

# Tallgrass Sierran

January/February 2005 Volume 33 No. 1

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

## HOI Group Meetings

WED  
JAN 19

### Peoria Wilds

Forest Park Nature Center, 7 p.m.

John Mullen is the chair and coordinator for Peoria Wilds, a volunteer group active for the past decade in the restoration of Peoria Park District land and Springdale Cemetery. The group has received a number of grants to determine best practices for restoration of woodlands and prairie. Tonight's program will review past projects and the program for the coming year. *All are welcome!*

WED  
FEB 16

### Timber Framing

Forest Park Nature Center, 7 p.m.

Rick Collins, Knoxville, started his own timber framing business to encourage sustainable resource management. Started nine years ago, the Trillium Dell Timberworks Co. has developed a national reputation. Rick is a leading authority on timber framing.

He coordinated the project of restoring the historic Phelps barn near Elmwood. He has completed the first phase of restoring the Quaker Meetinghouse south of McNabb. He not only restores old frame buildings, but constructs new ones. He brings history, skill, trigonometry and poetry to his work. *All are welcome!*



### HOI Sierra Club First-ever Midwinter Bird Seed Sale FUNDRAISER

Please see the insert and order some birdseed! Your purchase will help raise much needed funds to continue this newsletter and our meetings at Forest Park Nature Center. Donations can also be sent to Heart of Illinois Sierra Club, P.O. Box 3593, Peoria, IL 61614. Funding from our State Chapter is extremely tight for 2005, and we must raise local funds.

## Post Election Trauma

BY RALPH GINN

Anger, disbelief, nausea, distress, bitter, resentment, just a few of the words that describe the mood of the losers. And the environment maybe be the biggest loser of all. Salt on the wounds came from the exit polls that told us it was the "moral values" voter that enabled a Bush victory. So where is the morality of a pre-emptive war against a comparatively small, poor county? A war that has killed and injured tens of thousands. And where is the morality of environmental neglect and degradation? The disconnect between the "moral values" vote and its transformation is a seemingly impervious abyss. A fact of Republican politics biennially overlooked by the "moral values" species.

Carl Rove's worst nightmare is the retirement of one of the five Supremes that upheld Roe vs. Wade. Contrary to what 20 million "moral values" voters believe, the last thing Rove, Bush and the Republican hierarchy want is a reversal. It would pacify the right and inflame, not only the left, but millions in the middle. The media, always eager to exploit tragedy, would spew stories of death and injury caused by back alley abortions for victims of rape, incest and despair. And, did the "moral values" voter erect an impossible hurdle to stem cell research? Hardly. Individual states (California, Wisconsin, New Jersey) are now in the vanguard, as well as England, Israel, China and Australia. Will the "moral values" voter realize ratification of a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage? Sixty seven votes in the Senate and ratifi-

cation by 34 states is as likely as peace and democracy in Iraq.

Cary and Tara Leslie, Ohio evangelicals, voted for Bush and their "moral absolutes." They complain about sexual content on TV and in the movies, and their hot button issue is gay marriage. They watch Fox News and have also watched their income drop from \$55,000 to 30,000 since 2001, forcing them into the ranks of what he calls the "working poor." Maybe, in the next four years, someone will convince the Leslies that the future of their three children is a higher moral value than the relationship of a gay family they have never met. But, don't hold your breath.

Every two years, the Republicans recycle the "values" issues and every two years millions squander their vote on a pig-in-a-poke. After the votes are counted, the R's go back to their higher priorities like cutting taxes for the wealthy, eliminating capital gains and estate taxes, and deregulation goodies that include an increase in Rupert Murdoch's (Fox Network) power to market salacious entertainment such as "The Simple Life," (starring Paris Hilton), "Trading Spouses," and Jenna Jameson's book "How to Make Love Like a Porn Star." Is there a disconnect here? Republican priorities also include drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, expanding drilling and exploration on Alaska's North Slope, increasing timber harvests on public lands, more clean-up postponements for polluters, cuts in alternative energy funding, a \$300 million cut in the Environmental Protection

(See Election Trauma, page 2)



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### (Election Trauma, from page 1)

Agency's budget, brushing off the need for higher fuel efficiency standards for motor vehicles, and ignoring global warming threats to arctic villages, polar bears, seals and walrus. All of the above is the chad the "moral values" voter punched on November 2.

