



# Tallgrass Sierran

September/October 2008 Volume 36 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 17

### Peoria County Issues Forum

Forest Park Nature Center, 7 p.m.

The County Board candidates from the three contested county districts - the 6<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup> have been invited to participate in a forum on county environmental issues. *All are welcome!*

WED  
OCT 15

### Illinois Clean Car Legislation

Forest Park Nature Center, 7 p.m.

Will Reynolds, a member of the Sangamon Group of the Illinois Sierra Club, will give a status report on the Illinois Clean Car legislation, a major part of the Sierra Club's campaign for the current legislative session, which may be called up during the November veto and budget review session. *All are welcome!*

## Inside . . .



November 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>

Apollo Theatre, Downtown Peoria

Hosted by HOI Sierra Club

## Rule of the Barn

BY RALPH GINN, *Opinion Columnist*

A neighbor of mine has a barn in which a dozen cats reside. The other day, she told my wife that she had a complaint from another neighbor that her cats were stalking his bluebirds. She patiently explained that her cats know they are not to chase birds, "It's a rule of the barn."

I'm not sure there is such a smart cat, but wish more, a lot more Americans, would observe a rule of the barn to be informed, and vote for their environmental future. Frequently, I am asked what we, as individuals, can do to preserve the environment. I recommend the usual: conserve, recycle, drive slower in fuel efficient vehicles, become an activist. I always add, vote smart environmental choices. With global warming rising like a tornado loaded storm, it's crunch time and there are no more second chances.

It is important to do the things we as individuals can do, but the reality is that not everyone is going to conscientiously conserve energy, drive slower, recycle, etc. And, the reality is that individual effort will never be enough. Containing global warming will take a major commitment by governments at the regional, state, national and worldwide levels.

Energy policy and combating global warming are Siamese twins, co-joined, inseparable. Reducing greenhouse gases is dependent upon energy efficiency and the use of clean energy sources. The first difficult step is to take coal and oil out of the equation. Neither will ever be clean. Although, there is little chance of becoming oil and coal independent in the near

future, it is within our capability to become more efficient and to conserve. Dan Reicher, former assistant secretary of the Department of Energy told a Senate panel that energy efficiency is the "low hanging fruit in our economy." Al Gore says that energy efficiency and conservation are the best investments we can make.

Thomas Friedman, of the New York Times, wrote, "I continue to be appalled at the gap between what is clearly going to be the next great global industry--renewable energy and clean power--and the ability of the Bush administration and the Congress to put in place the policies we need to ensure that America leads that industry." Friedman cites the example of The Renewable Energy and Job Creation Act which would extend the investment tax credit for solar, wind, geothermal, wave, and other renewable energy sources. Republicans in the Senate have defeated it eight times. John McCain missed all eight votes, Barack Obama did vote for the credits three times and has stated his support for the bill. On one occasion McCain stayed in his office, a few seconds from the Senate chamber, during the vote.

A study released by the U.S. Energy Department says that offshore drilling will not add to domestic oil production until 2017 and would have insignificant impact on oil prices. While offshore drilling is a modest-sized issue, it is an opening battle in the conflict over energy policy. It is disappointing to see that the President and McCain are embracing offshore drilling as the answer to high gas

(See *Barn*, page 2)



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## Central Illinois Global Warming Solutions Group News

BY KIERSTEN SHEETS

### Cheers to East Peoria for their Cool Cities initiatives!

The Green Team meets twice a month and has a large representative base with the newest members coming from the police department and the parks and recreation district. Three, four cylinder Ford Escapes are in line for purchase which will save the City approximately \$6,000.00 in fuel costs over the life of each vehicle. Waste Management is working with the City to initiate a new hotel/motel recycling program. New recycling bins have been placed in the recreational facility, EastSide Centre. The Fondulac District Library will soon have three load testers available for check-out to library card carrying citizens interested in checking the wattage their appliances pull and where they can cut back or maybe replace.

