



Virginia Sierran

The Official Newsletter of the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter
Fall 2019

Opposition to Mountain Valley and Atlantic Coast pipelines grows

by Jessica Sims

As momentum against the ruinous fracked-gas Mountain Valley and Atlantic Coast pipelines continues to grow, this summer saw exciting, moving community-led events, multiple crucial legal updates, multi-state collaboration and continued outreach for our Stop the Pipelines campaign.

The past three months have brought continued scrutiny of the impacts of the Mountain Valley Pipeline on the communities, waterways and ecosystems of southwest Virginia. Critical monitoring efforts in the area provided by local residents and volunteer groups, including Mountain Valley Watch, saw more failing erosion control measures, flipped excavators and continued sediment runoff. In a surprising step on August 2, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality announced that they had issued a partial stop work order for two miles of the more than 300-mile project, owing to what they categorized as an imminent threat, but this stop work order was lifted within two weeks.

Building on the deserved scrutiny of the project and each part of its permitting process, on August 9, a new lawsuit was launched by Sierra Club challenging the U.S. Fish and Wildlife's approval of this pipeline. This was met with a public response from Mountain Valley Pipeline, LLC and quickly followed by their "vol-



John Laury of Union Hill in Buckingham, Virginia, spoke at "Our Air, Our Health, Our Future: The Fight to Save Union Hill" (photo courtesy of Billy Davies).

untary" suspension of construction in areas along the MVP route that include the habitat of the Roanoke log perch, candy darter and Indiana bat. But the specifics of what the stop order prohibits have not yet translated on site as monitoring indicates continued activity. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission reached out to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for a response about their role in approval of a permit, and on September 11, U.S. Fish and Wildlife agreed to reinstate consultation. Southwest Virginians and allies continue to push for public awareness of this destructive project, hosting edu-

cational and advocacy forums and press events and maintaining media attention. The September 22 "Circle of Protection: Bent Mountain" event, a restorative, welcoming event with music, speakers and art builds, in support of the community of Bent Mountain in Roanoke County, is receiving support from the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter. The event is also helping to support an anti-pipeline event, hosted by a tristate coalition, to be held the following day in Roanoke.

Another important development this summer was the July 26 release from the Federal Energy

Regulatory Commission of the draft environmental impact statement for Mountain Valley Pipeline's proposed Southgate extension. This opened a brief comment period which closed on September 16. A coalition of impacted residents and environmental organizations from Virginia and North Carolina, including Sierra Club, Appalachian Voices, Food and Water Watch, Good Stewards of Rockingham County and the Haw River Assembly, organized talking points, technical comments and action alerts to solicit comments. It also tabled at the commission's hearings and hosted comment-writing parties. With the help of the Beyond Dirty Fuels National Team, Sierra Club gathered over 15,000 comments in opposition to the proposed extension, a project that would lead from Pittsylvania County, Virginia, into Alamance and Rockingham Counties, North Carolina, and continue the same dangerous activities seen along the Mountain Valley Pipeline route.

News on the Atlantic Coast Pipeline brought both legal updates and amazing community events along the route. On July 26, allies fighting the unnecessary, dangerous ACP received welcome news as the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals vacated a

See Pipelines on page 10.

Update on solar on the schools

by Susan Stillman

There is a feeding frenzy for solar power purchase agreements on school systems around the commonwealth. Fairfax County, Loudoun County, Virginia Beach and Charles City County have requests for proposals on the street for power purchase agreements, or PPAs, to provide clean, renewable solar power for their schools. Why the rush? Solar is cheaper than ever; a solar PPA allows the school system to purchase power rather than panels, using the same operating funds that they use

today to purchase electricity from Dominion Energy; and the solar installer can take advantage of the 30 percent federal investment tax credit and pass that savings on to the school system. The credit drops to 26 percent in 2020.

Another reason for the rush is that there is an arbitrary limit in Dominion's service territory of 50MW for systems financed via power purchase agreements. Analysis by one of the leading Virginia PPA solar suppliers, Secure Futures, notes

that there have been 20MW of PPAs registered with the State Corporation Commission. With the requests for proposals noted above, it is anticipated that there will be another 30MW of solar installed via PPAs by June 2020. Solar companies spend a lot of time and marketing dollars to win these contracts and they will go elsewhere to sell systems before the cap is actually reached. This is not good for business, nor is it good for the school systems that would like to have the cost savings and academ-

ic advantages afforded them by installing solar.

As this article is being written, it is very much up in the air if or how the cap on PPAs will be lifted. If you are working with your school system or local government to advocate for solar via PPAs, email me at stillman.susan@gmail.com and I'll keep you posted as things change and let you know what your local entity can do to help expand the cap on solar PPAs.

Susan Stillman is a renewable energy vice chair of the Virginia Chapter.

Notes from the chair

by Daryl Downing



From the chair

Hello Virginia Sierrans and friends.

Last year my wife and I became

empty nesters (unless you count the beagle). We decided to move from a sprawl suburban development to Richmond. We were very fortunate because my wife found a solar house in a 45-home solar community (apparently the first in the state) that we were able to buy. Of course, it took good credit and other financial resources to make this dream a reality. It is my fervent belief that all Virginians should be able to benefit directly from solar energy, regardless of income.

Through a power purchase agreement, or PPA, an entity can obtain solar panels (with installation) at no cost. Richmond Public Schools recently executed one with the com-

pany Secure Futures. Secure Futures paid for solar panels for 11 schools.

I mention power purchase agreements because they are an example of a program Virginia needs to expand. Everyone—private individuals, non-profits, businesses and government agencies—should be able to shop around for a PPA in order to obtain solar panels at no cost. The folks who live in the neighborhood next to mine should be able to get solar without going into thousands of dollars of debt.

Let's make this happen in the 2020 General Assembly by electing state senators and delegates who have strong environmental poli-

cies. Current Chapter endorsements can be found at <http://scvapak.org/> and more will be posted this month. Please canvass (it can be done outside your district), donate, volunteer or get involved in some other way to ensure we get folks elected who will pass good environmental legislation.

Thanks for all you do.

Yours in conservation,
Daryl

Daryl Downing is the chair of the Virginia Chapter.

Virginia Chapter continues to make exciting progress toward its goals!

by Kate Addleson

During challenging times, it becomes all the more important to take time to reflect on our achievements and appreciate each other's contributions. Recently, the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter's 2018 Annual Report was released, documenting the numerous ways that our campaigns and advocacy over the past year have helped make Virginia a healthier and more sustainable commonwealth.

Thanks to the persistent efforts of dozens (if not hundreds!) of outstanding volunteer leaders across the state and our dedicated staff, we are continuing to advance climate solutions and clean energy in our communities and at the state level. Victories in the past year include expanding energy efficiency and renewable energy requirements for our utility companies, further de-

laying the development of the proposed fracked-gas Atlantic Coast and Mountain Valley pipelines, obtaining the governor's commitment to establish state limits on methane pollution and rejection of excessive fracked-gas power plant development by the state's biggest climate polluter (Dominion Energy).

We have also made huge gains in the local leadership and involvement in clean energy solutions with the expansion of our 100% Virginia campaign from Arlington and Alexandria to Fredericksburg, Prince William County, Richmond, Virginia Beach and more; and we have worked with a national coalition to delay the Trump Administration's efforts to open the Atlantic to offshore oil and gas drilling.

