

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

HOI Group Meetings

Wed May 16

Sierra Club Cool Cities Campaign

Forest Park Nature Center, 7 p.m.

Sierra Club Midwest staff person Becki Clayborn is the conservation organizer for the Illinois Cool Cities Campaign. She will present the Cool Cities energy conservation plan and how it can be implemented. (Rescheduled from March.) All are welcome! Refreshments served after the meeting.

WED Annual Potluck Picnic & JUNE 20 White Elephant Auction

Detweiller Park - Moose Shelter, 6:30 p.m.

Join us for our annual summer potluck picnic and fundraising auction of unusual, useful, and tasty items donated by our members. Bring a main dish or other food to share, plus your own table service. Iced tea and lemonade will be provided.

This year's picnic will be held at the **Moose Shelter at the south end of Detweiller Park, Peoria**. Enter the park from Rt. 29 and follow Detweiller Drive toward the bluff. Turn left before ascending the bluff and follow the park road to the far south end of the park. Turn right at the Moose shelter sign. Or, from Knoxville Ave. (Rt. 40) take Detweiller Drive east, turn right at the park entrance sign, and then turn right twice immediately after descending the bluff. If you'd like, don't forget an item to donate to the auction. And bring a friend! Everyone is welcome!

An Old Refrain: "End Times are a Comin."

BY RALPH GINN, Opinion Columnist

Fulfilling an "End Times" prophecy in 597 B.C. Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar conquered Israel, wrecked havoc on Jerusalem, and scattered the Jews across the Sinai Peninsula. Since then, and probably long before, "End Times" prophecies have surfaced with surprising frequency. In a telephone promo for an upcoming appearance at the Peoria Civic Center, comedian George Carlin predicted that the end of human civilization was not far off. His rationale: global warming and/ or proliferation of nuclear weapons. Carlin is not alone, hardly a month goes by when a prominent scientist or climatologist states the dire consequences of impending climate change.

In a recent preliminary report on climate change the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, a United Nations network of 2.000 scientists, warned that in just a few decades, hundreds of millions will go hungry, tens of millions will be flooded from their homes and a billion will suffer from drought, unless drastic measures are taken. Patricia Romero Lankao, a co-author of the report says, "Things are happening faster than we expected." Another co-author, Terry Root of Stanford University said, "We truly are standing at the edge of mass extinction of species." The American people appear to agree. A March poll conducted for Yale University by the Global Strategy Group found that 94% agreed that auto manufactures should be required to make more fuel-efficient cars and 43% agreed that preventing global warming is part of my religious duty.



While many states (California reduced carbon dioxide emissions in its power industry and public buildings to half the nation's per capita output and is committed to a 25% reduction of all greenhouse gases by 2020) and cities across America have mandated reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the President, Congress, automakers, and coal industry have remained oblivious. The President is a puzzling contradiction. As governor of Texas he launched the Texas wind industry which now leads the nation in wind-generated electricity. As President his environmental record is abysmal.

There are signs from which an optimist can find encouragement. In early April the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 5-4 that the federal government has the authority to regulate carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases produced by motor vehicles. While it does not require the government to regulate, it does instruct the Environmental Protection Agency to reconsider its refusal to regulate emissions. When giant Texas power company, TXU, announced plans to build 11 coal-fired power plants, Environmental Defense and National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) created a web site that built a national constituency opposed to the project. That probably would not have been enough had not two large financial groups offered a \$45 billion buyout with the stipulation that the two environmental groups sign off on the contract. TXU was persuaded to cut the number of coalplants to 3, plowing \$400 million into energy-efficiency programs, and doubling (See End Times, page 2)

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Banner Strip Mine Battle Appeals Prairie Lane Road Decision

Citizens for the Preservation of Banner Township have not paused one instant in their efforts to stop the strip mine that was proposed for 643 acres at the immediate edge of the village of Banner. Thanks to the work of attorneys Ken Davies and Dave Wentworth, with Hasselberg, Williams, Grebe, Snodgrass & Birdsall, Peoria, the legal effort to keep Prairie Lane Road from being declared abandoned is going to the Illinois Supreme Court. The land for Prairie Lane Road was given to Banner Township in the 1800's and it is historically and strategically important to Banner. This roadway crosses the proposed strip mine location, and the mine companies cannot claim full access necessary for mining without having this road vacated. The events, hearings, village politics, and gallant attorneys involved with this case would make a major motion picture something akin to a combination of "True Grit" and "Erin Brockovich". The Banner Citizens are fundraising for expenses for this effort and donations are tax deductible. Funds can be given to "Save Rice Lake Area Association", c/o John Grigsby, 19942 North Highway 24, Canton, IL 61520.

