



Tallgrass Sierran

November/December 2009 Volume 37 No. 6

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

HOI Group Meetings

WED
NOV 18

Green Highways
Forest Park Nature Center, 7 p.m.

The Peoria-Pekin Long Range Transportation Plan 2010-2035 has been released. The Illinois Department of Transportation has three major highways, 336 Peoria to Macomb, Rt. 29 Peoria to Princeton, and the East Peoria Bypass in various stages of study and development. The Federal Department of Transportation has issued "Green Highways Partnership" with the purpose to bring an environmental and green infrastructure perspective to the transportation planning process. Tonight's program will explore the application of green highways in the Heart of Illinois. *Everyone is welcome!*

WED
DEC 16

**Annual Christmas
Potluck & Slides Party**
Forest Park Nature Center, 6:30 p.m.

Bring your favorite food to share and a dozen or so slides from your latest trip, for a holiday time get-together. The Nature Center will be decked for the season, and this is a great chance to enjoy a relaxing evening during the holiday. Bring some friends! Hot and cold drinks will be provided. You will need your own table service and a good appetite! A projector will be available for showing a sampling of slides after dinner, and you will see your fellow/friend Sierrans in action!

**Heart of Illinois Sierra Club
Christmas Birdseed Sale**

Order Form Inside.



Climate Change and Politics

BY RALPH GINN, *Opinion Columnist*

There is an old saying with no known author: "The American political system was designed by geniuses so it could be run by idiots." This anonymous sage didn't anticipate the present day level of idiocy in the U.S. Senate. A dysfunctional body paralyzed by a tradition of political preservation, self inflicted archaic rules, and egotism. In its make-up the founders floundered, never imagining 20th or 21st century population distribution. Today, some Senators represent a half million people, others represent 45 million. A stick in the eye to democracy.

In July, the U. S. House of Representatives passed a climate change bill 219-212. This was in the time of some very bad news about accelerating glacial melt and polar sea ice decline. HOI-land was one for two on this vote, Hare voting yes and Schock no. At present, the bill is awaiting Senate action and the delay maybe very long, indeed. The upper chamber, as members like to call themselves, has tied itself into a Gordian Knot over health care reform and seems destined to satisfy neither of it's, or the President's stated goals of offering health care to all and slowing ever rising costs. If the Senate's record on health care reform is an indicator, and I believe it is, the next major test of government, changing the slippery slide into calamitous climate change, the country and the planet are in peril. While there are many other countries that must reduce their carbon footprint, the United States has been a deadbeat and has made it easy for China and India to shuffle along, sometimes

backward. The House climate bill, Waxman-Markley, is not as strong as many environmentalists and climatologists would say is required. It is front loaded with freebies for polluters, but does become tougher in the next decade. Given that not a single Republican voted for Waxman-Markley, and a few Democrats voted against because it was not strong enough, it was a remarkable accomplishment.

In the last year, climate science has forgone the idea that global warming can be stopped, but rather has focused on solutions that will slow it down, and quickly. Researchers at M.I.T. who were previously predicting a temperature rise of 4 degrees by the end of the century, are now predicting a rise of more than 9 degrees. Why? Greenhouse gas emissions are rising faster than expected, and recent research shows that the absorption of carbon dioxide by the oceans is not as high as originally calculated. By the end of this century, Illinois will likely have the climate East Texas does now, but with more frequent droughts and floods. Exacerbating the faster than predicted change in climate, the effects of rising temperatures are melting arctic sea ice and thawing arctic tundra. Frozen tundra holds captive huge amounts of carbon dioxide and methane, both of which will escape into the atmosphere and trap more heat from the sun. This cycle is called a feedback loop and it will be lethal if not halted.

There is an old story about boiling a frog, starting with cold water and gradually increasing the temperature to the
(See *Climate Change*, page 2)



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Attorney General Files Appeal of Banner Mine Decision

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

The Illinois Attorney General has filed a circuit court appeal of the Banner Mine Administrative Review decision. Heart of Illinois Group Sierra Club extends great appreciation and thanks to the Illinois Attorney General for taking this issue to court. This is the first mine permit that is known to be appealed in such a manner by the Attorney General, which makes clear the importance of what is at stake. Sierra Club will file in support of the Attorney General. Donations are needed to continue this next step in the over four years of efforts to stop the Banner Mine. Please make your check out to "Heart of Illinois Group Sierra Club" and indicate it is for the Banner Mine Fund. Mail to HOI at P.O. Box 3593, Peoria, IL 61614.