As we look ahead to the final months of 2019, our leadership has

coalesced around a strategic vision and mission that will guide our work moving forward and inspire new activists yearning to protect the planet to join our ranks. Building on the new Sierra Club mantra, "Powerful Together," we aim to be the most effective driving force for climate solutions in Virginia.

Our Vision:

The Sierra Club Virginia Chapter will be an exceptionally effective and relevant grassroots force for creating climate solutions and combating the climate crisis.

Our Mission:

To explore, enjoy and protect the wild places of Virginia; and to inspire, engage, educate and empower everyone in Virginia to be stewards of the natural and human

environment and implement solutions to the climate crisis.

When you are feeling down about the challenges we and our environment face, know that you are not alone. Reach out, pitch in and speak up. We are making a difference. We will not be defeated. Together, we will ensure healthy, livable communities and protect our environment for generations to come.

Go to <https://sierraclub.org/virginia/annual-report> to view the full 2018 Virginia Chapter Annual Report.

Kate Addleson is the director of the Virginia Chapter.

Virginia Sierran

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<https://sierraclub.org/virginia>

The Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club is over 20,000 members strong. We are your friends and neighbors working to build healthy, livable communities and to conserve and protect our climate and environment. The Virginia Chapter is part of the national Sierra Club, the nation's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization.

Information about our staff, executive committee and environmental action chairs can be found on the Virginia Chapter website under "About."

Virginia Sierran Editor: Sevim Kalyoncu, editorvirginiasieran@gmail.com

The editor welcomes editorial contributions, photographs and art work. Submissions should pertain to Virginia's environment and/or climate change. Email the editor with questions on submissions.

Please contact member.care@sierraclub.org for membership and mailing issues and address.changes@sierraclub.org to change your mailing address.

Volunteer spotlight: Leadership and dedication make the Chapter's work possible!

by Ann Creasy

The passion and hard work of our volunteers might be compared to the perfect cup of tea after a long day: rejuvenating, inspiring and exactly what you needed. One of the brightest, most motivating aspects of being a part of the Sierra Club is working with such impressive people. The progress we make is literally not possible without the tireless efforts of the great people who make Sierra Club what it is! For these reasons, we would like to shine a light on some great efforts by our volunteers.

Susan Bonney of the Great Falls Group continuously sets up social events to bring new people into our advocacy efforts. Catherine Carver has been a fantastic editor of the group's Cascade newsletter. John Cruickshank has led the Piedmont Group through many environmental battles with grace, humor and intelligence. Audrey Dannenberg has served on the Piedmont Group executive committee for about 30 years.

Richard and Suzanna Eggeling are outings leaders for the Roanoke Group. Their love and enthusiasm for environmental education is made clear through their guided outings in nature. Doug Ferguson has served as the Roanoke Group webmaster

Staff changes at the Virginia Chapter

by Kelsey Crane

The summer included several changes within our Virginia Chapter staff team.

We bid a bittersweet farewell to Zach Jarjoura in July. Zach joined the Virginia Chapter staff as conservation program coordinator working in communities around Hampton Roads and Virginia Beach. He was promoted to conservation manager and supported several of our organizers. Zach's work during his five years with the Virginia Chapter always drove home the human impacts of climate change and built partnerships with groups working to improve the lives of people across different issues. We all wish Zach the best on his next phase in Austin.

I (Kelsey Crane) am excited to move into my new role as campaign and policy director for the Virginia Chapter staff. I will take on Zach's previous responsibilities and also work to more effectively connect our policy goals with our grassroots campaigns. I hope to break down si-



Great Falls Group volunteers participated in a clean up on Scott's Run in McLean, Virginia (photo courtesy of the Great Falls Group).

for 10 years while providing essential tech support for film screenings and guest speakers. Shira Flax has done fantastic work on Resiliency Hubs. Kevin Halligan fought the proposed landfill in Cumberland County with outstanding community organizing and outreach to impacted community members. Morgan Johns spent months of incredible work fighting against the Atlantic Coast and Mountain Valley pipelines and the Chickahominy Power Station, which will be the largest gas plant in the country.

los between conservation campaign and legislative priorities for clean energy and environmental justice and to make the Sierra Club an even more effective and powerful grassroots force for finding solutions to the climate crisis and protecting the health of our environment and all the living beings that inhabit it.

Congratulations to Ann Creasy, who has been promoted to the position of Hampton Roads conservation program manager, effective August 1. Ann takes on the managing of our offshore energy, climate, solar and coal dust campaigns from our Sierra Club office in Norfolk. This new role will include supporting a new community outreach organizer once that position is filled. Ann's work has connected individuals and organizations to larger movements so that we can see the change brought forth by the efforts of people in Hampton Roads.

We also said a warm good-bye to Development Associate Sierra

Elizabeth Kreydatus has done tremendous work on our letter to the editor team and in the fight against the Chickahominy gas plant.

Ivy Main has been an outstanding leader in advocating and educating about clean energy in Virginia. Shavon Peacock serves as chair of the member engagement committee and ExCom secretary of the Falls of the James Group and has been a leader at the annual Big Yard Sale. Andrew Peacock has also been a leader of the Big Yard Sale in 2017-2018 and the designer of a fund-

Gladfelter on August 12. Having been offered an opportunity to work full time at the University of Virginia on climate adaptation and resilience, Sierra is pursuing an exciting new career path. While with us, she worked collaboratively with other staff to build the Chapter's fundraising program by telling the story of the challenges we are tackling and the successes we've had in order to inspire people to support our work through donations.

Pipelines Community Outreach Coordinator Billy Davies will be departing the Chapter in early October. Billy has been working on the Stop the Pipelines campaign around the Atlantic Coast Pipeline and supporting communities like Union Hill in their opposition to the dangerous fracked gas pipelines and the Buckingham compressor station. The Chapter's legal success and meaningful organizing has resulted in lost permits, significant delays and increases in costs to the dangerous,

raising/conservation project to build and market birdhouses.

Natalie Pien has done incredible work bringing allies together to strengthen the movement against the pipelines while fighting to secure a clean energy future for Virginia and for all. Gill Sigmon is former chair of the Falls of the James Group Member Engagement Committee and has held many leadership positions for the Big Yard Sale and RVA Environmental Film Festival.

Linda Stevens has provided outstanding, dependable, consistent and timely support in generating and distributing the environmental event information to the Northern Virginia community. Kathryn Ely and Natalie Lavery developed, lead and facilitated the Sierra and Student Coalition Grassroots Fundraising Initiative and empowered student volunteer leaders.

Thank you to those above and others not mentioned who do great things to make the forward movement of our efforts to explore, enjoy, and protect the environment possible.

Ann Creasy is the Hampton Roads conservation program manager of the Virginia Chapter.

unnecessary project. The Atlantic Coast Pipeline was projected to cost \$4.2 billion and is now estimated at more than \$9 billion. Billy's last big events while on staff will be the fun and inspiring Hands Across the Appalachian Trail gatherings on September 28-29.

We also want to show appreciation for the fantastic interns at our Richmond office, Megan Bolten, Peter Friesen and Riley Place, who supported work on various campaigns and political endorsements. Their time with the Virginia Chapter came to a close this past August. We thank them for all their hard work and contributions to the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter and hope they enjoyed their experience and learned what it's like to be a part of a team and do work that has real impact.

