



# Lake & Prairie

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## Illinois needs Clean Cars

New campaign urges adoption of Clean Car Bill, Calif. standards

By **WILL REYNOLDS**

One of the most important steps Illinoisans can take to confront global warming will also save consumers money at the gas pump. Automobiles are the second largest source in Illinois of emissions that cause global warming. That's why the Illinois Chapter is making the Clean Car Campaign an important part



**CLEANcars**

of our drive to promote alternative energy solutions. The Clean Air Act allows California to adopt better standards than the federal mandate for harmful automobile emissions such as carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxide, and particulate matter. Now California is set to require further reductions of carbon dioxide, which is the major source of global warming.

The good news for Illinois is that all states are allowed to adopt the healthier California standards. That's the purpose of the Clean Car Bill.



### Clean cars . . . literally

Staff, interns and volunteers attacked dirt during the Sierra Club's first-ever Clean Car Wash. **See page 4**

It would make Illinois the first Midwestern state to adopt the California standards. As one of the largest car markets in the nation, action by Illinois could convince auto-makers to use existing technology to reduce emissions in all of the vehicles they manufacture | CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

## Toxic landfill proposal loses round 2

By **BRIAN SARNA**

On June 21, 2007, the Illinois Pollution Control Board upheld the Peoria County Board's decision that denied the expansion of the Peoria Disposal Company's Hazardous Waste Landfill, which would have nearly doubled the amount of toxic waste at the edge of the city of Peoria.

The county board had originally denied the expansion in May 2006, citing unnecessary

expansion, public health and safety, and an impact on the neighborhood.

The PDC appealed to the control board, arguing the county's decision was not within the required time and was fundamentally unfair based on the evidence. Both arguments were denied.

Local environmental groups, Heart of Illinois Group Sierra Club and River Rescue, and local community group Peoria Families Against Toxic Waste collaborated to pro-

vide that evidence.

"Things were a little slow to start," said Joyce Blumenshine, 2006 Chair of Heart of Illinois Sierra and Peoria resident. "The real fire got lit when the Peoria Families got involved."

"When I found out about it (the landfill expansion), it was the kind of thing I could not afford not to get involved in because it was so alarming, with the danger for health being so great," said Kim Converse, a founder of the Peo-

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# Ill. Chapter gets award for mercury campaign

In recognition of the accomplishments of our amazing volunteers and staff, the Illinois Chapter was selected to be a 2007 recipient of the Sierra Club's Special Achievement Award. This national award was established to honor a single act of particular importance dedicated to conservation or to the Club. The Illinois Chapter received this award for our campaign to prevent mercury pollution in Illinois. The award was presented at the Club's annual dinner on Sept. 29 in San Francisco.

Our Mercury Campaign energized and coordinated grassroots activism across the state of Illinois, resulting in Illinois becoming a national leader in preventing toxic mercury pollution. The campaign involved Groups and grassroots volunteers from every part of the state as well as chapter staff.

The campaign included a massive education effort and many events around the state to explain the dangers of mercury pollution to the public and how mercury pollution gets into our environment from coal fired power plants. As a result of the campaign efforts, the Illinois Pollution Control Board that was working on new state mercury rules received over 7,000 comments. On December

12, 2006, the Illinois Joint Commission on Administrative Rules voted unanimously to approve new regulations on mercury pollution, which will prevent 7000 pounds of mercury a year from entering the atmosphere from coal fired power plants.

Congratulations to the many volunteers and our staff for your success on the Mercury Campaign and the well deserved recognition by this award.

While the Illinois Chapter is being recognized for its mercury campaign, we have not been resting on past accomplishments. This year has continued to be one of more successes, to include promoting our legislative priorities in Springfield through the lobbying efforts of our volunteer lobbying network and our director,



## THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

By Bill Davies,  
Chapter director

Jack Darin, who spent a lot of time in the Capitol halls while the Legislature was in session. We made major progress on all of our priorities:

► Renewable energy and energy conservation received a major boost. Our proposal to get 25% of our electricity from wind & other renewables, and to start major new programs

to cut power use was included as part of the \$1 billion rate refund legislation.

► The "Cool Cities Act" was passed to give state assistance to the growing number of local governments pledging to cut carbon emissions.

► The Great Lakes Compact was ratified to protect Lake Michigan from diversions of water outside its basin.

► Phosphorus, which pollutes Illinois waters, was phased out from dishwashing machine detergent.

► We built support for including conservation land acquisition funding as part of any new state capital budget for Illinois. As I write this, the state budget is unresolved, but we have won a lot of support for protecting our last remaining natural areas.

There is still so much more to do. The need for your help never stops, whether it is volunteering your time or by your ongoing financial support so we can continue to achieve more successes in making Illinois a cleaner, healthier place to live. If you haven't yet become a Prairie State Protector, please consider a gift of \$150 or more. In return you will receive special updates and invitations to special events in Illinois throughout the year.

Any size contribution, however, will make a difference and is needed for us to continue our impact on the environment in Illinois. Send your contribution today to the Illinois Chapter main office listed in the column on the left of this page. You can also give online at [www.Illinois.sierraclub.org](http://www.Illinois.sierraclub.org).



In January 2006, Chapter Director Jack Darin announced the campaign to reduce mercury pollution with Gov. Rod Blagojevich.

# Students study stormwater

Illinois Chapter interns report on Illinois' municipal stormwater management program

By **CINDY SKRUKRUD**

**M**ost people have not heard of the U.S. EPA Municipal Stormwater Rule, which requires towns in urban areas to take steps to reduce pollution entering rivers and streams from stormwater runoff. But an independent inquiry project undertaken by two Illinois Math & Science Academy (IMSA) seniors interning for the Illinois Chapter during the 2006-07 school year now provides an overview of U.S. EPA program requirements, an assessment of its implementation in Illinois and recommendations for how the program can be improved.

"When It Rains, It Drains," written by IMSA seniors Claire Herdeman and Yuxi Ji, explains the required elements of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System's (NPDES) municipal stormwater program. The program, which stems from 1987 amendments to the Clean Water Act, requires affected municipalities to develop a stormwater management program addressing pollutants that are picked up by stormwater, enter municipal storm sewer systems and are typically discharged without any treatment to nearby rivers, streams and lakes.

The Illinois EPA has implemented this program by developing a NPDES general permit for municipal separate storm sewer systems (commonly called the MS4 permit). By March 2003, municipalities had to submit a notice of intent to the Illinois EPA to be covered by the MS4 permit along with their plan for developing a stormwater management program. Starting in 2004, an annual progress report is due each June.

Each town is required to develop a storm water management program comprised of best management practices (BMPs) and measurable goals for each of the following six areas:

- ▶ public education and outreach on storm water impacts;
- ▶ public involvement and participation;
- ▶ illicit discharge detection and elimination;
- ▶ construction site stormwater runoff control;
- ▶ post-construction stormwater management in new development and redevelopment; and
- ▶ pollution prevention/good house-keeping for municipal operations.

The aim of municipal stormwater man-



Protecting our rivers requires more than good plans. This broken silt fence at a construction site allows soil to wash into the Fox River, located 20 feet downslope.

Photo: Nate Shelton

agement is to reduce pollution from common urban pollutants such as oil and grease from roadways, pesticides from lawns, sediment from construction sites and trash. U.S. EPA has provided a menu of BMPs to help guide municipalities and encourages communities to work together. For example, the IMSA interns found Kane County has taken the lead on the public education, public involvement and illicit discharge detection and elimination areas on behalf of all towns and townships in the county. Similarly DuPage County

**While many municipalities do a good job in reporting their progress, some have submitted annual reports which simply list all their efforts as 'ongoing.'**

and its municipalities have worked together to develop a manual detailing post-construction BMPs. Through interviews with U.S. EPA, Illinois EPA, county and municipal staff as well as review of numerous stormwater management plans and annual reports, the IMSA interns assessed the strengths and weaknesses of the program. They found that IEPA's oversight of the program is limited due to understaffing. One staff person is responsible for the whole program so the 432 annual reports the agency receives are recorded but not reviewed. While many municipalities do a good job in reporting their progress, some have submitted annual reports which simply list all their efforts as 'ongoing.'

The interns conclude their report by recommending ways that the Illinois EPA, municipalities and citizens can all help to reduce the amount of pollution enter-

ing Illinois' rivers and streams from urban sources. These include increasing IEPA staffing of the program so that an annual report of each covered municipality is reviewed at least once during the five years for which the general permit is issued. They also recommend all municipalities post their stormwater management plans and annual reports on their websites so that citizens in each town can easily review what their town is doing to address this pollution problem. Citizens are encouraged to find out how they can participate in their town's program and to follow the recommendations of educational materials which their towns distribute.

Clean water activists throughout the state can learn whether their towns are part of an urban area covered by the program by checking out the maps at <http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/urbanmaps.cfm>. Links to more information about the program are found in the "When It Rains, It Drains" report.

The IMSA interns have provided a valuable assessment of the implementation of this important new program. Besides their written report, they presented their findings this past May to the Valley of the Fox Group and at a meeting of NE Illinois ecosystem partnerships. They also provided a draft report to IEPA staff and incorporated their feedback into the final document. Many thanks to Yuxi and Claire for their hard work on this project. Since they both head off to college in the fall, please contact Cindy Skrukud at [cindy.skrukud@sierraclub.org](mailto:cindy.skrukud@sierraclub.org) for questions about the municipal stormwater program in Illinois.

A PDF of the 19-page "When It Rains, It Drains" report is available at the Illinois Chapter website (<http://Illinois.sierraclub.org>).

— DR. CINDY SKRUKRUD is the Clean Water Advocate for the Illinois Chapter.

# Cleaning cars for Illinois

By **KELLY SLENTZ**

**O**n a grey Saturday morning in August at Prairie Crossing in Grayslake, Sierra Club staff, interns, and volunteers busily worked the aCampaign. Though clouds hung ominously over the parking lot, the rain held off until after this community outreach event. The Illinois Chapter of Sierra Club organized this free car wash to educate members of the community about the difference between federal car emission standards and California's standards. Twelve states have already adopted California's standards, and car wash participants were asked to sign a postcard to their legislator requesting that Illinois institute these standards as well.

This event was a successful test-run car wash for future Clean Car Washes across Illinois. Not only were the volunteers well-prepared and well-equipped, but the event was a success with nearly 40 cars washed and postcards signed. Though the enthusiasm and hard work of all the volunteers ensured that the car wash ran smoothly and efficiently, none of it would have been possible without the help of Ben Ranney and Jason Kraus of the Prairie Holdings Corporation. We also received support from Home Depot in Evanston and Costco in Mount Prospect.

We took several steps to ensure the car wash was eco-friendly:

- ▶ Rags and towels were previously used and donated.

- ▶ Soap was biodegradable and water was used as sparingly as possible.

- ▶ Wash water ran into bordering prairie grass to be naturally filtered, rather than entering the sewer.

Though it was a clean car wash, we did not turn away some bicyclists who wanted to chat about clean car legislation and get the dirt off their cleaner-than-clean-car bikes.

The Clean Car Wash was part of a bigger environmentally-friendly celebration at Prairie Crossing that day. With the music of a live band following them wherever they went, car wash participants could also talk to I-Go Car sharing represen-



Photo: Rosemary Hensley

**Kelly Slentz gets to the top of a not-so-clean SUV.**

tatives, check out the sales at the Station Square stores, buy some fresh fruit from the farmer's market, and grab a coffee and a delicious sandwich at the Prairie Croissant Café. Green-minded customers would be happy to know that the café buys from local organic farms and its seemingly plastic cups are actually corn-based and biodegradable within 40 to 60 days. Sierra Club volunteers were grateful to receive free coffee in return for their washing efforts.

Sierra Club will host more Clean Car Washes as they continue to work towards the goal of bringing cleaner cars to Illinois. Using better technology to reduce emissions means less pollution that causes global warming, asthma attacks, and other serious health problems. With the fifth largest auto industry in the U.S., Illinois could be the tipping point in moving the Midwest and the rest of the country to cleaner cars.

— *KELLY SLENTZ, a native of Chicago, was a summer intern and is now a freshman at Middlebury College in Vermont*

## Clean cars

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

nationally. The bill compels auto-makers to put more low-emission, low-mileage vehicles on the market that drivers are asking for.

The Illinois Clean Car Bill was introduced in the Illinois General Assembly by Representative Karen May and already has a bi-partisan list of 19 co-sponsors. The bill got a green light from

the Illinois Environmental Health Committee so now we're building support for passage by the full legislature.

This summer, Sierra Club volunteers, interns and staff have been busy tabling at public events including the Lollapalooza music festival and the Illinois State Fair. Watch for news this fall about more ways to get involved in the campaign.

— *WILL REYNOLDS is the Chairperson for the Chapter's Clean Car Committee. He lives in Springfield.*

## Office manager departs; help needed

**I**f you've called the Sierra Club Illinois Chapter office in Chicago, you likely have talked with Sue Lannin, who has served as part-time administrative assistant/office manager since 1997. A former reference librarian at an urban affairs research center, Sue has always enjoyed connecting callers to resources and resource people within the environmental community.

She is leaving to complete her second Masters degree — this one in Community Development. Her interest in sustainable agriculture and environmentally sustainable communities deepens.

Sue will continue to represent The Sierra Club Foundation on Earth Share of Illinois' Board of Directors, where she serves as Campaign Committee Chair.

### Office help needed:

We're looking for volunteers who can spend a few hours a month assisting staff around the office.

Specifically we have data entry duties (limited computer skills necessary) and membership information needs.

If you've some time to spare please contact Douglas Chien at [doug.chien@sierraclub.org](mailto:doug.chien@sierraclub.org) or 312-251-1680 x2.



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# On the cutting edge

A roundup of news from the world of science and research **By Paras Bhayani**

## The Fuel of the Future?

If you listen to presidential candidates making swings through Iowa—or our own politicians campaigning downstate—you'd think that cellulosic ethanol is both a cure for our addiction to oil and a slayer of host of environmental problems.

The Summer Issue of Lake & Prairie carried an lengthy discussion of the nitty-gritty of ethanol, addressing everything from air and water pollution concerns to the size of subsidies that the industry will receive from the State of Illinois. But the question many environmentalists are asking is quite simple: is ethanol a net positive for the climate? The answer, unsurprisingly, isn't very clear.

Argonne National Laboratory has long performed "well-to-wheel" studies to analyze greenhouse gas emissions throughout the fuel cycle—everything from the drilling (or the planting) to the combustion. According to a May

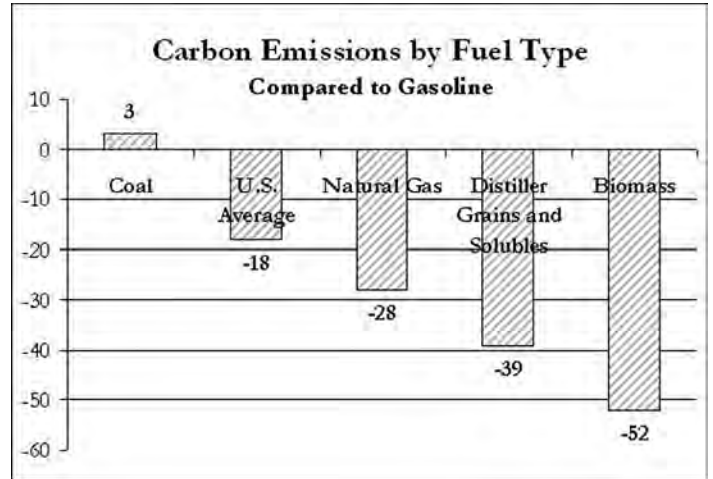
2007 report by scientists at the Illinois lab, the fuel used to run ethanol plants is the key determinant in how much—or whether at all—ethanol use reduces carbon emissions.

The Argonne researchers found that when coal is the fuel of choice, ethanol use actually leads to a three percent increase in emissions compared to gasoline. Using wood chips or biomass sources, on the other hand, results in a 52 percent reduction in carbon emissions. The obvious concern is that coal accounts for just over half of U.S. grid electricity production while biomass constitutes less than three percent.

