

Palisades Views



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July 2007

Freeman aims to build “greenest” subdivision

Editor's note: Longtime Piasa Palisades Group members know Wayne Freeman, son of co-founders Bob and Louise Freeman. Wayne lives in Montana now, and he's been doing some interesting things in the environmental arena. Vice Chair Sandy Wood passed along this article, which appeared in a Montana publication.

**By Mike St. Thomas
Outside Bozeman**

Wayne Freeman leans back at the outdoor table, wearing sunglasses in the bright August afternoon. He looks relaxed for a man whose brainchild is on the verge of breaking national ground just a few miles west of Bozeman.

Freeman is director of landscape architecture at CTA Architecture Engineering, the largest and oldest architectural firm in Montana. His project, called ViaVerda Ranch, is slated for development on a 350-acre parcel between Amsterdam and Churchill. The community ... will be a first for Montana – a strictly green, planned subdivision.

“There’s nothing in the country quite comparable,” (Freeman said, adding that it) aims to be the “greenest subdivision in the United States.”

A traditionally developed 350-acre parcel, Freeman notes, would

contain 636 units. ViaVerda has 372. Half of the development’s area is preserved as open space, and each of the community’s units overlooks open land.

Some open space will be used for growing food – there’s an organic farm and farmer’s market on site, as well as numerous 400-square-foot plots reserved for community gardening – and 12 miles of trails will snake through the development.

Homebuyers must sign an agreement to live by the community’s environmental stan-

dards, such as limiting water use. Though 50 acres of ... open space will be regularly watered, each owner is limited to 2,000 square feet of irrigated lawn. Households must pay a fine if they exceed their predetermined water-use limit (the penalties will support non-profit groups).

The community’s policy encourages contractors to buy local products and requires them to use sustainable building materials. Though the policy is yet to be finalized, Freeman suggests that ViaVerda will set high environmental standards and encourage landowners to “go greener.”

For example, ViaVerde would ideally generate its power on-site,

but legal restrictions prevent this. Instead, CTA urges builders to use solar panels and other natural-energy harvesters, and several large wind turbines in the development (will) power ViaVerde’s non-residential buildings.

Freeman hopes to offer “green tags” to the residents, which would provide incentives for buying power directly from the Judith Gap wind farm. Also, the project’s developers have developed a “ride-share” program, modeled after Portland’s system and are working to offer incentives to homebuyers interested in purchasing hybrid vehicles from Ressler Toyota.

ViaVerda’s eco-friendly features also include a recent development in wastewater treatment: the membrane

See SUBDIVISION/page 4

NOTICE

As is traditional, the Piasa Palisades Group will not hold monthly meetings in July and August. But there are other activities, including hikes, bike rides and a picnic, to keep you busy.

Also, mark your calendar for this year’s Escape to the Woods weekend at Pere Marquette State Park. It’s planned for Sept. 21-23 (look for more details in next month’s newsletter).



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Seeing the light with compact fluorescent lamps

By Christine Favilla
Staff person

Switching from traditional, incandescent light bulbs to compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) is an easy, effective step that every American can take right now to reduce energy use at home and lower greenhouse-gas emissions that contribute to global climate change.

Lighting accounts for close to 20 percent of the average home's electricity bill. Switching to CFLs costs little upfront and provides a quick return on investment.

If every homeowner in America replaced just one incandescent bulb with an Energy Star-qualified CFL, it would save enough energy to light more than three million homes and prevent emissions equivalent to those of more than 800,000 cars annually.

CFLs are more energy efficient than incandescent bulbs, which means they use less electricity. Much of our electricity is generated in coal-fired power plants. This generation accounts for roughly 40 percent of mercury emissions in the United States.

Mercury is an element found naturally in the environment. Mercury in the air can come from both natural and manmade sources. Power plants, mainly coal-fired, are the largest manmade source because mercury in coal is released into the air when coal is burned to generate electricity.

Not only do emissions contribute to climate change, mercury can be

toxic to humans. It affects the brain, spinal cord, kidneys and liver. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is implementing policies to reduce airborne-mercury levels.

CFL EFFICIENCY

A 100-watt incandescent bulb lasts about 1,000 hours. A 23-watt CFL (with the equivalent lumen output) lasts about 10,000 hours. So it takes 10 of the former to equal one of the latter.

The 10 incandescent bulbs consume 1,000 kilowatt hours of electricity, causing power plants to emit about 23 milligrams of mercury and 2,000 pounds of carbon dioxide during the generating process. One CFL consumes only 230 kilowatt hours, causing power plants to emit about 5.2 milligrams of mercury and 460 pounds of carbon dioxide.

To put this into perspective, an older thermometer contains about 500 milligrams of mercury. So it would take 100 CFLs to cause a power plant to emit that amount.

