



Tallgrass Sierran

Sierra Club - Heart of Illinois Group - Central Illinois Region

P. O. Box 3593 - Peoria, IL 61614

GENERAL MEETING: "Back Roads China"

On Wednesday, February 15, 7 pm, Elliot Murray will discuss his trip to China and show slides of the "back roads of China". Elliot will give his perspectives on environmental concerns he viewed during his stay, and share details of everyday life for the rural Chinese. What is a really great holiday dinner? You may be surprised! Born in China to a physician missionary family, Elliot knew China as a child before the Mao regime. His thoughts on the changes taking place in this, the most highly populated country in the world, will be interesting.

Bring a Friend to Your Sierra Club Meeting!

Meetings are the third Wednesday of each month, 7:00 pm at Forest Park Nature Center (located in Peoria Heights at 5809 Forest Park Dr., phone 686-3360). For more information, directions, or car pooling/transportation help phone Mary at 745-5479 or Joyce at 688-0950. We have great refreshments plus Dale's Great Fresh-Brewed coffee (plus herbal teas).



CONTRACT WITH AMERICA or CONTRACT ON AMERICA'S QUALITY OF ENVIRONMENT

A message from Co-chair Joyce Blumenshine.

For all the whoop-la about the Contract with America, there are many environmental concerns that will be hurt by what is being proposed, and this information is not what you are seeing on TV or reading in the newspaper. Briefly, parts of this proposal and particularly sections in the Job Creation and Wage Enhancement Act of 1995 have serious negative conservation results. Part of the Job Creation section will stop all public health and environmental regulations from being written if their combined costs exceed a certain amount to the private sector. No considerations are made for increased health costs from problems associated with increased pollution or quality of life issues, such as clean air and water.

Title IX of the bill creates a new entitlement program

that will compensate any individual who demonstrates a reduction in property value or water rights as a result of an established law. Taken to extremes, this could mean individuals or companies could propose to build a large development on a wetland that they never intended to build, just so they could collect money for "lost property value" due to wetlands protection laws. State and local governments would no longer have to comply with federal laws or regulations under the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act or the Endangered Species Act, unless the federal government pays in full for the incurred costs.

The National Audubon Society has stated that they believe the Contract with America will roll back 25 years of environmental protection. Find out more about what is and is not meant by the Contract with America before it is too late.

CONTRACT WITH AMERICA IS A CONTRACT WITH THE DEVIL by Hal Gardner

Is the headline too strong? Not in the least! Here is the breakdown of the new Congressional Committee Chairs with their League of Conservation Voters' ratings. Senate: Agric., Nutr., and Forestry, Sen. Richard Lugar, - 31%; Energy and Natur. Resources, Sen. Mark Hatfield - 46%; Environ. and Public Works, Sen. John Chafee - 85% or Sen. Alan Simpson - 8%; Foreign Relations, Jesse Helms - 0%. House: Agric., Rep. Pat Roberts - 4%; Energy and Commerce, Rep. Larry Combest - 0%; Health and Environ., Rep. Thomas Bliley - 0%; Merchant Marine and Fisheries, Rep. Jack Fields - 0%; Natur. Resources, Rep. Don Young - 0%; Energy and Mineral Resources, Rep. Barbara Vucanovich - 8%; Natl. Parks, Forests, and Public Lands, Rep. James Hanson - 4%; Public Works and Transport., Rep. Bud Shuster - 15%; Water Resources and Environ., Rep. Sherwood Boehlert - 85%. With the exception of Sen. Chafee and Rep. Boehlert, the line-up is exceedingly dismal.

In the next 100 days we can expect legislation to: (1) prohibit unfunded mandates by the federal government; (2)

intends to make scapegoats of environmentalists and conservationists. And, they will if we allow it to happen. Fight back! Our new Republican Congressman Ray LaHood (Peoria and counties south and east) did not sign on to the "Contract with America", an encouraging sign. Give him encouragement to fight regressive and anarchic legislation. **Write to: Representative Ray LaHood, House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515.** For counties west of Peoria, Rep. Lane Evans (D) is a friend of the environment with a past overall League of Conservation Voters' rating of better than 95%. He is also a member of the House Natural Resources Committee. He is sure to be sympathetic with our cause, but it would be helpful for him to know citizens are backing him up (Representative Lane Evans, 2335 Rayburn Building, Washington, DC 20515-1317).



