



# SOUTHEAST SIERRAN

News of the  
Southeast Gateway Group  
of the Sierra Club

NOV 2020-JAN 2021  
VOLUME 39, No. 4

Due to COVID-19, all national, chapter, and shared Sierra Club offices will remain closed, with rare exceptions, for urgent business continuity needs. Travel, in-person meetings, public events and outings remain on hold. For updates on outings please see our website, Facebook, Instagram, and Meet Up pages. Sign up to receive monthly SEGG E-news updates by emailing melissa.warner3@a2q.com.

From the  
Co-Chair  
by Tom Rutkowski

## POLITICAL ENDORSEMENTS

This month for the first time in its 175 year history, *Scientific American* has endorsed a presidential candidate, drawing a line between one contender who offers “fact-based plans to protect our health, our economy and the environment” and one engaged in “ongoing denial of reality.” The editors felt compelled to defend not only science itself but also safety of the citizens who depend on leaders making sound decision based on it. Just a few days later the *New England Journal of Medicine* broke its 208 year practice of avoiding politics by publishing an endorsement titled, “Dying in a Leadership Vacuum.” The contrast between our two presidential nominees is so stark there is no need to even identify which candidate these publications endorsed. Both of these decisions are unprecedented. That’s also a very generous way to describe the last four years in America.

As a Sierra Club member you already know how much is at stake in this election and you’re going to vote. In a normal election year, you might also be registering voters, working at the polls, and knocking on doors, but like everything else in our lives, that too has been disrupted. We’re a long way from normal in almost every sense. To adapt, political campaigns have used a variety of options including relational organizing, a method where people reach out to friends and family members about the election. One study by the Analyst Institute found that such outreach is three times more effective than knocking on a stranger’s door. Given the political polarization of our time, you might have difficulty finding someone you know who isn’t voting or isn’t voting like you. In these last few days before the election it would be great if you could reach out to someone who could use a little encouragement from a different perspective, a little nudge toward a better world where “unprecedented” isn’t the most generous term we could use to describe the times we live in.

The Southeast Gateway Group and the John Muir Chapter are happy to endorse the federal candidate below and the state runners on the next page. It is also time to elect SEGG’s governing members. Please see page 7 for more information and send in your ballot on page 8 by Nov. 24. *Thank You!*



### Roger Polack -1st Congressional District

"Climate change is real and poses threats to our health, our economy, and our national security – but leaders in Washington refuse to act. As a father of two young children, I worry about the world we’re leaving to future generations. We must set aggressive goals for clean and renewable energy that drive down the use of fossil fuels, with input from industry, farmers, unions, and other stakeholders in order to put Southeastern Wisconsin workers on the frontline of a clean energy economy." -Roger Polack

# GET INVOLVED → VOTE!



## SIERRA CLUB POLITICAL ENDORSEMENTS

The following candidates received not only the Sierra Club endorsement, they've also been designated as *2020 Environmental Champions* by the John Muir Chapter.



**Senator Bob Wirch**  
State Senate District 22  
(Somers)



**Representative Tip McGuire**  
State Assembly District 64  
(Somers)



**Representative Tod Ohnstad**  
State Assembly District 65 (Kenosha)



**Representative Greta Neubauer**  
State Assembly District 66  
(Racine)



## Other Endorsements:



**Katherine Gaulke**  
State Assembly District 32  
(Elkhorn)



**Joel Jacobsen**  
State Assembly District 63  
(Burlington)



**Elizabeth Lochner-Abel**  
State Assembly District 31  
(Walworth)



**August Schutz**  
State Assembly District 62  
(Caledonia)

# GET INVOLVED ➡ START HERE!



*Please Join Us!*

## **SEGG Annual Planning Meeting Saturday, January 16 ~ 10 AM**

This year the meeting will be virtual, of course. We'll be gathering online to discuss new programs, actions, future outings (when possible), and the general business of the group.

To register and to receive the zoom link, please email:  
**natom@wi.rr.com**

**Your donation helps us continue to "Explore, Enjoy and Protect" Southeast Wisconsin and beyond.**



Checks made out to *Sierra Club SEGG* can be used towards any purpose the club sees fit. Should you prefer your donation to be used strictly for educational programs and activities, please make checks payable to *Sierra Club Foundation*.

Please mail donations to our treasurer:

**Jeff Sytsma, 3508 Washington Ave, Racine WI 53405**



Congratulations to Donald Kohnke, first place winner in the SEGG Photo Contest!

## **Join the Sierra Club Wisconsin Book Club!**

Virtual meetings are held via phone or video chat every other month. Get to know fellow Sierra club members in a less formal setting and engage in discussion about the best environment or social justice related books.



November's book is *New York 2140* by Kim Stanley Robinson:

"It is 2140.

The waters rose, submerging New York City.

But the residents adapted and it remained the bustling, vibrant metropolis it had always been. Though changed forever.

Every street became a canal. Every skyscraper an island.

Through the eyes of the varied inhabitants of one building, Kim Stanley Robinson shows us how one of our great cities will change with the rising tides. And how we too will change."

