



Tyson's Corner Planning Update

When we last reported on the plans by Fairfax County to transform Tyson's Corner from a suburban nightmare into a transit-oriented urban area, a Task Force had recently completed a vision document. That document, prepared with the support of two consulting firms, anticipated an expansion to 3-4 times the current floor area, primarily to accommodate more residents. The document described extensively the increased supporting amenities that such growth would require: schools, public safety, utilities, parks, streets, bike routes, sidewalks and an expanded transportation system, including an internal circulator. Control of the effort has now passed to the County Planning Commission, which has formed a drafting Committee to prepare the Comprehensive Plan amendment.

Some potential problem areas have begun to emerge as the more general ideas in the Task Force report are brought into focus in work on the Comprehensive Plan language, which by nature is more precise. Most significantly, after several months of analysis, the transportation consultant presented preliminary results suggesting that to more than double the current development level would cause gridlock. Even this more modest expansion could increase vehicle trips by over 40 percent. This information has been cited to support their preference for a smaller version of the Task Force vision by a coalition of nearby communities, including McLean and Vienna.

(continued on page 3)

Chairman Bulova supports Cool Counties Program

On March 26, members of the Great Falls Group (GFG) met with Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova to discuss the County's progress towards meeting its commitments under the Cool Counties initiative and the future role of the Sierra Club-led Cool Counties Working Group. In signing the Cool Counties Declaration in July, 2007, Fairfax County committed to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent by 2050. As part of the commitment, the county pledged to conduct an inventory of greenhouse gas emissions, to draft a plan, and to implement policies and programs to reduce emissions.

Since that time, the county has taken many steps to reduce its emissions, becoming a leader among local governments in the fight against climate change. However, the county has not yet conducted its greenhouse gas emissions inventory. In addition, the economic downturn and severe budgetary constraints prevented the county from hiring an Energy Manager, whose job could include responsibility for the inventory and for actions to fulfill the Cool Counties pledge.

Recently the county formed an energy committee, composed of employees, to identify ways to reduce the county's energy use. In the March 26 meeting, Sierra Club members expressed their concern to Chairman Bulova that, while the committee would be useful in finding some energy savings, it had not been specifically tasked to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, create an inventory, or prepare a Climate Action plan.

(continued on page 3)

Farmers' Markets Opening

The season for freshening up your diet with food shopping at a neighborhood farmers' market is here. Buying locally and supporting sustainable agriculture in the Chesapeake Bay watershed contributes to making our area a better place to live and raise our families.

These farmers' markets are located in every county in the Great Falls Group area, with eleven in Fairfax County alone. Many of the markets have additional resources or activities like country stores, petting zoos, and plant clinics, usually run by Master Gardeners, who can teach visitors how to identify plant or insect specimens and diagnose plant diseases.

The seasonal items for sale, grown on farms from Virginia's Northern Neck to Pennsylvania, include fresh fruit, vegetables, flowers, honey, baked breads, dairy, eggs, cheese, meats and ice cream. You can also purchase plants to grow on your own and engage in interesting and informative discussions with the food growers.

Some of these markets allow information to be handed out. If you are interested in distributing Sierra Club literature and talking to customers at the markets about the environment, please contact GFG Membership Chair Norbert Pink (703-264-7445, norbetsierra@aol.com) for information.



Fairfax County Farmers' Markets

Information about the Fairfax County Markets is listed below. For other information about the Markets, call 703-642-0128, TTY 703-803-3354 or visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farm-mkt.htm>.

Tuesdays

Mount Vernon Farmers Market, 8:00 am - Noon, May 5 - Nov. 24, Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria

Fairfax Farmers Market, 8:00 am - Noon, May 5 - Oct. 27, Van Dyck Park, 3500 Old Lee Hwy, Fairfax

Wednesdays

Vienna/Oakton Farmers Market, 8:00 am - Noon, May 6 - Nov. 18, Oak Marr RECenter 3200 Jermantown Road, Oakton

Frying Pan Farmers Market, 8:00 am - 12:30 pm, May 6 - Oct. 28, Frying Pan Park, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon

Wakefield Farmers Market, 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm, May 6 - Oct. 28, Wakefield Park, 8100 Braddock Road, Annandale

Thursdays

Herndon Farmers Market, 8:00 am - Noon, May 7 -

(continued on page 2)

Metro to Dulles: Pushing for a Tunnel in Tyson's Corner

As most Northern Virginia residents know, the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project is a significant, planned expansion to the region's current Metrorail system. The 23.1-mile expansion would link D.C. to Dulles Airport and expand the transit options for those who live in the areas along the route, notably in the Tyson's Corner area.