One Good Step in the North Canton Strip Mine Fight

Folks who do not want 1,085 acres northeast of Canton and in the watershed of Canton Lake strip mined were cheered by the fact that Capital Resources Development Corporation has temporarily withdrawn their permit application to the Army Corps of Engineers. The mine company is required to obtain an Army Corps permit because the proposed mine would cause major impacts to streams feeding into the Illinois River.

Canton Lake is the source of water for over 22,000 people in area communities. The City of Canton is trying to find other water sources before a new ethanol plant east of town begins operations. Both the current Canton water supply and sewage treatment facilities are having problems. Canton was planning on pumping water from the Illinois River, but now is attempting to drill water wells near the river close to the end of the Banner Dike Road.

Recycling Electronics BY KIERSTEN SHEETS

Electronic waste, also known as e-waste, is creating more problems than you might know. E-waste takes up a huge amount of space in your landfill. Also, many electronics contain hazardous waste. Taking responsibility for your electronic waste is important.

What can you do to make a difference? Stop throwing away your household electronics! It's that simple. How do you get rid of it? For those living in or near Peoria, there is a simple solution. It's called Recycling for Illinois located at 401 NE Rock Island, (309)682-0675. You can drop off your electronic items at their store or save it up and drop it off when they host an e-waste collection event, usually held in the Firestone parking lot at Northwoods Mall. Call them for their next collection event. For those readers outside of Peoria, please contact your county government. Your Health and Human Services Department might have information about a local business or an organization that sponsors e-waste collection. You can also log onto www.illinoisrecycles.org to see if there is a company listed near you that offers e-waste recycling services. You can also try www.epa.state.il.us for more information on ewaste collection. If you can't find a way to responsibly eliminate your e-waste, consider staring a program or speak up to your local government and ask them to start a program.

Encourage your employer to take responsibility, too! When your workplace is updating office machinery, ask what happens to the old stuff. If the person in charge of getting rid of the e-waste doesn't have an answer, ask if you can offer some suggestions of where to take it instead of taking it to the landfill.

We are in a time when everyone needs to start thinking of how you can take responsibility for your environmental footprint. Take charge and find out what you can do to live a greener life. More often than not, the benefits to you outweigh any extra effort you may need to put forth.

If you can't find information and want some help, I would be glad to try. Contact me at <u>wtigerme@yahoo.com</u> or by letter at 411 Hamilton Blvd., Ste. 1518, Peoria, IL 61602

(End Times, from page 1)

purchases of wind power. Fred Krupp of NRDC concluded, "The markets are ahead of the politicians. The world has changed and these guys (businessmen) see it." In a first-round victory for the polar bear, environmental groups brought intense pressure on the Bush administration to propose that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service list the polar bear as "threatened." Fish and Wildlife has nine months to make a final decision. Researchers from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Colorado State University have computed which biofuels are best at reducing greenhouse gases. Switchgrass and hybrid poplar trees were

115% better than fossil fuels. Reed canary grass was 85% better and corn and soybeans were 40% better.

With the two-and-fro of climate change evidence swirling in the media, keep in mind two immutable facts. 1) carbon dioxide is a heat trapping gas. The surface temperature of Venus is 876 degrees Fahrenheit and its atmosphere is 96% carbon dioxide. Although Venus is closer to the sun than Earth, and its atmosphere is composed of much more carbon dioxide, the conclusion that carbon dioxide is a heat trapping gas is indisputable; 2) The Vostok ice core, almost 12,000 feet in length, was extracted from the Antarctic ice cap during the period 1990-1998. It revealed that the planet is nearly as warm now as it has been in the last 420,000 years and that carbon dioxide levels are the highest in the last 3,500,000 years.

The European Union has slammed the U.S. and Australia, with good reason, for failure to reduce increases in greenhouse gas emissions. U.S. emissions are 16% above 1990 levels, European's are 1.6% higher. This winter was, worldwide, the warmest on record. Lake Superior's surface temperature has risen 4.5 degrees since 1979. George Carlin's "End Times" prediction gets little argument from 20th and 21st century climate trends. Faith in the future remains grounded in hope for change.

