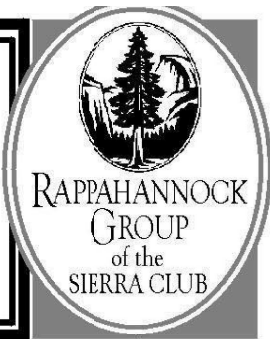


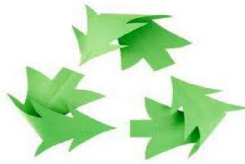
2011 December January February 2012

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Serving the Residents of
Culpeper, Orange, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Fredericksburg,
Caroline, King George



Upcoming Events



Holiday Party

**Thursday, December 8
7-9:00 p.m.**

**Fredericksburg United Methodist
Church**

**308 Hanover St. (enter on Charlotte St.
entrance)**

Join us for our Annual Holiday Celebration. We will enjoy sharing conservation ideas, issues and projects and planning for 2012. Entertainment, refreshments and delicious treats will be served. We will also have special raffle baskets and Sierra Club Calendars gift items for purchase. Canned Item(s) for the Food Pantry is appreciated. Free and open to the public. Contact Eric: ericlawrencestott@gmail.com



**Sierra Club Calendars Make A Great
Holiday Gift. Available at our Holiday Party
12/8/11. Proceeds support RGSC!**

**January 23, 2012 Conservation Lobby
Day Richmond, VA CenterStage,
Rythmn Hall**

Learn about important proposed conservation and environmental legislation. Then gear up and personally meet with your legislators. Our Virginia General Assembly needs to hear from the citizens on environmental issues. Plan to attend! More info here: <http://valcvf.org/>

KEEP THE BAN-KEEP OUR FRESH WATER SAFE

by Linda C. Muller



Keep The Ban Rally @ the University of Mary Washington
(photo by Linda C. Muller)

On October 20, 2011, concerned UMW students and citizens gathered outside Lee Hall at the University of Mary Washington to voice their support of "Keep the Ban" on uranium mining in Virginia. VA Chapter Sierra Club intern and UWM junior Graham Givens organized the grassroots rally and gave a rousing speech in support of keeping the ban. RGSC members Paula Chow and Ed Sandtner were stationed at an information table and collected signed petitions in support of the Keep the Ban. Jody Lochmiller also helped with petitions. Joining the rally was Mary Rafferty of the VA Chapter and Senator Edd Houck. Senator Houck pressed the need to keep the ban on uranium mining to protect the Rappahannock River watershed and to ensure a safe and healthy supply of fresh drinking water. Mary Rafferty emphasized that keeping the ban on uranium mining is a statewide issue. Should the ban be lifted then mining companies could consider uranium mining at other uranium sites identified in Virginia.

Decision Time Is Fast Approaching

One of the largest deposits of uranium east of the Mississippi River is located in Pittsylvania County, Virginia (Coles Hill). Virginia Uranium Inc. (VUI) and foreign investors have pressed hard to repeal the uranium mining ban in Virginia. The uranium mining industry has wined and dined VA state representatives and have funded expensive junkets to France and Canada to help "educate" VA elected officials on uranium mining. VUI also provided the funding for a soon to be released non site specific uranium mining study conducted by the National Academy of Sciences. The study will provide a technical analysis but not make any recommendation. **The decision to keep the ban or lift the ban on uranium mining will be made by Virginia State Legislators in the upcoming 2012 general assembly session.**

We All Live Downstream

Virginia is blessed by an abundance of fresh drinking water, especially in the eastern /coastal regions of the state. The same region experiences regular flooding events spawned by tropical storms and hurricanes. (cont on pg 2)

Take Action! Contact Your VA Representative

The Virginia General Assembly will be considering lifting the ban on uranium mining in the upcoming 2012 assembly session. Virginia Uranium Inc and its army of lobbyists have **spent over a million dollars** in attempts to sway our elected officials. **Its time for the citizens to speak up and be heard.** It's important to contact your Virginia elected officials and tell them to keep the ban on uranium mining. We value our natural resources, our health, our safety, our future. **Clean and safe drinking water: PRICELESS.** Lets Keep The Ban on uranium mining

Resources:
Keep The Ban
<http://www.keeptheban.org/>

The Southern Environmental Law Center
http://www.southernenvironment.org/cases/uranium_mining_in_virginia/