The project, currently planned in two phases, would add four rail stations in a 3.4-mile area through Tyson's Corner during Phase One. The U.S. Department of Transportation and the Federal Transit Administration approved a Commonwealth of Virginia plan for above-ground stations in Tyson's Corner, but the Sierra Club—along with other local environmental and civic groups—believes that such stations are a mistake on the grounds of cost effectiveness, environmental impact and sound smart-growth-oriented urban planning principles.

Led by members of the Great Falls Group, the Sierra Club has long enthusiastically supported a quality transit project to bring about revitalization, congestion mitigation, and change to a transit-oriented development model at Tyson's Corner. The Dulles Corridor project is essential to the region, particularly as we anticipate projected population growth in the area and look for ways to lessen our collective contributions to air pollution and climate change. The Sierra Club has participated in most of the steps of

this project and urged that there be open bidding and consideration of a tunnel.

At its March 14 meeting, the Sierra Club's Virginia Chapter executive committee voted to join a potential lawsuit challenging the current plan for above-ground stations; the lead plaintiff is the non-profit group Tyson's Tunnel, Inc., a coalition of business, community, civic and environmental organizations and concerned citizens. To learn more about the civic groups and businesses involved in Tyson's Tunnel, visit http://www.tysonstunnel.org/tysonstunnel_who.htm.

The decision to go with above-ground stations in Tyson's Corner was made before modern wide-bore tunneling technology was proven safe and extremely cost-effective in other transportation projects in the U.S. and abroad. Now that this is a proven technology, we believe that the Dulles Rail Corridor planners should reconsider their plans for above-ground stations in Tyson's Corner. The technical and economic viability of a tunnel is also laid out in this report: <http://www.asce.org/files/pdf/TunnelReviewPanelReport.pdf>.

The situation is complicated by the fact that the project was not competitively bid, as required for any federally-funded transportation project. If the project were competitively bid, as should be required, we believe that

(continued on page 2)

Ansel Adams Documentary Shown at Great Falls Group Meeting

The February Great Falls Group meeting presented a documentary film, coproduced by the Sierra Club, on the life and photography of Ansel Adams. Combining superlative photographic skills with a deep understanding and appreciation of wild places, Adams created his enduring legacy of photographs from the 1920s through the 1970's. This stunning biographical video chronicled his impact on conservation and photography, told from the perspective of family members, friends, artists and Sierra Clubbers who were a part of his life. The late John Szarkowski, former head of photography at the Museum of Modern Art, Carl Pope, former Director of the Sierra Club, Adams's son and daughter and others reflected on his life and contributions to art and the world. Ansel Adams's life was closely tied to the Sierra Club. He spent many summers in the Sierra Nevada on high trips, was a former Director of the Club, and drew his greatest inspiration from the mountains that gave the Club its name.



The approximately 50 attendees at the film showing were given some unique insights by Sarah Gerould, who, while signing in at the meeting, indicated that she is the granddaughter

of Adams's best friend, Cedric Wright. She graciously and spontaneously provided an introduction to the film that described the interactions between these two photographers and musicians. We are fortunate that our local membership includes unique people such as Ms. Gerould, who we sometimes discover as a result of the interactions that occur during our group activities.

by Norbert Pink, Membership Chair GFG

Metro to Dulles (cont'd from page 1)

the tunnel design would easily win out on the grounds of cost effectiveness and environmental impact. The Sierra Club and other concerned groups argue that an above-ground Metro superstructure and passing trains would not be conducive to high-quality Transit Oriented Development. This could result in lower ridership and fewer people willing to live within Tysons, a critical need for correcting the current jobs/housing imbalance in that area. Fewer residents would mean fewer people walking to work or to Metro, and thus more people driving, with all that that entails: i.e. more petroleum consumption, more air pollution, and more CO2 emissions.