Our next discussion will be **Wednesday, November 4 at 8:15 PM.**

Find our event page by searching "Sierra Club Wisconsin Book Club" on Facebook and sign up to receive the Google Meet invite or phone number.

Hope to see you all at our next discussion!

SEGG encourages you to *WRITE* to your legislators on the issues you care about.

Find your representative at **[legis.wisconsin.gov](http://legis.wisconsin.gov)**



## SEGG's Memorial Bench

by John Berge

In early 2016, the Caledonia/Mt.Pleasant Joint Park Committee put out a request for donors of park benches to be placed along the second phase of the Pike River Pathway between Washington and Durand Avenues in Mt. Pleasant. Several individuals, led by Mary Ann Ortmayer, contributed the \$750 necessary to purchase a bench, have it inscribed "In Memory of Past Sierra Club Members", and installed.

This bench was placed on a concrete slab just south of the big pond, which is encircled by the Pike River Pathway, and faces north towards J. I. Case High School and the under-construction Aquatic Center. The bench is described as the VICTORY model, is six-feet long and made out of 90% high-density polyethylene from recycled bottles. The concrete slab also contains a picnic table, waste and recycling containers and a large bike rack.



At the time of the donation, we talked about whether we should put individual names on the bench of deceased members of the Southeast Gateway Group, but put off any such plans or decisions until a later date. This summer, I took it upon myself to place the first few plaques on the bench, remembering three recently deceased leaders of the Group, Lila Berge, LD Rockwell and Dian Sorenson.

Concurrently, Mary Ann and I proposed a policy regarding such memorials to the Group's Executive Committee with two alternatives for financing the plaques, which I have been informed has been adopted. The

adopted policy is detailed below.

The two accompanying photographs were taken after the first 3" x 5" plaque was attached. People wishing to honor a deceased leader of the SEGG with a plaque can contact any member of the ExCom or me at [jberge35@wi.rr.com](mailto:jberge35@wi.rr.com) for purchase and installation.



### Memorial Bench Policy

It is the policy of the Southeast Gateway Group regarding the SEGG memorial bench on the Pike River Pathway that any deceased member of the SEGG who held positions of leadership for an extended period of time may be memorialized with a small plaque attached to this bench. Positions of leadership include elected office at the Group and Chapter level, committee chairmanships, and leaders of specific long-term campaigns. The plaques shall be 3" x 5", made out of gold or brass colored outdoor plastic as sold by The Trophy Shoppe in Racine and attached to the bench by brass screws. The plaque shall contain the memorialized person's name, birth and death dates, and one or more of the leadership positions held. The cost of the plaque, which is currently around thirty to forty dollars depending upon the number of letters and numbers, shall be donated by the relative or friend who has proposed the memorialization.

# ECO EMOTIONS

## Anxiety to Action Week Recap

From September 21-25, the Sierra Club Southeast Gateway Group invited its followers on Facebook and Instagram to check-in throughout the week for a virtual, self-paced program that focused on ways to combat environmental anxiety and turn these eco-emotions into something productive. At the end of the week, we had a Zoom Party where we did a mini-recap and got to connect with one another to discuss our own journeys with eco-emotions. If you wanted to check out our 10-minute recap, it is now available on our Facebook page.

Also, feel free to look back throughout the posts we shared during Anxiety Action Week and add to your environmental warrior tool belt. Links for our Youtube videos and music playlists are below and include uplifting songs, resource videos, and specially made yoga videos by local yogis that you can watch at your leisure.

Tip: Visit the SEGG website to copy and paste these links directly into your web browser.

### Music Playlist:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL5Y3O8C3o3K92qMrOW7-yhrBCbth3knv2>

### Video Playlist (Including Yoga Videos):

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL5Y3O8C3o3K\\_uZQEsgz\\_0K\\_ZFz2NGAVdy](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL5Y3O8C3o3K_uZQEsgz_0K_ZFz2NGAVdy)

### SEGG Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/SierraClubSoutheastGatewayGroup/>

### SEGG Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/sierraclubsegg/>

Thank you to all who joined us during the week and for our party, to the yogis Hilary Suarez, Chloé Wright, and Debra Smith-Andersen for their contributions, as well as to the Eco-Emotions planning team for all their hard work!



## 2021 Sierra Club Calendars Are Available Now!

These calendars make lovely holiday gifts and are a great way to support Southeast Gateway Group activities.



The engagement calendars are spiral bound, have a week-by-week format, and 56 full-color images by America's leading nature photographers. Engagement calendars are \$16.00.

The spiral-bound wall calendar features twelve stunning landscape photographs. Sierra Club Wilderness Calendar has been America's best-loved wall calendar for more than 40 years. Wall calendars are \$15.00.

