

Upcoming Fun

Wednesday, August 13

— Softball in the Park

Have you ever aspired to hitting home runs like Sammy Sosa or Mike McGuire? Now is your chance to show off! Join other Sierra Club members and their families for a picnic and softball game at Ambucs Park, located on East University, at 6 p.m. Please bring your glove, your home run swing and a dish to share.

For more information, contact Alice Englebretsen at 217-367-7344 or at englebre@uiuc.edu.

September 10

— Walk & Roll at Meadowbrook

What's Walk & Roll you ask? Well, since Chuck Berry's people and our people couldn't work out a Rock & Roll concert at Meadowbrook, we decided the next best thing was for you to bring your inline skates, bike or walking shoes and join other Sierra Club families for a bit of fall color. We will meet at 6:30 p.m.; from there we will journey for a little treat. For more information, contact Alice Englebretsen at 217-367-7344 or at englebre@uiuc.edu.

ONE EARTH, ONE CHANCE®

Wetlands Protection Passes First Hurdle

How Your Representative Voted

Yes — Pro Wetlands Vote

No — Anti Wetlands Vote

William B. Black (R) No

Shane Cultra (R) No

Roger L. Eddy (R) Excused from vote

Naomi D. Jakobsson (D) YES

Chapin Rose (R) No

Keith P. Sommer (R) No

M103E Capitol Building

Springfield, IL 62706

217-782-6674

District Office: 916 Broadway Avenue, Mattoon, IL 61938; 217-235-6033, fax 217-235-6052

Senator Dan Rutherford (R)

Springfield Office:

Senator 53rd District

105B Capitol Building

Springfield, IL 62706

217-782-6597

District Office: 320 N. Plum Street, Pontiac, IL 61764

815-842-3632, fax 815-842-2875

Senator Richard J. Winkler Jr. (R)

Springfield Office:

Senator 52nd District

M103A Capitol Building

Springfield, IL 62706

217-782-2507

District Office: 1717 Philo Road, Suite 27, Urbana, IL 61802; 217-328-0400, fax 217-328-1202

Next Steps

The Wetlands Protection Act passed the Illinois House of Representatives. In November it will be voted on in the Illinois Senate. Please contact your local Senators and ask them to support the Wetlands Protection Act sponsored by Senator Terry Link (D-30 Vernon Hills).

Senator Dale A. Righter (R)

Springfield Office:

Senator 55th District

CHAIR'S CORNER

by Alice Englebretsen, Chair

Are you feeling frustrated about the uncontrolled growth of our communities which seem more driven by large chain stores than citizens? How about the commercial buildings standing empty in the middle of our cities and towns but having to drive to the outskirts in heavy traffic for basic shopping needs. Are you frustrated with how difficult it is to have a voice in how our communities develop? The Prairie Group has some inspired initiatives to help you become empowered and get involved.

This past March we held two workshops on "Building Better Communities" which generated a lot of citizen interest in gaining a stronger voice. We heard from officials from the twin cities and the county on what planning programs are currently in place and where citizen input is most effective and even solicited. We gained experience in thinking about our ideal communities in a series of helpful group exercises. It's fun to visualize how our communities can develop into very desirable places to live—places where we know our neighbors and enjoy convenient shopping, services, and good transportation. (See the article "Building Better Communities" by Jim Beauchamp for more details.)

In April, in keeping with the theme of "building better communities," we took a chartered bus tour of the "good" and "bad" areas of Champaign-Urbana. The tour proved to be informative and fun. Cynthia Hoyle narrated and gave many insights on good planning ideas. We saw older neighborhoods with lovely historic features to neighborhoods needing revitalization; new developments which provide affordable housing to large homes in affluent areas; and commercial developments, both in city centers and on the outskirts. (See article by Anita Povich.)

If becoming involved interests you and you want to know more, let us know. In the near future we will build on what we learned and form a group of interested people to develop a unified voice in guiding our community to be the kind of place we want for our future.

On the Lighter Side

In the upcoming months, the Prairie Group also has some fun activities to look forward to. In August we are scheduling a family softball and picnic at Ambucs Park. Bring your gloves, ball, and bat along with a dish to share. Burgers will be provided. In September we have another family fun event planned at Meadowbrook Park. See details in the Upcoming Fun section.

