



Deconstruction and Green Jobs

The idea of *deconstruction* of one's residence or small commercial structure is quickly catching on in the Washington DC metropolitan area as part of the burgeoning "green building" movement. **Deconstruction** involves the manual disassembly of all or a major portion of a structure as part of a new construction or major renovation and reclaiming as much of the used building material as possible for reuse or recycling. Demolition, on the other hand, implodes a building and hauls its remnants off as quickly as possible, while salvage companies pay the property owner to remove only the most valuable features. With construction and demolition debris accounting for a major portion of the urban waste stream, any significant diversion of such material intended for the landfill has a number of benefits. It obviously saves scarce landfill space, but it also saves the embodied energy represented by the reclaimed and recycled products and the raw materials, carbon dioxide, petroleum, and other chemicals that would otherwise be needed if new items had to be made. More subtle benefits include reduced waste hauling expenses, recovery of toxic (e.g., asbestos and mercury) and environmentally harmful materials (e.g., Freon), less neighborhood disturbance, and the transformation of low-skilled workers into permanent skilled green collar employees. A growing number of homeowners, builders, architects, city planners, and elected officials are recognizing these benefits as they seek to "green" their homes, businesses, and communities.

Assisting this awakening in deconstruction is the fact that, while a property owner pays a deconstruction company to disassemble their home, he/she earns a *tax deduction* for donating the reusable components to nonprofit organizations, such as the new **The ReBuild Warehouse** located in Springfield, VA. The tax savings resulting from their donation can offset some or all of the deconstruction costs of a building

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Many Free Solar Home Tours on the Horizon

The next two months hold a bonanza for those interested in seeing how others are reducing their carbon footprint by creating or modifying their homes to be energy-conserving. There are multiple free events planned.

On Saturday, September 19, the Mt. Pleasant Solar Coop kicks off its "Mt. Pleasant Goes Solar: Homes Tour and EcoLiving Fair." The fair will be held at Bancroft Elementary School (1800 Newton Street, NW), a partner with the Mt. Pleasant Solar Coop. A tour of the neighborhood's solar and LEED-certified homes will take place 10AM to 1PM. From 1PM until 3PM, the coop will honor policymakers and others who made this initiative possible. The Coop invites

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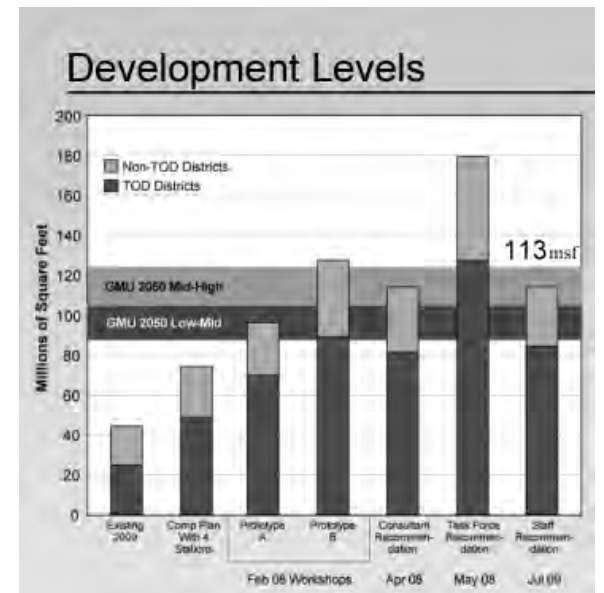
Tyson's Plan Advances Amidst Many Questions

After a series of June and July meetings, County planners and citizens came a bit closer to completing the language that will define a transformed Tysons, though several key elements remain in question. At the time of my May report, the vision document had been completed by the Task Force and transportation had been flagged as a possible problem

Since then, the Task Force and County staff took differing positions on what they consider to be appropriate levels of development for Tysons. The following chart on development levels (from a Tysons Committee presentation) will help describe the discussion.

