

Prairie Flyer



This newsletter only appears three times a year -- in April, August, and December. In addition to our newsletter, we use Facebook and our Alerts Listserv to communicate with members about environmental events and action items. For Facebook, please join the Sierra Club Prairie Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/SierraClubILPrairieGroup/>. For our Alerts List: <http://lists.sierraclub.org/SCRIPTS/WA.EXE?SUBED1=il-prairie-alerts>, where you can subscribe or unsubscribe.

The underlined text are internet links, so you can click on them to bring up the pages referred to. All the main articles in this newsletter are by members of the Executive Committee of the Prairie Group.

Contents

Ready for 100? - Michael Carpenter. This P.

The Water Project: Examining Our Relationship With Our Most Precious Resource - Nancy Dietrich. P 3

Our Mahomet Aquifer - Jacquelyn Potter. P 4

People's Climate March: History & Views from the Local & D.C. Marches - Origin of the March - Alice Englebretnsen. P 6

(Hiking) Boots on the Ground (in D.C.) - Rachel Vellenga. P 7

Champaign-Urbana March - Lois Kain. P 8

Events to come. P 9. About PG. P 10

Source of Articles

The first article is by an intern, Michael Carpenter, whom the Illinois Chapter assigned to work with the Prairie Group.

The remaining five articles originally appeared in Summer, 2017, issue of the public i, a newspaper which is published by the Independent Media Center of Champaign-Urbana four times a year. Three articles were written by members of the Prairie Executive Committee, with the remaining one by an active PG member Lois Kain, - **Dick Bishop, editor**

Ready for 100?

By Michael Carpenter

In the Sierra Club it is often said that power comes from two sources: People and Money.

Progressive environmental changes usually stem from harnessing the former, which illustrates the influence of and necessity for grassroots organizing. It's no surprise then that Sierra Club relies heavily on its members and supporters engaging with their local communities, and through them it seeks to more deeply understand and act on their varied needs and ideologies.

Ready for 100, one of Sierra Club's newest national campaigns, follows this logic by focusing on giving cities and towns the opportunity to discuss what clean energy means for them and inspiring members of the community to devise tailor-made plans for implementation. After all, when it comes to clean energy there is no "one-size-fits-all"; though the end goal is always to reach reliance on 100% clean energy by a set date, what that looks like can be determined entirely by local politicians and their constituents. So far seven very different cities located throughout the US have managed to make the switch to 100% clean energy, but you can be certain that no two took an identical path to get there.

In Georgetown, Texas, which even has a Conservative Mayor, wind and solar have recently become the primary energy sources for locals. One of the main reasons? According to the mayor the move provides cost certainty on the city's electricity for 25 to 30 years- thanks to contracts it has formed with solar providers installed in western Texas and a massive wind farm located in the Texas panhandle. In other words, being Ready for 100 has lowered their energy costs and given the community protection from the volatile energy market. The city of Aspen, Colorado has relied on 100% clean energy since 2015 by utilizing hydroelectric and wind power; 46% of its energy comes from hydroelectric, 53% comes from wind, and the remainder is from harnessing landfill gas. Depending on the city, logic for embracing a 100% clean energy future can vary, and the most efficient, reliable sources can differ based on location as well.

It is thanks to the successes of early adopters of cities like Georgetown and Aspen that momentum for this movement has been steadily building. As of right now over 110 mayors have endorsed making the switch to clean energy, and who can blame them? Those willing to take that initial step are promised a plethora of perks. Even when ignoring the obvious benefits to the increased quality of the air we breathe and the water we drink, there is significant evidence in support of the fact that it also saves money over time and provides new jobs in rapidly expanding sectors- take wind and solar, for example.

Concurrent with the gradual but persistent success of this campaign, the state of Illinois has also embarked on its journey to embrace clean energy by passing the Future Energy Jobs Act (FEJA). FEJA sets bold, respectable goals for Illinois to rely more on wind and solar power in the future and even outlines specific programs that seek to aid communities built around coal mining during this evolutionary

period. After all, it's important to ensure that this is a *just transition*.