EMIQUON and MEREDOSIA: National Wildlife Refuges on the Illinois River may be in big political trouble in Congress
by Hal Gardner

Emiquon, a new National Wildlife Refuge planned to be 11,039 acres (about 16 square miles) will be restored as a wetland on the bed of two lakes that were drained over a half century ago (Thompson and Flag Lakes). At this time 320 acres have been acquired for Emiquon. Meredosia Wildlife Refuge, an established refuge, is slated for additional land purchases of 900 acres.

The issue: Congress must appropriate funds for land purchase. Last fiscal year (for 1995) they appropriated \$1.1 million for Meredosia, and \$0.5 million for Emiquon. A total of \$4.2 million in appropriations for both refuges remain unspent from fiscal 1994-5. Due to the drastic political change in the new Congress, there is concern that funds for wildlife refuges may be in jeopardy. All funds appropriated in past years for all National Wildlife Refuges, including the \$4.2 million for Emiquon and Meredosia may be recalled for budget cuts by Congress.

Funding should be maintained: Since we need to invest in the future, the funding for our wildlife refuges should be kept intact. Money for National Wildlife Refuges comes out of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Each year, businesses who use resources on public land pay a total of \$900 million into the Fund. Usually, a small percentage of this Fund is actually used for purposes for which it was intended, such as land purchases for Wildlife Refuges. Congress sees the Fund as another way to raise

money. Public outcry is needed to stop Congress from dipping into this Conservation Fund.

What you can do: Write to your Congressman to request that he does his best to keep past funding for Wildlife Refuges intact. Also, ask him to keep supporting funding for Meredosia and Emiquon. Emiquon Refuge is within the district of Congressman Lane Evans (Fulton, Knox, Henry, Bureau, Whiteside, Carroll, Ogle, Rock Island, Mercer, Henderson, Warren, Hancock, McDonough, or Adams Counties). Congressman Evans is a friend of the environment, and he was instrumental in getting money for Emiquon Refuge in prior years. Meredosia is in the district of Congressman Ray LaHood (Peoria and counties south and east of Peoria). Ray LaHood is a new Congressman taking over from former Congressman Bob Michel, who supported Meredosia. **Address: Your Congressman, House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515. Write today!**

ALASKA WOLVES UPDATE *by Joyce Blumenshine*

In response to a request from Alaska Governor Tony Knowles, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has temporarily suspended the state-sponsored wolf control program pending a thorough investigation of its handling. Your letters are needed to urge the governor to put a stop to this "big game" enhancement program. Write to Governor Tony Knowles, P.O. Box 110001, Juneau, AK 99811-0001, and ask him to permanently cancel the state-sponsored wolf-control program. Urge that "same-day airborne trapping" be rescinded. Ask for a repeal of the new state law that allows killing of wolves and other predators to boost "big game" populations for the benefit of hunters.



FROM YOUR CO-CHAIRS

"Where have all the flowers gone?" The powers that be were once the youth of the 1960's, but I don't see much sharing and caring on the agenda. It appears to me that our conservation issues landscape is more than on the firing line, it is in front of the firing squad. Now is the time for all good folk to speak up for what your care about. Heart of Illinois Sierra Club is what you, its members make it. There are a lot of conservation concerns in troubled waters, and the time is now to get involved. Consider stepping out of your regular routine, or making time in your irregular routine to join in the Sierra letter writing nights or come to a group meeting. We need you! If you live too far away or just can't get out, have your own gathering at home: get

your paper and writing tools and take twenty minutes to write letters to your Representative, Senators, or whomever. Speak up for the environment. The air, water and animals need your voice. Thanks for being there.

Joyce Blumenshine

Hello! from co-chair Mary.

This promises to be an "interesting" year. Joyce is a wonderful person to work with. We've decided to split the work to make things go more smoothly. Please give Joyce your compliments for things done well; complaints are my specialty.

We can anticipate major uphill battles this year in both Congress and the state Legislature as all levels of government struggle to rearrange their priorities and cut budgets. We must remind the public and our leaders that money spent on the environment pays enormous long-term dividends and that environmental regulation requires the scope and co-ordination that only government can provide.

