



Sierra

Newsletter of the Coulee Region Group
DECEMBER 2018

"The window of opportunity for action is almost closed." - Petteri Taalas, Secretary-General, World Meteorological Organization

Join us for great food and interesting conversation!

COULEE REGION SIERRA CLUB WINTER POTLUCK

Tuesday, December 11 * 6:00 p.m.
Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship
401 West Avenue South, La Crosse

Bring some food to share. Beverages provided.



EVERYONE WELCOME - members and friends!

Park in the lot in the back of the building or consider taking the MTU Circulator (stops at Cass and West Ave - one block away - see tinyurl.com/MTUCirculator).

The Greener Life: Jan. 29

Our first program of the new year will be on **January 29** at **7:00 p.m. at the Ho-Chunk Three Rivers House** (8th and Main, La Crosse). Local author and sustainable living advocate **CS Sherin** will share ways to green your lifestyle and reduce your environmental impact. We'll have more details in our (online only) January newsletter! In the meantime, let's share ideas online and in our newsletters next year! Email your tips to crsierraclub@gmail.com or share on our FB page or on Twitter!



GO GREEN IN '19!

REDUCE YOUR USE OF RESOURCES! Don't buy or use single use plastics like straws, bags, and bottled water. Use reusable coffee/tea filters. Carry a water bottle. Stop junk mail (dmachoice.thedma.org). Save and reuse clean-one-side paper. Read online rather than mailed (we still mail HUNDREDS of newsletters to those who could easily read online. If you're one, tell us **ONLINE ONLY!** (crsierraclub@gmail.com)) Buy/Sell used items or donate them (freecycle.org). Buy in bulk. Take and reuse shopping bags. Take your own reusable "doggie bag" when you eat out. Use washable cloth rags and napkins. Repurpose when possible (makeuseof.com). Urge others, especially at work and school, to make changes, too!

**You can't hide this truth:
without action, global warming will
be catastrophic** (tinyurl.com/SCGWTruth)

Coulee Region Education Grants

Thanks to a grant from the Paul E. Stry Foundation, the Coulee Region Sierra Club is able to award environmental education grants of up to \$200 every year. The **application for 2019 grants** is available at tinyurl.com/crscedugrantapp. Teachers and organizations who work with elementary and middle school children in the Coulee Region (Crawford, Grant, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau, and Vernon counties) may apply. The deadline is January 5, 2019. Call Maureen at 608 784-9324/784-5678 with questions.

Sierra Club 2019 Calendars!

Your purchase of **Sierra Club calendars** will benefit our club and environmental programs and protection activities. The calendars cost \$14.95 for the wall calendar and \$15.95 for the engagement book. Get your calendar at our winter potluck or order from Maureen Kinney: 784-9324/784-5678 or email maureen@johnsflaherty.com

SIERRA CLUB NOTE AND HOLIDAY CARDS are for sale at the online store. store.sierraclub.org/calendars-cards-c28.aspx

YOUR input requested!

The Coulee Region Group board is looking for your feedback! Please complete the short online survey* so we can find opportunities, programs, and activities that interest you. Please complete the survey at tinyurl.com/crscmbrrsurvey by January 5 if possible. *If you don't go online, please mail a note to our return address (see p. 4) with your comments: 1. What outdoor activities do you regularly participate in? 2. What outdoor activities would you like to try or learn more about? 3. What environmental issues interest or concern you? 4. What Sierra Club activities did you attend or participate in this year? 5. Please suggest activities or programs for our club. 6. How often do you read the Coulee Region group newsletter? 7. What Sierra Club volunteer or activist opportunities would you be interested in? (see specific suggestions online) 8. What county do you live in? 9. If you'd like a board member to contact you, please provide contact info.

Ready for 100 Team

At its October 2018 meeting, the Sustainable La Crosse Commission voted to recommend partner municipalities pursue Ready for 100 resolutions. The John Muir Chapter Sierra Club is producing a sign-on document for allies - businesses, non-profits, individuals, and others - to show broad support for this initiative and welcome more voices to the effort. The document should be available by January 1.

