

# LANCASTER NEWS

## 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

Newsletter for the Lancaster Group of the Sierra Club

December 2015

Vol. 8, No. 1

### Message from the Co-Chairs

Hello to all Sierrans and friends of the Sierra Club. I trust 2015 has been a good year for you and that 2016 will be even better. And, if you haven't already done so, I hope in the new year you'll consider involving yourself in one of our many fun and environmental-friendly activities. For that matter, anyone reading this newsletter is invited to participate in our events and meetings. We're always open to suggestions and ideas--especially from new faces.

As it is with me, Climate Crisis seems to be on the minds of everyone these days. Before this last decade, we rarely saw news headlines dealing with weather-related topics; they now appear almost daily. Scientific experts who study weather patterns and atmosphere for a living are obviously much more qualified to speak to the issue than a "naysayer" news reporter whose employer is financially supported with advertising by the largest polluters.

Remember, we're all connected in this world. Living in a relatively flat state far enough away from the ocean, the folks of Lowcountry South Carolina never thought that climate change would affect them directly; however, 16- to 24-inch rains spreading across an area will make most dams fail, and that's exactly what happened. Water from melting glaciers in the polar regions must go somewhere...so its materializing as violent downpours, higher than normal rainfall (when it does rain), droughts that last longer, more prevalent and violent tornadoes, and in shorelines being eroded or lost. I ask: What's wrong with Not Polluting? You can learn more about what you can do and how to talk to your friends about

### Helping Hand—Taking the Classroom Outdoors



Students lend helping hands to clean up Hand Woods

joined forces in a massive clean-up. The next phase of the project will be to create a second classroom space around a large silver maple and connect the two areas via a path along a stream where a natural bog-type area exists for yet a third area for education. Look for opportunities to volunteer and make a difference for the environment and the community on our website.

The Sierra Club-Lancaster Group has partnered with Edward Hand Middle School to create an outdoor classroom space in Hand Woods to benefit both Hand Middle School and Washington Elementary students. Over 50 volunteers, including helping hands from the group EXIT Lancaster,

Climate Crisis by visiting <http://vault.sierraclub.org/sprawl/globalwarming.pdf> or <http://angeles.sierraclub.org/climatechange>.

Hope to see you at a program, general meeting or outing in 2016.  
Brian Vandegrift, SC Lancaster Group Co-Chair

**Co-chairs, Brian Vandegrift and Steve Heim, wish everyone a Happy Holidays and invite you to come to our annual Holiday Potluck Dinner held at Lancaster Country Day School on December 16th at 6:30 p.m. And join us in the new year for outings, educational presentations, or general meetings. Please check out our website for upcoming events.**

Last year we reported that only 43 out of the 100 trees and shrubs that we planted in Lancaster County Central Park survived the harsh winter. This year we are happy to say that those trees, along with some new trees from another planting, are thriving. Check them out along Mill Creek off of Exhibit Farm Road.



### WANTED: Outings Leaders and Committee Members

Bring your ideas for outings—hikes, clean-ups, bike or paddle trips. The committee meets twice a year. Contact Brian Vandegrift at [brianv@centurylink.net](mailto:brianv@centurylink.net) if

## "Green Project" Grants Awarded to Nine Local Organizations

The first of our "green project" grants--ranging from \$125 to \$500--were awarded in October to nine Lancaster County organizations, each of which has shown a need for support of a venture that promotes sustainability, expands environmental awareness and improves green infrastructure. These grants represent the initial awards that were distributed through our recently established grant program.

Organizations awarded the grants (along with their project descriptions) were: Church of the Apostles ("Science in the Park" program for inner city elementary students); Compass Mark (introduction of environmentally beneficial systems to its gardening focus); Edward Hand Middle School (schoolyard habitat program); Lancaster County Conservancy (rain garden at Climbers Run Nature Preserve); Lancaster Mennonite Middle School (on-campus pollinator garden); North Museum of Nature and Science (program for parents and young children that introduces them to nature and science); Rader Park (rain garden/meadow to control runoff into Brubaker Run); Green Sanctuary Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Lancaster (installation of Photovoltaic Array system on the church); and West Lampeter Township (construction and installation of bat boxes on all municipal properties). The grant applications were evaluated on such criteria as environmental objective, unique aspect of the project, quality of the submission, and how the Sierra Club-Lancaster Group could be involved.

All told, 14 organizations applied for grants. Commenting on behalf of the grant program committee, chair Jim Meenan said, "All of us were surprised and delighted that so many Lancaster groups responded to our first request for proposals. Equally exciting," he continued, "was the professional way in which many of the applicants expertly developed their proposals."

The grant program is funded with money generated by our annual Polar Bear 5K Trail Run/Hike (see related story in this issue of the newsletter). Eligible to apply for a grant are those charitable, educational and business organizations in Lancaster County that demonstrate a commitment to the Sierra Club's mission of "exploring, enjoying and protecting the planet."

