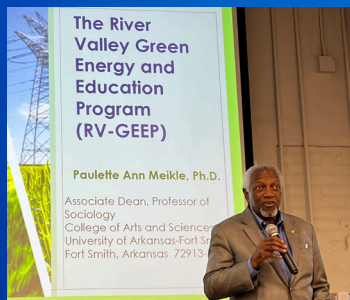




Collaborating for a Just
Green Energy Transition



2022 The Climate League **ANNUAL REPORT**



Delivering Climate Education & Collaboration

WORKING TOGETHER FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

The Climate League’s passion is climate justice. We recognize the intersection of poverty, race, and pollution. We work for a just green energy transition driven by local voices and resulting in healthier Arkansas communities.

Education and civic engagement are our action pathways. Collaboration is the heart of our efforts.

We work closely with grassroots allies including Citizens’ Climate Education - Arkansas Chapters, the Elizabeth McGill Center, and the Central Presbyterian Church in Fort Smith. We are active members of Arkansas Citizens’ First Congress and partner with Arkansas environmental organizations to deliver the annual Arkansas Environmental Policy Summit.

Our multi-year River Valley Green Energy and Education Program launched in 2022 with the October 20th River Valley Green Energy and Education Workshop held in association with the University of Arkansas Fort Smith (UAFS) College of Arts and Sciences, the UAFS College of Business and Industry, and the UAFS Center for Economic Development.

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2023 LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Dear Climate League Friends,

The New Year brings changes and continuity. The Climate League celebrated its 5th birthday as an IRS-recognized nonprofit in October, 2022.

Sincere gratitude to the vision of our founder climatologist, Robert McAfee, who expertly served as unpaid Administrator through the end of 2022. Jan Schaper began with the Climate League in 2018 and in January 2023 took on the role of Administrator assuming day-to-day infrastructure duties, while keeping in the forefront her outstanding collaboration skills working with statewide coalitions that promote awareness and action on clean energy, energy efficiency, and environmental justice. Robert continues to serve on the Climate League Board and will continue to focus on strengthening Fort Smith-area partnerships and increasing grassroots engagement so that more and more Fort Smith area individuals, families, and neighborhoods feel welcome to join and build up local climate education and clean energy initiatives.

As part of this outreach, The Climate League will be partnering to bring energy efficiency, energy assistance, and green job energy training information to low-income families in Fort Smith. This is an outflow of our multi-year River Valley Green Energy and Education Program launched in 2022.

The Climate League’s new logo outlines the state in blue while sprouting green leaves. The Climate League’s focus is its tagline “Collaborating for a Just Green Energy Transition.” I invite you to visit our updated website at the same address www.arkcl.org. You can invite your friends too and, while there, sign up for our email updates. Your support of the Climate League is so appreciated

– Fay Knox, Climate League Board Chair



Collaborating for a Just Green Energy Transition



River Valley Green Energy & Education Workshop

We’re building a movement! In 2022, The Climate League launched the multi-year River Valley Green Energy and Education Program (RV-GEEP). The program began and is currently centered in Fort Smith with plans to expand its support and equip more Arkansas communities to take advantage of green energy, establish educational programs, and change the culture of energy usage, so that the River Valley can reduce dependency on conventional energy generation.

The public debut of RV-GEEP occurred on October 20th, 2022. Nearly 70 folks filled the University of Arkansas–Fort Smith’s Economic Development Center for a day of learning and networking at the River Valley Green Energy and Education Workshop. Hosted by The Climate League in association with the UAFS College of Arts and Sciences, College of Business and Industry, and Center for Economic Development, the workshop brought together business leaders, city officials, clean energy advocates, students, and local residents.

The workshop, which was months in the making, featured local and regional experts in green energy financing, community solar, energy insecurity, home weatherization, and the opportunities availed by national climate legislation (e.g. The Inflation Reduction Act).

Climate League volunteer and workshop planner Ruthie McRae said, “The excitement generated from this workshop felt almost electric. It was the first time I felt some real energy and hope that the River Valley wanted to move toward green energy. There seemed to be no naysayers among the group which represented a key portion of the River Valley.”

We’re grateful to Arvest Bank, The First National Bank of Fort Smith, and The Climate League Donors for covering the meals during the workshop.

