

# Shawnee Trails

News of the Shawnee Group — January 2005

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



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Revised  
Shawnee Group ExCom  
Election Ballot Enclosed

## Shawnee Group Event Calendar

**January 6** ~ ExCom meeting,  
5:30. Location: TBD.

**January 13** ~ Membership  
Program, 7:30 PM at the  
Carbondale Township  
Office, 217 East Main St.,  
Carbondale. Free wine tasting  
session will begin at 7 PM.

**January 20** ~ Deadline to  
postmark Shawnee Group  
ExCom election ballots.

**January 27** ~ Newsletter  
folding and mailing.

## Water Privatization

*"Food and water are basic rights. But we pay for food...*

*Why should we not pay for water? "*

*— Ismail Serageldin at the Second World Water Forum, The Hague*

Consider the questions: Is water part of a shared "commons, a human right for all people? Or is it a commodity to be bought, sold, and traded in a global marketplace?

Over a billion people lack access to safe drinking water. Each year, millions of children die of diseases caused by unsafe water. The numbers are increasing. These two simple facts are driving a global debate that continued at the 2003 Third World Water Forum in Kyoto, Japan.

Politicians, international bankers, and corporate executives gathered to decide who will control global fresh water supplies. Their consensus preference for large dams and privatized, corporate water systems is challenged by experts and activists who assert that water is a human right, not a commodity to be traded on the open market."

In Southern Illinois we think we have an abundant supply of water. You may be asking yourself "why then should I be concerned about water?" Across the country, water systems are showing their age. How does a municipality keep their system updated and functioning in an environment where federal monies are drying up and the population is anti-tax? Who will fund the repair and maintenance of aging local water systems, especially in low-income, urban and rural areas? All too frequently, allegedly coming to the taxpayer's rescue is a trend towards "Corporate Privatization." By the end of 2000, at least 93 countries had partially privatized water or wastewater services, including Argentina, Australia, Chile, China, Colombia, the Philippines, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and Central Europe.

Proponents of privatizing water supply and delivery promise to lower rates, improve access, and take the burden off of financially challenged local governments. But do they really fulfill their promises? And once the corporations own your water system, how can they be held accountable to the public? Can they sell your water on the global market to the highest bidder? Can you control your water cost and quality? These are just some of the questions the Shawnee Group will explore with the viewing the movie "Thirst". This documentary since aired on PBS tells the stories of communities in Bolivia, India, and the United States that are asking these same fundamental questions and finding surprising answers.

A synopsis of the movie is online at: <http://www.thirstthemovie.org/summary.html>

This movie and subsequent discussion is free and open to the public and will begin at 7:30 PM, January 13, at the Carbondale Township Office at 217 East Main St. in Carbondale. At 7 PM the meeting will be preceded by a free wine sampling of vintages from yet another southern Illinois winery. The public is also cordially invited to this free social event. #

<Movie run time: 64 minutes>



## Shawnee ExCom Election Rescheduled — Vote By January 20th

Following publication of the December ballot that contained only one candidate to fill three open positions, several members stepped forward to offer to be on the Shawnee Group ExCom ballot. As a result, the current EXCOM decided to reissue a revised ballot and toss-out any ballots already received. We apologize for any inconvenience or confusion this has caused, but we think this situation has proved beneficial to the Group and we are hopeful that you, our members, will see this as a positive step towards building the strongest possible volunteer leadership for the organization. Please, vote for up to three candidates on the enclosed ballot and mail it in accordance with the new deadline of January 20th, 2005. You will note from the candidate statements below that they are all exceptional candidates fully capable (and eager) of leading us in these trying times.



**Phyllis Beck:** I am originally from Southwestern Michigan and come from a family who is fanatical about recycling. Since I moved to Carbondale 2 1/2 years ago, I've been an active member of Sierra Club. I've encouraged use of name tags at our meetings and organized this year's annual yard sale. I am willing to be an ExCom member and continue the conservation promotion of this organization.

