



Tallgrass Sierran

Sierra Club - Heart of Illinois Group - Central Illinois Region

P. O. Box 3593 - Peoria, IL 61614

GENERAL MEETINGS

**** July 19 Meeting, 7 pm, "Fun Hike and Conservation Issues"**

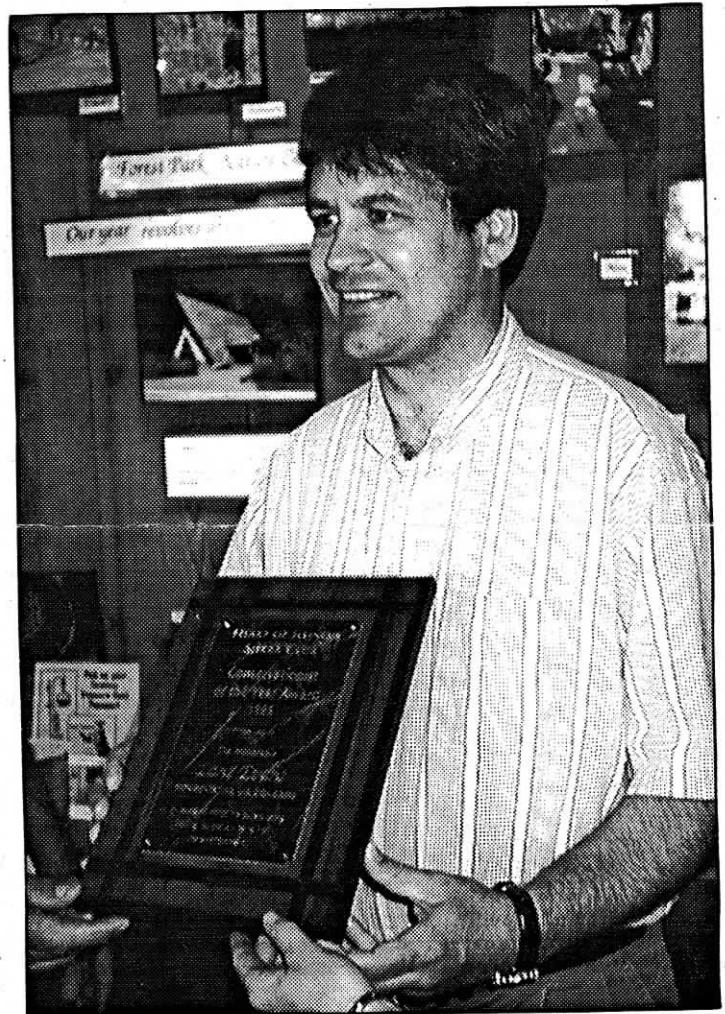
Let's get out and enjoy a summer evening. Meet at the Forest Park Nature Center for a comfortable walk up the Pimiteoui Trail to Peoria Heights. During our Dutch treat at the "Spotted Cow" along the hike, we will discuss some current conservation issues. The return to the Nature Center will be by trail or by car shuttle. Wear walking shoes and bring a friend. Call Joyce at 688-0950 for more information.

**** August 16 Meeting, 7 pm, National Sierra Video on Conservation Topics**

Meet at Forest Park Nature Center to see the Sierra Club's video on conservation topics and watch the news tape of Representative Lane Evans receiving the Heart of Illinois Sierra's 1995 Conservationist of the year Award. Gather at the Pizza Works after the meeting for more discussion and good time.

Everyone is welcome!

funding and regulations that protect the environment and biological diversity.



The Conservationist-of-the-Year award was presented to Congressman Lane Evans on June 21 at the Forest Park Nature Center. Photo by Al Harkrader.

CONGRESSMAN LANE EVANS RECEIVES CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Heart of Illinois Sierra Club bestowed its highest honor of *Conservationist-of-the-Year* to Congressman Lane Evans (Illinois 17th District). While serving in Congress, Evans has achieved an exceptional record of defending the environment and conserving of our precious natural resources. According to the League of Conservation Voters, Evans has consistently received the highest pro-environmental and conservation voting record of any Illinois Congressman. Since his election in 1982, his ranking has ranged between 92% and 100%.