### There's a new CFL drop off site in Peoria!

Home Depot has launched a national program accepting burned out or broken CFLs for recycling. Place your burned out CFL in a plastic bag and drop it off at the service desk. It's that simple! Please also remember there are CFL recycling sites at Farmington Road Hardware, West Peoria and Cash-n-Carry Lumber, East Peoria.

Want to know what else we are doing? Join our Yahoo! Group: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ciglobalwarming/>

## Climate Change: How Does It Affect Peoria?

**Town Hall Meeting - Tuesday, Sept. 9, 7:30-9 p.m.**

Forest Park Nature Center, Peoria Heights

Heart of Illinois Sierra Group and Global Warming Solutions Group have been invited to host a town hall meeting on global warming sponsored by the Illinois Environmental Council and Environment Illinois.

The agenda consists of an explanation of global warming, with a focus on local efforts to provide Peoria and Central Illinois with solutions, including current state legislative initiatives. Local legislators should be in attendance to help explain the current status of these initiatives.

Featured speaker Aur J. Beck will discuss how energy efficiency can help you save money and lower your carbon footprint. Mr. Beck is an energy efficiency and renewable energy installer who owns Advanced Energy Solutions in Carbon-dale. Local speakers include:

Bob Jorgensen - Heart of Illinois Sierra Club

John Mullen - Forest Park Nature Center

Sheldon Schafer - Lakeview Museum and local astronomer

Kiersten Sheets - Central Illinois Global Warming Solutions Group

This meeting is part of a statewide series that convenes local residents, elected officials and community groups to discuss how soaring gas prices and asthma rates as well as shifting gardening zones are related to climate change and how to address these problems.

Whether you're a skeptic or believer, please attend this free, public forum to hear what experts and your local legislators have to say about this impending crisis. For details, call 217-544-5954 or email [wking@ilenviro.org](mailto:wking@ilenviro.org).



### Conservationist of the Year Nominations Sought

The HOI Executive Committee is seeking nominations for the **2008 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 November 5th. Send nominations to Diane Jorgensen, c/o HOI Sierra Club, 212 Sunnybrook Dr., East Peoria, IL 61611; or call 698-0325.

### *(Barn, from page 1)*

prices and energy independence. This is junk economics, dishonest and fraudulent as an energy policy. Barack Obama does some better, favoring offshore drilling, if a bill will include more fuel-efficient vehicles and development of alternative energy sources.

Frequently, I read the question, why don't we harvest the estimated 500 billion barrels of oil from oil shale located in Western Colorado and Utah (for comparison, the Arctic Wildlife Refuge has between 5 and 15 billion barrels). The answer is, as always, in the details. Oil extraction from shale is expensive, the technology is not yet commercially viable, and most prohibitive, requires huge amounts of water. If you remember from 5th grade geography, the Southwest and parts of Southern California have one principle source of water, snow melt from the western slopes of the Rocky Mountains. Extra gallons are a chimera.

The very bad news is that global warming is accelerating faster than even two year old scientific predictions projected. Greenland's Kangis Glacier and its ice sheet are melting 30 percent faster than between 1979 and 2007, and in 2007 the melt was 10 percent bigger than the previous year. Greenland is now losing 200 cubic kilometers of ice per year to the sea from melt and glacial shed. For the first time in known history Greenland, a country that lies above the Arctic Circle, experienced rain in December and January.

Can this planet be saved? Paul Krugman, economist and op-ed writer for the New York Times writes that if the completely bogus claim that environmental protection is raising energy prices can get political traction (a recent poll showed that 51 percent of Americans believe that new offshore drilling will lower gas prices within a year), what are the chances of getting serious action against

global warming? A Carbon tax or trading plan really will raise energy prices.

While the survival of modern civilization is hanging in the balance, America continues to lead the world in energy consumption, and greenhouse gas pollution. We consume 25 percent of the world's oil production but have only 3 percent of worldwide oil reserves and produce 21 percent of greenhouse gases. Other developed countries are watching and waiting. Number 2, China, and number 3, India, are not going to be persuaded to control their greenhouse gas emissions as long as the U.S. is the Big Nick of consumption and pollution.

