



WENOCA SIERRAN

Newsletter of the Western North Carolina Sierra Club
February - April 2019

Explore, enjoy, and protect the planet

Upcoming Events:

Unitarian Congregation
1 Edwin Place, Asheville
(Charlotte St. & Edwin Pl.)
Social: 7pm / Program: 7:15
Free and open to the public

Thursday, Feb 7th
Electric Cars Powered
by Solar Homes

Thursday, March 7th
Spring Wildflowers of
the Blue Ridge
Mountains

Thursday, April 4th
Hope for our Climate

WENOCA will hold meetings on the first Thursday of the month. Executive Committee meetings will be held at 5:30pm prior to the monthly programs.
Open to the public
For more information, call Judy Mattox at 828-683-2176
judymattox@sbcglobal.net.

WENOCA SIERRAN is the newsletter of the Western North Carolina Sierra Club. The newsletter is published four times a year. Articles, comments welcome.

Electric Cars Powered by Solar Homes, Thurs, February 7th

Sierra Club presents on Thursday, Feb 7th at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Asheville "Driving to Net Zero". Imagine a future where each home powers not only itself, but the cars surrounding it. Imagine doing this with no fumes, no soot, and no emissions, from a fuel source that will never run out or jump in price. That future is possible now as you will find out in this talk as you learn how households are driving to net Zero!

Dave Hrivnak received a BS in engineering from Va. Tech and an MBA from East Tennessee State University. In his spare time Dave has been actively finding ways to live sustainably. He loves to push the boundaries of energy efficiency on projects such as: designing and building two passive solar homes, one earth bermed, built an all-electric Jeep & Miata, and modified their Prius and Chevy Avalanche into plug-in hybrid cars. He and his wife Brenda now power their home and vehicles from rooftop solar. Dave is active in the community as a Boy Scout leader, Habitat for Humanity volunteer, and a mentor with the First Robotics program. Dave leads the energy task force at his church to reduce costs and help the environment. Their home has been featured several times on the National Solar Tour of Homes, and he has coordinated five National Drive Electric events in the Tri-Cities.



Dave Hrivnak

Spring Wildflowers of the Blue Ridge Mountains, March 7th

Botanist Tim Spira will show photographs and discuss interesting characteristics of common and conspicuous, as well as rare and unusual, spring wildflowers, including trilliums, trout lily, wild ginger, mayapple, bearcorn, Jack-in-the-pulpit, pink lady's slipper, cucumber root, Oconee bells, and many others, including a few shrubs and trees. Tim will include examples of how plants interact with pollinators, herbivores (animals that feed on plants), and seed dispersal agents, including birds, bears, and ants.

Tim Spira is a plant ecologist, native plant gardener, and professor emeritus at Clemson University where he taught field botany and plant ecology, and did research on plant-pollinator interactions for more than 20 years. He's published more than 30 papers in scientific journals including a cover article in the journal Nature. He's the author of the award winning book, Wildflowers and Plant Communities of the Southern Appalachian



Tim Spira

Hope for our Climate, April 4th

Drew Jones, Co-Founder of Climate Interactive, will share a dynamic workshop using a soon-to-be-released version of a new simulator his team is developing. Building on recent experiences at the UN negotiations in Poland, financial industry summits with the HSBC bank in New York City, and with his recent NY Times Op-Ed (<https://nyti.ms/2Ct9mjz>), Drew will explore the possibilities for grounded hope in these times of great crisis and opportunity.

Drew Jones is Co-Founder and Co-Director of Climate Interactive, a top-rated climate change think tank that creates accessible, policy-maker-oriented simulations. He and his team at CI and MIT

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Sloan developed "C-ROADS", the user-friendly climate simulation in use by the U.S. State Department, John Holdren in the White House, and the analysts for the Chinese Government. Trained in system dynamics modeling at Dartmouth College and MIT, Jones has worked at Rocky Mountain Institute and served dozens of clients ranging from the CDC to Harley Davidson to the U.S. Government Climate Change Negotiators. He teaches Systems Thinking and Sustainability at MIT and the UNC Chapel Hill's Kenan Flagler Business School. Drew also attended both the Paris and Marrakech UN climate summits.



Drew Jones

Hiking Schedule

SUNDAY, FEB 24th, Old Dam & Bull Mountain Trails at Warren Wilson College. Distance approx 4 miles Round Trip. Meet in Asheville at 10:30, return around 3:00. Hike to a nice overlook of an Old Dam site, and along Bull Creek. Includes some winter tree ID. This hike has a few up/down stretches but also has level terrain. Not strenuous and not a fast-paced hike. All hikers please RSVP to hike leader Lisa McWherter at lisamcw2@gmail.com or 828-713-4994.

