

Palisades Views



Volume XXXVII No. 10

October 2007

Learn about hill prairies at next meeting

North America's prairies are rapidly becoming endangered ecosystems. Biology professor Chrissy McAllister is helping with regional conservation efforts by managing a prairie restoration project through Principia College in Elsah.

McAllister will be the guest speaker at the October meeting of the Piasa Palisades Group. She will discuss the unique and threatened hill prairies along the bluffs and hillsides of the Mississippi and Illinois river valleys.

Come and learn what makes a prairie a prairie, what makes hill prairies so special, how native plants and animals have adapted to the unique challenges of living in a prairie environment and how our land-use choices affect the survival of these species.

The meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Oct. 8, in the community room of the First Unitarian Church, Third and Alby streets in Alton. Coffee and refreshments will be served after the talk. For more information, call (618) 462-6802.

Churches to address global warming

A coalition of eight Alton churches and the United Congregations of MetroEast/College Avenue Presbyterian Church Core Team have selected "global warming" as an issue that deserves their special attention and targeted action.

The coalition is known as the UCM Alton Cluster. It includes Presbyterian, Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, Baptist, Unitarian and Evangelical churches. Representatives began meeting about a year ago.

"Spirituality that grounds and empowers activism on behalf of the earth is the goal," according to a press release. "The group will work with the Sierra Club through the

Cool Cities initiative to make Alton a green community."



The churches plan to take specific actions to educate members and the public about the magnitude of the global-warming problem.

These actions include raising individual environmental awareness within congregations; encouraging eco-centered worship and spirituality; conducting audits on use of energy and disposable products by churches; and building relationships with government officials and the

media.

Many Sierra Club members belong to Alton churches. You can help the club with its community outreach and get a sense of fulfillment by involving your congregation in the UCM Alton Cluster's environmental efforts.

For more information, call Ken Aud at (618) 451-1458 or Jan Hines at (618) 377-8257.

Group has new communication tool

People who already are familiar with MySpace Web sites know they're great tools for keeping up with friends and family who have moved away or become hard to reach.

Now the Piasa Palisades Group has a MySpace site, thanks to Executive Committee member Jon Byrd.

"I've brought MySpace to our club in an effort to give people another way to communicate with each other," he said.

To reach the site, go to www.myspace.com/piasapalisades. You will find information on the club, current events, etc.

"Check it out the next time you are surfing on the World Wide Web and give me a message on what you would like to see on our club's MySpace," Byrd said.

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

Nominating committee is seeking ExCom candidates

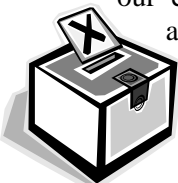
By Wayne Politsch Group chair

Here's your opportunity to become a leader on environmental issues! Elections for the Piasa Palisades Group Executive Committee (ExCom) will be held in December.

If you enjoy investing your time and enthusiasm in grass-roots politics, learning about local and national energy issues, persuading and organizing, this is for you.

The ExCom helps shape Sierra Club policy and works to improve the

environmental quality of local communities. We are seeking to make our committee gender, age and ethnically balanced.



Please consider running if you are a Sierra Club member in good standing and

passionate about environmental issues. Five candidates will be elected for two-year terms beginning in 2008.

Interested persons should contact Nominating Committee members Jon Byrd at (618) 401-

9939 or Gayle Borman at (618) 254-2250.

This is a great opportunity to learn, share, apply your talents and energy, and make a valuable contribution to the club and the environment.

As of press time, Piasa Palisades Group Treasurer Louise Freeman was a patient at Alton Memorial Hospital with respiratory problems. We're thinking of you, Louise!

