2016 was a busy year for GCG members.

* Our Group representative to the Chapter, Marc Thomas, became the Chair of the Utah Chapter.
* Members of the ExCom worked with Great Old Broads leader Mimi Trudeau to form a Moab Environmental Action Network (MEAN) to facilitate conservation efforts among different conservation groups. GCG member Bobbi Cronk volunteered to serve as electronic coordinator for the group.
* In February, GCG re-elected the 2015 slate of officers for 2016. The officers are Kay McLean, Albey Reiner, Marc Thomas, Tom Messenger, and Tammy Berrie.
* Outings leaders refreshed their First Aid training in March, and GCG member Barb Crossan donated supplies and put together a professional First Aid Kit.
* GCG member Dave McLean supervised the collection of email addresses (requested from our members by post card) for the purpose of electronically communicating our local group activities.
* GCG sent out two electronic newsletters (May and October) with information on issues, activities, news, and outings. We encourage all of our members to get on the GCG mailing list (for GCG only use) to receive alerts and our seasonal reports. Send your email address to glencanyongroup84532@gmail.com if you have not been getting our reports.

In the fall, MEAN leaders decided to meet quarterly rather than monthly and include all conservation group members rather than just leaders. We will send out electronic alerts when the pot luck MEAN meetings are scheduled. If you are interested, but have no email, simply call one of the ExCom members about upcoming meetings.

We have also decided to do some strategic planning for our group. Member Mike Stringham will lead these planning sessions sometime in early 2017.

Following a phone call in October requesting support to staff a “hydration station” for the Other Half Marathon, Kay McLean easily got commitments from six people and several “maybe” helpers. Tammy Berrie then enthusiastically took the reins as Kay was on her way to Montana for a month. Tammy attended meetings and got enough volunteers to staff two stations. With Ed Brandstetter and his truck for getting and hauling the supplies, Tammy as Captain of one station, and Cindy Pickett as Captain for the second station, and ample volunteers, we successfully performed the duties and received accolades in addition to a $1000 donation for our club. The teams consisted of Tammy Berrie, Cindy Pickett, Ed Brandstetter, Gail and Jack Peterson, Marc and Judi Thomas, Larry Witt, Stu Smythe, Paul Spencer, Bobbi Cronk, Dana Jones, Harold Wong, Michael Peck, Laura Cameron, Liane Morgan, Marti Bauer, and Marlene Huckabay.

The Marathon gurus called Tammy Berrie to see if we would man the aid station for the 34th annual Moab
Winter Sun 10K on Saturday, December 3. Taking the lead, she pulled her team together and staffed the station. It was a beautiful sunny day and we got to enjoy some interaction with some entertaining participants...lots of runners with strollers and their canine companions! Sierra Club volunteers had lots of fun and we are becoming quite experienced at efficiently manning aid stations! Thank you to our volunteers: Tammy Berry, Dave and Kay McLean, Liz Staub, Warren Ohlrich, and George Rathbun! Thank you to the many others that volunteered but were given the day off since we were flush with help! Fear not...there will be ample opportunity to pitch in! We are aiming to man THREE aid stations for the next Canyonlands Half Marathon on Saturday, March 18, 2017. We will need 25-30 volunteers, so be on the lookout for the recruitment activities to begin in January. Thank you all for making these fundraising efforts so successful - we couldn’t do them without YOU!

Various fund raising and conservation issues can often benefit from only a few hours of your time. If you would like more information, or would like to help with any of our issues or projects, please contact any ExCom member.

Events to watch for in the new year include conservation issues and our need for a conservation chair, strategic planning sessions, possible La Sal mine reopening discussions, community fund raising events, outings, and clean energy. Our ExCom (business meetings) are open to all our membership and are a great way to become familiar with what’s happening. Come join us.

KEEP PUBLIC LANDS IN PUBLIC HANDS

Our public lands are the heritage of all Americans. They contain some of the nation’s most scenic wildlands and some of its best wildlife habitat. This heritage is threatened by the efforts of Utah’s legislature to seize control of our public lands and dedicate them to industrial development. Put simply, the goal of the Keeping Public Lands in Public Hands campaign is to confront and stop Utah’s proposed land grab. Following the lead of Castle Valley, we are also urging Grand County and city of Moab elected officials to adopt a resolution that supports America’s public lands and opposes the state land grab.

