



the leaf

Newsletter of the Northwest Cook County Group of the Sierra Club

Fall 2006

Executive Committee Elections Candidate Statements

As with any organization, the Northwest Cook County Group of the Sierra Club has an Executive Committee. The ExCom takes care of the day-to-day responsibilities of organizing the group. Sounds dry, but it is not when coupled with our mission to Explore, Enjoy and Protect! It is fun work and not too time consuming.

The ExCom is elected by the Group's membership. This year, as every year, another three members stand for election for another two-year term. This ensures that there can be some turnover every year, but that some members will always remain from a previous year. Any group member is eligible to run. Below are five individuals who have volunteered to serve on the ExCom. We greatly appreciate all of their dedication and enthusiasm. Volunteerism is the

backbone of our organization and a personally rewarding experience.

Please read the Candidate Statements and cast your ballot for three members to be this year's ExCom elected. Ballots are on page 2.

The ExCom meets the first Thursday of each month and any member is welcome to attend any meeting, any time, to learn what we are all about. The meetings are held at Spring Valley Nature Center in Schaumburg, the same location as our monthly program meetings. Contact Greg Stolzer at (847)368-0483 for further information!

Jim McCarthy

Over one thousand residents of northwest Cook County are members of the Sierra Club. Since about 990 of you probably have never heard of

me, here is a brief resume: member of the Club since 1995; began attending most monthly meetings of this Group in April, 2002; began submitting press releases to the newspapers for the Group in January, 2003; have been a member of the executive committee since early this year. Log on to the Group's Web site at www.illinois.sierraclub.org/NWCook, which is filled with information on monthly programs and workdays, among other information. You will see that the executive committee (all unpaid volunteers) works hard to present interesting monthly programs, to plan and execute workdays at Oak Hollow in Schaumburg and at Spring Creek Forest Preserve, and to hold a summer cookout, among others. Please read all the candidates' statements, make your choices and mail your ballot!

Tom Borchard

I am a long time member and activist in the Northwest Cook County Group. The Sierra Club has given so much to me, it is a pleasure to be a

part of the executive committee. I have been given the opportunity and the training for public speaking, lobbying government officials, and organizing events. These are things the Sierra Club offers to all members. If I am again elected to our group's executive committee, I will continue to utilize these things. I will strive to include many more of us in the decision making process—which is necessary to a well run and inclusive organization. If I am elected, you can look forward to me contacting some of you for your ideas, your energy, and your help!

Robin Limp

I have been a member of the Sierra Club since 1992 and active in the Northwest Cook County Group since 2004. Currently I am co-editor of *the leaf*, the group's newsletter. I recently attended an editor's training in San Francisco. I joined the club because I love to camp, hike and canoe, and I am concerned about the health of our blue planet. I have enjoyed learning to

Continued on Page 2

Gas Prices...Saving Every Penny

By Lara Jackson

With the rising gas prices, Americans are finding unique ways to save on gas. Police forces throughout the country are patrolling on foot or bike or investing in hybrid or ethanol-run cars. More people are riding public transportation or bicycles—in Chicago you can take your bike on CTA trains and buses. Less people are taking vacations, and the list goes on.

Here are some tips to save money and also the impact on the environment:

1. Avoid aggressive driving—speeding, rapid acceleration and braking wastes gasoline. Aggressive driving

can lower gas mileage by 33% for highway driving and five percent around town.

2. Observe the speed limit.
3. Remove excess weight from your car; avoid keeping unnecessary items, especially heavy items, in your car. An extra 100 lbs. in your car could reduce your mileage per gallon by up to 2%.
4. Avoid excessive idling. Idling emits pollutants and consumes fuel. If sitting for more than a minute, it is best to turn the car off and restart it.

Continued on Page 2

Our Oceans are in Peril

Conserve Our Ocean Legacy—www.oceanlegacy.org

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The future of our living oceans is increasingly under attack by industrialized fishing. America's ocean fish are being devastated by unsustainable fishing practices. Unlike polluted air or clearcut forests, the oceans' plight has gone unnoticed for years because it is distant from our lives on land. Today, bycatch, overfishing, and habitat destruction problems have depleted once bountiful fish populations and jeopardized the oceans' capacity for sustaining life.

Bycatch: Commercial fishing fleets target only a few commercially valuable species of fish, but during this process they kill and waste billions of pounds of unmarketable species on a continual basis. These billions of creatures are the collateral damage of industrialized fishing. As the catch is hauled on board, non-target species—often badly injured or deceased—are discarded back into the ocean. Every year, casualties include birds, turtles, seals, dolphins, and whales.

Overfishing: Advanced fishing technology and the enormous capacity of our fishing fleet has resulted in overfishing—the catching and killing of more fish than can naturally be replaced. Unsustainable fishing practices have devastated global fish populations. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), in 2002 about 60% of the commercially important stocks in U.S. ocean territory were “overfished,” yet fishing is allowed to continue.