For more information about the River Valley Green Energy and Education Workshop and RV-GEEP, you’ll enjoy listening to this 8-minute [KUAF Ozarks at Large segment](#), drawn from KUAF Kyle Kellam’s August 2022 conversation with The Climate League board members Paulette Meikle and Robert McAfee, along with Herbert McGill (Director of Fort Smith’s McGill Center), and Dr. Latisha Settlege (Dean of the UAFS School of Business and Industry). Find it at [www.Kuaf.com](#).

Moving RV-GEEP forward will be at the center of The Climate League’s 2023 work.



Keynote speaker John Coleman of Entegrity addresses the River Valley Green Energy and Education Workshop’s morning plenary session.



Leah Lane (left), League planning committee member for RV-GEEP talks with Chelsea Cowan, Program Director at the UAFS Economic Development Center.



Elizabeth McGill Center Director Herbert McGill speaks at the Oct. 20 River Valley Green Energy and Education Workshop.



Paulette Meikle, Climate League Board Member and UAFS Associate Dean, wraps up a workshop session.

Dumas Park Campaign

A healthy climate takes many forms. In early 2022, Onie Norman, a longtime community organizer, told The Climate League about her intention to secure playground equipment for a park in her Dumas neighborhood, a community resource she’s been nurturing for years. The park is a welcoming green space featuring large trees and a few benches. It is owned by the local Youth Improvement Club and is adjacent to an elementary school, which doesn’t have an adequate playground for the students – most of whom are African American.

Climate League supporters contributed over \$2000 to our “So

Kids Can Run and Play Dumas Park Campaign”, which in turn helped the Dumas Youth Improvement Club unlock a \$2,500 matching grant. Thank you to all who donated!

Under Ms. Norman’s leadership, the park project continues to advance, attracting support from the county and other entities. As of late fall, Ms. Norman was working to acquire a set of used, good condition playground equipment. Once the equipment is installed, an on-site celebration will be in order. We’ll be there to honor Ms. Norman and to cheer on the youth and the young at heart.



Summer Meet Up: Dumas Community Leader Onie Norman receives a check from Climate League board members Shelley Buonaiuto and Robert McAfee.

June Luncheon at Fort Smith’s McGill Center

The Climate League is on the forefront of fostering climate change education and clean energy conversations in Arkansas communities often left out of these vital discussions. On June 17th, we

sponsored the monthly community luncheon at Fort Smith’s Elizabeth McGill Center. Neighborhood residents and Climate League volunteers shared a meal while exchanging personal stories and local concerns and aspirations.

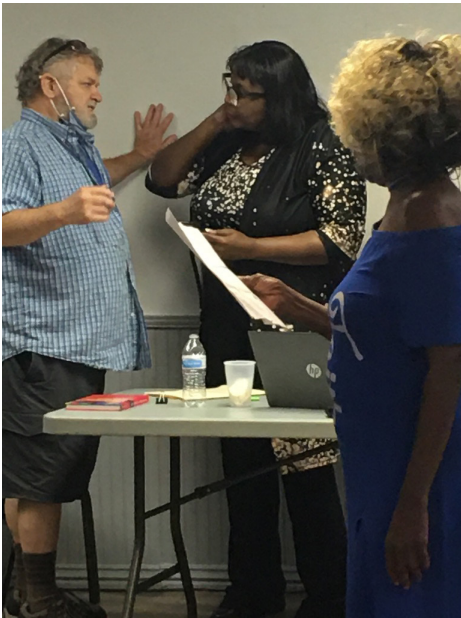
Climate League Board Secretary Shelley Buonaiuto reflected after the luncheon: “We have a common interest in educating ourselves about sustainability, energy efficiency, and renewable energy projects that can benefit the community, save money on energy, and contribute to the fight for a healthy planet. One central issue that The Climate League hopes to be able to address with help from experts is how to incentivize landlords to participate in energy efficiency projects on their rental units, by demonstrating that it can be financially viable and to their benefit.”

We know the impacts of climate change fall disproportionately on

low-income families. There is a real risk that the clean energy revolution and climate adaptation investments will by-pass low-income communities, who are already bearing increased vulnerability and energy insecurity. That’s why The Climate League prioritizes the steady work of grassroots listening and relationship building.

Interplay between The Climate League and the Elizabeth McGill Center has grown out of the June luncheon. Leaders in both organizations are communicating about energy efficiency improvements and a solar installation options for the center. Also, Herbert McGill co-led a breakout session on Energy Insecurity at the Oct. 20th River Valley Green Energy and Education Workshop.

Nurturing the connection and mutual goals of The Climate League and the Elizabeth McGill Center is a top 2023 priority.