**Yolanda Comiskey.** I have been a self-employed jewelry designer and manufacturer for 24 years. This has given me the flexibility to co-raise two children, spend time in California caretaking my parents and serve as a volunteer 4-H counselor. I enjoyed four years empowering teens to become club/camp leaders and role models for other members while caring for and appreciating the forest environment. With the passing of my parents we moved back to Carbondale where we had previously lived for 16 years. I am a long time Sierra Club member and now have the opportunity and desire to become more involved with protecting our natural resources. Of the many environmental issues facing us, I am most drawn to preserving public and environmental access to clean, affordable water. In CA the water issue is most apparent. We paid for water and sewer alone, on average, \$100/month. Most people of this area take for granted the abundant surface water and have no idea that there is a global corporate movement to take over control of American public waters in the next 10 to 20 years, making water a private commodity available to those who can afford it. This is already happening globally and in about 29 of the 50 United States, including Illinois. Typical results from my research are that water quality goes down, maintenance degrades and cost goes up. As an ExCom member I hope to develop a Sierra Club program, which would raise public awareness and bring about the protection of water as a public and environmental trust.

**Cathie Hutcheson:** I have been a resident of Southern Illinois since 1968. I am a land owner since 1971 and currently reside in Jackson County next to Forest Service land around Cedar Lake. I have been banding birds since 1970, specializing in hummingbirds since 2000, and stays very busy with research projects. I also help with Christmas Bird Counts in several counties, and helps with the Union County Spring Bird Count. I am a curmudgeon, very grouchy, and believes in strict population control, urging couples to have no children or to have one-child families.

**Jo Ann Nelson:** I moved to Carbondale from Champaign in 1982 to teach child development at SIU, and have been a member of the Sierra Club since 1984. Learning about the proposed wilderness areas of the Shawnee was a perfect way to discover the wild natural beauty of Southern Illinois. I have marveled at the extensive plant life here and land formations that support a diversity of life and people. I appreciate Sierra Club and other groups for helping people to discover the wonders that are here. Back in Champaign I was a Democratic party activist, in a very issue-oriented party. We worked to stop a proposed dam on the Sangamon River that would have flooded Allerton Park, and we worked to have the Middle Fork of the Vermillion River declared a Scenic River rather than being dammed. (More recently, I testified on behalf of Sugar Creek). In the last few years, I have gotten more adept in calling and writing legislators about ever-growing threats to our global and local environment. I believe that the Sierra Club has important roles of 1) public education on environmental issues; 2) persuasion of decision makers, and 3) nurturing a sense of wonder, understanding, and pleasure in the natural world.

**Tim Stenson:** I have enjoyed working with members of the Shawnee Group at both local and statewide events such as tabling at the recent Progressive Picnic in Carbondale and lobbying our state senators in Springfield. I have also volunteered as a Citizen Scientist involved in monitoring the health of our local forests for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Eco-Watch program. With the health of the monitoring program itself now in jeopardy, I would assist the Sierra Club with any effort to save it. I am concerned with the idea that for many people, happiness is largely connected with wealth. We are a nation that celebrates expansion, abundance, and accumulation of material goods sometimes to the point of greed without restraint. I'm very concerned about the increasing scarcity of our natural resources, and the human suffering resulting from abuse of our ecology, as well as, from what people do to people. I believe The Sierra Club can serve as an accessible, grassroots organization where members can learn a balanced approach to the sustaining of people, planet, and profit. I intend to foster an ethic of conservation at home, in my community, and as widely as I can reach. Recently engaged, graduate of SIUC Aviation, lifelong Illinois resident and environmentalist, I seek your vote for membership of the Executive Committee of the Shawnee Group of the Sierra Club. ☪



### Shawnee Group Leaders

(x = ExCom officers with voting rights)

**Chair:** Ron Schmeck

529-8387 <mailto:rae50@siu.edu> (x)

**Vice-Chair:** Bob Pauls

549-9408 <mailto:sg618@yahoo.com> (x)

**Secretary:** Shelby Seegers

529-5760 [mailto:sseegars\\_schafer@hotmail.com](mailto:sseegars_schafer@hotmail.com)

**Treasurer:** Bill Boman

995-9976 <mailto:billbo@onemain.com>

**Conservation Chair:** Barb McKasson

529-4824 <mailto:babitaji@aol.com> (x)

**Membership Chair:** Donna Ayers

985-6917 <mailto:dayers@accessus.net> (x)

**Outings Chair:** Bob Tyson

684-5643 <mailto:robkay43@webtv.net> (x)

**Program Chair:** Sandy Anderson

893-4545 <mailto:annansy@midwest.net>

**Vice-Chair/Webmaster/Newsletter Editor:**

Bob Pauls 549-9408 <mailto:sg618@yahoo.com> (x)



## MOVING?

Attach current mailing label here and  
write in new address below.  
(Please allow 4-6 weeks processing time.)

