

Palisades Views



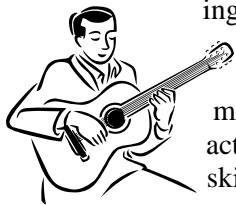
Volume XXXVIII No. 1

January 2008

Winter gala to be held in Godfrey

Gabie McGarrah will provide musical entertainment at the Piasa Palisades Group's annual winter gala Jan. 26 at The Nature Institute headquarters at Mississippi Sanctuary in Godfrey.

He has been a professional musician for 40 years, performing rock, pop, folk and blues as a band member and solo act. But his rare skills on flamenco guitar have helped him create a niche market in the St. Louis region, introducing audiences to a foreign genre with an exotic quality.



"If flamenco is in your soul, you can feel it," McGarrah said in a Belleville News-Democrat story last July. "It has beauty and fire, tenderness and violence. That's what creates the passion."

The gala is the group's nicest social event of the year. It will begin at 6:30 p.m.

Coffee, tea and soft drinks will be furnished. Please bring an appetizer or dessert. If desired, bring other beverages or photographs (in digital format) of recent trips or adventures for a

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Quinn names Freemans "heroes"

Our own Bob Freeman of Godfrey and his wife, the late Louise Freeman, were among 23 individuals, schools and organizations honored with 2007 Environmental Hero Awards by Illinois Lt. Gov. Pat Quinn last month.

"I am proud to honor these environmental heroes and the hard work they have done to protect the health and well-being of people all across the Land of Lincoln," Quinn said.

"These individuals and the organizations and municipalities they represent are fine examples of good environmental stewardship and teach us all that we have the power

to make our state a better, cleaner place."

Quinn presented the awards Dec. 27 at the James R. Thompson Center in Chicago.

The Freemans co-founded the Piasa Palisades Group of the Sierra Club in 1972 and continued to work tirelessly for 35 years to keep it strong. Louise served as treasurer until her death on Oct. 9.

"The Freeman family is a cornerstone of the conservation community in the greater Alton area," according to Quinn's Web site at www.standingupforillinois.org.



Ornithologist will speak at meeting

David Enstrom will be the guest speaker at the January meeting of the Piasa Palisades Group, but not because he's the brother-in-law of Executive Committee member Bob Larson.

Enstrom is an ornithologist with the Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS). His presentation is titled "Radio Telemetry and Studies of Aerials in the Wild." He will discuss current research on cardinal bird calls, including methodology and findings.

The INHS has been recorder and guardian of the state's biological resources since 1858, according to its Web site. It is recognized as the

premier natural history survey in the nation, with a staff of more than 200 scientists and technicians.

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Bond, Calhoun, Fayette, Greene, Jersey, Macoupin, Madison and Montgomery.

Hikers are guided by full moon's light

Organizer Sandy Wood is happy to report that interest is growing in the Piasa Palisades Group's monthly moonlight hike, thanks to regular announce-



ments in newspapers and on the radio and Internet.

"We have new people coming each month, enjoying the hike and the nature preserve," she said. "Last month, a former resident of Godfrey, now living in Michigan, saw the listing of the hike and brought her extended family with her as they celebrated Christmas."

Hikers explore trails at Mississippi Sanctuary and Olin Nature Preserve in Godfrey, which are owned by The Nature Institute. Starting time is 7 p.m. on the day of the full moon each month at Talahi Lodge.

The next two hikes will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 22, and Wednesday, Feb. 20 (the latter is a full lunar eclipse). Sierra Club members and friends are welcome. Participation is free.

To reach Talahi Lodge, take Homer Adams Parkway north from Alton (Illinois 3) and turn right on West Delmar in Godfrey (also Illinois 3), left on Levis Lane and left on South Levis. For more information, call Wood at (618) 463-0358.

Favilla's month in the trenches

Many Piasa Palisades Group members know Christine Favilla, who works as Three Rivers Project coordinator in the Sierra Club's Alton office. But not everyone understands what she does on a regular basis. Here's her project report for December:

1. Submitted comments on a ConcoPhillips permit proposal to construct a docking facility, "laydown" areas and a heavy haul road (and/or make improvements to existing roads) between Hartford and Roxana.

2. Implemented the first semester of a river curriculum at two area high schools through the Upper Mississippi River Education Committee Pilot Program.

3. Conducted a controlled burn of the Sierra Club's prairie plot at LaVista Park in Godfrey.

4. Planned a Cool Cities workshop and other activities for an energy conference that will be co-sponsored by the Piasa Palisades Group and the United Congregations of MetroEast Alton Cluster on Feb. 9.