The study effectively shows that if ethanol is to be considered among the solutions to climate change, we first have to invest in producing clean electricity.

## An Invading Army

As volunteers in our north suburban groups can attest, the presence of invasive buck-



thorn has become a major problem in the northern Chicagoland's forest preserves and woodlands.

But the staying power of buckthorn, a small tree that often crowds out native vegetation, is not just a result of its natural hardiness. In fact, it might be indicative of a larger "invasional meltdown" that threatens to fundamentally alter the region's native ecosystem.

A study released last Octo-

ber by researchers from DePaul University and the Chicago Botanic Garden tracked the symbiosis of *Rhamnus cathartica*, a common species of buckthorn, and Eurasian earthworms.

The researchers, who conducted their study in a 40-acre woodland in Glencoe, Ill., found that "the impact of earthworms...creates conditions that promote and sustain invasion by *R. cathartica*," and that "*R. cathartica* may alter soil properties in a way that promotes and sustains invasion by earthworms."

Most frightening of all, the scientists said that belated attempts to remove one of the species might come too late to disrupt the symbiosis. "The legacy of *R. cathartica* on soil properties and earthworm populations may persist even after the plant has been physically removed," they wrote.

The study shows just how high the stakes are when it comes to invasive species: not only are they fast-spreading and difficult to remove, they might also entrench other invaders that are already present.

—PARAS BHAYANI, a member of the Massachusetts Chapter Executive Committee, is a former intern with the Illinois Chapter and activist with several Illinois groups.



Illinois members of the National Water Committee met with Senators Durbin and Obama in June while in Washington DC. The senators learned about efforts to protect isolated wetlands. Read the full story in the DuPage Sierran newsletter beginning on page 24. L to R: Sen. Durbin, Frank Orto, Ann Wechsler, Sen. Obama.



Preserve across from Lot 5

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# Sierrans at the Renewable Energy Fair

By BECKI CLAYBORN

The 6th Annual Illinois Renewable Energy and Sustainable Lifestyle Fair, which was held on Saturday, August 11th and Sunday, August 12th at the Ogle County Fairgrounds, in Oregon, IL, was a great time for Sierra Club volunteers and members. The Fair featured over 100 booths and exhibits, 60 workshops, food, entertainment, childrens' activities and tours of homes in the area.

Sierra Club had a table at the Fair, which gave individuals an opportunity to learn how to help create a cleaner energy future for Illinois. Two of Sierra Club's main campaigns were highlighted – the 'stop the coal rush' and 'clean car' campaigns. Attendees signed postcards to legislators requesting a clean car standard for Illinois, and many also signed up to become involved in the Sierra Club's energy cam-



Photo: Bob Brubaker

Becki Clayborn presents Smart Energy Solutions to Global Warming.

paings.

Sierra Club also presented at the fair, discussing 'Smart Energy Solutions to Global Warming'. The presentation, given by staffer Becki Clayborn with help from

Linda Sullivan, Chair of the IL Chapter Lobby Committee, was well attended and created useful discussions throughout the weekend.

And finally, a Sierra Club Social complete with sandwiches and sodas was hosted on Saturday night by super Sierra Club volunteer Tom Borchard. The social was very popular with members and non-members alike, and yielded new volunteers for Sierra Club's efforts. Well done Tom!

Overall, it was a very successful weekend. Thanks so much to Jeff Markus, Donna Hriljac, Linda Sullivan, Noah Walsh, and Barbara Hill for volunteering. This event was much more effective because of your efforts. Thank you!

We hope to see you all out for it next year!

— BECKI CLAYBORN is the Regional Representative, Sierra Club Midwest Clean Energy Campaign.



Educating fair goers about stoping the "Coal Rush" and the Illinois Clean Car Campaign.

Photo: Jeff Markus

## Landfill

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ria Families and working mother of two young children.

The groups worked to raise funds to hire lawyer David Wentworth to represent their side at the public hearings and to pay for two reports, a professional hydrologic review by Charles Norris of Geo-Hydro, Inc., who testified at the county hearing, and a landfill assessment by Dr. G. Fred Lee.

The groups also worked to educate the public through door-to-door campaigns, petitions, billboards, and developing a Web site ([www.notoxicwaste.org](http://www.notoxicwaste.org)).

"The majority of the people of Peoria had no clue a dangerous landfill was at

the edge of their city," said Blumenshine. "I think this shows that community awareness and involvement is necessary."

Converse said that the Peoria Families Group grew to 20-25 core members who would attend weekly meetings.

"All these people were so different-working parents, stay at home moms, Democrats, Republicans," Converse said. "This issue compelled and united people from all spectrums."

The local medical community even became involved.

"The medical community was a huge factor," said Converse. "They became educated about the issue and testified at the hearings."

PDC appealed the control board decision eight days after the ruling.

The company is also asking for a per-

mit modification with the Illinois EPA that would supersede local authority, allowing the expansion, and has a pending application with the U.S. EPA that would allow the landfill to take waste with toxic polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) without having to apply each time to IEPA.

The local organizations have continued to fight back, meeting with the Illinois EPA and requesting that the PDC's operating permit requires the county board's list of landfill improvements to be applied to the permit for the Peoria landfill.

"We fully expect them (PDC) to carry it further and we are in for the long haul," said Converse. "The facts are on our side."

— BRIAN SARNA is a recent graduate of Columbia College Chicago. This is his first contribution to the Lake & Prairie.



## October 2007

### **6 Day Hike, South Kettle Moraine State Forest, LaGrange, WI.**

A fall-color hike in South Kettle Moraine State Forest, north of Lake Geneva, WI. Learn how this area of special natural beauty was formed during the glacial age. Our pace will be moderate over hilly and forested trails. Limit 25 per hiking group. Leader Fred Weber. Assistant leaders Mike Davis and Paul Saindon. Call Fred 630-469-6826.

### **6-8 Canoeing the Pere Marquette River, Baldwin, MI.**

Fall color and salmon should peak as we float down 40 miles of this clear stream. Learn how fishery management has affected the river. We will base camp with hardy meals around the campfire. Intermediate and seasoned paddlers are welcome. Canoe rentals available. Leader Rich Balis (773) 254-2383. Call assistant Leader Phil Walusek after September 1st Home: 708-479-7996 7-9 pm; Work: 312-751-4504.

### **7 Hike at Herrick/Danada, Wheaton, IL.**

We may see fruit on trees, some fall colors, animals, birds, and learn about this area so close to home for many of us. After our hike there may be a dinner get together. Contact leader Jan Bradford, 847-455-2947 or e-mail jbradford60131@sbcglobal.net Assistant Leader is Paul Saindon

### **11-14 Canoeing the Current River, Salem, MO.**

Three days primitive canoeing and a day hike at Mantauk Springs. The Current River is part of the Ozark National Scenic River way. It features springs, bluffs, hollows, & caves along with fish, birds, boars, wild horses. Paddlers should have paddling skills & swimming ability. Enjoy the autumn air, the warm spring river, and fly fishing. Contact Leader Ed Gacek e-mail backcb@indianvalley.com

**For up-to-the-minute listings and more details visit <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/outings>**

### **12-15 Hikes/Fall Colors at Shawnee National Forest, Harrisburg, IL.**

Day hikes and fall colors in three spectacular wilderness areas in Shawnee National Forest near Harrisburg, IL. The mix of trees can provide an unequaled autumn color. Learn "Why Leaves Turn Color". We'll stay at a luxurious B&B. Cost of \$175 includes lodging, breakfasts & 2 gourmet dinners. Limit 16. Leader: Paul Silverman 847-392-3433. Co-leader: Joe Pokorny. Assistant leader: Diana Haskins.

### **13 Biking the Old Plank Road Trail, Frankfort, IL.**

Join us for an easy 35 mile ride on the Old Plank Road Trail, beginning and ending in the historic district of Old Frankfort. The scenery transitions back and forth from marshlands with lots of bird activity to the backyards of small cities in the southern suburbs. Leader Mark Ginger. Co-Leader Berni Kolasa. Limit is 20. Contact Mark 847-699-0329.

### **14 Canoe on the lower Fox River, Sheridan & Wedron, IL.**

Come join us for a relaxing canoe on the beautiful lower Fox River. We will enjoy this area and learn why some people refer to this as the "Illinois Dells." Our 12 mile journey will take us past islands, rock cliffs, fall colors, and birds to identify. Leaders Jan Bradford and Mike Way. Limit 16. Contact Jan 847-455-2947 or e-mail jbradford60131@sbcglobal.net.

### **19-21 Camp/Hike at Governor Dodge State Park, Dodgeville, WI.**

Fall camping and hiking in this "island" of hills and valleys that the receding Wisconsin Glacier bypassed. We will camp at a private campground. Saturday we will be hike 10 to 12 miles at Governor Dodge State Park. We

will return on Sunday for another 6 mile hike. Limit 20. Call Leader Mark Ginger at 847-699-0329.

### **19-21 5th Annual Shawnee Forest Cleanup, Harrisburg, IL.**

We'll be based at Pounds Hollow in the beautiful Shawnee National Forest. Saturday, after breakfast and a short conservation orientation, we'll bash the trash from Illinois' only National Forest. Afterwards, we will host a BBQ for all participants near and far. Sunday is open for travel or one final concentrated bash. Cost: \$20 covers food, camping, trash bash supplies. Assistant leaders Linda Sullivan, Alice Englebretsen, and Scott Etienne contact: Tom Borchard 847 390 8386 ; after Sept 15, Scott Etienne 847 516 8653 Chapter Service Outing

### **21 Signal Point Trail, Glendale, IL.**

Meet 9AM Murdale Shopping Center, Carbondale, or 9:30 old Walmart, Marion. This 2 mile loop follows the base of a cliff, ascends to the top, follows the stone glade rim trail and visits Cedar Creek Wonders. Learn about the conflict between ATV riders and equestrians. Limit 10. Contact leader Bob Tyson 684-5643. This trail description is indexed at <http://shawneegroup.blogspot.com>.

### **25-28 Backpack at Hoosier Nat'l Forest, Story, IN.**

A moderately paced fall color adventure through the forested hills of southern Indiana. Learn how this area became a national forest. We will cover about 8 miles on each of 3 days. Suitable for experienced and beginner backpackers in good physical condition. Limit 18. Cost \$50. Leaders Fred Weber and Mary O'Boyle. Assistant leaders Paul Saindon and John Stevens. Call Fred 630-469-6826.

### **27 Volunteer Work Day at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, Wilmington, IL.**

Join friends and have fun assisting with the creation of the 17,000-acre National Tallgrass Prairie. Under the guidance of site naturalists we will be doing something helpful. Dress for outdoor work — equipment provided. Box lunch or barbecue picnic will be provided by Midewin Alliance. At end of work day, we will do a guided hike or bike ride, so bring your bike or hiking shoes. Call Leader Steve Carrow 630-293-4988 or email [stephencarrow@sbcglobal.net](mailto:stephencarrow@sbcglobal.net)

## November 2007

### **3 Sandhill Crane & Migrating Birds, Indiana Dunes Nat'l Lakeshore & Jasper- Pulaski FW,**

## Are you single?



Join the introduction network for graduates, faculty and students of the Ivy League, University of Chicago, Northwestern, The Art Institute, and excellent schools.

[www.rightstuffdating.com](http://www.rightstuffdating.com)

**IN.** See Sandhill Cranes as they migrate through Indiana. There will be a guided hike in the Indiana Dunes, then drive to the Jasper-Pulaski to watch thousands of sandhill cranes. We may have dinner at a local restaurant. Sign-ups taken Oct 1-Nov. 1. Contact Leader Floyd Bednarz at 847-933-9340 or email fbednarz@hotmail.com. Sign-ups will be taken FROM October 1st UP TO November 1st, 2007.

**10 Training Workshop for New Outings Leaders, Oak Brook, IL.** Interested in becoming a Sierra Club outings leader? Want to learn how to lead a trip? This workshop will cover trip scouting, planning, enrollment, on-trail practices, conservation issues, safety, etc. Open to potential leaders from all Sierra groups in the area and anyone else interested. Taught by a team of River-Prairie Group outings leaders. Limit 15. Call Steve Turner 630-782-5865.

**11 Wolfe Creek Trail, Pomona, IL.** Meet 12:30 at the ranger station in Murphysboro. The club hiked the south cliff line canyon last year. This time we will do the north end. We will note the club position on logging and prescribed burning on Forest Service land which lie adjacent to private residences. Limited to 10 hikers. Contact leader Bob Tyson 684-5643.

**11 Educational Hike and Sandhill Cranes, Indiana Dunes Area, IN.** An Educational hike with a representative from the Save the Dunes Council. We will learn about the council's activities and Sandhill cranes before seeing the crane migration at Jasper Pulaski park. Your fee of \$5 includes a donation to Save the Dunes Council. Contact leader Jan Bradford 847-455-2947 or jbradford60131@sbcglobal.net

## December 2007

**2 Cache River State Natural Area, Belknap, IL.** Meet 9AM Murdale Shopping Center, Carbondale or 9:30 old Walmart, Marion. We will take the Observation Trail at Wildcat Bluff, Heron Pond Swamp, including three state champion trees: Water Tupelo, Bald Cypress, and Cherry Oak. An orientation to the history of this wildlife wetlands area will be provided. Limit 10. Contact leader Bob Tyson at 684-5643. A description is in the October, 2005 newsletter <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee>.

## January 2008

**4-5 Eagle Activities & Viewing on the Mississippi River, Fulton/Clinton area, IA.** Come join me for a whole day of Eagle Watching, music, and presentations. The outing will be held at the Clinton Community College and includes a trip to Lock #13 to view the Eagles at the dam and a "Bird of Prey" show. Cost TBD. Limit 20 people. Contact Leader Jan Bradford 847-455-2947 or jbradford60131@sbcglobal.net Paul Saindon Assistant leader

**11-13 Wolf Tracking in Northern Wisconsin, Tomahawk, WI.** Wolf tracking in Northern Wisconsin. This unique outing will be at Treehaven Outdoor Education Center. Activities include orientation on wolf behavior, outdoor winter survival skills, tracking, & a wolf howl. Snowshoes & cross country skis will be used for exploring this beautiful site. \$170 fee covers lodging, 3 meals, equipment, & administrative fees. Limit 15. Leader Mark Ginger. Assistant Leader Marie Malo. Contact Mark 847-699-0329.

**26-27 Beginner Cross Country Ski Workshop, Delafield, WI.** Learn to cross coun-

## The 2008 election approaches . . . What are you doing (other than voting)?

Passing good policy means having good policy makers. Sierra Club is the only environmental group that endorses and supports pro-environmental candidates for local, state, and federal offices with resources like on-the-ground volunteers.

Can you spare one evening a week? A few hours on the weekend? Any time that you can give will help Sierra Club elect pro-environmental candidates to the General Assembly in Springfield and in local offices around Illinois.

When it comes time to vote for a pro-environmental bill, like "Clean Cars" or reducing toxic mercury emissions, Sierra Club supported candidates will be there for the environment.

Volunteers will help educate voters by:

- distributing literature
- calling fellow Sierra Club members
- door-to-door literature drops
- election day poll watching
- general in-office support

It is not hard and any time you give is a big help. We don't know yet where our efforts will be directed but we know our effort make a difference!

Contact Jennifer Hensley to volunteer.

312.251.1680 x3 or [Jennifer.Hensley@sierraclub.org](mailto:Jennifer.Hensley@sierraclub.org)

try ski or improve your skiing. Participants will learn basic skills and then hit the trails with instructors. The \$15 cost covers the information packet and Sierra Club fees, but not trail fees of \$5-10 per day, meals or lodging. Limit 20. Leaders Teresa and Dave Barnard and Donna and Steve Turner. Call Teresa or Dave at 847-255-9982 or oiagree@aol.com beginning December 1.

lent areas with groomed trails will be skied. Trip fee of approximately \$140 includes lodging, two dinners, and Sierra Club fees. \$70 deposit due Jan 2nd. Limit 18. Leader Mike Davis. Call beginning December 17 815-331-3042.