North Canton Mine Nationwide 21 Permit Approved by Army Corps Instead of 404 Permit Review

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

The North Canton Mine gets the sorry distinction of being the first ever Nationwide 21 Permit issued by the Rock Island District Army Corps of Engineers. This permit is used in lieu of a 404 Permit Review, which considers loss of wetlands, impacts to streams, and other detailed impacts. John Betker, Army Corps contact regarding the review, explained that to issue a Nationwide 21, the Corps must determine that the mine will have minimal impacts. He further explained that destruction of less than 10,000 linear feet of streams and tributaries is considered minimal by the St. Louis District U.S. Army Corps. The Rock Island District Office has now decided they can use the same criteria. When asked if the pollution of the public water supply for about 20,000 people was a minimal impact, Mr. Betker answered that the Corps did not have to consider that issue because they rely on the state agency assessing the mine permit. The Nationwide 21 limits the scope of what the Corps has to consider. The North Canton mine permit application clearly shows greatly increased levels of sulfate and total dissolved solids going into the creek feeding Canton Lake.

HOI Seeks New Treasurer

Chris Golden, our current treasurer, will be leaving her post at the end of 2009. She has done a wonderful job for us and we all owe her a great amount of gratitude for her years of service. Thank you Chris!

With her exit, a great opportunity opens for any HOI member to take on the task of becoming Treasurer. The job includes handling our monthly bills, writing checks for special events and activities, presenting ExCom with a monthly report and completing paperwork filed with the state Sierra Chapter and National Sierra Club.

If you have any questions, please contact any ExCom member or Chris herself! All contact info can be found on the last page of this newsletter.

(Climate Change, from page 1)

boiling point. The story says that the frog will not notice the rising temperature until it is too late. Is this a metaphor for the difficulty of reacting to an impending disaster that creeps up slowly until our species is overcome? If you have paid even a bit of attention to the U.S. Senate this year, you will realize that we can become the dumb frog. And, if you have enjoyed the debate over health care reform, you are going to love the debate on climate change. The Republicans are pumping-up the "hoax" myth and have convinced many of the masses that climate change is a fake. Representative Paul Brown (R-GA) called it a hoax in a House debate and received resounding applause. Senator James Inhofe (R-OK), the original "hoax" messenger in Congress, announced that in November he will be traveling to the Climate Summit in Copenhagen to be a one-man truth squad. Presumably, to enlighten the interna-

tional community on the error of their beliefs in climate change. At home, Limbaugh, Beck and O'Reilly gas TV and radio with tirades of climate change denial.

Political progress is being brick-walled by the right wing of the Republican Party. The strangely named "Blue Dog Democrats" have enabled this crippling inertia. Can the spell that doomed the frog be broken? It better be. At this point, the central forecast of reputable climate models--not the worst-case scenario, but the most likely outcome, is absolute catastrophe. A nine degree rise in temperature by 2100 will disrupt life as we know it. However, the outcome can be changed. A few corporations have quit the U.S. Chamber of Commerce because it publicly opposed any cap-and-trade law (Waxman-Markey is a cap-and-trade) and called for a Scopes monkey trial on the question of global warming. DuPont, Apple and Exelon, a mega-power producer,

are among those with a wider, more futuristic world view than the Chamber. Also, climate change deniers do not control the White House nor the Congress. With a majority in the House and 60 Democratic, some would challenge the authenticity of the Democrat label of a few, and Independent votes in the Senate there is modest optimism that a good climate bill can become law. But, standing in the way, with outsized authority, from mostly small population states, are the upper chamber's blue dogs and their vagary. Next year is an election year. A time when nothing of significance gets done in Congress. What's left of this year could be our best chance to put an effective brake on greenhouse gas emissions. Mother Nature is sometimes forgiving, up to a point. Do we know this is not that point?

Send comments to Ralph Ginn at randdginn@dishmail.net.



**CHANGE IS INEVITABLE,
WE MUST **e**volve**

ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL

Presented by:

At the **APOLLO THEATRE**,
Downtown Peoria
Nov. 6 (Fri.) & Nov. 7 (Sat.) 7 to 9 p.m.

Prices for Tickets for each night are

\$5.00 for ages 12 and up;

\$3.00 for younger than 12

Door prizes from local merchants.



**SIERRA
CLUB**
FOUNDED 1892

Heart of Illinois Group



Also hosting two film debuts! *Sinking the Heartland*: Longwall coal mining in Montgomery County, IL
Lake DePue and the Village of DePue's EPA Superfund site [DePue, IL]

Friday, Nov. 6 at 7 p.m.