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

The Peoria County website stated on April 13th that the County Board did not vote on a proposed settlement agreement with Peoria Disposal Company over the PDC Hazardous Waste Landfill expansion. The notice stated that if an agreement is proposed in the future, it would go before the full Board for a vote and the public would be notified well in advance. If there is a proposed agreement, the notice stated that interested parties would be allowed to review and comment on the proposal.

At the April 12th County Board meeting, members of Peoria Families Against Toxic Waste, HOI Sierra, noted area physicians, and concerned citizens filled the County Board meeting room to speak during public comments. Much of the concerns related to the negotiations between PDC and County staff that have been going on for over two months. No information has been made public about these meetings. Near the end of January, 2007, PDC attended a Peoria County Health and Environmental Issues Committee meeting where PDC offered to discuss terms regarding the landfill expansion with the County. At that meeting two Peoria County Board members said that staff should talk with PDC, and a motion was made directing County staff to do so.

On February 23, 2007, Peoria Families and HOI Sierra held a press conference to present a proposal covering a full range of issues that need to be addressed at the PDC landfill. The proposal includes exhumation of the barrel trench and major updates for the older parts of the landfill, an end to landfilling PCBs and MGP wastes, numerous safety upgrades on a range of issues, closure of the landfill and the waste treatment facility with no attempts to delay closure or reopen them, and the establishment of a true perpetual care fund that could not be raided for other landfill expenses. Other conditions were included. These were to be done for a greatly reduced expansion and some continued years of operation.

Sierra Club in Illinois has made real environmental gains through negotiations with polluters. One example is the Springfield City, Water, Light and Power settlement of last year, which resulted in advancing wind power and energy efficiency, while obtaining better air pollution controls on a new coal-fired power plant.

It is well known that PDC can reapply for another site expansion public hearing in 2008. The HOI Board respects that not all group members agree with proposing terms or considering what can be done at the PDC Hazardous Waste Landfill. The focus was to provide comprehensive short -term, and long-term protections

Kellar Branch Line News

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Take a look at the snazzy new R.I. Trail information at <u>http://www.ritrail.org/</u> and watch their calendar for Kellar Branch Line updates and volunteer workdays. "Build the Trail" bumper stickers are available at Running Central at the corner of Main and Sheridan in Peoria. Yard signs will be available in May. Phone 688-0950 if you would like a "Build the Trail NOW, Kellar Branch Line," yard sign.

Did you realize that the railroad companies using the Kellar Branch Line have paid essentially nothing to the City of Peoria for use of the Kellar Branch Line since 1986? The Surface Transportation Board allows fair market rent to be charged for use of rail lines. This can be up to 12% of the property value of the rail line. We need the City of Peoria to require that any rail company using the Kellar Branch Line pay fair market value rent. The cost of this will clearly show that rail service on the Kellar Branch line is not economically viable. The city of Peoria is subsidizing both the new \$2 million western spur rail line into Pioneer Park and the Kellar Branch Line by allowing use by forprofit rail companies for only \$1 each a year! This is outrageous! Please write to your Peoria City Council representative and to Mayor Jim Ardis, at Peoria City Hall, 419 Fulton St., Peoria, IL 61602, and request that the city charge fair market value rent for any train use of the Kellar Branch Line. It is enough that Peoria taxpayers help subsidize one rail line into Pioneer Park. The millions of dollars in grants that the Peoria Park District has waiting for development of a public trail on the Kellar Branch outweigh whatever a for-profit rail company could pay in rent. For more information on this issue, contact George Burrier, Chair, Friends of the Rock Island Trail, 266-5085.

Thanks to Senator Dick Durbin, Sponsor of Utah Wilderness Bill, and to Rep. Ray LaHood for Cosponsoring "American's Redrock Wilderness Act"

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Please phone Senator Dick Durbin, 202-224-2152, and Rep. Ray LaHood, 202-225-6201 or Peoria phone 671-7027, to thank them for their efforts regarding "America's Redrock Wilderness Act" (ARWA). Durbin has championed this bill for some time. Representative LaHood is new in his cosponsorship of a companion bill in the House. The legislation will provide formal wilderness protection for some of the most spectacular landscapes in the United States. The redrock canyonlands of southern Utah are part of the last places in the lower 48 states to be mapped, and the area needs protection to remain a wilderness where the human imprint on nature is at a minimum.

