

Palisades Views



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October 2008

Longwall mining: Efficient but destructive to farmland

The Piasa Palisades Group will take up the controversial issue of longwall mining at its October meeting.

Mike Maccanelli of the Illinois Citizens Opposed to Longwall Mining will give a Power-Point presentation. Mary Arlis Bates and others will represent the Citizens Against Longwall Mining, an umbrella organization that has led the fight in Montgomery County.

Longwall mining is very efficient, extracting 90 percent of coal underground. But it leaves no pillars to support the surface and results in "planned subsidence."

NOTICE

California-based biologist, eco-builder, author, farmer, activist and alternative-fuel expert David Blume will be interviewed on the "Let's Talk" show at Alton radio station WBGZ (1570 AM) at 11 a.m. Thursday, Oct. 23. Hayner Public Library has prepared by ordering two copies of his book, "Alcohol Can Be a Gas!" It outlines how people can brew their own alcohol fuel.

Water collects in shallow pools on the surface, causing a "bathtub effect." Land becomes too wet for farming in the spring and too dry during droughts.

Technology to reclaim farmland or mitigate damage done by longwall mining has not been developed to the satisfaction of landowners. (Many sold mineral rights in the early 1900s, when they thought companies would use the room-and-pillar method.)

Likewise, the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act hasn't been amended to protect landowners from destruction of natural water resources, crops, homes and barns. Municipal water lines, anhydrous lines, gas lines and cable and electrical systems also are at risk.

The meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Oct. 13, in the community room at First Unitarian Church, Third and Alby streets in Alton.

FOUND

Someone left a wooden picnic basket at the Sierra Club picnic at Beaver Dam State Park in August. To claim it, call Gayle Borman at (618) 254-2250.

Clouds didn't spoil festival

By Sandy Wood
ExCom member

The Mississippi River was well-celebrated along the river's edge in Alton on Sept. 20. In fact, the high water cast a "worry edge" for planners of the Mississippi Earthtones Festival, as the river almost left its banks.

Some 400 to 500 energized visitors enjoyed the combination of music, children's activities, environmental information and crafts. Of course, the cloudy day prevented a demonstration of the solar oven, and electricity was required for the third musical group. The first two were powered by solar energy!

One special aspect was sharing the "environmental energy" with exhibitors and volunteers who helped with booths. Tim Matifes of Rustic Wood Creations in Alton displayed a neat centerpiece of Mississippi driftwood "spoiled" by plastic litter.

The river clean-up had to be postponed due to high water. It's been rescheduled for Nov. 8 (see calendar).

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Serving the Southwestern Illinois counties of
Bond, Calhoun, Fayette, Greene, Jersey, Macoupin, Madison and Montgomery.

WEEKEND IN THE WOODS

(FOR KIDS OF ALL AGES)

YOUR PERSONAL INVITATION

The Sierra Club's Piasa Palisades Group cordially invites members, prospective members, families and friends to escape for a weekend in the woods. Come and enjoy the fall colors!

When: Friday afternoon, Oct. 24, through noon Sunday, Oct. 26. You can stay one night or two, or just come Saturday evening for the cookout and campfire.



Where: Beautiful Pere Marquette State Park, 7 miles west of Grafton along the Illinois River. We've reserved Camp Ouatoga for the weekend.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

You can take advantage of guided activities, explore on your own or just hang out around camp.

Owl program: Learn about owls from a park ranger at 8 p.m. Friday, then take a 2-mile night hike and gather around a campfire (marshmallows and drinks provided). Bring a flashlight.

Early morning hike: See 100-year-old trees, scenic overlooks and other hotspots on a 6-mile hike with a park ranger from 8:30 a.m. to noon Saturday.

"Lost cabin" hike: Hike with Sierrans to a 19th-century log cabin and barn that are gradually being taken over by nature, beginning at 10 a.m. Saturday.

Canoe trip: Explore shallow backwater lakes along the Illinois River. Suitable for all skill levels (canoes, paddles and life jackets provided).

Meet at 10 a.m. Saturday.

