



THE ALAMO SIERRAN

THE ALAMO GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB NEWSLETTER - VOL. 43 No. 4 APR 2009

Alamo Group Endorsements

Many of you may be worn out from the November election, but club members in San Antonio must now work together to influence the mayoral and City Council elections in May. The next City Council will have a huge burden in leading San Antonio to address climate change issues locally. Climate change is the most pressing event of our time. It will produce serious local consequences, including possibly 20% less rainfall combined with more flooding when it does rain.

The good news is that most of the 46 candidates for Mayor and City Council have acknowledged the problem and sought the Sierra Club endorsement in this election cycle. There has been a dramatic change from the

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Water Forum

A water forum sponsored by a number of organizations, including the City of San Antonio, the San Antonio Water System, the government of the Canary Islands and UTSA, was held March 5 in downtown San Antonio, with Alamo Sierrans Jerry Morrissey and Loretta Van Coppenolle in attendance. Experts were on hand to discuss San Antonio's current and future water situations.

Dr. Alfonso Chiscano, a native of the Canary Islands now living in San Antonio, was responsible for putting the forum together. A large part of the event dealt with successful solutions to water and energy problems used in the Canary Islands. The islands, part of Spain but located off the coast of western Africa, are

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A Word from the Chair by Loyd Cortez

I am happy to announce that ExCom has appointed a new Recycling Chair, Laurie Posner. Under her guidance we will continue the recycling campaign that Patricia Martinez began. On behalf of the Alamo Group of the Sierra Club, I wish to thank Ms. Martinez for all her hard work and dedication to the apartment recycling campaign.

Due to a pending relocation out of state, we had an ExCom member decide not to continue on the board. We thank Jane Ward for her tireless support and willingness to volunteer for many of our club's activities. We will miss her and wish her the best in her new home.

As there was a vacancy in the Membership Chair position, I decided to reassume those duties. We will be asking for a volunteer for this position at a later date.

I want to bring to your attention other community events posted on our website's Community Calendar at www.texas.sierraclub.org/alamo/Community.htm. If you get a chance, take a peek at those. We also have a couple of Action Alerts posted at www.texas.sierraclub.org/alamo/Alerts.htm.

Our Basura Bash river cleanup drew the biggest group of volunteers recently. About 40 people showed up, and it didn't take long for all the tacos and bottled water to disappear. Thank you, Sierra Club members and non-members who gave up their Saturday morning to pick up trash along the river. We are glad to have a great bunch of volunteers who were not afraid to get down and dirty.

General Meeting: 7:00 P.M., 3rd Tuesday each month at the Witte Museum located at 3801 Broadway just south of Hildebrand Ave. Socializing begins at 6:40, program at 7 P.M.

April 21, 2009: Crocodiles, Mermaid Spirits, and Little Daddy: Kunwinjku of Western Arnhem Land and Their Ways of Conservation

Denise Goodfellow, author of *Birds of Australia's Top End*, will present a slide program.

May 19, 2009: The Light Rail Option

Dave Dobbs of the Texas Association for Public Transportation and publisher of *LightRailNow!* in Austin will speak on the basics and benefits of light rail systems, including revitalization of the city.

Fay Sinkin: In Memoriam

The Sierra Club joins others in the environmental community in mourning the loss of Fay Sinkin, a longtime activist, chiefly in the areas of public health and aquifer protection. New York-born Sinkin married Solar San Antonio founder Bill Sinkin and came to San Antonio in 1942. From then on, through most of her life, Mrs. Sinkin worked tirelessly for the betterment of her adopted city. Fay Sinkin died on March 4 at the age of 90.

SAEN Backs Mission Verde

The Sierra Club has joined with the San Antonio Environmental Network (SAEN) to endorse the San Antonio sustainability plan known as Mission Verde. SAEN is a loose coalition of some 40 environmental entities of which the Sierra Club is a member.

In a letter to Mayor Phil Hardberger, Alamo Group chair Loyd Cortez wrote, "While the Sierra Club may have some reservations about the [Mission Verde] plan, we support it in principle and feel that it will go a long way toward assuring the future viability of San Antonio and the surrounding region." Noted in the letter

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Endorsements Continued

80s when the Sierra Club carried little clout locally despite the club's farsightedness on numerous issues. Part of that farsightedness culminated in the formation of the Edwards Aquifer Authority. At times in the past, the Sierra Club was demonized by some politicians. A few lawsuits and many serious initiatives later, the Sierra Club commands respect. Now candidates are lining up to seek our endorsement.