The studies over the past year analyzed cases Prototype A and B and these cases had been discussed in a set of public workshops. The consultant suggested a development level of 112 million square feet (msf). The transportation analyses of these cases showed it would be challenging to develop more than 84 msf by 2030 because of road system limitations. In their latest "Sketch Analysis" the County Department of Transportation (DOT) says that after 2030, auto trips must be held constant and additional development (above 84 msf) would have to be tied to an improvement in the transit share of the total trips. They estimated it needed to improve from 22 percent in 2030 to 35 percent (Tysons-wide) by 2050 along

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The True Cost of Homes: Part II

In our last newsletter, we started discussing the Sierra Club Sustainable Consumption Committee's "True Cost of Homes" initiative to increase awareness about the impact of homes and how you can make environmentally responsible choices when maintaining your home. Last time we described the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) criteria for home construction as a starting point for what makes a "green home."

In the LEED system, the single most important category—in terms of maximum points available—is the energy and atmosphere category. This affirms the central importance of a home's energy performance in being green. The road to green goes through energy efficiency; it is a necessary, if not sufficient, condition. The American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE) features a good "checklist for action" for those who wish to improve their home's energy performance. Some of ACEEE's suggestions are included below.

To Do This Week or Month:

- Start using energy-saving settings on refrigerators, dishwashers, washing machines, and clothes dryers.
- Survey your incandescent lights for opportunities to replace them with compact fluorescents (CFLs). These lamps can save three-quarters of the

electricity used by incandescents. The best targets are 60-100W bulbs that are used several hours a day. CFLs are now sold at many grocery and drug stores.

- Check the age and condition of your major appliances, especially the refrigerator. You may want to replace it with a more energy-efficient model before it dies.
- Clean or replace furnace, air-conditioner and heat-pump filters.



Photo by Keith Dewey. All rights reserved.

- Buy low-flow showerheads and faucet aerators as needed. These can be purchased from any hardware or home improvement store.

- Rope caulk leaky windows.
- Assess your heating and cooling systems. Determine if replacements are justified, or whether you should retrofit them to make them work more efficiently

to provide the same comfort (or better) for less energy.

- Crawl into your attic or crawlspace and inspect the insulation. Is there any? How much?
- Insulate hot water pipes and ducts wherever they run through unheated areas.
- Seal up the largest air leaks in your house—the

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Deconstruction (continued from page 1)

and free up money for the owner to use for upgraded features on their project, paying excavation costs, or simply saving it. For an owner razing the building, it is advisable that they use an appraiser experienced in deconstruction to value the donated material for tax purposes.

DeConstruction Services, LLC was formed in 2004 to respond to this "green market" with a goal of keeping as much used building material out of landfills as possible. It employs three 5-person crews and employs a "reverse engineering" technique in disassembling a structure -- last in, first out. First, everything is removed from all interior walls, ceilings, and floors and transported to a nonprofit warehouse. Second, all drywall or plaster is removed. Finally, the roof assembly and the remaining wood framing is disassembled, de-nailed, and taken to the warehouse. Asphalt shingles, broken lumber, ferrous, aluminum, and copper metal are recycled. All that remains are the masonry walls and concrete basement slab. For a whole house, the process averages about two weeks, although interior deconstruction can usually begin before the owner has their demolition permit, delaying the start of construction by only a week. A final portfolio is prepared for the owners providing them with the necessary documentation for tax purposes.

This process creates "green collar" jobs for low-income individuals in deconstructing the buildings, project site management, transporting reclaimed material, unloading the trucks, inventorying and stocking materials, warehouse operations, pricing and labeling products, and retail sales. All the while workers who may never have had steady employment until now are acquiring job readiness skills, learning to work as a team, achieving stability in their financial and family obligations, and developing experience in a "green" job that prepares them for a future in the green construction industry.

In addition, once **The ReBuild Warehouse** attains profitability, it will be using its profits to support a worker training program for various at-risk clients (e.g., youth, those who may be temporarily homeless, non-violent parolees, clients in substance abuse rehabilitation, etc.). This program will pay for training in other "green collar" jobs, such as asbestos abatement, lead abatement, solar panel installation, pesticide treatment of invasive plant species, green roof installation, geothermal system installation, stormwater management, tree planting, and stream and wetland restoration. Training will consist of technical education, test preparation, and tutoring for licensure examinations and certifications, along with all the necessary on-the-job experience needed to meet the qualification for these occupations. **The ReBuild Warehouse** has partnerships with **Sustainable Occupation Services, LLC** and **DeConstruction Services, LLC** that together form *The Sustainability Group* which stands ready to employ those receiving this training based on future contracts with private, government, and nonprofit organizations working in these fields.