Climate League Board Member Paulette Meikle answers questions at the McGill Center Luncheon.

Citizens First Congress’ Environmental Justice Caucus

We’re stronger and more effective together. The Climate League continued participating in the [Arkansas Citizens First Congress’ Environmental Justice Caucus](#) throughout 2022. The CFC is a multi-issue, non-partisan coalition of organizations who work together for critical changes in state policy. We can’t emphasize enough how much we value the cross-issue education and united commitment to improving the lives of Arkansans afforded by the CFC.

Over the past year, the Environmental Justice Caucus’ Energy Working Group consulted with supportive state legislators to revise two draft bills with the intention of having them introduced in the 2023 legislative session:

- 1) The Advanced Energy Reporting Act would require utilities to report their carbon intensity.
- 2) An act to create The Advanced Energy Jobs Task Force would focus on seizing clean energy and related economic opportunities as well as roadmapping the way for Arkansas utilities to reach near zero emissions by 2050.

In partnership with the CFC, we’re excited to educate our supporters about these bills and other essential policies that are needed to improve the lives of Arkansans.

7th Annual Arkansas Environmental Policy Summit

Collaborations build allies and deliver results. For the second year in a row, The Climate League joined other Arkansas environmental and policy organizations in putting on the Arkansas Environmental Policy Summit.

In addition to being involved in foundational planning and sharing in logistical expenses, The Climate League collaborated on organizing two breakout panels: “The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022” and “Climate and Public Health”. Throughout, we proceeded with an eye to highlighting issues and opportunities relevant to low-income families and struggling Arkansas communities and diversifying the core planning team and panelists.

The summit was held in person on November 18th at the Little Rock Audubon Center and was also streamed online. Keynote speaker Marshall Johnson, the Chief Conservation Officer for the National Audubon Society, moved attendees with his obvious enthusiasm for birds and the nation’s prairies and his inclusive message.

We look forward to co-creating the 8th Annual Arkansas Environmental Policy Summit in 2023.

Seeking a good read? Mr. Johnson recommends *Giants in the Earth: A Saga of the Prairie* by O.E. Rolvaag.



A panel of local experts discusses Inflation Reduction Act opportunities for businesses, communities and families..



Keynote speaker Marshall Johnson speaks at the 2022 Summit.

2022 Financial Statement of Activities



Note: Food expenses were for the RV-GEEP Workshop. Software is primarily for our donor records and management system and the website. The charitable donations are for the Dumas playground equipment.

MONEY IN	
Donations	\$ 16,995.20
Non-NFG Donations	\$ 5.86
TOTAL INCOME:	\$ 17,001.06
MONEY OUT	
Community Outreach	\$ 6,000.00
Office Supplies & Software	\$ 4,279.01
Charitable Donation	\$ 2,265.00
Food	\$ 1,899.37
Contractors	\$ 1,450.00
Webmaster	\$ 1,340.00
Insurance	\$ 984.00
Legal & Professional Services	\$ 675.49
Bank Charges & Fees	\$ 275.00
Membership Dues	\$ 150.00
Meals & Entertainment	\$ 148.93
Postage & Shipping	\$ 122.85
Printing	\$ 108.23
Dues & Subscriptions	\$ 82.25
Conferences / Cont. Education	\$ 16.11
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$ 19,796.24
RETAINED EARNINGS	\$15,913.52
2022 NET INCOME	\$ (2,795.18)
TOTAL EQUITY	\$ 13,118.34

LOOKING FORWARD: 2023 Community Engagement

With your support, The Climate League will continue the many valuable climate collaborations outlined in this Annual Report, including The River Valley Green Energy and Education Program. We will also be expanding our community outreach in Fort Smith in order to bring more Arkansans into the energy efficiency and clean energy transition. Visit the re-designed Climate League website and watch your email for updates and invitations!

Delivering quality climate education and community engagement takes time, talent, and financial resources. Our Resource Development Committee, composed of board members and other Climate League volunteers, will be hard at work. If you’re interested in becoming more involved with The Climate League in 2023, please get in touch by emailing info@arkccl.org. We welcome your interest.

Visit Our Website! www.arkccl.org



Thank You League Supporters!

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First Horizon Fondation

Gold
Transparency
2022

Candid.

Climate League Earns Candid's Gold Seal Designation for Transparency.

Candid collects, standardizes, and makes nonprofits data available. The Gold Seal verifies The Climate League's program, financial and people information. Find out more at candid.org.