



Sierra

Newsletter of the Coulee Region Group

DECEMBER 2023

*"... it is a serious thing just to be alive on this fresh morning in the broken world."
- Mary Oliver, Invitation*

Coulee Region Sierra Club Winter Holiday Potluck

** * * * * for CRSC members and friends! * * * * **

Sunday, December 10 from 4 to 6 p.m.

1925 Main Street, La Crosse

Home of CRSC Board Member Dorothy Lenard

>>> PLEASE RSVP at <https://tinyurl.com/23CRSCWinterPotluck> <<<

***Bring some food to share and/or a holiday dessert! Beverages provided.
If you wish, bring your own foodware.***

Carpool at <https://tinyurl.com/23CRSCPotluckRide>

Winter Together

We're lucky to have many opportunities to celebrate the winter beauty of the Coulee Region. Here are a few:

On December 2, Norskedalen will host its annual Old Fashioned Christmas. Learn how immigrants celebrated their holidays and then explore the beautiful grounds and trails. Learn more at www.norskedalen.org/

On Saturday, December 9, the Kickapoo Valley Reserve will host **Al Cornell**, writer & retired Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Technician, who will talk about his new book, ***A Year At A Beaver Pond***. Learn more at <http://kvr.state.wi.us/Events/Lecture-Series>

In its 124th year, the **Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC)**, December 14 to January 5, is a chance for everyone of any age or ability to appreciate and help the the amazing birds that sweeten our lives. The La Crosse/ La Crescent CBC will be held on Saturday, December 16. To participate contact Coulee Audubon member Dan Jackson at dejackson2256@gmail.com. Help is welcomed.. To learn how to participate no matter where you live, visit www.audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count

On December 15, the La Crosse Astronomical Society will host a group Dark Skies event at Ridge History Park near Middle Ridge (weather permitting) for the Geminids meteor showers. Learn more at www.lcaas.org

Education Grant deadline Jan. 5

CRSC offers grants of up to \$200 each for environmental education projects to schools or community organizations involving young people at the elementary and middle school level within the CRSC region: Crawford, Grant, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Richland, Trempealeau, and Vernon counties.

Applications may be completed online, emailed or mailed. The deadline for applications is January 5, 2024 For more information, visit sierraclub.org/wisconsin/coulee/Education or tinyurl.com/CRSC-Education.

These grants are funded by an annual grant from the Paul E. Stry Foundation, shared dues from Sierra Club memberships, and donations made by community members. To donate or learn more about the grants, email CRSierraClub@gmail.com or call 608-315-2693.



More December events

12/ 2: Black Ash Plaited Basket (with kits) with Llandra Skenadore.1 p.m., People's Food Co-op, 315 Fifth Ave. S. www.driftlessfolkschool.org/classes/black-ash-plaited-basket-with-kits

12/ 5: Burn prep with MVC. Boscobel Bluffs, 9 a.m. Email genesis@mississippivalleyconservancy.org for details.

12/ 6: The Miller Garden & Driftless Area BioBlitz at 7 p.m. at The Nature Place, Myrick Park, La Crosse.

12/ 9: Beginning Chip Carving at 1 p.m. at People's Food Co-op www.driftlessfolkschool.org/classes/beginning-chip-carving-december-9-2023

12/13: Prairie work day - Mississippi Valley Conservancy. Email genesis@mississipp7ivalleyconservancy.org.

12/15: A Journey in Tracking with Nicholas WazeeGale at 6:30 p.m. at the People's Food Co-op www.driftlessfolkschool.org/classes/a-journey-in-tracking

12/17: Citizen Action Third CD virtual candidate forum, 6 p.m. Register: https://secure.everyaction.com/t4n7Zaa_PE-JZpoN4Sx2ZQ2

12/21: Trash pick up - Mississippi River Conservancy. Email genesis@mississippivalleyconservancy.org

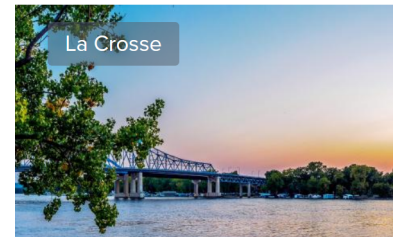
Kudos!

Congratulations to Vernon County Energy District and Citizen Action Driftless Co-op! These Coulee Region groups shared the Good Citizen award at November's annual Sierra Club Wisconsin Chapter Awards ceremony!

