



May 2026

Hello ChathamCAN Community,

It's spring and there's lots happening! Get out and enjoy nature and then look for ways you can jump in to protect our beautiful, life-sustaining planet.

CALLS FOR ACTION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Climate Solutions Fair!

Saturday, May 30, 2026 12 noon - 4:00pm at The Plant in collaboration with Haw River Assembly. Solar demonstrations, live music, interactive demos, kids' activities, film screening and panel discussion.

AND

May is National Bike Month! Join our community bike ride and help make bikes more visible in Chatham County! On Saturday, May 30, we'll meet at the Pittsboro Pop-Up Park (50 West Salisbury St.) at 11:30. At 11:45, we'll ride as a group two miles through downtown Pittsboro to The Plant, where you can enjoy the **Climate Solutions Fair**, with info and activities for all ages. Families with young children can join the bike ride at 12:00 noon from the SECU parking lot (630 East St.) for the last .8 mile on a quiet road. Together let's show our community that bikes matter! For more info please contact chathamclimateaction@gmail.com. (Flyer attached-please post if you can!) And click for more on [National Bike Month](#) founded in 1956!

Community Network Initiative to Address Rising Heat

You're invited to a meeting on 5/19 at 5:30 pm (meal included) to learn about an emergency heat-care initiative at Evergreen United Methodist Church (11098 US-15 N). The plan is to use the church as a cooling site, build a partnership with DSS and Operation Fan Heat Relief, and start building a community network so fans and other cooling items can be collected for community members. Hopefully this model can be expanded around the county. Bryan Schroeder, MPH, RN, who is organizing this effort, will also be presenting at the resource fair on June 27 see below. Reply to this email and we'll put you in touch.

[Energy Saver NC](#) is now available in Chatham County and across the state. The program offers residents rebates on household upgrades that reduce monthly utility bills. Applicants may receive up to \$16,000 toward new appliances, better insulation, or other purchases that help a home consume electricity more efficiently. That might include: heat pumps, energy-efficient HVAC units, electric stoves and air sealing. Renters and multifamily building owners can apply, though renters require approval from their landlord. The program is targeted toward low-income families. Please share this information with people who might benefit. We will highlight this program at the resource fair on June 27 (see below).

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Chatham Transit

<https://chathamtransit.org/>

Chatham Transit is the public transportation provider in Chatham County. It reaches all across the wide expanse of the county and serves many riders who depend on this service. Last month over 50,000 were provided and 70,000 miles traveled. A nonprofit agency, it is funded from the county and the state and relies on fares and private donations. As Chatham grows, the demand for public transportation will increase. It is a vital part of the economic life of our community. Keep your eye on Chatham Transit developments.



UPDATES and FOLLOW UP

Thanks to everyone who joined us for the **Community Conversation on Mutual Aid**

Our panelists gave us much to think about. Many thanks to Sara Martin, who organized the community resource hub in Chatham during COVID; Aylin Sotelo with Chatham Resists; and Laura Paye who is organizing mutual aid networks in two neighborhoods in Durham. To learn more about Laura's approach, visit [Building Blocks](#). (Information from this event will be added to our website soon.)

UPCOMING

June 3, Drag Down Our Electric Bills

5:30 pm, Rally and Drag Show

7 pm, Public hearing on Duke's request to raise electric bills

Durham County Courthouse, 501 S. Dillard St. Durham

Originally scheduled on May 12th, the public hearing on Duke's request to raise electric bills was changed unexpectedly three days before the hearing was to take place to June 3rd because of "significant security concerns." Join us for the last rate hike hearing! North Carolinians are having to choose between paying the light bill and paying for food, medicine, or rent! One reason your bills are so high?: NC electric bills are subsidizing power for big tech companies' data centers. What makes it even worse: Our money, water, and land are being consumed for AI tools we don't use, but are used for: Surveillance, Wars and Deporting our neighbors. What's really going on? They are worried about too much public participation! DO NOT LET THEM SQUASH YOUR VOICE. HOPE TO SEE YOU JUNE 3RD! Register [here](#)

If you can't make it to the hearing, you can still submit comments [online](#) (be sure to include the Docket number in your comments: Docket E-2 SUB 1300 if your utility is Duke Energy Progress and Docket E-7 Sub 1276 for Duke Energy Carolinas.. For information about background and talking points see [Energy Funds for All](#).

Fast facts:

- Energy bills in North Carolina have gone up by 22% from 2020 to 2025
- On your bill, this increase will be between \$25-\$30 per month by January of 2028.
- Actual increases WILL be higher - this rate increase does not include increases in fuel costs

Stay Safe and Save Money: Community Resource Fair on Extreme Heat & Rising Energy Costs! Sponsored by ChathamCAN in collaboration with our members in Siler City and the western part of the county. The resource fair will be held at Holy Trinity Church Fellowship Hall in Siler City, **Saturday, June 27, 10am-2pm**. Rising temperatures and energy costs are putting real strain on our community. Join us for a free, in-person resource fair with practical tools to stay safe in the heat and manage rising electricity bills — including information on assistance programs that may help. Free lunch and prizes!

Angella Dunston, who was one of the children protesting the PCB landfill site in Warren County in 1982, will be the moderator. Warren County is the birthplace of the Environmental Justice movement in the US. **Mark your calendar to attend or let us know if you can volunteer to help. And help us spread the word** (flyers attached-post if you can).

Fun (really!) opportunities for Chatham County residents coming up

- Interested in learning more about recycling? Two free tours of the recycling facility are scheduled in June. Details and how to register are on this website- www.chathamcountync.gov/education
- Waste and Recycling Enthusiast Program (WREP) is an educational program offered to residents. It is a six-week course deep diving into waste management, recycling, composting, environmental justice, and household hazardous waste. Learn more at www.chathamcountync.gov/wrep

LONGER TERM

We're talking with teachers, group leaders, young people and others. We're listening to learn how we can involve youth in ChathamCAN and climate solutions and support them in their climate goals. **Do you know of people we should be talking with? Are you interested in helping with this project?** Reply to this email to let us know. And stay tuned.

WHAT WE'RE READING/WATCHING/LISTENING TO

(send us your favorites!)

Listen

A Matter of Degrees (podcast): [The Long Arc of Climate Action with Gina McCarthy](#)

What if We Get it Right? (podcast) [Climate Wayfinding with Dr. Katharine Wilkinson](#)

Read

Robin Wall Kimmerer wants to start a new movement: "Plant Baby Plant!" To counter "Drill Baby Drill," she says, **"let's raise a garden-gloved middle finger in return."** <https://plantbabyplant.com/about>

Naomi Klein and Astra Taylor have a new book coming out, [End Times Fascism and the Fight for the Living World](#). You can read Naomi Klein's newsletter [here](#)

Rebecca Solnit has a new book, [*The Beginning Comes After the End: Notes on a World of Change*](#), which provides a hopeful reminder of just how much positive change has happened over the past decades.

Heat and Drought in NC. See NC State Climatologist's [blog](#).

Article (gift) in New York Times on Pittsboro [A 22,000-Home Community Is Being Built in a 5,000-Person Town](#)

Watch

Documentary on Warren County and birth of environmental justice movement - [Our Movement Starts Here](#)

If you haven't seen it yet, be sure to watch NC Warn's short documentary about Duke Energy: [The True Cost of Power](#). Or come to The Plant for the Climate Solutions Fair on May 30 and watch it there with others!

With hope and in community,

Betsy, Lenore, Maura, Meredith and Vickie - organizing for ChathamCAN

P.S. Please forward this email to others who might be interested in being a part of ChathamCAN. Let us know if you'd like for us to remove you from our mailing list.