## February 2008

**15-18 Boulder Junction Cross-Country Ski Outing, Boulder Junction, WI.** A 3-day cross-country ski trip in the great snow country of northern Wisconsin. Stay in fully-equipped cabins near Boulder Junction and enjoy group meals. Several excel-

**23 Winter Hike at Indiana Dunes State Park, Chesterton, IN.** Enjoy the late-winter quiet of this national treasure, first as we walk the wooded trails in the 1,800-acre forest, then viewing the golden grasses as we cross over the dunes and continue walking on a spectacular stretch of dunes and beach on one of the world's greatest lakes. Limit of 25 per hiking group. Call Leader Fred Weber 630-469-6826.

What do you pay for your office space?

Is your landlord responsive?

Does everyone enjoy natural light in their work spaces?



Are your offices near public transportation, ADA compliant, and convenient to restaurants and retail?

## WAVELAND PARTNERS

Waveland Partners specializes in helping not-for-profit organizations find better office space at a rental rate your board will approve.

Call Nick Wilder at 312 634-6310. He will be your guide through the office leasing jungle and lead your organization to a much better work environment.

Discover nature & explore your mind!

The Clearing is a "folk school" for adults founded in 1935 by renowned landscape architect, Jens Jensen. Classes focus on the arts and fine crafts, humanities and natural sciences and range from one and two-day workshops to weeklong resident classes held in a secluded wooded setting on the water in northern Door County.

On the State and National Registers of Historic Places

12171 GARRETT BAY ROAD ■ ELLISON BAY (920) 854-4088 ■ [WWW.THECLEARING.ORG](http://WWW.THECLEARING.ORG)

# Statements of candidates for executive

## Christine Williamson Chicago Group

It's been my privilege to serve the Sierra Club as an activist since 1987. This 20-year history has given me a long, Sierra Club-specific perspective about environmental issues in Illinois, nationwide and globally. I've been a member of the Chapter ExCom since the early 1990s and currently serve as chair of the Endangered Places/Species and co-chair of the Olympics committees. My local group is Chicago Group; I serve as group and conservation chair. I also serve on Sierra Club's National Wildlife and Endangered Species Committee. I have a strong interest in land and species protection: Protecting habitat is synonymous with protecting both common and threatened species. I am particularly concerned about the impact of climate change on plant and animal species. The combination of efforts to control global warming and species and land protection is the Sierra Club's exciting Cool Habitats campaign. I am committed to furthering the campaign nationwide and right here in Illinois. Locally, Cool Habitats likely will translate into a statewide focus on habitat protection to save threatened species. To

that end, I'm looking forward to working with conservation activists around Illinois to better protect the natural environment in their own areas.

## Linda Sullivan

I am committed to the Sierra Club because of its grassroots structure that empowers ordinary people to make a difference. I believe the Sierra Club should build on this strength, reaching out to the 26,000 Illinois members, finding new ways to draw them into active participation and improving channels for all members to make their voices heard.

I am putting this philosophy to work as the co-chair of the Illinois Grassroots Lobby Committee by reaching out to Sierra Club members all over the state to get them involved in lobbying for the environment. This committee of almost 100 volunteers has played a critical role in our recent legislative successes and raising the profile of the Sierra Club in Springfield.

My best traits are hard work and follow through. These characteristics I have brought to my roles on the Chapter Political committee, as River Prairie Group political co-chair co-manager of Bluestem, a

136-member phone tree conservation action alert system and Chapter Board member.

If I am elected, I will bring enthusiasm and a positive attitude toward empowering all of us who care about conservation in Illinois.

## Will Reynolds

Since being selected as the Sangamon Valley Group Representative in 2006, I have attended every Illinois Chapter Executive Committee meeting. Last year I was one of the Sierrans who participated in negotiations and advocated for approval of the landmark agreement between City Water Light and Power and the Sierra Club which resulted in Springfield making significant investments in wind power, energy conservation, and other emission reduction measures.

Currently I serve as Chair of the Illinois Clean Cars campaign and I'm a member of the Chapter Political Committee. My professional background is in non-profit and political organizing including my current work as a media and web consultant.

As a board member I would continue to work on energy issues along with the Club's historic focus on conservation, seek to actively engage more young people as leaders for the future of the organization, and maintain a statewide perspective. I'm grateful for the opportunities I've had to make a positive impact on the environment through the Sierra Club and I look forward to participating in the Club's future successes.

## Cory Jones

As a dedicated, feet on the ground, environmental advocate in Chicago, I want to be a part of the Sierra Club's state level strategy process. It is important to translate national environmental goals into local action. Being elected to the IL Executive Committee would serve to add more direction and purpose to the local events I help make happen in metro Chicago. With the size of our IL membership growing, and big issues on the horizon (pollution in the Great Lakes, new power plants, wind farms, etc.) the Sierra Club needs to translate big picture environmental goals into local actionable items. Results happen when you have strong communicators and take charge initiators. My day job pays me for delivering results -- this is something I can do for the Sierra Club.

---Cory Jones cory.jones@interaccess.com 773-463-4072

## Illinois Chapter Directory

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Chair:** Bill Davies (chair@illinois.sierraclub.org, 309-797-6101)

**Vice-Chair:** Bob Larson (larsonlaw@gmail.com)

**Secretary:** Evan Craig (evan.craig@illinois.sierraclub.org)

**Treasurer:** Charlie Kubert (ckubert@elpc.org, 312-795-3716)

**At-Large:** Fran Caffee (francaffee@earthlink.net, 630-859-1687)

George Etu (gjetu@yahoo.com, 847-432-3787)

Craig Gilbertson (l10csg1@core.cso.niu.edu, 815-748-5037)

Rudy Habben (309-685-5605)

Cory Jones (cory.jones@high-techpartners.com, 773-463-4072)

Verena Owen (baumling@aol.com)

Linda Sullivan (lsullivan23@hotmail.com, 630-620-5257)

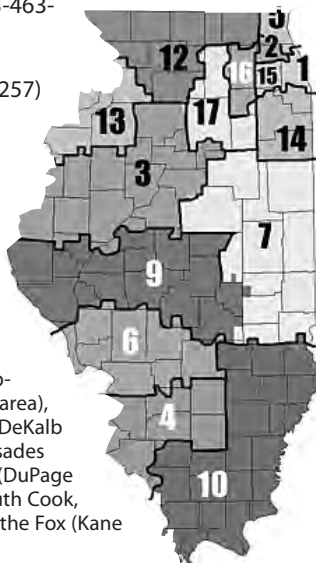
Lynn Rotunno (lynn\_rotunno@yahoo.com)

Christine Williamson (birdchris@aol.com, 773-935-8439)

### LOCAL GROUPS OF THE ILLINOIS CHAPTER

All Illinois Sierra Club members are assigned to one of 15 local groups. Each has an elected Executive Committee and hosts regular general public program meetings. To find local contact information and meeting dates and locations visit: [illinois.sierraclub.org](http://illinois.sierraclub.org) or call 312-251-1680 x0

12: Blackhawk (Rockford area), 1: Chicago (includes inner ring suburbs), 13: Eagle View (Quad cities area), 3: Heart of Illinois (Peoria area), 4: Kaskaskia (Belleville to Centralia area), 17: Kishwaukee Solduc (DeKalb area), 2: Northwest Cook County (Schaumburg area), 6: Piasa Palisades (Alton area), 7: Prairie (Champaign-Urbana area), 15: River Prairie (DuPage Co.), 9: Sangamon Valley (Springfield area), 14: Sauk-Calumet (south Cook, Will, Kankakee cos.), 10: Shawnee (Carbondale area), 16: Valley of the Fox (Kane & Kendall cos.), 5: Woods & Wetlands (Lake & NE Cook cos.)



# committee

**Barbara Hill**  
**Northwest Cook County**  
**Member since 1985**

The Illinois Chapter of the Sierra Club has been an important force in protecting our environment. The most important issues that are ripe for advancement now are global warming and local biodiversity. In both cases (as in everything the Sierra Club does well), the most important agents of change are local members who make their voices heard in their communities and to their elected officials. The chapter staff is a vital part of our efforts, making sure that we have the information we need to speak confidently and helping us to choose our priorities and our tactics for maximum effect.

I am currently the Illinois chapter's political chair. In this role I have seen firsthand how individuals, groups, and the chapter come to consensus on political endorsements and on choosing priority races to work on.

I have been active with the Northwest Cook County group since its reactivation in 2002. I currently serve on its executive committee and as its political chair. I am also an alternate delegate from the group to the Illinois chapter.

Please vote for me to help keep the Illinois chapter strong and moving forward.

## **Craig Gilbertson**

I have been a Sierra Club member since 1985 and have been an active member of the Kishwaukee Solduc Group since shortly following its formation. I have served as Group Conservation Chair, Outings Chair, Vice Chair and Group chair as well as serving as Group Delegate to the State Chapter. I am also serving as an elected member of the Illinois State Chapter Executive Committee and have served as alternate delegate for the State Chapter to the Council of Club Leaders. Many areas in our state are threatened by uncontrolled development with its attendant negative impacts on the environment. The remaining undeveloped natural areas in Illinois are under threat. During my service to the Club I have gone before County and Municipal Governments, testifying on the need for Smart Growth and Land Use Planning. I have actively worked for the protection of natural areas and farmland which are threatened by development. I am also actively involved in the Water Sentinels program and actively involved in Water issues. I ask for your vote to help me to continue this work.

# Executive committee ballots due Nov. 30

Please vote for at-large representatives for the Illinois Chapter Executive Committee. This is your opportunity to help build your State Chapter decision-making board.

## **Illinois Chapter ExCom Ballot**

### **Instructions:**

- ▶ You must be an Illinois Sierra Chapter member to vote
  - ▶ **Important:** You must print your full name and address on the outside of the ballot envelope for membership verification and mark your envelope: "ATTENTION: Chapter Elections Committee."
  - ▶ Joint membership may use Ballots #1 and #2 - be sure to print both membership names on the ballot envelope (needed for membership verification and privacy of ballots inside). Please separate joint ballots for privacy in voting.
  - ▶ Do not send any items except your ballots in the envelope (no renewals, etc.)
  - ▶ Vote for a candidate by putting an X in the box next to her/his name
  - ▶ VOTE FOR FOUR CANDIDATES (there is no cumulative voting)
- Please print clearly. If we can't read it, we won't count it.

### **Ballot #1**

(for Single Member Ballot)

- Craig Gilbertson
- Barb Hill
- Cory Jones
- Will Reynolds
- Linda Sullivan
- Chris Williamson

### **Ballot #2**

(for Joint Member Vote)

- Craig Gilbertson
- Barb Hill
- Cory Jones
- Will Reynolds
- Linda Sullivan
- Chris Williamson

Mail ballot for receipt **by Nov. 30, 2007**:  
Illinois Chapter, Sierra Club, 70 E. Lake St. Suite 1500,  
Chicago, IL 60601. Attn: Chapter Elections Committee

Your name  
second name if joint ballot  
address

41¢  
STAMP

Sierra Club, IL Chapter  
70 E. Lake St. Suite 1500  
Chicago, IL 60601

attn: Chapter Elections Committee

Sample ballot envelope

## **Executive Committee elections procedures and rules**

- Each ballot is validated by a method with assures secrecy of the ballot and allows verification that the voter is an Illinois Chapter member (or joint membership) in good standing.
- Election materials and statements will be presented the Chapter newsletter. Instructions will be given to make the outside of the envelope containing the ballot(s) so that membership can be validated. Joint members can separate ballots #1 and #2.
- Campaign Activity: During the time after nominees are announced and before the elections are held, campaigning and statements by candidates are subject to the following restrictions:
  - Space in Club publication for candidate's statements and promotion of candidates may be allotted on an equal basis to all candidates.
  - Time to address club meetings may be provided to candidates, as long as all candidate are so notified and are afforded an equal opportunity to do so.
  - Written campaign materials may be circulated, provided they are identified by source and are circulated to the Elections Committee Chair and to all other candidate with adequate time for response
  - Articles by or about candidates which are not campaign materials but which relate to the ordinary performance of the candidate as members may appear in Club publications.
  - No candidate may comment on or sign pro or con arguments which accompany other ballot items, such as By-Law changes, except in their own individual ballot statements and campaign materials.
- Activities of the Election Committee with respect to validation and counting shall be subject to monitoring, as in an announced open meeting for these functions, or a provision for "observers" appointed by the candidates and the Executive Committee.
- The members of the Illinois Chapter Committee for the 2008 elections are Joe Laszlo, Donna Hrijljac, and Bill Davies.
- The main duty of the Election Committee is to validate and count the ballots received. Additional duties of the Committee Chair include receipt of ballot materials, preparation of ballots from voters, and notification to the Executive Committee of the election results.
- After receipt of the ballot materials from the Nomination Committee Chair, the Elections Committee Chair shall prepare the ballots. The ballots shall allow each voter to vote for as many candidates as there are positions to be filled. Cumulative voting is not allowed.
- The closing date for this election is November 30, 2007.

# Wild Onion

The Newsletter of the Chicago Group of the Sierra Club

Fourth Quarter 2007

## Cool Cities Need Cool Burbs

by Jack Gilroy, Chicago Group Air/Energy Committee

Think the Sierra Club's Cool Cities campaign to fight global warming is aimed only at big cities? Think again.

The Air and Energy Committee of the Sierra Club Chicago chapter will soon be e-mailing its suburban members to encourage them to take an active role in getting their towns to join the campaign.

Cool Cities is a program by which the Sierra Club facilitates adoption of the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement and commitment to reduce carbon dioxide pollution to levels targeted by the Kyoto Protocol Global Warming Treaty. At present, there are 666 cities and towns in the U.S. that have made that commitment, including Chicago and 21 others in Illinois.

The goal of the local Committee initiative is to make the Chicago metropolitan area one of the first in the U.S. to have the vast majority of its suburbs as well as its core city as partners in the fight against global warming.

To achieve that goal requires the active involvement of Sierra Club members in the suburbs who can marshal community support for the adoption of the Cool Cities program where they live and monitor the program's progress to ensure that it reaches its environmental benchmarks. Any Sierrans who want to be leaders or participants in their suburb are welcome to join in this effort.

Activists and municipal participants working on Cool Cities initiatives now have the advantage of a new, user-friendly website (<http://coolcities.us>) that provides global warming information, campaign fact sheets and access to the action plans of previous joiners of the program. Free software from the International Commission of Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) can also be downloaded from the website by any municipality to measure its current and future levels of CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gases.



Chicago Group Air/Energy Committee member, Rose Gomez, asks movie goers to sign Illinois Clean Cars postcards before the August 21 Grant Park Screening of *An Inconvenient Truth*. Credit: Cynthia Linton.

Concerns about global warming have grown dramatically in recent years and Sierra Club members who help persuade the mayors or city council of their home towns to join the Cool Cities response will be playing a vital role in the preservation of our planet.

The way to start is by responding to the soon-to-be-received e-mail from the Air and Energy Committee of the Chicago Group of the Sierra Club or, if you can't wait or aren't on the e-mail list, by contacting Jack Gilroy at [jdgilroy@rcn.com](mailto:jdgilroy@rcn.com) to volunteer as a "city-lead" or group volunteer to make Cool Burbs a Chicagoland reality.

# Group and Cubs both are Winners!

by Christine Williamson, Group Chair

The Chicago Group of the Sierra Club reserved a block of 40 seats at the Aug. 28 Cubs home game against the Milwaukee Brewers.

Little did Take' Yamamoto know way back in April when he reserved the tickets that the Cubs would be locked in a close battle for first place with the Brewers.

On a warm, perfect-baseball weather night, 40 Sierrans watched an exciting game from high above the field on the first base line. Outfielder Jacque Jones, hit a two-run double to tie the game and scored the tie-breaker on an error by Brewers pitcher, Scott Linebrink, to lift the Cubs to a 5-3 victory.

As the next-day game report on cubs.com stated: "How big (was) this series? Not only was Wrigley Field packed with 40,884 sweaty fans, but every rooftop surrounding the ballpark was full. Cub fans clearly outnumbered folks from Wisconsin. Brewers broadcaster Bob Uecker was booed as he tried to lead the crowd in the seventh-inning stretch. Fans in the upper deck then did a better version "a capella."