Deadline to apply for our next round of grants, up to \$500, is March 1, 2016. Grant awards will be announced on April 22, 2016, in celebration of Earth Day. For complete details about the grant program, please visit <http://lancastersierraclub.org/grant-program/>, call (717) 475-0586 or email [jimsmeenan@gmail.com](mailto:jimsmeenan@gmail.com).



Our 2015 bicycle outing, held on a beautiful early fall morning, had a very special guest this year. We were delighted to have Joanne Kilgour, PA Sierra Club Chapter director, ride along with us and serve as our informative energy production expert. Ten people joined us for this jaunt on the relatively new Enola Low Grade Rail Trail, which skirts the Susquehanna River from below the Turkey Hill wind turbines to the Safe Harbor hydroelectric dam. Along the trail, Joanne spoke about the various energy producers that line the river. In the process, we gained a much better understanding

of wind turbines, landfill methane capture, oil trains (there is an active route just below the trail), and hydroelectric power, as well as Sierra Club policy regarding these entities and issues.

Next year we are thinking of having a bike outing on the new trail that runs north from Columbia to Bainbridge. This ride would be close to some of the more controversial energy producer sites in the area, including the Lancaster County incinerator, the Brunner Island coal-fired plant (one of the dirtiest in the state and it still uses outdated smoke stacks), and Perdue Farms 'soon to be built' soybean processing plant and problematic hexane tanks. Keep an eye on our website for this and other spring/summer activities.

### **Runners and Hikers:** **Time to register for** **the 6th Annual Polar** **Bear 5K Trail Run** **Hike Just Weeks** **Away!**

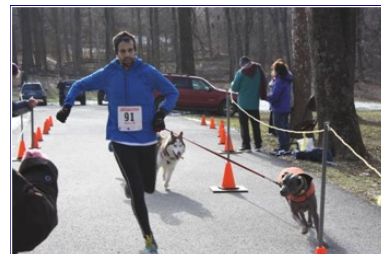
Get ready runners and hikers! We're just weeks away now from our biggest fundraiser of the year: the annual Sierra Club - Lancaster Group Polar Bear 5K (3.1 mile) Trail Run/Hike. It'll take place at 10 a.m. Saturday, January 16, 2016, in picturesque Lancaster County Central Park. And don't forget, dogs on a leash are welcome...so bring them along to run or hike with you; they always add to the festive-like feeling of the day.

If you didn't already know, this year's PB 5K, held in January, was a record setter. More than 310 runners and hikers registered for the race and scores of volunteers donated their expertise to truly make this a fun and professionally-run event. Not only that, at least 45 friendly canines (another milestone) participated with their masters.

January 2016's trail run/hike will follow the same route as last January, winding through the park on well-maintained trails with some hills. Race day registration and check-in will begin at 8:30 a.m. at the park's Pavilion 22 (Kiwanis Lodge).

The registration fee is \$20 from now until December 26 (2015); \$25 after this date and until race day. Those who pre-register by January 7, 2016, are guaranteed a specially designed t-shirt. For registration forms and more information, please visit our website, [www.lancastersierraclub.org](http://www.lancastersierraclub.org), email us at [sierraclubevent@gmail.com](mailto:sierraclubevent@gmail.com), or "Like" us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/sierraclublancaster>.

Funds generated through the 2016 Polar Bear 5K will aid our local efforts to end global warming, the reason polar bears and other creatures are at risk of extinction. More specifically, the money will be used to support our new grant program that was launched earlier this year (see related story in this issue of the newsletter), as well as a variety of outdoor activities and educational programs. Remember, by running or hiking in this race, you'll be making tracks for change!





## Cast Your Vote for These Executive Committee Nominees

**Barbara Bromley:** As I look back, I think I have always been “environmentally conscious.” However, over the last couple decades, I have become more focused on the importance of environmental education as a critical avenue for bringing about change. As a teacher, I am passionate about getting my students outside to appreciate and understand the interrelationships of the natural world. I believe if students feel a connection to nature, they will be more inclined to take the personal action steps throughout their lives to protect the environment. Being a member of the Sierra Club gives me the opportunity to act on my environmental convictions of education and action by supporting the important work of this club in our community.

**Kate Ruof:** Thank you for considering me for the ExCom. I am thrilled to be a part of the Sierra Club and have enjoyed working with the ExCom and other members to increase conservation awareness and educate the public about the important issues affecting our environment. My strong interest in environmental issues led me to major in geology at Franklin & Marshall College, and I have a broad background in the other natural sciences as well. For many years I have volunteered at the North Museum of Natural History & Science, and more recently for the Humane League of Lancaster County. I hope to continue to use my science background and my passion for protecting the environment to make a difference.