But what does all of this mean for you? Perhaps most importantly, it's key to recognize that this is an exciting and charged time to engage in environmental activism. Campaigns like Ready for 100 are providing platforms for local communities to come together around clean energy, and on the whole public opinion has become increasingly educated about its potential benefits. Sierra Club has only just begun the Ready for 100 campaign in Champaign-Urbana, but so far the public response has been overwhelmingly positive! Over 100 petitions in support of the movement have been signed, new volunteers have added their time and energy to the cause, and there have been many valuable discussions with community members about how to realistically implement clean energy practices in our cities. Once again, the people power on which Sierra Club is founded has demonstrated what we can do when we combine forces.

If you're interested in finding out more about FEJA, the Ready for 100 campaign in Champaign-Urbana, or what you can do to help, there is an event you might be interested in! Sierra Club's Prairie Group has been in the process of planning an environmental Town Hall, which will feature Senator Scott Bennett, Representative Carol Ammons, Deborah Feinen, and Diane Marlin. They will discuss progress that both towns have made as well as what interested members of the public can do to aid with the clean energy transition in the future; there will be a Question and Answer portion of the event as well! *This event will take place on September 11 from 5-7PM on the top floor of the Illinois Terminal Building in Champaign, and we will be sending out more information and reminders as the date draws nearer.*

Primary Sources:
SC's RF 100 Factsheet
Georgetown, Texas
Aspen, Colorado

***The Water Project: Examining Our
 Relationship With Our Most Precious
 Resource***

Nancy Dietrich is a resident of Urbana who became an environmentalist because she likes to breathe clean air and drink clean water.

“Destruction of water resources and of forest catchments and aquifers is a form of terrorism. Denying poor people access to water by privatizing water distribution or polluting wells and rivers is also terrorism.”

~Vandana Shiva, Water Wars: Privatization, Pollution and Profit

Water is essential for all living things. It is also a convenient dumping ground for waste, and a commodity to be bought and sold. With these three themes in mind, the ensemble of Kate Insolia, Efadul Huq, Maddie Terlap, Madelyn Childress, Rosanne Brighton, Katie Fenton, Yu-Yun Hsieh and Latrelle Bright met once, sometimes twice, a week over the course of several months to learn, discuss, collaborate, create and then perform *The Water Project*, the latest theatrical performance directed by local theater maker Latrelle Bright. Katie Fenton served as dramaturge and Yu-Yun Hsieh as sound designer for the performance.

According to her website, latrellebright.com, “through research, devising and development, six local folk immersed themselves in water issues and created this performance from their findings and rumination, infusing sound, poetry, movement and song.” Phase one of the project consisted of research and learning: the group met to watch documentaries, discuss articles on water issues, and listen to invited guests. Phase two was the development phase. Using an age-old technique called “devised theater,” the ensemble began to collaborate on the piece

itself: writing poetry & prose, creating movement pieces, and sharing their creations with the group for feedback, where the pieces were finessed and finalized by the entire ensemble. Phase three was rehearsal and performance.

Latrelle conceived of *The Water Project* as a way to raise awareness of the numerous water issues that confront our society today, to meet with like-minded people who care about these issues, and to find a way to merge the academic with the artistic. Latrelle studied musical theater at the Boston Conservatory, and has also studied at the International University in San Diego and Florida State University. She became interested in environmental issues as an undergraduate, but felt that there was a culture around the environmental movement that didn’t include people like her. This project has given her a way to meet and create with others who don’t necessarily fit into the usual environmental movement mold.

