

Palisades Views



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January 2009

The “greening” of corporate America

Sierrans will learn more about carbon-credit trading and other ways to make the corporate world more environmentally friendly at the January meeting of the Piasa Palisades Group.

The guest speaker is Mark Green, president of TeraVista Systems. His new St. Louis company helps clients implement “innovative and strategic software technology” to create high-performing businesses that also are good environmental stewards, according to its Web site.

Services generally fall in three categories: 1) environmental sustainability, 2) greenhouse gas and carbon

credits, and 3) and product development.

“Sustainability (and) corporate social responsibility can be just buzzwords to many organizations,” the Web site states. “TeraVista Systems believes these are opportunities for increasing customer relationships, increasing employee morale and building brand equity.”

The St. Louis Business Journal published a story about the company in February, when Green was raising capital and developing soft-

ware to assist in the documentation and trading of credits for carbon emissions.

The article offered the following background:

Carbon-credit trading has become common in the European market.

— *St. Louis Business Journal*

“Carbon credits can be earned when an enterprise reduces the amount of carbon it releases into

the atmosphere. The enterprise can then sell these credits to another user to offset its emissions.

“Carbon-credit trading has become common in the European market following the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol in 1997. The United States did not sign the protocol, and currently California is the only state that has caps on the permissible amount of carbon emissions.

“The trade of carbon credits is expected to be a \$9.5-billion market in just the agriculture industry by 2010, according to the National Geographic World Institute. About 30 percent of carbon emissions in the United States come from the agricultural market, Green said.

“Carbon credits currently are traded for about \$3.50 to \$5 a ton on the Chicago Climate Exchange. TeraVista’s platform, CarbonTrax, can help farmers verify the reduction of carbon emissions and automate the process of trading carbon credits on

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Mark your calendar for “gala”

Kevin Liley of the popular St. Louis-area band Cumberland Gap will provide musical entertainment at the Piasa Palisades Group’s Winter Gala this year.

He plays banjo, guitar, fiddle and mandolin.

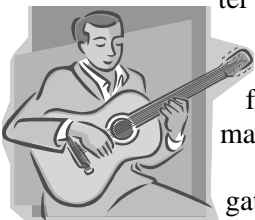
Sierrans will gather at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 17 at Mississippi Sanctuary, 2213 S. Levis Lane in Godfrey. Dress up or go casual. Bring an appetizer or dessert to share. If desired, bring

favorite beverages and/or photographs (slides or digital images).

Cumberland Gap is known for its acoustic renditions of classic folk, blues and bluegrass, as well as original music.

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. Pass Talahi Lodge on the left, go through the gate and continue until the road ends.

For more information, call (618) 462-6802.



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Financial crisis presents an opportunity

By Wayne Politsch
Group chair

January finds our nation suffering from high anxiety as the economic fabric slowly unravels. We are pre-occupied with financial fears in conversations with friends and strangers. Food and energy bills are rising. Retirement funds are disappearing. Jobs are becoming less secure.

One thing is clear: The year 2009 will not be "business as usual."

If you attended Sierra Club meetings or gatherings over the past decade, you knew "the chickens would

come home to roost" someday. Oil addiction, climate change and the widening gap between rich and poor placed a significant drag on the international economy.

Throw in greed, injustice and people living beyond their means, and you had all the ingredients of a perfect storm.

But any crisis that poses a threat also presents an opportunity. It creates the possibility for a profound shift in thinking about the way we live, work and play. Members of the environmental community

have a head start in understanding how to begin the collective journey toward a sustainable financial future.

Fortunately, the first step already has been taken. Sierra Club members saw the necessity for change in national politics. They willingly gave time and money and cast their votes for a candidate who would bring integrity to the White House.

President-elect Barack Obama's cabinet appointments suggest na-

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CALENDAR

Thursday, Jan. 1 Annual New Year's Day hike in the Pere Marquette State Park area. A long-time tradition of the Piasa Palisades Group. Time to clear cobwebs and rethink our environmental priorities. Eat breakfast at Lily's restaurant in Grafton at 8 a.m. and hike until 1 p.m. with lunch on the trail. Return to town about 2 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 10 Piasa Palisades Group monthly moonlight hike at The Nature Institute in Godfrey.

Explore Mississippi Sanctuary and Olin Nature Preserve. Meet at 7 p.m. at Talahi Lodge, 2213 S. Levis Lane.



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.

Monday, Jan. 12 Piasa Palisades Group monthly meeting. Mark Green of TeraVista Systems will be the guest speaker (see related article). Meet at 7:30 p.m. in the community room of First Unitarian Church.

Wednesday, Jan. 14 Knee-High Naturalists program at The Nature Institute in Godfrey for children ages 3-5 accompanied by an adult. January's theme is "Stories on the River." Participants will meet the literary characters Seymour Bluffs the American Bald Eagle and the legendary Piasa Bird. Morning session from 10 to 11 a.m. and afternoon session from 1 to 2 p.m. The \$5 cost includes a nature hike, snack and

craft to take home. Register by Jan. 9. For more information, call Patti Brown at (618) 466-9930.

Saturday, Jan. 17 Mark Hall memorial service. Friends and family members will celebrate the life of Alton environmentalist Mark Hall, who died Nov. 23 after a four-month battle with brain cancer. Meet at 10 a.m. at Grace United Methodist Church, 702 Henry St. in Alton (note change from original Jan. 10 date).