CFL DISPOSAL

After five years of using CFLs in my home, I have only had to replace two. But there's still the question of how to dispose of them properly. Their glass tubing contains mercury. Ironically, it's an essential ingredient for most energy efficient lamps.

Burning a CFL in a municipal incinerator will emit 5.1 milligrams of mercury into the air. Add that to the 5.2 milligrams from power

plants and you get a total of 10.3 milligrams (about half the 23 milligrams emitted with 10 incandescent bulbs).

However, most jurisdictions have facilities that allow residents to properly dispose of CFLs and other hazardous waste. Madison County residents can go to special waste-collection events or electronics-recycling drives sponsored by the Sierra Club and Web Innovations & Technology Services.

Ikea stores have recycling stations that accept light bulbs, batteries and plastic bags. You can get more information at www.earth911.org or www.lamprecycle.org.

CFL CLEAN-UP

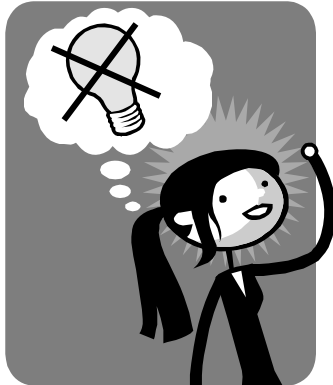
If you have to clean up a broken CFL, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency offers the following guidelines:

- 1) Open a window, leave the room and restrict access for at least 15 minutes.

- 2) Remove what you can without using a vacuum cleaner. Wear disposable rubber gloves, if available (don't use bare hands). Carefully scoop up fragments and powder with stiff paper or cardboard or use sticky tape such as duct tape. Wipe the area clean with a damp paper towel or disposable wet wipe.

- 3) Place cleaning materials in a plastic bag, seal it and keep it until the next hazardous-waste drive. Wash your hands after disposing of the bag.

- 4) After you vacuum the area where the CFL was broken, remove the vacuum bag or empty and wipe the canister. Put the bag and/or debris and cleaning materials in sealed plastic bags in the outdoor trash or other protected outdoor location for normal disposal.



CALENDAR

Monday, July 16 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. For more information, call (618) 462-6802.

Tuesday, July 17 Piasa Palisades Group monthly bike ride. Take a 13.5-mile

loop on the Nickel Plate, Glen Carbon Heritage and Goshen trails in the Glen Carbon-Edwardsville area with a side trip on the Nature Trail to get ice cream. Meet at 6 p.m. in the parking lot at the entrance to Miner Park in Glen Carbon. For more information, call Jim Bensman at (618) 463-0714 or send an e-mail to jbensman1@charter.net.

Sunday, July 29 Piasa Palisades Group monthly moonlight hike at Mississippi Sanctuary and Olin Nature Preserve on South Levis Lane in Godfrey. Meet at 7:30 p.m. at Talahi Lodge. Take Godfrey Road (Illinois 3) northwest about 2 miles from Homer Adams Parkway (Illinois 111). Turn left on Levis Lane and veer left on South Levis. Bring a friend! For more information, call Sandy Wood at (618) 463-0358.

Wednesday, Aug. 8 Watershed Nature Center wildflower walk. See summer's display of native wildflowers. Learn what makes a prairie special and how to identify prairie flowers from the natural resources educator. Meet at 7 p.m. The center is at 1591 Tower Ave. in Edwardsville, across from Hoppe Park. For more information, call Michaelleen Gerken at (618) 692-7578.



Sunday, Aug. 12 Annual Piasa Palisades Group summer picnic. Gather at Beaver Dam State Park near Carlinville, one of Illinois' best-kept secrets with its fishing lake, wooded campground, walking trails and marsh overlook. Picnic hours are 2 to 6 p.m. Canoeing and boating will be followed by a barbecue and pot-luck meal at Pavilion No. 3 and a walk on the trail around the lake. Bring plates, utensils and a covered dish. Meat and veggie burgers provided. For more information, call (618) 462-6802.

Wednesday, Aug. 22 Watershed Nature Center monthly evening walk. Conversation and exercise beginning at 7 p.m. The natural resources educator will answer questions. Dogs are welcome on a leash. The center is at 1591 Tower Ave. in Edwardsville, across from Hoppe Park. For more information, call Michaelleen Gerken at (618) 692-7578.

Saturday, Aug. 25 Fund-raising bike ride in Northern Illinois. The Favillas are organizing a team for the 15-mile option of Rolling on the River: Illinois Ride for the Environment. Other options include 25, 45, 62 or 100 miles along the scenic Fox River. Sponsored by Prairie Rivers Network, Illinois Environmental Council and Illinois Stewardship Alliance. Other weekend activities include a post-ride party, environmental festival, organic cookout, live music, camping, bonfires, hiking, canoeing, kayaking, birding and star-gazing. Sierra Club volunteers needed to operate an informational/art booth. For more information, call Christine Favilla at (618) 462-6802 or

visit the Web site at <http://www.rollingriverride.org/main.php>.