The Cubs took the lead in the super-exciting bottom of the seventh inning. Then Cubs reliever, Bobby Howry, took the mound in the top of the eighth inning. He faced Brewers pinch-hitter, Gabe Gross. With two Milwaukee players on base with two outs, Howry got Gross up to a 3-2 count, and then Gross proceeded to hit fouls on the next six pitches.



Sierrans Bob Coon, Cory Jones, Chris Williamson and Jennifer Byrd enjoy an evening at Wrigley Field. Photo credit: Bill Bianchi

Howry described his tactic on the 12th pitch to cubs.com as follows: "For eight pitches, you've got the crowd, 40,000 people screaming as loud as they can, and it's a rush. The final pitch was a split, I hung it. I hung it bad enough and it was a big enough change of speed that he got himself out on that one. It wasn't a good enough pitch for me to say I got him out."

Needless to say, the Sierrans in the crowd were screaming their heads off to support the Cubbies! Everyone left the game well-pleased that the Cubs retained their first-place position in the National League's central division.

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## Late Fall Field Trip: Chicago Household Waste Recycling Facility November 3, 9:30 a.m., 1150 N. North Branch Street, on Goose Island

Back by popular demand, Chicago Group will once again tour the City of Chicago's fabulous (yes, fabulous!) Household Waste Recycling Facility.

Just in time for the holidays, make a clean sweep of your kitchen, basement, home office, garage and garden shed and gather up hazardous household wastes, electronics and cell phones for drop-off. It's great to participate in a "group drop" of our collective clutter to see how big the pile gets to be.

Learn more about why safe disposal of dangerous materials and electronics is essential to safeguarding the environment and see how truly green and energy efficient this year-old facility is.

There also is a "swap" room for useable paint, cleansers, silver polish — almost any product that

comes in a bottle, can or pot that you can think of might end up in the room. Your unused paint might be just the color another person is looking for to brighten up their home.

Brunch at Goose Island will follow for those interested.

The facility accepts the following for recycling or safe disposal: antifreeze, used motor oil, old gasoline, oil-based paints, paint thinners, aerosol paints, herbicides, insecticides, pesticides, lawn chemicals, solvents, drain cleaners, cleaning products, pool chemicals, hobby chemicals, mercury, fluorescent lamps and bulbs, computers and cell phones.

Please R.S.V.P. for the tour and/or lunch after October 10 to event leader, Christine Williamson, [birdchris@aol.com](mailto:birdchris@aol.com) or evenings 773-935-8439. Limit: 25.

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# Sustainability Field Trips

## November 9-11 and December 8

### North Park Village Nature Center

#### 5801 N. Pulaski, Chicago

Chicago Group of the Sierra Club members are invited to a "field trip" of a series of workshops about sustainable urban living.

The workshops are being held across the weekend of November 9-11 at North Park Village Nature Center on Chicago's northwest side and will focus on the idea of eco villages. Eco villages support ways of living that enhance both community and sustainability. Their multiple forms range from intentional communities and co-housing, to friends and neighbors deciding to share more, while green-

ing-up their environment and way of life.

On December 8, Sierrans are invited to learn more about permaculture in an afternoon workshop at the nature center.

Membership chair Bill Bianchi can provide more information about the learning events, where Sierrans can meet to discuss the issues raised, as well as more general information about the Chicago Group's wide range of activities from conservation and habitat restoration to beach clean-ups, political advocacy and social events. Call Bill at 773-935-3346.

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# Holiday Party and Fundraiser

## Wednesday, December 12, 6:30 p.m.

### Ethnic Dining — Thailand at P.S. Bangkok 2

#### 2521 N. Halsted, Chicago

The Chicago Group of the Sierra Club has been exploring the cuisines of the world all year long and will end our culinary journey at a Thai restaurant for a fun holiday-season evening.

Our final destination is P. S. Bangkok 2 on Chicago's north side, where a family-style dinner with five entrees and three appetizers will be served. Vegetarians will be accommodated. P.S. Bangkok 2 is BYOB, so feel free to bring along something to enjoy with your meal. Riesling works well with most Thai dishes, as does beer.

Not only will you get to meet fellow Sierrans during the most festive time of the year, but a portion of the fee for the dinner will benefit Chicago Group's conservation programs.

There is a limit of 30 people, so make your reservations early. The reservation deadline is December 5. To R.S.V.P., please send a check for \$17 made payable to Sierra Club to: Take' Yamamoto, 555 W. Cornelia Ave., Apt. 301, Chicago, IL 60657.

If you have any questions, you can contact Take' at 773-528-7812 or [ch-socials@illinois.sierraclub.org](mailto:ch-socials@illinois.sierraclub.org)

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## Subscribe to Chicago Group e-News

Chicago Group has a better way to keep members up-to-date with news and events: Chicago Group e-News. Through e-News, subscribers are kept informed monthly about programs, socials, outings and environmental events in our neighborhoods.

This listserv is for members only; you must have a Sierra Club membership number to sign up. Check the

address label on *Sierra* magazine to find your number.

Take a minute to subscribe online to receive the next issue at <http://Illinois.SierraClub.org/Chicago/e-News>.

For information about Chicago Group's social outings, subscribe to the e-newsletter at: [http://illinois.sierraclub.org/chicago/socials/social\\_listserv.html](http://illinois.sierraclub.org/chicago/socials/social_listserv.html) and check the web at <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/chicago/outings/>.

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# Gas Station Boycotts: Use Your Head When You Fill Up

by Cory Jones, Political Chair

As a consumer you can vote every day with your dollar, supporting companies with pro-environment initiatives and avoiding companies that are openly hostile or indifferent to keeping the planet and people safe and healthy.

For the following reasons, we suggest a boycott of these gas stations:

## Exxon/Mobil

- ExxonMobil contributes to global warming. ExxonMobil's operations and burning of its products have released an estimated 20.3 billion tons of carbon into the Earth's atmosphere — and that analysis was noted in a report done five years ago.
- ExxonMobil denies that global warming exists. In 2004, ExxonMobil gave \$1.9 million to 26 organizations specifically to challenge the scientific consensus on global warming.
- ExxonMobil refuses to pay court ordered punitive damages from the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil tanker spill. ExxonMobil is still appealing the more than four billion dollars in punitive damages the court ordered it to pay for damages incurred to over 10,000 square miles of water in Prince William Sound and the Gulf of Alaska and to the fishermen and Alaskan natives who depended on that ecosystem for their livelihoods.

## 2) BP/British Petroleum

- Right now, today, BP legally dumps over 1,000

pounds of ammonia and over 3,600 pounds of sludge into Lake Michigan each and every day.

- Although BP has recently promised not to increase its daily dumping of pollution into Lake Michigan, this is just a public statement, not a legally binding agreement.
- BP still holds Indiana EPA permits to legally increase their daily dumping of ammonia by 54 percent and to increase their daily sludge discharge into Lake Michigan by 35 percent.
- Furthermore, BP has not announced any plans to reduce their already high levels of pollution discharging into Lake Michigan.

## Shell

- The Bush administration has approved Shell Oil's plan to drill off the coast of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge despite knowing full well that an oil spill in these icy waters could never be cleaned up.
- Shell's plans for drilling makes the Arctic Refuge vulnerable to a catastrophic oil spill that could despoil the shores of our greatest wildlife sanctuary for generations to come.
- According to Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.: "It would take just one oil spill on the icebound Beaufort Sea that borders the Arctic Refuge to create a long-term toxic waste site — because the oil industry has no proven method for cleaning up oil in icy water."

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## Oak Park Environmental Book Club Started

By the time you read this, the new Oak Park Environmental Book club will be in full swing. The club meets every other month starting in September.

Read the books and join the discussion about environ-

mental issues that really matter. Everyone is welcome.

For details on the date and location of the next Oak Park Environmental Book Club, contact Take' Yamamoto at [ch-socials@illinois.sierraclub.org](mailto:ch-socials@illinois.sierraclub.org) or 773-528-7812.

### Chicago Group Information

For information about the Chicago Group of the Sierra Club, check the web site often: <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/Chicago>. Contact details for group leaders who can answer questions about activities and how you can get more involved can be found on the home page. You may also subscribe to e-News for e-mail delivery of a monthly calendar of activities. To subscribe, click on the Chicago Group e-News box in the right column on the home page.

Chicago Group's newsletter, *Wild Onion*, is a quarterly publication with in-depth news and discussion of local issues. *Wild Onion* — traditionally available in print — now can be sent electronically, saving printing expenses and paper. To receive *Wild Onion* by e-mail, send your name, Sierra Club membership number and e-mail address to [editor@illinois.sierraclub.org](mailto:editor@illinois.sierraclub.org).



**SIERRA CLUB**  
FOUNDED 1892

NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHWEST COOK COUNTY GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB | AUTUMN 2007

# the leaf

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For the most up-to-date news, be sure to visit us on the Web:

<http://illinois.sierraclub.org/NWCCook>

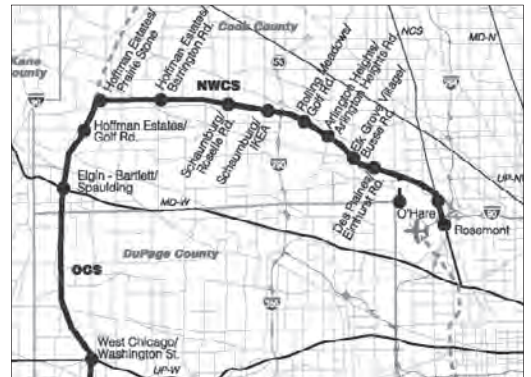
# Building a Transit Network

By Paras Bhayani

Lost in the unusually acrimonious budget battles this summer was any discussion of building more mass transit capacity, either through expanding bus routes, extending train lines, or building new ones. The debate focused instead on the enormous operating shortfalls at the Regional Transportation Authority and its three kids—the CTA, Metra, and Pace.

Indeed, with the region's mass transit system needing \$10 billion of capital investment just to get to a state of "good repair," talk of the CTA's proposed Circle and Mid-City Lines has virtually vanished. Likewise, the Metra STAR Line, which would connect the terminuses of several Metra lines to O'Hare, has been put on the backburner.

Chicago's hub-and-spokes network is great for those commuting to and from work, but it's not very useful for getting around Chicagoland more generally. Completing any or all of the three lines, which would help turn the system



REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

into a *network*, is one of the most meaningful steps the region can take to cut pollution, gas consumption, and traffic gridlock.

The STAR line, short for the Suburban Transit Access Route, would utilize existing freight tracks to connect nearly 100 suburbs on the west and northwest sides of Chicago. Starting in Joliet, it would run north through Naperville, Aurora, and Elgin, turn west at Hoffman

PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 19

# Invading Forces Held Back ... Again

By Wendy Valentine

This spring, the Northwest Cook County Group (NWCCG) went on the attack in Schaumburg Park District's Oak Hollow Conservation Area, an oasis hidden behind subdivisions.

The all-volunteer Sierra Club army assembled to annihilate invasive plant species and reinstate those native to this area.

Soldiers in this diverse brigade run executive search firms, archives, and child abuse investigations in their civilian lives. They also fight this ongoing war to eradicate non-native plants.

The invading plants easily spread, crowd out, and kill natural ecosystems in

the few open areas that remain.

Armed only with shovels, hand tools, and gloves, the company went to battle, replacing non-native plants, like garlic mustard, with aboriginal wildflowers such as Wild Hyacinth.

Dive-bombing birds chased away those who came too close to nesting areas. These birds and poison ivy posed the only real threats on the otherwise perfect spring day, made enjoyable by gentle breezes and clear skies.

Some volunteers had no battle experience, but they were accompanied by legionnaires like Greg Stolzer, who has been conserving area habitats since 2001.

Led by Stolzer and Dave Brooks, conservation manager at Spring Valley

Nature Sanctuary, the troops learned about the friends and foes of the preserve, discussing the natural habitat and history of this conservation area.

Wild Ones, an allied native plant rescue organization, donated some plants it recently saved from an Olympia Fields development, according to Brooks. Other plants were purchased or came from Spring Valley greenhouses.

Brooks told of the vast oak woods pioneers would have found in this area and explained how natural wildfires kept the vibrant oak trees separated by fields of tall grasses.

These early European settlers

PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 19

## From the Chair

Autumn days are here again and I can't wait to get out and enjoy the beautiful weather.

I love to hike in the forest preserves, explore natural areas, visit local festivals, collect signatures for candidates that I hope will win, attend our NWCCG Program Meetings and participate in restoration workdays by cutting and burning buckthorn. Take a look at this newsletter for our Calendar of Events, a Calendar of Events from Schaumburg's much beloved Spring Valley, and other special, seasonal announcements that come to you on a quarterly basis.

If you want to get the outings information quickly, read what's happening in the group, reduce our group postage and printing costs, or just save a tree, you can receive the newsletter electronically. Just send your name, membership number (listed directly above your name in Sierra magazine) and e-mail address to: [editor@illinois.sierraclub.org](mailto:editor@illinois.sierraclub.org).

I would like to thank a few quiet, but very important people that keep the group moving forward. Robin Limp and Laura Franzen are the editors of *the leaf*. In my opinion, these two have done a great job of gathering and requesting articles, keeping me on schedule, and producing a newsletter that is both informative and interesting. I am pleased that a new volunteer, Paras Bhayani, has filled the design vacancy. He brings his own style to the pages and gives *the leaf* its own identity. Thank you, all.

Do you know that we have a group website? Joyce May has volunteered in many positions in our group and has designed and maintained our website for many years. Thank you, Joyce for your continuous sharing of your time, talent and expertise. Our website: [www.illinois.sierraclub.org/NWCook](http://www.illinois.sierraclub.org/NWCook) is always up-to-date and professional. Check it out and I am sure that you will agree with me.

Have a great fall season!

—Donna Hriljac

## SIERRA CLUB CALENDARS

Nature's Infinite Beauty is Once Again Captured

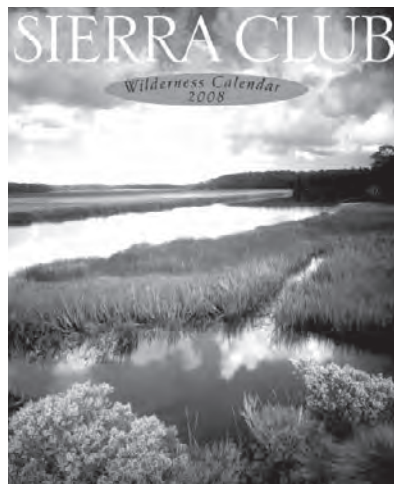
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2008 WALL CALENDAR



2008 ENGAGEMENT CALENDAR

## TO OUR MEMBERS

If you're looking to get involved with our group and can offer some time (as little as just a few hours a month!), we have a great hands-on opportunity to learn firsthand how we work to preserve, protect and enjoy our precious local environment and neighborhoods.

The Nominating Committee for this year's Executive Committee (Ex-Com) election is seeking candidates.

Candidate submissions are due by Nov. 5, 2007. The Ex-Com, which manages the NWCCG, is comprised of seven members elected at-large from the local NWCCG group. If you would like to be a nominee for the Ex-Com for a two-year term, the only stipulation is that you must be a Club member in good standing. If you would like to nominate someone else, he or she must also give their consent before the nomination.

If you have any questions or wish to propose yourself or another person as a candidate, please contact Donna Hriljac at 847-967-7835 or by e-mail at: [misky272000@earthlink.net](mailto:misky272000@earthlink.net).

# Spring Valley Events

The Schaumburg Park District's Spring Valley Nature Center & Heritage Farm offers numerous educational programs and events that help people forge connections with the natural world and learn about local history.

**Friday, Sept. 21 — 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.**

**Friday, Nov. 9 — 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.**

## **Nature's Night Life**

A perfect way for adults to increase their knowledge of the natural world. Participants engage in activities and explorations along Spring Valley's trails and conclude the evening around a campfire with refreshments, readings from selected authors, and informal discussion.

\$8/resident or \$12/non-resident.