Building Better Communities: A Vision for the Future

by Jim Beauchamp

On March 8 and 15, two workshops billed as "Building Better Communities" were held at the Terminal Building in Champaign. Professional speakers discussed various aspects of smart growth, there was a plethora of handouts for everyone to follow for anyone who missed anything and, there was plenty of coffee and free box lunches. Over the two days, some 40 people attended these extremely informative workshops, which were jointly sponsored by the Illinois Student Environmental Association (ISEN) and the Sierra Club.

For the first workshop, subtitled "The Tools to Participate," the speakers were Laura Huth (Executive Director of ISEN and member of the Urbana City Council), Lindsay Robinson (Head Trainer of ISEN), Ellen Shubert (Director, Campaign for Sensible Growth, Chicago), and Rob Kowalski (Planning Manager, City of Urbana). After introductions, Kowalski talked on "Why a Comprehensive Plan?" with particular emphasis on the situation in Urbana. His presentation included a discussion of neighborhood workshops and resident surveys held in Urbana. Shubert discussed "What is 'Smart Growth' and its Relationship to Planning?," "Overview of the Legal Basis for Planning: What is the New Planning Law in Illinois?," and "How Do We Plan Livable Communities?" Her engaging style made it easy for attendees to participate in her discussion of planning alternatives. In the mid-afternoon Frank DiNovo (Director, Planning & Community Development, Champaign County Regional Planning Commission) gave a short talk on "RPCs, COGs, & MPOs: Counties and their Relationship with Municipalities." He emphasized that government on the county level consists of a patch-quilt of different governing entities, so that to accomplish planning goals one must take this difficulty into account. Finally, Robinson and Huth passed out recyclable cameras and outlined a camera "visioning" exercise whereby participants would snap pictures of examples of "good," "questionable," and "really bad" development in the C-U (or wherever) area, turn them in for photo processing, whereupon they would be displayed for viewing and discussion at next workshop. They also gave a brief overview of the second workshop.

The second workshop was subtitled "Visualizing Better Communities." Presenters were Laura Huth, Lindsay Robinson, Mary DeBacker (Planner, Parsons-Brinckerhoff), and Bruce Knight (Planning Director, City of Champaign). We started by viewing

and discussing our "good, bad, and ugly" photos. One of the conclusions was that it isn't always easy to decide whether a particular development is acceptable or not unless you have a really concrete means for evaluation. DeBacker then presented "Visualizing your Community: Taking Stock and Forming Vision." She discussed the use of a Visual Preference Survey (<http://www.nelessen.org>) as a tool to help people identify what types of building types and landscape styles they prefer for their community. She emphasized that there are no "right" or "wrong" choices, only implications for community development based on building styles and regulations. This was followed by Huth and Robinson talking about "The Nuts and Bolts of Organizing for Social Change: An Introduction to Campaign Planning and Coalition Building." In the afternoon, attendees broke into groups called "charettes" to work on developing a "vision" for their communities, an effort coordinated by Knight. Finally, Huth and Lindsay conducted a session on "Moving to Action" with sub-topics "Forming Coalitions and Neighborhood Groups to Move from Re-active to Pro-active," "Exciting the Public to Build Better Communities — Realizing Your Goals and Dreams," and "Putting your New Skills and Vision into Action."

As a follow-up to the workshops, on April 9 we held a "Sprawl Bus Tour" (see article below for more details). Sierrans with an interest in community planning met at Lincoln Square and rode a bus around Champaign/Urbana according to a route designed by Alice Englebretsen. Cynthia Hoyle kept us entertained and informed during the tour with planning philosophy, politics of planning in the Champaign County region (sometimes in comparison to her previous residence in Oklahoma), and comments on various areas passed. We visited old Urbana, then a new eco-friendly development east of Philo, followed by the Sunnycrest "shopping area." We traveled west on Winsor to Mattis in Champaign (glimpsing the Cherry Hills subdivision and Barkstall School in the distance), briefly stopped for a look at the Old Farm Shopping Center, on to the beautiful old houses on University, then up Prospect to the infamous shopping area north of I-74. Afterwards, several of us repaired to the historic Lincoln Hotel Irish Pub for drinks, conversation and music.

For more information on the insidious problem of urban sprawl, a good web site to visit is <http://www.sierraclub.org/sprawl/>.

