

# Palisades Views



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June 2009

## Green economy requires major shift in thinking

By Wayne Politsch  
Group chair

“What Color is Your Parachute?” has been a best-selling job-hunter’s bible for decades. Only recently has the world discovered the answer might be “green.”



The “new green economy” is the centerpiece of President Obama’s antidote to climate change, fossil-fuel addiction and the global-market meltdown.

How will customers, corporations and communities find their way among the twists and turns of this uncharted terrain? We need to make sure to ask the right questions before coming up with answers.

Most of us realize it can no longer be “business as usual.” There is universal agreement that Americans need to rapidly begin a journey down a greener, sustainable path.

We cannot continue to invest enormous amounts of time and money chasing fossil-fuel-based carbon to keep the economy humming. We can no longer discard products made from nonrenewable resources in the trash.

There is a shift in thinking: People

## *Climate change affects bird migration*

Mitch Leachman, executive director of St. Louis Audubon Society, will be the guest speaker at the June meeting of the Piasa Palisades Group. He will discuss the effects of climate change on bird-migration patterns.

“Nearly 60 percent of the 305 species found in North America in winter are on the move, shifting their ranges northward by an average of 35 miles,” according to the national Audubon Web site.

“Audubon scientists analyzed 40 years of citizen-scientist Christmas Bird Count data and their findings provide new and powerful evidence that global warming is having a serious impact on natural systems.

“Northward movement was detected among species of every type, including more than 70 percent of highly adaptable forest and feeder birds. Only grassland species were an exception, with only 38 percent mirroring the

northward trend.

“But far from being good news for species like (the) Eastern meadowlark and Henlow’s sparrow, this reflects the grim reality of severely depleted grassland habitat and suggests that these species now face a double threat from the combined stresses of habitat loss and climate adaptation.

“It is the complete picture of widespread movement and the failure of some species to move at all that illustrate the impacts of climate change on birds.

“They are sending us a powerful signal that we need to 1) take policy action to curb climate change and its impacts and 2) help wildlife and ecosystems adapt to unavoidable habitat changes, even as we work to curb climate change itself.”

The meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. Monday, June 8, in the community room of First Unitarian Church, Third and Alby streets in Alton.

see climate change, peak oil and the eye-popping numbers of a failing economy as unmistakably connected.

How can we succeed in this green transformation? First, there must be green jobs. What are the

opportunities and challenges for job seekers? The Apollo Alliance estimates several million people could be employed by efforts to reduce our nation’s carbon footprint.

Green jobs could relate to every-

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## GREEN

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thing from weatherization of existing buildings to public transit to renewable wind and biofuel energy. They will not only protect the environment but also provide living wages, safe working conditions and worker's rights.

But training people in a broad range of green occupations will be a complex process. And so far, the wave of green jobs has not arrived

with any appreciable force.

A second necessary component of a green economy will be corporations with sustainable strategies. Smokestacks, drainpipes, industrial waste and the use of nonrenewable resources must be reduced if not eliminated.

Several corporations have built greener "mousetraps" by wringing out toxins, waste and fossil fuels from their products. Businesses such as The Body Shop, Whole

Foods Market and Seventh Generation have discovered going green is not only good for the environment; it improves the bottom line.

The final piece of a green economy will be consumers. They are a complex group, ranging from the affluent to the impoverished. Not all have access to hybrid cars, organic food, eco-friendly fashions or solar energy.

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# CALENDAR

**Saturday, June 6 Two Rivers Family Fishing Fair** at Pere Marquette State Park, near Grafton. Twenty educational activities, trout and bluegill ponds, a 4,000-gallon aquarium, Radio Disney and Camo the Clown from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free. Fishing poles, bait and other supplies provided. For more information, call (618) 786-3323, ext. 1.

**Sunday, June 7 Piasa Palisades Group monthly moonlight hike** at The Nature Institute in Godfrey (see related notice). Explore Mississippi

Sanctuary and Olin Nature Preserve by the light of the full moon. Meet at 7:30 p.m. at Talahi Lodge, 2213 S. Levis Lane. From Homer Adams Parkway in Alton (Illinois 3), turn right on West Delmar in Godfrey (also Illinois 3), left on Levis Lane and left on South Levis. Bring a friend! For more information, call Sandy Wood at (618) 463-0358.

**Monday, June 8 Piasa Palisades Group monthly meeting.** Mitch Leachman of St. Louis Audubon Society will be the guest speaker (see related article). Meet at 7:30 p.m. in the community room of First Unitarian Church, Third and Alby streets in Alton. For more information, call Christine Favilla at (618) 462-6802.

**Wednesday, June 17 Piasa Palisades Group monthly bike ride.** Cover about 10 miles on trails in the Edwardsville and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville area. Stop for ice cream. Bring a light. Meets at 6 p.m. in the N-1 parking lot at Longfellow Avenue and Troy Road (Illinois 159), near Market Basket. For more information, call Jim Bensman at (618) 463-0714.

**Wednesdays, June 17 to Aug. 26 Prairie walks** at Gordon Moore Park's Heartland Prairie in Alton, sponsored by The Nature Institute in Godfrey. Spend about an hour in a restored native prairie, beginning at 6:30 p.m. A guide will identify flowers in bloom. Bring family and friends. The prairie is across Illinois 140 from the main park property. For more information,

call Nan Adams at (618) 655-0170.