Burning the Future: Coal in America [feature presentation]

Writer/director David Novack examines the explosive conflict between the coal industry and residents of West Virginia. Confronted by emerging "clean coal" energy policies, local activists watch a world blind to the devastation caused by coal's extraction. Faced with toxic ground water, the obliteration of 14 million acres of mountains, and a government that appeases industry, our heroes demonstrate a strength of purpose and character in their improbable fight to arouse the nation's help in protecting their mountains, saving their families, and preserving their way of life.

www.burningthefuture.com [US, 2008, 89 mins]

Saturday, Nov. 7 at 7 p.m.

Extreme Ice [feature presentation]

Art meets science in photographer James Balog's Extreme Ice Survey. The project has captured global warming in the act using 26 solar-powered cameras taking time-lapse photographs of glaciers in Greenland, Iceland, Alaska, the Alps, and the Rocky Mountains. In the course of shooting, Balog recognized that extraordinary amounts of ice were vanishing with shocking speed. Features that took centuries to develop were being destroyed in just a few years or even just a few weeks. These changes are the most visually dramatic and immediate manifestations of climate change on our planet today. The documentary is a joint venture between National Geographic Television and NOVA, the PBS signature television series.

www.extremeicesurvey.org [US, 2009, 56 mins]

Peoria and Recycling

BY KIERSTEN SHEETS

On October 13, 2009, Peoria City Council voted 10-1 to accept the waste hauling bid proposal from Peoria Disposal Company. PDC offered an alternate bid in which trash, landscape and recycling services were provided to all Peorians at an annual flat fee of \$5 million. This bid was drastically under the Waste Management proposal.

Global Warming Solutions Group and Peoria HOI Sierrans had been working diligently to provide the City Council and the Public Works Department with encouragement to provide the citizens with a comprehensive recycling program without a subscription fee; in other words, universal recycling. Unfortunately, given the financial conditions of the city, the goal had to be met with some compromise.

Beginning March 2010, PDC will offer 95-gallon totes for recycling to any Peoria resident who pays a \$50 refundable participation fee. The fee is a one time fee. Any household can participate. The recycling totes will be picked up at the curb or in the alley once a month. There will also be a plan for apartments and condos to participate.

There are many great advantages to this program over the current subscription program.

- Only one fee. At the subscription rate of \$3.25 per month, the \$50 participation fee is paid back in approximately 15 months. You can be in the recycling program for years and never have to pay again!
- Refundable fee. The \$50 fee is refundable.
- PDC's aggressive plan of reminders. Reminders of your recycling pick up day could be by e-mail or by phone message or both.
- Big Toter! The 95-gallon toter should be enough for an average family's recycling needs. For those of us with greater need, we can still use the County drop off sites or purchase another toter.
- Toter with a lid. No more recyclables blowing out of open containers.
- Easy "How To" Lid. The PDC toter will explain all materials accepted for recycling right on the lid. No more wondering if a particular item is recyclable or not.

You may hear about HOI Sierra and GWSG supporting the PDC recycling program and members working with them to educate citizens about the program. This cooperation will not reduce our efforts to continue the fight to responsibly close the PDC Hazardous Waste Landfill and their treatment and hauling of electric arc furnace dust. HOI Sierra is concerned about PDC having a monopoly in the City of Peoria. In addition to the City Waste Hauling Contract, PDC has won the City/County Landfill contract for the new site opening in the next few years. Even so, the simple fact is it is still vitally important to our community that we reduce waste. Unless we are given a reason to not be fair, we did not discourage recycling with Waste Management and we should not discourage it with PDC.

PLEASE sponsor a newsletter or chapter meeting.

HOI funds are still low and we NEED the support of our members. Please consider sponsoring a newsletter mailing (Approx. \$135), a chapter meeting at Forest Park Nature Center (\$35) or a month for our phone hot line (Approx \$30).

Donations can be sent to: Heart of Illinois Sierra Club
PO Box 3593
Peoria, IL 61614



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It's time for America to get smart about energy and be less dependent on dwindling oil reserves. We need to increase our use of clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar power. Let your voice be heard.

**Add your voice to protect the planet.
Join Sierra Club.**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Phone (____) _____

Email _____

**Join today and receive
a FREE Sierra Club
Weekender Bag!**



☐ Check enclosed. Please make payable to Sierra Club.

Please charge my: ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ AMEX

Cardholder Name _____

Card Number _____

Exp. Date ____/____/____

Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
Special Offer	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32

Contributions, gifts and dues to 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 for your Chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club,
P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968
or visit our website www.sierraclub.org

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Heart of Illinois Sierra Club

Christmas 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 222-2519 for more information.

Order Deadline: December 1, 2009

Pickup Day: Saturday, December 5, 2009, 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. Delivery is on Saturday, December 5, 2009.

