

# Tallgrass Sierran

July/August 2003 Volume 31 No. 4

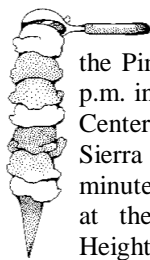
THE HEART OF ILLINOIS GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB ♦ P.O. Box 3593, Peoria, IL 61614 ☎ (309) 637-1393

## HOI Group Meetings

WED  
JULY 16

### Spotted Cow Ice Cream Hike

Forest Park Nature Center, 7 p.m.



Join us for a hike along the Pimiteoui Trail beginning at 7 p.m. in front of Forest Park Nature Center. This uphill hike, in the true Sierra tradition, takes about 45 minutes, and is followed by a stop at the Spotted Cow in Peoria Heights. Wear good walking shoes. If it is hot, you may want to bring water. Rides back to the Nature Center will be provided. If you prefer not to hike, you may also meet us at the Spotted Cow at approximately 7:45 p.m. This is a participatory event for all ages! Call 243-2230 for more information.

WED  
AUG 20

### Riverfront Walk & Dinner

Gateway Building, 6:30 p.m.

We'll meet at the Gateway Building in downtown Peoria for a leisurely walk along the riverfront. Afterward we will stop at the Old Chicago Restaurant near the Gateway Building for an optional late dinner. All are welcome! Call 243-2230 for more information.

### Memorial Tribute for Cassi Dunbar

Heart of Illinois Sierra Club members raised over \$300.00 for a memorial donation to Cassi Dunbar. The funds came from items auctioned at the June HOI Group picnic and white elephant auction. The donation will be given to the Allen-Dunbar Children's Trust Fund, 1<sup>st</sup> National Bank, 900 4<sup>th</sup> St. Chillicothe, IL 61523. Cassi's care for the environment and her volunteer work will be remembered.

## Wolves, Fogging, and Consequences

BY RALPH GINN

In late December, 2002, Randy Worker was hunting near Henry, Illinois when he saw a canine, a Tiger Woods drive away, in a stubble field. A look with binoculars and then a rifle scope convinced Worker the animal was a coyote. He shot it. His "coyote" turned out to be a 92 pound gray wolf. The average coyote weighs 25-30 lbs. Worker erred by 200% and killed one of two verified wolves to inhabit Illinois in the last 100 years. The wolf was probably from the 300 plus Wisconsin population, a two year old male looking for new territory to start his own pack. Although the gray wolf is classified federally as threatened, and that means a wolf can be killed or injured only in defense of life, it is unlikely Mr. Worker will be prosecuted. The Fish and Wildlife Service report is expected to say Worker unknowingly shot and killed the wolf. End of case. Most hunters are responsible outdoorsmen. Hunting and fishing groups contribute mightily to game management and habitat acquisition. But, there are a few hunters who can't distinguish between a 90 lb. wolf and a 25 lb. coyote, an eagle and a duck, a human and a deer.

Attention residents of Chillicothe, East Peoria, and Macomb your respective cities have plans to broadcast pesticides this summer in large areas of your city, or as in the case of Chillicothe, the entire town. This over-reaction can be blamed

on fear of the Culex mosquito that can carry West Nile Virus. Although only 1 in 150 people who are infected by the disease will develop a severe form (most will not even know they have the disease), and 72% of Illinois' severe cases occurred in Cook County last year, a few local governments are expected to do the wrong thing by fogging the wildlife and human populations of their town. They will insist that their pesticide is "safe." Don't believe it. Ask the mayor what the warning label says. Read the warning on any pesticide container for yourself. A pesticide is a poison. Fogging doesn't discriminate as to which animals are harmed or killed. Fogging machines do not dispense uniformly. Birds, pets, and small children can be at risk. Eliminating stagnant water, treating mosquito larvae before they hatch and wearing repellent when outdoors

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are the most effective ways of avoiding mosquitoes and West Nile Virus.