**To purchase, contact Judy Rockwell at [jjrockwell@gmail.com](mailto:jjrockwell@gmail.com) or call/ text 262-949-8323. Please leave a message and we will arrange delivery.**

**THE SIERRA CLUB'S SOUTHEAST GATEWAY GROUP OF WISCONSIN'S JOHN MUIR CHAPTER  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CANDIDATES  
SEE NEXT PAGE FOR VOTING INSTRUCTIONS  
BALLOTS DUE BY NOV. 24**

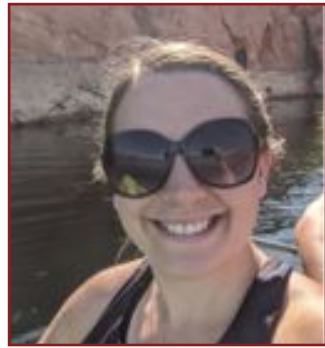


**Amy Macemon**

I have a Liberal Arts degree in Environmental Conservation from Carthage College and have volunteered or worked for a variety of environmental or food justice organizations. I've lived in the Racine area my entire life. A youthful pessimist of Racine, I've come to fully realize this place is beautiful and that its natural wonders are worth protecting and promoting! I hope to be able to do both during my time with Sierra. Peace, love & hope.

**Tom Rutkowski**

I've been fortunate to have camped and hiked in some of the world's most beautiful places; I appreciate the mission of the Sierra Club to help others "explore and enjoy" these places as well. For several years I've worked to advance renewable energy and call for action to address climate change. In my spare time, I try to retire coal plants, read as much as I can, and take several walks a day. I'm thankful for all the work the Sierra Club has done with these issues and all of its other efforts to "protect" the natural world.



**Kelsey Saari**

A Registered Nurse and lifelong resident of Kenosha, I became involved in the Sierra Club in 2019. I have really enjoyed meeting new people and raising awareness about land preservation, clean energy and climate change.

**Laura Schulz**

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 fur babies, Larry, Laurel, and Lumpy.



**Allan Sommer**

A Sierra Club member for 40+ years, a 10+ year member of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, a 30+ year member of The Nature Conservancy, a 40+ year member of Millburn Congregational Church, and a new member of Invasive Plant Assoc. of Wis. (IPAW). Currently, Allan 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.

**REFERENDUM**

According to the Southeast Gateway Group's by-laws, a majority of two-thirds is needed to amend the by-laws. At this time if you are in favor of expanding the number of people serving on the Southeast Gateway Executive Committee from seven to eight members, please vote Yes.

**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 in 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.

Please mail your ballot to:

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

Deadline for voting is **Nov. 24, 2020**

Vote for up to 5 candidates. Second box is for joint members only.

Membership No. \_\_\_\_\_

- |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Amy Macemon</b>       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Tom Rutkowski</b>     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Kelsey Saari</b>      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
|                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|                          | <b>Laura Schulz</b>      |                          | <b>Allan Sommer</b>      |                          |                          |
|                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |

**REFERENDUM**

At this time, if you are in favor of expanding the number of people serving on the Southeast Gateway Executive Committee from seven to eight members please check here:

YES

**2020 Southeast Gateway Group Leadership**

**Executive Committee**

Tom Rutkowski (Co-Chair/Programs).....natom@wi.rr.com  
Laura Buska (Co-Chair/ Programs).....lauraannbuska@gmail.com  
Zack Van Den Berge (Vice Chair).....vande104@rangers.uwp.edu  
Laura Schultz (Secretary/Programs).....schulz@uwp.edu  
Lisa Selje.....lisas2259@gmail.com  
Allan Sommer (Outings Chair).....sommerallan4@gmail.com  
Andy Hayes.....hayes.andy.m@gmail.com

**Other Group Leaders**

Joe Dubaniewicz.....joeduban@yahoo.com  
Jeff Systma (Treasurer).....jeff12759@aol.com  
Laura Feider (Conservation/Racine).....lfeider@hotmail.com  
Barry Thomas (Conservation/ Kenosha).....bthomas6@wi.rr.com  
Melissa Warner (Editor, E-News).....melissa.warner3@a2q.com  
Mary Schroeder (Hospitality).....ilovedogsandcats2@yahoo.com  
Jessica True (Outings).....jessicatrue@yahoo.com

**SOUTHEAST  
SIERRAN**



The newsletter of the Southeast Gateway Group is published quarterly by Group members. Please send articles, event submissions, photographs, corrections and/or comments to:

**Nicole Reid - nreid23@wi.rr.com**  
Please use subject line: *SEGG Newsletter*

**Deadline for Feb-Apr Issue:  
Friday, Feb. 5, 2021**

Southeast Gateway Group  
of the Sierra Club  
1529 Crabapple Dr.  
Racine, WI 53405-1705



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Scan Code to  
View Every  
**Sierran**  
in Full-Color on  
our website.



[www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/southeast-gateway](http://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/southeast-gateway)



SEGG Sierra Club members participated in a photo contest, sending in pictures that captured nearby nature. The contest complemented our August program featuring Eddee Daniel, a photographer known for his blog, *A Wealth of Nature*, that features images of parks and preserves in Southeast Wisconsin.

Here are the second and third place winners.

See page 3 for the first place photo submitted by Donald Kohnke.



Third place by James Gorsline



Second Place by Gary Anderson

**What's Inside:**  
*Time to Vote!*

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