5. Attended an Illinois Stewardship Alliance board meeting and helped interview candidates for the organization's executive-director

position.

6. Operated the group's fifth-annual Green Gift Bazaar at Alton Square mall.

7. Attended classes at University of Missouri-St. Louis on legal and public planning and zoning issues.

8. Participated in the activities of several committees, including the 2009 Mississippi River Conference Steering Committee, Upper Mississippi River Education Committee, It's Our River Day Committee, Winds of Spring Planning Committee and Alton Beautification and Clean City Committee.

WELCOME

The following people recently became members of the Sierra Club and the Piasa Palisades Group:

Joan Anderson of Gillespie, Jonathan Annis of Jerseyville, June Baily of Highland, Rick Clark Jr. of Benld, Michael Clendenny of Hamburg, William Crake of Maryville, Janet Dawdy of White Hall, Freddie Garst of Girard, Julie Gary and Glenn Gindler of Collinsville, M. Hauptman of Granite City, Howard Hausafus and Nikki Pope of Godfrey, Daniel Homes of Glen Carbon, Michael Hungerford, Robert Nusbaum and Susan Lucco of Edwardsville, Lynn Jim of Grafton, Carrie Miller of Brownstown, Renee Hodson of Vandalia, Nancy Payman of Wood River and Carroll Powell of Bethalto.

Wayne Brotze and Patrick Gietl of Carlinville, Bradley Duthie of Edwardsville and Robin Raymond of Wood River are continuing Sierra Club members who recently transferred into the Piasa Palisades Group.

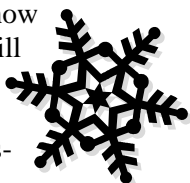
Welcome! We hope to see you at meetings, picnics, hikes and bike rides in the future.

NOTICE

The Piasa Palisades Group is teaming up with United Congregations of MetroEast Alton Cluster to sponsor an energy conference in February, focusing on how to improve the environment through community efforts. We'd like to have a good turn-out of Sierra Club members (see the CALENDAR listing on page 3).

CALENDAR

Wednesday, Jan. 9 Knee-High Naturalists program at The Nature Institute in Godfrey for children ages 3-5 accompanied by an adult. January's theme is "Snow Watch." Participants will learn about snowflakes and make a "snow snake" to measure snow. Morning session from 10 to 11 a.m. and afternoon session from 1 to 2 p.m. The \$5 cost includes a nature walk, snack and craft. Register by Friday, Jan. 4. For more information, call Patti Brown at (618) 466-9930.



Monday, Jan. 14 Monthly program of the Piasa Palisades Group. David Enstrom of the Illinois Natural History Survey will be the guest speaker (see related article). Meet at 7:30 p.m. in the community room at First Unitarian Church, Third and Alby Streets in Alton. For more information, call the Sierra Club office at (618) 462-6802.

Tuesday, Jan. 15 Windows on Watershed program at Watershed Nature Center in Edwardsville. Doug Conley, director of The Gardens at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, will discuss the importance of parks, gardens, nature preserves and other public "green" spaces at a time when people in urban areas are becoming more and more detached from the natural world. Admission is free. The center is at 1591 Tower Ave., across from Hoppe Park. For more information, call Michaeleen Gerken at (618) 692-7578 or e-mail her at watershed@cityofedwardsville.com.

Monday, Jan. 21 Executive Committee meeting of the Piasa Palisades

Group. All members are welcome to attend! Meet at 7 p.m. at the Sierra Club office, 223 Market St. in Alton. For more information, call (618) 462-6802.

Tuesday, Jan. 22 Monthly moonlight hike, sponsored by the Piasa Palisades Group. Explore Mississippi Sanctuary and Olin Nature Preserve, 2213 S. Levis Lane in Godfrey. Meet at 7 p.m. at Talahi Lodge. From Homer Adams Parkway in Alton (Illinois 3), turn right on West Delmar in Godfrey (also Illinois 3), left on Levis Lane and left on South Levis. Bring a friend! For more information, call Sandy Wood at (618) 463-0358.

Saturday, Jan. 26 Annual winter gala of the Piasa Palisades Group (see related article). Meet at 6:30 p.m. at Mississippi Sanctuary in Godfrey. Live music, socializing and slide show. Coffee, tea and soft drinks provided. Bring an appetizer or dessert. If desired, bring other beverages or photographs of recent adventures in digital format. For more information, call Bob Larson at (618) 462-4448.