2007 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chair	Wayne Politsch	6424 Alpha Drive, Alton, IL 62002	466-6150
Vice Chair/Secretary	Sandy Wood	1719 Central Ave., Alton, IL 62002	463-0358
Treasurer	Louise Freeman	4813 Kaskaskia Trail, Godfrey, IL 62035	466-0656
Conservation	Jim Bensman	1802 Main St., Alton, IL 62002	463-0714
Membership	Gayle Borman	510 Hamilton Blvd., Wood River, IL 62095	254-2250
Chapter Delegate	Bob Larson	909 McKinley, Alton, IL 62002	462-4448
Political Action	Michael Fischer	1001 McPhearson, Alton, IL 62002	462-3832
Member	Everett Loy	221 Ladd, Alton, IL 62002	462-5919
Youth Coordinator	Jon Byrd	2065 Pinehurst Way, Maryville, IL 62062	401-9939

OTHER COMMITTEES AND STAFF

Outings	Larry Tucker	1822 Park Ave., Apt. A, Alton, IL 62025	462-0649
Outings	Rich Keating	P.O. Box 13, Edwardsville, IL 62025	656-3647
Fund-raising	Bob Freeman	4813 Kaskaskia Trail, Godfrey, IL 62035	466-0656
Hospitality	Audrey Wiseman	3941 Sarah Lane, Alton, IL 62002	259-5997
Merchandising	Jennifer Politsch	6424 Alpha Drive, Alton, IL 62002	466-6150
Staff Person	Christine Favilla	christine.favilla@sierraclub.org	462-0282

SIERRA CLUB OFFICES

Illinois Chapter	200 N. Michigan, Suite 505	Chicago, IL 60601	(312) 251-1680
Piasa Palisades Group	223 Market St.	Alton, IL 62002	462-6802
E-Mail	ppg_sc@yahoo.com	Home Page	FAX 462-0282
		www.Illinois.SierraClub.org/PiasaPalisades	

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Calendars now on sale

The Piasa Palisades Group is selling Sierra Club calendars again this year. You pay the same price as in the store (minus sales tax), and a portion of proceeds goes toward education and conservation programs.

The 2008 desk-top engagement calendar has a weekly format and 57 stunning color photos of flora and fauna (\$13.95). The 2008 wilderness wall calendar has a monthly format with photos showing the grandeur of the North American wilderness (\$12.95).

For more information, call merchandising committee chair Jennifer Politsch at (618) 466-6150. She also will have calendars available for purchase at group meetings in October, November and December.

Sands honored by refuge

Long-time Sierra Club member Gene Sands was honored last month for his work in recreating a native prairie at the headquarters entrance for Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge in Calhoun County.

Volunteers from the National Audubon Society have spent many hours planting and watering the native plants this summer. They will continue with a fall planting and spring update.

Sands is a dedicated "prairie man" who also helps individuals enjoy native species in their home gardens.

Eclipse gives colorful show

Early birds in the Piasa Palisades Group gathered at Mississippi Sanctuary in Godfrey at 4:30 a.m. Aug. 28 to watch the total lunar eclipse. They had a clear view of the "orange-

shadowed moon" as it set in the eastern sky over the Mississippi River.

Some folks returned that evening for the full-moon hike, enjoying a walk in the woods and great company.

Hall leads prairie group

The Nature Institute in Godfrey is giving renewed attention to the native prairie at Gordon Moore Park in Alton (across Illinois 140 from the main entrance).

Mark Hall is chairing a special committee to monitor and maintain it. Members have been working on trail maintenance and elimination of invasive species.

Recycling drive is Oct. 14

People can recycle their unwanted computers, electronics and related paraphernalia by taking them to the Edwardsville YMCA Meyer Center between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 14.

The annual drive is sponsored by the Piasa Palisades Group of the Sierra Club, Web Innovations and Technology Services (WITS) in St. Louis and the YMCA.

WITS provides refurbished computers and free or low-cost training to low-income and underserved populations. Items that can't be reused are safely recycled to save landfill space and keep pollutants out of streams.

The Meyer Center is at 7348 Goshen Road in Edwardsville. For more information, call Christine Favilla at (618) 462-6802.

20 volunteers needed

The Piasa Palisades Group is

seeking 20 volunteers ages 14 and up to do light or heavy work at the annual computer and electronics recycling drive at the Edwardsville YMCA Meyer Center on Sunday, Oct. 14.

Shifts are available between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. To sign up, call Christine Favilla at (618) 462-6802.

Recycled "boat" in Alton

Some Sierra Club members had the opportunity to see and share in the adventure of the Rockaway Armanda, which was docked along the Alton riverfront for about a week in early September.