Kelsey Crane is the campaign and policy director of the Virginia Chapter.

SCPRO: New leader training a great success!

by Ellen Hill

In the words of John Muir, “Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul alike.”

One of the Virginia Chapter’s many initiatives is to expand outings programs throughout the state. In line with John Muir’s philosophy, the hope is that people will become more invested in protecting the earth’s wild places if they are able to experience them firsthand. To that end, Kate Addleson, director of the Virginia Chapter Sierra Club, along with her husband, Rob, partnered with Sierra Club Potomac Region Outings, also known as SCPRO, to plan and conduct a new leader training weekend in early August. Both Kate and Rob are already certified outings leaders, having taken part in the training retreat SCPRO hosted at the Bears Den Hostel last November.

SCPRO leader/trainer Glenn Gillis and I traveled to Pocahontas State Park in Chesterfield, Virginia, for the August event. This beautiful and enormous park (almost 8000 acres) was originally developed in the 1930s by the Civilian Conserva-



Attendees of the SCPRO 2019 new leader training retreat (photo courtesy of Rob Addleson).

tion Corps “boys.” It features miles of hiking and mountain biking trails, a lake ideal for canoeing and kayaking and a host of other recreational and visitor amenities. Kate reserved a cluster of rustic sleeping cabins (hosting a plethora of very active mice at no extra charge!) surrounding a central meeting room, all of which perfectly suited our purposes. The five trainees who participated—Gustavo Angeles, Glen Besa, Ann Creasy, Shavon Peacock and Bob

Piscura—brought to the training their own rich experience making the sessions a delightful collaborative exchange of information and ideas. All five had previously completed basic first aid training on their own and, by the end of the weekend, were further certified in the required Outings Leader Training 101 as well as the more advanced Outings Leader Training 201. All that was left for full leader certification was for them to plan and execute their own outings

under the watchful eye of an experienced mentor. Kate, Rob and Glenn volunteered to act as these mentors for proposed outings that included a nice diversity of activities—hiking, mountain biking and kayaking. On the last afternoon of the training, we broke into three groups to go on practice outings. Things learned in the classroom, such as delivering the trailhead talk and conservation message were practiced in real time. As of this writing, Gustavo has completed his mentored outing and is now a fully certified leader. By the time this article is published, no doubt the other trainees will be certified as well. Congratulations and thanks to all.

Extra special thanks to Kate for setting up and organizing this most enjoyable and meaningful weekend. In addition to all she already does, she has volunteered to be the Chapter’s acting outings chair. Please contact her or me at ellenwhill@gmail.com if you are interested in becoming an outings leader or know of a good candidate to recommend.

Ellen Hill is the chair of Sierra Club Potomac Region Outings.

Piedmont Group upcoming events

•September 23—Piedmont Group ExCom meeting

All Sierra Club members are invited to attend the Piedmont Group executive committee meeting. Together we will be discussing environmental campaigns and planning future programs.

6:15 p.m.

Central Library Meeting room
201 E. Market St., Charlottesville
<https://sierraclub.org/virginia/piedmont/>

•September 25—Sierra Club program on the Virginia Green New Deal

The founder of the Virginia Green New Deal, Del. Sam Rasoul, will be speaking on the Green New Deal for the Sierra Club.

7:00 p.m.

McIntire Room, Central Library
201 E. Market St., Charlottesville
<https://facebook.com/events/2277184612377372/?ti=icl>

•September 28—Hands Across the Appalachian Trail

Please join us for the fourth annual Hands Across the Appalachian Trail event. Wild Virginia and

the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter are co-hosting this event to bring together people across Virginia who value the Appalachian Trail. At this event, you will have the opportunity to enjoy food, music and guest speakers with others who have been working to protect the trail.

11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Humpback Rocks Visitor’s Center and Picnic Area
Milepost 5.8, Blue Ridge Parkway, Lyndhurst, VA 22952

For more information contact:

Jessica Sims at jessica.sims@sierraclub.org or 804-366-0745.

•October 3—Albemarle Candidates’ Forum on Environmental Issues

The Sierra Club is again hosting a forum on environmental issues for the candidates for the Albemarle Board of Supervisors.

7:00 p.m.

Lane Auditorium of the County Office Building
401 McIntire Rd., Charlottesville

All events are free and open to the public.



Audrey Dannenberg, vice chair of the Piedmont Group, tabled for the Virginia Chapter at a Master Gardener program entitled “The future of our landscape, a climate awareness event” at the Paramount Theater in Charlottesville (photo courtesy of Joan Chapman).

New River Valley Group hosts forum on best environmental practices

by David Jenkins



Attendees of the New River Valley Group's panel on sustainability in August (photo courtesy of Joe Scarpaci).

During the last week of August, the New River Valley Group hosted a panel of local leaders who each gave a short presentation describing their environmental practices that support sustainability in the New River Valley. The panel included town and city mayors, sustainability and solid waste managers, rooftop solar installers and representatives from Appalachian Power and the forest service. The presentation, at the Blacksburg library, was attended by about 70 people, a diverse audience of many interests, with ages ranging from an 8-year-old boy to senior citizens. The panel's presentation was followed by a question-and-answer session with the audience. This event was free and open to the public.

While introducing the panel, Joe Scarpaci, the New River Valley Group chair, commented on the importance of the area's environmental qualities that serve as key selling points when identifying the New

River Valley. He added, "the people who live here really celebrate that."

Denny Cochrane, director of sustainability for Virginia Tech, said that sustainability is a group effort requiring everyone to work as a team. Christiansburg Mayor Mike Barber described environmental practices as a fiscal responsibility to repair past neglect. He gave the number of low-energy lights installed in public buildings as well as auto-on/off devices for motion-sensing light switches. Ed Tulcher of Shelter Alternatives noted the importance of a free energy check and the need to check the "sealing" aspects of the six sides of a structure to ensure energy savings. Patrick Feucht, manager of Baseline Solar Solutions, reminded the group that, while the price of installing solar panels and the cost of the panels is falling, the benefits of tax deduction will soon go away. Teresa Sweeney, of Montgomery County Waste Management, described the difficulty in making

consumers aware of proper recycling practices.

Larry Jackson from Appalachian Power told of the ability for consumers to specify that the electricity for their homes be derived solely from green energy sources. The monthly electric bill for those selecting this option is increased by \$4.25 per month for each 1000 kW of use. We later learned of Ivy Main's article (<https://powerforthepeopleva.com/2019/01/16/appalachian-power-gets-approval-to-sell-100-percent-renewable-energy-to-customers-hold-the-champagne/>) stating that the State Corporation Commission ruling permitting this pricing limited competition in the renewable energy market.

As explained by one of the panelists, Carol Davis, director of sustainability for the Town of Blacksburg, a hindrance to environmental policy changes by local governments is the Dillon Rule, which requires that local regulations be approved by the state. As a consequence, stricter energy standards and the banning of plastic bags, straws and styrofoam must have state approval. Davis said, "We can offer carrots, but not sticks."

A summary of the forum was presented in a local newspaper. The author of the article said that the forum was important for updating residents on the status of environmental practices, and asked that a similar forum be repeated on a regular basis so that residents can be kept informed.