In retaliation for the new Bush administration policy, disclosed recently as part of a legal settlement with Utah, that calls for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to stop assessing its public lands for possible wilderness classification, the Outdoor Industry Association threatened to take two trade shows, worth \$24 million a year, out of Salt Lake. Outdoor Industry Association is a trade group representing over 1000 gear and clothing manufacturers. Utah Governor Mike Leavitt and the Utah Congressional dele-

(See *Consequences*, page 2)



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## Stop Bush

BY RALPH GINN

I get regular mailings from a dozen or more environmental groups. I assume Sierra Club sells/trades/loans its membership list. Have you taken the time to read the letter that accompanies these requests for a donation/membership/survey/letter to Congress? If not, save some time and read just one. The others will be clones. The hot topic is **STOP BUSH**, prefaced with a litany of environmental transgressions, most of which are via administrative changes in regulations.

Transgression samples: removal of wilderness protection for 264 million acres of public land under the management of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), easement and delay of pollution-control standards for dozens of urban areas whose current smog levels violate Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards, changes to the Clean Air Act that would allow older, dirty power plants and oil refineries to "modernize" without installing new pollution control equipment (this was the straw that broke EPA director Christine Whitman's back), delay, stall, and impede implementation of Clinton's Roadless Area Conservation Rule (a rule that would protect 60 million acres of national forests from future road build-

ing), rescinded the Clinton ban on snowmobiles in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks, and with the approval of Congress, waiving environmental rules in national forests so that commercial logging (including old growth trees) can be increased in order to "control wildfires."

If you are reaching for a "happy pill", I'm sorry, and I don't imply that any of these environmental insults are unimportant. They are very important and that is exactly why reading about them in every environmental mailer is depressing. George Bush is a hairball in the environmental throat, and he is 70% popular, and the odds are high that he will be President until January of 2009.

What's an abused environmentalist to do? Psychology 101 tells us to accept our fate, and move on. If lightning in a bottle changes the 2004 election, lucky us. If not, move on by working on issues here in Illinois, issues we can impact. Like river and stream siltation, CAFO pollution, water and light pollution, bike and hiking trail development, prairie and woodland restoration. Calls and letters to Congress on national issues are always important, but can't we stop dwelling on the inevitable Bush?



## Get Active Early for the Next Presidential Election



BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Folks, our environmental future, not to mention the ethical soul, international reputation and character of America is eroding faster than a bulldozed bluff along the Illinois River. The Bush Administration is dismantling decades of environmental safeguards piece by piece. Sierra Club Director Carl Pope has stated this, along with saying that the Bush Administration has devised an underhanded way to riddle important policy with loopholes for industry. Referring to Bush Administration actions that took the Tongass National Rain Forest in Alaska out of the Roadless Rule protection status, Carl Pope said it is like taking Yellowstone out of the National Park system. There are 50 timber sales that now will move forward in the Tongass alone. Even if you are not enchanted by other candidates you can get online and active with Vote Smart, Move On, or other groups that are working for the truth about what the Bush Administration is doing. We all need to work for change in the next election to protect the environment, for our families, for our future.

(Consequences, from page 1)

gation have, for years, worked diligently to open BLM public lands to new mining, gas and oil leases, and road building. U.S. lands marked as wilderness must be in pristine condition and, in turn, enjoy the highest level of protection against development. No roads, no drilling, no mining, no all-terrain vehicles, and no logging is permitted. The Bush freeze on wilderness assessment threatens some of the finest wild lands throughout Utah and western America. Governor Leavitt and Utah congressmen have arranged meetings with the Outdoor Industry Association. Consequences!