The Mt. Vernon Group will be hosting a True Cost of Homes outing at the ReBuild Warehouse on Sunday, September 20, 2009 from 2:00-4:00 pm. For directions and to RSVP, contact Diana Artemis at artemdi@yahoo.com

by Paul S. Hughes, Founder, DeConstruction Services, LLC (www.deconstructionservices.com) and the ReBuild Warehouse (www.rebuildwarehouse.org)

True Cost of Homes (continued from page 1)

ones that whistle on windy days, or feel drafty. The worst culprits are usually not windows and doors, but utility cut-throughs for pipes ("plumbing penetrations"), gaps around chimneys, recessed lights in insulated ceilings, and unfinished spaces behind cupboards and closets. Better yet, hire an energy auditor with a blower door to point out where the worst cracks are. All the little, invisible cracks and holes may add up to as much as an open window or door, without you ever knowing it!

- Save as much as 10% a year on your heating and cooling bills by simply turning your thermostat down 10% to 15% for 8 hours. You can do this automatically without sacrificing comfort by installing an automatic setback or programmable thermostat.

- Schedule an energy audit for more expert advice on your home as a whole or learn how to conduct your own by visiting the Home Energy Saver Web site. A directory of available energy audit services by state is available at the Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET).

This Year:

- Insulate. If your walls aren't insulated, have an insulation contractor blow cellulose into the walls. Bring your attic insulation level up to snuff.

- Replace aging, inefficient appliances. Even if the appliance has a few useful years left, replacing it with a top-efficiency model is generally a good investment.

- Upgrade leaky windows. It may be time to replace them with energy-efficient models or to boost their efficiency with weather-stripping and storm windows.

- Have your heating and cooling systems tuned up in the fall and spring, respectively. Duct sealing can also improve the energy efficiency and overall performance of your system (warm-air furnace and central air conditioners).

Learn More — Visit the following web sites:

<http://www1.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/>
<http://www.aceee.org/consumerguide/>
<http://www.natresnet.org>
<http://www.truecostofhomes.org/>
<http://cyberparent.com/green-building/>
<http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=147>

by Andrew Nicholls and Diana Artemis

Free Solar Home Tours (continued from page 1)

RE/Green businesses, along with PV installers, to set up booths. (202.387.5956, robobin@rcn.com or www.mtpleasantsolarcoop.org.)

The 19th annual D.C. metro area solar homes tour is October 3 and 4 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Over 60 solar-powered homes will highlight a variety of passive design, technology and sustainable living concepts, including photovoltaic and solar hot water systems, radiant heat, energy-efficient appliances, and energy-saving building construction techniques. Many homeowners also will be demonstrating their energy and water conservation measures, recycling procedures, and their fuel-efficient vehicles. Also, a self-guided bike tour is planned for some homes in Frederick and Washington Counties. Details are available on the solar tour website (<http://solartour.org>) in early September. The tour guide can be downloaded for free after September 16 or purchased for a tax-deductible \$5 from participating outlets. In addition, a "tour within a tour" will be featured.

The Takoma Park Green Homes Tour will take place on October 3 (www.Truthful-Living.com).

The 2009 Solar Decathlon is on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. The Solar Decathlon is a biennial competition where

20 teams of university students from around the world develop fully-functional houses that draw all their energy from the sun. The solar homes must produce enough electricity and hot water to perform all the normal functions of a home, including powering the lights and home electronics, washing clothes and dishes, showering, and cooking, all while maintaining a comfortable temperature. The event will be open to the public on October 9-13 and 15-18. (www.solardecathlon.org/)

by Steve Gorman



Solar panels on shutters of a 2007 Solar Decathlon house. Photo by Karen Grycewicz. All rights reserved.

Great Falls Group Executive Committee

The monthly meeting of The Great Falls Group's (GFG) Executive Committee is usually held on the second Tuesday of the month and is open to all Sierra Club members. Contact Chris Koerner for time and location.