So, how does this election affect the environment? Double ugly! The environment got 60 seconds in the 360 minutes of presidential and vice presidential debate. Nevada was the only state where the environment was a factor in the outcome. Bush won Nevada by 2.6%. Can it get worse? Yes, we have a Republican loaded Congress and a President who sees environmental stewardship as an adjunct of economic growth. But, maybe four more years of "Bush environmentalism" will wake up the 62% of Americans who claim they want a clean, healthy environment. The pendulum swings, and we can only hope it will begin

## Peoria to Macomb Highway

BY RUDY HABBen

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) held three open house meetings in December for the public to review alternative alignments for a four lane highway 336 between Interstate 474 at Peoria and a proposed freeway bypass at Macomb. This meeting was the second to refine down a broad corridor to determine a preferred alignment. Three basic corridors were presented, with six alternatives around and through strip mined land north and west of Canton. The first three miles at Peoria and Macomb must be developed as freeway. The remainder may be developed as expressway or freeway. No alignment took Department of Natural Resources or designated nature preserve land.

Am IDOT handout listed each alignment by total right of way required broken down by agriculture, woodland, and grassland. Also, the number of bridges and number of relocations required for each segment were counted. Of the three basic corridors, the "South" required the most right of way, took the most woodland, and was the most expensive.

IDOT only has funds to do the corridor study. Construction funds would need to be included in the next Federal Transportation Bill. More information on the alternative alignments, data, and public comments can be found on IDOT's website [www.peoriatomacomb.com](http://www.peoriatomacomb.com).



Happy New Year to You!

As the New Year unfolds, let us step forward each day to live with an earth consciousness: we share this beautiful planet with thousands of other living creatures who have homes, families, feelings, and need food and shelter, just like us.

For your New Year, resolve each day to do something for the good of the earth and its creatures. Have a Happy and Green New Year!

### HOI EXCOM Welcomes Dave Grebner

Dave Grebner is the newly elected board member for the Heart of Illinois Sierra Club Executive Committee. Dave begins his post at the January meeting. Dave is a long-time member of HOI Sierra, and brings a wide ranging knowledge of local groups, activities, environmental education, science and related issues to the board.

## Illinois Funding for CREP at Risk

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Letters to Lt. Governor Pat Quinn are needed to urge support for full funding for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). CREP funds bring Illinois a four to one match of Federal dollars to state dollars. Due to the state's financial distress, there is concern that the \$10 million needed to fund the Illinois portion of CREP for the coming year will be cut. CREP funds allow marginal farm land to be taken out of production and planted with cover crops for wildlife or returned to wetlands. Illinois has gained 110,000 acres of wetlands, streamside forests, grass waterways, and other set-aside lands that would not exist without CREP payments to farmers. Write to: Lieutenant Governor Pat Quinn; State House, Rm. 214; Springfield, IL 62706-4700 ATTN: Erica G. Ott, as soon as possible to urge full support for Illinois CREP funds. See Ralph Ginn's great article on CREP in the Nov.-Dec. *Tallgrass Sierran* for more information on all the good this program does.

## Congratulations to Allison Wolverton and Doug Franks!

Heart of Illinois Sierra Club Chairman Norm Ewing presented Allison Wolverton and Doug Franks with Conservationist of the Year plaques at the December potluck meeting. Allison was honored for her amazing work with wildlife rehabilitation at her Wildsides Wildlife Center near Tremont. Doug Franks was honored for his leadership and progress with the Prairie Dawgs, a prairie restoration and conservation group at Jubilee College State Park. Our thanks and appreciation to you Allison and Doug!

☐ Yes, I want to join the Sierra Club! My check is enclosed.