The lack of competitive bidding is the focus of the forthcoming lawsuit, which may also be instrumental in forcing a reassessment of Virginia's Public Private Transportation Act, under which the project was advanced. There are many problems with that Act, including procedures making it easier to circumvent federal requirements such as the National Environmental Policy Act and the requirements for competitive bidding. The Act also restricts public access to documentation regarding the true costs of the project and the liabilities incurred by the taxpaying public and the Dulles Toll Road users.

More information about the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project may be found at <http://www.dullesmetro.com/>. For more information about the tunnel alternative and its status, visit <http://www.tysonstunnel.org/>. If you have questions, please contact Scott Monett, president of Tysons Tunnel, Inc. and Vice Chair of the Great Falls Group, at (703) 442-0038.

by Mary Kadera, Chairman Mount Vernon Group

Public Lecture Series: Science In Action

To create a better understanding of the importance and value of the US Geologic Service, the USGS Science in Action public lecture series is now a monthly event! A new lecture in the series will be held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm in the Dallas Peck Auditorium on the first floor of the USGS Building in Reston. These lectures are free to the public and are intended to familiarize the lay person with science issues meaningful to daily life. Presenters are specifically selected for their enthusiasm and the ability to share their expertise with an audience that may be unfamiliar with the topic. Best of all, attendees have the unique opportunity to interact with scientists directly and ask questions about the most recent developments in the presented topics.

The first lecture held on April 1st was entitled **Knee-high to Bird's Eye: Multi-scale Remote Sensing of Vegetation Dynamics**. Dr. John Jones discussed how various airborne and satellite sensing technologies measure variance of land cover and terrain across space and through time and how this research helps address resource management in relation to climate change. He indicated that there may be an

Farmers' Markets (continued from page 1)

Oct. 29, Old Town Herndon, 777 Lynn Street, next to the Red Caboose, Herndon

Annandale Farmers Market, 8:00 am - Noon, May 7 - Nov. 5, Mason District Park, 6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale

Fridays

McLean Farmers Market, 8:30 am - 12:30 pm, May 8 - Nov. 20 (closed on May 15), Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean

Kingstowne Farmers Market, 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm, May 8 - Oct. 23, Kingstowne Town Center near the Sunoco Gas Station, 5955 Kingstowne Center, Alexandria

Saturdays

Burke Farmers Market, 8:00 am - Noon, May 2 - Oct 24, Virginia Railway Express Parking Lot at Burke Centre, 5671 Roberts Parkway, Burke

Reston Farmers Market, 8:00 am - Noon, May 9 - Oct 31, Lake Anne Village Center, Reston

Sundays

Lorton Farmers Market, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm, May 3 - Oct 25, Virginia Railway Express Parking Lot, 8990 Lorton Station Blvd, Lorton

opportunity for Sierra Club members to volunteer on his Shenandoah project. For more information on this topic visit: <http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2008/3046/>.

The May 6th lecture, entitled **Taking the Pulse of Our Planet: Tracking Seasonal Signs of Climate Change**, by Dr. Jake Weltzin, will offer attendees an exciting opportunity to volunteer to assist scientists with tracking the effects of climate on seasonal patterns of plant and animal behavior. For more information on this topic visit: <http://usanpn.org/>.

The June 3rd lecture, **A Field Trip to the Congo—Hydroacoustic Measurements in "The River That Swallows All Rivers"**, by John M. Shelton, recounts the amazing findings and exciting adventures of Shelton and his fellow scientists while collecting data on the Congo River. For more information on this topic visit: http://research.amnh.org/ichthyology/congo/team_index.html or http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/series/explorer/3826/Overview_

Next in the series, on July 1st, is **Hurricanes and Our Changing Coasts**, by Dr. Asbury Sallenger. Dr. Sallenger will discuss how the coast changes during

cont. on page 3

Loudoun County Farmers' Markets

These markets are located in Ashburn, Cascades, Leesburg (has a summer and winter market), Lovettsville, Middleburg, and Purcellville. For more information visit <http://www.loudounfarmersmarkets.org/>, email info@loudounfarmersmarkets.org, or call (540) 454-8089.