**James Meenan:** I remember catching crayfish in the streams of King of Prussia when I was a young boy before the mall was built. I saw firsthand what unbridled development can do to the environment. As a result, I committed myself to a career in environmental sciences. I’ve been involved in the environmental movement for over thirty years. I received a B.S. in biology with a concentration in ecology. I have numerous post graduate credits in education. I worked for environmental consultants in Pennsylvania and Vermont. I currently work for Temple University and am contracted out to Fort Indiantown Gap National Guard Base to conduct vegetation studies in its training corridor. I would like to share with the public my experiences and hope to educate them as we explore the natural world. Thank you for your consideration.

**Brian Vandegrift:** I have been a Sierra Club member since 1982. I am an avid hiker and skier, always looking for new adventures and wild places. My personal environmental interests are recycling, hikes, biking and clean ups, and green building as I have been a remodeling contractor since 1988 as owner of Vandegrift Creative Construction. I have been on the Lancaster ExCom since we became a group, the last 2 as co-chair of the group. I am also the voting delegate to Sierra Club’s PA Chapter. In 2013 I was awarded a Supernova Award for life time achievement from the Pennsylvania chapter of the Sierra Club.

Join the Sierra Club - Lancaster Group in helping make the **New Amos Herr Dream Park** a reality.



The club is contributing native trees and plants for landscaping as well as joining with other volunteers to build the park. The second phase of building will happen in the spring of 2016 and will require many volunteers. Please contact Judy Davis at [pugs2davis@yahoo.com](mailto:pugs2davis@yahoo.com) for more info.



### Earth Day 2015 -

Bagzilla was out and about again letting folks know that the average person uses between 300-500 plastic grocery bags a year. Make sure to use reusable

bags!

Sierra Club members donned environmental superhero costumes and marched with our new polar bear to promote environmental awareness in the



### 2015 Millersville Parade.

**Voting Ballot for Lancaster Group - Executive Committee Members**  
Vote for up to 4 candidates to serve on Lancaster Group’s Executive Committee. Place a ✓ beside your choices and mail this ballot to:

**Sierra Club-Lancaster Group, PO Box 8344, Lancaster, PA 17604**

or email your response to: [SCLancasterElections@gmail.com](mailto:SCLancasterElections@gmail.com)

or cast your vote online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9WZRXLN>

☐ Kate Coolidge

☐ Barbara Bromley

☐ James Meenan

☐ Brian Vandegrift

**Voting Deadline: Dec. 31, 2015**

The Sierra Club - Lancaster Group is excited about all that is happening — this newsletter gives just a few highlights. Please consider joining us and inviting your friends to outings, programs, or even meetings, in the new year. Together, we can make a difference in our community as we explore, enjoy, and protect the planet. Check out the website or Facebook for updates .

The official registration and financial information of the Lancaster Group of Sierra Club may be obtained from the PA Dept. of State by calling, toll free within PA, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.



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## What You Should Know about the Local Pipeline

The proposed Atlantic Sunrise Pipeline would transport unsustainable energy in the form of fracked gas from Northern Pennsylvania through Lancaster county and into Maryland for export from Cove Point Liquid Natural Gas terminal in Maryland to customers overseas. The size of this proposed pipeline is unprecedented – when completed it would measure 42 inches across and be pressurized to 1200-1500 PSI! The proposed path of the pipeline threatens farms, communities, woodlands, and streams with a variety of economic, cultural, and environmental harms ranging from contaminated groundwater to destruction of Native American archaeological sites to the potential for catastrophic explosions. Many farmers and homeowners are threatened with the loss of their property through eminent domain, and even preserved farms that should be off limits to development in perpetuity are threatened.

The threat is real, but the good news is that a huge groundswell of public opinion opposes the Atlantic Sunrise Pipeline. Residents, business owners, community leaders, and environmental groups have been active on many fronts in the fight to stop this pipeline. The organization that has taken the lead in the Lancaster area is Lancaster Against Pipelines, and Sierra Club members who want to get involved should visit their web site, [www.wearelanastercounty.com](http://www.wearelanastercounty.com), to learn more about the environmental dangers this pipeline project poses, see up to date route maps, attend upcoming events, or donate time or money.

One great way to help is to become a part of the quilt project. Lancaster Against Pipelines is putting together a quilt made up of squares contributed by individuals who are concerned about the pipeline's impact. You don't need to be a quilter to participate – use paint, marker, or whatever materials you desire to create a square that expresses your love for our local environment, your support for renewable energy over unsustainable sources, and/or your opposition to the Atlantic Sunrise Pipeline. As it grows, this quilt makes a powerful statement about our love for the place we live in and our need to protect it. The quilt is in progress now, and parts of it have already been displayed at rallies, fairs, art galleries, and other public events in order to raise awareness and generate support for the cause. Please visit Lancaster Against Pipelines' web site for more information on how to participate!

Thank you for considering the Sierra Club—Lancaster Group in this year's Extraordinary Give. We can make a difference!

THE **EXTRA** GIVE  
ORDINARY



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