**Saturday and Sunday, June 20 and 28 Sierra Club recycling drives** for computers, electronics and appliances. Hours are 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. June 20 at Collinsville Memorial Public Library, 408 W. Main St., and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. June 28 at Carrolton Bank's Jerseyville Banking Center, 201 W. Exchange St. in Jerseyville. For more information, call Christine (618) 462-6802 or send her an e-mail at christine.favilla@sierraclub.org.

**Monday to Monday, July 6 to 13 Student Environmental Leadership Training,** sponsored by the Sierra Student Coalition. Weeklong youth training at Pere Marquette State Park near Grafton. Led by national youth

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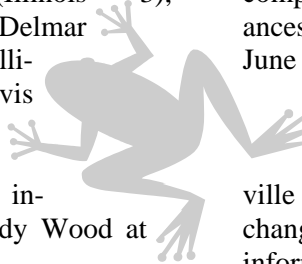
## Ribbit ...

ExCom member Sandy Wood sent word that people on last month's moonlight hike not only enjoyed the full moon, Mississippi River views and special ecology of Olin Nature Preserve; they also were serenaded at the frog pond.

"We could hear the frogs — at least two distinct calls — from quite a distance," Wood wrote. "As we approached the pond and went out on the boardwalk, the symphony was so loud, you almost wanted to cover your ears.

"It was the tiny tree frog with the booming voice. They pleased us by also being visible in a number of places. Rich Keating picked one up, and several of us also got to hold it. A true blessing of nature.

"It's always a special event, even if the moon stays behind the clouds. Let's hope for a nice clear night (this month) and not a rainstorm."



## Palisades Views

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members.

To submit a newsletter item:  
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**DEADLINE FOR JULY:  
SATURDAY, JUNE 27**



## Books get Rich's thumbs up

By Richard C. Keating  
Group member

The two books reviewed here are about foot travel through natural scenery, but that's all they have in common.

"Wandering Home: A Long Walk Across America's Most Hopeful Landscape" is the most straightforward. Author Bill McKibben teaches English and environmental studies at Middlebury College in Vermont and has family land in New York's Adirondacks.

McKibben describes his 15-day pack trip to the property, across Vermont and New York. He meets people from all walks of life and carries on environmentally oriented discussions and digressions.

Readers learn about lore of New England and Northern New York and the local alternative agriculture movement. They also learn that Adirondack state forest preserves were designated earlier than most national parks and are collectively larger.

This is a fine and thoughtful read by a respected environmental writer.

Doug Peacock's memoir, "Walking it Off: A Veteran's Chronicle of War and Wilderness," is much more complex and multi-layered. It's gripping and sometimes painful to read.

The author was a close friend to Edward Abbey, and he reveals much about Abbey, his final days under Peacock's care and how he influ-

enced Peacock.

The unpredictable Peacock had been the model for George Washington Hayduke, Abbey's classic character in the "Monkey Wrench Gang." That book inspired the Earth First! movement, known as an "ecoterrorist" group to the FBI.

Peacock, a Green Beret medic during the Vietnam War, suffered a severe case of post-traumatic stress disorder. At times, his grip on sanity was tenuous.

He figured contact with nature was the best medicine. "Walking it Off" follows a series of his adventures in the Southwest United States, Asia and Mexico.

Peacock persisted in living on the edge, nearly perishing on more than one occasion. Readers learn of his keen interest in nature; he is a first-class naturalist, making a number of subtle observations on diverse species.

Slowly, the walking-and-writing cure seemed to work. Peacock later gains enough equanimity to research and publish on grizzlies, and to find peace.

These days, he leads an examined life and, for those of us who love our fellow man and nature, he offers abundant lessons.

Abbey believed in him, and Peacock would have made his mentor proud with this smoothly written and sophisticated book.

### BOOK REVIEW

**"Wandering Home: A Long Walk Across America's Most Hopeful Landscape"**  
by Bill McKibben  
(2005, Crown Publishers, New York, 157 pages, hardback)

**"Walking it Off: A Veteran's Chronicle of War and Wilderness"**  
by Doug Peacock  
(2005, Eastern Washington University Press, Spokane, 196 pages, paperback)

## GREEN

Continued from page 2

Perhaps the majority of consumers are indifferent to green products and unwilling to pay higher prices. Some have been "greenwashed" by businesses that make themselves look more environmentally friendly than they really are.

Potential green customers are confronted with many choices: Purchase stuff or live a "bare-minimum" lifestyle. Shop at Wal-Mart or Small-Mart. Eat locally produced food or find the best price.

Consumers can get a more complete picture of a product's impact on the wallet, body and planet by visiting the GoodGuide Web site at [www.goodguide.com](http://www.goodguide.com).

If we do not move beyond "paper-or-plastic" decision-making and deal with the deeper, more complex issues confronting our way of life, we may just as well debate what shade of green to paint deck chairs on the Titanic.

## CALENDAR

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organizers. Develop skills in grass-roots organizing, leadership and communication; network, bond with other students, engage in fun activities and enjoy tasty vegetarian cooking. Be a force for change! The subsidized cost of \$200 to \$300 (sliding scale) covers tuition, room and board, local transportation and Sierra Club membership. Limited need-based tuition and scholarships available. For more information, visit the Web site at [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org).