You can also sign up for a weekly email from the above Loudoun County farmers' market site, which will describe the produce, vendors and related information about specific markets, as well as what is happening on local farms.

Fauquier County Farmers' Markets

These markets are located in Goldvein, New Baltimore, Remington, The Plains, and Warrenton. For more information visit <http://www.fauquiercounty.gov/Government/Departments/agdev/index.cfm?acti-on=farmersmarket>.

Other DC Suburbs Farmers' Markets

For other Farmers' Markets in the DC suburban area visit <http://dc.about.com/od/farmersmarkets/a/FarmersMktVA.htm>.

by Norbert Pink, Membership Chair GFG

Great Falls Group Executive Committee

The monthly meeting of The Great Falls Group's (GFG) Executive Committee is usually held on the first Monday 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		Monett@monettech.com
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	Chapter Delegate, Joe Apple	703-860-1254	Joe.Apple@comcast.net
	Conservation, Steve Bruckner	703-883-3622	sbruckner@cox.net
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Let's Get The Dirt Out!

Now that April showers are here, it's time to make sure our water sources stay clean. One source of pollution is from construction sites. If the site is poorly managed, mud and debris can be washed away during a rain shower and end up in storm drains. As you know, these drains lead directly into our rivers and reservoirs. Help protect our water supply by becoming a "Get The Dirt Out" volunteer. Go to the website at www.potomacriverkeeper.org and click on "What You Can Do." Read up on the program and attend one of the training sessions listed. There is one session planned for April 26th at the College Park REI and another on May 13th at the Arlington Library. Keep checking the website for up to the minute information and more training session dates and times. Once you have attended a session, you are ready to visit nearby construction sites and monitor their compliance with debris and sediment management rules. Make sure you remember your camera!

Another way to help keep our water clean is by becoming a Riverwatcher. A Riverwatcher is anyone who enjoys hiking, walking, kayaking, swimming, paddling or any other fun outdoor activity in the Potomac watershed area. All you need to do is observe your surroundings. If you see pollution or other types of problems around the watershed area, note the location and report it to keeper@potomacriverkeeper.org or (301)-POTOMAC. If you are in the Shenandoah Valley, report your findings to jeff@shenandoahriverkeeper.org or (540)-837-1479. The more information and documentation you can provide the better. You can even request a water quality monitoring kit to perform tests if you suspect a problem. Find out more about this program at www.potomacriverkeeper.org. *Keep our watershed area clean!*

Chairman Bulova (cont'd from page 1)

They suggested that an experienced Energy Manager working with the committee would likely find more opportunities, be able to work across departments, and could ensure that the most cost-effective energy efficiency measures are undertaken first. This county-wide authority also would make the Energy Manager the best person to develop an action plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They further suggested a time-limited appointment, which would make the job appropriate for federal stimulus funding.

Chairman Bulova and the Sierra Club members also discussed the future role of the Cool Counties Working Group, which has been conducting outreach to the community on behalf of the county. The Working Group consists of volunteers from the GFG and other environmental organizations, as well as county employees and interested citizens from a cross section of county life. Among its other projects, the Working Group created the Cool Neighborhoods program, which allows

Second Stream Cleanup on Rocky Run

As part of the Alice Ferguson Foundation's 21st annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup, we conducted our second cleanup of the stormwater impoundment facility behind the dam on Lewinsville Road, near Tysons Corner, on Saturday morning, April 4th. The weather was perfect – sunny yet cool. Thanks to the eleven people who showed up, we collected 35 trash bags of mixed trash including plastic and glass bottles, beverage cans, coffee cups, Styrofoam and plastic wrap. This trash washes down the storm sewers of the Tyco Road Industrial area, near Tysons Corner, then flows through a culvert under the Dulles Toll Road, and empties into this impoundment facility, which in turn empties into Rocky Run, a tributary of Difficult Run. We also carried out one hot water heater that was obviously dumped years ago before a gate was installed. The project was sponsored by Friends of Rocky Run, which hopes to initiate additional projects on Rocky Run including planting Riparian Buffers and Stream Monitoring.

