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FEB-MAY 2009

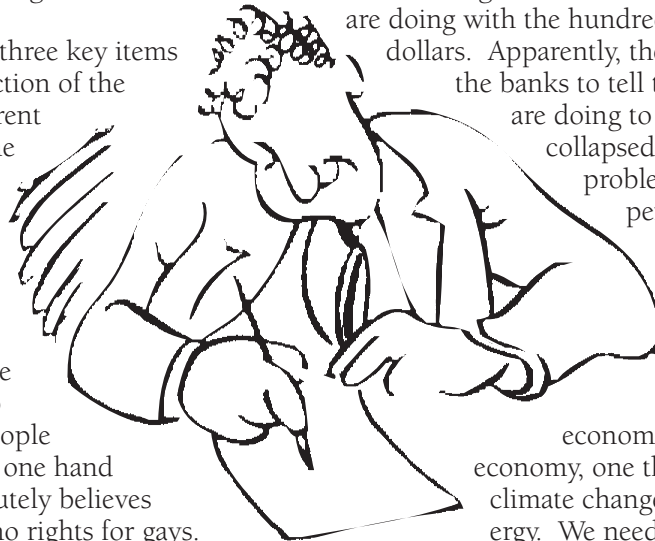
The Newsletter Of The Chesapeake Bay Group

Message from the Chair

It's Not the Environment; it's the Economy and the Environment.

By this I mean an economy that is sustainable. An economy that does not deplete the planet of its resources and an economy that involves everyone. People are either working or preparing to work, like going to school or receiving technical training.

In addition to the economy there are three key items I want to address: (1) the course of action of the administration after 9/11, (2) the current melt down of the economy and (3) the need to do something for those who recently lost their jobs through no fault of their own. After 9/11 what made sense to me was for the people of this country to come together to address all the things that divide us, and all the things that cause major difficulties in people's lives. To fight terrorists we need a nation of people who believe in their government. On one hand we have the religious right that absolutely believes in no abortions, no gun control and no rights for gays. On the other hand there are those who believe that government should help everyone with the appearance of give a ways. Worst of all there appears to be: neither the interest nor the ability to work together to come up with the best available solution. Let's face it there are huge needs for health care, affordable housing, living wages, quality and affordable child care, affordable quality education, equal wages for equal work. By addressing these issues, we could set an example for the people of all nations. Our making progress on these issues would greatly reduce incentives for people to turn to terrorism. This still makes sense to me.



But what happened in Richmond and Washington was politics as usual. How could they?? It's like politicians know no other way. They need money, the lobbyists have the money and so we have major corruption.

Secondly, the economic melt down. Already we are finding out that nobody knows what the banks are doing with the hundreds of billions of tax payers' dollars. Apparently, there are no requirements for the banks to tell the government what they are doing to address the problem of the collapsed mortgage business. Another problem is 70% our economy depends on consumer spending.

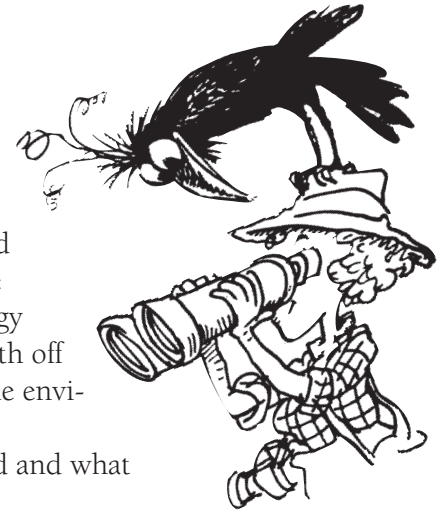
Without money consumers are not going to be doing any buying soon and the economy will remain in increasing trouble. What we need is a new economy. We need a much greener economy, one that heavily takes into account climate change and alternate sources of energy. We need greater investment in education and in research and development. We need innovation, small businesses and entrepreneurial funds. We definitely need a sane energy policy that will stop sending 700 billion dollars annually to our enemies.

Finally, we need to do something for those of us who have recently lost their job. We need to do it for them and for ourselves.

Sierra Club will be working to address each of these concerns. Come and join us. Fred can be reached at 467-2775 or email at warbler2@cox.net.



PROGRAMS



FEBRUARY 2ND

Suzanne Ankrum from the Virginia Conservation Network is our speaker. VCN is the umbrella organization for all the environmental groups in Virginia. During the past couple of years it has done an outstanding job identifying proposed legislation we should support and those we should oppose. Suzanne is going to give us the status of bills on such issues as Climate Change, alternative energy and energy conservation, smart growth, land use, cleaning up the Bay, and uranium mining with off shore drilling. You will find it fascinating to see how both parties are addressing the environment.