The Alamo Group's political committee sent questionnaires and conducted personal interviews with candidates for eight weeks, beginning long before the deadline to file on March 9. Our committee spent many hours discussing the candidates and making many difficult decisions. Some candidates, while showing very strong commitments to the environment, lacked the experience necessary to lead the city. We encourage these candidates to continue to work with the Sierra Club to develop skills and expertise so that in the future, we can endorse them. We want to thank each candidate who completed questionnaires and sat at the table. Finally, we endorse only in contested races. With all of that said, our endorsements are as follows:

Mayor

We again endorse JULIAN CASTRO, who graduated from Harvard Law School in 2000. During his four years on City Council, Castro demonstrated a calm, positive demeanor in addition to leadership skills. We believe he can handle the problems the city will be facing in the next few years and is in the best position to complete Mayor Hardberger's vision of Mission Verde, continuing the city on its path to sustainability. Castro understands the gravity of the decisions this city is encountering. We must all get behind Julian Castro to support San Antonio.

District 1

MARY ALICE CISNEROS, incumbent and life long resident of the district, is the best candidate for the job. During her two years on Council, she has supported solar energy and other clean energy sources. She has been in attendance at many of the events hosted by the Sierra Club and others to discuss alternative energy.

District 2

IVY TAYLOR, a 1992 Yale University graduate, has the experience and attitude necessary to bring the concept of sustainability to Eastside neighborhood residents. As a former employee of the City of San Antonio who worked on inner city development issues and also served on the San Antonio Planning Commission, we feel she will be able to work with both the business community and

residents to address the problems of District 2.

District 5

Incumbent LOURDES GALVAN has taken the cause of CPS oversight and the bigger problem of uranium mining and its effects on the community personally, having friends in Goliad County who will be personally impacted by uranium mining. She knows the problems of District 5 as an inner city community that lacks fundamental city services such as parks and green spaces and how those deficits affect the health of her constituents. Lourdes Galvan has the experience necessary to continue for two more years when she will be term-limited out.

District 6

RAY LOPEZ, former Northside ISD school board president, has demonstrated leadership in reducing Northside's energy use. Lopez has led initiatives in greening the environment which we hope he will continue doing as a Council member. Lopez's ecological concerns include strengthening aquifer protection, cutting CO2 emissions, and planting and saving more trees.

District 7

JUSTIN RODRIGUEZ, the incumbent and a lawyer, has been the leader on City Council in endorsing and supporting sustainable energy. He has fought to force CPS to be accountable. He has supported the establishment of the Office on Environmental Policy and of a citizens' committee on the environment. The political committee considers it important to give Justin Rodriguez two more years when he also will be term-limited out.

District 8

REED WILLIAMS spent most of his life working in the energy sector. Before retiring he was employed by Frontier Oil Corporation as Executive Vice President for Refining and Marketing. He is for efficiency first and is a strong supporter of alternative technologies. As an industry insider who understands climate change and energy security, Reed Williams has the knowledge and experience that this Council needs.

District 10

JOHN CLAMP, a CPA and self proclaimed "numbers" guy, is an incumbent who has been a champion of City Council's oversight duties in regulating CPS. We must have this candidate on board for two more years to continue his efforts in leading CPS Energy into the 21st century and true sustainability.

Please vote and get involved in the campaigns. Call or email Russell Seal (289-9008, rseal@sbcglobal.net) if you'd like to help out in one of the above campaigns. May 9 is Election Day. Early voting is April 27 - May 5.

Mission Verde Continued

were initiatives number five and six of the plan which dealt with a greener building code for San Antonio and extensive retrofits of existing homes in the city. Also applauded was the plan's intention to pursue expanded mass transit.

On Thursday, March 12, the first step was taken in implementing Mission Verde when Council voted 11-0 to pass the green building code ordinance. It will require energy savings in new construction of 15 per cent, effective January 1, 2010. A goal of 30 per cent savings is mandated by 2012 and by 2030, all new buildings must attain the goal of being net-zero carbon producing.

A small contingent of Sierrans went before Council to urge passage of the ordinance. Spokesperson Loretta Van Coppenolle spoke of the urgency of climate change as the reason the ordinance needed to be passed. Cited were the words of an international climate scientist who has said that the world is now on track for the IPCC's worst case scenario of five to six degrees C of planetary warming. The sanantonio.gov website has more information about Mission Verde.

Water Forum Continued

arid, particularly the eastern islands. They use groundwater catchment and have been desalinating water since 1964. They have the highest use of reclaimed waste water in Spain. The islanders use renewable energies as much as possible to power the desalination process of both brackish and sea water and use energy efficiency systems in the process as well.

Representatives of SAWS spoke of SAWS' having the largest direct use recycling system in the U.S., with the treated water used in industry, not for drinking. They spoke of SAWS' underground storage for Edwards Aquifer water in the Carrizo Aquifer, which holds three times the amount of water the defeated Applewhite Reservoir would have held. Greg Flores, SAWS vice-president, stated that by 2014 SAWS will open a brackish desalination plant.