Defend the Shawnee Activist
Training Workshop
 Save the date — October 25-26 — for a weekend of information, skills, and fun! More information to come in the next **Lake & Prairie** and on the website.

WANTED : Newsletter Editor
 Help us put together our quarterly newsletter. As editor you will collect and edit submissions and write articles as needed. Time commitment: 4-6 hours quarterly.



George Gore and Jim Beauchamp represent the Prairie Group at the Kickapoo State Park Canoe Festival in May, 2003.

ACTIVIST CORNER

Come to the State Fair!

The Sierra Club will have a table at the state fair in Springfield, and the Prairie Group will be staffing it Saturday, August 16. We need volunteers to take shifts at the table. This should be a fun chance to visit the fair as well as to educate the public about our activities and issues. Please contact Dick Bishop at 217-328-6379 or at r-bishop@uiuc.edu for more information.

Table at the Farmer's Market

We will be trying something new this year! Please join us on the second Saturday of the month, June through October, at the Urbana Farmer's Market. For more information, contact Alice Englebretsen at 217-367-7344 or at englebre@uiuc.edu.

Community Visioning

We are starting a committee to look at growth issues in the Champaign/Urbana area. For more information, contact Alice Englebretsen at 217-367-7344 or at englebre@uiuc.edu or Kirstin Replogle at 217-344-3809 or at kdohrer@life.uiuc.edu.

Prairie Group Alerts and Outings E-Mail Lists

Want to know about local environmental alerts, outings, or the latest opportunities to get involved?

Sign up today for our moderated alert listserv and our open forum outings listserv by going to <http://lists.sierraclub.org/archives> and scrolling down past many Sierra Club listservs to click on "IL-PRAIRIE-ALERTS" and/or "IL-PRAIRIE-OUTINGS-FORUM."

On the next screen click on "Join or leave the list" then fill in blanks for "Your e-mail address" and "Your name."

Finally, select the listserv settings you want (default is fine for beginners) and click on "Join the list."

Any questions, please e-mail George Gore at geo_gore@yahoo.com or Mike Corn at mcom@uiuc.edu.

Our mailing address is: Sierra Club Prairie Group, P.O. Box 131, Urbana, IL 61803.

On the Road Again by Anita Povich

About 30 people attended the Prairie Chapter's meeting-on-wheels in Champaign-Urbana April 9. The topic was sprawl versus planned growth. Participants boarded a city bus for an interactive tour of the best and the worst areas in east-central Illinois' twin communities. Narration was provided by Cynthia Hoyle, a local planner, and Alice Englebretsen, Prairie Chapter chair. Participants described the evening as "informative and fun."

Highlights of the scenic bus tour included a trip through the near east older neighborhood in Urbana to Savannah Green, a new subdivision with some unique features such as front porches, sidewalks, and smaller lots, harkening to a more "neighborly" era. The tour continued through commercial sections, including both downtown Champaign, Campus Town, and downtown Urbana, as well as the commercial areas in Savoy and north of I-74.

A lively discussion continued throughout the evening. The bus tour was a follow-up to the Chapter's workshops on "Building Better Communities," held in March as a way of "seeing" what was discussed and

learned. Because of high interest, we plan to continue this educational process.

After the tour, participants socialized and discussed ways of participating

in the planning process to provide a positive influence on their communities. Most were eager to learn about various ways of preventing sprawl. Visions were offered on how the Champaign-Urbana area should continue to develop in the future. Participants were provided with area maps and schedules for yearly city council meetings.

Many thanks go to the enthusiastic participants and to Bill Volk of MTD for providing a bus. Special thanks to Dennis, our helpful bus driver, who offered a few places to see we hadn't thought about.



Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Restore: Creative Office Ideas For Savvy Sierrans

by Laurie Mainczyk-Kulasik

REDUCE

What: Ink

How: Print in draft; when you go to print on your computer, click on properties and then click on draft or the furthest thing from text and it will typically use the least amount of ink.

When: Whenever printing anything! (Except important, boring business stuff — like your resume or legal documents.)

Where: Wherever you can. You might try asking your boss if everyone could use draft on inner office stuff.

Why: Reducing ink use puts less impact on the environment and more money in your pocket — smart thinking!

Role Models: Teach a child in your life that reducing is cool wherever they are — home or school. Maybe they could suggest the idea to their teachers.