**Sunday, Oct. 7 — 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

## **Autumn Harvest Festival**

Spring Valley's most popular event, the festival features demonstrations of 19th century farm life at the Volkening Heritage Farm as well as a re-enactment of frontier life at a pioneer encampment. Activities include cider pressing, woodstove cooking, blacksmithing, and horse-powered threshing. Pioneer era activities include fire starting, campfire cooking, and musket firing. Children's crafts and games, live music, hayrides, and sales of refreshments will be available throughout the day.

\$3/person; children 3 and under admitted free.

**Friday & Saturday, Oct. 26/27 — 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.**

## **Halloween Ghost Jaunt Woodland Mystery Theater**

Groups of 15 will be guided along a trail of magic and adventure, populated by various costumed characters who interact with the guide. All ages welcome, but the program is most suitable for children between the ages of 5 and 10. Pre-registration is encouraged but walk-in registrants will be accepted. Pre-registration: \$5/resident or \$6/non-resident; walk-in is \$7/person.

**Sunday, Nov. 4 — 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

## **Hoghouse to Smokehouse**

Get a true taste of an autumn tradition on a traditional German farm.

This event explores the concept of sustainable food sources on traditional farms, and will feature demonstrations of root cellar vegetables, pickled meat, and sausage making. The Farm's authentic 19th century smokehouse will be in operation, smoking ham, bacon, and sausage from the previous year's growing season. Hayrides, crafts, and refreshments will also be available at this event.

\$1.50/person; children 3 and under admitted free.

**Saturday, Nov. 17 — 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.**

## **Owl Adventure**

After a walk to the woods, a naturalist will attempt to call in Spring Valley's resident screech owls or the great-horned owl. Participants will then learn some fascinating owl lore while enjoying refreshments by the fireplace in the log cabin. \$6/resident or \$9/non-resident.

*Spring Valley is located at 1111 E. Schaumburg Road, just west of Meacham Road. The site's grounds and 3+ miles of trails are open every day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. through October. Starting Nov. 1, the site closes at 5 p.m. For more information on facility hours and other programs, please call 847.985.2100 or visit [www.parkfun.com](http://www.parkfun.com). Pre-registration is encouraged for many Spring Valley programs, since some do fill up quickly.*

# Group Calendar

**Thursday, Oct. 11, 2007**

## **Glaciers to Wildflowers**

Please join us as author and biologist/geologist Raymond Wiggers takes us a mere twenty thousand years into the past when much of northeastern Illinois was a forbidding ice desert. This talk explores how, at the end of that glaciation, the Prairie State's landscapes, soils, and plant communities evolved into their present forms.

**Thursday, Nov. 8, 2007**

## **Protecting Alaska's Wilderness**

Please join us as Sean Babington from the Alaska Wilderness League presents the beauty that is Alaska's wild lands and talks about the efforts that are underway to permanently protect them.

**Saturday, Nov. 17, 2007**

## **NWCCG Restoration Workday**

Help us continue our restoration work for Spring Valley Nature Sanctuary in Schaumburg. Helping to restore native habitat is our way of saying thanks to Spring Valley for letting us use the nature center for our program meetings. Meet in the Spring Valley parking lot at 8:45 a.m. We will work until 11:30 a.m. or so. Gloves and tools provided.

**Thursday, Dec. 13, 2007**

## **Holiday Potluck Dinner**

Join your fellow Sierra Club members for a relaxing evening of food and friendship. Please bring a dish or dessert to pass.

Watch future issues of *the leaf* and your e-mail for details on our early Winter Programs, our Spring Open House, and our much anticipated April Program meeting, Coyotes with Chris Anchor.

*Program meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month, September through June, at the Spring Valley Nature Sanctuary at 1111 East Schaumburg Road in Schaumburg.*

*Meetings start at 7:00 p.m. and the program, focusing on natural history or environmental issues, starts at 7:30 p.m. Meetings are free and open to all. For more info, contact Greg Stolzer at [gstolzer@hotmail.com](mailto:gstolzer@hotmail.com) or 847.561.5004.*

*See the Outings section of Lake & Prairie for more information on events.*



*the leaf*

Autumn 2007

Disclaimer: Published quarterly, *the leaf* is the official newsletter of the Northwest Cook County Group of the Sierra Club. Opinions expressed in articles are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Sierra Club. *the leaf* may be redistributed as long as the content remains unaltered and full credit is given both to the author and to the Northwest Cook Group. Copyrights for the print and electronic content belong to the Sierra Club and the Northwest Cook County Group.

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**VISIT US ON THE WEB:**

www.illinois.sierraclub.org/NWCook

# Our Endorsement Process

By Amy Kuchuris

Unique among environmental advocates, the Sierra Club works hard to protect our environment both globally and locally. One way we do this is by endorsing political candidates.

As election filing time approaches, we develop a questionnaire to ask both about the candidate's positions on environmental issues and record of environmental leadership.

Once the candidates complete and return the questionnaires, local groups like the NWCCG schedule interviews with the candidates. Our Interview Committee consists of four individuals, some of whom are individuals familiar with the endorsement process and others of whom are their constituents.

After interviewing the candidates, the committee determines which nominees to recommend for endorsement. Among the factors the committee considers are the candidate's proven track record on environmental issues; the track record of the candidate's opponents; and the candidate's viability.

The committee then forwards its recommendations to the local group's Executive Committee, which comprises

seven individuals who are elected by the general membership. Two-thirds of the committee must vote in favor of the endorsement to be submitted for approval.

Finally, there is the stipulation that endorsements must be approved at two levels. If the election is local or state, the local group and Illinois Chapter approve the endorsement, and if it is for Congress, sign-off must be sought from both the Chapter and the home office in San Francisco.

If you would like to help strengthen our ongoing political efforts, we are always looking for people to sit on both the Interview and Political Committees. No prior knowledge or experience is necessary.

Finally, while most endorsements are for state and federal races, we are always looking to become involved in municipal races. If you know of a mayoral race, for example, where environmental issues are relevant, feel free to bring it to our attention.

*—Amy Kuchuris worked in the environmental industry for over 10 years and now focuses on wellness education and promotion.*

*—Thank you to Political Chair Barbara Hill for explaining the endorsement process.*

## Building the STAR Line

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

Estates, and run through Schaumburg before terminating at O'Hare.

Many transit experts argue that the cost of the line—estimated at \$1.1 billion—is too high, and that expansions should only be built in areas of high population density.

These critics do have a point, but it's worth noting that the line will only be built with significant federal funds, and

that different proposals will be studied—including building only a section of the line, for instance, from Elgin to O'Hare.

No matter the eventual outcome, what's clear is that Chicagoans need a transit system capable of getting them somewhere other than the Loop. The STAR Line would be a significant step in making this a reality.

*—Paras Bhayani is the designer of the leaf and a former intern with the Illinois Chapter.*

## Oak Hollow Restoration

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

brought non-native plants with them.

Now, controlled fires set at Oak Hollow every three to four years kill buckthorn and other invasive species, giving native grasses and sedges a chance to survive.

The NWCCG sponsors several volunteer workdays each year, rallying this militia back to combat, or at least to time spent outdoors with like-minded earth-friendly allies.

*—Wendy Valentine is a freelance writer living in Palatine, Ill.*

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# PRAIRIE FLYER

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Newsletter of the Sierra Club Prairie Group ■ East-Central Illinois ■

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## Urbana: Getting Cooler all the Time

By Kirstin Replogle

Huey Lewis and the News had a hit song in the 1980s called “Hip to be Square” that celebrated being, well, square, or at least “normal.” Today, being green seems to be the new cool thing. Some might argue that people shouldn’t adopt green practices in order to be hip, while others maintain that anything that gets people to behave in a more environmentally-sane manner is just plain groovy (count us in the latter category.)

Here in Urbana, we are fortunate that our City government views reducing its environmental impact as being more than a fad, as exciting recent developments have shown.

First, Urbana Mayor Laurel Lunt Prussing signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement on May 23, 2007. This puts Urbana on the path of becoming a Cool City, by committing to reducing its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 7% below 1990 levels by the year 2012. Mayor Prussing has our congratulations for taking this important step, and we look forward to assisting the City as it pursues this goal.

Second, on August 9th of this year, the City released “Sustainable Urbana: A Place to Work, Live, and Grow.” This draft, which covers topics from energy efficiency to community outreach to waste and recycling, lists many of the steps the City has already taken in these areas, opportunities for future improvements, and the challenges each topic presents. Early communications with City officials indicate a strong desire for community feedback on how to move forward with these ambitious goals. The report is available online at: [http://www.charliesmyth.org/docs/Sustainable\\_Urbana\\_Report.pdf](http://www.charliesmyth.org/docs/Sustainable_Urbana_Report.pdf).

This report accomplishes several early steps in a Cool Cities campaign by identifying actions the city has taken that already reduce GHGs (such as the purchase of hybrid vehicles and the installation of solar-powered flashing lights at the intersection of Windsor and Vine) and also identifying “low hanging fruit” that will quickly save the City money while further reducing GHGs.

The timing of this report was serendipitous, as it coincided with a training event hosted by the Sierra Club’s Cool Cities staff discussing the process for creating a GHG inventory. Taking an inventory of GHG emissions is the next step -- after those already take in the Sustainable Urbana report -- towards developing a Climate Action Plan. The Clean Air and Climate Protection Software was developed by the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), and allows municipalities to input data for past years’ emissions and the determined necessary cutbacks, and then model the costs and benefits of various scenarios before implementation so that the most effective and appropriate plans are put in place.

This is a complicated process. It involves the calculation of direct emissions (such as those from fuel consumption by the municipal fleet) and indirect emissions (such as those from a power plant that serves a region much larger than one city). A great deal of data will need to be collected in order to calculate baseline emissions – this would be a great way for volunteers to help out the city.

One important feature of the software is that it provides for separate calculations for community emissions (the whole pie) and government emissions (a slice of the pie). It is

estimated that municipal governments generate only 3-5% of a community's total emissions. So even significant reductions in the government sector will produce only limited reductions overall, yet the opportunity for the city to show bold leadership is enormous.

In addition to the GHG inventory, this program allows cities to track air pollutants that are co-produced with GHGs (such as mercury from coal-fired power plants) and the resulting cuts in these levels along with the reduced GHGs. Cities can then better protect public health while at the same time working to solve the climate crisis.

This software is available at no charge to municipalities that are members of ICLEI, and membership is a relatively nominal fee. In addition to the software, membership in ICLEI provides cities with technical support and a host of other resources to support these efforts. (For anyone interested in learning more about ICLEI, visit their website at <http://www.iclei.org>)

The typical timeframe for developing a Climate Action Plan using the ICLEI software is approximately one year. This fits in well with Urbana’s draft report, which is looking 5 and even 10 years down the road.

Sustainable Urbana is a solid step towards being “cool,” but it needs your support and input. Please check it out at the address listed in this article, and give your feedback to the City or to the Prairie Group and we will carry your message forward. And if you’d like to get your city to be as cool as Urbana, contact Kirstin Replogle, [kirstinrep@mac.com](mailto:kirstinrep@mac.com), to get started.

# Building Healthy Communities: Land Use, Transportation, and their Environmental Impact

By Cynthia Hoyle

The environmental impact of the American land use-transportation system is huge. This may seem like stating the obvious, but this fact is often overlooked in discussions on how to best reduce our detrimental impact on the environment. Environmental impact reduction often focuses on sexier ideas such as alternative fuels, electric cars, solar and wind power, etc. All of these technologies are important to addressing global warming and reducing our dependence on fossil fuels, but a technological fix will not solve our ever-expanding conversion of land from rural/wild to urban/suburban.

It may be a familiar story, but it bears repeating. How did the United States arrive at its current system of sprawling cities and almost total auto dependence? Prior to WWII the U.S. had a viable national rail system, compact cities, and most urban areas had trolleys or subways. All of this changed rapidly after the end of WWII. President Eisenhower initiated the national interstate highway system to provide for quick movement of both military and civilian populations in the event of attack. Congress passed a program to insure home loans, particularly for returning veterans, and federal loans came with requirements for how new housing developments would be planned and constructed. For example, a minimum street width was established for any homes to be sold using federally-guaranteed loans. The minimum street width was based on the perceived need to be able to get heavy equipment into neighborhoods to remove debris in the event of a nuclear attack.

The new federal policies, along with the desire to own a new home, combined to create a post-war boom of housing construction that resulted in the massive suburbanization that we see today. Most new subdivisions built in our country do not provide residents with choices in mobility. They are usually too far from shopping, schools, work, or recreation to walk, bike or have access to viable transit. Most families with two working adults have at least two cars and often three or more as children reach the age of driving and parents can be relieved of the duty of chauffeuring.

The long-term consequences of a built environment that requires driving to fulfill everyday needs has had unforeseen consequences. Some of those consequences are:

The conversion of our most valuable farmland into subdivisions, which in turn requires food to be transported longer distances and consumes additional fuel and contributes further to the emission of airborne toxins and global warming.

The fragmentation of our wild lands. As wild lands are designated for protection the private land surrounding our national parks, wilderness areas, etc. are subdivided and developed based on the amenity of adjoining a wild area.

The Center for Disease Control has concluded that obesity is an epidemic and expressed alarm at rising rates of childhood obesity. The CDC is now predicting that if current rates of obesity continue to increase unchecked this generation of Americans could be the first in the history of our country to have a shorter lifespan than their parents. The CDC has begun to scientifically establish the health impacts of our built environment and has become a big player in advocating for communities to change how we are designing new development.

The media has begun to pay attention to these trends and their impacts. You probably are aware of many of the issues described above. How do we change our land use and transportation system? It will not happen overnight, but we have to begin. If it were possible to reduce the number of trips made by single-occupancy vehicles by half, this would have a dramatic impact on the environment and our health.

The Sierra Club's Building Healthy Communities Campaign lists a number of resources on the national Sierra Club website. The website attempts to provide activists with not only facts and resources, but also tools to help envision how we can make changes to reduce our environmental impact. One of these tools is the Healthy Growth Calculator.

(See: [www.sierraclub.org/sprawl/density/summary](http://www.sierraclub.org/sprawl/density/summary))

You can enter data on housing density, transportation options, etc. and compare the impact on resource consumption, pollution, land use, etc. to the average sprawling suburban development. For example, if you were to increase the number of households per residential acre from 3 to 8, you would see the following improvements:

Land used: from 333 acres in a sprawling development to 125 acres in a development with 8 houses per acre.

Roads and sidewalks: from 233,333 sq.yards/1000 households to 87,500 sq. yards.

Water use: 1,032 gallons per household to 487 gallons/household

Auto costs: \$3,439 (cost of fuel alone per year) to \$2,615/year

Pollution: from 62 pounds of organic compounds per household per year to 47 pounds/year from 274 pounds of particulates to 202 pounds/year from 16.5 tons of greenhouse gases per household each year to 12.5 tons/year.

Transit service: from 0 buses per hour to 13/hour.

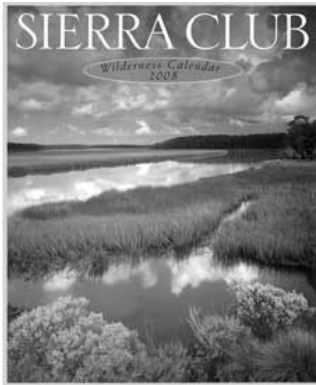
Miles driven per household per year – from 23,552 to 17,907

Gallons of gasoline used per household per year from 1,178 to 895.

(Continued next page)

# It's That Time of the Year Again

The ever popular Sierra Club calendars are ready for 2008!



The popular Sierra Club calendars come in two varieties

The Wilderness Wall Calendar with 12 large spectacular photos that will awe you every day of the month, every month of the year

and

The Engagement Calendar with a new photo every week, 57 perfect-color photos in all.


The Sierra Club calendars are the most popular item sold by the Sierra Club with over 7 million sold.

This has been a Sierra Club tradition for over 30 years.