Name

Address

City  State  Zip

Introductory ☐ \$25 Individual ☐ \$39 Joint ☐ \$47

Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to Sierra magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

Please mail this to Sierra Club,  
P.O. Box 52968, Boulder,  
Colorado, 80322-2968



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# Heart of Illinois Sierra Club

## Midwinter Bird Seed Sale



Support your local Heart of Illinois Sierra Club and stock up on bird seed to get you through the winter! All seed is from Kelly Seed Company. All sales must be pre-paid by the order deadline. Call 688-0950 for more information.

**Order Deadline:** January 21, 2005

**Pickup Day:** Saturday, January 29, 2005, 9 to 11 a.m.

**Pickup Location:** Kelly Seed and Hardware Parking Lot, 202 Hamilton Blvd., Peoria

**Optional Delivery:** Free delivery within 15 miles of Peoria for all orders of \$40 or more. There is a delivery charge of \$10 for all orders under \$40. Delivery is on Saturday, January 29, 2005.

**Reminder: I purchased** \_\_\_\_\_ bags of \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ bags of \_\_\_\_\_ **For** ☐ Pickup  
\_\_\_\_\_ bags of \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ bags of \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Delivery

✂----- Mail bottom with check ----- Keep top -----

| Type of Seed         | Size          | Price    | Number Ordered | Total    |
|----------------------|---------------|----------|----------------|----------|
| Sunflower (oil)      | 25 lbs        | \$ 8.50  | _____          | \$ _____ |
|                      | 50 lbs        | \$ 14.00 | _____          | \$ _____ |
| Sunflower hearts     | 10 lbs        | \$ 8.50  | _____          | \$ _____ |
|                      | 50 lbs        | \$ 32.00 | _____          | \$ _____ |
| Thistle (Niger) seed | 10 lbs        | \$ 8.50  | _____          | \$ _____ |
|                      | 50 lbs        | \$ 32.00 | _____          | \$ _____ |
| Premium Mix          | 25 lbs        | \$ 7.50  | _____          | \$ _____ |
|                      | 50 lbs        | \$ 13.00 | _____          | \$ _____ |
| Cracked Corn         | 25 lbs        | \$ 5.50  | _____          | \$ _____ |
| Peanuts (no shell)   | 10 lbs        | \$ 9.50  | _____          | \$ _____ |
| Ear Corn             | 25 lbs        | \$ 7.00  | _____          | \$ _____ |
|                      | 50 lbs        | \$ 11.00 | _____          | \$ _____ |
| Suet Cakes           | box of 1 doz. | \$ 12.00 | _____          | \$ _____ |
| <b>Sub-Total</b>     |               |          |                | \$ _____ |

**Check one:** ☐ Pick-up

☐ Delivery (Add \$10 for purchases under \$40) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Amount Due** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail order form and check for amount due to: Heart of Illinois Sierra Club, P.O. Box 3593, Peoria, IL 61614**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

## Please Help the Illinois Environmental Council Matching Grants Fund-Raising

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

The Illinois Environmental Council (IEC) is our environmental voice in Springfield. We can count on IEC to represent the best for the Illinois environment by lobbying in the state legislature and many other legislative efforts. IEC's resources are limited and the challenges that face our state have grown. Before the end of the year, IEC needs our help to take advantage of two challenge grants. Please help however you can with a donation to the Illinois Environmental Council. Your donation now will be matched dollar-for-dollar! The McKnight Foundation and long-time patron Michael J Scully are offering a total of \$10,000 in matching grants for new memberships or increased donations. Would you please consider giving IEC or IECEF an additional end-of-the-year donation to help them meet the \$10,000 Challenge? The grants differ slightly in scope so here are the details: if you would like to support their legislative advocacy work, please direct your gift to IEC (only IEC donations over \$250 will be matched). If you would like to assist outreach and education and would like the added benefit of a charitable tax deduction please donate to IECEF (Increased donations of any size to IECEF will be matched). All money raised will be used right here in Illinois for a healthier environment.