David Jenkins is an ExCom member of the New River Valley Group.

Falls of the James Group 2019-2020 calendar of events

Unless otherwise noted, all programs are at 7:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month at the Science Museum of Virginia. They are free and open to the public.

- September 10, 2019—A panel of journalists, including Jeremy Lazarus with the Richmond Free Press, Mechelle Hankerson with the Virginia Mercury and Patrick Wilson with the Richmond Times Dispatch, will present "Reporting on Environmental and Social Justice Issues: from Pipelines to the Richmond Coliseum."

- October 8, 2019—Election special! Come hear updates on Virginia's legislative races and environmental issues, presented by folks who regularly track the political

scene.

- November 12, 2019—Ed Clark, president and founder of the Wildlife Center of Virginia, will speak on the center's role in wildlife management in Virginia.

- December 12, 2019 (Thursday)—Falls of the James Group Holiday Potluck Dinner, 6:00-9:00 p.m. at Westover Station, 5047 Forest Hill Avenue, Richmond 23225.

- January 14, 2020—Dr. Todd Lookingbill from University of Richmond will review research on tide pools of the James River, geography of the James River watershed and invasive species removal.

- February 11, 2020—Goodwill Industries presenters Andrea Butler and Bill Carson will explain how

Goodwill recycles goods as well as talk about their unique employment program. A tour of a Goodwill outlet will be scheduled at a later time.

- March 10, 2020—Bill Shanabruch from Reedy Creek Environmental, LLC, will discuss the use of native plants and conservation landscaping for water quality. An accompanying 3-hour workshop will be held on September 28.

- April 14, 2020—Jay Epstein, president/developer/builder of Health E Community, will introduce us to the Walnut Farm Zero Energy Ready Homes.

- May 2020—Big Yard Sale at the University of Richmond and Falls of the James picnic.

Group Directory

Groups are organized to conduct the work of Sierra Club in local areas, cities and towns.

The information listed below is for the chair of each group.

Information regarding groups' geographical area can be found on our website under "Find a Group Near You."

Blue Ridge: Tom Eick
434-277-5491
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Chesapeake Bay: John Luker
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Falls of the James: Joe Brancoli
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Mount Vernon: Rick Keller
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New River Valley: Joe Scarpaci
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Piedmont: Donna Shaunesey
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Roanoke: Daniel Crawford
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Shenandoah: Pete Bsumek
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Sierra Club Potomac Region Outings (SCPRO): Ellen Hill
703-994-9493
ellenwhill@gmail.com

York River: Tyla Matteson
804-275-6476
tmatteson1@mindspring.com

Heros aren't hard to find by Bob Shippee and Corrina Beall

In a world of dysfunctional government and a worsening climate crisis, it can seem hard to find heroes. Yet, in Virginia, we do have legislators who are fighting for our environmental priorities, and our 2019 General Assembly Climate & Energy Scorecard highlights them. Sierra Club strives to be tough but fair in our grades, yet nine of 140 legislators were able to attain a perfect score:

Sen. Jeremy McPike (Senate District 29, Woodbridge)

Sen. Lionell Spruill (Senate District 5, Chesapeake)

Del. Dawn Adams (House District 68, Richmond)

Del. Jennifer Carroll Foy (House District 2, Woodbridge)

Del. Lee Carter (House District 50, Manassas)

Del. Elizabeth Guzman (House District 31, Woodbridge)

Del. Debra Rodman (House District 73, Henrico)

Del. Danica Roem (House District 13, Manassas)

Del. Kathy Tran (House District 42, Springfield)

In addition, 12 legislators earned "A" grades, meaning they voted with the Sierra Club 90 percent of the time or better:

Sen. George Barker (Senate District 39, Alexandria)

Sen. Adam Ebbin (Senate District 30, Alexandria)

Sen. John Edwards (Senate Dis-

trict 21, Roanoke)

Sen. Lynwood Lewis (Senate District 6, Accomac)

Sen. Dave Marsden (Senate District 37, Burke)

Sen. Monty Mason (Senate District 1, Williamsburg)

Sen. Jennifer McClellan (Senate District 9, Richmond)

Sen. Scott Surovell (Senate District 36, Mount Vernon)

Del. Mark Keam (House District 35, Vienna)

Del. Kay Kory (House District 38, Falls Church)

Del. Mike Mullin (House District 93, Newport News)

Del. David Toscano (House District 57, Charlottesville)

We are proud of these leaders, and if your representative appears on this list, please thank them for their support of the environment. In addition, at the Annual Gathering on September 21, we celebrate the legislators who went above and beyond by sponsoring clean energy, climate and environmental justice legislation in the 2019 session. Here are our award winners:

A long-term solution to Virginia's toxic coal ash pollution has been achieved thanks to a compromise reached between environmental groups, the Northam Administration, Dominion and two legislative champions who have fought to hold polluters responsible for clean-up over multiple years: Sen. Scott Surovell and Del. Jennifer Carroll Foy. Thanks to their efforts, SB1355 was

passed, requiring Dominion to clean up 27 million cubic yards of toxic ash currently sitting near Virginia's rivers.

A top priority in 2019 was the Solar Freedom Bill, carried by Sen. Jennifer McClellan (SB 1456) and Del. Mark Keam (HB2329). This bill would have removed eight barriers to distributed solar that exist in current Virginia law. While the bill failed in Commerce and Labor committees, our patrons are ready to fight alongside us again in 2020. Del. Keam also carried numerous other bills supported by the Sierra Club, including HB2332, a successful bill to protect customer utility data, HB2330, which would create an Environmental Justice Council, and HB2331, a bill that would have established a state action plan for connecting wildlife habitats via migration corridors.

Del. Lachrese Aird also introduced legislation to move solar forward in Virginia, HB2741, establishing a Clean Energy Advisory Board and providing rebates for solar installation. The bill passed but was not fully funded, creating an opportunity for the 2020 budget cycle.

Del. Rip Sullivan has carried energy efficiency bills for several years, and 2019 saw some of them pass: HB2292 requires the State Corporation Commission to show their calculations if they determine that any energy efficiency proposal is cost-effective, and HB2293 establishes an Energy Efficiency Stakeholder process, which the

Chapter now participates in. In addition, Del. Sullivan carried HB2243, which would have created an Energy Efficiency Revolving Fund, and HB2294, which would have established meaningful energy efficiency goals.

Del. Charnielle Herring carried HB2696 and developed a coalition of bipartisan support for an Environmental Justice Advisory Council.

Dels. Sam Rasoul and Elizabeth Guzman will be celebrated for their leadership on the Green New Deal Virginia coalition. Del. Rasoul also carried several bills in 2019, including HB2501, which would have required Virginia to maintain a comprehensive greenhouse gas inventory, and HB2645, which would have required the utilities to refund over-earnings. Del. Guzman introduced HD2095, which would have allowed localities to prohibit or tax single-use plastic and polystyrene products.

These are some of the legislative leaders we are privileged to work with in the General Assembly. We look forward to the number of environmental champions growing in the next session! As always, if you have any questions about our legislative program, please contact Bob (rsox-bob@gmail.com) or Corrina (corrina.beall@sierraclub.org).

Bob Shippee is the legislative chair and political vice chair and Corrina Beall is the legislative and political director of the Virginia Chapter.