La Crosse Mayor Tim Kabat is still the only Coulee Region official on the Mayors for 100 list. Get your mayor onboard! (see sc.org/mayors-action) and join our Coulee Region Sierra Club Ready for 100 team. In January, we will begin educating our communities about the benefits of moving as quickly as possible to 100% renewable energy sources. If you know of a club, group, or organization we could talk to or to join the effort or for more information, please email crsierraclub@gmail.com or call 608 315-2693 (leave a message).



GO GREEN IN '19!

BE A CLIMATE CITIZEN and VOTER! Monitor how elected officials vote and what environmental legislation they sponsor. (See tinyurl.com/wilcv-scorecard) Call and send emails regularly. Attend open office/town hall meetings and talk about climate and environmental concerns. Connect with environmental groups and participate in online and in person actions. Talk about the importance of voting and citizen lobbying to others. Write letters to the editor or articles for your organizations' newsletters or websites about voting for the environment. Help people register to vote and get to the polls. If you can, donate to candidates and programs supporting a sustainable environment. Consider running for office.

Green New Deal

On November 20, youth activists associated with the Sunrise Movement urged members of Congress nationwide to back a **Green New Deal** and the Sierra Club redoubled its calls for that platform. "A Green New Deal can create millions of family-sustaining union jobs upgrading our infrastructure, making our communities more resilient to the climate crisis, retrofitting and weatherizing our buildings, restoring our ecosystems, and moving our country to a 100% clean, renewable energy economy." Michale Brune, Executive Director, Sierra Club See tinyurl.com/sc-gnd for details and how you can help.

Sierra #1812

Newsletter of the Coulee Region Group, John Muir Chapter, Sierra Club is published four times per year.
Coulee Region Sierra Club, 620 S 23rd Street,
La Crosse, WI 54601

Board Elections

Bill Katra's term is expiring and he'll leave the board after eight years of service. **Thank you, Bill!** Current board members Maureen Kinney and Avery Van Gaard are on the ballot as well as Nancy Hartje of La Crosse, an environmentalist and retired educator, and Jake Schnepfer, a junior UWL business major from Chicago who wants to further the goal of protecting our planet. You may also write in and vote for another if you wish.

Please vote for up to four people to serve from 2019-2021.

Bring your ballot to the December 11 Sierra Club event or mail it by December 20 to the return address shown on page 4.

Coulee Region Sierra Club Board Ballot (vote for four)

- _____ Nancy Hartje
- _____ Maureen Kinney
- _____ Jake Schnepfer
- _____ Avery Van Gaard
- _____ Write in: _____

GO GREEN IN '19!

REDUCE ELECTRICITY USE Most utility provided electricity in the Coulee Region is generated from coal and natural gas. Upgrade to Energy Star appliances, use LEDs, weatherize, and turn things off when not needed. Wash with cold water. Ditch the dryer. Turn an electric water heater down or off for three days or longer. Plan to reduce your use and monitor progress. Use solar for lights, heating, recharging. Be an energy hawk at your school or work. Turn off lights in empty meeting rooms and TVs in empty waiting rooms. Ask merchants what they are doing to conserve energy. Join the Ready for 100 movement in your community.

Arrive Together: Equity & Access

On October 23, the Sierra Club along with 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, WISDOM and WISDOM affiliates, the Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired, and the Chippewa Valley Transit Alliance released a report on transportation in Wisconsin - **Arrive Together: Transportation Access and Equity in Wisconsin**. A first of its kind report, **Arrive Together** shows how people's needs are not being met by Wisconsin's transportation system. The report examines the effectiveness of public transit access to major employers and other areas of interest in nine cities and regions across Wisconsin. It highlights stories from transit riders, opportunities for improvement within transit systems, and the serious barriers and needs for improvement at the state level.