Congressman Evans support is particularly appreciated at a time when there is so much anti-environmental sentiment in the newly elected Congress. During the first 100 days of Newt Gingrich's "Contract with America", Congress rolled back 25 years of environmental progress. Unlike most of his Congressional colleagues, Congressman Evans defended the environment 100%. Lane voted against mandates to increase logging of our National Forests exempt from all environmental laws and at increased federal expense estimated at \$390 million in road-building for logging (the bill was fortunately derailed by a Presidential veto). Lane Evans also voted against bills that weakened protection for endangered species, clean water, and wetlands. In general he voted against serious roll-backs in

LOCAL ISSUES:

URBAN WOODLAND IN DANGER FROM "DEVELOPER'S DISEASE" by J. Blumenshine

For the second time, Schnuck's Grocery Company asked the Peoria Zoning Commission to delay consideration of rezoning of timbered acres for their proposed store near Glen and Sheridan.

Heart of Illinois Sierra Club sent letters to all Zoning Commission members stating our concerns about saving the mature oak woods and not having more acres of green space turned into parking areas. There are several other concerns, one being the potential for major drainage problems. The next Zoning Commission meeting is July 1st and we plan to testify at the hearing.



STRIP-MINING by Rudy Habben

Heart of Illinois Sierrians interested in the preservation of prime farm land, the dumping of fly-ash or other waste in surface mines and the restoration of strip-mined land for agricultural use should attend an informational and strategy meeting on Friday, July 21 at 1 pm in the Knox County Farm Bureau Building in Galesburg.

The Citizens Organizing Project of Knox, Fulton, McDonough, Henry and La Salle counties have invited Sierra Club members to meet with Assistant Illinois Secretary of Agriculture, Chet Bonuff. For more details contact Jane Johnson (309-639-4421).

BANNER MARSH by Rudy Habben

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has released its plan to make \$3,500,000 of improvements to the Banner Marsh State Fish and Wildlife Area located along the Illinois River and U.S. Route 24 about 20 miles southwest of Peoria.

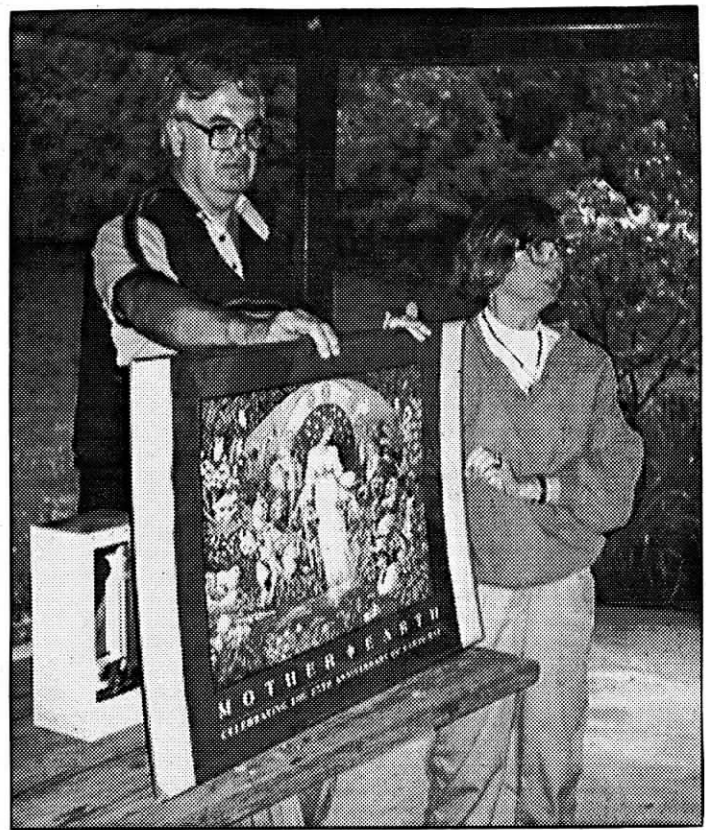
Most of the funds will be spent for levee restoration and water level control. The existing 8.4 miles of perimeter levee will be restored to a 100 year flood level of protection using borrow material excavated from adjacent interior marsh lands. A new two-way pumping facility will be constructed near the existing Copperas Creek Station. A second pump station outside the levee, including a well pump, will pump water into the marsh. Restoration of the levee will protect against the deleterious effects of flooding and the pumping system will provide the necessary water level control to promote habitat.

One hundred six acres of land next to existing marsh will be graded to create littoral areas with approximately 18 inches of water depth. These littoral areas would optimize habitat for fish spawning, and waterfowl. Grading along seven miles of high wall shoreline left from strip-mining will also improve habitat.

An area of over 200 acres along U.S. 24 will be planted in a mix of grasses and forbs.