by Steve Bruckner, Conservation Chair

"Driven by the Environment"

The Washington Auto Show, properly titled "Driven by the Environment" came to the Washington Convention Center February 5th – February 8th. This year, the show's focus veered away from technology and entertainment toward providing hands-on knowledge of the green technology that auto industry executives hope will make their firms relevant and profitable in the second decade of the 21st century. Todd Kaho, executive editor of Green Car Journal, noted the appropriateness of an auto show in the nation's capital emphasizing policy and law. This recognition of the unique aspects of such an event located in our area extended to the chairman of the show, who remarked that "it would be unfair for government officials to make decisions on funding and policy without proper exposure to the new technology." He remarked that Carol Browner, the President's Assistant for Energy and Climate Change, had spent a lot of time in the "Green Car Pavilion". Other governmental attendees included EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson and Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood.

It was, of course, still an auto show and all exhibitors attempted to put their most enticing products, both present and future, on display. General Motors' display of environmentally friendly vehicles included the Volt and the Equinox, both from Chevrolet. As most readers know, the Volt, expected to hit the streets in late 2010, is powered by a lithium ion battery, rechargeable on a household electric socket. The Equinox, a hydrogen-fueled vehicle, will not be available until at least 2015. GM's Project Driveway hopes to promote the Equinox's popularity, thereby helping to ensure that the needed infrastructure, such as hydrogen filling stations, is ready when the vehicle is.

by Judd Stephenson, member GFG

communities to gain recognition for efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the household level. Cool Neighborhoods and its commercial counterpart, Cool Businesses, engage the private sector in meeting the goals of the Cool Counties initiative.

Chairman Bulova reaffirmed her commitment both to the Cool Counties initiative and to supporting the outreach efforts of the Working Group. Specifically, she said that she would resolve the issues that led to elimination of the Cool Neighborhoods program from the county website (in the meantime, the program information can be found on the GFG website). She also expressed her support for the fledgling Cool Businesses initiative and promised to help find ways to give it an effective launch.

Sierra Club members attending the meeting included Chris Koerner, Roger Diedrich, Linda Burchfiel, Rekha Nadkarni, Ross Shearer, Steve Bruckner and Ivy Main.

by Ivy Main

Tyson's Corner Planning (cont'd from page 1)

The Sierra Club has not taken a position on the preferred amount of development, but we have always suggested that the Metro Silver Line will not be sufficient to serve a renewed and expanded Tysons. Indeed, the transportation consultant suggested that the County should explore additional high-quality transit connections. We have frequently called for study of additional transit, such as on Route 7 and on Gallows Road (i.e. the Purple Line).

The Planning Commission drafting Committee has responded to this new information by delaying its schedule to allow more discussion. The Committee already had a long list of topics to review at its weekly or bi-weekly meetings. It is still awaiting the final traffic report, a supplemental neighborhood traffic impact study and a Transportation Demand Management study. Whereas the Committee had planned hearings in July-August, they will now be moved to the end of the year, or possibly into next year. Details on the project can be found at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/tysonscorner/>

by Roger Diedrich

Public Lecture Series (cont'd from page 2)

extreme storms such as hurricane Katrina and what these changes mean for coastal developments. For more information on this topic visit: <http://coastal.er.usgs.gov/hurricanes/>.

For copies of handouts, information about volunteering, etc, please contact Norbert Pink at norbetsierra@aol.com. For directions to the USGS Building and any further information, please contact the USGS Visitor Center in Reston, Virginia at (703)-648-4748. For special accommodations such as sign language interpreting, etc, please contact Joan Corley at jcorley@usgs.gov at least two weeks before the event. Video of each lecture will be accessible after the presentation on-line through the USGS Multimedia Gallery.

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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:
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Table of Contents

Page 1

Tyson's Corner Planning Update

Farmers' Markets Opening

Chairman Bulova supports Cool Counties Program

Metro to Dulles: Pushing for a Tunnel in Tyson's Corner

Page 2

Ansel Adams Documentary Shown at Great Falls Group Meeting

Public Lecture Series: Science in Action

Page 3

Let's Get the Dirt Out!