The "boat" is a collection of rafts made of recycled trash and tied together. It's manned by a changing crew of 15 to 40 people, who float

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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 NOVEMBER:
SATURDAY, OCT. 27**



Fabry kids don't take the Earth for granted

Editor's note: We periodically run notices inviting Piasa Palisades Group members to contribute to our newsletter. Here's a response from Jeran Fabry, 11, Keegan Fabry, 8, and Clair Fabry, 8, as told to their mother, Mary Lou. They live in Alton.

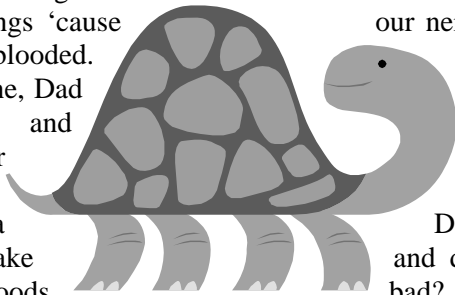
Our family mission statement is to care for the earth, rescue turtles and help each other to be our best. We do lots of things each day to help our planet. We know that if we mess up planet Earth, we won't have any place to live.

At dinner, we sit down together to eat a healthy meal (no red meat, vegetables from the farmer's market and organic stuff from our garden, cooked in cast-iron pans), and we say this blessing that Mom found and changed to match us:

"Earth who gave us all this food,
Sun who made it ripe and good,
Rain who fed it from above,
Family to share and eat with love."

We like to rescue turtles that are about to get hit by cars in the road. They crawl there to get warm on cold mornings 'cause they're cold-blooded. So if we see one, Dad slows down and opens his door and grabs it. We take it to a place by a lake with lots of woods so it will be safe. Sometimes we take it home and feed it bananas for a while until we release it.

Right now, we have Goody, a girl eastern box turtle who keeps trying to dig a hole to lay eggs; and Glace, a boy eastern box turtle who's really big; and Pepper, a three-toed box turtle with a cute red chin; and Gretchen, a second female eastern



box turtle who we know is 11 years old because of the rings on each of the segments on her shell.

A few weeks ago, we found a really long black snake, the kind that eats mice and stuff that chew our garden. He was caught in the plastic netting by our squash. Poor thing, he was really stuck. He would die 'cause he couldn't get loose.

We got some scissors, and we worked a really long time in the hot sun, cutting all the plastic off him. He kept trying to back up and get out. He wouldn't let us put him in a bucket. Finally, we could hold his head and get the last bits off him.

We tried to take (the snake's) picture, but he wanted to crawl in the raspberries and find something to eat. Now we have to change our family motto to "Turtle AND Snake Rescue Brigade." We might walk in the Christmas parade and carry a banner.

When we go on walks around our neighborhood, we pick up trash and put the cans and bottles in our recycling bin. Why do people throw their trash out the window? Didn't their moms and dads teach them that is bad?

On trash pick-up days, we go around the block and find lots of cool stuff that people are throwing away. Are they just too lazy to take it to the Goodwill? We found chairs and pillows and toys and dishes and clothes and stuff. We say, "Found any good trash?" If we don't want it, we give it to friends or Goodwill.

How about we have a "donate" bin at the curb with our recycling bin? Then all this good stuff wouldn't go in a landfill. We wouldn't have to keep making new stuff and polluting the environment.

We always use stuff over again, like plastic bags and yogurt containers. We put all the paper and cardboard and cans and bottles and plastic in the recycling bin. It's not very hard. Just rinse something out and put it in the special trash can in your kitchen, then they take it out on trash day. Why do people put recycling in their yucky trash? That's just lazy.

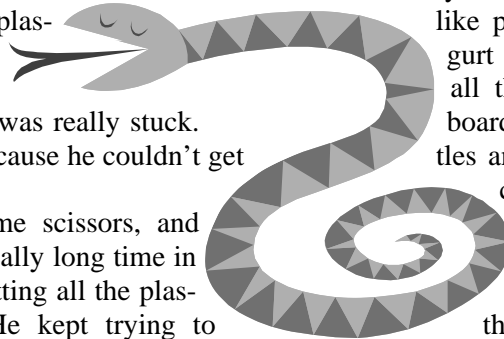
When we take a bath, we leave the water in the tub, then scoop it out with a bucket to flush the toilet. It seems stupid that most people use drinking water to flush their poop.

