

SHAWNEE TRAILS

Shawnee Group, Sierra Club February 2002



General Meeting

Shawnee Group, Sierra Club
February 2002

The February General Meeting of the Shawnee Group will take place at the Unitarian Fellowship building, at 7:30 PM, on Thursday, February 14.

The Unitarian Fellowship is located at the corner of University Avenue and Elm Street, in Carbondale, Illinois.

This month's program will be presented by Carla Cline on **Global Warming**.

Hope to see you there!

Dinner Before Meeting

Join some of the Executive Committee, the speaker for the evening's program, and other members for dinner at the El Bajio, Mexican Restaurant located west of the Vic Koenig's Chevrolet at 5:45 p.m. on Thursday, February 14, before the meeting.

Stone Soup Jan 1, 2002

We had a large gathering at the Stone Soup Picnic to greet the new Year. Global Warming kept the snow and ice away. Thanks to all who helped make it a success especially Ron Schmeck who was responsible for getting it off to a good start.

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What's Going on With Our Wetlands?

Recently I attempted to help a friend who had observed a wetland area that was being filled in without any good reason. I called the person responsible for taking action in these cases with the Corp of Engineers in St. Louis who assured me that something would be done after he had a chance to look at it. He also requested that a form be filled out along with appropriate pictures which was done. After a month or so I called to see how the investigation was going. He said he no longer had the backing from the higher ups to follow through and prevent the filling in of this wetland area though he had made a special trip to check it out. What happened to cause this about face? Read on.

There was an article in the last issue of *Lake and Prairie*, which helps explain the current situation based on a recent decision by the U. S. Supreme Court. The decision which caused the Corp in Chicago to make approximately 200 declarations of no jurisdiction for just the six-county area in northeastern Illinois in the last seven months is called the **Bartlet Balefill/SWANCC** decision. According to *Lake and Prairie*, page 3, "The Court not only sides with the Solid Waste Association of Northern Cook County, which asserted that it could build a landfill in a wetland area, it also removed protection from waterways that are not navigable. **That puts millions of acres of isolated marshes, fens, bogs, swamps and seeps in America that are not connected to rivers and streams used for boating or shipping at severe risk.**"

News of this decision and its effects came to me first via Tom Anderson of the Save the Dunes Council who quotes Thomas E. Dustin, of the Indiana Izaak Walton League in opposition to a bill designed to thwart state protection of wetlands. "Plain and simple, Dustin states, this is a scheme to continue the raid on state wetlands which over the decades have already been sacrificed to the tune of over 87 percent. "SB 141 [the bill before the Indiana Senate] is a direct product of special interests which make their profits by filling and destroying wetlands. It should be buried at once. And if by some fluke it slimes its way through, it should be vetoed by Governor O'Bannon, Dustin said."

There's much more than meets the eye on this issue including the status of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) which uncovered the facts of the case in northeastern Illinois and which is currently under attack by Attorney General Ashcroft and Pres. Bush, but that's another story...**Don Lawrence, Editor.**

Continued on P. 2

Shawnee Group, Election Results

Laurel Toussaint and **Cathie Hutcheson** were re-elected and **Bill Boman** elected to the Shawnee Group Ex-Com for 2 year terms. Continuing Ex-Com members are Donna Ayers, Ron Schmeck and Bob Tyson. Many thanks to departing Ex-Com member, **Sabrina Hardenbergh** who did a great job as treasurer for the past 4 years.

ForestWatch Winter Tree ID workshops

Marion Monitor **EcoWatch** Network--**Winter Tree ID Workshop**

February 2, 2002 - Giant City State Park , February 9, 2002 - Beall Woods State park, 10 am -2 pm

Attend one of our ForestWatch Winter Tree Identification Workshops! The Winter Workshop is a good reason to get out of the house and an excellent way to improve your tree identification skills. Join the EcoWatch staff and state park interpreters for a day, learning just how to identify trees without the leaves. Learn how to identify an oak by its leaf scar or a sycamore by the arrangement of the buds. This workshop is divided into two parts, a classroom portion followed by a guided hike. **Lunch** is provided and **FREE**, so all you need to do is show up and dress accordingly! Hope to see you there! Please RSVP (or questions) at 618-997-0135.



LaRue-Pine Hills Appreciation Day

April 13 & 14

There will be many learned specialists on hand to lead walks to point out the many native plants, animals and geology of the area. This will be the first such celebration of the area in five years. It is always a fun and informative event.