Environmental justice groups support community causes by Gustavo Angeles

During the last quarter, the local environmental justice groups have continued with their monthly meetings. The EJ working group in the York River Group viewed a presentation by Virginia Organizing, whose members are asking the city of Newport News to request that Hampton Roads transit authority increase its public bus service hours and frequency. There are currently 100 missed or delayed bus trips across Hampton roads, and Hampton Roads Transit is short over 70 bus drivers.

Some of their members shared stories about how long they have to wait for the bus, especially when they make a connection, and about the limited number of hours that the

bus runs. In addition, there is a shortage of bus drivers, which has worsened the current reduced hours and frequency. This creates problems for people who rely on bus service and limits their ability to get jobs.

In coordination with Virginia Organizing, we are preparing an action alert that will be circulated in Newport News asking city council members and the mayor to address the public transportation problems.

Another issue that we are supporting is in the Piedmont Group territory. The Monacan nation is fighting the proposed construction of a water pump station on a location that the tribe considers sacred; it was once their nation's capital, Rassawek. Rassawek's historical significance is

well known; it was first documented in 1612 by Captain John Smith. In cooperation with Cultural Heritage Partners, which is representing the Monacan nation in this fight, we sent an action alert to request that the Army Corps of Engineers protect the burial ground of the Monacan nation and consider other locations in which to build this water pump.

The first meeting of the reconstructed Virginia Council on Environmental Justice happened on July 12. Eight people from Cumberland and Powhatan counties came to present their personal histories to the council and request that the council ask the Army Corps of Engineers for an environmental impact study of the proposed mega-landfill project in

Cumberland County. We have been working and supporting the efforts of the two groups in the area, Cumberland County Landfill Awareness and AMMD Pine Grove Project, to prevent the landfill. The next meeting of the council will be on September 18 at 10:00 a.m. in the Patrick Henry building in Richmond.

Please feel free to contact me at gustavo.angeles@sierraclub.org if you would like more information regarding any of the campaigns previously described or would like to get involved. All working group meetings and events are free and open to the public.

Gustavo Angeles is the environmental justice program coordinator of the Virginia Chapter.

Is Dominion serious about offshore wind?

by Eileen Woll

At an offshore wind conference last July, Liz Burdock, executive director of the Business Network for Offshore Wind, announced that the East Coast had crested the threshold amount of offshore wind power (5,000 MW) of projects in the pipeline necessary for major investment to start happening in the U.S. Liz told conference attendees to expect a constant stream of announcements for the next two years about supply chain manufacturers setting up shop along the Atlantic to produce any one of the over 8,000 parts that go into each of the hundreds of turbines destined to be standing in the Atlantic by 2023.

One such announcement came shortly after Liz spoke. A German firm, EWE, had partnered with Ørsted to produce the large steel foundations on which turbines stand. They plan to move very quickly so as to supply projects being constructed as early as 2021. The firm's representative also announced they were setting up shop in New Jersey.

I had to talk to this rep and express to him some disappointment over the fact that they weren't setting up in Virginia. Experts here had long considered Hampton Roads perfect for production of foundations in particular, given our capabilities to handle very large pieces of steel.



Knowing that the supply chain follows the projects (the "if you build it, they will come" philosophy), his response was to pose the question about whether or not Dominion is serious about offshore wind.

Ultimately, to make Virginia attractive to the wind industry, draw manufacturing firms to our state and create thousands of green jobs for Virginians, the commonwealth must create economic certainty. For northeast states where that 5,000 MW of projects will built by 2023, that eco-

conomic certainty comes largely from enshrining renewable energy goals into law and meeting carbon emissions reduction goals with large dollops of offshore wind. As it stands right now (and as so painfully revealed in the EWE representative's question), Virginia presents none of the market certainty that the wind industry needs in order to invest here. That needs to change.

All state legislators were recent-

ly asked to stand as offshore wind champions with our ask of them being to speak out publicly or pen op-eds in support of offshore wind and to lobby Dominion to include the larger commercial lease area in its integrated resource plan, or IRP. Eighteen legislators have pledged so far, and we scored a little bit of a win on that last front as Dominion, for the first time, included a first phase (roughly 800 MW) in their 2019 plan update. But considering an IRP outlines its plan for 15 years of electricity generation, the entire area that Dominion CEO Tom Farrell pledges to have online by 2030, 2,000 MW—enough to power 500,000 Virginia homes—must be in its 2020 IRP.

And offshore wind goals such those Gov. Northam outlined in the 2018 Virginia Energy Plan are helpful too. But nothing says certainty to investors, that Virginia is open for business, more than policies set in stone ensuring that Virginia's offshore wind projects will be built.

Eileen Woll is the offshore energy program director of the Virginia Chapter.



In August, Gustavo Angeles, Virginia Chapter's EJ program coordinator and outings leader training graduate, led a four and a half mile hike at Dutch Gap Conservation Area of the James River in Chesterfield County. Over 25 people came out to enjoy this bilingual, educational outdoor experience, which offered information about the coal ash disposal sites in the area and the health risk posed by the pollution from coal ash impoundments along our rivers. As Gustavo told participants, the coal ash is now being relocated, thanks to a major environmental victory in the state earlier this year that requires 27 million cubic yards of coal ash sitting on the banks of Virginia's rivers to be cleaned up by Dominion Energy (photo courtesy of Kate Addleson).

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Jan. 25-26, 2020 ... Harrisonburg area, VA

Classes instructed by Matthew Rosefsky, Geo Medic, SOLO Instructor-Trainer and Sierra Club Outings leader. Cost is \$195. See <https://solowfa.com> for more information and online registration.

Exciting news for clean energy in Virginia!

by Alice Redhead

At the September County Board Meeting, Arlington is considering committing to 100 percent clean energy. Over the past two years the county has undergone a review and update to the Community Energy Plan. Originally adopted in 2013, the plan was visionary for the time and established Arlington's values as an energy leader in the state. Acting upon the plan's original goals and targets, Arlington made many steps forward including being the first Virginia locality to develop a Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy, or C-PACE, program for financing efficiency and clean energy upgrades; establish community solar co-ops; provide energy efficiency programs to residents; implement broad energy efficiency measures across county facilities; and create a Commercial Green Building Program, which led to Arlington being named the nation's first LEED Platinum-level community in 2017.

The county's past leadership set high expectations for the five-year update to the Community Energy Plan, and it was the perfect opportunity for the Ready for 100 campaign. Ready for 100 is a national Sierra Club initiative to develop grassroots efforts to advance clean energy at the local level in communities around the country. With a federal administration that is attempting to rollback programs and regulations that are

essential for our health and environment, local-level action is more important than ever. The clean energy transformation is underway, and it's happening from the ground up.

When Ready For 100 launched in 2016, Arlington was selected as one of the first communities in the country to participate. The county was determined as a strategic locality to secure a victory and help jumpstart the movement due to previous actions and the receptiveness and support of the community for these issues. While the movement charged ahead nationwide, achieving a commitment to 100 percent clean energy in Arlington ended up not being as straightforward as originally hoped. Now, three years later, one of the Community Energy Plan's primary goals is 100 percent community-wide clean electricity by 2035, including transitioning county government operations to 100 percent clean electricity by 2025. When the plan's update is adopted, Arlington County will become the 145th U.S. locality to commit to 100 percent clean energy. Seven states, Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico have also made 100 percent clean energy commitments.