Use your vote wisely, your grandchildren will say "Thank you." Make it your **Rule of the Barn** to vote for environmental sanity.

Send comments to Ralph Ginn at [randdginn@bwsys.net](mailto:randdginn@bwsys.net).



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Heart of Illinois Group



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

**Apollo Theatre, Downtown Peoria**

**Nov. 7 (Fri.), 7 to 9 p.m.**

**Nov. 8 (Sat.), 7 to 9 p.m.**

Tickets for each night are \$5.00 for adults, \$3.00 for children under 12.

Door prizes from local merchants as well as Patagonia, Clif Bar, Tom's of Maine and special promotions by the additional sponsors listed below.

**Friday, Nov. 7**

**7 p.m.**

***Mountain Top Removal*** (feature presentation)

***Jury Award- Wild & Scenic Film Festival 2008***

At times, it seems news of environmental and ecological exploitations of other nations is at the forefront of our awareness. What's happening in our own country, our own backyard, is neglected or ignored. Director Mike O'Connell, though, points a sharp lens at the harsh coal-mining practice called mountaintop removal, a process that involves clear cutting and then the removal of up to 1,000 vertical feet of mountain by explosives. He is there when citizens, students and evangelical environmentalists confront the nation's fourth largest coal company. (74 mins)

**Saturday, Nov. 8**

**7 p.m.**

**Road Trip film series.** Travel over 23,000 miles on alternative fuels with these award winning films:

***Save Our Snow*** Hilarious but with a serious message, this film follows two snowboarders as they tour around in a waste vegetable-powered RV and spread awareness about the realities of climate change. (30 mins)

***Hybrid Pedal*** Environmentalists and road bikers make a thousand-mile ride from Portland, Oregon, to Salt Lake City, Utah. Along the way, riders rode through seven threatened areas and discussed the issues of each place with representatives from grassroots groups seeking to keep them wild. (28 mins)

***Oil & Water Project*** Two kayakers embark on an endless summer-style 35,000 km road trip from Alaska to Argentina in a retro-outfitted Japanese fire truck without a single drop of petroleum. (33 mins)

Additional Sponsors:



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# Thanks to Everyone Who Attended the PDC Hazardous Waste Delisting Hearing !

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

For all the HOI members and friends who took off from work, or in other ways gave a long afternoon or efforts to the PDC hearing, your presence made an impact ! Thanks for being there !

Wide-ranging issues challenging the Peoria Disposal Company were presented in public comments at the August 18<sup>th</sup> Illinois Pollution Control Board (IPCB) hearing held at the Peoria Public Library. The hearing was in regard to PDC's application to have Electric Arc Furnace Dust delisted from being landfilled as a hazardous waste, based on PDC's newly developed, secret process. The new process is to bind the heavy metals in the waste with a special reagent to keep them from leaching out. Delisting would allow PDC to landfill EAF in any municipal waste landfill, and avoid closure of their hazardous waste landfill at Peoria. PDC's current operating permit states that closure is expected in March, 2009. PDC has commented publicly that it intends to keep their hazardous waste landfill open to 2018 by shipping EAF to municipal waste landfills. 95,000 cubic yards a year could be off-shipped from PDC #1 after processing. EAF is Hazardous Waste Listing K061 and contains thirteen heavy metals

including lead, zinc, cadmium, chromium, hexavalent chromium, thallium, mercury, nickel, and arsenic. Many of these are carcinogenic or neurotoxins and have known health risks. EAF also contains dioxins and furans, which are highly toxic and bio-accumulate in animals and people. Over 100 people attended the hearing.

Twenty-eight public comments were made, including four steel company representatives who spoke in support of the delisting. Twenty-two individuals made comments opposing the delisting. Numerous people asked that a public hearing be held in Clinton.

