

News from the Foothills

October 2007

Newsletter of the Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club

P.O. Box 5531, Charlottesville, VA 22905

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

Sierra Club Endorses Local Candidates

The Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club has developed endorsements for candidates in races for the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors and the Charlottesville City Council, as well as two state races. We weigh a number of factors in making endorsement judgments. These include record in public office, evidence of broad understanding of environmental issues, strength of support for environmental protection and campaign robustness.

In Albemarle County, we endorse Marcia Joseph in the Rivanna District race and Ann Mallek in the White Hall District race. In Charlottesville, for the three at-large City Council positions, we endorse David Brown, Satyendra Huja and Peter Kleeman. In the 57th District of the Virginia House of Delegates, we endorse David Toscano. In the 25th District of the Virginia Senate, we endorse Creigh Deeds.

Significant differences in commitment to the environment exist between candidates in races this fall. Politics is important and your participation matters! We urge Sierra Club members and all other voters concerned about protection of our environment to actively support the campaigns of the candidates we have endorsed.

For additional information, contact John Cruickshank, Chair of the Piedmont Group Executive Committee (973-0373) or Tom Olivier, Political Chair of the Piedmont Group (831-2408)

Vote to Protect Albemarle Rural Areas

The Albemarle County Board of Supervisors was unable to follow through on key proposals to protect rural areas in their recent October

10th meeting as a result of a deadlock (3-3) vote. Even though the County adopted the Mountain Protection Plan in 1998 and the Rural Areas Plan in 2005, the BOS has not implemented the most critical sections of those plans. These actions to "protect" have been studied for years by County staff and are endorsed by the Albemarle County Planning Commission. The modest proposals under consideration would:

- Prevent erosion by limiting the disturbance of steep slopes during construction.
- Protect water quality and stream health by limiting land disturbance within stream corridors
- Slow down development by extending the time frames for "family subdivisions".

These proposals have been put forth to help protect and benefit not only our local community, but also communities and natural systems across the Commonwealth. While the benefits accrue to everyone, there are safeguards built in to protect individual landowners against potential hardships. Measures to control building on critical slopes and protecting waterways is part of a statewide effort to decrease pollution in the Chesapeake Bay. One of the top sources of pollutants is runoff from urban and suburban areas. The measures considered are "exactly what is being recommended and indeed required for protection of the Chesapeake Bay" says Board member, Dennis Rooker. *(continued on page 2)*

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Voting in favor of rural protection were Dennis Rooker, David Slutzky and Sally Thomas. Voting against were Kenneth Boyd, David Wyant and Lindsay Dorrier. All three Supervisors voting against the proposals are up for re-election this Fall.

The Sierra Club has endorsed **Marcia Joseph** who is running against Kenneth Boyd in the Rivanna District and **Ann Mallek** who is challenging David Wyant in the White Hall District. **Both of these Sierra Club endorsees support the rural area protection initiatives.**

Nature Camp

"Hey Mike, what'd you find?" "I don't know—some kind of salamander I guess." "Can I see it?" Does this sound like one of your children? Does your child love bugs, stream critters, birds, and snakes? Campfires, ghost stories, and silly skits? Hiking in the mountains and swimming in a cold mountain stream?

If so, Nature Camp might just be the place for him or her. Located in the George Washington National Forest near Lexington, Virginia, Nature Camp is a coeducational, residential summer camp specializing in natural history and environmental education for 5th through 12th graders. Once described as a place "where fingertips are taught to see," Nature Camp emphasizes hands-on, field-based, experiential learning in classrooms consisting of forest, field and stream. In each of four two-week sessions divided by age, campers attend classes in such subjects as botany, geology, and ornithology, but also enjoy plenty of free time for hiking, swimming, and games. Many campers return summer after summer and form lasting friendships that extend into adulthood, as they develop a deep and abiding attachment to nature and lifelong love of learning.

For more information, visit the Nature Camp website at www.naturecamp.net or contact camp director Philip Coulling (540-460-7897 or director@naturecamp.net).

Recycling Updates

CFLs (Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs): Rivanna Solid Waste Authority (RSWA) will begin accepting CFLs on Oct. 22 at the McIntire Recycling Center, in Charlottesville, VA. CFLs contain small amounts of mercury that are disposed of safely in recycling programs. Please recycle your CFLs.
Cell Phones: Residents of RSWA now may take their cell phones to both the McIntire and Ivy Facilities for recycling.

Sierra Club Calendar Sales

Sierra Club 2008 calendars are on sale now! Engagement calendars are \$13.95 and Wilderness wall calendars are \$12.95. When calendars are purchased directly from the Piedmont Group, the profit stays with the Group for its local activities. To obtain your calendar, email Audrey at aadann@gmail.com.

Calendar of Events

Nov. 6 Please vote!!!

Nov. 7 Sierra Club Program *"Mountaintop Removal Mining. What are the real costs?"* Terry Lilley & Thomas Roberts will describe the devastation caused by this type of coal mining. 7:00 p.m. St. Mark Lutheran Church (corner of Ivy Rd. & Alderman Rd. in Charlottesville) (434) 973-0373

Nov. 14 Green Matters Workshop *"Green Your Home"* 6:00 p.m. at the Habitat Store (434) 293-6331

Dec. 8 Rivanna Trail Hike Join us for a walk on the Rivanna Trail and warm up with a bowl of soup at Panera Bread afterwards. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at Panera Bread in the Barracks Rd. Shopping Center. (434) 295-1395

Jan. 23 Sierra Club Program Al Weed will speak on *"The Carbon Tax: Weaning us from fossil fuels & building a biomass energy foundation."* 7:00 p.m. St Mark Lutheran Church (434) 973-0373