Habitat Destruction: Fish and other wildlife are losing their habitat. One example of this problem is the devastation created by bottom trawlers which drag nets the size of football fields across the ocean floor to capture bottom dwelling creatures like shrimp, cod, flounder, and rockfishes. A single pass from a bottom trawler

can destroy miles of fish habitat. What's left behind is a dead zone, like a forest after being clearcut, except that it takes centuries rather than decades to grow back.

Congress is expected to reauthorize the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the major law governing U.S. marine fisheries. Members of Congress can put an end to the major challenges facing the U.S. fishing industry and our living oceans. The question is, will they?

Conserve Our Ocean Legacy (COOL) is a broad national effort to build support for increased protections for our ocean fish and ecosystems. To learn more about and COOL and the issues COOL works on, please attend our Thursday, November 9 program meeting at Spring Valley. See the *Calendar of Events* for more information.

Calendar of Events

Program meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month, September through June, at the Spring Valley Nature Sanctuary at 1111 East Schaumburg Road (west of Meacham Rd. and east of Plum Grove Rd.), in Schaumburg. Meetings start at 7:00 P.M. with refreshments and the program starts at 7:30 P.M. Programs focus on natural history or environmental issues. Our meetings are free and open to the public. For more information about our programs contact Greg Stolzer at (847)368-0483 or greg.stolzer@illinois.sierraclub.org

Also see the Outings section of *Lake & Prairie*, (the flip side of this newsletter) and on our website at: <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/NWCook>

Thursday, October 12, 2006—Join us as we discuss the upcoming November '06 elections. We will discuss local, state, and national elections with a focus on the environmental positions of candidates.

Thursday, November 9, 2006—Learn how you can become an ocean advocate and help preserve our oceans. Deanna LaSusa-Hotchner, a volunteer for COOL, Conserve Our Ocean Legacy, will discuss the problems our oceans face today.

Saturday, November 18, 2006—NWCCG Restoration Workday. Help us continue our restoration work for Spring Valley Nature Sanctuary in Schaumburg. Meet in the Spring Valley parking lot at 8:45 A.M. We will work until about 11:30 A.M. or so. Gloves and tools provided. Fun and good work!

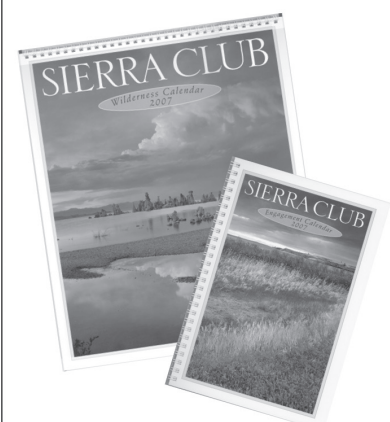
Thursday, December 14, 2006—*John Muir: A Living History Portrayal*. Please join us as John Wallace, a member of the Illinois Humanities Council's Road Scholars Speaker's Bureau, portrays the Sierra Club's founder, John Muir. John Muir (1838-1914) is America's most famous and influential naturalist and conservationist. He has been called “The Father of our National Parks.”

Thursday, January 11, 2007—*The Health of the Chicago Region's Ecosystems*. John Rogner will present the results from the Chicago region's biodiversity report card: *The State of Our Chicago Wilderness: A Report Card on the Health of the Region's Ecosystems*. The report card, created by the biodiversity consortium Chicago Wilderness, reports on the health of our region's woodlands, wetlands, streams, and prairies. Mr. Rogner is the Chairman of the Chicago Region Biodiversity Council.



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Sierra Club 2007 Calendars



Buy from us and support local conservation work!

For more information or to purchase a calendar, contact Greg Stolzer at (847)368-0483 or greg.stolzer@illinois.sierraclub.org

Gas Prices
Continued from Page 1

5. Use overdrive gears—when you use the overdrive gears the car's engine speed decreases, this saves gas and reduces engine wear.
6. Use cruise control.
7. Keep your tires inflated and maintain your car on a regular basis.
8. Use the recommended grade of oil for your vehicle.
9. Only use air conditioning when you really need it.

Even if you only practice some of these recommendations you should see a difference in your gas bill and will also be doing your part to reduce emissions in the air.

Other forms of transportation, such as biking, walking, or carpooling are ways to make a difference in lowering emissions, saving money, and getting a little exercise. A good source for carpooling is www.eRideShare.com, which is a national service connecting commuters and travelers. Even if you only practice some of these recommendations you should see a difference in your gas bill and will also be doing your part to reduce emissions in the air. For more information also see www.thepriceoffuel.com and www.climatecrisis.net



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From the Chair

By Greg Stolzer (greg.stolzer@illinois.sierraclub.org)

I have several things on my mind these days so I thought I would jump around a bit with my topics!