Little Giant City hike: The name says it all. Meet at 1:30 p.m. Saturday.

Stargazing: Look at stars through a telescope after the Saturday night cookout if it's a clear night. Bring a flashlight.

Nature photography workshop: Get tips on how to capture images of scenery, plants and animals, beginning at 10 a.m. Sunday. Bring your camera.

Bicycle ride: Bike on a paved trail along the Great River Road (time and day to be determined). Bring your bicycle.

CAMP FACILITIES

Camp Ouatoga was built by the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Great Depression. It is rustic, wooded and isolated from the rest of the park, high on the Mississippi River bluffs.

Lodging: Single-room, enclosed cabins with screened and shuttered windows, electric lights and steel bunk beds with mattresses. Bring sleeping bags or sheets, blankets and pillows.

There also are several unit lodges that can house families, larger groups and single men or single women who want to share.

Dining hall: A large dining hall will serve as our headquarters. It has tables, benches and a fully equipped kitchen with a refrigerator, walk-in cooler, a great old gas range, a microwave, coffee pot, sinks, dishes, silverware, cooking utensils, pots and pans.

Bath house: Yes, the new bath house is a modern facility with elec-

tricity, flush toilets, sinks, mirrors and showers with hot water.

MEALS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Meals: Just like home. You supply and prepare your own breakfasts and lunches. The bad news is, you have to wash your own dishes.

Saturday night cookout: Volunteers will prepare a meal of grilled pork steaks (or veggie burgers for vegetarians), baked potatoes, baked beans, corn, salad, garlic and French breads, coffee, iced tea, lemonade, pie and ice cream. Eat at 5:30 p.m.

Entertainment: A short program will follow the cookout Saturday. We'll also gather around a campfire, roast marshmallows and make s'mores both nights. Bring your musical instruments!

OTHER INFORMATION

Bring: Bicycles, cameras, binoculars, day packs, rain gear, water bottles, flashlights, musical instruments, breakfast and lunch supplies and other beverages, if desired.

Don't bring: Guns, radios or pets. Tent camping is prohibited.

Cost: Only \$6 per person per night for the cabins, \$12 per person for the pork-steak dinner (\$7 for children under 10) and \$10 for the vegetarian dinner.

To register: Fill out the form on the opposite page and mail it with payment by Monday, Oct. 20, to Weekend in the Woods, 440 W. Union St., Edwardsville, IL 62025. Directions and a map can be sent on request.

Questions: Call 656-8132 or send an e-mail to palisadesviews@gmail.com. We'll get back to you!

C A L E N D A R

Saturday, Oct. 11 Alton fall clean-up. Register at one of five sites with coffee and donuts or stay close to home and beautify your own neighborhood. For more information, call (618) 467-2375.

Saturday, Oct. 11 Cool City Treasures Communitywide Sale to benefit United Congregations of Metro East Alton Cluster, a peace and justice organization working for lasting social change. Hours are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the old St. Patrick's School, Fifth



and Central in Alton, one of five registration sites for the city clean-up (see listing above). Vendors will sell artwork, crafts, plants, books and other new and "gently used" items. Space rental is \$25 for a table and two chairs. For more information, call Mary Lu McManus at (618) 660-5223 or Jan Hines at (618) 377-8257 before Sept. 20.

Saturday, Oct. 11 "Winterizing Your Garden" program. It's part of a fall speaker series with University of Illinois Extension master gardeners, sponsored by Pride Incorporated, a Godfrey based, non-profit organization dedicated to community beautification. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at Whispering Winds Gazebo at Glazebrook Park, 1401 Stamper Lane in Godfrey. Free. Seating is limited. Call (618) 467-2375 to make a reservation. For more information, visit the Web site at www.prideincorporated.org.

Monday, Oct. 13 Monthly meeting of the Piasa Palisades Group (see

related article). The guest speaker is Mike Maccanelli of Illinois Citizens Opposed to Longwall Mining. 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.

