

Tallgrass Sierran

September/October 2006 Volume 34 No. 5

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

HOI Group Meetings

WED
SEPT 20

Longwall Mining

Forest Park Nature Center, 7 p.m.

Retired teacher and century farm owner Cathy Edmiston will discuss longwall mining and its impacts on the environment. Cathy will discuss how she got involved in the issue and is working with other farmers and individuals to try to prevent longwall mining in Montgomery County. Other counties in Illinois are facing longwall mining concerns, and the public needs to be informed about the subsidence, damage to water resources, buildings, and other costs of this coal extraction method. *All are welcome! Refreshments served after the meeting.*

WED
OCT 18

US Army Corps Upper Mississippi - Illinois Waterway Plan

Forest Park Nature Center, 7 p.m.

Mark Beorkrem with the Mississippi River Basin Alliance will review the Army Corps draft plan for locks, levees and ecological restoration of the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers. A status report on the proposed levee project at Rice Lake and the proposed trail from Banner Marsh to Rice Lake will also be presented. *All are welcome! Refreshments served after the meeting.*

Inside . . .

patagonia presents the

Wild & Scenic

ENVIRONMENTAL
FILM FESTIVAL
on tour

Hosted by HOI Sierra Club

Locally sponsored by Bushwhacker



Jubilee Triangle at the corner of Princeville-Jubilee Rd. and Jubilee College Rd.

Photo: John Wosik

Jubilee Triangle Prairie and Woods Threatened

Jubilee Township attempting to acquire title to Jubilee College Historic Site entrance for residential development.

BY DOUG FRANKS

Located at the intersection of Princeville-Jubilee Rd and Jubilee College Rd near the entrance to Jubilee College State Historic Site, sits a 2-acre parcel once known as "Public Square". Today this spot is easily recognized as the triangular roadside prairie area that surrounds the "Jubilee College State Historic Site and Park" sign and the woodland behind.

Public Square was surveyed and designated Public Square by Jubilee College in the 1850's. The streets were dedicated to the public; but for reasons unknown, Public Square was not; and it is not known whether Public Square was ever used as such. As Jubilee College's fortunes declined after the civil war, Public Square

became an orphan remnant of College property. Today, 150 years later it might belong to Bishop Chase's heirs; but no heirs have ever asserted any rights. Sufficient to say, it is in legal limbo and does not have a *warranted deed*.

Jubilee Township Board has for some years been trying to acquire title to this property and we fear this is the "eleventh hour". Township officials are now saying that they just wish to acquire title and have no plans for the property. However, having attended many Township meetings in 2003 and since, we know that the intention is to sell it to the highest bidder to bolster the Township's coffers and to add to its tax base. It is a foregone conclusion that the property would end up as residential, the woods and prairie would be gone and the park sign would be lucky to find a spot on the roadside.

(See *Jubilee*, page 2)



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

PDC Landfill Opponents Meet with IEPA Director

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Representatives from Heart of Illinois Sierra, Peoria Families Against Toxic Waste, and Peoria Audubon met with Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Director Doug Scott and members of his staff on July 26th. The meeting discussed local concerns regarding the Peoria Disposal Company Hazardous Waste Landfill and the PDC application to IEPA for an extension of their current operating permit. IEPA representatives stated that operating permit extensions are approved in 10 year segments. Closed landfills have to have an operating permit for as long as they are under post-closure regulations. Because of the Peoria County Board vote against the PDC expansion, IEPA is likely to hold a public hearing on the PDC operating permit extension. The hearing will take place this fall. Individuals can write to the IEPA regarding their concerns about having the hazardous waste landfill operating next to the city or other issues. Write to: Mr. Doug Scott, Director, IEPA, 1021 N. Grand Ave. East, Springfield, IL 62794-9276.

Coming in December

The 3rd Annual HOI Sierra Club Birdseed Sale

More information and an order form will be in the next issue of the *Tallgrass Sierran*. Birdseed makes a great Christmas gift!