Did you happen to read Paul Salopek's feature in the Sunday, July 30, 2006 copy of the Tribune? His article, "A Tank of Gas, a World of Trouble"

(www.chicagotribune.com/oil), is an eye-opening look at where the gas we pump into our cars, trucks, and SUVs comes from around the world. Salopek journeyed to Iraq, Nigeria, Venezuela, and the Gulf Coast of the United States to show just how fragile the oil supply is and how hostile these locations can be. On his journey he saw plenty of violence, poverty, corruption, and broken dreams. All of this is occurring so that the world's insatiable demand for oil can be met. An important read for everyone.

I was happy to read the other day in *Newsweek* about the national Sierra Club's increase in membership. At the local level I have seen a slight increase in our membership ranks as well. It is nice to see more people interested in the environment and viewing the Sierra Club as a worthy

organization in which to take part. We must keep in mind, however, that citizens concerned about the environment are even more effective advocates for the environment when they volunteer their time with the Sierra Club. Membership is a great starting point but volunteering allows you to take your advocacy to the next level. If you are interested in volunteering feel free to email me.

Don't forget that we have an important election coming up on November 7. By now you have probably received a mailing from the Illinois Sierra Club or possibly an email. In order for politicians to pay more attention to the environment we have to let them know that voters are concerned about the environment. We have to get out to the polls and support environmentally-friendly politicians

whenever possible! If you are interested in getting involved with our political committee send me an email.

Finally, we have our annual calendar sales going on right now. \$10 can get you a beautiful Sierra Club calendar while at the same time supporting our local efforts to protect the environment. See the ad in this issue.

Thank you all for being Sierra Club members.

In order for politicians to pay more attention to the environment we have to let them know that voters are concerned about the environment.

Executive Committee Candidate Statements from Page 1

be more environmentally conscious through researching articles for *the leaf*, attending monthly meetings and discussing green issues with other members. I am especially proud of the group's contributions towards native prairie restoration in the area, both at Spring Valley in Schaumburg and Spring Creek in Barrington.

Tad Scheele

I wish to participate on the Executive Committee of the NWCCG because I want to make a difference and protecting our environment is part of my self-expression. Growing up, I spent extended time in rural settings on family farms. My first true wilderness experience was canoeing in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area at age 13. For as long as I can remember, the outdoors has provided immense pleasure, enjoyment, peace and recreation. This background has grown my commitment to preserving that experience for my sons and others who wish to partake of it.

In time, my reasons have grown to include the recognition that preserving this "rock" is essential. It is the right thing to do and it is part of who I am. One of the roles I would like to take on in my participation would be as an Ombudsman to youth groups. My goal will be to introduce kids to the amazing wilderness—from pure fun to extraordinary learning to fulfilling careers. To teach that they share a responsibility for our planet, which need not be a chore but something from which they will derive pleasure and satisfaction their entire lives. I am a 48-year-old single father with two sons. We enjoy hiking, camping, skiing, biking and more. During "the day" I am a Vice President. Corporate travel sales have been my career for over 20 years.

Rick Rszafarz

Over 20 years ago, my father would take my brothers and I hiking in the forest preserves along the Des Plaines River. At a very young age, I was

taught to admire and respect nature. In grammar school, I was in the Boy Scouts and had the opportunity to camp and hike in many of the state parks in the Midwest. These experiences reinforced in me that natural places require protection. As a young adult, I got the opportunity to visit many of the National Parks and wilderness areas. I got to see firsthand abuses to the land, such as casual littering, uncontrolled clear cutting of forests, irresponsible pollution control, and unregulated real estate development. I joined the Sierra Club because I have always admired the principles of John Muir and strongly believe in the protection of the environment. Currently, I am a volunteer for the Illinois Water Sentinels program for Spring Creek in the northwest suburbs of Chicago. As Henry David Thoreau said, "In wilderness is the preservation of the world."

Ballot Instructions

- You must be a member of the Northwest Cook County Group to vote.
- **IMPORTANT:** You must print your full name and address on the outside of the ballot envelope for membership verification. Mark your envelope: "Attention: Elections Committee."
- Joint memberships may use Ballots #1 and #2—be sure to print both member names on the ballot envelope (needed for membership verification).
- Do not send any items except your ballot(s) in the envelope (no membership renewals, etc.).
- Vote for a candidate by putting an X in the box next to his or her name.
- Vote for up to three (3) candidates.

Please mail ballots by November 1, 2006 to:

**NWCCG ExCom Elections
1208 W. Northwest Hwy.
Arlington Heights, IL 60004-5249
attention: Elections Committee**

Ballot #1

(for Single Member vote)
Please choose 3 candidates

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jim McCarthy | <input type="checkbox"/> Tad Scheele |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tom Borchard | <input type="checkbox"/> Rick Rszafarz |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Robin Limp | |

Ballot #2

(for Joint Member vote)
Please choose 3 candidates

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jim McCarthy | <input type="checkbox"/> Tad Scheele |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tom Borchard | <input type="checkbox"/> Rick Rszafarz |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Robin Limp | |