Please visit IEC online at [www.ilenviro.org/join\\_our\\_mailing\\_list.htm](http://www.ilenviro.org/join_our_mailing_list.htm) or phone IEC at 217-544-5954. Mail your check to: Illinois Environmental Council, 107 W. Cook St., Suite E, Springfield, IL 62704. With your generous support, IEC will continue to make a difference in the battle for clean air, water and wise use of Illinois' natural resources. This is a holiday gift that will keep giving! Your gift will be doubled if you are giving a gift for the first time or increasing your donation!

## Action on Concerns Regarding Coal-Fired Power Plants



BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

On Wednesday, December 8, 2004, the Illinois EPA issued new "revised proposed" Operating Permits for the 22 biggest polluters in IL, which are grandfathered coal-fired power plants. These permits will replace the permits IEPA issued last year that received many public comments and lots of attention. There is a new public comment period for these permits ending January 17, 2005. The Clean Air Act specifically provides the public with an opportunity to comment on permits for major polluters. Public scrutiny often leads to stronger and more protective permits. In this case, IEPA has set aside long-standing public participation policies. Heart of Illinois Sierra Club Conservation Chair Joe Laszlo has signed on to a letter to IEPA Director Renee Cipriano stating concerns about pollution from the plants. In early December, Joe also

sent a letter with comments from Bruce Nilles, Sierra Club Clean Air, Madison, WI, and Verena Owen, Illinois Chapter Clean Air Campaign Chair, to file concerns regarding the Edwards power plant at Bartonville. Our thanks and appreciation go to Bruce and Verena for all their work in making this technical statement possible. The Edwards plant has been operating for years with excessive sulfur dioxide emissions, and is one of the worst air polluters in your Peoria river valley region. These coal-fired power plants also pump mercury into the air, which ends up in our water, land, and lives. Thanks to Joe Laszlo for taking on yet another major issue for Heart of Illinois Group. As Joe said at the December group meeting, history has been made for HOI, as we filed a technical statement on the Edwards plant permit issue. Way to go Joe!

## Protest Cuts in State Funding for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Please write and phone Governor Rod Blagojevich and your local state Representative and Senator to let them know that you are outraged by the latest round of cuts and layoffs at the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). Dedicated, senior IDNR professionals have been targeted in the latest round of cuts from the Governor. Earlier huge cut-backs decimated Ecowatch staff and other staff and valuable IDNR initiatives. From earlier cuts, there is a concern that knowledgeable IDNR staff are being replaced by politically connected appointees. Governor Blagojevich has shown no concern for the importance and value of the Department of Natural Resources to the people of this state. The health of Illinois' state parks are at risk because of the severe cuts in staff and funding that are being inflicted. Years of progress made toward ensuring the future of Illinois' natural heritage, its sustainability, and accessibility are being compromised and are at critical risk of irreparable harm. Urge that the Governor cease balancing the state's budget by eliminating positions and compromising programs within IDNR. Cuts in IDNR funds and staff must stop. Staff reductions at IDNR are over twice that of any other state agency. IDNR is being targeted by Governor Blagojevich and we need to demand this outrage end.

Please send an email to: <http://www.illinois.gov/gov/contactthegovernor.cfm> or write/phone:

Gov. Rod Blagojevich  
State House  
Springfield, IL 62706

Rep. David Leitch  
3114 N. University  
Peoria, IL 61614  
685-3900

Sen. George Shadid  
456 Fulton St., #192B  
Peoria, IL 61602  
673-8404

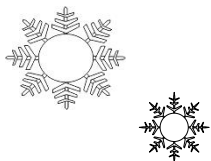


# HOI Group Calendar

*January*

**3 MON Executive Meeting & Newsletter Mailing, 6:30 p.m.**  
Peoria Pizza Works, 3921 N. Prospect Rd., Peoria Heights

**19 Group Meeting, 7 p.m.**  
**WED** Forest Park Nature Center. *John Mullen, Peoria Wilds.* Everyone is welcome!



## Sunday, February 6

## Starved Rock Winter Hike



**8 Executive Meeting, 7 p.m.**  
TUE Joseph Laszlo's home, 330 S. Barnewolt  
Dr., Peoria. Call 637-4692 for directions.