Officers:	Chairman, Chris Koerner	703-715-2204	1Koerner@verizon.net
	Vice Chairman, Scott Monett		scott.monett@monnettech.com
	Treasurer, Joe Apple	703-860-1254	Joe.Apple@comcast.net
	Secretary, Raymond Smith		Ray.Smith531@gmail.com
Committee Chairs:	Immediate Past Chair, Linda Freimark	703-222-9240	Linda.Freimark@virginia.sierraclub.org
	Chapter Delegate, Joe Apple	703-860-1254	Joe.Apple@comcast.net
	Conservation, Steve Bruckner	703-883-3622	sbruckner@cox.net
	Membership, Norbert Pink	703-264-7445	norbertsierra@aol.com
Committee Support:	Education, Brian Morrissey	703-385-3273	brian8@ix.netcom.com
	Political, Bob Pearson	703 690-3071	Bob.Pearson@virginia.sierraclub.org
	Social, Bobbi Beck	703-464-4755	Bobbi.Beck@virginia.sierraclub.org
	Newsletter Sr. Editor, Karen Grycewicz	703-273-6226	Karen.Grycewicz@virginia.sierraclub.org
	Managing Editor, Raymond Smith		Ray.Smith531@gmail.com
	Layout Designer, Nanette Rock-Shraga	703-437-7323	nrshraga@yahoo.com
	Website Maintenance, Linda Stevens	703-787-8861	LnJStvns@aol.com

Tyson's Plan (cont'd from page 1)

with a vigorous application of transportation demand management (TDM) measures. This hopefully would allow the development to rise to about 113 msf.

The Task Force Committee however argued that much greater densities and possibly development levels be allowed to fulfill the vision and generate revenues for the many required features. They called for a "soft cap" of about 110-115 msf pending extra measures, including a change in Virginia's development code if necessary. A Fairfax County Chamber leader supported the higher levels, saying decisions on phasing them in should be performance-based. Citizens in the February 2008 workshops had not been presented with these higher levels of development.

Planning Commissioners drafting the language say they hope to finish and hold hearings by year-end. However, there are several significant elements that remain to be worked out:

- **Parks and Recreation** – The Park Authority has not completed their final recommendations on the location and description of parks and other amenities for the influx of new residents.
- **A Phasing process** – Transforming Tysons will take at least 40 years, yet it is important to maintain a balance among uses, and between growth and supporting infrastructure such as transportation. The balance among elements needs to be maintained over the entire construction period so that they continue to work together. Controls, incentives, triggers and guidelines need to be set to improve the chance of success.
- **Finance** – There are many expensive amenities needed to build a better Tysons like transportation; a circulator; schools; stormwater control; open space and public art. The timing and location of these features are not likely to coincide with proffers from developers. The means to acquire revenues and allocate spending equitably may have been discussed, but not openly.
- **Transportation** – In the most recent analysis, the County DOT stated that additional quality transit (rail or bus) was necessary to realize their development target. Yet none of the routes for improvements or circulators have been identified. The Metropolitan WASHINGTON Council of Governments has applied for federal funds for several Bus-Rapid Transit routes, including one along Rt. 7, but this was not considered in the analysis. Additionally, a bike and pedestrian access plan needs to be completed.

Referring to the above issues, Commissioner Hart said, "It gets more and more complicated every week". It seems to me that the project complexity at this time, the lack of public awareness and buy-in, along with a slow real-estate market suggest that the schedule for completion should be extended and a series of public information sessions should be planned

It should be noted that the effort to secure a tunnel through Tysons has regrettably failed, but not for lack of conviction but a lack of resources and political will, especially political will.

Finally, I think it is past time to thank the Tysons Task Force for their work and disband it.

by Roger Diedrich

Will CARS Jump-Start the Environment?

The CAR Allowance Rebate System (CARS) is a federal \$1 billion program that allows consumers to receive a \$3,500 or \$4,500 rebate for their trade-in vehicle when purchasing or leasing a new vehicle. The program intends to:

- Jump-start the economy, revive the auto industry and act as a positive feedback loop to economic recovery
- Help put greener cars on the roads (more importantly remove gas guzzlers off the road) and act as a positive feedback to the environmental recovery.