Yes, I want to jo Name Address City	in the Sierra Club! My check	11221		_
Introductory \$25 Contributions, gifts and d	Individual 239 Joint 539 Joint 5 ues to the Sierra Club are not tax d forts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a Sierra Club, ulder,	eductible; they suppor subscription to Sierra		
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HOI Group Calendar

May

 9 Executive Meeting, 7 p.m.
 Bob and Diane Jorgensen's home, 212
 Sunnybrook Dr., East Peoria. Call 698-0325 for directions.

16 Group Meeting, 7 p.m.

NED Forest Park Nature Center. Becki Clayborn, Sierra Club Cool Cities Campaign. Everyone is welcome!



Conservationist of the Year Nominations Sought

The HOI Executive Committee is seeking nominations for the **2007 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 September 12th. The winner will be announced at our September Group meeting. Send nominations to John Wosik, c/o HOI Sierra Club, 12409 N. Blackhawk Ct., Dunlap; or call 243-2230.

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

May 19 (Sat) Kellar Branch Line Clean-up

Important workday for trail advocates! Sponsored by Friends of the Rock Island Trail and Trail Advocates. For more information phone George Burrier, 266-5085.

June

7 Illinois Pollution Control Board Decision on PDC Appeal

Illinois Pollution Control Board to announce decision in the PDC appeal of the 2006 Peoria County Board vote to deny the PDC Hazardous Waste Landfill expansion.

7 Global Warming Group Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Peoria Public Library, 2nd floor, downtown Peoria. See the announcement below for more information.



Executive Meeting, 7 p.m.

John Wosik's home, 12409 N. Blackhawk Ct., Dunlap. Call 243-2230 for directions.

17 Newsletter Deadline

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

20 Annual Potluck Picnic & White Elephant Auction, 6:30 p.m. Detweiller Park, Moose picnic shelter. See front page for more details.

25 Newsletter Mailing

N Peoria Pizza Works, 3921 N. Prospect Rd., Peoria Heights

Special Announcement: Formation of Global Warming Group

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HOI Sierra Club is spearheading a coalition of environmental groups, individuals and organizations with the main purpose of combating global warming locally and statewide. This coalition will focus its attention on programs (such as Sierra Club's Cool Cities) to reduce CO2 output, introduce green building for new construction, promoting conservation and promoting a state CO2 reduction policy. These are big ideas and we need volunteers from our membership and beyond to get things going! If you are interested in being involved in this exciting new group, please attend our first meeting at the Peoria Public Library, 2nd floor, downtown Peoria, on June 7th, at 6:30 p.m. If you want more information, please contact David Pittman at <u>dvdpttmn@aol.com</u>, Kiersten Sheets at <u>wtigerme@yahoo.com</u> or call the Sierra Club phone at 309-637-1393. We look forward to seeing you there!

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.



Recycle Your Aluminum Cans and Help Raise Money for the HOI Sierra Club

Save your aluminum cans over the summer and help raise money for the Heart of Illinois Sierra Club! Drop off your cans at Forest Park Nature Center parking lot at our September 19th Group macting, or an Seturday. September 22nd from 10

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Center parking lot at our September 19th Group meeting, or on Saturday, September 22nd, from 10 a.m. to noon. Your donation will help finance HOI Group operating expenses, including this newsletter. Please call 243-2230 for more information.

Heart of Illinois Sierra Club Local Meetings & Outings Action Alerts Hotline: (309) 637-1393 Contacts • Leave Messages HEART OF ILLINOIS NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION U.S. POSTAGE PAID **Executive Committee** Sierra Club 🖗 PEORIA. ILLINOIS Chair Joseph Laszlo 637-4692 laszloja@excite.com PERMIT NO. 104 P.O. Box 3593 Vice-Chair Rudy Habben 685-5605 Peoria, IL 61614 Co-SecretaryDiane Jorgensen ... 698-0325 jestpr@aol.com Co-SecretaryRobert Jorgensen . .698-0325 jestpr@aol.com Conservation Chair David Pittman 676-5237 DvdPttmn@aol.com Political Chair Wendy Marquis .. 243-9982 rockymtpoohbear@mchsi.com Newsletter Editor . . John Wosik 243-2230 johnwosik@insightbb.com * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * Treasurer Chris Golden 579-2967 Membership Chair Norman Ewing ... 686-4122 Outings Chair Chuck Buchna 693-8587 ... To explore, enjoy and protect the wild places of the earth Calendar Sales Emiko Yang 691-5213

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