We use rainwater to water our plants. We use rabbit poop to feed our garden. When mom trims our hair, we put it around the vegetables to try to keep the groundhogs and deer from eating them. Humans smell bad to them. Sometimes we see robins picking up our hair to build nests.

When we plant things in the yard, we pick native plants like elderberry, sweet shrub and sumac. Birds like to eat the berries and make nests there.

It's fun to eat yellow wood sorrel and violets from our yard. We don't spray toxic chemicals, so it's safe to eat.

We think it's good to do stuff to help the planet. Maybe other people could start doing some stuff, too, and help. Maybe we could have a group called Earthkeepers.



CALENDAR

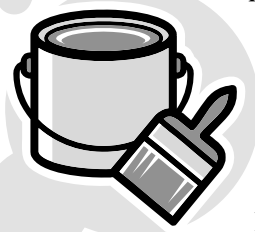
Monday, Oct. 8 Monthly meeting of the Piasa Palisades Group. Principia College biology professor Chrissy McAllister will be the guest speaker (see related article). Meet at 7:30 p.m. in the community room at First Unitarian Church, Third and Alby Streets in Alton. For more information, call the Sierra Club office at (618) 462-6802.

Tuesday, Oct. 9 Windows on Watershed presentation at Watershed Nature Center in Edwardsville. Environmental Educator Jessica Pascoe will speak on the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center, particularly its work to foster understanding of Missouri, Mississippi and Illinois river watersheds. Meet at 7 p.m. at 1591 Tower Ave., across from Hoppe Park. For more information, call Michaelleen Gerken at (618) 692-7578.

Friday, Oct. 12 Forestry Field Day at the McCully Heritage Project in Kampsville. Particularly designed for landowners who want to learn about issues such as timber sales and managing forests for wildlife. Forestry experts from throughout the state will lead workshops from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. The \$7.50 registration fee includes lunch. For more information, visit the Web site at www.mccullyheritage.org.

Saturday, Oct. 13 Nature Photography talk at Watershed Nature Center in Edwardsville. Scott Evers will cover the basics of choosing and using a camera, plus lighting and editing. Meet from 9 to 11 a.m. at 1591 Tower Ave., across from Hoppe Park. For more information, call Michaelleen Gerken at (618) 692-7578.

Saturday, Oct. 13 Paint-recycling drive at the Madison County Public Works garage at the River's Edge complex (former U.S. Army depot) in Granite City. Sponsored by the Piasa Palisades Group. Useable and non-useable latex and oil-based paints accepted. No spray paint or other chemicals.



Hours are 8 a.m. to noon. Volunteers needed to work two-hour shifts. For more information, call Christine Favilla at (618) 462-6802.

Sunday, Oct. 14 Computer and electronics recycling drive at Edwardsville YMCA Meyer Center (see related notices). Co-sponsored by the Piasa Palisades Group. Hours are 9 to 4 p.m. at 7348 Goshen Road. Volunteers needed. For more information, call Christine Favilla at (618) 462-6802.

Monday, Oct. 15 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, Oct. 16 Monthly bike ride, sponsored by the Piasa Palisades Group. Last ride of the season. Take the Watershed Trail from Wanda to Edwardsville and back with a break at Sacred Grounds coffee house. About 12 miles round trip. Meet at 6 p.m. in the trailhead parking lot on Russell Drive. From Interstate 255, go east on Madison

and north on Wanda Road. Sunset will occur at 6:21 p.m. so bring a light and reflective clothing. For more information, call Jim Bensman at (618) 463-0714 or send an e-mail to jbensman1@charter.net.

Wednesday, Oct. 17 Knee-High Naturalists program at The Nature Institute in Godfrey for children ages 3-5 accompanied by an adult. October's theme is "What Smells There?" Participants will learn how animals survive and communicate through smell. 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, story and hand's-on activity. Register by Oct. 12. For more information, call Patti Brown at (618) 466-9930.

Friday, Oct. 19 Enchanted Forest program at The Nature Institute in Godfrey. A safe alternative to traditional trick-or-treating. Kids learn about nocturnal animals from costumed volunteers. Fun for the whole family from 7 to 9 p.m. The cost of \$5 per person includes chili, hot dogs, Halloween treats, punch, games and crafts at Talahi Lodge on South Levis Lane. Register by Oct. 15. For more information, call Patti Brown at (618) 466-9930.