“When creating this piece, I felt like—this is community; this is democracy. In other theater performances I’ve been involved with, there is a hierarchy, which is typical in theater. Instead of top-down, this was side-by-side,” she reflects. This was one element that led to *The Water Project* debuting at the IMC. “I knew the IMC folk would appreciate it. If it would have been held at a more traditional theater, people would have expected traditional theater,” she says. Efadul Huq, one of the performers in *The Water Project*, became interested in the project because it sounded fun and engaging. Efadul is a PhD student in the U of I’s Urban and Regional Planning program, and has a background in creative writing. In summarizing how the performance was created, he emphasized the importance of learning together, as well as how the piece was improvised over time.

“This was my first time doing devised theater,” he said. “Latrelle gave us exercises and prompts about the topic of water for us to think about. Then we created pieces and brought them back

to the group, and the group would make comments and changes. It was different; more dynamic than regular theater.” Latrelle notes that devised theater is an old form of theater, and it comes naturally to us: children, for example, perform devised theater. “Even though you can get a degree in it, you don’t have to have a Master’s degree to be human,” she says. “Creating theater with people in community, with folks who don’t necessarily have training in theater,” was a powerful experience for Latrelle in directing and performing in this piece.

As the slogan goes, the personal is political. One of the goals of *The Water Project* was to think about, and get audiences to think about, how we access water and how water becomes a tool of domination depending on who controls access to it. “I wanted to work with Latrelle on this project because I knew it would be political; it wouldn’t just be ‘let’s celebrate how wonderful water is.’” Efadul says. And it did not disappoint in that way. Many examples of the political aspects of water are evident in the performance, including a piece called *Resistance: Flint, MI* [Not included].

Overall, upon reflecting on the question, “Why a piece about water?”, Latrelle responds, “because we don’t think about it enough. Many organizations are engaged in water issues. I hope we’ve planted another seed. There are so many issues to care about, but water is essential to everything.” And Efadul reflects, “there are so many things that divide us, but water connects us; it grounds us. [*The Water Project*] helps us reflect on our shared problems, and how it connects us all. Water is life.”

Latrelle states that there may be room in the piece for further development, specifically to focus on solutions; on ways that people are making access to water work for them. Perhaps a second act is in the works? Stay tuned. For more information about Latrelle Bright and *The Water Project*, check out her website at: Latrellebright.com.

Our Mahomet Aquifer

*By Jacquelyn Potter, Sierra Club Prairie Group
Jacquelyn Potter is on the Executive Committee of the local Sierra Club, where she is involved in activism with many issues, including water protection, and serves on the Mahomet Aquifer Model group.*

Water issues have always been at the forefront of environmental and human rights concerns. This year was eye-opening for many following the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) conflict and its impact upon surface water. However, another critical issue is protection of our vital underground water sources against such threats. Our Mahomet Aquifer, lying right underneath us here in Champaign County and several other counties, supplies over 100 million gallons of water per day to over 500,000 in East Central Illinois. Just think about that for a minute. Water. Is. Life.

What’s so special about the water from the Mahomet Aquifer? It exceeds other water sources in its purity. When you drink water from the Mahomet Aquifer, you are drinking very ancient water that fell to Earth between 3,000 and 10,000 years ago, well before the contaminants of our recent times. The Mahomet Aquifer is part of the prehistoric Mahomet River Valley, where water flowed upon bedrock and was layered with sand and gravel and buried beneath hundreds of feet of clay, compliments of the glaciers.

One major issue surrounding aquifers is how and where they recharge and how recharge is balanced with withdrawal. This is a complex topic, subject to much ongoing research. Illinois State Geological Survey Carbon-14 analysis shows the water underneath Champaign County is 5,000 to 7,000 years younger than 50 miles west, which reveals the highest amount of recharge is in northern Champaign County. Some researchers believe high withdrawal or over-consumption is a greater threat to the aquifer than contamination, especially in dry

years when river flooding (a major source of recharge) doesn't happen. A report by the Mahomet Aquifer Consortium revealed the highest level of withdrawal from both surface water and aquifer is by far thermoelectric power generation (coal, petro, natural gas and nuclear) with another figure showing it as 74% of total withdrawal: 1,315 million gallons per day.