This critical victory would not have been possible without years of efforts by dedicated Sierra Club volunteer leaders with the local Mount Vernon Group. They devel-

oped meaningful relationships with county energy staff and board members who sought their input, gained a deep knowledge of both county decision making and Virginia energy policy, participated in volunteer advisory committees and remained actively involved in county proceedings.

The wait and sweat was worth it—as they say, all good things take time—because Arlington has created an aspiring plan that once again raises ambitions and positions the county to lead the way forward. As Mount Vernon Group chair, Rick Keller, explained, “from the beginning it was not about just making a commitment, but making a commitment with a plan to achieve it. That made the objective more difficult to achieve.” But ultimately, it was more rewarding.

This is a major success for clean energy and climate action in Virginia. Arlington's commitment raises the bar for Virginia energy policy and builds momentum as a catalyst for further action. The Community Energy Plan also provides an example framework for other localities across Virginia to follow to pursue similar goals. Arlington is making a strong statement that will help put pressure and accountability on Dominion Power and our state government to change restrictive policies that hinder clean energy advance-

ment and hold us all back from reaping the benefits of clean energy. Dean Amel, a volunteer leader with the Mount Vernon Group said, “It took years to convince the Arlington County Board to take this step, but, to their credit, they weren't willing to sign on to an empty resolution. Arlington now has a well-thought-out plan.”

In the Community Energy Plan, Arlington embraces its role in the clean energy transition and encourages collaboration and competition from other localities. It's time for an energy revolution in Virginia. Change is happening and an exciting clean energy future is ahead.

At the time of publication of this newsletter, the vote to commit Arlington to 100 percent clean electricity, set for September 21, had not yet occurred but was anticipated to pass unanimously.

Reach out to the Chapter's local clean energy organizer at alice.redhead@sierraclub.org to get updates, learn more about clean energy or start a local effort for 100 percent clean energy in your community.

Alice Redhead is the Ready for 100 organizer of the Virginia Chapter.

Virginia Chapter email lists

Join these email lists to get more informed about and involved with Virginia Chapter activities.

Virginia Climate Movement

This is a statewide list of folks active in the Virginia climate movement. You can receive and send emails on climate-related news, events, webinars and actions going on across the state. *Monthly call 4th Tuesday at 12 p.m. and 7 p.m.* **Contact Mary-Stuart Torbeck at mary-stuart.torbeck@sierraclub.org**

Virginia Environmental Justice

Join our email list to work towards achieving environmental justice in Virginia. Our purpose is to identify environmental justice communities across the state, to develop EJ leadership, to provide room at the table for these organizations in statewide policy discussions and to share resources. *Monthly call 2nd Wednesday at 11 a.m. and 2nd Thursday at 5:30 p.m.* **Contact Tim Cywinski at tim.cywinski@sierraclub.org**

Sierra Club Virginia Chapter Equity, Inclusion and Justice

This space is for asking questions, voicing concerns and sharing ideas as we move forward in our work to create a more equitable environment and chapter. **Contact Tim Cywinski at tim.cywinski@sierraclub.org**

Hampton Roads

Join this list to get updates about actions, events, and ways to get involved in Hampton Roads. **Contact Ann Creasy at Ann.Creasy@sierraclub.org** or visit <https://vasierra.club/hr>

Richmond

This email list contains updates about actions, events and ways to get involved in the Richmond metropolitan area. **Contact Jessica Sims at jessica.sims@sierraclub.org** or visit <https://vasierra.club/rva>

Northern Virginia

Join this list to get updates about actions, events and ways to get involved in Northern Virginia. **Contact Kelsey Crane at kelsey.crane@sierraclub.org** or visit <https://vasierra.club/nova>

Sierrans and allies join hands to celebrate victories against pipelines at Hands Across the AT

by Billy Davies

On Saturday, September 28 and Sunday, September 29, communities from across Virginia are coming together to enjoy our commonwealth's scenic landscapes while celebrating victories to protect them at the fourth annual Hands Across the Appalachian Trail! This free event, featuring food, music and speeches, will take place at three locations along the Appalachian Trail in Virginia: Bears Den in northern Virginia, Humpback Rocks in central Virginia and Pearisburg in southwest Virginia.

All are welcome to be a part of this special weekend of events across the state as we celebrate our many victories over the last year and continue the work to protect our communities, water, air and natural treasures from the threats posed by unneeded and harmful fracked gas pipelines.

The massive Mountain Valley and Atlantic Coast pipelines propose to cross several nationally known and highly popular public recreational areas including the George Washington National Forest, the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Great Eastern Trail and the Appalachian Trail. They threaten to permanently damage these iconic landscapes as well as hundreds of waterways, endangered species and public health. But the dedicat-



ed work of volunteers, community groups, allies, legal advocates and individuals has led to stop work orders and further delays of the pipelines, and the efforts to stop these fracked-gas project continues.

Virginians have a lot to celebrate at Hands Across the Appalachian Trail this year. This annual event comes one year after a federal court rejected a key permit for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline for its failure to adequately protect the trail and national forests. Most recently, this past sum-

mer the Mountain Valley Pipeline lost a crucial Endangered Species Act permit just after Sierra Club filed a lawsuit challenging it, and a court threw out the same permit for the ACP, saying the agency that issued it "lost its mandate" when it rushed the approval process to help meet ACP construction deadlines. Continued legal setbacks, the ballooning costs of both pipelines, and growing opposition by the public has led some to doubt whether the pipelines, particularly the ACP, will ever

be built.

Five years ago, polluters gloated that these toxic fossil fuel projects would be in service by early 2018. But here we are, going into 2020 with neither pipeline in service and only a tiny fraction of the proposed 600-mile Atlantic Coast Pipeline even close to being built. Our movement to stop the pipelines is stronger than ever as Virginians demand our public officials secure a safe, healthy, clean energy future for all.

Our legal allies are continuing to ensure that the polluting companies behind these toxic fossil fuel projects are held accountable in courts, and we will continue to work together to realize a commonwealth that is beyond dirty fuels, where people always come before polluters' profits and our natural treasures remain undisturbed for all to enjoy. All are welcome to be a part of this movement serving the commonwealth and to join hands and celebrate the Appalachian Trail on September 28 and 29.

Visit <https://vasierra.club/handsacrosstheat> for more information about this event.

Billy Davies is the pipelines community outreach coordinator of the Virginia Chapter.

A newcomer's perspective

by Tim Cywinski

I have learned a great deal about environmental issues and activism during the short (but rewarding) time that I have been with the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter. Though I am no stranger to Virginia politics and advocacy, the conservation and climate action movement was less familiar to me. So, for my first newsletter article, I thought it may be valuable to share how our cause and our work are viewed through a newcomer's eyes.

A main takeaway I have to share should not come as a surprise to anyone: our Chapter's work is vital. Before starting, I was unaware of the many environmental issues plaguing Virginia's communities. I did not know that the National Academy of Science recently ranked Virginia as the 16th worst state for air pollution or that sea levels have risen by more than two feet in Hampton Roads or even that the City of Richmond, my home, is considered an asthma cap-

ital.

