



## **Your Vote Needed: Mount Vernon Group Elections This Month**

Members of the Mount Vernon Group (residents of Arlington, Alexandria, Falls Church, eastern Fairfax County and eastern Prince William County) are eligible to vote in the annual election to select members of the group's Executive Committee.

This year we have five candidates for five open positions. After reading the candidate statements below, please use our [online ballot](#) to cast your vote.

If you would like to receive a ballot by U.S. mail, contact Bruce Parker at 827 Fontaine St., Alexandria, VA 22302-3610, 703-549-5792, [bruce@chesdata.com](mailto:bruce@chesdata.com).

**The deadline for voting is January 10, 2019.**

[Dean Amel](#) | [John Bloom](#) | [Seth Heald](#) | [Derek Meyer](#) | [Colin Nackerman](#) | [Katherine Peinhardt](#)

### **Dean Amel:**

I've been a member of the Sierra Club since 1987 and became active in the Mount Vernon Group shortly thereafter. After serving as Virginia Chapter treasurer and on the Club's national Finance Committee for several years, I returned to the Mount Vernon Group Executive Committee in 2010. I've served as group chair for five years in total, including the last three years. Since my return to the ExCom, the group was active in the successful effort to close the GenOn coal-fired power plant in Alexandria; worked on the task force that developed Arlington's Community Energy Plan and its implementation; supported mass transit; maintained an active political campaign that has endorsed dozens of candidates for local office; worked on the Club's campaign to move to 100% renewable electricity in Alexandria and Arlington; and joined in efforts to get Alexandria to stop dumping raw sewage into the Potomac from its combined sewage system in Old Town. In addition, over the last eight years the Mount Vernon Group's financial condition has improved and stabilized. Looking forward, the arrival of Amazon's HQ2 in Arlington and Alexandria will present us with an opportunity to make the redevelopment of the area as environmentally sensitive as possible. With your support, I will continue to promote the environmental goals that we share for the next two years.

### **John Bloom:**

I am a Life Member of the Sierra Club with a passion for promoting renewable energy and climate change policy. I am a current member of the Mount Vernon Group Executive Committee, where I serve as Vice Chair and Virginia Chapter Delegate. For the Virginia Chapter, I also serve on the Strategic Planning Work Group overseeing long-term planning at the state level. I am active in the Sierra Club's Ready for 100 Campaign in Arlington, which is asking the County to commit to 100% clean electricity by 2035, and to 100% clean energy in all sectors by 2050. I serve on the research team that is strengthening

the case for clean energy in Arlington. In addition to my Sierra Club roles, I serve as Chair of Arlington's Energy Committee, and as a member of Arlington's Environment and Energy Conservation Commission (E2C2). These roles provide insights that help inform my Sierra Club work. I believe climate change is the defining challenge of our era. If re-elected to the Mount Vernon Group Executive Committee, I look forward to working creatively and collaboratively, exploring new strategies, and developing new allies in our efforts. I would greatly appreciate your vote.

**Paul Kaplowitz:**

I am a pediatrician who has worked for 35 years as an endocrinologist (the last 15 at Children's National) and have recently retired. Although I have been a Sierra Club member since 1983, it is in the last few years that I have become active in the club, starting with the Beyond Coal campaign and more recently with the Ready for 100 initiative. I have learned much about the complexities of getting Alexandria to commit to reducing its carbon footprint and the different strategies which might help us get there. I am passionate about the need to address climate change at the local level and to support programs which help make our area of Northern Virginia green and livable. If I am elected to the MVG executive committee, I would also work to set up at least 2 social events per year to better engage our membership. I believe that having the opportunity to meet others in the club who share our goals and interests in a relaxed setting will increase the number of members willing to take on a more activist role.

**Colin Nackerman:**

As the current Climate Change Chair of the Mount Vernon Group, I've been grateful to work for the community in addressing local environmental and climate issues. Since my election to the Executive Committee two years ago, in addition to general support, I have worked hard to advance energy and climate solutions in the region. I provided research support and advocacy to help advance Fairfax County's newly implemented Energy Strategy, and I plan to continue to work with the county on developing a Community Climate Action Plan. While working in the solar industry, I partnered with the Sierra Club on a study to forecast solar job growth in Virginia, and have actively participated in advancing the local solar market. I've since returned to work with the Center for Climate Change Communication at Mason and intend to use my knowledge and resources to help advance climate solutions in the region. Before joining the MVG, I was a passionate undergraduate at George Mason University, leading several environmental campaigns and co-founding Transparent GMU and the national organization UnKoch My Campus. It's been an honor to represent MVG's members and pledge to work with even more urgency in the coming years. Thank you for your consideration!

**Barbara Swart:**

I am a relatively recent member of the Sierra Club (2014), but have been active in other environmental groups for many years. My particular interests have been related to energy efficiency, solar, and sustainability. My motivation, like others, has been to help "save the world" which used to be a figure of speech, but with climate change has become today's reality. I view energy efficiency as being the low hanging fruit in the effort to reduce the greenhouse gases that threaten our planet. My energy efficiency work began in my own home, where changes over the past 17 years have reduced our electricity consumption by 66%. I took what I learned, got additional training, and with two others developed a home energy assessment program under a local environmental group. Other diverse activities in local organizations included support for solar installations, environmental education and low-income housing energy efficiency modifications. After joining the Sierra Club I joined the Ready for 100 project, making presentations to various civic associations and researching information that was included in a county forum on the future of energy in Arlington.

*This content originally appeared in the January 2019 issue of the Mount Vernon Sierran, the Mount Vernon Group's quarterly newsletter. For more information about the Mount Vernon Group, please visit [virginia.sierraclub.org/mvg/](http://virginia.sierraclub.org/mvg/).*