Congratulations, too, to Jessica Schoonover, Director of the Shirley M. Wright Memorial Library in Trempealeau who received the Sustainability Institute's Individual Inspiring Sustainability award for 2023, and to the City of La Crosse Climate Action Plan team for receiving the Group Inspiring Sustainability Award. Nominees included CRSC board member Pat Wilson.

Carbon Free Challenge

bright action LA-CROSSE Carbon Free Challenge!



The City of La Crosse has partnered with Bright Action to help community members find actions they can take to help reduce carbon emissions as part of its Climate Action Plan.

If you live in the city, please join the Coulee Region Sierra Club community at tinyurl.com/CarbonFree-LaX to join us as we transition from promoting climate action to taking climate action. Soon, the action site will have community-specific information that will help you get more information as you choose your household actions. And throughout 2024, CRSC will highlight some of the most impactful steps we can take.

You don't have to live in La Crosse to use Bright Action. Anyone may sign up and start a team or community group. You will find plenty of ideas to motivate you and others.

In addition, the UNEP *ACT NOW! SPEAK UP!* campaign urges everyone to be a climate action advocate. See what you can do at www.unep.org/interactives/things-you-can-do-climate-emergency/

- * Speak up to local leaders
- * Start the conversation with family, friends, and colleagues
- * Push corporations and governments to follow the Paris Agreement
- * Empower yourself with the latest science and SPEAK UP!
- * Get more ideas at their website

Coulee Region Sierra Club Board Elections Information and Ballot

Thank you for participating in the democratic process of electing your local Sierra Club representatives! Enter your member number and then vote for up to four candidates to begin two-year terms in January 2024. Candidate bios are below. Please complete one ballot per member (both members in a Joint membership may cast ballots). You will receive a link to the online ballot and your member number in an email OR via postcard. We must have your member number so your ballot can be verified by the Election Committee. **Please vote either with the online ballot OR by printing, completing, and mailing the ballot show below.**

**** All ballots must be received by midnight December 30, 2023. ****
To use the ballot shown below, complete and mail it by December 20 to
1815 Cameron Ave. La Crosse, WI 54601

Kathy Allen - Kathy lives in La Crosse and was elected to the Coulee Region board in 2018. She has served as the group's president since January 2020. Kathy was a member of the "Ready for 100" team that worked with the city and county of La Crosse to pass 100% renewable energy transition resolutions. Since 2022, she has volunteered with the Sierra Club Wisconsin Chapter's Beyond Coal to Clean Energy team, campaigning against Dairyland Power's proposed new fossil gas plant in Superior, WI. In her free time, she enjoys cycling on the Driftless Region's roads and trails.

Ned Gatzke - Ned has lived in rural Monroe County for 45+ years, interacting with a small woodland and prairie landscape. He first joined the Sierra Club in 1974. He is on the board of Wisconsin Conservation Voters/Voices, has been on the board of The Prairie Enthusiasts (Coulee Region Chapter), and is a citizen participant on the Monroe County Climate Change Task Force. Ned was present for the first Earth Day in 1970, and his travels throughout North America since then have provided him a larger perspective on environmental issues for people living in other places.

Larry Sleznikow - Larry has been a Sierra Club member for over a decade. He retired from Western Technical College in 2023 where he was an instructional technologist who helped instructors use technology effectively for their teaching. While employed at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse he was a founding member of UWL's Joint Committee for Environmental Sustainability. He is a La Crosse City Council member who chairs the city's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee that advocates for equitable, carbon-free, alternate transportation options in La Crosse. He is also the leader of the La Crosse chapter of Citizens' Climate Lobby, an international organization working for effective legislative action on climate change. With three daughters and three grandchildren, Larry is committed to working for a livable, sustainable planet Earth for future generations and all living things.

Cathy Van Maren - Cathy is retired and lives in La Crosse but also spends time in Vernon County. She has been the newsletter editor for several years and is active on the state Sierra Club Transit Equity team. She's an "active transportation" (public transit, walking, bicycling) advocate, working with local and state transit advocacy groups to push for better transportation and commuter cycling infrastructure, but she also owns an electric car and has worked on several EV education and outreach programs. She's on the city's Climate Action Plan team and volunteers with neighborhood Victory Gardens.



Coulee Region Sierra Club Board Elections - Ballot

Vote (X) for up to four people. Mail your ballot by December 20 to ensure it is delivered by December 30. If you vote online, please do not use the mail-in ballot. Email CRSierraClub@gmail.com OR call 608-315-2693 with questions.

Member number (REQUIRED): _____

_____ Kathy Allen

_____ write in

_____ Ned Gatzke

_____ write in

_____ Larry Sleznikow

_____ write in

_____ Cathy Van Maren

_____ write in