

News from the Foothills

August 2008

Newsletter of the Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club

P.O. Box 5531, Charlottesville, VA 22905

<http://virginia.sierraclub.org/piedmont/>

Calendar of Events

Sept. 12-14 Sierra Club Jamboree

(see article on page 2)

Sept. 24 Sierra Club Program:

"Contaminated without Consent: Avoiding Toxins in Everyday Products." Deborah Judson-Ebbets and Barbara Cruickshank will show this compelling video and describe ways that you can reduce your exposure to toxic chemicals. 7:00 p.m. St. Mark Lutheran Church (corner of Ivy Rd. & Alderman Rd. in Charlottesville.) (434) 973-0373

Sept. 27 Vegetarian Festival: Volunteers will be needed to greet people at the Sierra Club booth from 11:00 to 4:00. Please contact John at 973-0373, jcruickshank4@gmail.com if you can join us.

Nov. 19 Sierra Club Program: "The Future of Passenger Rail in Virginia."

Meredith Richards will describe the current status of rail service in our area and what we can do to bring improvements. 7:00 p.m. St. Mark Lutheran Church.

Jan. 21, 2009 Sierra Club Program

"Recreational Outings in Central Virginia" with outdoor specialist John Holden.

7:00 p.m. St. Mark Lutheran Church

March 4 Sierra Club Program "Creating a Butterfly Garden in Your Backyard"

with herbalist Deborah Judson-Ebbets.

7:00 p.m. St. Mark Lutheran Church

A Word from the Chair

The Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club has 1200 members living in Charlottesville and the counties of Albemarle, Orange, Greene, Madison, Rappahannock, Fluvanna, and Louisa. During the past year we have been leaders on environmental issues involving climate change, healthy communities, and land preservation.

- Our members have spoken at public hearings and demonstrated against the proposed coal plant in Wise County, Va.
- We have supported a legal appeal of a DEQ permit which allows Dominion Power to discharge hot water, without temperature limits, into Lake Anna. Lake temperatures reached as high as 106 degrees during the summer of 2007. We are also fighting to stop construction of a third nuclear reactor at the North Anna Nuclear Power Station.
- Our group has been advocating for energy conservation, efficiency, and the use of renewables such as solar, off-shore wind, and geo-thermal.
- Sierra Club members convinced the Albemarle Board of Supervisors to implement a "Safer Chemical Management Procedure" which restricts the use of toxic chemicals in county parks and buildings. Albemarle is one of the first counties in the U.S. to pass such a policy. (continued on page 2)

Sierra Club, Piedmont Group

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- Our members have lobbied local governments to protect biological resources and protect natural areas. We have opposed new developments that will drastically increase local population without adequately preserving natural resources or paying for the real costs of growth.
- The Piedmont Group has spoken out on the water supply debate and recommended that dredging be considered to maintain the health of the Rivanna Reservoir.

The Sierra Club supports alternatives to the automobile. We advocate for an expansion of public transit, bike trails, and safe pedestrian walkways. We are opposed to new roads that will intersect public parks, encourage sprawl, and increase air pollution. The Piedmont Group is collecting signatures on a petition to protect McIntire Park in Charlottesville.

I thank the many members who support the Piedmont Group and encourage everyone to participate in our upcoming activities.

John A. Cruickshank
jcruickshank4@gmail.com

Virginia Sierra Club Jamboree

Mark your calendar and don't miss the Old Dominion Chapter's Jamboree, September 12-14 at the Pocahontas State Park Ecology Center near Richmond. Participants will meet Sierra Club members and allies from around the state, enjoy fall weather on the beautiful trails, and learn about success stories and ways of protecting and enjoying our natural resources. Families are welcome. Saturday evening

features music from the *Floating Rock Band*, with rockin' oldies from the 60s and 70s.

The \$75.00 registration fee includes two nights housing in simple cabins at the Ecology Center, all meals, and all events.

The theme of the jamboree will be *Cool Solutions*: models for community based agricultural initiatives, grassroots anti-sprawl campaigns, the cool city initiative and other examples of what everyone can do to protect and enjoy natural resources, stop sprawl and control climate change. For more information read the latest edition of the *Old Dominion Sierran* or contact John Cruickshank (434 973-0373; jcruickshank4@gmail.com).

Join the Piedmont Group email List

Receive weekly updates on environmental issues and events in our area. To subscribe simply go to our website and click on "Join the Piedmont Group's email list."

<http://virginia.sierraclub.org/piedmont/>

Piedmont Group Officers

Chair & Treasurer: John Cruickshank

Vice-Chair & Calendars: Audrey Dannenberg

Conservation Chair: Tom Olivier

Political Chair: George Bowles

Membership: Carol Chandross

Outings: Allie Crowell & Deborah Judson-Ebbets

Newsletter: Shirley Napps

Chapter Delegates: George Bowles & Betty Black

Webmaster: Mark Judson-Ebbets

Climate Change: Diana Abbott

Recycling Tip: Instead of throwing out the plastic containers that strawberries and other fruits come in at the grocery store, the vendors at farmer's markets can clean and re-use them thus saving them money and our landfill. One farmer reports these plastic containers cost him 20 cents each.