"Driven by the Environment"

Second Stream Cleanup on Rocky Run

Sierra Club Virginia Chapter
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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. May 18th 7:30-9pm – "Celebration of Spring" Dr. Stanwyn Shetler, Curator Emeritus for Botany at the Smithsonian Institution, shares slides of some of the beautiful wildflowers and birds of a Washington-area spring with his colorful and fast-paced slide presentation. **Fairfax County Government Center, Conference Room 7.**

Mon. June 15th – 7:30-9pm – "Removing Invasive exotic plants and replanting with native alternatives". Claudia Thompson-Deahl, Environmental Resource Manager for the Reston Association, will discuss our most problematic plant concerns and what we can be planting in their place. Expand your planting palette beyond burning bush and barberry to include viburnums and blueberry! **Lake Anne Community Center at 1609 Washington Plaza N, Reston, VA***

Sat. July 25th – 8am-2pm "Birds, Butterflies and Farm Tour," Join the Great Falls Group for a day of outdoor fun for all ages at the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship in Loudoun County. Begin at 8 with a guided bird tour by the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy (LWC), followed by a potluck picnic lunch about 11:30, then butterfly walk led by the LWC, and closing with a tour of the organic farm. **BRCES is located just north of Neersville, at 11661 Harpers Ferry Rd /Rt 671.** Directions from Leesburg: west on US Rt 7, right on Rt 9, right on Rt 671/Harpers Ferry Rd. Go 6 miles to the BRCES entrance on the left, just past the Neersville Fire Station. Check out www.brces.org. Want to carpool? Contact Linda Burchfiel.

Mon. Sept 21st 7:30-9pm – "Think Globally, Act Cerebrally: Balancing Alpha and Beta Brain Waves to Reduce Carbon Footprints" Did you know that the natural vibration or frequency of the planet is 10 Hertz, right in the middle of the Alpha brain wave channel?! But as human activities accelerate faster and faster, our own brain waves leave the alpha range and go off in a super-charged beta direction at 13 to 32+ Hz., heedless of the consequences for Earth's and our own equilibrium. The evening will show how restoring balance between beta and alpha brain waves can reduce carbon footprints and make you part of the solution, rather than the problem. Brian Morrissey is a long-time educator and author of two books on mastering brain states for learning and optimal experience. **Lake Anne Community Center at 1609 Washington Plaza N, Reston, VA***

***Lake Anne Community Center: 1609 Washington Plaza N, Reston (703-476-4500).** From Rte. 7 take Baron Cameron Ave., turn south (left) onto Village Rd., left onto Northshore Dr., then immediate sharp right into the Village Center parking lot. **From Fairfax County Pkwy** go east on Baron Cameron Ave., turn right onto Village Rd., continue as above.

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. Please send articles as plain text in an email or in Word or WordPerfect file format. For placing an ad, please contact Bobbi Beck at 703-464-4755 or bobbi.beck@virginia.sierraclub.org for details and pricing.

Also See Inside:

Old Dominion Sierran

The Sierra Club's Newsletter for Virginia

1 – Mattaponi Victory

2 – Conservation easement on James River Park

3 – 2009: Opportunity to elect environmental majority

Annual Gathering features workshops, entertainment

4 – 2010 budget stresses transformations for energy and environment

Recovery Redefined

5 – Moving towards 21st century transportation

Court rules Dominion permit invalid

New transmission lines will increase pollution

6 – Citizens rally to save Charlottesville's McIntire Park

U of R student discards to be recycled at yard sale

Hopewell Clean Air Network reaches out to citizens

7 – 2009 General Assembly slow towards energy efficiency

Virginia convenes coal combustion waste panel

8 – Ready to join Local Food Movement?

Protect natural wonders of GW National Forest

EPA to review new mountain-top removal permits

9 – Three Tour de Cut hikes planned

Virginia Ridge and Valley Act passed

Outings, travel sometimes life-changing events

10, 11 – Gubernatorial candidates' views on environment

12 – Blue Green Alliance tries to dispel false dichotomies