Rock Island Trail Extension Needs Your Help Also: New Petition Drive to Build the Trail

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Please write your letter of strong support for the conversion of the Kellar Branch Line into a bicycle and hiking pathway to downtown Peoria. Urge the City of Peoria see that the trail issue is resolved and that this be made a priority issue. Currently Carver Lumber Company, the only business in Pioneer Park using rail delivery service, is complaining to the Surface Transportation Board that shipments on the new western spur line cost more than deliveries that were done by Pioneer Rail Corporation over the Kellar Branch Line. Carver Lumber receives about 50 rail deliveries per year. Lack of a resolution of this issue has been holding up development of the only north-south safe bicycle route for the city of Peoria. Over nine years ago the Peoria Park District received \$4 million in specific grants for the trail development. These funds are in jeopardy. Peoria needs a safe, family and bicycle commuter friendly route from the northern part of the city to downtown. Write to Mr. James Ardis, Mayor, City of Peoria, 419 Fulton, Peoria, IL 61602, and let him know this is a quality of life issue for Peoria, and is an important part of the type of options needed to make Peoria a more attractive place to live and work.

A new petition drive to "Build the Trail" is being coordinated. Phone Rail-Trail advocate Mark Klokenga, 693-2767 (home) or 681-6526 (work) for petitions or to volunteer for a few hours at the Rock Island Trail, Alta, to help with circulating petitions.

(Jubilee, from page 1)

The triangle area has been the site of the park sign for approximately 45 years. Park personnel have mowed the area for 25 years, and the Jubilee Prairie Dawgs, a volunteer group, have maintained the Prairie over its 12-year existence. The neighborhood and the general public have always perceived this area as an extension of Jubilee College Historic Site and State Park. Many letters have been written by Historic Site and State Park managers, the Citizens to Preserve Jubilee College Inc., and the Jubilee Prairie Dawgs, imploring the area be left alone as open space on the grounds that it provides a buffer between residential development and the Park, provides a nice backdrop to the Park sign and introduces the prairie theme of the park.

In 2003, when it became apparent Jubilee Township Board was pursuing title possession, Attorney James M. Tomlin of Peoria investigated legal options essentially pro bono, to secure title to the State. A plat survey was paid for by Citizens to Preserve Jubilee College Inc. (Jubilee Township Board refused to

share theirs) and presentations were made to the Peoria County Board Highway Committee that were positively-received. On Sept 24, 2003, Attorney James Tomlin recommended to Merle Kirby, Property Manager, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, that a *Complaint for Declaratory Judgment and To Quiet Title* be filed; and State legal agreed to take the matter from there.

On Friday August 4th, Jubilee Township called a closed meeting with the Illinois Historic Sites Properties Division and representative Leitch, declaring their intention to proceed to acquire title to Public Square; and pressuring the State not challenge this claim. Reportedly, Rep. Leitch, anxious to stop any legal wrangling between government entities, and unaware of any public opposition, persuaded the State not to challenge the Township's action for title.

This meeting has essentially de-fused the State's action. The State is unequivocal in preserving the status quo of Public Square; but has assumed a low profile "not wishing to appear as the land-grabber". The Prairie Dawgs have been

rallying environmental groups and citizens asking them to assert their opposition to Township takeover.

Please voice your opposition to the Jubilee Township takeover of "Public Square" by writing or calling Illinois Representative David Leitch, State Senator Dale Risinger, and Paula Cross at the

Rep. David Leitch 220 Capitol Bldg. Springfield, IL 62706 Phone 217-782-8108	Senator Dale Risinger M103F Capitol Bldg. Springfield, IL 62706 Phone 217-782-1942
District Office: 3114 N. University Peoria, IL 61604 Phone 309-685-3900	District Office: 5415 N. University, Suite 105 Peoria, IL 61614 Phone 309-693-4921

Paula Cross
Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
313 S. Sixth, FL. 002
Springfield, IL 62701
Phone: 217-785-1584

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency:

Emails can be sent to Lt. Gov. Pat Quinn

patagonia[®] presents the

Wild @ Scenic

ENVIRONMENTAL
FILM FESTIVAL
o n t o u r

Apollo Theatre, Downtown Peoria, Nov. 3rd & 4th, 7 to 9 p.m.

Tickets are \$4.00

Advanced tickets recommended and can be purchased @ Bushwhacker and the Apollo Theatre beginning October 2nd.

Door Prizes and Refreshments

Hosted by Heart of Illinois Sierra Club



Locally Sponsored by Bushwhacker



Friday, Nov. 3rd

Zoltan

Will Zoltan, international lover of rivers and “professional” tuber, ever gain respect in the world of whitewater? He may be up for a fight, but you can’t help but love the guy. (5 min.)

Kilowatt Ours

From the coal mines of West Virginia to the solar panel fields of Florida, filmmaker Jeff Barrie journeys to discover solutions to America’s energy related problems. Along the way, he and his wife Heather share a plan to eliminate their use of coal and nuclear power at home by employing energy conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable energy sources. (38 min.)