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Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

### Sierra Club 2008 Calendars



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Item	Cost	Quantity	Total
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Wilderness Calendar	<input type="checkbox"/> \$12.95	_____	_____
Subtotal			_____
Shipping (\$3 per calendar)			_____
Grand Total			_____

Order from your local group or send check or money order to with this form to:  
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P.O. Box 131  
Urbana, IL 61803

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City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

## Building Healthy Communities (Continued from previous page)

The results of this analysis are moderate compared to an increase from the typical 3 houses per acre in most new subdivisions to a higher density/mixed-use development. When you have higher densities, you can often walk and bike to run errands or go to school or work, you can sustain better transit, build and maintain fewer roads, etc.

In Champaign-Urbana, members of the cycling and environmental communities made the effort to participate in recent community visioning and planning processes and the results have been striking. The community passed a new transportation plan that calls for less sprawl and more infill and mixed-use development. It also called for a multi-modal transportation system that gives the residents a choice as to whether to travel by bus, car, bike, or on foot. In less than 2 years, the community went from no bike lanes to new bike lanes being installed and more on the way, as well as bike plans being developed for the City of Urbana, the City of Champaign, and another in the planning stages for the University of Illinois.

The experience in Urbana-Champaign points to the impact that a small but dedicated group of activists can have in raising issues in a community. The City of Urbana is working on a sustainability plan. Recent surveys have found that 54% of the households in the community have a household member who has used the transit system in the last year. In Urbana, 35% of the trips to work are by walking, biking, bus, or other means such as car pooling. More infill and mixed-use projects have been proposed and are being built every day.

For more ideas about how you can begin to make your community more sustainable, go to the Building Healthy Communities Campaign website at: [www.sierraclub.org/sprawl](http://www.sierraclub.org/sprawl) .

## Upcoming Events **\*\*Note New Meeting Location!\*\***

**All General Meetings are at 7 PM on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. For the meetings from September to December 2007—** Unless otherwise noted, regular monthly meetings of the Prairie Group are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 7 PM in the Bondurant Room (2nd floor), Illinois Disciples Foundation, 610 E Springfield, Champaign (NW corner Springfield & Wright).

### October 9th

Join us for a discussion of Cool Cities and the Sustainable Urbana report (*see related article this issue*). The City of Urbana is making a serious effort towards sustainability and reducing greenhouse gases - but they need our support and input. We are inviting elected officials and city staff for a roundtable discussion on priorities and implementation of some terrific ideas. To download the report, please go to [http://www.charliesmyth.org/docs/](http://www.charliesmyth.org/docs/Sustainable_Urbana_Report.pdf)

[Sustainable\\_Urbana\\_Report.pdf](http://www.charliesmyth.org/docs/Sustainable_Urbana_Report.pdf)

We look forward to hearing from you!

### November 13th

We hope to have a representative from the Prairie Rivers Network talk to us about river restoration on the Upper Mississippi River. Biology curricula in our schools teach more about the Amazon than our own Mississippi River, so many people are unaware of the issues faced by this important river. Should this presentation be unavailable, please look for a postcard mailing for further information.

### December 11th

Join us for our annual "Vacation Slide Show" evening! We will have a slide projector and computer equipment (for both PC and Apple computers) available. In order to accommodate everyone, please limit your presentation to 10 minutes or less. Please feel free to bring a holiday treat to share!



## Happy 100th Birthday Urbana Park District!

*Saturday & Sunday, October 13 & 14 at Crystal Lake Park*

The Prairie Group is pleased to help the Urbana Park District celebrate its 100th birthday during its Centennial Chautauqua at Crystal Lake Park! The site of the original Chautauquas, Crystal Lake Park will revive the old time event with a 21st century twist. With six days of music, story-telling, and speeches, there is something for everyone. In particular, we are excited about the appearances of "John Muir" and "Rachel Carson" on Saturday the 13th, and a speech by none other than Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. on Sunday the 14th!

For a complete schedule of the event, please go to [www.urbanaparks.org/special/Chautauqua.html](http://www.urbanaparks.org/special/Chautauqua.html)

Please come out and make this event a huge success!

### ***Executive Committee Members of the Prairie Group***

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\* elected or appointed to ExCom for 2006-2007

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#### **Open Positions**

Program Chair, Publicity Chair, Fundraising

Website: <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/prairie>

#### **Mailing address:**

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# DuPage Sierran

Sierra Club, River Prairie Group

Summer 2007

Volume 26, No. 4

## Following in the Footsteps of Jimmy Stewart in *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*

by Frank Orto

Frank Orto walked metaphorically in the footsteps of Jimmy Stewart in the classic movie *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. While he did not arrive in Washington, D.C. at Union Station, he did follow the example of Mr. Smith, who believed in the idea that individual citizens of a large country like the United States can potentially make a contribution and even a difference by participating in our system of representative democracy. Frank believed in that principle and, accompanied by Ann Wechsler of Utah, put it to the test with a lobby visit to D.C. in June, 2007.

Frank Orto of Illinois, a member of the National Water Committee of the Sierra Club, was concerned about how the Clean Water Act passed in 1972 had become weakened with recent federal court rulings. As a result of two federal rulings (SWANCC in 2001 and Rapanos in 2006), many of the rivers and waterways of the United States that were originally covered by this 1972 landmark legislation were no longer protected. The original 1972 landmark legislation used the words "navigable waters" to describe the rivers and waterways of the United States. Recent federal court rulings have exempted isolated wetlands, rivers, and streams that did not flow into navigable watersheds. Furthermore, many streams in the western part of the United States that do not flow all year long were also included in the list of "not protected" under the 1972 landmark legislation.

As a result of these rulings, many of our wetlands, streams, rivers, and seasonal streams in the western part of the United States were now threatened. Potentially planned development activities could impair these waterways and have a significant impact on the plants and wildlife that depend on healthy wetlands, streams, and rivers. Furthermore, many of these wetlands serve as a natural storm management system in parts of the country. For some drier parts, the waterways are important sources of drinking water for human habitation.

The Clean Water Restoration Act of 2007 (H.R. 2421) was introduced in the House of Representatives as a means to restore the intent of the original 1972 landmark legislation. This bill would replace the term "navigable waters" with "waters of the United States" as the statutory definition in which waterways are covered. "Waters of the United States" was

based on the longstanding definition in the Army Corps of Engineers regulations (33CFR328.3).

Another important piece of water legislation was introduced in the House of Representatives. The Clean Water Protection Act (H.R. 2169), commonly known as the "mountain top removal bill," would forbid the practice of dumping industrial and construction waste into our nation's waterways. Currently, some coal companies in Appalachia have been blowing off the tops of mountains to mine coal and dumping the waste into the nearby rivers and streams. Because of the recent Bush Administration directive to the Army Corps of Engineers allowing the Corps to permit the dumping of waste in our nation's waterways, the concern is that this practice could be followed in places outside of Appalachia where construction is occurring. Potentially the waste from the construction of a strip mall or a new Home Depot along the East Branch of the DuPage River or the Fox River could be permitted by the Corp. This potential practice could have a devastating impact on the water quality and aquatic life of these rivers.

Frank's mission was to meet with many environmental aides from the congressional delegation of Illinois over a three-day period in June. Frank contacted the DC office staffs to set up meetings. Along with three from Utah, 23 appointments were scheduled.

The lobby visits were very cordial. Frank presented the Illinois environmental aides with a complimentary issue of *The Lake & Prairie/DuPage Sierran*. Each bill was briefly discussed. Next, Frank would directly ask the aide if that member of Congress would become a cosponsor of the legislation by adding his/her name to the bill. The goal was to build momentum for the eventual passage of these bills with the addition of more members of Congress signing on as cosponsors.

Sierra Club members attended the Thursday morning coffee session with Senators Durbin and Obama of Illinois. The public is always invited, no reservations are required. During the question period, Frank asked Senator Obama if he would become a cosponsor of the Clean Water Restoration bill when a companion bill was introduced in the Senate. (At the time of writing this article, the legislation had only been introduced in the House, but it was expected



Senator Durbin, Frank Orto, Ann Wechsler and Senator Obama.

that a companion bill would shortly be introduced in the Senate.) Senator Obama stated publicly that he would become a cosponsor. Afterwards, Elizabeth Olson (Senator Obama's environmental aide that Ann and Frank had met the previous day) approached them and said she would remind the senator of his pledge when she met with him the following week.

Frank Orto took his cue from Mr. Smith, organized this experiment in citizen democracy, was well received as an Illinois constituent, and feels the effort provides opportunities for follow-up by other Club members on this important legislation. In fact, one aide suggested, "get your members to flood our office with phone calls (asking the representative to co-sponsor the legislation), and it will help me make the case!"

As of the writing of this article the following members of the House of Representatives have become cosponsors. From Illinois for H.R. 2421: Guterrez, Jackson, Schakowsky, Rush, Emmanuel, Kirk, Bean, and Davis. From Illinois for H.R. 2169: Guterrez, Schakowsky, Rush, Emanuel, Kirk, Hare, and Davis.

What can you do as concerned citizen? Find out who represents you. Go to [www.illinois.sierraclub.org/rpg](http://www.illinois.sierraclub.org/rpg) and click onto "Find Your Elected Legislators." Follow the prompts. This link will give you the names, addresses, and phone numbers of your elected officials for state and federal offices. If your member of Congress has already become a cosponsor of H.R. 2421 and/or H.R. 2169, call and thank him or her. If not, call and ask them to become a cosponsor. Also, call both Senator Obama and Senator Durbin's offices and ask them to become

*continued on next page*

## Sierra Club's River Prairie Group of DuPage County

### Calendar of Events

General programs are held at the Glen Ellyn Public Library approximately six times a year. Since times and days for general programs may vary, please check the group's web page at [www.illinois.sierraclub.org/rpg](http://www.illinois.sierraclub.org/rpg) or the 24 hour hotline at 630-955-1185. These sources provide detailed information about the general programs and other activities sponsored by the group.

The Glen Ellyn Public Library is located in downtown Glen Ellyn at 400 Duane St. Duane runs east/west and is the first street on the south side of the Metra tracks. From Highway 53 or I-355, exit at Roosevelt Rd., travel a few blocks west on Roosevelt, then turn right (N) at Main St. in Glen Ellyn. Head north a few blocks on Main to just before the railway tracks; turn left (W) on Duane. The library is on the right (N) side of Duane. Committee meetings are typically held in Sierra Club activist's homes. For the times and locations of committee meetings, call the Sierra Club activist listed.

Date/Committee	Meeting Host
<b>NOVEMBER 2007</b>	
Wednesday, Nov. 7 Outings Committee Meeting 7:30 p.m.	Call Steve Turner at 630-782-5865
<b>DECEMBER 2007</b>	
Wednesday, Dec. 5 Outings Committee Meeting 7:30 p.m.	Call Steve Turner at 630-782-5865

#### PROGRAMS AT THE GLENELLYN LIBRARY

October 22

New Members Meeting, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Are you a new member or an old member who'd like to find out about RPG activities? Join us to meet and talk to group leaders to find an activity you're interested in.

November 19

TBA— 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Call Bruce Blake at 630-629-2520 or e-mail [RlInstns1@aol.com](mailto:RlInstns1@aol.com).

#### Announcements

Make a Difference Day, October 27 from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. All electronic recycling at United Recycling Industries Inc., 1600 Harvester Rd., West Chicago, 630 231-6060.

River Prairie Group Native Plant Restoration, Glacial Ridge Forest Preserve/Prairie Path in Glen Ellyn. For details, e-mail [RlInstns1@aol.com](mailto:RlInstns1@aol.com) or call Bruce Blake at 630-629-2520.

For RPG Programs and General Meetings, call the RPG Hotline, check [http://illinois.sierraclub.org/rpg/general\\_pgms.html](http://illinois.sierraclub.org/rpg/general_pgms.html) or contact Bruce Blake at 630-629-2520 or [RlInstns1@aol.com](mailto:RlInstns1@aol.com).

#### DuPage Sierran

Executive Chair: Frank Orto

Editor: Bonnie Blake

Beat Writers: Paul Mack, Frank Orto

#### Hotline and Web page!

For a listing of activities, legislative action alerts, and outings information, call the 24-hour hotline, 630-985-1185, or visit <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/rpg>.

## 2008 Group Executive Committee Elections

- Vote for a candidate by checking off the box next to his/her name.
- Vote for up to three candidates.
- Print your full name and address on the outside of the envelope for membership verification, and mark it to the attention of the Elections Committee.
- Joint members may use a xerox copy for a second ballot. Indicate "joint" on the outside of the envelope and list both joint members' names.

### Candidate Statements

#### Frank Orto

I am asking for your vote as a candidate for the RPG Executive Committee. I have a strong love and appreciation for our natural world. My ethical belief is that I should be a good steward of the natural world I have inherited and try to conserve its riches for future generations to come. With your support, I believe that as a Sierra Club officer I can help promote policies in the club that will enable the conservation of our natural world and create opportunities for our members to participate in preserving and protecting our environment. My goal is to help create programs and policies in the Sierra Club to allow members and the public to become good stewards of the natural world.

My appreciation for our natural world began early in my life with the many outings I participated as a Boy Scout member. As an adult I have hiked many of the beautiful trails located in our nation's national parks and forests. During the summer of 1991, I served as an intern ranger with the Student Conservation Association at Mono Lake Tufa State Preserve in California. I gave guided hikes around the lake that Mark Twain visited, performed some trail and park maintenance, and assisted visitors. During my activism in the Sierra Club, I have led day hikes in the Midwest area with a focus on what members could do to help promote a good stewardship policy by contacting their public officials to support good conservation policies. All of these activities have strengthened my resolve to become a good steward of the natural world that we have inherited.

I have been an active member of RPG since 1989 and have helped to develop numerous programs that provided opportunities for our members to help promote good conservation policies. I was one of the original founders of the current Bluestem Network, allowing members with time constraints to become "armchair activists" at home by keeping them informed of current environmental legislation at the federal and state levels. With our hotline and Internet services, members are given information on pending bills with a recommended phone message to give their representatives. I was an original founder of the RPG River Monitoring Network. This program has members participate in a "hands-on" collection of water samples of the rivers in DuPage County. Many members became trained as chemical testers who later analyzed the water samples. Our results are posted on our web page. The Sierra Club has used this data to lobby the Illinois EPA to develop programs that would promote a cleaner and healthy environment for the aquatic life of the DuPage rivers. I was one of the original founders of our DuPage Lobby Program. In the early 1990s, I helped develop a program that assisted members to make visits to their elected state and federal representatives in their home districts in the DuPage area and also with overnight trips to Springfield. These lobby visits gave members the opportunity to practice citizen democracy. Recently, as a member of the National Water Committee, I lobbied all 21 members of the Illinois Delegation in Congress with a lobby visit in DC to ask for their support of the Clean Water Restoration Act. Lastly, as the Executive Chairman of the RPG Executive Committee for these past years, my leadership style has been to support and encourage new activists and current activists. I have assisted our activists to explore ideas to develop new programs and improve current programs that would foster a policy of good stewardship of our natural world.

I thank you for taking time to read my candidacy statement. I ask you for your vote for my candidacy to the RPG Executive Committee. Thank you.

#### Bonnie Blake

I would like to serve on the RPG Executive Committee. I am involved with RPG as newsletter editor, and involved with the River Monitoring group as a tester and Administrator. By going to meetings I've seen the issues and problems that need attention.

I will commit myself to work on the Executive Committee to help in anyway I can. I have volunteered my time to work on the Prairie Path Restoration Project and will continue with any other programs or projects that may need a hand. By involving myself in RPG, I have become a more aware person in environmental issues and feel that serving on the ExCom I will be able to make a difference.

#### Lonnie Morris

Cool Cities Chair - no statement.

## Mr. Smith, continued

cosponsors when companion bills are introduced in the senate. Lastly, if you're interested in participating in local lobbying activities here in Illinois with state representatives and senators, contact Linda Sullivan at [lsullivan23@hotmail.com](mailto:lsullivan23@hotmail.com) for more information. For lobbying activities with DuPage County officials, contact Frank Orto at [forto@aol.com](mailto:forto@aol.com).

## River Prairie Group Executive Committee Ballot

\_\_\_ Frank Orto \_\_\_ Bonnie Blake \_\_\_ Lonnie Morris

Return ballot for receipt by December 1st to: Joe Pokorny, 1627 Buckingham Ave, Westchester, IL 60154.