SATURDAY, MARCH 16th - GREENLAND CREEK TRAIL. There are at least 3 waterfalls planned on this trip, with an option by unanimous consent to hike a little further for an additional waterfall. There may be some early wildflowers. Meet in Asheville at 8:30am, return by 5:00pm. We will learn about unique features, and how the tract was acquired by the US Forest Service. Again, plan for an all-day trip for the estimated 5 mile hike and 3 hours round trip driving time. Experienced hikers only. Good hiking shoes/boots required. Hiking poles encouraged. Call trip leader for details. Leader – David Reid, 828-713-1607. daviddbreid@charter.net.

SUNDAY, MARCH 17, GREEN RIVER Gamelands Hike. Mostly Pullium Creek Trail, plus some Green River Cove trail. Meet at 10:00 in Asheville. Back around 5:30. Moderate with some easy level of difficulty. Approx 6 miles R.T. on this there & back trail with elevation gain of 900 ft. It's a beautiful trail that ends at the Green River just below the narrows, with rapids moving through large boulders. On the way there, there's a tedious creek crossing with wiggly step-stones, requiring good footwear & maybe hiking poles. Plan to learn about the beautiful early-blooming wildflowers there, and a few trees. NOTE: Sorry, no doggies this trip due to Pullium Creek crossing. This hike is for experienced hikers, or one can contact the hike leader with questions/concerns. All hikers please RSVP to hike leader Lisa McWherter at lisamcw2@gmail.com or 828-713-4994

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27th – MIDWEEK IN MONTREAT: WALKER'S KNOB - The Montreat Conference Center manages a protected network of hiking trails in its land in the coves abutting the Asheville Watershed on the West, the Blue Ridge Parkway on the North, and the Pisgah National Forest on the East. We will take the Greybeard Trail to Walker's Knob for a view of the Swanannoa Valley. Six mile round trip. Moderately Strenuous due to elevation change. Learn about the Conference Center's conservation philosophy, and how this land fits into the larger protected lands puzzle in the region. RSVP to hike leader, David Reid, at daviddbreid@charter.net or 828-713-1607.

SATURDAY, APRIL 20th - SMOKY'S BIG CREEK WILDFLOWER HIKE - Hike along Big Creek in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Great wildflower hike, with one waterfall. Hiking poles encouraged. RSVP to trip leader for details. Leader – David Reid, 828-713-1607. daviddbreid@charter.net.

SATURDAY APRIL 20, PINK BEDS/BARNETT BRANCH WATERFALL HIKE: Meet at 10:00 a.m. in Asheville, back around 5:30 pm. This hike is approx 5.5 miles, rated Easy/Moderate (due to occasional rugged terrain w/ tree roots & occasional rocks, requiring good foot wear). Part of the hike will be on the Pink Beds Loop trail, but we will also take Barnett Branch to a nice waterfall. There should be some nice wildflowers (with I.D. Opportunities), & also some tunnels of rhododendrens & laurels. We will also have opportunity for some tree id. There will be a variety of habitats, including a small wetland with a board walk. All hikers please RSVP to hike leader Lisa McWherter at lisamcw2@gmail.com or 828-713-4994, or contact her if any questions.

Some Good Environmental News

Inspite of all the negative news we constantly hear, good things are also happening:

- Gov. Roy Cooper signed an executive order on October 29th calling on North Carolina to cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent in the next seven years. His executive order calls for getting at least 80,000 zero-emission vehicles on the road, improving the efficiency of state buildings so they cut their energy use by 40 percent and working to expand North Carolina's clean energy industries. The 40 percent target is based on the state's 2005 emission levels, an ambitious goal that is more than any other state in the Southeast.

- The City of Asheville joined Buncombe County in setting a goal of powering the city with 100% Renewable Energy by 2030 and also voted to support the county wide goal of all homes and businesses reaching that goal by 2042.

- Successful lawsuits by the Sierra Club and our environmental partners have forced construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline and the Atlantic Coast Pipeline in NC **TO STOP**. In both cases, the permits for construction will have to be reconsidered because environmental protection concerns were not properly considered.

WNC Sierra Club Honors Local Individuals, Institutions, Businesses

Asheville, NC – December 11, 2018: The WNC Sierra Club presented its annual Environmental Recognition Awards on December 6 at its Potluck Holiday Party. The awards were made in recognition of local individuals, institutions and businesses whose actions reflect their commitment to preserving the environment. This year's honorees were:



Judy Mattox

North Carolina Political Volunteer of the Year

Sierra Club Chair Judy Mattox was honored by the NC Sierra Club for recruiting 238 volunteers to hand out the club's candidate endorsement cards, filling 540 shifts during early voting and on Election Day. Rich Wasch is shown presenting the award to Judy.



John Noor

Green Elected Official and Government Volunteer, City of Asheville

Julie Mayfield, Asheville City Councilwoman, and volunteer John Noor, Chair, Asheville Sustainability Advisory Committee on Energy and the Environment Commission, were recognized for their leadership in getting the City of Asheville to set a goal of having city government operations transition to 100% Renewable Energy by 2030 and supporting the Buncombe County Goal of having the entire county transition to 100% Renewable Energy by 2042. Ken Brame is shown presenting the award to Julie and John.