These figures represent one concerning side of the story, but the stories I have heard from impacted community members during my short tenure is what truly underscores the need for our Chapter's work. In my first month, I spoke with a resident of Union Hill who was convinced that their home was targeted for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline's compressor station because "people in power don't care about us." In June, a mom from Charles City County expressed her fears to me that the proposed Chickahominy gas-fired plant will "poison the air that my two kids breathe." And in September, I listened to a woman at the Rally for the Refund speak about putting off medical payments and car repairs because "my [Dominion] electricity bills keep me from affording my other needs." These stories describe the plight of so many Virginians, all of whom need to know they are not

alone in these struggles.

My perspective is not all doom and gloom. In fact, the rest of my outlook is quite the opposite. I can honestly say that the Virginia Chapter staff is the most dedicated group of people I have ever worked with. It is a privilege to support them, and I often find myself inspired by the passion of Kelly, Jess, Billy, Ann, Mary-Stuart, Gustavo, Ann, Eileen, Corrina, Alice, Kelsey and Kate.

Each one pours their heart and soul into their respective duties. Each one refuses to let bleak news and unexpected setbacks diminish their motivation and spirit. Each one, in their own unique way, proves that the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter is in the business of offering hope.

My positive view is not only influenced by our wonderful staff. I have long believed that a movement's potential and strength can be measured by its members and volunteers, something the Virginia

Chapter has in spades. At more than 20,000 members strong, the Chapter has an astoundingly vast network of people willing to share their knowledge, time and talents without any compensation. Our mission to create a cleaner, healthier and more just Virginia could simply not be accomplished without you.

My short time at the Sierra Club has taught me a lot. Not just about environmental issues, but also a lot about people of goodwill and the importance of hope. This work is hard, and it constantly feels like we are fighting an uphill battle. But every time I see the passion of our staff or volunteers, I know in my heart that brighter days are ahead. And together, we can be the light that shows the way.

Tim Cywinski is the communications coordinator of the Virginia Chapter.

Immigrants are not to blame

by Ivy Main



People protested President Trump's immigration policies in Lafayette Square, Washington, DC, (photo courtesy of Ivy Main).

Chances are, the people you know who call themselves environmentalists also celebrate racial diversity and think the U.S. should welcome immigrants and refugees. What, then, are we to make of white nationalists who invoke environmental concerns to justify acts of violence against immigrants?

Recent news articles tell us the suspect in the El Paso massacre cited overpopulation as a reason for killing 21 shoppers at a Walmart in the Texas border city. Latinos, many of them Mexican-born, make up more than 82 percent of El Paso's population. The suspect is said to have written a "manifesto" decrying Americans' over-exploitation and degradation of natural resources.

"The American lifestyle...is destroying the environment of our country," he wrote, before concluding, bizarrely, that therefore he should kill non-Americans.

He is said to have drawn inspiration from an earlier mass shooting in Christchurch, New Zealand, where a white nationalist killed 51 people at two mosques in the name of "eco-fascism." He defined the term as "ethnic autonomy for all peoples

with a focus on preservation of nature and the natural order."

As a member of the Sierra Club for almost 40 years, I find this sounds familiar. Starting in the late 1980s, anti-immigrant forces tried to take over the environmental group, in an effort that wasn't fully exposed and defeated until 2004. I remember the critical board election; the anti-immigration candidates made a plausible case for overpopulation as a root cause of much of what ails the environment, then and now. If you have fewer people around, after all, there's only so much harm they can do.

Only, of course, the problem wasn't—and isn't—immigrants; it was U.S. laws that allowed native-born Americans to pollute our land, air and water. Keeping out immigrants isn't a solution, it's a non-sequitur. Realizing this, Sierra Club members firmly rejected the anti-immigrant slate of board candidates.

White nationalists aren't just wrong in blaming immigrants for environmental ills. They also refuse to acknowledge that today's most serious environmental challenges

are global. Climate change, ocean acidification, the rapid loss of species—to name just a few—can't be stopped by building walls and evicting non-white people.

This may be one reason many right-wing voters still reject the scientific consensus that climate change is a human-caused problem. The qualities most treasured by much of the radical right—self-sufficiency, male supremacy, physical strength, proficiency with weapons—aren't useful in solving climate change. It's human nature to disregard a problem you don't think you have the tools to tackle.

Managing global problems requires international cooperation, respect for others, patience in the face of provocation and empathy for those who are suffering. People of faith, humanists and adults in general recognize these as higher-order virtues, but these virtues are the first to be dispensed with in a zero-sum situation. People who believe the survival of their way of life requires other people to suffer do not ask themselves, "What would Jesus do?"

There is indeed a case for despair about the health of the planet. Bad news dogs us daily, from the deforestation of the tropics and the collapse of insect and amphibian populations, to the intensification of hurricanes and the plague of plastic waste. And then, of course, there is the recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that highlights how we have just 12 short years to greatly reduce greenhouse pollution before we reach our tipping point and enter an age of runaway global warming.

But it isn't fear of Nature's wrath that keeps me and other climate activists up at night. It's the steady erosion of our conviction that we humans have it in us to rise to the enormous challenges before us.

Across the world, people are responding to resource scarcity and

an increase in refugees not with compassion and generosity but with anger and distrust. Nationalism is confused with patriotism. Identity politics replaces communitarian values. Democracy is in retreat.

This is particularly maddening because, in fact, we know how to address the environmental challenges we face. We have the technology to quit fossil fuels. We can adapt to sea-level rise. We can make room for climate refugees. We can stop deforestation and even reclaim deserts for trees. We don't need to poison the earth to grow crops. We could end plastic waste tomorrow. We can't bring back the species we've lost (at least not many of them), but we can do a much better job of protecting the ones we have left. Even reversing the rise in atmospheric carbon is conceivable, if we undertake to do it.

The question isn't whether humans can do these things, it's whether we will. Americans should be the ones leading the way, negotiating treaties with other nations, funding research, implementing solutions that benefit everyone and keeping our doors open to the dispossessed.

That's the sort of thing Americans used to do—not always, admittedly, but in hindsight we recognize those as our finest moments. We desperately need this sense of purpose again now, when the threats we face are existential.

But to do that, we have to reject a foreign policy grounded in selfishness and domestic policies that feed racism, xenophobia and climate-science denialism here at home. There are no "other" people we can exclude, neglect or destroy to save ourselves. There is only all of us, all across the world, and we are all in this together.

Ivy Main is the renewable energy chair and conservation co-chair of the Virginia Chapter.

Pipelines

continued from page 1

federal permit because it had failed to adequately protect endangered or threatened species along the path of the proposed project. Saturday, September 7 saw the beautiful event "Our Air, Our Health, Our Future: The Fight to Save Union Hill" in Buckingham County. Chapter staff

member Billy Davies provided significant support for this event, which was organized by Richard Walker of "Bridging the Gap in Virginia" and the Friends of Buckingham. It was held on the ancestral home of Richard Walker's family, the Harper Family. The programming featured legal

updates from Southern Environmental Law Center and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation on the suit brought by Friends of Buckingham against the Air Pollution Control Board's decision to vote in support of the compressor station. The event featured members of the Union Hill commu-

nity and legal experts, and was an inspiring solidarity event.

Jessica Sims is the Richmond community outreach coordinator of the Virginia Chapter.