Virginia League of Conservation Voters
<http://valcv.org/>

Who Is My VA Legislator? Link to look up your representative:
<http://conview.state.va.us/whosmy.nsf/main?openform>

History: "Uranium firm to boost leasing land in region" by Larry Evans
December 12, 1981 Free Lance Star Article
<http://news.google.com/newspapers?id=acBLAAAIBAJ&sjid=W4sDAAAIBAJ&pg=4790%2C2136280>



SUCCESSFUL & FUN 3rd Annual AMERICA RECYCLES WEEK

By Paula Chow

It's the third year that RGSC has teamed with Ten Thousand Villages to extend America Recycles Day into a week long event that included an expanded line-up of activities. The purpose of America Recycles is to engage citizens and the local business community in educational, fun, and pro-active "reduce-reuse-recycle" activities.

More Activites and Events

Participants had an opportunity to tour Aikido of Fredericksburg's green building, tour the salvage and recovery operations of the Goodwill Warehouse and the Stafford County Landfill and Recycling Center. There was a "Woods-Good" walk at the Salamander Trail in Spotsylvania that showcased nature's own recycling, as well as demonstrations of vermicomposting and making reusable bags from T-shirts. This year also included a Swap Meet, Trashion Show, River Clean Up and Clean Up the Butts Campaign.

Engaging Local Businesses – City of Fredericksburg Proclamation

The business community participated by choosing particular items to receive to and donate to their charity of choice and/or encouraging participants to use their own reusable bags when making purchases for the "Tag Your Bag" program. The businesses were generous with their door prize donations. Participants picked up punch cards and tags at the opening event or at the participating businesses. Eligibility for door prizes required 10 punches and/or 6 tag initials.

This year's America Recycles Week **doubled** its local business participation which resulted in many generous door prizes. Fredericksburg Mayor Tomzak issued a proclamation honoring America Recycles Week and Colonial Cupcakes donated their cupcakes for the opening event. From fifty dollar gift cards to an art workshop gift certificate, every participant this year walked out with a door prize at the closing event held at Ten Thousand Villages. If they participated in both programs, they came away with at least two prizes. (cont. Page 3)

FEMA has designated three flood hazard zones at the Coles Hills site. There is also a spring and several acres of wetlands in the southern area of the site which may indicate a high quantity of underground water. Virginia's unique climate and hydrology is not conducive to safe uranium mining-as it is subject to regular flooding-which can result in contamination to fresh drinking water supplies.

The downstream impact from uranium contamination on fresh drinking supplies would be devastating. The City of Virginia Beach published a study that shows if a major waste spill occurred, radioactive contaminants would flow from the Bannister River to Kerr Reservoir and Lake Gaston . Kerr Reservoir is the primary drinking water source for Halifax, Clarksville, Mecklenburg and Brunswick Counties. Lake Gaston is the drinking water source of Virginia Beach, Norfolk and Chesapeake City.

Uranium Foot In The Door: VA History

If the uranium mining ban is lifted it could set off a chain of uranium mining explorations. In the early 1980's, a company called Marline Uranium Corporation acquired hundreds of uranium mining leases in Madison, Orange, Culpeper and Fauquier Counties. Waters flowing through the sites drain into the **Rapidan, Occoquan, and Rappahannock Rivers.** Citizens were outraged over possible radioactive contamination in their water and the City of Orange and Orange County Board of Supervisors called for a state moratorium on uranium mining. With a uranium mining ban in place those leases were never developed. It is likely that if the uranium ban is lifted in Virginia, the other lease sites would be re-activated with consequential impacts to the Fredericksburg Area water supply.

Fresh Healthy Drinking Water- Our Most Essential Natural Resource

There has never been an active uranium mining operation east of the Mississippi river. Active uranium mining has occurred in the arid and less populated regions of the western United States (ie Arizona, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming and New Mexico). Many of these same western states have experienced severe droughts and clamor for fresh water supplies, while Virginia enjoys an abundance of fresh water. Fresh healthy drinking water is an essential natural resource which we literally cannot live without. Uranium mining will imperil Virginia water supplies with radioactive contaminants. In 1982, Virginia had the foresight to place a ban on uranium mining but that may change unless we take action.(cont next column)

America Recycles cont from page 2

The Swap Meet proved successful for all who participated – exchanging more treasures, not trash. If there wasn't a desired swap, participants took items they could use to recycle/donate at a participating business to get their cards punched. This group really knows how to recycle!