REUSE

What: Paper

How: Save everything, print on the other side later.

When: The question is not when, do it every time you can!

Where: Wherever you can. You might try asking your boss if you can reuse old outdated binders full of one-sided (half-used) used paper to print inner office stuff.

Why: Why not?! Using both sides of the paper saves half as many trees and we're particularly fond of trees, in fact, "Tree Huggers" would be the appropriate word. I'm a tree hugger and I'm ok!

Hints: Keep a box labeled "Scrap Paper" near your computer and place all one-sided used paper (half-used) in it. This may include printing errors, pages with mistakes, outdated drafts, or stuff you don't need anymore. Then, when you need to print, grab from the scrap box. The hardest thing is figuring out which way to put the paper in the tray, after that, it's easy.

Role Models: Parents/teachers, teach your children the importance of professionalism as well as reuse.

RECYCLE

What: Envelopes

How: Find a spot and label a box "Recycle Envelopes" near your mailing center (the place you keep stamps and stuff) and place all reusable envelopes in it. "Recycle" doesn't always mean the recycle bin. We should reuse envelopes if we can before they get to the end of their known life (the recycle bin). When we think creatively, we can

recycle many items by reusing them over and over. When: Whenever I get an envelope I place it in the "Recycle Envelopes" box for use. If an envelope has a name on it, put a sticker on it. If it has a window on it, put a white sticker over the window or just ignore it and address it as if it's not there. Where: Home and at work.

Why: We use envelopes constantly. Instead of reaching for a brand new one, give a used one a new life.

RESTORE

What: Cool paper/pictures from: cards, outdated Sierra Club calendars, magazines, found photos, etc.

How: #1. Every time you receive a card, file it in your "Cool Paper-Creative Restoration File."

#2. Get out your Fun supplies: glue, scissors, some cool writing utensils, and recycled paper (colors of your choice).

#3. I start by cutting out whatever is redeemable from a card. If I like the picture and words, I cut out the entire card, taking out anything personally written in the card, and glue it on to a recycled piece of paper. If I only like a picture, I might just use that and write the words myself.

When: The next time you need a Thank You, Birthday, Congratulations, or even a Wedding card. Go into the restoration file and restore a card back to new condition.

Where: In your home or office, or wherever you can.

Why: It's fun; you get to cut and paste and act like a kid again. You save time by not running around, and you have less reasons to go into stores where other things may call to your pocket book. In the end you have a home-made gift from the heart. If you're purchasing a gift, you have more money for the gift or enough money to buy one for yourself. Don't forget to design a cute recycled sign on the back of the card and help spread the word that it's cool to recycle! You'll be part of the recycle solution and you'll be giving new life to cards.

Creative Idea: I have a friend who loves sending and receiving cards for every holiday of the year. I recycled a St. Patty's card and cut out the St. Patty's day stickers from the envelope she sent me. I glued them on her recycled envelope. When she received it, her first thought was "cool stickers." Her second thought was "Hey, wait, those are the cute ones I sent her." She got a big laugh out of it and is now going to send me the very same card next year. People will respect you for being creative and simultaneously savvy. Sometimes if you're lucky, it even catches on.

Executive Committee Members of the Prairie Group (ExCom) Website: www.illinois.sierraclub.org/prairie

Alice Englebretsen **
 Chair, 217-367-7344, englebre@uiuc.edu

Jim Beauchamp *
 Vice Chair, Membership Chair
 217-344-3307, j-beauch@uiuc.edu

Andy Borbely
 Conservation Chair, 217-390-6016, beebel28@hotmail.com

Karen Beauchamp *
 Treasurer, 217-344-3307

George Gore **
 Communications Chair, Chapter Delegate
 217-239-2015 x111, geo_gore@yahoo.com

Jack Kuehn *
 Outings Co-Chair, 217-356-7206, j-kuehn@uiuc.edu

Dick Bishop **
 Political Chair, 217-328-6379, r-bishop@uiuc.edu

Kirstin Replogle * Member-at-large
 217-344-3809, kirstin.replogle@sierraclub.org

Trent Shepard
 Publications Representative
 217-344-2822, tshepard@prairienet.org

Mike Corn
 Outings Co-Chair, 217-344-0049, mcom@uiuc.edu
 * elected or appointed to ExCom for 2003-2004
 ** elected or appointed to ExCom for 2002-2003