To combine activism, fun, and visible accomplishment this year we've started two new projects. Conservation work crews under Hal Gardner's guidance plan to plant trees and work on habitat restoration (times and dates will be listed on the calendar). Joyce will host letter writing meetings at her home on the fourth Friday of each month (see article and calendar for details). We'll educate our legislators.

It's going to be a busy year. Please, contribute your ideas, efforts, constructive criticisms, and comments so that this can also be a productive year.

Mary Bodell

FOURTH FRIDAY LETTERS WRITING NIGHTS

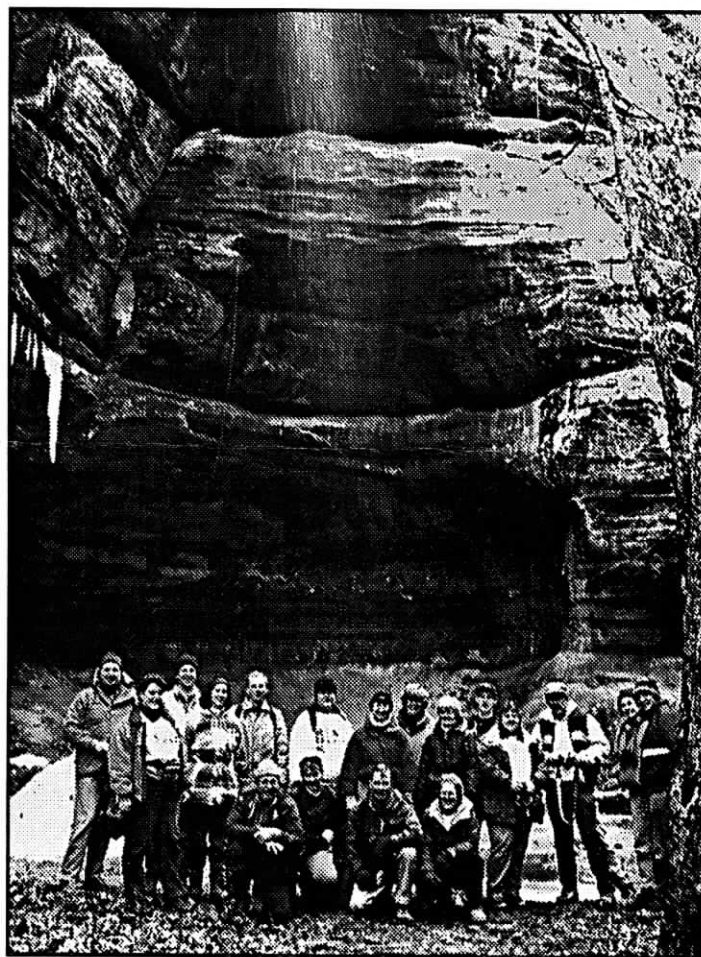
Looking for a low-cost and entertaining Friday night out? Yes! Come to the Heart of Illinois Sierra Club Fourth Friday Letter Writing nights. An informal gathering, anytime from 7 pm to 10 pm will take place to write letters on conservation issues, enjoy a friendly discussion or debate, munch on tasty munchies, and listen to whatever tapes, CD's or humming you would like. For winter months, this event will take place at the Blumenshine residence. **Phone Joyce Blumenshine at 688-09550** for information and directions. In the summer, we will be at Mary Bodell's country place and write out under her great oak trees. There is no under-age or over-age for these letter writing parties. Kids are welcome when accompanied by an

adult. Arrive early, late or in between. Stay for however long you wish, just give this a try! Information pages for conservation topics, address lists, and sample issues letters will be available. (*Watch the Group Calendar for dates and time.*)



SPECIAL THANKS

A special thanks to out-going board members John Wosik, Phil Minear, Larry Robbins and Ruddy Habben. Thanks to John Wosik for all his dedicated work, thanks to past treasurer Phil Minear and to Larry Robbins and Rudy Habben. Your efforts are truly appreciated!



Annual Sierra Club Starved Rock winter hikers from Peoria, Galesburg, DeKalb and Normal gather under a waterfall in LaSalle Canyon for their 1995 outing photo.

OUTINGS

Sunday, February 12th, 1:00 pm

Hike or ski on the Rock Island Trail along Peoria Park District's new section of the trail. Meet in Alta at the state's parking lot. You will hike/ski from the parking area to Peoria. Contact **George Burrier at 266-5085** for more details.