Conversely, the rate of recharge is estimated to be hundreds of millions of gallons per day, a figure thought optimistic by some. Close to half of Illinois' population depends upon groundwater, and in rural areas, the number is closer to 90%. Therefore, improved conservation and protection of this precious resource is of utmost importance.

Public interest in protecting the Mahomet Aquifer began to increase just over a decade ago. In March of 2007, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) issued a permit to Clinton Landfill to store potentially hazardous waste (e.g. polychlorinated biphenyls or PCBs) at the landfill in DeWitt County sitting directly above the Mahomet Aquifer. For several years, this was fought, and finally then-Governor Pat Quinn directed the IEPA to stop approval of PCB waste storage at the landfill. By winter 2012, officials petitioned the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to designate the Mahomet Aquifer a "sole-source aquifer." Such designation recognizes how vital the aquifer is as a source of water, giving special protection. The USEPA is required to review federally-funded projects located above the aquifer to ensure no danger to our drinking water supply. Over 400 people attended public hearings on sole-source designation, many expressing support for the designation; none were against it. By spring 2014, the USEPA issued preliminary approval of sole-source, and a year later was approved. Although sole-source designation requires EPA review for federally-assisted projects that would potentially contaminate the aquifer, projects funded by state, local or private entities are not subject to review. Therefore, sole-source designation did

not affect Clinton Landfill plans, as it is privately funded. However, heightened attention toward aquifer protection did lead to passage of state law, when Representative Carol Ammons and Senator Scott Bennett introduced bills to protect the aquifer. Specifically, materials containing high PCBs and manufactured gas plant waste are prohibited in landfills above the aquifer. The legislation aimed at preventing Clinton Landfill from continuing plans to accept the toxic chemicals. Recently, another bill was approved establishing a Mahomet Aquifer Task Force to study the water source, develop a plan to maintain the quality of the aquifer, identify current and potential contamination threats, identify actions that ensure long-term protection, and make legislative recommendations to protect the aquifer.

These developments have bearing on the pipeline issue, as it has direct impact on the water sources in Illinois. The Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) mostly affects surface water; however, the proposed pipeline expansion by Canadian corporation Enbridge to "twin" the Line 61 pipeline running through Illinois from Canada threatens surface water, but also runs directly over a Mahomet Aquifer recharge area. Central Illinois has become a major route for Canadian Tar Sands crude oil, with Enbridge sending up to 880,000 barrels a day through a pipeline constructed above the Mahomet Aquifer. History shows the question is not if a pipeline will break, but when. Sierra Club looked at Enbridge's history of spills from years 1999 to 2010, finding it responsible for over 800 spills. The 2010 Enbridge spill in the Kalamazoo River required massive removal of streambed soil (to recover embedded oil). Because the Mahomet Aquifer is a deep aquifer, it is better protected than shallow aquifers; however, it can be contaminated. Therefore, protective measures are important, as it is extremely difficult to clean up contaminated surface water, but it is near impossible to clean up a deep underground aquifer once contaminated. Considering the Enbridge track

record, it is extremely negligent to have the pipeline along the trajectory directly crossing Mahomet Aquifer recharge areas, and to allow for expansion along the same trajectory would be bordering on the absurd.

Pipeline deregulation has amounted to a weakening of the environmental review process, which is of utmost concern regarding sensitive areas such as streams or recharge areas, known as HCAs or “high consequence areas.” Some landowners said they were never informed the pipeline would be for Canadian Tar Sands Crude, which is much more pollutive and caustic due to high levels of volatile organic compounds. Doug Hayes, attorney for the Sierra Club, expects to prove the pipeline violates the Clean Water Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. “We have a strong case that the government deliberately segmented the project to avoid an environmental review.” Hayes said oil corporations saw the controversy of Keystone XL and intentionally planned the pipeline through central Illinois “behind closed doors.”