2020-2021 Virginia Chapter ExCom at-large candidates

Vote for the 2020-2021 Virginia Chapter ExCom at-large delegates.

There are four at-large positions for the Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club executive committee up for election for the 2020-2021 period. At-large members serve two-year terms and join group delegates to make up the ExCom. The ExCom is the group of volunteers that makes policy decisions for the Virginia Chapter.

All members of the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter are encouraged to vote for up to four candidates. Please mail your ballot to Sierra Club Virginia Chapter ExCom, c/o Linda Muller, PO Box 305, Stafford, VA 22555 or go to <https://vasierraclub/vote> to vote online.

Ballots that are mailed must be received no later than December 1, 2019. All ballots will be counted by December 10 and reported to the Chapter ExCom.

Candidates:

DARYL DOWNING

Daryl Downing, a Sierra Club life member, is currently serving as Chapter chair. He served as Chapter vice chair in 2018. He devotes a considerable portion of his week to manage Chapter programs. He also volunteers with the Falls of the James Group, as a Virginia Conservation Network board member, as a Scouts BSA leader and as a Virginia Master Naturalist. His love and concern for the environment are the common threads. His family owns two electric vehicles (and no fossil fuel ones), his house and cars are powered by the sun and he's an outspoken advocate for EVs & PVs (photovoltaics).

Daryl served as an Air Force officer for 24 years and continues to serve in a different, but no less important, way.

RICHARD EGGELING

I would be grateful for the opportunity to serve as an at-large member on the Virginia Chapter ExCom.

Hopefully the following background provides insight into my interests and commitment:

I currently assist my wife as co-chair of Rappahanock Group Outings. We share a long-held interest and concern for all matters related to enjoying, protecting and preserving the environment. In my case, it is

grounded in childhood life on a farm and, later, having the good fortune to spend several months in countries where good stewardship and respect for mother earth is evident in the everyday behavior of every citizen (e.g., New Zealand, the EU).

As a retired mechanical engineer and grandfather, when appropriate I am especially eager to support and promote utilizing renewable energy resources to reduce carbon emissions.

Although somewhat unrelated but nevertheless relevant, my wife and I also share very active roles in local political activities, having encouraged members of the community we live in to "get out the vote" (door-to-door!) in every election since 2008.

DEBRA JACOBSON

I have been an at-large member of the executive committee and the Chapter's legislative committee for the past two years and a member of the Great Falls Group for four years. During the past two years, I have led an initiative called Clean Energy for Fairfax Now, which has led to some significant positive actions by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, including the adoption of a county

ordinance authorizing a Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy and Resiliency, or C-PACE, program; the largest request for proposal in state history for solar power purchase agreements on municipal buildings; and funding to develop a community-wide energy and climate action plan.

My recent work with the Sierra Club is based on my passion for environmental and clean energy issues, which began in 1970 when I spearheaded a teach-in at my local high school on the first Earth Day. Subsequently, I received a bachelor's degree in environmental studies and a law degree and then worked for more than 25 years as a senior advisor in the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Department of Energy on energy and environmental issues. I also co-taught an energy law course at George Washington Law School for 13 years, worked as a consultant on energy and environmental issues and served as the co-director of the George Washington Solar Institute.

I believe that my background in energy and environmental issues provides a strong foundation to assist the Virginia Chapter in achieving its goals.

BOB SHIPPEE

Bob has bachelor's degrees from Syracuse University (economics and industrial engineering) and master's degrees from Cornell University (MBA and industrial/labor relations). He worked in financial services for 28 years before retiring in 2015. He ran for county office in 2015, which led him to become very active in the political arena.

Bob has been a member of the Sierra Club for many years, volunteered in various capacities and served as Chapter treasurer from 2007-2010. He joined Sierra Club Virginia Chapter's legislative and political committees in 2016. Bob's exposure to the Chapter's work in this arena led him to become legislative committee co-chair in 2017 and chair in 2018. (He is currently vice chair.) Bob recently served as the Chapter's PAC treasurer, until turning over the reins to Dean Amel this summer.

Bob also serves as a full-time volunteer advocate in the General Assembly and vice chair of the Henrico Electoral Board. He volunteers many hours to progressive candidates annually.

Ballot for 2020-2021 Virginia Chapter ExCom at-large members

Vote for up to four candidates. Use only the boxes on the left for single membership. Use both columns for joint membership (two names appear on your membership label).

This election ballot must have your printed membership label on the back. If you choose, you may ink out your name(s) and mailing address on the reverse side of this ballot. Please do not ink out the bar code. Cut out and mail this ballot, to be received by December 1, 2019 to the following address:

**Sierra Club Virginia Chapter ExCom
c/o Linda Muller
PO Box 305
Stafford, VA 22555**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Daryl Downing
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Richard Eggeling
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Debra Jacobson
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bob Shippee

Summer interns provide exceptional support

by Jessica Sims

Summer at the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter brought three fantastic and dedicated interns, Riley Varner, a University of Colorado student majoring in environmental studies and an accomplished rock climbing athlete; Megan Bolten, a Richmond-based environmental and community advocate and founder of a local sustainability group; and Peter Friesen, a James Madison University student majoring in writing, rhetoric and technical communication and an editor for both written and audio publications.

The bright, talented interns spent the summer supporting our Environmental Justice, Climate Action, Stop the Pipelines and More Solar More Places campaigns. Their effective outreach efforts for our air toxics-related campaigns and research projects related to energy usage in the state helped bring important information to impacted communities, and their powermapping of key decision makers and creation of event promotional materials strengthened the Chapter's internal processes.



The Virginia Chapter's summer 2019 interns, (left to right) Riley Varner, Megan Bolten, Peter Friesen (photo courtesy of Jessica Sims).

The interns took leading roles in our campaign related to a potential new gas plant in Charles City County, Virginia, canvassing communities; attending Air Pollution and State Water Control Board meetings; researching ongoing and systemic environmental justice issues in the

state; and crafting, submitting and publishing letters to the editor.

All accomplished writers, their strong understanding of environmental issues in Virginia was evident in their writing and ability to discuss and present substantive information to the public about Virginia's

varied environmental threats. Their responsibilities often included rapid responses for upcoming events, maintaining Chapter calendars, preparing tabling materials and handling vital grassroots engagement data, which they all handled with great acuity.

From meetings with public officials to direct engagement with the public through tabling, phone-banking and assisting our volunteers, they represented Sierra Club excellently. Their support for the work of the Virginia Chapter was valued by the entire staff and helped strengthen the work of our organization. We wish these accomplished three the very best for their next chapter!

Jessica Sims is the Richmond community outreach coordinator of the Virginia Chapter.

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Inside Virginia Sierran

Page 1

Opposition to pipelines grows
Solar on the schools update

Page 2

From the chair
Chapter progress

Page 3

Volunteer spotlight
Staff updates

Page 4 • Group Updates

SCPRO: New leader training
Piedmont Group events

Page 5 • Group Updates

New River Valley Group sustainability forum
Falls of the James Group events

Page 6

General Assembly scorecard
Environmental justice groups update

Page 7

Dominion and offshore wind

Page 8

Clean energy in Arlington

Page 9

Hands Across the AT
Newcomer's perspective

Page 10

Immigrants are not to blame

Page 11

Chapter ExCom at-large elections

Page 12

Summer interns provide exceptional support