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# Reduce, Reuse, Recycle: *The Evolution of a Universally Palatable Eco-Ethos*

by Paul Mack

This is the last in a series of articles asking readers to challenge conventional wisdom.

Only a few decades have elapsed since the first Earth Day in 1970 but it seems like a different lifetime altogether. Television, that barometer of American culture, was achingly innocent then, and the technology was clunky and functional. Plasma was something administered intravenously by Dr. Welby, and LCD was Mr. Kotter's arithmetic shorthand for lowest common denominator. Cable was used to tie down things in a station wagon, and satellites were used to beam down images of Soviet military bases.

Of all the environmental habits to emerge from that funky decade, recycling is perhaps the most widely identified and practiced. In the 30 years since Archie Bunker belittled Meathead and his tree-hugging ilk, recycling has steadily gained traction in mainstream life. The "chasing arrows" symbol became ubiquitous and universally recognized, although it's just as likely to be spotted in a garbage can as in a recycling bin, as participation rates in most areas are far below 50%.

Further discouraging is the belief in recycling's ascendancy. As envisioned by early environmentalists, recycling was to be just one component of a low-impact lifestyle, which had at its center the three R's of responsible consumption: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. Practiced together, they would help minimize the ecological footprint of an increasingly consumerist society, by encouraging citizens to reduce outright consumption, to reuse existing items rather than purchase new ones and, finally, to recycle whatever waste was leftover. Such habits would slacken both the depletion of natural resources and the subsequent flow of garbage.

But, as anathema to business and with little outward appeal to consumers, the first two members of the trinity were abandoned, leaving recycling — the orphan and runt — to stanch the flow of resources and to abrogate the subsequent flood of waste, tasks that it has, not surprisingly, proven underpowered to perform. A means to an end rather than an end, recycling was to be a last resort act. It was never intended to be the primary means of mitigating resource use and disposal that it has defaulted to today.

Plucked from its original context, recycling is also unable to fulfill its secondary goal: by obligating consumers to sort and stockpile garbage, it could help them become aware of the quantity of waste they generated, and they could then work to minimize it through the first two R's.

That consumer spending accounts for two-thirds of America's roaring economic activity made Alan Greenspan uneasy. So, too, should it trouble environmentalists. As the driving engine in the growth-oriented U.S. economy, consumerism has little use for anachronisms, so reduce and reuse have yielded to profits and pragmatism, leaving recycling as a lowest common denominator compromise to both producers and consumers. The ubiquitous recycling triangle has outgrown its original meaning to become a symbol of reassurance to business and consumers, a win-win license for unfettered production and guilt-free consumption, a promise to minimally

impact balance sheets and lifestyles. A skeptic would say that anything so enthusiastically embraced by business, government, and society deserves closer scrutiny. And that's exactly what this article aims to do.

Ready to do some myth busting? Good, let's get started..

**Myth #1:** Recycling is a clean, green process. *Mmmm, no.*

The reprocessing of a recyclable material is a dirty, energy-intensive, industrial operation that is simply less dirty and energy-intensive than the processing of its raw material parent. The next time you recycle, avoid wistful visions. Think instead of a six m.p.g semi driving it across three states to the loading dock of a grimy processing plant that devours energy and belches smoke and sludge. The difference is that this plant devours less energy and emits less smoke and sludge than one processing virgin material.

Don't forget the global economy. Scrap metal, plastic, and paper are often exported to Asia — notorious for lax environmental laws — to feed its huge manufacturing appetite. It is difficult to calculate actual numbers, but common sense suggests that any environmental edge gained by recycling is diminished or erased altogether by trucking stuff to a dock in Long Beach and shipping it to China, where it is reincarnated into new products and shipped back to the U.S., then trucked back to your local discount store. Where is the environmental benefit there?

**Myth #2:** The items in my recycling bin will soon reappear on store shelves. *Don't hold your breath.*

It's reassuring to think that the bottles and cans in your recycling bin will soon reappear on the shelves of your supermarket or that this month's *Vogue* will be reincarnated as next month's *Boys Life*. But that rarely happens.

Entropy is a scientific term describing the natural tendency of things to become more disordered, to fall into a lower quality and less useful state. It applies to many components of the recycling stream, and explains why items tend to be recycled into lower value items. The specific culprits are material degradation, economics, technology, and entrenched manufacturing processes.

Below is a sample of recyclables and some common reincarnates:

- Glass is sometimes reprocessed into glass jars, but just as often, "cullet" (crushed glass) is sold for use in fiberglass insulation and road aggregate.
- Plastic is virtually never recycled into new food containers. PET (#1) is reprocessed into carpet, clothing, and pillow/sleeping bag fill, HDPE (#2) is turned into plastic lumber and pipes.
- Magazines and newspapers start out as low grade paper and go downhill from there. While they can be used as feedstock for new telephone books and newspapers, they are often shredded and sold as animal bedding or blown-in (cellulose) insulation. White office paper, on the other hand, is a higher quality product and thus can be recycled into paper towels, tissue, and lower grade office paper.

- Steel and aluminum are the most efficiently recovered, undergoing the least degradation. In addition, they are economical to use and amenable to existing manufacturing processes, so are widely recycled back into primary goods.

- Yard waste isn't often thought of as a recyclable, but it is. Illinois was the first state to ban yard waste from landfills, and about half of the others have followed suit. Many are beginning to take their yard waste composting facilities to the next level, with plans to accept household food waste — a big milestone.

A twofold implication should be obvious. First, recycling means less virgin material is wasted in the manufacture of secondary items (e.g. aggregate), but has little effect on many primary items (e.g. high grade office paper). Second, recycling may not prevent a resource from going to a landfill, merely postpone it. For example, recycling a load of newspaper might only temporarily keep it out of a landfill, if it is recycled into paper towels (which are used and discarded).

A final thing to keep in mind is that, for various reasons, most recycled products contain only a fraction of your recyclables; e.g. an item labeled "contains 15% post-consumer content" is equivalent to "contains 85% virgin material."

**Myth #3:** Items collected for recycling are always recycled. *Usually, but occasionally a load of recyclables is diverted to a landfill.*

Why? Contamination is the primary culprit. It can be as obvious as food in tin cans or random plastic thrown in with #1 or #2 bottles. It can be as esoteric as paper impregnated with broken glass (a problem in curbside "single-stream" recycling programs). It may be impossible to remove the contaminants or merely too expensive. Prices received for recyclables are so low that manually sorting a load is unfeasible — no business could justify paying a \$12/hr worker to sort a ton of mixed-up glass that'll be sold for \$9.

Contamination is the price of convenience, as the curbside, "single-stream" (commingled) recycling method is favored by citizens for its simplicity, by municipalities for its high participation rates, and by haulers for ease of collection.

Economics is another culprit. The market for recyclables is volatile. If the price of a material falls sufficiently, it may no longer be profitable to collect or store, and may actually be less expensive to dump it in a landfill. Although this was a larger issue in the past, when the market was less mature, it is still a cyclical risk. Here are wholesale prices paid for some recyclables, as of August 2007: #1 & #2 plastic: \$380/ton, newspapers: \$94/ton, cardboard: \$120/ton, aluminum cans: \$1760/ton, tin cans: \$148/ton, glass: \$9 - \$24/ton (based on color). To see how even "harmless" contamination affects price, mixed-color glass fetches only \$6/ton, which is probably less than its transportation cost.

The amount of recyclables a waste company or municipality diverts to the landfill is referred to as its "residue level." Levels range from less than 3% to as much as 30%, but municipalities and haulers are often not required to track data, let alone publicize it. Residue level

is not considered polite conversation.

**Myth #4:** My service station recycles motor oil and tires. *Not in the conventional sense.*

In the last few decades, the term “recycle” has seen wider use as a euphemism, stretched and applied to a broad range of applications that most people would not recognize as recycling.

Virtually all used motor oil (and hydraulic and transmission fluid) is “recycled” as boiler fuel — i.e. minimally processed and sold to fuel industrial furnaces (steel and paper mills, cement kilns) and boilers (power plants). That in itself is not bad, allowing boilers to consume a waste product rather than a first-generation resource. However, engines add toxic contaminants to oil, and a given boiler’s emissions are not necessarily monitored. (Hazardous waste disposal often consists of burning it in industrial furnaces.)

Half of all used tires are burned in the same manner as used motor oil. Of the remainder, 30% are shredded for such applications as road and playground aggregate; 15% are sent to landfills.

Burning hydrocarbon recyclables (motor oil and tires) is euphemistically termed “energy recovery.” Power plants built specifically to burn such waste are termed “waste-to-energy” (WTE) plants. No one likes the word “incinerator.”

These terms, strictly speaking, are accurate, and some environmentalists argue that recyclables are a legitimate fuel source, reasoning that, as long as the state needs electricity, there is no point burying energy (tires) in one part of Illinois and digging up energy (coal) in another. That is an oversimplification. One of the main problems with incineration is the well-known emissions issue. Still, business and politicians are aware that a plan for an incinerator or power plant is less likely to garner attention from citizens and the media if labeled an “energy recovery plant.”

More worrying is the fact that a favorite fuel of WTE plants is plastic. As a hydrocarbon product, plastic has the highest energy density of any material in a municipal waste stream. It is not clear to what extent, if any, plastics collected by recycling programs are purchased by WTE plants as fuel. (Don’t expect your county’s solid waste board to know — or to fess up.)

**Myth #5:** I just recycled my old PC and cell phone. *Don’t rush to congratulate yourself.*

Recycling a computer or other electronics is a complex, partial process; practices differ firm to firm. In general, if a computer is in relatively new, working condition, it may be refurbished, then sold. Otherwise, they will disassemble it, shred the metal chassis and plastic case, and sell it as scrap. Any relatively new peripherals in working condition will be removed and sold, such as the power supply, hard drive, CD/DVD drive, CPU (if socketed), RAM, and expansion cards. The remainder — including the motherboard and all of its components — will be shredded and land-filled or incinerated in a smelter, in which small amounts of heavy and precious metals are recovered. If the computer is older or broken, its outcome is less clear (and even less promising).

As a general rule, circuit board components (including computer chips) are plentiful, non-interchangeable, easily damaged by removal, and sufficiently inexpensive that no effort is made to reclaim them. Cell phone recycling follows that of computers (with the exception that some attempt is made to recover their batteries).

Some experts believe up to 80% of computers, monitors, and other electronics collected by U.S. “e-cyclers” are shipped to the Third World, which can be 10 times cheaper than processing them responsibly here. Poor, uneducated laborers disassemble electronic waste by hand, exposing themselves and the environment to toxic chemicals, or burn them on a trash heap, hoping to recoup precious metals. Not what most folks imagine when they hear the cheery term e-cycle.”

It might feel satisfying to blame greedy businesses or lazy bureaucrats for this mess, but the problem is mired in the device. An electronic product is far more complex and expensive than a glass jar, requiring proportionally more complex and expensive recycling. Are you willing to pay \$65 to have your old laptop recycled responsibly?

**Myth #6:** Corporate America shares your environmental concerns. *True. And Spongebob Squarepants is the love child of George Jetson and Betty Rubble.*

Businesses capitalize on trends to enhance their bottom line. Right now, green is in. Until the next fad, they’re content to play along, boasting about the number of trees saved from paper they’ve recycled. But, that’s less than half of the equation — their products have a greater

environmental impact than their internal green habits. Detroit’s 30-year war against increased fuel economy has caused far more environmental harm than some token green practices in its factories and offices could ever hope to mitigate.

The building sector in particular is culpable. C&D debris (waste from business and residential construction, demolition, and renovation) has been estimated to be as much as 45% of the U.S. waste stream — higher than the nation’s recycling rate! Consumers share the blame; remodelers and new home buyers should reconcile themselves to the fact that the dumpster full of debris from their new home or renovation is not somehow magically neutralized by a pledge to begin recycling milk cartons and junk mail.

#### Some Final Words

As a consumer in the world’s most prolific and materialistic economy, you stand at the center of an industrial process in which recycling is one small cog which attempts to ameliorate a fraction of the overall process. With that in mind, here are some suggestions for moving forward:

“Recycling,” apparently, is now a legitimate label for any effort short of discarding an entire product in a landfill. Always be skeptical about such claims by business and government.

Demand accountability from business and government. Everyone in the recycling field understands it is a commodities venture, not an environmental one. A company rep., service station manager, or county bureaucrat may be just as unaware as an ordinary citizen; recyclables can change hands many times. But, if they are aware of a less-than-ideal circumstance, they won’t divulge it, so strong is the need in our culture to appear green. Be fair, but persistent.

Keep recycling — and buy recycled products! Like any market, that for recyclables lives and dies by supply and demand. Manufacturers will be hesitant about using recycled materials unless the supply of recycled feedstock and demand for recycled products are strong and stable.

Put as much effort into reducing and reusing as you do into recycling. Acknowledge your culpability as a consumer. Recycling doesn’t exonerate you.

Finally, don’t get discouraged about recycling. At the same time, don’t get complacent about it, either. Remember — it’s the runt of the litter.

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## CFLs & Mercury: Eating your way to a trimmer waistline

### Some follow-up words to Myth #4 in the previous Sierran

by Paul Mack

Remember the celery diet? It promised that celery would shed inches from any waistline, because the body burns more calories digesting celery than it contains. Folks soon realized the effect was insignificant, because celery accounted for only five percent of the calories in their overall diet. Hold that thought.

In response to public concern over mercury in compact fluorescent light bulbs, the EPA, industry groups, and environmentalists have rushed to the CFLs defense. They acknowledge that a CFL contains a small amount of mercury (approx 5 mg), but go on to argue that, given the mercury emissions from coal power plants, its efficiency prevents more

than double that from being released, making it a net mercury consumer when compared to a normal (incandescent) bulb.

While that is factually true, it is not altogether honest. Only about five percent of the electricity ComEd delivers to its Illinois customers is generated by coal plants, so very few mercury emissions can be attributed to electricity consumption. Thus, at the end of its life, a CFL will be tossed in the trash and have added 5 mg of mercury to the environment, while a normal bulb will have added almost none. Five milligrams might not seem like much until you consider that 1,200,000,000 CFLs are sold annually, and that number grows each year, as

prices decline and households and businesses are encouraged to upgrade their old bulbs.

One more thing to consider: In addition to mercury in a CFL, there may also be a tiny bit of radioactive isotope in its ballast. CFLs that embody a fast-start (glow-switch) starter contain tritium, krypton, thorium, or promethium. Their use does not pose a health hazard but is mentioned as a general reminder that increased energy efficiency almost always comes at the cost of higher complexity, and higher complexity comes with its own new set of challenges.

An informed environmentalist is an informed consumer.



# 21ST CENTURY FOX

## One Earth, One Chance

Sierra Club Valley of the Fox Group  
Serving Kane and Kendall Counties

Fall 2007 Volume 16, No. 4

## Mountaintop Removal Destroys Appalachia

Excerpts from *The Dirty Truth About Coal*: A Sierra Club 2007 publication.

One of the most devastating types of coal mining is known as mountaintop removal mining, a technique common in Appalachia. Mining companies literally blow the tops off mountains to reach the seams of coal and then, to minimize waste disposal costs, dump millions of tons of waste rock into streams and valleys below, causing permanent damage to the ecosystem and landscape. This destructive practice has damaged or destroyed approximately 1200 miles of streams, disrupted drinking water supplies, flooded communities, eliminated forests, and destroyed wildlife habitat. Coal companies have created at least 6,800 landfills to hold their mining waste, and the government estimates if this mining continues unabated in Appalachia it will destroy 1.4 million acres of land by 2020—the date when the coal is expected to run out.



Photo by Vivian Stockman/www.ohvec.org; flyover courtesy of SouthWings.