Sunday, March 12th, 1:00 pm

Hike and enjoy the first signs of spring (maybe) at beautiful Farmdale Park! Meet at the Thompson's grocery store parking lot in Sunnyland Plaza, East Peoria. Contact **George Burrier at 266-5085 or Larry Robbins at 676-4601, ext.29** for more details.



SIERRA WORK CREWS

Emiqon Wildlife Refuge tree planting and prairie restoration work days will begin. Contact Hal Gardner or Cheryl Pauli at 446-9792 during the morning or evening.

Farmdale Park will be planting trees this spring, also. Contact Larry Robbins at 67-4601, ext.29 for details.

Jubilee State Park's prairie and woodland restoration will continue. Contact Hal Gardner at 446-9792 for details. Starting February 18th, workdays are the first and third Saturdays at 9:00am to 12 noon. Meet at Hal Gardner's place.



BOARD ACTION

At the January 11th Executive Committee meeting, Joyce Blumenshine and Mary Bodell were elected co-chairs for the Heart of Illinois Group. They will alternate leading meetings, attending the State Sierra Excom., and other duties. Secretary for the year is Ralph Ginn, and Grayce Haworth is Treasurer. Other Board Members are George Burrier, our legal counsel and Outings Chair for the year; Kelly O'Leary, who will be a Conservation Issues Apprentice for Hal Gardner; Dale Goodner, who is our public parks and environmental concerns liaison.

Appointments for '95 are Conservation Chair Hal Gardner, and we thank Hal for again being our leader in this post. Newsletter editor, with thanks for all her excellent work, is Cheryl Pauli. Thanks to Larry Robbins for continuing a Membership Chair, and Rudy Habben is watching agricultural Issues and organizing our Clean Water Day booth. John Wosik is solid waste issues chair. Chris Meydam is doing Sierra calendar and book sales. What is your interest? Give Joyce or Mary a call with your ideas (*see Excom. 1995 for phone numbers*). Your participation is encouraged.

HELP! HELP!

If you have the time and would like to help at the Sierra Club booth at the "Clean Water Celebration" in March contact **Rudy Habben at 685-5605**.

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1995 BOARD MEMBERS

Co-Chairs, Joyce Blumenshine (688-0950) and Mary Bodell (745-5479); Legal Advisor, George Burrier (266-5085); Secretary, Ralph Ginn, (274-3289); Dale Goodner (682-0789); Treasurer, Grayce Haworth (246-8397); Kelly O'Leary (685-2240) These are your elected representatives.

Appointed members: Conservation Chair, Hal Gardner (446-9792); Newsletter Editor, Cheryl Pauli (446-9792); Outings, George Burrier; Membership/Newsletter Mailing, Larry Robbins (692-3930); Agriculture/ Sun Foundation Rep, Rudy Habben (685-5605); Solid Waste Issues, John Wosik (682-8950); Book/Calendar Sales Coordinator, Chris Meydam (682-0549).



GROUP CALENDAR


- FEB 8 Ex Com. Meeting, 7:30 pm**
120 W. Arcadia, Peoria.
- 12 Outing, Rock Island Trail 1 pm** (see Outings)
- 15 General Meetin, 7 pm**
- 18 Workday, Jubilee Park, 9 am**
- 22 Newsletter Deadline.** Mail to C.Pauli, RR 1 Box
168 A, Brimfield, IL 61517
- 28 Newsletter Mailing, 7 pm, Pizza Works**
- MAR 4 Workday, Jubilee Park, 9 am**
- 8 Ex Com.Meeting, 7:30 pm**
- 12 Outing, Farmdale Park, 1 pm** (see Outing)
- 15 General Meeting, 7 pm**

OTHER EVENTS

Feb 4 and Mar 4, 9 am Rock Island Trail
Workdays. Meet at the Alta end maintenance building. Leave Alta on Rt.91, go about 1 mile, turn right on Radnor Rd. Follow road around curves, maintenance building is on your right just before the railroad tracks. Call Chris at 682-0549 or 691-2246.

(Note: The HOI Grp. provides this information as a public service. OTHER EVENTS are not sponsored by Sierra Club.)



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 <p>... To explore, enjoy and preserve the nation's forests, waters, wildlife and wilderness ...</p>	