Saturday, Oct. 20 Regional litter clean-up, co-sponsored by the Sierra Club. Registration sites include Bosanova, Lowe's, Main Street Methodist Church, Midtown Restaurant and St. Peter's Hardware in Alton; Glazebrook Park in Godfrey; Bethalto Village Hall; Keasler complex at 615 Third St. in East Alton; Hartford Village Hall; and Central Park Roundhouse in Wood River. Hours are 9 a.m. to noon, rain or shine. Coffee

CALENDAR

and donuts served beginning at 8:30 a.m. For more information, call Christine Favilla at (618) 462-6802.

Saturday, Oct. 20 Composting and leaf-management workshop at McCully Heritage Project in Kampsville. Participants will learn the basics of composting (including worm bins), leaf management and related equipment. The \$30 registration fee includes a compost bin, hand-outs and refreshments (\$15 for a second family member or friend without bin). For more information, visit the Web site at www.mccullyheritage.org.

Wednesday, Oct. 24 Monthly evening walk at Watershed Nature Center in Edwardsville. 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., across from Hoppe Park. For more information, call Michaela Gerken at (618) 692-7578.

Thursday, Oct. 25 Monthly moonlight hike, sponsored by the Piasa Palisades Group. Explore Mississippi Sanctuary and Olin Nature Preserve 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.

Friday, Oct. 26 Horseshoe Lake clean-up, co-sponsored by the Sierra Club. Volunteers needed from 9 a.m. to noon at Horseshoe Lake State Park in Granite City. For more informa-

tion, call Mike Fruth of the Madison County Stormwater Office at (618) 296-4982.

Saturday, Oct. 27 5K Trail Run/Walk and Kids Fun Run at Watershed Nature Center in Edwardsville. Starting times are 9 a.m. and 8:30 a.m., respectively. Prizes for top finishes in each division. The center is at 1591 Tower Ave., across from Hoppe Park. For more information, call Michaela Gerken at (618) 692-7578.

Saturday, Nov. 3 Tree-identification workshop at Watershed Nature Center in Edwardsville. The natural resources educator will talk about basic identification techniques and using a field guide and other resources. Meet from 9 to 11 a.m. at 1591 Tower Ave., across from Hoppe Park. For more information, call Michaela Gerken at (618) 692-7578.

Sunday, Nov. 4 Autumn Ramble fundraiser for The Nature Institute in Godfrey. Artsy and environmentally friendly vendors will sell their wares and donate 10 percent for education programs. Kids can go on a supervised hike and make crafts while parents shop. Hours are 1 to 4 p.m. at Talahi Lodge (see directions for the moonlight hike). For more information, call 467-2521.

Friday to Sunday, Nov. 16-18 Weekend camp-out at Beaver Dam State Park near Carlinville, sponsored by the Piasa Palisades Group. Stay Friday and/or Saturday in the group campsite. Possible activities include archery and fishing (bring your own supplies) and hik-

ing on 8 miles of trails. A perfect place for star-gazing, weather permitting, with the Leonid meteor shower near peak. The cost is \$4 per person per night. Minimum of 10 people. For more information, call Jim Bensman at (618) 463-0714 or jbensman1@charter.net or Carol Klinger at (618) 288-5630 or ciklinger@yahoo.com.

Friday, Nov. 23 Green Gift Bazaar, sponsored by the Piasa Palisades Group. Fifth-annual event. Hours are 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Alton Square mall (lower-level store next to Hallmark). A great opportunity to buy Christmas gifts! The group is seeking eco-artists and other vendors. To register for a booth, call Christine Favilla at (618) 462-6802.

NEWS

Continued from page 3

down the Mississippi River to raise environmental awareness. It's powered by Volkswagen Rabbit engines that run on biodiesel fuel.

Crew members stop in towns along the way, presenting plays, music and stories for children. They performed a shadow puppet show at Riverfront Park.

One of the reasons crew members stopped in Alton was to get one of their failing engines fixed. They found the help they needed at Glenn's VW.

"They were a wonderful group of individuals, (including) many artists," said Piasa Palisades Group Vice Chair Sandy Wood. "They say they want to 'create,' 'meet people' and 'share adventure.' We're glad they shared their vision and adventure with us."