A media event at La Crosse's Grand River Station Transit Center included several speakers highlighting important aspects of the study: Cassie Steiner, co-author; Obbie King of La Crosse Area Transit Advocates; Maureen Freedland, CouleeCap; and Rep. Jill Billings. Thanks to the MTU staff, local speakers, and local media (see links to coverage at cr-sierra.blogspot.com) Read the report at tinyurl.com/jmctransitrept

Solar Group Buy - SunVest

In October we hosted a program about the Sierra Club's solar group buy program which allows people to get a discount on solar PV installation from SunVest Solar, a Wisconsin-based company. So far, 114 kw of installations are set up. You do not need to be a Sierra Club member to sign up for a solar site assessment, a personalized cost/benefit information packet, and, for those who move forward, complete installation of a solar system. More info: sunvest.com/programs/sierraclub/



We're still looking for CR Sierra Club members around the region to email with news of events and issues in their communities so we can get more people involved. Email crsierraclub@gmail.com.

GO GREEN IN '19!

GREEN YOUR TRANSPORTATION! Vehicle emissions are the biggest source of greenhouse gases. If you can, trade your vehicle for a lower emissions, more fuel efficient, hybrid, or electric one. Keep tires inflated and do regular maintenance. Pledge to drive your fossil fueled vehicle less and monitor progress toward that goal. Group errands into one trip. If you can, work from home. Push for online meetings. Walk, bike, car pool, car share, take public transportation or use a combo - your bike on the bus or park and ride. Don't idle your car! (tinyurl.com/epacarspollute) Teach your kids to use public transportation. Talk to your school about an anti-idling program. Push for better public transit, workplace rewards for car pooling, and better local transportation policies.



Coulee Region Sierra Club
Maureen Kinney
620 South 23rd Street
La Crosse, WI 54601

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A win for the environment and human health

One of the biggest winning outcomes from the election in Wisconsin was the environment. All statewide races were won by pro-environment candidates ... because of the tireless efforts of countless volunteers including many, many Sierra Club members who helped register voters and turn out folks to the polls. However the November 6 election was not all roses. It showed us once again the effect of gerrymandering. At the same time that environmental candidates won all the statewide elections, we lost one state Senate seat held by an environmental legislator. The environment was a big winner for three reasons. First, with Tony Evers as governor, we can look forward to environmental decisions made on scientific grounds. The second environmental win was the election of Josh Kaul as State Attorney General. There will be no more tortured legal opinions that inappropriately undercut the ability of the DNR to do its job. It also means our environmental laws will be enforced. Finally, changes in the US House of Representatives means no more threats to cut the EPA, Endangered Species Act, and other important federal environmental laws. Read more at sierraclub.org/wisconsin/blog/2018/11/environment-and-human-health-will-benefit-because-election

DATES TO REMEMBER! (cr-sierra.blogspot.com)

- Dec. 4 Grant County Rural Stewardship mtg**
6:30 pm Platteville Public Library
- Dec. 5 FILM: Decoding the Driftless**
7 p.m. UWL Student Union Theater
- Dec. 8 Tree Farm Walk** 10 am Kann Tree Farm,
7762 Cty B, Sparta (tinyurl.com/mvctreefarm)
- Dec. 11 Public Hearing - CAFO discharge permit**
2 pm 916 Elm Street, Lancaster
- Dec. 11 CR Sierra Club Winter Potluck**
6 p.m. N1965 Valley Road, La Crosse
- Jan. 29 A Green Life with CS Sherin**
7:00 pm Ho-Chunk House (8th & Main), La Crosse

GO GREEN IN '19!

FOOD The Natural Resources Defense Council reports up to 40% of food is wasted annually in the US. Growing, processing, transporting, storing, and disposing of uneaten food is expensive, wastes resources, and contributes to greenhouse gases. Food is the number one addition to landfills nationwide. Meat and dairy have larger carbon footprints than grain or vegetable products. Organic food has a lower carbon footprint. Eat locally grown organic food and a more plant based diet including some meat/dairy free meals. Use shopping lists and menus. Label and date food. Monitor and rotate refrigerator and freezer items regularly. More tips at epa.gov/recycle/reducing-wasted-food-home