# Peoria Area Issues

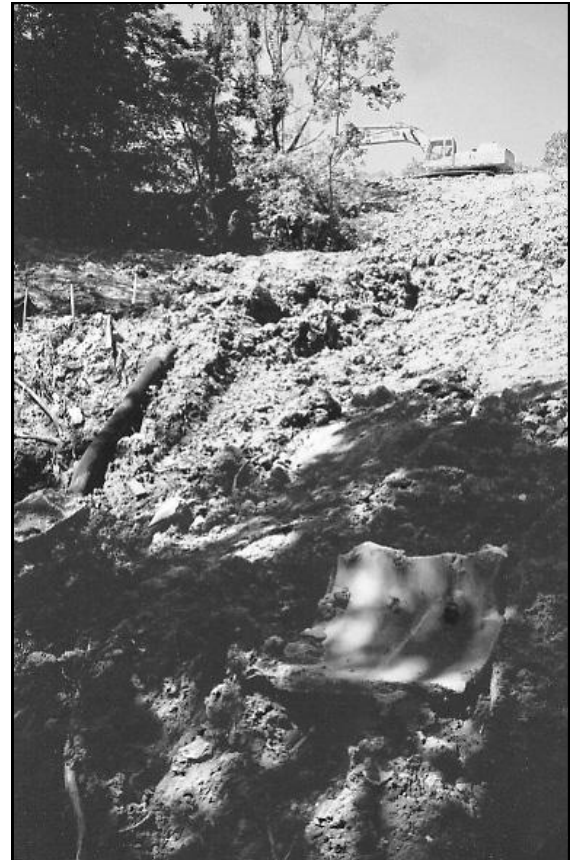
BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE



Beautiful trees at Wedgewood Park Estates may be threatened if condominiums are constructed. Photo: Joyce Blumenshine

## Condominiums in the Future for Trailer Park Site

Wedgewood Park Estates at 6529 N. War Memorial Drive has been purchased by a developer who plans on placing condominiums at the site. Many beautiful oaks and other large trees are around the trailer park. Good planning by the developer could save the mature trees on the site. If Peoria had a Tree Protection Ordinance, safeguards for such trees would be in place and mean the difference between destruction and conservation of beautiful old trees.



A few straw bales and plastic screening are all that protect a scenic Grandview Drive area creek from an entire hillside under construction at the Peoria Journal Star. Photo: Joyce Blumenshine

## Hillside Erosion at the Journal Star Construction Site

Erosion from construction being done at the Peoria Journal Star threatens a small and scenic creek that runs near Grand View Drive. A local resident contacted the EPA with concerns. Several straw bales and plastic screening are in place to catch erosion. Compared to the massive hill construction site, the erosion control measures look minimal. There are still concerns that runoff ground will fill in the nearby creek which feeds into the Illinois River.

## Grand View Drive Irks Past Sierra Chair

Joe Callahan, Heart of Illinois Group Chairman in the 1980s, was irked to see the condition of Peoria Park District slopes along Grand View Drive recently. Joe sent a terse letter to the Peoria Park District with his concerns for the cut and slash management done along the slopes and the lack of any planting program. Volunteer trees such as sumac and Alanthus, along with brush and weeds are below the manicured bluff edge. Joe feels the slopes are maintained only to keep a clear view for the houses along the drive and not for the health of the forest and habitat.

## Highlights from the June Picnic and Auction BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Hey! You missed a mighty fine picnic if you did not get to the June outing. Thanks go to Mary Bodell who hand crafted the beautiful, top dollar winning fancy potted herb garden. Other great bargains were sleeping bags, geodes, home baked breads, special jams, hand crafted cedar bird nest box and a squirrel feeder, and many other great things. Thanks go to Mary and Al Harkrader, who provided a lot of humor in addition to being outstanding auctioneers for the evening. HOI

Treasurer Grayce Mesner kept track of all the items and her great organization and handling of the sales is really appreciated.

Your Heart of Illinois Group meetings are the third Wednesday of each month and are a great chance to meet with a friendly group of people who share concerns about the environment and the enjoyment of the outdoors. Try out an HOI Group meeting soon!

# HOI Group Calendar

*July*

**1 Executive Meeting, 7 p.m.**  
**TUE** Joyce Blumenshine's home, 2419 E.  
 Reservoir Blvd., Peoria, IL 61614-8029.  
 Call 688-0950 for directions.

**16** **Spotted Cow Ice Cream Mike, 7 p.m.**  
WED Meet at Forest Park Nature Center.  
*See front page for more details.*

## Conservationist of the Year Nominations Sought

The HOI Executive Committee is seeking nominations for the **Heart of Illinois Conservationist of the Year**. The nominee does not have to be a Sierra Club member.