Architect Robert Shemwell stressed the need for a comprehensive approach to maximize water sources and efficiency of use while maintaining water quality and

quantity. Jose Ruiz of the North American Development Bank emphasized that water conservation, reuse, and desalination should be practiced, in descending order. In closing remarks, San Antonio Environmental Policy Director Laurence Doxsey stated that area developers are not opposing stronger water codes for San Antonio.

E-Waste Recycling

Two national office supply chains with stores in San Antonio have announced electronics recycling at all their stores. The two are Best Buy, with numerous locations in San Antonio, and Staples with one location. Both stores claim responsible recycling. Best Buy will take telephones, coffeemakers, DVD players, PCs, small televisions and monitors under 32 inches. A \$10 fee is assessed on some items recycled. Go to BestBuy.com/Recycling for more information.

Staples recycles computers, printers, fax machines and other office electronics for a \$10 fee per item. They offer free recycling of cell phones, PDAs, rechargeable batteries, mice, keyboards and computer speakers. Staples' website for more information is staples.com/eceasy. To search for recyclers by zip code, visit Earth911.com.

OUTINGS

SAT, APR 25: KING WILLIAM PARADE

What a great way to get some exercise, while parading your Sierra Club colors! Local organizations and businesses will be showcasing their festive side with a fun and funky parade. The parade will begin on E. Guenther Street at Eagleland Drive at 10:00 am, but participants will assemble by 9:00 am. Wear your Sierra Club t-shirt, hat and comfortable shoes suitable for pounding the pavement along a 1.5-mile parade route. Call (674-9489) or email Loyd Cortez for information.

SAT, MAY 2: GOVERNMENT CANYON DAY HIKE

Early to rise day hike. Meet at 7:30 AM at the porch of the park headquarters, 12861 Galm Road. This healthy and wise 9-mile hike will go out the Joe Johnston Route to include Caroline's Loop, a meander over Little Windmill, and return via Sendero Balcones,

all at a moderate pace. **DIFFICULTY:** moderate (length). Cost: \$6 entry fee without annual permit. Be sure to bring water and snacks. Sign up with leader Stan Drezek, 493-0939.

WED, MAY 6: POTLUCK DINNER AND OUTINGS COMMITTEE MEETING

Contact Scott Wolfe, 724-2707 for details.

THUR, MAY 7: EISENHOWER PARK EVENING HIKE

Meet at 6:45 PM at the main trail entrance for a 3-mile hike that will be completed in the moonlight. Bring water and a snack. Wear hiking shoes or boots that are appropriate for a rugged trail. A walking stick might be helpful. **DIFFICULTY:** moderate to strenuous. Leader: Jerry Morrisey, 382-2614 or jl Morrisey@aol.com

SAT, MAY 16: BRACKENRIDGE PARK DAY HIKE

Meet at 9 AM at the main parking lot next to the train station for a leisurely walk through the park. **DIFFICULTY:** easy. After the hike we will have brunch at a nearby restaurant. Leader: Jerry Morrisey, 382-2614 or jl Morrisey@aol.com

SUN, MAY 17: MISSION TRAIL BIKE RIDE

This bike ride is along paved trails and roads along the San Antonio River and that lead from mission to mission in the southeast part of San Antonio. We may stop to take quick walks through some of the missions along the way. Planned distance is 15 miles round-trip, depending on participants. Pace will be "no riders left behind." Minimum age is 12. Helmets are required. Be ready to ride by 8:00 AM in the grass parking lot southeast of the paved parking lot in front of Mission Concepcion, 807 Mission Road. **DIFFICULTY:** moderate. Fees: donations to Sierra Club encouraged. Sign up with leader Lee Dodge, LSG999@earthlink.net or 647-0216 as start times might change.

AUG 3-12: HIGH SIERRA BACKPACK TRIP

This will be a 7-day backpack (Aug 4-10), but including travel days it will cover August 3-12. It will cover over 60 miles in the southern Sierras. Only experienced backpackers should consider this hike as we will go over three mountain passes (Bishop, Muir, Piute), totaling over 7000 ft of elevation gain. We will travel through Dusy Basin, LeConte Canyon, Evolution Valley, and McClure Meadow. Those

considering this hike must be self-sufficient in the art of high-altitude wilderness travel and all the preparatory work involved. Everyone is responsible for their own travel and food. Limited to 6-8 people. For information, call Scott Wolfe 724-2707.