When implemented, the plan will increase management flexibility and optimize the quality and quantity of preferred habitat at Banner Marsh. The plan meets the goals and objectives of the Upper Mississippi River System Environmental Management Plan, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, and the Partners in Flight program.

Although the plan has been approved, it must be funded by Congress and the state of Illinois. With the current Congress on an anti-environment, cost slashing campaign, it will be a test of the Illinois Congressional delegation to have the Banner Marsh Plan implemented.



Larry Johnson and Mary Harkrader drive a hard bargain at Club annual picnic and auction. Photo by Al Harkrader.

STATE ISSUES

STATE REPS. BURN TAX PAYERS MONEY by John Wosik

The Illinois Retail Rate Law gives significant subsidies to waste incineration in Illinois. The effort to repeal the law fell short in the state legislature. This time it was the Illinois House rejecting the repeal effort (HB 730) after the Senate had earlier voted to end the current law.

The Retail Rate Law forces electric utilities to buy power generated by waste incinerators at the full retail rate. This is about three times what it would cost the electric utility to produce the power. The utility is allowed to take the difference in cost as a state tax credit, and at the end of twenty years the incinerator operator is "supposed" to repay the state the total tax credit claimed by the electric utility. However, no repayment is guaranteed under the Retail Rate Law.

New incinerator construction is practically nonexistent in the rest of the country, yet out-of-state incinerator operators are lining up to take advantage of the generosity of our state politicians. It is estimated that somewhere between \$750 million and \$2 billion will be spent over the next 20 years. These incinerators will emit toxic pollution, including dioxin, and compete with local recycling efforts.

ACTION: Contact your state representative and ask him to change his vote to help repeal the Retail Rate Law during the fall

"veto session". Representatives Jay Ackerman, Frank Mautino, Richard Myers, Don Saltsman, and Michael Smith need to be contacted.

Representative David Leitch needs to be commended for voting to repeal the law and encouraged to continue to vote to repeal the Retail Rate Law.

Contact your representative at 217/782-2000 or write: The Hon. _____, State House, Springfield, IL 62706.

JOLIET ARSENAL/MIDEWIN NATIONAL TALLGRASS PRAIRIE

Help preserve 19,000 acres of the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie at the Joliet Arsenal. Illinois residents will have to enthusiastically support H.R. 714 and S.B. 449. Write to your U.S. Congressman and Senators. For more details contact Mary Bodell at 745-5479 or Cheryl Pauli at 446-9792.



NATIONAL ISSUES

SENATE TO GO HOG-WILD GUTTING WETLANDS PROTECTION *by H. Gardner & J. Blumenshine*

Ask your Senators to oppose and vote no on S.B. 851. This bill will gut stream and wetlands protection, essentially drastically reducing Section 404 protection. Streams could be channelized or altered without regard to greater effects downstream. Also, it would be easier to fill wetlands by developers. A National Academy of Sciences study on wetlands was commissioned by Congress mainly in the belief that the study would justify weakening regulations, but the study showed that strong wetlands protection should continue. S.B. 851 was co-authored by Senator Faircloth (R-NC) who owns nine hog farms (140,000 hogs worth about \$19 million). All nine farms are close to wetlands, and in 1984 one of the farms was found to be dumping waste into a wetland. Another classic case of more welfare for the rich. In this case, it is specific welfare for the legislator sponsoring the bill - pure hog manure. The next generation speaks out about this issue: seven-year-old Bryce Gardner says, "Frogs need a home, too!" Please write your letter or call of opposition to Senators Paul Simon and Carol Moseley-Braun.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT 1995 STYLE *by M. Bodell & J. Blumenshine*

The moratorium on the listing of endangered species or critical habitat designation is only a precursor to the full assault we will see when Don Young's Resources Committee amends the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Floor action in the House can be expected in July.

Senator Slade Gorton's "Endangered Species Act Reform Amendments" (S.B. 768) would replace the ESA's present goal of recovering endangered species with a "conservation objective"

written by the Secretary of the Interior, who is a political appointment. S. 768 also allows the Secretary of Interior to choose to do nothing about declining species. Habitat protection would no longer be covered. Habitat protection currently makes the ESA our strongest environmental law since habitat destruction is the greatest threat to endangered species. For more information call Les and Mary Bodell at 745-5479.

ACTION: Contact Senators Carol Moseley-Braun (312-353-5420) and Paul Simon (313-353-4952) and ask them to oppose S.B. 768.

ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE *by Mary Bodell*

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) is in danger again. Both House and Senate have passed budget targets that mandate opening ANWR to energy development. In budget bills that set revenue and spending targets for the next fiscal year, arctic energy development is to provide \$1.5 billion over the next five years. We may have to rely on President Clinton to veto the Reconciliation Bill, which balances budget targets with actual cuts and revenue goals passed by Finance, Ways and Means, and Appropriations Committees.



PRAIRIE. Photo by Mike Ingram.

GENERAL INFORMATION

FOR YOUR HEALTH by Joyce Blumenshine

Senators Dole and Johnson are sponsors of S.B. 343 which will require extraordinary studies to be done before any action is taken on environmental health issues. A dollar value will have to be placed on illnesses that could be caused by contaminated water, air and land. A risk assessment would then be required to compare costs of stopping or correcting the problem against the current dollar costs to industry or business.

For more information contact Joyce at 688-0950.

ACTION: Contact Senators Carol Moseley-Braun and Paul Simon and ask them to oppose S.B. 343.



RIVER-WATCH by Mary Bodell

Illinois River-watch Network needs monitors. You would monitor stream quality on Illinois waterways and collect the information for a database. It's easy, simple, fast and fun. One morning or afternoon to wade in a creek gathering data is all that is needed. Are you interested? Contact Mary for more details (745-5479).

THANKS!

Thanks to the great cooks and awesome auctioneers. If you missed the June potluck picnic you missed some wonderful food. Special thanks go to our "white elephant" auctioneers, Mary Harkrader and Larry Johnson, who did a fantastic job. Over \$140 was raised for the club. The money will go toward newsletter printing and mailing costs.

SEARCHING AGAIN ♀♀

Soon a search will begin for interested, dedicated, and concerned members to run for (not from) the 1996 Heart of Illinois Executive Board.

HOI SIERRA NEEDS YOU

The Heart of Illinois Sierra Club will be having a booth at the Marshall-Putnam Fairgrounds for an expo on woodland stewardship. Volunteers are needed to help at the booth. The hours are 8 am to 8 pm on August 26th. Contact Mary (745-5479) or Joyce (688-0950) if you can help.

CONSERVATION HOTLINE

Remember, you can phone 708-690-4930 for the Sierra Club's River Prairie Group's state and national conservation issues hotline.



1995 Heart of Illinois Sierra Club

Co-Chairs: Joyce Blumenshine* (688-0950) and Mary Bodell* (745-5479); Secretary: Ralph Ginn* (274-3289); Treasurer: Grayce Haworth* (246-8397); Board members: George Burrier* (266-5085); Dale Goodner* (682-0789); Kelly O'Leary* (685-2240); Conservation Chair: Hal Gardner (446-9792); Newsletter Editor: Cheryl Pauli (446-9792); Membership Chair and Newsletter Mailings: Larry Robbins (692-3930); Outings Chair and Legal Advisor: George Burrier (see Board Members); Land Use Advisory Committee Rep: Rudy Habben (685-5605); Solid Waste Issues: John Wosik (682-0549); Book/Calendar

Sales Coordinator: Chris Meydam (682-0549)

Board members that represent the membership and vote on pertinent issues are denoted by an asterisk*.

GROUP CALENDAR

JULY 12 Executive Meeting, 7:30 pm

Meet at Ralph Ginn's home. Call Ralph at 274-3289 for directions.

19 General Meeting, 7 pm

Forest Park Nature Center

AUG 9 Executive Meeting, 7:30 pm

Meet at George Burrier's home. Call George at 266-5085 for directions.

16 General Meeting, 7:30 pm

Forest Park Nature Center

28 Newsletter Deadline

Send articles for September and October to C. Pauli, RR1 Box 168 A, Brimfield, IL 61517.

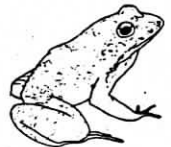
SEPT 5 Newsletter Mailing, 7 pm

Peoria Pizza Works

OTHER EVENTS

JULY 15 The Interplanetary Bike Ride

See insert for details.



Rock Island Trail Workdays, 9 am

Aug 5, Sept 9, Oct 7 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.

Sept. 24, Rock Island Trail Breakfast, 9-11 am. Join us at the Kickapoo picnic area and shelter for breakfast. The cost is \$5.00 adult, \$2.50 child over 5 years old. Reservation needed. Call Chris (682-0549) or Mary (745-5479)

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

HEART OF ILLINOIS

Sierra Club

P.O. Box 3593
Peoria, Illinois 61614

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