We strongly urge you to come and find out what is happening in Richmond and what you can do about. Most importantly come and support the efforts of Suzanne!

Location: Virginia Beach central Library
Time: 7PM

MARCH 2ND

Ned Kuhns is our speaker and he will take us hiking the Pyrenees Mountains of Spain. Ned is a outdoorsman as well as a hiker, and gifted story teller. His openness and willingness to describe his challenges and his mistakes has a way of drawing in the audience and at the same time becomes an excellent learning experience. Ned is also an excellent photographer. Come and enjoy this entertaining and educational presentation.

Location: Virginia Beach central Library
Time: 7PM

APRIL 6TH

Ben Duff is our speaker. His passion is Bees. As you know bees have for several years been subjected to several diseases that have greatly reduced their numbers. This is a serious situation as bees pollinate most crops and now some farmers are pollinating by hand, which is very labor intensive and thus expensive. Come and get the latest status of the bees. Ben hopes to bring some of his friends with him. No swarms are planned.

Location: Virginia Beach central Library
Time: 7PM

MAY 4TH

Jeff Turner is the Blackwater/Nottoway Riverkeeper. Some of our members have seen his presentation and say it is outstanding. These are two of the very scenic rivers to our West that can act up during Northeasters. It is Jeff's task to keep the river clear and healthy. He is supported by an organization of 141 current members. Riverkeepers are spreading throughout the country. We have the chance to do some similar work on the North Landing River. So come and see what river keeping is all about.

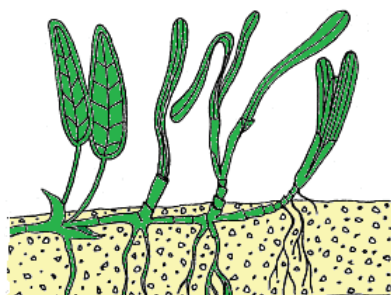
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The Chesapeake Bay Foundation Grasses for the Masses Program

Over half a dozen members of the Chesapeake Bay Group of the Sierra Club are volunteering in the Grasses for the Masses Program sponsored by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF). This program has been jump started by Jess Barton, the Virginia Grassroots Coordinator for the CBF.

Volunteers in the program grow wild celery (*Vallisneria spiralis*), a type of underwater grass, in small tubs in their homes for 10 weeks. After 10 weeks of growth, volunteers get together to plant their grasses in the James River at Mason Neck or Westover Plantation to bolster grass populations and help restore the Bay.

Terra Pascaros, Vice-President of the Chesapeake Bay Group of the Sierra Club, will be conduct-



ing a workshop where volunteers will be given instructions and the tools necessary to grow the underwater grasses themselves.

Plantings at restoration sites occur during the months of April and May, after 10 weeks of home-growth. Participants will plant their grasses at Mason Neck or Westover Plantation in early May. They will join CBF staff and other volunteers in planting their grasses.

Although the workshop is full for 2009, the CBF will be recruiting volunteers for the 2010 Grasses for the Masses at the year end. If you would like additional information about the program, please peruse the CBF website for additional information @ <http://www.cbf.org/grasses> or contact Terra Pascaros via email @ terrabsp@gmail.com.

Ride the Tide

Benjamin Duff

Since when does a traffic pattern problem in downtown Norfolk put a smile on my face? Brambleton, Ballentine, and St. Paul Blvd are all in some phase of construction and getting back onto 264 is difficult. When I finally get on the interstate, the concrete rails and steel girders put a smile on my face. The traffic congestion is worth it; the Tide Light Rail system is being built. The Tide is a step in the right direction for Norfolk to reduce its carbon footprint.

The smile on my face disappears when I see that construction ends as you enter the City of Virginia Beach... The City of Virginia Beach is not on board. Posturing between the city and Norfolk Southern over funding has delayed the completion of the Tide into and through Virginia Beach. The projected path of the Tide would take the light rail system all the way to the oceanfront. However, Norfolk Southern is asking for



a substantial amount of money for the use of its land adjacent to 264. Until the city and Norfolk Southern can come to some sort of reasonable financial agreement, the Tide is dead in its tracks in Virginia Beach.

The goals of the Tide Light Rail include: enhancing the continued development and redevelopment of the City of Norfolk; improving the access, reliability, and linkage of the public transportation system; creating transit corridors that link residential, educational, employment and other activity centers; contributing to the protection and preservation of the environment through a multimodal transportation system.

At a time when city, state, and national budgets are at a shortfall; and environmental sustainability is at the forefront; it is crucial for the Tide to ride through Virginia Beach. More information regarding the Tide can be found on the web at: <http://www.ridethetide.com>.

Executive Committee

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Chesapeake Bay Group

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