If you have a desire to help out on this campaign, we can sure use your assistance. Please contact Marc Thomas, tomaso3@yahoo.com, (435) 259-3603.

GCG ENDORSEMENTS IN COUNTY RACE

Four Grand County Council seats were up November 8th. The Glen Canyon Group Executive Committee (ExCom) and the Chapter ExCom concurred in endorsing: Evan Clapper in District 2, Greg Halliday in District 4, Rachel Nelson in District 5, and Sarah Sidwell at large. These endorsements were announced in both our electronic newsletter and in post cards sent to all members in Grand County.

In Grand County, voting is by mailed ballot, and there was an unprecedented return of over 90%. Two of our endorsed candidates—Evan and Greg, were among the winners, and they will join the progressive wing of the County Counsel. Rachel and Sarah were excellent candidates who we hope will run for future offices.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY SIERRA CLUB

In 2017, the Sierra Club will be 125 years of age! The first ever meeting of the Sierra Club was held May 28, 1892, organized by UC Berkeley Professor Henry Senger, Attorney Warren Olney and Naturalist John Muir to write articles of incorporation. Muir presided at that meeting and was elected president, an office he held until his death from pneumonia on Christmas Eve, 1914. In 1892, the United States consisted of 44 states; in 1914 of 48.

The 1890’s, like today, were a time of drought and strife. Bitter polarization and economic dislocation followed the Civil War. The Industrial Revolution had produced extreme pollution of the air and water in the east, exploitation of the natural resources in the west. Men, women and children worked in factories or on farms from dawn to dusk. Electricity had been invented, but few benefited. Even the White House Christmas Tree didn’t have electric lights until 1894. Overall, it was a time of overbearing materialism when few were concerned about preservation or even sustainability.

In 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt accompanied Muir on a visit to Yosemite. The American Antiquities Act followed in 1906 and eventually both the National Park System and the U.S. Forest Service. Now with 2.4 million members and supporters, the Sierra Club has grown into a large and influential grass roots environmental organization. We can celebrate its upcoming birthday with pride.

STOP CORONA ARCH FROM BECOMING THE WORLD’S LARGEST ROPE SWING

We who crave some serenity when hiking can let the BLM know that it should permanently ban rope swinging, rock climbing, rappelling and zip lining at Corona Arch and Gemini Bridges. The federal agency which manages these two sites is seeking comments until December 30th on whether or not to make permanent a temporary ban instituted after public concerns over the resource damage, physical dangers, and noise associated with extreme sports activities.
Corona Arch was the site of a fatal rope swinging accident in 2013 in which a Utah man died. In 2015, the BLM instituted a ban on roped activities while it analyzed the impact of making the ban permanent. “The BLM carefully weighed the impacts to these iconic resources from roped activities and listened to feedback from various user groups,” said BLM’s Moab assistant field manager Jennifer Jones. “Public support was overwhelmingly in favor of making permanent the temporary restrictions in order to improve the visitor experience by protecting the resources and ensuring public safety.”

The BLM believes permanent restrictions will help produce a quieter experience for visitors, as well as minimize resource damage caused by bolts and friction from ropes and cables. Visitors have frequently complained to the agency that rope swinging detracts from what should be quiet contemplation of nature’s beauty. Instead, swinging creates a circus atmosphere with much yelling and whooping as riders sail back and forth through the arch.

“Restricting roped activities at the two locations would allow the majority of users (hikers) to enjoy the experience of viewing the arches unfettered by dangling apparatus and people,” states one BLM analysis, and would “prevent further scarring and bolting on the natural features, which are the most-visited arches on BLM public lands in the Moab area.” The BLM said roped activities are still allowed on more than 1.5 million acres in other areas covered by the Moab field office.

The public can comment on the proposal through Dec. 30 by writing to the Bureau of Land Management (specifying it is in response to proposed supplementary rules), 82 E. Dogwood, Moab, UT 84532.

**GCG HIKES**

The official GCG Sierra Club hikes are posted on the Utah Chapter Sierra Club web page (http://utah.sierraclub.org/content/calendar). They are usually every other Saturday during that particular quarter year. Hikes are chosen to appeal all interests and capabilities. Some hikes are short, some long, some easy, some hard. The most important consideration for all hikes is safety. We have put together an informal hike classification that may help in understanding the type of hike proposed.