This individual's conservation efforts should have been pursued on a volunteer basis, not for pay. Your nomination should include a brief explanation of why you feel this person should be considered. The deadline for nominations is August 20th. The winner will be announced at our September 17th Group meeting. Send nominations to **Joyce Blumenshine, c/o HOI Sierra Club, 120 W. Arcadia Ave., Peoria, IL 61604; or call 688-0950.**

*August*

**5 Executive Meeting, 7 p.m.**  
**TUE** Ralph Ginn's home, 20822 N. Blue Ridge Rd., Chillicothe. Call 274-3289 for directions.

**10** **Sierra Club at the Illinois**  
**SUN** **State Fair**

Heart of Illinois Sierra Club volunteers will staff the Illinois Sierra Club booth at the Illinois State Fair. Hours are 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Share a ride from Peoria for the whole day, or volunteer for a few hours and then enjoy the fair. Phone 688-0950 for more information. Helpers are still needed!

**20**  
WED **Riverfront Walk & Dinner, 6:30 p.m.**  
Meet at the Gateway Building in downtown Peoria. *See front page for more details.*

## 22 Newsletter Deadline

Send articles for September/October to:  
John Wosik, 12409 N. Blackhawk Ct.,  
Dunlap, IL 61525, or  
[johnwosik@insightbb.com](mailto:johnwosik@insightbb.com).

**27 Newsletter Mailing, 7.p.m.**  
WED Peoria Pizza Works; *Everyone welcome.*

**Other Events:** (Not sponsored by the Sierra Club but provided as a public service.)

 **Prairie Dawgs Work Crew**

The Prairie Dawgs meet the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month at Jubilee State Park. Work includes prairie burns, brush cutting, eradicating alien plants, native plant seeding, and planting root stock. Call Doug Franks at 691-7993 for more information.

## The Illinois Renewable Energy Fair 2003

August 9-10  
Oregon, IL - Ogle County Fairgrounds

Exhibitions, workshops, and speakers about renewable energy resources. See [www.illinoisrenew.org](http://www.illinoisrenew.org) for more information.



## Good and Bad Results from the Illinois Legislature By JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Illinois Sierrans can be proud that the Illinois House passed H.B. 422, to protect Illinois Wetlands, in the final hours of the legislative session. The bill passed 65 for, 48 against, and 4 other. The bill will need to face the Illinois Senate during the fall veto session. Now is the time to write to your state Senator about how important it is for Illinois to protect wetlands. Go to the Chapter webpage at <http://illinois.sierraclub.org> for more information about isolated wetlands at risk and details about the legislation. Thanks go to Illinois Chapter Director Jack Darin and Chapter staff and volunteers who worked so hard for this legislation.

A host of really bad ATV bills passed and calls and letters are needed to Governor Rod Blagojevich, 214 State House, Springfield, IL 62706, phone 217-782-7884, and ask that he veto Senate Bills 1521 & 1804 and House Bills 2816 and 2273. These bills will promote ATV use and some restrict law enforcement regarding ATVs. For more information check out the Bad ATV Bills information on the Illinois Chapter website.

Senate Bill 1379, the Safe and Clean Communities Act, passed the Illinois Senate unanimously. It is expected to receive the Governor's approval and will enable Attorney General Lisa Madigan to strengthen enforcement of clean air and

# Heart of Illinois Sierra Club

**Hotline:** Local Meetings & Outings • Action Alerts  
Contacts • Leave Messages (309) 637-1393

## Executive Committee

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<b>Secretary</b> . . . . .	Joyce Blumenshine . . . . .	688-0950	joblumen@yahoo.com
<b>Conservation Chair</b> . . . . .	Joseph Laszlo . . . . .	637-4692	laszloja@excite.com
<b>Membership Chair</b> . . . . .	Norman Ewing . . . . .	686-4122	
<b>Newsletter Editor</b> . . . . .	John Wosik . . . . .	243-2230	johnwosik@insightbb.com
	Cindy Ewing . . . . .	686-4122	

**Treasurer . . . . .**Grayce Mesner . . . .246-8397

**Calendar Sales . . . . Emiko Yang . . . . .691-5213**

**HEART OF ILLINOIS**

**Sierra Club**   
P.O. Box 3593  
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