## Please Write to the Illinois Pollution Control Board By Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>

Public comments should include the Case Number AS 08-10. Concerns regarding this delisting include:

- Testing on the new process was only done in December, 2007, and February, 2008. No long-term testing has been done and no testing has been done in an actual municipal waste landfill.
- The new process has only been tested by the company PDC paid to develop it and has received no independent testing.
- PDC intends to send the treated waste to their Indian Creek Municipal Waste Landfill near Hopedale, Tazewell County, and likely also to Clinton Municipal Waste Landfill, DeWitt County, and both of these landfills are over the Mahomet Aquifer which is an essential water resource serving 14 counties in central Illinois. The Mahomet Aquifer should not be put at risk from thousands upon thousands of tons of EAF. Indian Creek runs into the Mackinaw River, which would allow dioxins and other toxics to move into a popular river where people canoe and fish.
- PDC is requesting to landfill the EAF in any municipal waste landfill in Illinois - this would allow statewide placement of EAF in locations with no considerations of site risks.

For more information phone 637-1393. Mail your comments to:

Illinois Pollution Control Board, Clerk of the Board RE: Case AS 08-10,  
100 W. Randolph St., Ste. 11-500, Chicago, IL 60601

## Local Environmentalists Oppose Delisting of Hazardous Waste

BY TOM EDWARDS

Peoria Disposal Co. (PDC) would forestall and avoid what must be done for the health and welfare of the Peoria area — that is, to safely forever close its toxic waste landfill off Rt.8, which not only adjoins a densely populated area of Peoria, but sits right above our local water supply aquifer and upwind of the air the city must breathe. It is the nation's only still operating such facility so dangerously located.

Local environmentalists, including myself, are appealing to the Illinois Pollution Control Board the Illinois EPA's decision to allow "delisting" of electric arc furnace "dust" from steel mills as a hazardous waste so it can be instead taken to regular city waste landfills. This EAF waste is rife with a host of toxic metals and chemicals. Steel producers want to rid themselves of its responsibility, and as cheaply as possible. So its being sent to Peoria.

PDC is claiming it would, at its toxic waste landfill here, apply a secret

"proprietary stabilization technology" that could, at least for a while, immobilize the bevy of hazardous health residues in the waste, which can become airborne or waterborne. (And it also wants the present state law changed to allow "dilution" of the hazardous materials with plain soil to help, yes, dilute their toxicity, i.e., spread it out.)

However, PDC is refusing public release of what this "treatment process" is, or its short or long term effectiveness in contact with the other waste materials in landfills as well as weather.

I have requested the IPCB to summarily reject and dismiss the IEPA decision because right of due process has been deprived and violated given the public secrecy in which this "technology" has been cloaked.

Under its proposed permit change PDC would be allowed to receive 95,000 cubic yards of EAF waste per year for so-called "treatment" at its Peoria toxic waste land-

fill site. If the treatment is effective, it would be reloaded onto trucks and taken to regular landfills. It would be coming from, so far, 10 steel manufacturers throughout the Midwest. At a 5-yard per load truck trip, it would be 19,000 trips into PDC's Peoria landfill, then reloaded and trucked 30 miles to PDC's non-toxic waste landfill in Tazewell County.

If Illinois is to continue to have such a disposal site for the most toxic wastes from, so far, 15 other states, then the state itself must provide the safest such site possible. However, PDC itself could be a prime contractor to operate such a state facility!

PDC's toxic waste landfill is the only public one still operating in the nation's upper half from 35 miles over the Indiana border to the Rocky Mountains. But Indiana's is closer to Chicago and the east half of Illinois, and to five other Midwest states than PDC's.

# HOI Group Calendar

*September*

**4 THU Global Warming Solutions**  
**Group Meeting, 6:30 p.m.**  
 Peoria Public Library, 2nd floor conference room, downtown Peoria. Check out <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ciglobalwarming> for more information.