Tuesday, Oct. 14 Monthly moonlight hike at The Nature Institute in Godfrey, sponsored by the Piasa Palisades Group. Explore Mississippi Sanctuary and Olin Nature Preserve. Meet at 7 p.m. (note earlier winter starting time) at Talahi Lodge,

See CALENDAR/page 4

WEEKEND IN THE WILDERNESS REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

NUMBER OF CABIN CAMPERS:

Friday	Saturday	Total	X \$6	Cost
_____	_____	_____	X \$6	_____

SATURDAY EVENING COOKOUT:

	Number of people		
Grilled pork-steak dinner	_____	X \$12	_____
Vegetarian dinner	_____	X \$10	_____
Children under 10	_____	X \$7	_____
GRAND TOTAL:			_____

**Mail with payment by Monday, Oct. 20, to:
Weekend in the Woods, 440 W. Union St., Edwardsville, IL 62025**

Directions and a map can be sent on request.

CALENDAR

Continued from page 3

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.

Wednesday, Oct. 15 Monthly bike ride of the Piasa Palisades Group.



Last ride of the season! Ride the Schoolhouse Trail, Madison County Transit's newest trail. Meet at 6 p.m. at the Droste Park Trailhead in Maryville. From Illinois 159, go east on Main Street and northeast on Parkview. Bring a light and dress in warm clothing. Stop for ice cream afterward, weather permitting. For more information, call Jim Bensman at (618) 463-0714 or send an e-mail to jbensman1@charter.net.

Thursday, Oct. 16 Backyard-composting teleconference program, presented by University of Illinois Extension. Learn about the

FOR SALE

Women's jackets — Marmot rain jacket in a beautiful mustard-green color with gray trim, new with tags, small; black Outdoor Research down "sweater," new with tags, medium. High quality, comparable to The North Face. Selling for well below half price. For more information, call Teri at (618) 656-8132.

composting process, different types of bins and systems and the blending of materials. Meet at 7 p.m. at the extension office, 900 Hillsboro Ave. in Edwardsville. The cost is \$5. For more information, call (618) 650-7050 or register online at www.extension.uiuc.edu/madisonstclair.

Saturday, Oct. 18 Heartland

Prairie fall work day, across Illinois 140 from Gordon Moore Park in Alton. Help clear the walking path of native grasses and flowers that have fallen over. Bring a pair of long-handled loppers or an electric hedge trimmer. The prairie is really colorful at this time of year! For time and other information, send an e-mail to Nan Adams at nan2adams@att.net.

Monday, Oct. 20 Executive Committee meeting of the Piasa Palisades Group.

All members are welcome to attend! Meet at 7 p.m. at the Sierra Club office, 223 Market St. in Alton.

Wednesday, Oct. 22 Citizen Planner Training Workshop,

sponsored by the American Planning Association's Illinois chapter. Experts will talk about multi-jurisdictional issues in our region; how to collaborate on promoting development; and annexation, development and intergovernmental agreements. Hours are 6 to 8:30 p.m. at the Gateway Center in Collinsville. For more information, call Jennifer Howland of the City of O'Fallon at (618) 624-4500, ext. 4, or send an e-mail to jhowland@ofallon.org.

Friday through Sunday, Oct. 24-26

Weekend in the Woods at Pere Marquette State Park near Grafton (see fact sheet). Lodging in rustic cabins, hiking, biking, canoeing and stargazing. For more information, call (618) 656-8132 or send an e-mail to palisadesviews@gmail.com.

Saturday, Nov. 8 Mississippi River clean-up

(rescheduled because of high water on Sept. 20). Two-hour shifts from 9 to 11 a.m. or 10 a.m. to noon, clearing trash and other debris from river banks. Board boats at the Alton Marina dock (upstream, closest to Riverfront Park). Wear sunscreen, long pants and close-toed shoes that you don't mind getting wet or muddy. T-shirts, gloves and bags provided. For more information, call Christine Favilla at (618) 462-6802.

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is a monthly publication for and about Sierra Club members.

To submit a newsletter item:
440 W. Union
Edwardsville, IL 62025
(618) 656-8132
palisadesviews@gmail.com

**DEADLINE FOR NOVEMBER:
SATURDAY, OCT. 25**