With this in mind, activist groups have been mobilizing in response to the proposed Enbridge pipeline expansion, informing Illinois land owners about the dangers the pipelines pose and the tactics used by the corporations to take their land. There have been meetings with local and state government. In fall of 2016, local environmental activists and Native American representatives spoke to the Urbana City Council about dangers pipelines pose to surface waters and aquifers. The Urbana City Council responded, drafting a resolution that stressed the need to protect our aquifers. These efforts, along with the addition of the Mahomet Aquifer Task Force, aim at increasing awareness about the potential threats to our aquifers.

A longer-term viewpoint looks at how they are all connected. That is, in order to best protect the Mahomet Aquifer, there must also be protection for the streams and rivers that recharge it. There is precedence that addresses the importance of this, as demonstrated when

the EPA restored Clean Water Act protections for 48,782 miles of streams in Illinois, protecting against development of wetlands, dumping by coal companies, power plants and meat-processing plants. Both surface and underground water sources are depended upon for drinking water by approximately 1,680,948 Illinoisans. If so many are dependent upon the Mahomet Aquifer and surface waters that recharge it, all being vulnerable to overuse and contamination, then how is it the right of the few over the many to over-exploit and pollute? This question is pertinent to both the Dakota Access pipeline as well as the Enbridge pipeline, and we the people of Illinois must decide what kind of future we want for ourselves and our ancient waterways.

Also posted in [Environment](#), [Human Rights](#).

People’s Climate March: History & Views from the Local & D.C. Marches - Origin of the March

By Members of Prairie Group of Sierra Club and Food & Water Watch

Origin of the People’s Climate March

By Alice Englebreetsen

Alice Englebreetsen has been a member of the Sierra Club for many years, and originally got involved by going on national outings. For the last 16 years she has been on the Executive Committee of the Prairie Group of the Illinois Chapter in many capacities. Currently she is Treasurer and Political Chair of the Prairie Group.

The original People’s Climate March (PCM) was called in May 2014 by 350.org, the environmental organization founded by writer/activist Bill McKibben, and it was endorsed by over 1,500 organizations, including the Sierra Club. The march was conceived as a response to the scheduled U.N. Climate Summit of world leaders to take place in New York City on September 21, 2014. The months of organizing and the day itself helped to re-boot the climate movement in this country. The march was

attended by over 400,000 people from all walks of life.

The work of the PCM is grounded in a set of core principles:

- Prioritize leadership of front-line communities, communities of color, low-income communities, workers and others impacted by climate, economic and racial inequity.
- Use the [Jemez Principles for Democratic Organizing](#) to ground our work.
- Build a coordinated but decentralized structure that lifts up a common platform and message while being flexible enough to create more opportunities for connection to local issues, ownership and engagement in the movement.
- Work in a way that helps to strengthen and build the capacity of the local organizing.
- Develop opportunities for a range of organizations and social movements to work together, and to use our joint efforts to give greater visibility to our common struggle. This includes, but is not limited to, putting people into the streets as we demand policy changes and bold action.



Buses from C-U to D.C. ready to leave.

In 2015 the Peoples Climate Movement focused its collective energy on strengthening the climate justice movement at the local level. That

October we organized 200 actions in 48 locations, mostly led by front-line communities, unions, faith groups, youth, and people of color organizations. These actions highlighted the on-the-ground realities in their cities, and tied those struggles to the national movement.

In addition to the People's Climate March in New York City, there were many other communities around the world who also hosted marches.

Alarms went off again when the climate-denying Trump was elected President in 2016, along with a right wing congress. Another People's Climate March was organized for April 29, 2017, 100 days after the inauguration, to be held in Washington D.C. In addition, many other communities in the United States and around the world organized marches. In Illinois there were marches held in Chicago, Carbondale, Peoria and Champaign-Urbana.

(Hiking) Boots on the Ground (in D.C.)

by Rachel Vellenga

Equally important to the local marches was getting a large number of demonstrators to show up in D.C. to show politicians how adamant people are about the need to act on climate change. Some traveled on their own and some rode on buses organized by various environmental groups and other non-profits from around the country. A estimated total of 200,000 people answered the call to the national protest. People of all ages and ethnic groups.