**Sierra Club**  
**P.O. Box 52968**  
**Boulder, Colorado**  
**80322-2968**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

### Election Guide:

The Shawnee Group ExCom consists of six members elected by the membership. Three are elected each year on a rotating basis. Terms of office are for two years. ExCom members whose terms expire in January include Donna Ayers, Ron Schmeck, and Shelby Seegers-Schafer. Members whose term continues for one year include Barb McKasson, Bob Pauls and Bob Tyson.

### Ballot Instructions:

Printed below are voting ballots that can be used by anyone whose local Sierra Club membership is current through any date in December 2004. Two ballots are provided for those households that have more than one voting member.

After you complete the ballot, seal it in an envelope and MAIL it to:

ELECTION, Shawnee Group, P.O. Box 117, Carbondale, IL 62903-0117.

**The envelope must have on the outside both a return address and the member name(s) on either the front or back. The ballot must be POSTMARKED by no later than the end of the day on January 20, 2005. Be sure to vote for no more than three candidates.**

### Shawnee Group '05 ExCom Election Ballot

Indicate up to three choices by marking the appropriate box.

- Phyllis Beck
- Yolanda Comiskey
- Cathie Hutcheson
- Jo Ann Nelson
- Tim Stenson

Ballots must be postmarked by no later than 01/20/2005 and be addressed to:

ELECTION, Shawnee Group,  
P.O. Box 117  
Carbondale, IL 62903-0117

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P.O. Box 117  
Carbondale, IL 62903-0117

Safe, happy and inspired

Descriptions of all outings of the Shawnee Group and five other Chapter Groups in Illinois are now available in one central location thus making it easy to find a wider range of outdoor activities by any Sierra Club member or the general public. Go to the Group website for the link to this new feature: <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee/outings.htm>

### January 16 (Sunday) Cove Hollow Trail Hike, Murphysboro, IL

This three mile hike in the Shawnee National Forest will start at Cove Hollow trailhead and end at Pomona Road where we will have a car shuttle. We will view rock shelters, rock formations, a cave, maybe a frozen waterfall, long cliff walls, and a punch bowl canyon. We will also survey any trail improvement needs. Meet at the ranger station in Murphysboro 12:30. This trail is also noted in the book, Fifty Nature Hikes in Southern Illinois by Alan McPherson. Contact Bob Tyson 684-5643.

### February 21 (Monday) South Forest Tower Road Trail Hike (SNF), Wolfe Lake, IL

This trail is located in Trail of Tears State Forest. We will hike from the picnic area and proceed to the top of the bluffs. From there, we will take a 3.5 mile hike along a narrow road which affords us bluff top views during leaf-off into continuous canyons and adjacent ridges. We end the hike downhill at the county road and our car shuttle. Meet at the ranger station in Murphysboro at 9:30 AM. Contact Bob Tyson, trip leader at 684-5643.

### March 13 (Sunday) Fountain Bluff River Trail Hike, Gorham, IL

This abandoned railroad trail is level and offers continuous views of the Mississippi River on one side and views of steep bluffs on the other. As we hike, we will learn about the fragmentation between public and private lands. This trail is roughly 2.5 miles from the parking area to the end at the power plant. We will retrace our route back to our cars. Meet 12:30 PM at the ranger station in Murphysboro. Contact Bob Tyson, trip leader at 684-5643.

## Adventures with Uncle Bob Tyson

### *Your Guide to Self-Adventure*

<http://illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee/unclebob/adventures.htm>

This month I recommend to you a hike at Hayes Creek Canyon. Directions: From Harrisburg, take US 45 south to IL 145 and proceed to Eddyville. At the crossroads near the convenience store, turn right into the village and find the blacktop road that goes north. You will pass a public housing project. Next, you will approach a horse camp. Just north of the camp look for a trail opening on your left. Park at a nearby wide shoulder. Once on the trail, turn left under the power line and soon you will turn right into the woods. A "T" intersection appears at 0.3 mile. From the trailhead. Turn left and look for opportunities to walk onto the sandstone glades. You will be treated to continuous views of the canyon bottom, cliff formations, and a thin, lengthy waterfall cascade. Further on the trail you will reach a huge stone glade area, shaped like a soup bowl. Watch your footing as the stone is smooth and may be slippery. Note the small caves/shelter bluffs in the cliff bottoms (inaccessible). Climb back onto the trail and either walk east into the campground or retrace the route back to the trail intersection.