Tuesday, Aug. 28 Piasa Palisades Group monthly moonlight hike at Mississippi Sanctuary and Olin Nature Preserve on South Levis Lane in Godfrey. Meet at 7:30 p.m. at Talahi Lodge (see directions above). Bring a friend! For more information, call Sandy Wood at (618) 463-0358.

Saturday, Sept. 15 It's Our River Day festival in Alton (see related article). Activities that promote education, recreation and conservation of Illinois waterways. Alton is one of many communities across the state participating in the annual event, sponsored by the Illinois lieutenant governor's office. For more information, visit the Web site at www.cleanwaterillinois.org.

See CALENDAR/page 4

Palisades Views

is a monthly publication for and about Sierra Club members.

To submit a newsletter item:
440 W. Union
Edwardsville, IL 62025
(618) 656-8132
palisadesviews@gmail.com

**DEADLINE FOR AUGUST:
SATURDAY, JULY 23**



NOTICE

The Alton Marketplace association is starting a project called Artfully Alton to help promote the region's thriving art community. Beginning this summer, artwork will be displayed in businesses and other buildings in downtown Alton. Partners will include those who already offer art-related goods and services and those who want to increase their local visibility and/or involvement. It's also a good way to advertise space available for rent or sale. The organizing committee can help match locations with complementary artwork. Participation is free. For more information, call Sara McGibany at (618) 463-1016.

CALENDAR

Continued from page 3

Friday through Sunday, Sept. 21-23 Escape to the Woods annual weekend at Pere Marquette State Park, north of Grafton. Sponsored by the Piasa Palisades Group. Activities include hiking, canoeing, bird-watching, star-gazing, a group meal on Saturday evening and socializing around a bonfire. Camp Ouatoga has rustic cabins, bath houses and a great dining lodge. More details will be provided in next month's newsletter. For more information, call Bob Freeman at (618) 466-0656.

Wednesday, Sept. 26 Watershed Nature Center monthly evening walk. Conversation and exercise beginning at 6 p.m. The natural resources educator will answer questions. Dogs are welcome on a leash. The center is at 1591 Tower Ave. in Edwardsville, across from Hoppe Park. For more information, call Michaelleen Gerken at (618) 692-7578.

Festival needs financial sponsors

By Christine Favilla
Staff person

The Sierra Club is seeking sponsors to help pay for two components of the It's Our River Day festival in Alton on Sept. 15.

1) Solar-photovoltaic modules to meet the electrical needs of bands, announcers, food vendors, etc. HomeEco of St. Louis will set up and operate the system, but the company charges \$450.

2) Boats, crews and safety equipment for Missouri River Relief. We need \$1,000 to make this happen and to cover costs associated with trash disposal and recycling.

Available sponsorship levels and benefits are as follows:

Mississippi River level — For \$200 and up, individuals or businesses will get first-tier visibility of names on brochures, posters, banners, the agenda and donor board;

they also will be mentioned in the entertainment booth.

Illinois River level — For \$100 to \$199, individuals or businesses will get second-tier visibility of names on brochures, posters, banners the agenda and donor board; they also will be mentioned in the entertainment booth.

Piasa Island level — For \$50 to \$100, individuals or businesses will get third-tier visibility of names on brochures, posters, banners, the agenda and donor board.

Skinny Island level — For \$15 to \$49, individuals or businesses will get fourth-tier visibility of names on brochures, posters, banners, the agenda and donor board.

If you can help, please send a check made payable to Piasa Palisades Group of the Sierra Club to 223 Market St., Alton, IL 62002. For more information, call (618) 462-6802.

SUBDIVISION

Continued from page 1

bioreactor (MBR). Though the new technology sounds like something from "Star Trek," the concept is simple: recycle water. The MBR will treat used water so that it can be returned to the community in the form of secondary portable water.

The bioreactor will inject half of the treated water into ViaVerde's aquifer and use the rest for lawn irrigation. It will be the first use of MBR technology in Montana. In fact, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality will draft its MBR regulations around this project.

Contrary to many other subdivisions in the Bozeman area, ViaVerde Ranch focuses on creating a

mixed-income environment. Single-family residences will share space with townhouses and a few commercial buildings, and (the community will also include retirement housing) ...

Freeman notes that, in addition to its strictly environmental aims, a major goal of the project is proving that sustainable development and profitable development are not mutually exclusive. And if it succeeds, environmentally conscious but wary or stingy developers no longer have an excuse for wasteful construction.

Freeman hopes that ViaVerde Ranch encourages "other developers to jump on board not because it is the right thing to do but because it is profitable."