Saturday, Jan. 17 Piasa Palisades Group winter gala (see related article). Our nicest social event of the year! Meet at 6:30 p.m. at Mississippi Sanctuary in Godfrey.

Saturday, Jan. 17 Winterfires coffeehouse at La Vista Ecological Learning Center in Godfrey. A magical night of sharing favorite or original poetry, stories and music. Ambience provided by a glowing fire in the rustic lodge. Mexican hot cocoa and fair-trade coffee will be served. Meet at the Earth flag near the main house, 4300 Levis Lane, for a nighttime walk to the lodge. Registration and optional donation appreciated. For more information, call (618) 466-5004.

Monday, Jan. 19 Piasa Palisades Group Executive Committee meeting. All members are welcome to attend! Meet at 7 p.m. at the Sierra Club office, 223 Market St. in Alton.

Wednesday, Jan. 21 Eagle program at The Nature Institute in Godfrey called "Winter Along the Mississippi River Bluffs: An Eagle's Perspective." Hours are 9 a.m.

to noon. Meet at Talahi Lodge (see moonlight-hike directions) for an eagle-ecology presentation. Take a short hike to the Mississippi Sanctuary office for eagle viewing. Dress for the weather. The \$5 cost (ages 5 to adult) includes a craft for children and lunch. Bring binoculars, telescopes and cameras. For more information, call (618) 466-9930.

Saturday, Feb. 7 Wilderness conference. Sierrans are invited to attend "Wild Things: A Chicago Wilderness Conference for People & Nature," sponsored by the Volunteer Stewardship Network. Audubon Chicago Region and Chicago Wilderness. Large and small group sessions will be led by experts with real-life experience in everything from habitat management, botany and zoology to

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Palisades Views

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DEADLINE FOR FEBRUARY:
SATURDAY, JAN. 27



Volunteers make it all happen

By Christine Favilla
Staff person

Volunteers are the heart of the Sierra Club. In the past year, I have met many new volunteers at our events, and I sincerely appreciate their time and energy.

Volunteers are the reason the Piasa Palisades Group was able to: 1) remove more than two tons of trash from the Mississippi River, 2) recycle more than 52 tons of e-waste, 3) convince Alton to sign on as a Cool City, 4) convince Edwardsville to sign on as a Cool City, 5) educate more than

1,000 fifth-graders on the importance of clean water, 6) educate more than 1,200 elementary students on the importance of not littering, 7) reach out to more than 400 area residents about solar energy, 8) consistently monitor construction sites in Madison County for proper erosion-control measures, 9) monitor air-quality permits and speak out for clean air at permit hearings, and 10) rehab the group's Alton office using "green" techniques.

Thank you volunteers for your dedication to the Earth and its communities. Happy New Year!

CALENDAR

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advocacy, education, art, culture, history and backyard ecology. The keynote speaker is Doug Ladd, director of conservation science in The Nature Conservancy's Missouri Field Office. Early registration costs \$27 through Jan. 24. For more information, visit the Web site at www.habitatproject.org.

Environmental tip of the month

By Zac Krug
Intern

Have you ever woken up in the middle of the night and heard drip, drip, drip?

A leaky faucet not only is annoying, it can drive up your utility bill and waste a hefty amount of water.

American households consume an average 90 gallons of water a day. A slow leak, even just a drip, can waste up to 100 gallons a week.

WELCOME

The following people recently became members of the Sierra Club and the Piasa Palisades Group: Dawn Alexander of Butler; Stephen Hayes, Christian Powell, Joseph Benzenhafer, Jean Clarke, Nancy Diak, James Steinwagner, Ruth Lohmann, Susan B. Pensoneau and Alene Hill of Collinsville; Caitlin T. Dunnagan and Kenneth Springer of Wood River; Clayton Ellsworth of Greenville; Pamella Gronemeyer of Glen Carbon; Lillian Schwendemann and Linda L. Sulphin of Granite City; Harold Baird, Donna Triplett and James Rogalsky of Godfrey; Blake Fuhler, James Berg and Janis Kerbarick of Edwardsville; Mr. and Mrs. William Fraser of Carlinville; Fred E. Husmann and Deanna Johnson of Jerseyville; Lauren Pattan and Linda Rushing of Alton; Michelle Rondi of Dorsey; Russ Knight of Maryville; Penny Parish of Hardin; Richard W. Sparks of East Alton; Amanda Wall of Staunton; Mark Wright of Virnden; and Gary Kell of Moro.

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the (exchange).

"We didn't go at this full force a year and a half ago because it seemed like a phantom market, and you couldn't really tell if it was going to hit the United States full force," Green said. "Now they are projecting that by 2032 it will be a \$3 trillion market."

"It's all about global warming, and it just hit the tipping point."

Please plan to attend the meeting at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 12, at the First Unitarian Church at Third and Alby streets in Alton. It's in our interest as one of the country's leading environmental groups to stay on top of such issues.

CRISIS

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tional policy will wring as much oil out of the economic system as possible, create "green-collar" jobs and fund renewable-energy projects. All will be powerful national steps in the right direction.

If there ever was a time for Sierra Club members and environmental thinking to be front and center in tackling the crisis locally, the time is now.

We need to give voice to the connections between principles of sustainability and the economy. We must commit to explaining clearly and plainly to members of our communities why we need to take real action to reduce our carbon footprints as we journey down the green pathway.

On behalf of the Piasa Palisades Group of the Sierra Club, I wish you a very special new year. I'm looking forward to seeing you at the monthly meeting on Jan. 12 and winter celebration on Jan. 17.