Beyond these environmental concerns, mountaintop removal mining poses other dangers to local communities as well. One stunning example is Sundial, West Virginia, where Marsh Fork Elementary School lies a mere 400 yards downhill from a massive coal waste impoundment containing 2.8 billion gallons of toxic sludge. The state acknowledges the facility would likely cause deaths if it fails, and estimates students and teachers would have only about three minutes to escape if a breach occurred. Alarmingly, almost a third of impoundments in the state built since 1972 have ruptured, spilling more than 170 million gallons of sludge. Even worse is the track record of the parent company, Massey Energy, which owns the impoundment; it is responsible for over half of the state's spills. Impoundment dam breaks have caused widespread devastation in West Central

Appalachia before, like the Buffalo Creek disaster that killed 125 people and left thousands more homeless.

Central Appalachia is home to some of the poorest counties in the nation. Interestingly, while mining production rose in West Virginia 32 percent over a ten-year period, the number of mining jobs dropped by 29 percent because mountaintop removal mining relies on machinery and explosives rather than experienced miners. Mountaintop removal mining has also caused the value of some homes to drop 90 percent, and is responsible for cracking the foundations and walls of nearby houses. The mining also jeopardizes the much needed income brought into the region from tourism. Mountaintop removal mining is simply the most destructive and irresponsible mining technique used today.

Coal mining is frequently associated with water pollution, including acid mine drainage. One source of acid drainage is from "gobs", or piles of waste coal and other rocks that are cast aside during mining. Another more common source of mine drainage is abandoned mines that fill with water that becomes acidic and mixes with heavy metals and minerals. When this toxic water leaks out, it combines with groundwater and streams, causing water pollution and damaging soils. Acid mine drainage can harm plants, animals, and humans. For example, in Pennsylvania alone acid mine drainage has polluted more than 3,000 miles of streams and ground waters, which affects all four major river basins in the state. The toxic pollution has even led to places termed "no fish" or streams where fish cannot survive because the

*continued on next page*

# A Stream Monitoring Plan

Every one of our water sentinels does an awesome job of monitoring their streams. When the call comes through, our volunteers are ready and able to grab their water samples and get them to Ron Bedard who, by the way, takes time out of his Saturdays to analyze the samples brought to him.

With that said, why do we do what we do? It is because of our love of the river and its tributaries, or something else? Whatever the reason, we could all benefit by following some simple guide lines.

When you monitor a water way answer these questions:

- Why do I want to monitor the stream?
- Where will I collect information? Determine the best areas for sampling. Look for inlets and outlets.
- How will I collect the information? Use what ever is easy for you to collect waters samples. Plastic containers are Water

Sentinels best friends.

- What parameters will I monitor?

The Water Sentinels monitor to determine the health of the water through chemical analysis, but feel free to adopt your waterway and keep tabs on other aspects, such as assessing potential impacts. Check the numbers of invertebrates, (i.e. dragonfly nymphs, damselfly nymphs, riffle beetles, caddisfly larva) fish and other wildlife. Look at the vegetation; is it native or non-native? This might take some research on your part, but it is well worth the effort when you have an overall view of your stream's health.

It is up to you to determine how much you want to learn about your stream. I plan to take the extra step and follow these simple guidelines when monitoring my waterway.

Be prepared to read about my finding in upcoming newsletters. Please send your findings, too and they will be shared with our members.

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water is so polluted. Acid mine drainage has also been a problem for the past two decades in western Maryland, where officials have documented 342 leaks of toxic water and where a new discharge killed all of the fish in the Georges Creek in 2006.

So what can you do about all this? Think renewables, and energy efficiency, cleaner ways to produce

electricity and better ways to use less. Think before you flip that light switch or leave that computer on. demand clean air. We need to reduce global warming emissions, burning coal does not get us there. And Mountaintop Removal mining destroys a way of life, a culture that is as old as our country.

For more information: [www.sierraclub.org/coal](http://www.sierraclub.org/coal)

## Save Paper! Save Trees! Save VOF Money!

You can now receive the 21st Century Fox electronically. We all talk about saving trees, saving paper, being environmentally responsible. Going electronic is a way to do that.

To subscribe to the *21st Century Fox* (VOF's newsletter, as well as the Chapter *Lake & Prairie*), send your

name, membership number (eight digit # on the address label of your *Sierra* magazine) and your e-mail address to: [editor@illinois.sierraclub.org](mailto:editor@illinois.sierraclub.org). If you cannot locate your membership number, please contact [fran.caffee@illinois.sierraclub.org](mailto:fran.caffee@illinois.sierraclub.org).

Thank you for doing your part.

## From the Chair Well, sort of from the chair.

Until the end of 2007, Dudley Case and I have agreed to share the chair responsibilities. Dudley will conduct ExCom (business) meetings and I (Fran Caffee) will conduct the Public meetings. Real officers will be selected by the end of the year. Watch the website for details, [sierraclub.org/chapters/ill/vof](http://sierraclub.org/chapters/ill/vof).

Even though most of us needed to take a hiatus this past summer, work continued. The Water Sentinels did their 3rd Quarterly monitoring on August 18 and made plans for the Annual Meeting to be held on September 17th.

Photos were collected and plans made for the Open House held on September 10. I hope you were there.

VOF member Nate Stelton was one of the judges for a photo contest held by the Prairie Parkway opponents, Citizens against the Sprawlway.

The Fundraising Committee has already selected a date for the 2008 Paddleboat ride of the Fox River. It will be on July 26. Mark your calendar now. Proceeds will go to support continued work of the VOF Group. April 19 is the River Clean-Up date. As always we need help with the Clean-up. Maybe this year you will offer to help with planning?

As you can see, VOF is always working, even when on hiatus.

Join us at a meeting soon and see what you are missing.

Fran Caffee

## New Listservs

Get involved! Please check the VOF Web site ([sierraclub.org/chapters/ill/vof](http://sierraclub.org/chapters/ill/vof)) for announcements of new listservs.

Listservs are easy to subscribe to and just as easy to unsubscribe from if you find they generate too much e-mail.

**Sign up to receive Sierra Club Insider, the flagship e-newsletter. Sent out twice a month, it features the Club's latest news and activities. Subscribe and view recent editions at <http://www.sierraclub.org/insider/>**

# The Mystery of the Big Bagged Bird

by Barbara Vrchota

Earth day 2007. It was a day like any other, sunny and warm with a hint of a breeze softly blowing across the river. Many Sierra Club volunteers appeared on the river's edge in Aurora to participate in a much needed spring cleaning. Some walked the path and picked up trash, while others waded and pulled debris from the watery depths. Some of the usual items were removed, and some not so usual items were removed. This is the tale of one of those unusual specimens discovered on clean-up day.

There it is was hanging out in the river, the most unusual object to date. It was a Thanksgiving bird, about 20 pounds, still in the plastic wrapping.

Where did it come from? How long had it been there? How did it miss the holidays? These questions and more were wracking my brain. I knew I would not sleep until I found the answer and solved the ... Mystery of the Big Bagged Bird.

In my extensive investigation, I found that not only one turkey was retrieved, but a second was found. Coincidence, you say. I think not. My head began to reel with thoughts of turkey, stuffing, and countless other holiday fare. I started counting them in my sleep. "One, two, one, two." Was it a turkey conspiracy or something much deeper, deeper than the Fox River itself? On those sleepless nights I came up with several clues which I will share with you.

1. An escaped plastic wrapped bird was found in the Fox River!
2. A second turkey turned up one month later!
3. They are both name brand turkeys!
4. This is the big one, a mind blower if you will. A friend of a friend, has a friend who received a similar name brand turkey from an establishment that docks on the Fox River in Aurora. It was a gift to the customers over the holiday season for depositing lots of money in their place of business. No can state for sure the bird came from the suspect place, but I have to believe, if a friend of a friend, of a friend said so, it's got to be true.

That said, let's ponder upon the ways the bagged bird went from point a, the establishment, to point b, the river. Have you heard of turkey bowling? It's where a frozen turkey is tossed much like a bowling ball into a group of pins. The same rules of bowling apply to this game. It is quite possible the turkeys made their way into the river after a game of turkey bowling went awry. Another assumption is the turkeys in question could have been simply forgotten in the parking facility of said establishment's parking lot, and found their way to the river. I tend to believe there is a more creative way they ended in the river. How about the turkey chuck, where you chuck the turkey like a shot put? The winner chucks it the farthest. I could go on and on, but I'll spare you.



*The, umm, bird under suspicion...*

One thing we know for sure is turkeys invaded our water ways, at least for a little while. There may be more out there just waiting to stir up our senses but, for now, if you have any information on this mystery, please let me know, so I can finally get some rest.

## ATTENTION MEMBERS!!!

The Valley of the Fox Group would like to send short e-mail messages to our members occasionally. The quickest and most efficient way for us to do this would be by e-mail. If you are interested, and we hope you are, please send your e-mail address to: [vf-newsed@illinois.sierraclub.org](mailto:vf-newsed@illinois.sierraclub.org). Thank you!

Visit the Valley of the Fox Web Site! <http://www.sierraclub.org/chapters/il/vof>  
Sign Up for the Valley of the Fox ListServe!

To: [IL-VOFNEWS@LISTS.SIERRACLUB.ORG](mailto:IL-VOFNEWS@LISTS.SIERRACLUB.ORG) Subject: [leave blank]  
Message: SUBSCRIBE IL-VOFNEWS [your name]

A beautiful pair of bald eagles take a break among the pines.

We can all be thankful that Benjamin Franklin's suggestion for national bird was voted down, or the turkey would be our national bird....

*Photo provided by Nate Stelton.*



## Don't Forget!

Valley of the Fox meets at the Batavia Public Library on the second Monday of every month from 7-9 p.m. except July, August and December.

# VOF Calendar of Events

For more information about outings and hikes, see the Outings section of the *Lake & Prairie*.

All meetings are held at the Batavia Public Library at 7 p.m. the 2nd Monday of each month except July, August and December. The public is invited to attend.

**Check the website for outings!**

## October 8 (Monday) -

General membership meeting. Tom Weisner, Mayor of Aurora, will be guest speaker. What is Aurora doing to be Clean and Green?

## November 12 (Monday) -

General membership meeting. Speaker to be announced.

## November 17 (Saturday) -

4th Quarterly Water Sentinels Monitoring Day. Contact [fran.caffee@sierraclub.org](mailto:fran.caffee@sierraclub.org).

## December 8 (Saturday) -

Annual Christmas Party at Garfield Farm. Check the VOF website for details: [www.sierraclub.org.il.vof](http://www.sierraclub.org.il.vof)

## April 19, 2008 Earth Day -

Mark your calendar now for VOF's Annual Fox River Clean-Sweep. Don't let others have all the fun.

## Driving Green

The top five 2007 green cars according to [www.greenercars.org](http://www.greenercars.org):

1. Toyota Prius (averages 60 m.p.g).
2. Honda Civic Hybrid (averages 49 m.p.g).
3. Nissan Altima Hybrid (averages 42 m.p.g).
4. Toyota Camry Hybrid (averages 40 m.p.g.).
5. Toyota Yaris (averages 34 m.p.g.).

The top five 2007 gas guzzlers are:

1. Lamborghini Murchilgo (averages a pitiful 9 m.p.g.).
2. Mayback 57s/62s (11 m.p.g.).
3. Bentley Azure (averages 11 m.p.g).
4. Bentley Arnage RC (10 m.p.g.).
5. Ford F-250 (averages 13 m.p.g).

The Dodge Ram 2500 Mega Cab and Lincoln Navigator also average 13 mpg.

## 2007 VOF 4Q Organizational Change

The Sierra Club Board of Directors authorized an organizational change process in June 2007; and the Organizational Change Steering Committee has been hard at work since.

Using the information gathered from a May 2007 on-line survey of 800 Club leaders, as well as discussion at the May Board retreat, interviews with staff and volunteers, including GovCom leaders and Board members, and discussions at a GovCom Assembly in early August, we have identified commonly reported difficulties posed by the current national decision-making structure. These difficulties often stymie the work of dedicated activists, forcing and detracting from their ability to do the Club's work. We have grouped these many difficulties into three key core problems:

1. The Structure - The complexities of GovCom structures, the lack of connection between volunteer and staff structures, and between national and local structures, the difficulty experienced by chapter leaders in accessing information at the national level.
2. Lack of Clarity - There is a lack of clarity around how national decisions are made, what paths various decisions should take and the scope and authority of different parties and entities. There is thus little accountability for making and adhering to decisions. There is a feeling that a decision is final only until someone disagrees with it.
3. Communication - We have both inadequate (not enough) and ineffective (not getting the message across) internal communications. That means that chapters don't know what national entities are doing and vice versa, and that staff and volunteers at the national level are not in sync.

We have developed a list of principles by which we will judge any new model structures and processes:

The new structure should result in..

1. Enhanced ability to fulfill the mission
2. Closer collaboration between and among staff and volunteers
3. Less overlapping authority and duplication of effort
4. Clear decision-making paths
5. More time and energy focused on doing the work instead of deliberation
6. More robust implementation structures
7. Greater ability to move strategically and make decisions quickly
8. Greater satisfaction in everyone's involvement with the Club
9. A governance structure that is more closely tied to the elected Board
10. A structure that seeks people with new ideas and welcomes involvement of new members
11. Better alignment between national and local entities.

And...Keep It Simple.

We think structures that meet each of these principles will strengthen the Club and enable it to be both more responsive to members and more effective in the world.

We will meet again in person just before the September Board meeting, then offer a progress report to the Board and Council of Club Leaders. A final report and recommendations are due to the Board by year's end.

Project Renewal is a consultative process that relies on the committee's ability to research, deliberate, and dialogue with Club leaders such as yourself. How can we streamline structure and processes to make it easier for approved programs to proceed and dedicated activists to become involved?

The committee's work products are being posted on: <http://clubhouse.sierraclub.org/committees/ocsc/>. We welcome your reactions through our blog (<http://sierraclubprojectrenewal.blogspot.com/>) and communications to the committee.

Allison Chin, for the Organizational Change Steering Committee

## 2007 VOF VIPs

All VOF leaders listed below can be reached by e-mail by using the following example: [firstname.lastname@illinois.sierraclub.org](mailto:firstname.lastname@illinois.sierraclub.org). The following Leaders have assumed ExCom status and officers will be selected before January 1, 2008: Ron Bedard, Fran Caffee, Julie Koivula, Jan Mangers, Terry Murray, Gene Schultz, Jon Wesenberg, Craig Zabel, and Barb Vrchota. Check the website for updates at [www.sierraclub.org/il/vof](http://www.sierraclub.org/il/vof).

*21st Century Fox* is published quarterly by the Valley of the Fox Group of the Sierra Club. Send all submissions to Barbara Vrchota at [bvrchotacomcast.net](mailto:bvrchotacomcast.net). Deadline for the next issue is November 1, 2007.

The Valley of the Fox Group meets the second Monday of every month (except July, August, and December). All public meetings are held at the Batavia Library at the southeast corner of Route 31 and Wilson Avenue. Call 630-208-9567 or any VOFExCom member for directions.

## Announcements and Events

### October 27, 2007. Downtown Chicago political campaign training

Kickoff the political season with Sierra Club, and join us for a hands on training where we focus on how to make YOU a valuable volunteer asset and raise the profile of the environment in politics.

We will train you on the techniques used to develop an active field campaign so that you can bring real skills to a campaign office.

The training will be held Saturday, October 27, 2007 from 10 AM to 4 PM at the Illinois Chapter Office located at 70 E Lake Street, Suite 1500 Chicago, IL 60601.

RSVP required by October 19 to Jen Hensley at [jennifer.hensley@sierraclub.org](mailto:jennifer.hensley@sierraclub.org) or at 312.251.1680 x3.

October 18-21, 2007. Glenview

### Our Climate Matters

Our Climate Matters, a four day symposium on global warming, will be held at the new Glenview Park District facilities in The Glen from Thursday evening, October 18 through Sunday evening, October 21, 2007.

Sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Wilmette, with the Glenview Park District and ten additional local leagues, Our Climate Matters will examine the issues, implications, challenges and possible 'remedies' associated with global warming. A series of concurrent programs, each focusing on a different aspect of this significant issue, will be presented.

Sierra Club will present two topics on Sunday.

10:30 AM - Making Illinois Green

3:00 PM Making Your Town Green

Contact:

Libby Bankoff, [Lbankoff@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Lbankoff@sbcglobal.net)



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