The program seems to have very good intentions and portrays a win-win for both the environment and the economy. *But is it really so?*

The benefits of the program, apart from the ones mentioned above are as following:

- It brings "eco-living" into people's discussions and water cooler conversations. "Hey, I might get a new car with the 'cash for clunkers program', thinking about either the Toyota Prius or the Civic Hybrid". "Oh really, have you thought about the Ford Fusion Hybrid, it has good reviews too".
- All the automakers are advertising their "eligible" models and showing their greener side.

– It reinforces the idea that you might actually save money by adopting a green life-style, which is crucial to its implementation among most population.

But there are some questions that arise in my mind-

– The new car you buy or lease must have a rating at least 2 MPG higher than the trade-in. This, to me is not a big enough jump. The only thought is that consumers will use this opportunity to upgrade to a much more fuel-efficient car than they currently own. But they may not.

– Where are all the clunkers going? Most will be re-cycled for parts and that is a good thing, but the thought of landfills of electronic waste is threatening to wipe out all the positives of this program.

– The biggest downside to this program is that it is still making us drive and burn fossil fuel. Maybe some will drive more, now that they have a fuel-efficient car and that is not a great thing. Could the \$1 billion have better environmental value had it been used for infrastructure development that encouraged public transportation? That would have created jobs too, but maybe not in the auto industry.

The complex nature of the economy and the environment make it difficult to come with clear answers. Every economic gain comes with an environmental cost. The challenge is to incorporate the cost of bio-resources in any economic analysis and to weigh real pros & cons, not just the superficial ones. A bad deal for the environment will most definitely turn into an excruciating deal for the economy.

by Priti Ambani

Building for the 21st Century

Check out the current lecture series at the National Building Museum on Building for the 21st Century: *Sustainable Design and Energy-Efficient Building Technologies*. The next lecture in the series is:

Deep-Energy Retrofits for Existing Homes
September 10, 2009, 12:30 - 1:30 pm

Betsy Pettit, AIA, president, Building Science Consulting, provides results from several cold-climate retrofits that addressed windows, insulation, equipment, and more.

The lecture is free, registration required, check www.nbm.org for details. Can't make it downtown for the lectures? Listen to recordings of this and their other lecture series on their website.

<http://www.nbm.org/programs-lectures/>

by Karen Grycewicz

Call For Executive Committee Candidates

Get more involved in your Sierra Club! The Executive Committee (ExCom) works throughout the year to select our conservation issues and plan campaigns, meetings, special events and other activities. Elections for the ExCom are coming up in the next newsletter. If you're interested in running for a position, contact Linda Burchfiel at 703-506-4310 by September 30th.

Get the latest event information delivered to your in-box every week! Sign up for the Great Falls Group email announcement list at <http://virginia.sierraclub.org/greatfalls/greatfalls-news.html>

YES, I want to join the Sierra Club!

Name _____
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Annual dues include subscriptions to SIERRA (\$7.50) and chapter publications (\$1.00). Dues are not tax deductible. Enclose check and mail to:
Sierra Club, PO Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322.

Membership Type	Individual	Joint
Introductory	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25.00	N/A
Regular	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47.00
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100.00
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175.00
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,250.00
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32.00
Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32.00
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September-October 2009

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Call for Executive Committee Candidates

Sierra Club Virginia Chapter
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Check our website
for meeting updates or
changes:
<http://www.virginia.sierraclub.org/greatfalls/>

True Cost of Homes Tour Sun. Sept. 20th.
Special Mount Vernon Group Event – True Cost of Homes outing at the ReBuild Warehouse on Sunday, September 20, 2009 from 2:00-4:00 pm. For directions and to RSVP, contact Diana Artemis at artemdi@yahoo.com. For more information about ReBuild Warehouse, see the article p. 1.

Also See Inside:

Old Dominion Sierran

The Sierra Club's Newsletter for Virginia

- 1 – America's bright future powered by clean energy
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EPA awards grants to reduce diesel emissions
- 3 – Annual Gathering filled with variety of learning
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Leaders wanted to serve on chapter excom
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Sierra Club works on DEQ energy permit process
Stop ODEC's Surry County coal plant
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Solar Decathlon in Washington DC in October
McIntire Park named endangered site
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- 7 – Pamunkey River kayak excursion
Utah's Red Rock Canyonlands
Outings in Hampton Roads area
- 8 – Wake up and smell the biomass

Upcoming Programs – Everyone Welcome!

