



SOUTHEAST SIERRAN

News of the
Southeast Gateway Group
of the Sierra Club

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HELP WANTED

In the early 80's, James Watt, Ronald Reagan's Secretary of the Interior, was considered "one of the two most intensely controversial and blatantly anti-environmental political appointees in American history". The other was Ann Gorsuch, the director of the EPA and mother of Trump's nominee for the Supreme Court. Consider them early role models for Ryan Zinke and Scott Pruitt. Before concern for the environment had been politicized, after years of fighting and winning efforts to establish the EPA and the Clean Water Act and even Earth Day, it seemed that environmentalists were losing ground.

In this atmosphere, a philosophy professor from UW-Parkside named Mary Ellen Johnson obtained membership lists of Sierra Club members within Racine and Kenosha Counties and sent out an invitation to a meeting to discuss forming a local Sierra Club group. According to David Hewitt, one who attended that first meeting, about thirty people met to discuss what the group would or could do and where and when they would meet again. "It grew from there. Mary was singularly responsible for the beginning. The group was not organized around an issue or a cause. It was purely a function of getting a list of Sierra Club members and helping us to organize a local group, for outings and political action. Preservation of Chiwaukee Prairie became a major cause soon after we started our group, but the group came first."

Another founding member, Mary Ann Ortmayer, remembers that "We were part of the Milwaukee Group and she (Mary Ellen Johnson) felt that the Racine-Kenosha area had its own unique issues apart from Milwaukee that needed to be addressed. She knew that organizing at the grass roots was essential and opened up her home, and donated her time and energy towards that end, giving picnics and dinner parties that brought people together that were environmentally committed."

Since that time the Southeast Gateway Group has established a monthly hazardous waste collection in Racine, has cleaned highways and weeded invasives

and offered a wide range of outings, environmental programs, and opportunities for activism. It has endorsed candidates, held press conferences, and met with legislators. In short, it has helped many to "explore, enjoy and protect" what was often ignored, exploited, and threatened.

It was an effort sustained for over 35 years as those founding members were gradually replaced by other volunteers who kept the group active by fulfilling necessary responsibilities and roles. What began with one woman's effort to form a group that would respond to local threats and issues, kept going well past that individual's efforts and developed a momentum of its own. Like many groups that function well, like the many strands in the fabric of civil society, we're glad it is there when we need it, glad that others maintained the effort.

It is clear that efforts to protect the environment are never finished; as long as there are resources to exploit and undeveloped land to develop that effort must continue. In fact, those same battles have become more dramatic and more urgent. For the first time, we have a deadline on addressing a problem as all-encompassing as climate change. In the meantime, those engaged in those efforts don't get any younger. Without a rejuvenation of new people and new energy, people get tired, groups get thinner.

If you've been an active member of the group, thanks for all you've done. It still needs doing. We need new blood,

new ideas, and most importantly new energy. Consider joining this group for a program or an outing. Consider writing an article for the newsletter or organizing an event or an action or serving on the executive committee. The Southeast Gateway Group, like many other groups, received a "Trump bump" bringing local members to well over a thousand.

We need a few of you to help out.

-by Tom Rutkowski, SEGG Chair





CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Stay Informed of Upcoming Events with Meetup:
www.meetup.com/Southeast-Gateway-Group-Sierra-Club-Hikes-and-Activities/

SEGG November Program & Meeting:

FoxConn's Environmental Regulation Deal: A Legal Perspective Thursday, November 16, 6:30PM at iMET Center, 2320 Renaissance Blvd, Sturtevant

Attorney Tressie Kamp from Midwest Environmental Advocates (midwestadvocates.org) will present the view of the FoxConn project from an environmental lawyer's perspective. Will the Walker administration get away with dismissing state environmental regulations in FoxConn's enterprise zone? Will federal laws protect our water, soil, and air from heavy metal contamination when Wisconsin turns its back on protecting our health? Or are we setting the stage for one more EPA Superfund site?

Preview environmental concerns with this short video from Wisconsin Public Television:

<https://wpt.org/here-and-now/manufacturing-expert-explains-foxconn-environmental-impact>

You don't have to be a Sierra Club member to attend our programs. Come learn with like minded people because "the ones who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones that do."

ICE AGE TRAIL HIKE:

Lapham Peak Segment

Sunday, November 19, 1:00 PM



Join SEGG for a 7.8 mile hike starting at Cushing Park in Delafield and ending at the Waukesha Field Station in Waterville. We will be hiking one-way with a car pool/transfer back to the starting point.

At 1,223 ft. high, Lapham Peak is the highest point in Waukesha County and features a 45 ft. tall observation tower.

Meet in the Cushing Park parking lot at 116 Hickory Ct in Delafield. The Waukesha Field Station, modeled after the UW-Madison's Arboretum, hosts typical Wisconsin plant communities and has an 8-acre prairie restoration and oak savanna area. Ages 12+, no pets please.