Forest Service Trails Planning Meeting

This is a continuing series of meetings for public input on new trails, existing trails, and obliterating user made trails. The next meeting is Febr 19, 6:30, Marion High School cafeteria. We will be discussing trail networks in the Lusk Creek watershed.

ADOPT A TRAIL

The board has voted to consider adopting Panther Den trail as an on-going project. This would, presumably, include clearing obstructions, signage, etc. Since we have only averaged 4-6 members on the Forest Service volunteer reconstruction projects last year, I need to know how many members would support this endeavor with muscle-power before making any commitments. Contact Bob Tyson 684-5643.

Sierra Club desk and wall calendars are still available for you, for gifts.

If you could use one, call Bill Boman at 995-9976.



SHAWNEE OUTINGS

by Bob Tyson



Saturday, Feb. 16--RIVER TO RIVER TRAIL. Meet at Murdale shopping center sign 8 am. or Marion Walmart parking lot (nearest Ryans) 8:30 am. An 8 mile section of this trail falls within Ferne Clyffe State Park. At some point along this trail, we will loop back to the parking lot trailhead as a 4-6 mile hike. Rating is easy to moderate. Contact Bob at 684-5643 on any questions.

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Other Outings

Saturday, Feb. 2--Jackson County Hiking club. Pickle Creek Natural area, Hickory Canyon, Hawn State Park. See the previous newsletter for details or contact Bob at 684-5643.

ADVENTURES WITH UNCLE BOB

(Column for those unable to participate in our group hikes but are able to hike on their own)

by Bob Tyson

Over the past year I have featured some articles on trails in Tennessee. Recently, due to budget cuts, the state of Tennessee has closed 14 parks and recreation areas. Before embarking on a hiking trip, you may want to call 1-800-891-8332, to see if the park of your choice is one of them. This does not affect trails in Cherokee National Forest or ones owned by Bowater Lumber Corp.

This month we feature SHARP ROCK FALLS. Take 14th Street in Murphysboro north to Ava blacktop. Shortly before Ava, there is a sign for Sharp Rock Falls campground. At the "T" in the campground, go left. Pass over a concrete culvert and continue past lot #44 to a place to park next to a tire on a rope. On your right there is a trail with a Forest Service sign. You will cross a creek twice on stepping stones. During leaf-off, notice the pretty cliff lines in this deep ravine. Just before descending to another creek-crossing, look to your left (note the FS metal sign). It would seem that you are only looking at a narrow 15 ft wide gorge. However, upon walking into it, the gorge curves right and opens to a two tiered falls. If it is too wet to walk in the gorge, just climb up the left bank for a birds-eye view. This moderate hike is about 1.5 miles. Another entry point for this trailhead is to take Lone Oak road from Ava blacktop, and follow to Possum Road. The latter will take you to a forest service parking lot. Upon entering the trail, keep right whenever a trail junction occurs. Distance is approx 2 miles to the falls. More information from me at 684-5643.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE & FOLDING

Every month we get together to fold the newsletter for the newsletter mailing. We welcome all the help we can get. The deadline for the March newsletter will be February 23 with folding on February 28 at Don Lawrence's house at 5:30 PM. To check on directions call Don at 457-8989.

EXCOM MEETING

Our January ExCom meeting will be held on Thursday, February 21, 5:30 p.m. at Don Lawrence's. For directions, call Don at 457-8989. Any member is welcome to attend.

SAVING PAPER AND COSTS BY USING E-MAIL

Changing the method by which you receive the Shawnee Trails Newsletter has never been easier. To receive the electronic edition, go to <http://lists.sierraclub.org/archives/il-shawnee-trails.html> and click on the "join or leave the list" menu option. Once you join the newsletter mailing list, every issue will then be e-mailed right to your computer within minutes of its publication. Subscribing to the electronic newsletter instead of the paper edition helps the Sierra Club not only save trees, but reduces the Shawnee Group's overhead expenses for printing and mailing which consumes approximately 40% of the group's annual budget. Also, the electronic version is available in color unlike the B&W paper edition. Subscribe today! (PS. If you already receive the electronic version, you do not need to resubscribe using this new method!). Need help? Contact sg618@yahoo.com



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Shawnee Group ,Website: <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee>

Yes, I want to join! I want to safeguard our precious natural heritage. My payment is enclosed.

My Name _____
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