Refreshments and socializing start at 7:00pm.

Questions? Linda Burchfiel at 703-506-4310 or larva@attglobal.net.

Check our website, www.virginia.sierraclub.org/greatfalls/, for updates

Mon. Sept 21st 7:30-9pm – Water Consciousness We take our water supply for granted. Yet, the world we live in is rapidly degrading, with everything subject to change. 'Water Consciousness' expands the mind beyond its ordinary pre-occupations to seek answers to questions that must now be asked. Where does our water supply come from? Who owns it, and why? Are there threats to it in the future? Are there steps to take to protect access to it for the future? What about water conservation? What threat does Global Warming pose to the water supply in this area? We invite you to join us as such questions are addressed at the September Sierra Club Great Falls Program Meeting: a combined slideshow presentation/group consciousness-raising event with ample opportunities for discussion and engagement. The evening will be facilitated by Ex-com member Brian Morrissey: long-time educator, author, workshop leader, brain wave researcher, and student of Consciousness. **Lake Anne Community Center* 1609 Washington Plaza N, Reston, VA**

Mon. Oct 5th 7:30-9pm – Elections and the Environment. What the elections mean for the environment, and where the candidates stand. For more information, Bob Pearson 703-690-3071 or bob_pearson@cox.net. **McLean Government Center** 1437 Balls Hill Road, McLean, VA.**

Mon. Nov 16th 7:30-9pm – Your Choice! Would you like to learn more about a topic? Heard a great environmental speaker or watched an interesting film lately? Contact Linda Burchfiel at 703-506-4310 or larva@attglobal.net and together we can make this program happen! We usually begin with refreshments and socializing 7, followed by the speaker 7:30-8:30 and questions 8:30-9. Looking forward to hearing your ideas! **Location to be determined.**

Mon. Dec 21st 6:30-9pm – Sierra Holiday Party. Enjoy music and a potluck dinner, and socialize with members and other like-minded people at. To coordinate food contributions please contact Linda Freimark at Linda.Freimark@virginia.sierraclub.org and write in Subject Line: Sierra Holiday Party. **Lake Anne Community Center* 1609 Washington Plaza N, Reston, VA.**

Get Outdoors With The Sierra Club

Sierra Club Potomac Region Outings (SCPRO; formerly, Metropolitan Washington Regional Outings Program or MWROP) is a special activities section of the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter. It organizes hikes and events year-round for the general public on behalf of the Sierra Club's Washington DC Chapter and the Maryland and Virginia Chapters' Washington-suburb groups. Volunteer leaders conduct the events, many of which include conservation, educational, or historical elements. For information about SPRO and its upcoming events, visit www.sierrapotomac.org. To obtain a free calendar subscription, inquire about becoming a SPRO outings leader, or get answers to other questions, write to info@sierrapotomac.org.

*Directions to Lake Anne Community Center,

1609 Washington Plaza N, Reston:
from Route 7, exit onto Baron
Cameron Ave, Left on Village Rd,
Left on Northshore Dr, immediate
Right into Village Center, Community
Center is to left of Millenium Bank.

**Directions to McLean Government Center,

1437 Balls Hill Rd, McLean:
from 495 N, exit 46 B, merge
onto 123 N, Left on Great Falls
Rd. (aka Lewinsville Rd),
Right onto Balls Hill Rd.

The Cascade is published 5-6 times per year by the Great Falls Group of the Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club. We are always open to contributions from members, including stories and photographs. We reserve the right to edit all submissions, both editorial and advertisements. The views expressed are those of the authors and may not be those of the Sierra Club. Deadlines are the same as for the ODS. For consideration, mail articles or photos to Karen Grycewicz, 3508 Winston Place, Fairfax, VA 22030 or email them to karen.grycewicz@virginia.sierraclub.org. For placing an ad, please contact Bobbi Beck at 703-464-4755 or bobbibeck@virginia.sierraclub.org for details and pricing.