I took a bus organized by the Illinois Chapter of the Sierra Club. The bus stopped in Peoria, Bloomington/Normal, Champaign/Urbana and Indianapolis. We were at capacity by the time we pulled out of Indianapolis. We drove all night and arrived in D.C. Saturday morning. The march was very well organized with parking set aside for buses at RFK Stadium and volunteers to direct us where to go to get to the



starting point. You could text a number on your cellphone to get updates about the march and messages from your fellow bus participants. We had a few hours to explore and then lined up in a predetermined order. We were located towards the end of the march and therefore had to wait some time to get started but spirits were high and we were eager to show our displeasure. The weather was a sweltering 90 degrees... in April, a tie with the all time record set in 1974 (appropriate for the cause – where's James “Snowball” Inhofe when you need him). Some kids got the entrepreneur spirit and sold bottled water out of old shopping carts for the sweating masses yearning to be free (of climate change). And while I am loath to buy bottled water, I am more loath to pass out on the asphalt in front of Trump Hotel from heat exhaustion (although again... appropriate). We marched peacefully with a great collection of clever signs, costumes (one brave soul dressed in full polar bear outfit), musical instruments and chants. The biggest reaction came when we passed Trump Hotel where marchers let our displeasure be heard loud and clear. Food trucks lined the avenue when we finished and then back to our bus for the all night ride home. Extremely tired and sweaty and in need of a shower but confident

that we had done our part to show our support for combating climate change.

Champaign-Urbana March

By Lois Kain

Lois Kain hooked up with Food and Water Watch in the fall of 2012 for the GMO food labeling fight in Illinois, and has been the volunteer local coordinator since 2013. She went to the NYC march in 2014 and wanted to try to bring that incredible experience to C-U. When details for the 2017 PCM were being worked out for D.C., organizers around the country expressed desires to hold events in their home towns, so, the idea of sister marches was born. Day by day the map of sister marches and events around the country grew in number. While Chicago would be Illinois' biggest march (5,000 people hit the streets in a cold rain!), a number of other cities across the state joined in to give Illinois activists an option closer to home. Champaign-Urbana got on the map! Local members of Sierra Club and Food and Water Watch, with the help of student groups Beyond Coal and iMatter, came together to create our event.

The steering committee decided to have not only a march but an Earth fair out in the fresh air and sunshine of Westside Park in Champaign. Music, tabling with local organizations, speakers, a march, and a raffle to raise money for our very own Pollinatarium came together over the months of March and April.

Carol Ammons (State Representative) and Scott Bennett (State Senator) headed up our speaker list. Alice Englebreten (Sierra Club), Carol Hayes (Prairie Rivers Network), Lan Richart (Eco-Justice Collaborative), and Anna Catalina Rosu (iMatter) added their voices in the call for people to WAKE UP! to the impending catastrophe of our warming planet.



State Rep. Carol Ammons addresses the crowd at the C-U March

Environmental and political party organizations, churches, local green energy companies and the City of Urbana tabled with messages and information for us human inhabitants of Mother Earth of hope, justice, solidarity, and solutions for the social and environmental messes in which we had made for ourselves. Even Flat Rodney hung out with us! Meadowhawk provided the welcoming music and Common Ground Food Co-op and Strawberry Fields-World Harvest donated cool, Earth-loving gift baskets for the raffle.

As the date approached, the weather forecast became more and more ominous. We had to decide to change our plans or change the venue. We opted for venue and Grace Lutheran Church was gracious enough to provide the new location on such a short notice.

People from all around East Central Illinois RSVP'd on the sister march website from Danville to Peoria, and Watseka to Mount Vernon. The threatening weather and sudden venue change did not dampen the spirits of 300 Earthlings who came to share their concerns and hopes for the future of our only home, Gaia. Also posted in [Environment](#).