Participants reported that the tour of the Rappahannock Goodwill Recycling Warehouse was an eye opener about how products are recycled and the tour of the Stafford Landfill was equally enlightening as the technology and science behind managing a landfill is quite complicated.

Recycling Quick Skits-Trashion Show – Red Carpet Creativity

The November 10th RGSC meeting included recycling themed “quick skits” that presented educational tips on recycling with a twist of humor. The most entertaining event was the Trashion Show, a true “Project Earthway.” Entrants fashioned clothing and accessories from trash/recyclables and were very creative and even stunning. Two local artists even submitted trashions. There were fancy fascinators to wear at a Royal Wedding, handbags, jewelry and some awesome clothing. Some of the trashion designs were truly Red Carpet worthy. Some silly trashion gave cause to pause about how much trash humans generate and its affect on the environment and natural resources. This was the idea behind the Trashion Show, an original creation of last year's RGSC's intern, Desirée de Haven, which had its debut at the 2011 Earth Day in Fredericksburg.

Feedback –Planning for America Recycles 2012

The feedback at the closing event gave the committee ideas on improving the event. Most participants expressed the need to expand America Recycles over a two week period to allow more time and opportunity for citizens to engage in the activities. Everyone expressed having FUN and many folks did it with a friend. It was also expressed that America Recycles Week is a very family oriented event. Many of the participants said the America Recycles provided motivation to visit some local stores for the first time. A couple of women commented that they were not particularly eco-conscious but stated “We are now”! They plan to get more friends involved next year. This is exactly what America Recycles Week was designed to do.

RGSC Members- We Need YOU!

While we had excellent participation with local businesses, we were lacking support and attendance from our RGSC membership. There is always the same handful of RGSC members who shoulder the workload. Involvement could range from just an hour of volunteering to making contacts with favorite businesses inviting them to participate in America Recycles Week or by simply participating in the events. The event is seen as a creative and not overwhelming way to educate and bring awareness to the public about how to reduce, reuse and recycle. With each member's involvement no matter how little, the community's carbon footprint can significantly decrease. We can only be as effective as our membership is involved. We are already planning for 2012 (cont next column)

Thank You To Sponsors & Supporters

The Recycling Committee would like to thank our dedicated and annual supporters of America Recycles Week, Aviv Goldberg and Donna Pienkowski who generously donate their time for presentations and tours for the event. The committee is also appreciative of the volunteers of Ten Thousand Villages who made the tags for the “Tag Your Bag” program and contributed other valuable work hours to the effort. And a special thanks to the UWM Ecology Club members and supporters. The committee feels that the business community is becoming increasingly involved in the recycling efforts and applaud their participation.

Thank you to these sponsors for donating door prizes for the Recycling Punch Card drawing

Rappahannock Goodwill Industries • Monkee's • VA Runner • Parcel Plus • Rob's Car Wash • Harvest Market • Ten Thousand Villages • Rappahannock Sierra Club • Edible Arrangements • Encore Furniture • Caribou Coffee Qdoba • Sequels Upscale Resale Shop • Crave Frozen Yogurt • Juvenile Justice of Prince William County

Thank you to these sponsors for donating door prizes for Tag Your Bag drawing

Ten Thousand Villages • Scrapdoodles • Simply Sweet • Harvest Market • Spotsy Thriftworld • The Pear Tree • Happily Ever After Children's Consignment Shop • Colonial Cupcakes • Irish Eyes • PONSHP • Griffin Bookshop • A Place in Time • Tied With A Bow • Jabberwocky Children's Books • The Mock Turtle Monkee's • Scentchips Cat's Closet • Goolrick's • The Virginia Wine Experience • Corky's • Fredericksburg Antique Gallery • Write at Lydia's • C & T Produce



Trashion Show Participants included Ria Firth, Evelyn, Nancy Quinn, Paula Chow, Eve Cederbaum, (holding City of Fredericksburg Proclamation) Kate, Ed Sandtner, Leslie Brier. (not pictured but participated: Molly Baldwin and Graham Givens)