Flying Over Everest (Feature presentation)

A man, a bird, and a mountain. Angelo d’Arrigo, world champion hang glider, attempts to be the first to hang glide over Mt. Everest. By his side will be two Steppe Eagles, now extinct in the region. As part of an attempt to reintroduce them to the area, he will teach them the ancient migratory routes that once took them from Tibet to Nepal each year. The tales and the legends of this ancient Himalayan land will form the backdrop of an adventure story like no other. (60 min)

Saturday, Nov. 4th

Rollerboy

Rollerboy dons his hockey outfit and grabs his trusty hockey stick to take care of business with a swift hip check to anyone caught littering. You’ll think twice before you toss that candy wrapper on the sidewalk after seeing Rollerboy in action! (7 min.)

An Inconvenient Truth (with Al Gore) ***(Feature presentation)***

A passionate and inspirational look at one man’s fervent crusade to halt global warming’s deadly progress in its tracks by exposing the myths and misconceptions that surround it. That man is former Vice President Al Gore, who, in the wake of defeat in the 2000 election, re-set the course of his life to focus on a last-ditch, all-out effort to help save the planet from irrevocable change. In this eye-opening and poignant portrait of Gore and his “traveling global warming show,” Gore also proves himself to be one of the most misunderstood characters in modern American public life. Here he is seen as never before in the media - funny, engaging, open and downright on fire about getting the surprisingly stirring truth about what he calls our “planetary emergency” out to ordinary citizens before it’s too late. (100 min)

For more information, call the Heart of Illinois Sierra Club at (309) 637-1393.

The Re-Greening of America

BY RALPH GINN

The two forces lifting environmental awareness to a level not seen since the early 1970s, when the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act were signed into law, are global warming and the Bush administration's anti-environment agenda. Some of you may remember the 70s heyday of environmentalism when Charles Reich's book, "The Greening of America" stormed to the top of the best seller list. Reich was a Yale Law School professor with a vision for a change of consciousness.... a new way of living. "Greening" was more about reform of the "corporate state" than polluters, but it gave impetus to the environmental movement.....an energy that we are getting a glimpse of today.

While opinion polls have consistently indicated that 70% of Americans want a clean environment, that number drops to one percent for those who put the environment as their highest voting priority. The number for those somewhere between, people who are informed and consider environmental issues when voting is rising. The change is the result of a shift in tactics across the spectrum of environment based organizations. Sierra Club, National Wildlife Federation and other environmental groups are expanding their bases to include labor unions, business leaders, recreational organizations (hunting, fishing, skiing), local governments, and churches. Many are forming broad based coalitions. The Apollo Alliance is one such coalition. It's mission is to advocate green jobs and development programs for America. Apollo proposes investing \$300 billion of public funds in

green energy technology over the next ten years.

Chairman of the board of National Wildlife Foundation, Jerome Ringo, says, "The glue that connects the dots is the fight against climate change. In the past, green groups diffused their impact by working on too many different issues." Ringo argues the Apollo Alliance case, "Environmentalists can best pursue this battle, and gain new allies in the process, by championing green energy and jobs."

Green energy is a salesperson's dream product, it creates jobs, reduces pollution, including greenhouse gases, and cuts oil imports from the Middle East.

Except for the Sierra Club and The League of Conservation Voters, environmental groups have traditionally evaded politics. The outrages of the Bush Administration finally led many groups to take a more active roll in the 2004 elections. Regrettably, the Democrats chose to ignore the grassroots hunger for an environmental voice and the 10 million members of environmental groups, lost in ambiguity, voted at the same low rate as the rest of the nation. Jump forward twenty calendar pages; a tide of change is flowing across the country. It is driven by the states, cities and towns and it is leaving behind a stubborn President and a gridlocked Congress that is unable to solve the most mundane problem....when ordering lunch do we ask for french fries or freedom fries?

Examples of energy saving, reducing pollution and job creation abound: August 2, 2006, 22 cities around the world, including Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and New York joined an effort pro-

posed by former president Clinton to limit global warming; the California legislature is considering a bill that will limit all greenhouse gases, it has the backing of the governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger; over the last 30 years California has imposed energy efficiency standards on its power industry, buildings and appliances that have reduced its energy use, per capita, to half that of the rest of America; Portland, Oregon has cut greenhouse gas emissions by 13 percent since 1993; Salt Lake City, in Utah, one of the reddest of red states, has a democratic mayor, Rocky Anderson, who has implemented green policies that have cut greenhouse gases to 7% below 1990 levels, while boosting city revenues, thanks to energy efficiency and methane recovery; energy giant British Petroleum invested \$20 million over three years throughout its production facilities to increase energy efficiency and realized \$650 million in fuel cost savings: Wal-Mart, the ultimate Big Box, is going green, CEO Lee Scott has pledged to cut greenhouse gases at existing stores by 20% and by 25-30% at new stores, Scott has mandated that Wal-Mart's trucks get twice as many miles per gallon by 2015.