Volunteer Opportunities

Woodlawn Earth Day:

Sat, Apr 18, 10:00am to 4:00pm

Earth Day at UTSA:

Sat, Apr 22, 10:00am to 52:00pm

King Williams Parade:

Sat, Apr 25, 9:00am to 10:00am

S. A. Zoo International Migratory Bird Day Celebration:

Sat, May 9, 10:00am to 3:00pm

If you would like to volunteer for any of these events, contact Loyd Cortez at 674-9489 or loydcortez@earthlink.net.

Sierra Socials

(Contact Loyd Cortez 674-9489 or loydcortez@earthlink.net if planning to attend.)

APR 24, La Fogata, 2427 Vance Jackson Rd, 6-8 PM

Join us on the patio for good Mexican food and a margarita. APR 24, La Fogata,

MAY 22, Candlelight Coffeehouse, 301 N. St. Mary's, 6-8 PM

The good food and quiet atmosphere make it one of our favorite places to get together.

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MEETING DATES AND CONTACT INFO

General Meeting:	3rd Tuesday 7 p.m.	Jerry Morrissey	497-5470
Executive Committee Meeting:	3rd Thursday, 7 p.m.	Loyd Cortez	674-9489
Newsletter Submissions:		Fred Wills	fredwills@att.net
Political Committee Meeting:	2nd Thursday, 7 p.m.	Russell Seal	289-9008
Newsletter Mail Party:	2nd Tuesday, 7 p.m.	Jim Stewart	692-0727
Outings Committee Meeting:	1st Wednesday every 2 months, 7 p.m.	Lee Dodge	647-0216
Conservation Committee Meeting:	1st Thursday, 7 p.m.	L. Van Coppenolle	492-4620

ALAMO GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OFFICERS & MEMBERS

Loyd Cortez	Chair Person	674-9489
Ellen Clegg	Secretary	283-5045
Margaret (Peggy) Day		829-5632
Wendell Fuqua		373-0748
Hector Gonzalez		226-6069
MaryEllen Garcia		344-1581
Fred Wills		673-9566
Scott Wolfe		724-2707
Sharon Dukes (non voting) Treasurer		828-3721

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACTS

Programs	Eloise Stoker	828-0919
Fundraising	Paula Stone	393-7351
Publicity	Teresa Ronquillo	844-8720
Mailings	Jim Stewart	692-0727
Membership	Loyd Cortez	674-9489
Newsletter	Fred Wills	673-9566
Website	Richard Alles	494-2088

COMMITTEE CONTACTS

Outings Chair	Lee Dodge	647-0216
Political Committee	Russell Seal	289-9008
Outreach & Education	Carolyn Wells	271-0640

CONSERVATION CONTACTS

Conservation Chair	L. Van Coppenolle	492-4620
Assistant Chair	R. Carroll-Bradd	216-6125
Endangered Species	Fred Wills	673-9566
Fluoridation	L. Van Coppenolle	492-4620
Organic Gardening	Dave Klar	495-2148
Recycling	Laurie Posner	510-917-0097
Tree Conservation	Richard Alles	494-2088
Volunteer Coordinator	Jerry Morrissey	497-5470
Water Issues	Jerry Morrissey	497-5470

U.S. CONGRESSPERSONS

Charlie Gonzalez (210) 472-6195
Lamar Smith (210) 821-5024
Henry Cuellar (210) 271-2851
Ciro Rodriguez (210) 922-1874

CITY COUNCIL

Mayor: Phil Hardberger; 207-7060;	mayor@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 1: Mary Alice P. Cisneros; 207-7279;	district1@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 2: Sheila McNeil; 207-7278;	district2@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 3: Jennifer V. Ramos; 207-7064;	district3@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 4: Phillip A. Cortez; 207-7281;	district4@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 5: Lourdes Galvan; 207-7043;	district5@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 6: Delicia Herrera; 207-7065;	district6@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 7: Justin Rodriguez; 207-7044;	district7@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 8: Diane G. Cibrian; 207-7086;	district8@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 9: Louis E. Rowe; 207-7325;	district9@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 10: John G. Clamp; 207-7276;	district10@sanantonio.gov

The Alamo Sierran published monthly (except July) by the Alamo Group of the Sierra Club, 615 Willow, San Antonio, TX 78202. Members support the Sierran and receive the publication as part of membership. Nonmember subscriptions \$10.00/year. Periodical postage paid at San Antonio, Texas. Publication No. 018475

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Sierra Club Member Services, PO Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322 or email to address.changes@sierraclub.org

Alamo Group website address
www.alamosierraclub.org

Thanks to Dave Hammeren of The Printed Word, 6502 Bandera Rd Suite 205, San Antonio, Tel 520-5700 for our nominal newsletter cost.

Alamo Group of the Sierra Club
P.O. Box 6443
San Antonio, Texas 78209

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STUDENT	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
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