Saturday, Feb. 9 Energy conference at National Great Rivers Museum in East Alton, co-sponsored by the Sierra Club and United Congregations of MetroEast Alton Cluster, an activist group of churches. "Caring for Creation by Going Green" will include workshops on how to protect and improve the environment through community efforts. Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. The registration deadline is Wednesday, Feb. 6. The \$10 cost includes lunch. Tickets can

be purchased in advance at College Street Presbyterian Church, Elm Street Presbyterian Church, First Presbyterian Church, First Unitarian Church and Trinity Lutheran Church. Or make a reservation by calling (618) 465-8861 and pay at the conference. The museum is adjacent to Melvin Price Locks and Dam, off Illinois 143.

Mondays, Feb. 11 to March 24 Voluntary Simplicity discussion course, sponsored by La Vista Ecological Learning Center in Godfrey. Explore material and psychological distractions that prevent people from caring for the Earth, themselves and their relationships. A maximum of 10 people will discuss readings from a guidebook in an informal setting from 7 to 8:30 p.m. The guidebook costs \$20. To register or get more

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Palisades Views

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To submit a newsletter item:
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**DEADLINE FOR FEBRUARY:
SATURDAY, JAN. 26**



CALENDAR

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information or directions, call the Oblate Ecological Initiative at (618) 466-5004.

Wednesday, Feb. 13 Knee-High

Naturalists program at The Nature Institute in Godfrey for children ages 3-5 accompanied by an adult. February's theme is "Sugaring."



Participants will tap, collect and boil maple sap to make syrup, weather permitting. Morning session from 10 to 11 a.m. and afternoon session from 1 to 2 p.m. The \$5 cost includes a nature walk, snack and craft. Register by Friday, Feb. 8. For more information, call Patti Brown at (618) 466-9930.

Wednesday, Feb. 20 Monthly moonlight hike, sponsored by the

GALA

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slide show.

"New members and families are encouraged to attend," said organizer Bob Larson.

McGarrah lives in Wood River and performs at restaurants, dinner parties, corporate events and weddings. One of his regular haunts is The Rotten Apple, a bar and grill in Grafton, where he caters to a crowd that favors Jimmy Buffett and other classic rock.

The history of flamenco is complicated and somewhat sketchy. It generally emerged in the late 1400s as a multicultural form of expression by Gypsies, Muslims and Jews who faced widespread persecution in Southern Spain.

Many flamenco songs have lyrics,

Piasa Palisades Group. Explore Mississippi Sanctuary and Olin Nature Preserve, 2213 S. Levis Lane in Godfrey. Meet at 7 p.m. at Talahi Lodge. From Homer Adams Parkway in Alton (Illinois 3), turn right on West Delmar in Godfrey (also Illinois 3), left on Levis Lane and left on South Levis. Bring a friend! For more information, call Sandy Wood at (618) 463-0358.

Friday, Feb. 22 Environmental

film screening. The Student Organization for Sustainability at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville will show "The 11th Hour" at 3 and 7 p.m. in the basement of SIUE's Lovejoy Library. The documentary was produced by actor and environmentalist Leonardo DiCaprio, who also serves as narrator. Admission is free, thanks to financial support from the university's Student Activities Board.

but McGarrah doesn't sing them. It could end his musical career.

"They say a good flamenco singer has the sound of a wounded animal," he said. "Americans wouldn't like it. They wouldn't understand it. It's not really designed for entertaining. It's a religious, soul-cleansing experience. It's a way to express how (the singer) feels. It's a therapy thing. It's not meant to be beautiful."

To reach The Nature Institute headquarters, go north on Homer Adams Parkway in Alton (Illinois 3) and turn right on West Delmar in Godfrey (also Illinois 3), left on Levis Lane and left on South Levis and continue until the road ends. For more information, call Bob Larson at (618) 462-4448.

New committee needs volunteers

Here's a new term for you: "E-waste" (also known as "electronic waste" or "waste electrical and electronic equipment").

It refers to broken or unwanted electrical or electronic appliances, which concern environmentalists because many components are toxic or non-biodegradable.

The Sierra Club is forming an informal partnership with the Chicago-based Environmental Law and Policy Center to work on e-waste legislation, and it needs committee members from the Piasa Palisades Group.

Eight states have used a model that Illinois is considering. If legislation is passed, it may spur a national solution to the handling of e-waste.

Interested members can volunteer or get more information by calling Christine Favilla at (618) 462-6802.

MEETING

Continued from page 1

The agency's stated mission is to "investigate and document the biological resources of Illinois and other areas, and to acquire and provide natural history information that can be used to promote the common understanding, conservation and management of these resources."

The meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 14, in the community room of First Unitarian Church, Third and Alby streets in Alton. Refreshments and discussion will follow the presentation. For more information, call the Alton office at (618) 462-6802.