Julie Mayfield

Government Sustainability: NC Army National Guard Field Maintenance Shop #1

The North Carolina Army National Guard Field Maintenance Shop #1 was honored for its outstanding achievements that support environmental protection. In 2016 and 2017, the shop exceeded expectations in reducing hazardous and universal waste, as well as reducing the use of water. In each of the last two years, it diverted 15 tons of oil, rubber, plastic, metal, paper, cardboard, antifreeze, batteries and wood pallets from landfills. It also replaced its outdated lighting fixtures with LED lights. Joel Mazellis is shown presenting the award to First Sergeant Todd Lingerfelt.



Todd Lingerfelt

Environmental Organization of the Year: Energy Savers Network

The Energy Savers Network (ESN) was recognized for helping solve the climate crisis by helping people. ESN mobilizes volunteers to focus on improving the homes of lower income people, offering free upgrades, energy saving education, and referrals to agencies that offer more comprehensive repairs and weatherization. Director Brad Rouse, staffer Yulia Shaffer, and volunteer Alice Wyndham are shown receiving the award from club chair, Judy Mattox.



Energy Savers Network

Green Business of the Year: Sierra Nevada Brewing Co.

Leah Cooper accepted the award from Maryanne Rackoff. The award was made in recognition of Sierra Nevada's multiple conservation achievements, including provision for alternative transportation, stormwater management, low-flow toilets and faucets, low-water-use plants and native species, use of solar panels, recycling and composting programs, and a healthy, indoor environmental quality.



Leah Cooper

Conservation Advocate – Will Harlan

Will Harlan, Editor-in-chief, Blue Ridge Outdoors Magazine, creator/director of *I Heart Pisgah*, and founder of Friends of Big Ivy, was honored for his lifetime commitment to conservation. He also founded and organized Friends of Big Ivy, a grassroots organization that protects the old-growth forests and wild areas of the Craggies and Big Ivy section of Pisgah National Forest. The award was presented by David Reid and J.D. Diefenbach.



Will Harlan

Naturalist, Educator and Wildlife Rehabilitator of the Year: Carlton Burke

Naturalist and educator Carlton Burke was honored for his educational service organization, *Carolina Mountain Naturalists*, which presents live animal and nature programs and displays for area schools, summer camps, and many other organizations. He also teaches with the Blue Ridge Naturalist program at the NC Arboretum, and works with Muddy Sneakers. The award was presented by Judy Mattox.



Carlton Burke

Highlights from the NC Election Results

The 2018 election saw significant gains for pro-environmental candidates both nationally and in NC. NC Sierra Club endorsed 120 candidates in North Carolina and 70% of our endorsed candidates won their races.

-All four of the statewide judicial candidates endorsed by the Sierra Club won, including Anita Earls winning a seat on the state Supreme Court, giving us a 5-2 pro-environmental advantage.

-In the **NC House**, we replaced **10 bad incumbents with pro-environmental candidates** allowing us to sustain vetoes by the Governor. Six of the wins came in Wake and Mecklenburg Counties where we had Sierra Club Organizers leading our volunteer efforts in these races. Two victories, Joe Sam Queen and Ray Russell, came in Western NC in districts where Sierra Club Endorsement Cards were handed out. Local environmental heroes Susan Fisher, John Ager, and Brian Turner also won re-election.

-The **NC Senate picked up 6 seats** which provided the margin needed to also sustain vetoes by the Governor. Local environmental hero Terry Van Duyn in Buncombe County won re-election.



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Highlights from the NC Election Results(Continued)

-**In County Commission** races we were able to keep a majority in Buncombe County with one of our candidates, Amanda Edwards, winning easily in an open seat. Another endorsed candidate, Donna Ensley, lost narrowly against a popular incumbent who had previously won easily. Pro-environmental incumbent Al Whitesides won re-election unopposed.

-**We recruited hundreds of volunteers** from across the state, with the WENOCA group alone recruiting 238 volunteers and filling 540 shifts to hand out endorsement cards in Buncombe County. These individuals knocked on over 5,000 doors, had over 5,000 phone conversations, texted 9,500 members and supporters, sent out nine endorsement and GOTV emails to 81,420 members and supporters, mailed to 90,000 members and supporters households across the state, and printed more than 65,000 N.C. Sierra Club endorsement cards to be distributed at the polls. The NC Sierra Club PAC contributed over \$100,000 directly to our targeted candidates and spent over \$200,000 totally to elect our endorsed candidates.

-**Overall nationally, statewide, and locally**, Sierra Club endorsed candidates have been elected, which will allow us to stop many bad environmental bills and to champion good environmental initiatives at the local level.

WENOCA Volunteers Needed: contact judymatttox@sbcglobal.net, 828-683-2176