Reminder: I purchased _____ bags of _____ _____ bags of _____
_____ bags of _____ _____ bags of _____

For ☐ Pickup

☐ Delivery

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

Type of Seed	Size	Price	Number Ordered	Total
Sunflower (oil)	25 lbs	\$ 9.50	_____	\$ _____
	50 lbs	\$ 17.00	_____	\$ _____
Sunflower hearts	10 lbs	\$ 11.00	_____	\$ _____
	50 lbs	\$ 45.00	_____	\$ _____
Thistle (Niger) seed	10 lbs	\$ 10.00	_____	\$ _____
	50 lbs	\$ 40.00	_____	\$ _____
Premium Mix	25 lbs	\$ 9.50	_____	\$ _____
	50 lbs	\$ 15.00	_____	\$ _____
Cracked Corn	25 lbs	\$ 9.50	_____	\$ _____
Peanuts (no shell)	10 lbs	\$ 10.00	_____	\$ _____
Ear Corn	25 lbs	\$ 9.50	_____	\$ _____
	50 lbs	\$ 17.00	_____	\$ _____
Suet Cakes	box of 1 doz.	\$ 15.00	_____	\$ _____

Check one: ☐ Pick-up

☐ Delivery

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 _____

Thank you for supporting the
Heart of Illinois Sierra Club!

2009 HOI Excom Election: Rules and Procedures

1. You must be a HOI Sierra Club member to vote.
2. Vote for not more than **3** candidates for a 2010-2011 term to the Heart of Illinois Executive Committee.
3. Joint memberships may use Ballots #1 and #2.
4. Mail ballot(s) to: Kiersten Sheets
c/o Heart of Illinois Sierra Club
P.O. Box 3593
Peoria, IL 61614
5. Write the name of the voting member(s) on the outside of the envelope containing the ballot.
6. Ballots must arrive at the Sierra Club's mailbox by Dec. 16, or can be delivered to the Group Meeting on Dec. 16.
7. Ballots will be counted by the Election Committee on Dec 16.

2009 HOI Sierra Club Excom Election Ballot #1

_____ Chuck Buchna
_____ Robert McCoy
_____ David Pittman

2009 HOI Sierra Club Excom Election Ballot #2

_____ Chuck Buchna
_____ Robert McCoy
_____ David Pittman

Ballots Due December 16

Heart of Illinois Executive Committee Election: Candidate Statements

Chuck Buchna

I am a long time member of the Sierra Club and served two terms on the Heart of Illinois board during the 1980s. During this period, we were trying to stop over development of Jubilee Park and promoting development of the Rock Island Trail. Recently I served two years as outings chair. Safeguarding our natural places and encouraging youth involvement are important priorities for the future of Central Illinois and the world - working together is crucial to our success.

Robert McCoy

I would be happy to serve on the HOI Executive Committee. I have been involved with Sierra for approximately five years, the last two or three with the HOI Group. I believe my fifteen years of experience as a lawyer would be helpful for the club's advocacy efforts, but I am especially interested in attracting new (and some younger) members, and increasing the number of local outings.

David Pittman

My name is David Pittman and I would like to return to HOI Sierra ExCom in 2010. If elected I hope to become Chairperson and will work very hard to set specific goals that include better communication with the entire membership. My goal is to establish a local HOI Sierra website within one year. I very much believe that every HOI Sierra member should find a way to increase their involvement and hope that specific, time limited tasks and fun activities can be created that will appeal to everyone, not just those who want to devote lots of time on our local and regional issues. I am currently involved with the Global Warming Solutions Group, Lakeview Wilds Inc, Nature Conservancy, West Peoria Residents Assn, Peoria Area Green Party, Springdale Cemetery Foundation and Recreational Trail Advocates. I am married to Teresa Smith and work as a registered nurse at OSF SFMC.

Army Corps Project at Rice Lake to Begin in 2010

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

Fish channels, dredging, massive pumps on the Illinois River side, and tree planting will be part of an over \$7 million project the Army Corps of Engineers has planned for Rice Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area which is to enable better management of the site by IDNR. The project will also allow large amounts of silt to be dumped on Duck Island. Local residents have attempted to point out problems with the location of fish escape channels at the high end of Rice Lake, and other issues. Recently HOI was contacted by the Rock Island District Army Corps for information on shorebirds at the site.

2010 Sierra Club Calendars . . . The Perfect Christmas Gift!



Wilderness Wall Calendar (\$12.95)

Engagement Calendar (\$13.95)

To order, call Diane Jorgensen at 698-0325. Calendars will also be on sale at all Group meetings through January.