Events to come, other details to be posted on the Alerts list and the PG Facebook.

*17 August, 5:30: SC Happy Hour, Pizza M, Main Street, downtown Urbana

*19 August: Urbana Farmers' Market

*25 Aug 5: 30: Opening of the first part of the **Kickapoo Rail Trail** - ribbon cutting in St. Joseph!

*24 August, 7pm: Champaign Public Library - Irrigation and the future of groundwater in Illinois. Public conversation organized by the Midwest Center for Investigative Reporting. Free, but tickets required. More at: [Irrigation & groundwater](#)

*26-27 August: Saturday night - Sunday morning is scheduled for camping out at Friends Creek near Decatur/Cisco. There is room for 25 people who will share the modest fee of \$30.

*11 September, 5-7 pm: Ready for 100 Town Hall

*9-16 September: National Drive Electric Week(Scott Greene)

*16 September: Urbana Farmers' Market

* 21 September, 5:30 pm: SC Happy Hour, Pizza M

*Late September, 1 pm: Potluck Picnic.

University YMCA Friday Forum series runs Sep. 8 through Nov. 10, on themes of sustainability. The first few in the series, all on **Fridays at noon** at the University YMCA, 1001 S. Wright St. in Champaign:

Sep. 8 - Standing Rock and the Power of Indigenous Youth Voices

Sep. 15 - Organizing for Environmental Justice
 Sep 22 - A Half Century of Protecting and Restoring the Waters of the United States.
 Sep. 29 - Neighborhood Approaches to Environmental Justice featuring the Lierman Neighborhood Action committee and the 5th & Hill Neighborhood Rights Campaign

... and more! Oct 6 through Nov. 10 on national parks, bicycling while Black and Latino, environmental justice, environmental change and indigenous peoples, coal, and the revitalization of urban communities.

Starting on Oct 1st, **First Presbyterian Church** in Urbana has their own series of talks on sustainability. Talks are on **Sundays at 11am**. The first few (details at: FirstPresUrbana.org):

Oct 1 - Journey of the Universe: Story of Cosmic, Earth and Human Transformation
 Oct 8 - The Challenge of Human Population Growth
 Oct 15 - The Challenge of Sustainable Mineral and Energy Resources
 Oct 22 - The Challenge of Sustainable Fresh Water Availability
 Oct 29 - The Challenge of Sustainable Food Availability
 Nov 5 - Extinction and Biodiversity - Worrisome Trends and Practical Solutions

About the Prairie Group

The current Prairie Group Excom consists of Alice Englebreetsen (a.engelebreetsen at comcast.net), Bob Illyes (bob.illyes at gmail.com), Nancy Dietrich (nancydietrich01 at gmail.com), whose terms end in December, 2017; Don Davis (zoots2005 at gmail.com), Stuart Levy (stuartnlevy at gmail.com) Rachel Vellenga (rlvellenga at yahoo.com), and our newest appointee Jacquelyn Potter (jackienbrad at yahoo.com), whose terms end with December, 2018. Usually we have an election towards the end of each year, but if there are no more candidates than positions to fill or if a position becomes vacant, the current Excom may appoint people for those positions.

The Excom has the responsibility to decide on all activities and expenditures of the Prairie Group. Usually these decisions are taken at the regular Excom meetings, which occur 6 times each year in the odd-numbered months on a Sunday afternoon or some weekday evening. In January of each year we decide on who will be the elected officers and designated activity positions.

Membership in the Excom is open to any Prairie Group member. The Excom meetings are usually held at one of the Excom members' homes. They are open to the public but not usually actively publicized.

The current officers are Chair: Stuart; Vice-chair: Don; Treasurer: Alice.

Some activity positions are Secretary: Dick Bishop; Delegate to Chapter Excom: Alice; Alternate Delegate: Don; Outings: Rachel Vellenga; Sales of Calendars: Trent Shepard; Editor of this newsletter: Dick (richardl.bishop at gmail.com)