Contact Al Sommer to RSVP or for inquiries:
Sommerallan4@gmail.com or 262-716-6955

Free Film Screening:

Cheshire, Ohio:

A Question of Power

Wed., Nov. 8 - 6:30 PM, at
River Bend Nature Center



The Clean Power Coalition will be hosting a free screening and discussion of the film *Cheshire, Ohio* with the film's producer, Eve Morgenstern.

American Electric Power did a 20 million-dollar deal to buy the town of Cheshire, Ohio, after their coal plant began emitting a blue-plume. But not all their residents were ready to move. A gun toting 83-year old for one. Now only a few residents remain and they continue their fight for their health, the environment and their home.

Please RSVP by emailing:
miranda.ehrlich@sierraclub.org.

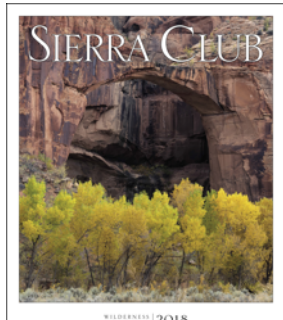


Our 2018 Sierra Club Calendars Are Here!

Calendars are available for purchase in-person at SEGG programs or by contacting Judy Rockwell at jjrockwell@gmail.com or 262-742-4306.

They make nice holiday gifts and are a great way to support Southeast Gateway Group activities. Two Choices:

1. Spiral bound engagement calendars have a week-by-week format with 56 full-color images by America's leading nature photographers. Cost \$16.00.
2. The Wilderness Calendar has been America's best-loved wall calendar for more than 40 years with 12 stunning landscapes. Cost \$15.00.



THE SIERRA CLUB'S SOUTHEAST GATEWAY GROUP OF WISCONSIN'S JOHN MUIR CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BALLOT

Those receiving this newsletter and ballot electronically are asked to print the ballot and to validate their vote by writing their membership number below. Find your membership number on your membership card or on the Sierra magazine label. *Ballots without a valid number will not be counted.*

Those receiving a paper newsletter need only cut out the ballot. You may black out your name and address for anonymity. Bring your ballots to a meeting or mail it to:

Nancy Hennessy, 5216 Wind Point Rd., Racine, WI 53402

Deadline for voting is **Nov. 16, 2017**

Vote for up to 3 candidates. Second box is for joint members only.

Membership No. _____

Judy Rockwell

Laura Schultz

Allan Sommer

Judy Rockwell has served on the SEGG ExCom since June of 2014. She has been Group delegate to the John Muir Chapter Executive Committee since 2013. Judy grew up on a farm near Sturgis, South Dakota. Living near the Black Hills made her aware of the necessity of preserving the wilderness. Retired from the Burlington Public Library, she is very interested in climate change issues.

Judy Rockwell



Laura Schultz earned her BS in Geosciences from UW-Parkside and her Masters in Soil Science from UW-Madison. Laura is now the director of the Root River Environmental Education Community Center (REC) in Racine and a Lecturer in the Environmental Studies program at UW-Parkside. In her free time, Laura likes to swim, hike, kayak, read, and hang out with her pet guinea pig, Larry.

Laura Schultz



Allan Sommer has been a member of Sierra Club for 40+ years, is a 10+ year member of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, 30+ year member of The Nature Conservancy, 40+ year member of Millburn Congregational Church and a new member of Invasive Plant Assoc. of Wis. (IPAW). Currently, he manages a small vineyard and large garden (trying to do both sustainably), and is a board member and leader of volunteers reducing invasive species for Pringle Nature Center.

Allan Sommer



Beyond Coal Update

by Miranda Ehrlich, Organizing Apprentice for Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign



Sierra Club volunteers are continuing to work hard on moving from coal to clean energy in Southeast Wisconsin. Sierra Club has formed a coalition on this issue with several other environmental and social justice groups, so far including NextGen America, League of Conservation Voters, Racine Coalition for Peace and Justice, Racine Green Party, and Wisconsin Green Muslims. Together, these organizations make up the Clean Power Coalition—Southeast Wisconsin. We expect this list to expand significantly in the coming weeks.

In October, the Clean Power Coalition held a beach clean-up and trail clearing event at Bender Park. The event was a great success! Our volunteers did an excellent job working to keep Bender Park's beach and trails clean and accessible while helping to raise awareness about pollution from the Oak Creek Coal Plant next door. Thank you to everyone who attended.

We are excited to announce that the Clean Power Coalition will be hosting a free screening and discussion of the film *Cheshire, Ohio: A Question of Power*, on November 8, at River Bend Nature Center with the film's producer, Eve Morgenstern. See page 2 for details.

Interested in getting involved with the coalition's efforts?
Email miranda.ehrlich@sierraclub.org and follow us at www.facebook.com/cleanpowersoutheast/

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John T. McCutcheon's *Injun Summer*, Chicago Tribune, Sept. 30, 1907

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*and why **WE NEED YOU!***