At the intersection, you can turn right and return to your car or continue straight ahead. I suggest that you continue straight to where you will cross a small creek and enter a mixture of forest service and private land. The sign here says if you go right, you'll be on "horse trail # 1". That trail goes to Murray bluff and Bay Creek Wilderness. Continuing straight, the trail is in good shape for both horse riders and hikers. You are now on trail "#2-3" (private land). Next comes a junction: trail #2 goes right to Double Branch Hole. Upon entering this trail, it was nearly impassible due to horse damage (I gave up). The canopy is so thick that the sun never dries out the trail.

Continuing straight ahead, now on trail #3, the sign indicates that you can travel to Hayes Creek and Peter Cave. The trail has been graveled by the horse camp through the woods and where we will traverse a cedar glade. Upon re-entering the woods (Forest Service property), the trail heads downhill and is again difficult to navigate due to horse damage. I reached a creek crossing and unmarked intersection with no clue to the above objective. Needless to say, I re-traced my route back to the car.

Hayes Creek Canyon is listed as a two mile loop trail in the book Hiking Illinois; however, the trail map page does not seem to make sense or is out of date. I showed the map to the horse camp manager who was also baffled by it. The trip would still be worthwhile just to view my information listed in the first paragraph. While here, why not make a day of it and include nearby Sand Cave and Bell Smith Springs. For more information, call Bob Tyson at 684-5643. #



## Message from the Shawnee Group Conservation Chair

*Barbara McKasson*

### Help Protest Drastic Cuts in IL Department of Natural Resources !

*By Barbara McKasson*

It seems that Governor Blagojevich has zeroed in on the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) as his prime target for budget cutting. The Governor has been quoted as saying that he would squeeze until the public began to complain. Well, it's definitely time to complain — loudly and often! According to Jeff Lampe of the Peoria Journal Star, most state agency budgets have been cut by 4-6 percent, while the reductions at IDNR are already almost 16 percent! We cannot allow this to continue! Governor Blagojevich has already laid off many long-time IDNR professionals and in the process lost their extensive management skills, knowledge and history of our state natural areas, parks, forests, etc. The most recent round of 87 layoffs has included at least eleven site managers. For example, Andy West, the site manager at Trail of Tears State Forest, is a totally dedicated and highly qualified site manager. He protected the wildlife and other natural resources while maintaining the Trail of Tears State Park as a prime recreation area, in spite of having a staff cut down to the bare bone. We need to start demanding that dedicated IDNR professionals such as Andy are spared from the reckless budget hatchet. With so many cuts, IDNR personnel will be spread too thinly to properly manage our natural lands – to control exotics, maintain trails, prevent illegal logging and ATV use, and protect high quality areas. What you can do?

Write or call Governor Blagojevich's office and tell him that you object to the deep cuts and layoffs at IDNR. Let him know that the conservation of Illinois' natural resources and wildlife, plus outdoor recreation and education are important to you. Ask him to rescind the most recent layoffs at IDNR.

- ★ Write or call Governor Rod Blagojevich, James R. Thompson Center, Floor 16; 100 W. Randolph, Chicago, IL, 60601, (312) 814-2121; or make comments at the state website: <http://www.illinois.gov/gov/contactthegovernor.cfm>

Please also CC: Director Joel Brunsvold, IDNR, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702

Dear Governor Blagojevich:

I am very concerned about the effect of the deep cuts and layoffs in the IL Department of Natural Resources. Dedicated site superintendents and other highly trained staff have worked for many years to protect and improve our state parks, forests, conservation areas, and recreation areas. It is important to me that these state natural resources remain protected, accessible and well managed. Thus, we need to keep the experienced, dedicated professional that we have.

Unfortunately, you have made decisions to cut the IDNR budget much more drastically than any other state agency. I am asking that you reverse this policy. In particular, I am asking you to reverse your decision to lay off 87 people at IDNR in this latest round of cuts. I urge you to stop balancing the state's budget by laying off IDNR staff and endangering critical programs within IDNR. Many years of building up our state natural resources could be squandered by short sighted budget cutting. Please retain the people who protect our state natural treasures. #



Don't miss the special screening of the documentary THIRST at the next membership meeting of the Shawnee Group of the Sierra Club: Thursday, January 13th, 2005, 7:30 PM. See Pg 1.



Shawnee Group  
P.O. Box 117  
Carbondale, IL 62903-0117

**Time Sensitive Election Material Enclosed!**

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Carbondale, IL  
Permit 3