Message From Your Chair

by Eric Lawrence Stott

2011 has been an incredibly busy year for the Rappahannock Group SC. I am proud of our volunteers and supporters who have worked hard to share our message of Explore Enjoy and Protect our regions natural resources. By reading Paula Chows review of this years America Recycles you will understand that a lot of work and planning went into this event-but we need more support from our RGSC membership. We have tabled at events, sponsored movie screenings, co-sponsored Earth Day, conducted clean-ups and have supported rallies like Keep The Ban. We do all of this to generate interest and support for important environmental issues. As a grassroots volunteer organization, we are motivated by our passion and concern for the environment. Please make a New Years resolution for 2012 to be more active in YOUR RGSC: attend meetings, volunteer/ support RGSC sponsored events, write an article of the newsletter, share your ideas. A little goes a long way!

Be sure to join us for our annual Holiday gathering Thursday, December 8, 2011 at the Fredericksburg United Methodist Church @ 7 pm. We will have Sierra Club Calendars, raffle baskets, light snacks and refreshments. We look forward to seeing you there!

Keep Virginia Clean, Green & RECYCLE

ericlawrencestott@gmail.com

Connect with Rappahannock Group Sierra Club



“Like” RGSC is on [FACEBOOK!](#)

RGSC Website

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

RGSC Email News Group
send an email to sign-up
rappsierragroup@gmail.com

RGSC Mailing Address:
RGSC
P.O. Box 7972
Fredericksburg, VA 22404

Email Contacts for RGSC Ex-Com

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Webmaster: Doug Ferguson
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Board Member: Jim Lynch
jplynch@crosslink.net



RGSC Programs, Events & Outings

*** RGSC meets at the **Fredericksburg United Methodist Church , 308 Hanover Street. Enter on Charlotte Street Entrance.** All meetings are open to the public. Donations of canned goods accepted for FUMC Food Pantry. Bring a Friend! Check website for updates: <http://virginia.sierraclub.org/rg/>

Sierra Club/ RGSC Programs

Thursday, December 8 ,7:00 pm- 9:00 pm RGSC Annual Holiday Party. Gift basket raffles, Sierra Club Calendar for purchase. Light Refreshments. Bring A Guest. Contact: Eric Lawrence Stott: ericlawrencestott@gmail.com

Thursday, January 12 2012 7 pm to 9 pm RGSC meeting. 2012 VA General Assembly Legislative Review. This will be a pivotal year for environmental/conservation issues. Keeping the Ban on Uranium Mining, Clean Rivers/Forests. Learn more about upcoming conservation/environmental legislation and how you can get involved.

Thursday February 9th, 7pm to 9 pm RGSC meeting: Black History Month: African Americans and the Environmental Movement . Discussion w/guest speaker TBA. Contact: Eric Lawrence Stott ericlawrencestott@gmail.com

Thursday March 8, 7 pm to 9 pm RGSC meeting: Spring Cleaning the NonToxic Way. Learn how you can clean without all of the harmful chemicals and toxins. Contact: Eric Lawrence Stott: ericlawrencestott@gmail.com

Coming up April 14, 2012 EARTH DAY

Other Events/Non RGSC Sponsored Events

Saturday December 3 Virginia Environmental Legislative Workshop., Richmond VA, sponsored by the Virginia Conservation Network. Registration \$25. Contact Dana Roberts at VCN 804.644.0283 <http://vcnva.org/ans/>

Monday January 23, 2012 Environmental Lobby Day, Richmond, VA. Meet and speak to your Virginia Representative on important environmental issues. Morning session includes legislative updates and reviews. Get Involved and become a Legislative Contact Team Member. <http://www.vcnva.org>

Fredericksburg Green Drinks Last Thursday of the month 6-8 pm. Otter House, 1005 Princess Anne St Fredericksburg, VA On Facebook: Green Drinks FXBG <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=30214117143&v=wall>

Outings

There are many outings offered via SCPRO- Sierra Club's Potomac Outings Program. Please contact the SCPRO website for listings : <http://www.sierrapotomac.org/>

Additional Hiking/Outings Non Sierra Club:

Northern Virginia Hiking Club:

<http://www.nvhc.com/>

Potomac Appalachian Trail Club:

<http://www.patc.net/PublicView/>