**16** **Group Meeting, 7 p.m.**  
**WED** Forest Park Nature Center. *Rick Collins, Timber Framing.* Everyone is welcome!

**18 Newsletter Deadline**  
FRI Send articles for March/April to: John Wosik, 12409 N. Blackhawk Ct., Dunlap, IL 61525, or [johnwosik@insightbb.com](mailto:johnwosik@insightbb.com).

**23 Newsletter Mailing, 6:30 p.m.**  
**WED** Peoria Pizza Works, 3921 N. Prospect  
 Rd., Peoria Heights



The Heart of Illinois Sierra Club will sponsor their 27th annual winter hike at Starved Rock State Park on Sunday, February 6th. Everyone is invited to participate in this annual outing. Meet at the Forest Park Nature Center in Peoria Heights at 9 a.m. for the trip to Starved Rock, or meet in the Great Hall of the Starved Rock Lodge at 10:30 a.m.

The approximate 4-hour slow paced outing will explore some of the picturesque areas of the park that should also include bald eagle sightings and other photo opportunities. Dress for the weather, including waterproof footwear and pack a lunch to eat on the trail. On the return trip to Peoria, an optional dinner stop is planned at Mona's Italian Restaurant in Toluca. For additional information, contact Al or Mary Harkrader at 682-8462.

## Last Year's Hike: Below the frozen waterfalls

Photo: Al Harkrader

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

**Jubilee College State Park  
Trail Crew**

**Sat. Jan. 15th** - Jubilee College State Park Trail Crew - a new volunteer opportunity! Enjoy fresh air and exercise for a good cause. First work day is Sat., Jan 15th. Meet 10:00 a.m. at the natural area lane, south off of the Brimfield-Jubilee blacktop (before the horse camp). Site Superintendent Tom Hintz will have a variety of trail maintenance projects. Regular work days will be the first and third Saturdays of each month, beginning at 10:00 a.m. to 1-2 p.m. For more information phone the park at 446-3758.



## Prairie Dawgs Work Crew

The Prairie Dawgs meet the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month at Jubilee College State Park. We are currently taking a winter break but will resume work in February or March. Call Doug Franks at 691-7993 for more information.

## Pimiteoui Trail Association Hikes

- **Sat., Jan. 8, 10 a.m.** Rock Island Trail, Dave Grebner, 688-3908
- **Sun., Jan. 23, 1:30 p.m.** East Peoria River Trail, Chris Golden, 579-2967
- **Sat., Feb. 5, 6 p.m.** Annual meeting/potluck, Forest Park Nature Center, Cindy Alexander, 444-3297
- **Sat., Feb. 19, 10 a.m.** Northwood Park, Morton, Jay Meinrich, 688-7679
- **Sat., Mar. 5, 10 a.m.** Moss Ave. historical walking tour, Cindy Alexander, 444-3297
- **Sun., Mar. 20, 1:30 p.m.** Detweiller Park, Paul Kaiser, 693-2974

Please contact hike leader for details.

## Heart of Illinois Sierra Club

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

## Executive Committee

|                                     |                         |          |                         |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------|-------------------------|
| <b>Chair</b> . . . . .              | Norman Ewing . . .      | 686-4122 |                         |
| <b>Vice-Chair</b> . . . . .         | Rudy Habben . . .       | 685-5605 |                         |
| <b>Secretary</b> . . . . .          | Joyce Blumenshine . . . | 688-0950 | joblumen@yahoo.com      |
| <b>Conservation Chair</b> . . . . . | Joseph Laszlo . . .     | 637-4692 | laszloja@excite.com     |
|                                     | David Grebner . . .     | 688-3908 |                         |
| <b>Newsletter Editor</b> . . . . .  | John Wosik . . . . .    | 243-2230 | johnwosik@insightbb.com |
| <b>Political Chair</b> . . . . .    | Ralph Ginn . . . . .    | 274-3289 | randdginn@bwsys.net     |

**Treasurer** . . . . . Grayce Mesner . . . 246-8397  
**Calendar Sales** . . . . Emiko Yang . . . . 691-5213

## HEART OF ILLINOIS

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