



Catoctin News

Newsletter of the Catoctin Group serving
Carroll and Frederick Counties

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Connecting Planet and Politics

by Davin Faris

Student Organizer and Hub Coordinator of Sunrise Frederick

*We are our environment. We need to ground ourselves
in that idea, feel the fear, but also the hope there.*

I grew up on a regenerative farm, outside of Frederick. An outlier in fields of monoculture corn and conventional cattle, my family rejected those industrial tenets of maximized production in favor of a more holistic approach: healing depleted soil, sequestering carbon, supporting various species in concert, and also supplying healthier food. I played with hogs and moved cows, gardened and shoveled manure, spent years playing in these woods and catching crawdads and eating food grown in my backyard. Closeness to the land is deeply important to me, and the thought of that environment being changed or destroyed is heartbreaking. That's what drives me to political work, to talking with representatives, engaging in campaigns.

The Importance of Intersection

In environmentalism, a distinction is often drawn between political advocacy and local conservation efforts, like planting trees or picking up litter. While both are valuable, finding the intersection between the two can let us reach beyond individual limits, as well as connect past partisan lines.

You can tell people about global heat trends and ppm of CO₂; you can try to express the international humanitarian implications of the climate crisis. But the fact is, we don't live in some observatory, set aside from environmental degradation. We are our environment. We need to ground ourselves in that idea, feel the fear, but also the hope there. It means all of us have something to lose, and conversely, much to gain from taking action.

The Nature of Nature

Nature is more than a backdrop or an artifact to be saved. It's a way of connecting. If someone says politics doesn't matter to them, what does? Is it their land? The water their grandchildren drink? When we forget it's personal, that's when we lose people, whether in elections, news articles, or just a conversation with a neighbor.

I try to remember that, especially in this season of political noise. I hike through the watershed, past the flat crystal lakes, and remind myself that this is why it all matters to me.

(continued, following page)



(from previous page)

There is a place at this table for everyone who wants one, and our work is to send out invitations. To connect the abstract and contentious to the intimate, tangible, and intuitive.

Teaching people to love our outdoors—leading hikes, planting gardens, cleaning the rivers—is an inherently and beautifully political act. Likewise, the work of registering voters, canvassing, or

calling representatives can repair our soil and air. They inform and interrelate to one another, two sides of the same ecological coin.

So I'll see you in the forests and the farms, in the streets, and I'll see you in November.

We are the Frederick MD hub of the Sunrise Movement, working towards a livable future for all. Join us in the fight for climate justice.



Missing Environmental Voters

By Ron Kaltenbaugh

The Environmental Voter Project works to reach out to environmentalists who have not voted in recent elections.

As a group, people who list environment/climate as their top issue historically have lower voter turnout rates than the general population. With the need for so much action on climate change and other related issues, this seems surprising. Fortunately, there is a non-profit working on this problem.

The Environmental Voter Project works to reach out to environmentalists who have not voted in recent elections. They use data and models to identify people and reach out to them in a variety of ways.

Once they find and encourage a new voter, they work to make this a “sticky habit” so that they continue to vote. There are millions of potential climate voters who have been identified, and getting more of them to vote could positively impact tight elections. This past year, even with a very closely divided congress, we have seen a tremendous

amount of climate-related bills being signed into law at the federal level. The Infrastructure Bill, The Chips Act, and the recently passed Inflation Reduction Act all have a variety of important climate provisions. While these represent good progress, they are imperfect, not enough, and barely made it through Congress. Imagine how much more could have been accomplished with more environmentally and climate concerned representatives in Congress.

It is very important that those of us who care about climate and the environment vote and encourage others in our community to vote as well. So, this fall, please vote with the climate and our health in mind. Encourage your family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and others to do the same. And consider getting involved with the Environmental Voter Project.

Find out More

**ENVIRONMENTAL
VOTER PROJECT**

<https://www.environmentalvoter.org/>

VOTE VOTE VOTE

By Jane Ladner

This is a Season of Voting

There are the all important State and local elections with voting on November 8, but there is also voting in our Sierra Club Catocin Group for the Executive Committee. The ExCom sets priorities; discusses environmental objectives; organizes a program of outings, educational and activist events; recruits and communicates with members; endorses political candidates; and raises funds, in accordance with Sierra Club policies and bylaws.

All SCCG members will get to vote on the candidates between November 11 and December 10. The ballots will be distributed by email or paper if members have no email. Voting is your contribution to guiding the organization to conform with your views of what the SCCG should be doing. VOTE in the SCCG election for ExCom, VOTE in the Gubernatorial election for the people you want to control your country, state, and local community.

VOTE!

SCCG In the Streets ... Again!

by Jim Wagner

On Saturday, September 10, our pop-up canopy again popped up on Market Street for the Frederick In the Streets celebration. Kudos to Patti Fredericks, Steve Luke, Paul Walker, Jim Wagner and Patty O'Malley for staffing our station and engaging with the In the Streets celebrants. We had table displays, including the "Kids Quiz," and abundant literature, including our "Green Ballots."

It was a pleasure this year to collaborate with members of Sugarloaf Alliance, who joined us. They had an excellent flier and an enlarged map of the Sugarloaf Treasured Landscape area to help explain what is at stake in the Sugarloaf Landscape boundary issue. Business was brisk for most of the day, and the weather cooperated. We handed out many Green Ballots, fliers and Make America Green Again bumper stickers. And we also managed to have some fun.



Paul Walker and Jim Wagner in front of the SCCG canopy.

Photo by Patty O'Malley

Officers/Committee Chairs

Chairperson Patti Fredericks

Vice Chair Kerri Hesley

Secretary Kerri Hesley

Treasurer Patty O'Malley

Membership Open

Executive Committee Patti Fredericks, Vanessa Gress, Kerri Hesley,
Ron Kaltenbaugh, Bob Ladner, James Wagner, Paul Walker

Newsletter Manager/Editor: Jane Ladner, Design Editor: Dee Dolan

Further Information

<http://www.sierraclub.org/maryland/catoctin-group>