**Easy:** Relatively even terrain, few steep sections, fit for every active walker. For example, all hikes in Arches are easy.

**Moderate:** Uneven terrain, may include several steep sections. Primitive trails in Arches and route to petrified wood on Colorado River off Shaffer Trail road are these kinds of hikes.

**Difficult:** Rough terrain with perhaps steep up and/or down hill sections, hand holds necessary, possible ledges and injury if fall occurs. Ropes available if desired.

**Exploratory:** Terrain and difficulty uncertain.

Even though the hike rating is unknown, be prepared for a difficult hike.

Along with these ratings we’ll include approximate distance and elevation changes if possible. Members of the GCG and others in Moab’s hiking community meet every Tuesday and non-official hike Saturdays at the old Red Rock Elementary School parking lot (9 am winters, 8 am summers) for informal hiking. Hikes are usually decided at the meeting place with everyone participating in suggesting and selecting the hikes. Everyone is encouraged to suggest hikes. A general discussion of the suggested hike’s difficulty, length and elevation gain will be discussed if requested. Frequently there are two or more hiking groups with individuals selecting their hike of choice.

The first Tuesday of each month will include a “dog friendly” hike that will be short (4 miles or less) and easy. Dogs are not mandatory but welcome.

**UTAH NUCLEAR UPDATES**

- The Sierra Club supports Arizona Congressman Raul Grijalva’s bill to designate the Grand Canyon Heritage National Monument. The bill would protect the Grand Canyon’s cultural heritage and watershed and stop future uranium mining in the Canyon area.

- Blue Castle Project: On January 26, 2016, there will be oral arguments before the Utah Court of Appeals on the challenge of the appropriation of water for the proposed nuclear reactor near Green River. Blue Castle Holdings has not moved forward with an application for an Early Site Permit to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Right now, there is no evidence that the proposed reactor will ever happen.

- Transportation High Level Nuclear Waste: Then, there is the transportation of high level nuclear waste through Grand County should the Yucca Mountain spent nuclear fuel repository be brought back to life. There may be a Congressional push to provide funding and a directive to move forward with Yucca Mt., which is technically flawed and vigorously opposed by the State of Nevada and tribal and environmental groups.

Huge casks with spent fuel rods would travel on rail cars along the Colorado River from Denver, through Ruby Canyon in Grand County, and across the County to Green River and on to southern Nevada.

Two companies, located in New Mexico and Texas, have plans for a centralized interim storage site. EnergySolutions, a Utah company with a radioactive waste disposal operation in Tooele County, has purchased...
Waste Control Specialists, the Texas company that plans to develop an interim spent fuel storage facility. WCS also disposes of other types of radioactive waste.

Spent fuel could be transported through Utah if either facility is approved. The Sierra Club supports the development of a permanent spent fuel disposal facility, or facilities, not temporary, interim solutions.

Glen Canyon Group ExCom Officers

Kay McLean, 259-6199 Albey Reiner, 260-8708
Marc Thomas, 259-3603 Tom Messenger, 259-1756
Tammy Berrie, 260-0462

Some of our volunteers at the Other Half Marathon

ELECTION FOR 2017 ExCom

A ballot is enclosed for you to choose two candidates for next year's ExCom. Please take time to send in your ballot.

Official Hikes

GCG Sat 12/17 Delta Pool and the Crack. Visit the little mesa between Courthouse Wash and Mill Canyon. See if the crack suggesting the eastern side of the mesa is about to fall into Courthouse Wash has widened. Visit Delta Pool and enjoy walking on the Entrada slickrock with views of Monitor and Merrimac Buttes. Under 4 miles with ~500' of relief. EASY Meet at: Parking lot, former Red Rock Elementary School, at 9:00 AM. Leader: Thomas J Messenger 435-259-1756 messengert35@gmail.com.

GCG Sat 12/31 Sand Flats, Negro Bill Rim. Start just past the one-way stretch and leave the mesa top to walk below the rim down canyon on an inner rim of Negro Bill. Fine views into Negro Bill and towards the Moab Rim. About 5 miles, up 300', down 600' and 300' back up. MODERATE Meet at: Parking lot, former Red Rock Elementary School, at 9:00 AM. Leader: Thomas J Messenger 435-259-1756 messengert35@gmail.com.