**9 TUE Climate Change: How Does It Affect Peoria?, 7:30 p.m.**  
Forest Park Nature Center. Town hall meeting on global warming hosted by the Illinois Environmental Council, Environment Illinois, HOI Sierra Club, Forest Park Nature Center, and the Central Illinois Global Warming Solutions Group. *See page 2 for more details.*

**10 Executive Meeting, 7 p.m.**  
WED David Pittman's home, 2422 W. Moss,  
Peoria. Call 676-5237 for directions.

**17 Group Meeting, 7 p.m.**  
**WED** Forest Park Nature Center. **Peoria County Issues Forum.** Everyone is welcome! Drop off your aluminum cans at tonight's meeting and help raise money for the HOI Sierra Club.

**20 SAT Aluminum Can Drop-Off,**  
**10 to 11 a.m.**  
Drop off your aluminum cans at Forest  
Park Nature Center parking lot and help  
raise money for the HOI Sierra Club!

*October*

**2 THU Global Warming Solutions Group Meeting, 6:30 p.m.**  
Peoria Public Library, 2nd floor conference room, downtown Peoria. Check out <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ciglobalwarming> for more information.

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

**11 SAT Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup, 9 a.m.**  
Meet at the Fry Farm at 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, call Rudy Habben at 685-5605.

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

**Candidate Forums:**

**Sept. 10 (Wed) – U.S. Representative, 18th District** - 7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. At the Pere Marquette Hotel, Grand Ballroom. Heartland Partnership forum with Colleen Callahan, Aaron Schock, and Sheldon Schafer.

**Sept. 17 (Wed) – Illinois Representative, 92nd District** - 7:30 a.m. To 9 a.m. At the Heartland Partnership office, 100 SW Water, Peoria. Jehan Gordon and Joan Krupa.

**11**  
**SAT** **Newsletter Deadline**  
Send articles for November/December  
to: John Wosik, 12409 N Blackhawk Ct,  
Dunlap, IL 61525, or  
johnwosik@comcast.net

**15** **Group Meeting, 7 p.m.**  
**WED** Forest Park Nature Center. *Will Reynolds, Illinois Clean Car Legislation.*  
 Everyone is welcome!

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

### ***HOI EXCOM Nominations Needed***

Nominations for the HOI EXCOM Board are needed by October 8th. 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 Diane Jorgensen, c/o HOI Sierra Club, 212 Sunnysbrook Dr., East Peoria, IL 61611; or call 698-0325.

## Heart of Illinois Sierra Club

**P.O. Box 3593, Peoria, IL 61614      Hotline: (309) 637-1393**

## Executive Committee

<b>Chair</b> . . . . .	Robert Jorgensen . . .	698-0325	jestpr@aol.com
<b>Vice Co-Chair</b> . . . . .	Rudy Habben . . . .	685-5605	
<b>Vice Co-Chair</b> . . . . .	Judy Stalling . . . . .	673-4673	
<b>Secretary/Calendars</b> . . . . .	Diane Jorgensen . . .	698-0325	jestpr@aol.com
<b>Conservation Co-Chair</b> . . . . .	Tom Edwards . . . . .	637-1979	
<b>Political Chair /</b>			Rockymtpoohbear
<b>Chapter Delegate</b> . . . . .	Wendy Marquis . . . .	645-6263	@mchsi.com
<b>Global Warming</b>			
<b>Solutions Co-Chair</b> . . . . .	David Pittman . . . . .	676-5237	DvdPttmn@aol.com

**Conservation Co-Chair** Joyce Blumenshine 688-0950 joblumen@yahoo.com  
**Treasurer** . . . . . Chris Golden . . . 579-2967  
**Membership Chair** . . . Norman Ewing . . . 686-4122  
**Global Warming**  
**Solutions Co-Chair** . . . Kiersten Sheets . . . 249-2095  
**Newsletter Editor** . . . John Wosik . . . . . 243-2230 johnwosik@comcast.net

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