There are many, many more examples of locals and states finding that green is responsible and profitable. How long it will take for the President and the Congress to get off square-one is anyone's guess. In the meantime the grassroots are looking at them in the rearview mirror.

And where is Charles Reich today? An Executive Vice President at 3M corporation with compensation of \$6 million a year.

HOI EXCOM Nominations Needed

Nominations for the HOI EXCOM Board are needed by October 15th. Four board positions will be up for election this year. Board members have a range of opportunities from organizing programs for the general meetings, representing HOI at various meetings and events, or being active by contributing ideas. Nominate yourself or send in a nomination for someone that would like to be on the Board. Meetings are held once a month, and are a great way to participate in your local Sierra Group. Send nominations to John Wosik, 12409 N. Blackhawk Ct., Dunlap, IL 61525, or call 243-2230.

☐ 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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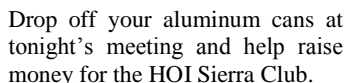
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HOI Group Calendar

September

13 Executive Meeting, 7 p.m.
WED John Wosik's home, 12409 N. Blackhawk Ct., Dunlap. Call 243-2230 for directions.

20 **Group Meeting, 7 p.m.**
WED Forest Park Nature Center. *Cathy Edmis-*
ton, Longwall Mining.



23
SAT  **Aluminum Can Drop-Off,
10 a.m. to Noon**

Help raise money for the HOI Sierra Club! Drop off your aluminum cans at Forest Park Nature Center parking lot from 10 a.m. to noon.

24
SUN  **Hennepin & Hopper
Lakes Outing, 9 a.m.**

Meet at Forest Park Nature Center at 9 a.m., or at Hennepin & Hopper Lakes at 10:15 a.m.

In April 2001, a non-profit ecological restoration organization known as The Wetland Initiative began restoring water flow and retention back into this 2,600-acre complex which had been drained for agriculture. The influx of water was like lifeblood, almost instantly reviving Hennepin & Hopper lakes along with their accompanying marshes and wet-prairies back into viable wildlife habitat. Within weeks, species of birds, frogs, and aquatic plants that had not been seen on the site for the past nine decades reappeared. Other objectives for this site include demonstrating cost-effective, self-sustaining solutions to water pollution and flood management issues, educating the public about the values of wetlands, providing opportunities for research, and providing high-quality open space for recreational opportunities. Call 693-8587 for information, including directions to Hennepin & Hopper Lakes.

October

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

14 **Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup,**
SAT **9 a.m.** 

Meet at the Fry Farm at the intersection of Rt. 40 and Singing Woods Road. Gloves and hard-soled shoes are recommended. Sorry, no helpers under 10 years due to safety concerns. For more information, or if you have not viewed the safety video (required), call Rudy Habben at 685-5605.

15 Newsletter Deadline

Send articles for Nov/Dec to: John
Wosik, 12409 N. Blackhawk Ct, Dunlap,
IL 61525, or johnwosik@insightbb.com

18 Group Meeting, 7 p.m.

Forest Park Nature Center. *Mark Beorkrem, US Army Corps Upper Mississippi - Illinois Waterway Plan.* Everyone is welcome!



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

Through Sept. 23

“Illinois River Stories, a Journey with Regional Photographers” exhibit at the Peoria Art Guild, 203 Harrison Street, downtown Peoria, with ten professional photographers showing many ways the Illinois river connects with our lives.

Sat., Sept. 9

Peoria Art Guild hosts Illinois River Stories events starting with an 8 a.m. river walk meditation, to a 9 a.m. panel discussion on river issues and other activities. Call the Art Guild at 637-2787 or check their website for the schedule www.peoriaartguild.org



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.

Congratulations Prairie Dawgs

for being selected as an “Outstanding Volunteer for IDNR for 2006”!

Heart of Illinois Sierra Club

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

Executive Committee

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Vice-Chair Rudy Habben 685-5605
Conservation Chair Joseph Laszlo . . . 637-4692 laszloja@excite.com
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