GCG Sat 1/14 Snowshoeing or Cross-Country Skiing in the La Sals. Snowshoeing/skiing (your choice) starts at the cross-country skiing parking lot on the road to Geyser Pass and heads towards Gold Basin or Geyser Pass for a round trip of 3 to 5 miles. MODERATE Hiking in snowshoes is easy and lots of fun. Bring your own skis or snowshoes (can be rented locally). Meet at: Parking lot, former Red Rock Elementary School, at 9:00 AM. Leader: Jock Hovey 435-260-0239 jockhovey@gmail.com.

GCG Sat 1/28 Amasa Back. Nice winter hike. Hike initial part of the Captain Ahab trail and then explore the mesa to the west before return. 5 to 8 mile hike depending on extent of mesa exploration. MODERATE Meet at: Parking lot, former Red Rock Elementary School, at 9:00 AM. Leader: Michael Stringham 435-259-8579 mikechrista@earthlink.net.


GCG Sat 2/25 Dark Angel, Arches NP. Hike to the Dark Angel from the Devils Garden Trailhead and return. MODERATE Meet at: Parking lot, former Red Rock Elementary School, at 9:00 AM. Leader: Jock Hovey 435-260-0239 jockhovey@gmail.com.

GCG Sat 3/11 Cameo Cliffs. Loop begins and ends approx. 2 miles south of Wilson Arch and 1 mile east of Highway 191. Hike through lovely area, mostly on jeep/ATV tracks, past an arch that you probably haven't seen. High clearance desired for the one mile from highway. Approx 7-8 miles, 4-5 hours. EASY walking but long. Meet at: Parking lot, former Red Rock Elementary School, at 9:00 AM. Leader: Albey M Reiner 435-260-8708.

GCG Sat 3/25 Wilson Arch. Hike to the top of Wilson Arch and then explore Wilson Canyon rim before return. 5 to 6 mile loop hike. MODERATE Meet at: Parking lot, former Red Rock Elementary School, at 9:00 AM. Leader: Michael Stringham 435-259-8579 mikechrista@earthlink.net.
Glen Canyon Group ExCom Elections

There are two seats on the ExCom that are up for election. We have two outstanding candidates for these seats. Please vote for one or two candidates and mail your ballot to Glen Canyon Group, Sierra Club, PO Box 622, Moab, UT 84532.

Bobbi Cronk

I am a retired RN. My husband and I moved to Moab three years ago. My roots are from Upper Michigan where I learned to love and respect the outdoors. We decided to settle here after years of vacations spent hiking, rafting, kayaking, biking & jeeping in this spectacular area. I am still in awe every day at the beauty that surrounds us. Since moving here, I have been actively volunteering in the community, particularly with conservation organizations. Many of you already know me through various Sierra Club activities. This past year, I have volunteered for the Sierra Club, and attended many rallies, including support for the Bears Ears Monument and “Keep It in the Ground”. I am currently serving as coordinator of the Moab Environmental Action Network (MEAN).

For years, we have supported the efforts and accomplishments of the Sierra Club, and I would love to serve a more active role in the GCG.

Marc Thomas

I’m a freshly-minted 65-year old who has belonged to the Sierra Club for nearly two decades, living in Moab for the past ten. Like many of you, my association began through the Club’s outings program, before graduating to conservation chair for the Glen Canyon Group and its delegate to the Utah Chapter’s Executive Committee. In 2016-17, I am serving as Chair of the Club’s Utah Chapter. Conservation issues I’ve worked on (mostly in opposition) include the Bishop-Chaffetz Public Lands Initiative, the 6-County Infrastructure Coalition, the Dead Horse Lateral Pipeline, and the expanding oil well footprint north of Canyonlands. Currently, I’m involved in two campaigns at the city and county level: Keeping Public Lands in Public Hands and Net-Zero Carbon Footprint. I also serve as hiking representative on the county’s Trail Mix Council.

Clip and send this ballot to: GCG Sierra Club, PO Box 622, Moab, UT 84532. It must be postmarked no later than December 31, 2016, to be counted. Please vote for no more than TWO candidates for the Glen Canyon Group 2017-2018 ExCom. The second column of boxes should be used by joint members.

Bobbi Cronk .................................................. ☐ ☐

Marc Thomas .................................................. ☐ ☐

(Write In).................................................. ☐ ☐