

Newsletter

The Alamo Sierran e-Newsletter - December, 2013

* General Meetings *

Tuesday, December 10th: Holiday Party and Fundraiser

You are invited to the Alamo Sierra club's holiday fundraising party. Enjoy the dazzling downtown lights, a catered buffet (no need to bring pot luck this year!), full bar options, and new musical entertainment — [Austin Forrest](#) and **The Bluegrass Express**.

6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

[The Worm Tequila & Mescal Bar](#), 123 Losoya St., Hyatt Regency River Level [At the riverfront, lower level of the Hyatt Regency, in the old Jim Cullum's Landing location]

[Map](#)

There is free city parking nearby at 240 E. Houston St. (enter this parking lot on College St. between Navarro and St. Mary's St.) and all other city parking lots downtown after 5 p.m. Or you can come by bus, which stops nearby too. We are asking for a modest suggested \$10 cover.

There is a silent auction. We have received party food, gift baskets and certificates from restaurants and grocers such as **Blue Star Brewery**, **Chipotle**, **Crumpets**, **Grimaldi's Pizzeria**, **Hearthstone Bakery**, **Jason's Deli**, **La Madeleine**, **Paesanos**, **Page Barteau Catering**, **Panera Bakery**, **Red Culinary Institute Restaurant**, **Sprout's**, **Trader Joe's**, **Twin Liquors**, and **Whole Foods Market**.

We have fine art prints from **Clyde Dexler**, **Wendell Fuqua**, and **Kathleen Trenchard**, ceramics from **Eloise Stoker** and **The Beautiful Bowl**, and cool stuff like plants and a cooler from **Anne Pearson** and **Loretta Van Copenolle**, car washes at **The Wash Tub**, a hammock from **Whole Earth Provision**, and gift certificates from **Big Grass Bamboo** and **Dos Carolinas**.

Professional services such as **K Charles Aveda Salon**, architecture/remodel consult with **John Hertz**, personal protection consult by **Benjamin Kurata**, and horseback ride and lesson with **Michelle Petty** are available.

Rainbow Gardens and **Shades of Green** area nurseries donated gift certificates.

We are expecting other desirable, bargain auction items to be available. If you would like to donate an item please contact me or bring it to the party. Part of the proceeds will go toward our Inner City Outings.

We hope to see you there. Invite friends, colleagues, and family over 18. If you have any questions or would like to help, please contact [Peggy Day](#), (210) 829-5632.

Tuesday, January 21st: Connections: Streetcar and Comprehensive Plan, Plus Commuter Rail to Austin

Brian Buchanan, Vice President of Operations at VIA, and one of the recognized **40 under 40** leaders in San Antonio, will provide an update on the streetcar and our multimodal system, including the comprehensive plan. Go to VIA's [Final Plan](#) to see how connectivity expands across the city. Intercity connections between Austin and San Antonio on the LSTAR commuter rail will be discussed by Rail Director Joseph Black of the Lone Star Rail District. Go to [Lone Star Rail](#).

Times, maps and speaker bios are on our Events page.



A Word from the Alamo Group Chair

This is the traditional time for giving thanks for the blessings of the harvest we have received and giving voice to Peace on Earth. Sierrans understand that for Peace on Earth human society must be at Peace with Earth.

While contemplating a message about the peace and the environment, I remembered a story better than one I had time for, "Peace on Earth. Peace with Earth. What's the connection?" from Promoting Enduring Peace. PEP began in 1952 to educate and lobby to avert a possible a global thermonuclear cataclysm. Unlike many peace organizations, PEP's mission has evolved to elevate environmental stewardship and sustainability. PEP's purpose is "to conduct peace education promoting the advent of a harmonious planetary commonwealth through the convergence of the worldwide movements for disarmament, social justice, and environmental stewardship as the foundation of sustainable peace." It

is a big task and one we will not achieve on just a wish, a prayer, and a heartfelt song.

In human history, diminishing access to necessary resources leads to social injustice, strife and war. With increasing populations, elitism, materialism, and militarism, in an economic system that is incapable of contemplating limits to growth and resource exhaustion, many around the world are reaping a bitter harvest with little peace in sight.

Americans are currently more protected by our prosperity, but this is for many a tenuous comfort in today's world, more aware and connected than ever through the World Wide Web. If we want peace in the world and serenity in the face of anxieties this information may provoke, the Sierra Club's message is great medicine. Give of ourselves to live, learn, and teach how to be in harmony with our earthly home. With adequate checks and balances, we can protect and preserve the web of life that provides clean air and water, food and shelter, companionship, beauty, and mystery that not only nourishes our bodies but feeds our souls.

Thank you all, Sierrans and our allies, for your support for our mission—to preserve, protect and enjoy the earth. May you all have and bring peace with earth and good will among humankind.

Margaret "Peggy" Day, ExCom Chair

No World Bank and UN Money for Nuclear Power

This is some thanksgiving cheer forwarded from Energía Mía's Cindy Weehler via Robert Singleton. "More evidence that the economics of nuclear power just do not make sense," Weehler added.

In a November 28 article, *World Bank, UN say no money for nuclear*, The Australian Financial Review reported today:

The World Bank and United Nations have appealed for billions of dollars to provide electricity for the poorest nations but say there will be no investment in nuclear power. "We don't do nuclear energy," said World Bank president Jim Yong Kim on Wednesday, as he and UN leader Ban Ki-moon outlined efforts to make sure all people have access to electricity by 2030.

The AFR elaborated:

Kim said the World Bank is preparing energy plans for 42 countries that would be ready in June, but said any money raised would only go to new power sources. "Nuclear power from country to country is an extremely political issue," Kim told reporters. "The World Bank Group does not engage in providing support for nuclear power. We think that this is an extremely difficult conversation that every country is continuing to have. "And because we are really not in that business our focus is on finding ways of working in hydroelectric power in geo-thermal, in solar, in wind," he said. "We are really focusing on increasing investment in those modalities and we don't do nuclear energy."

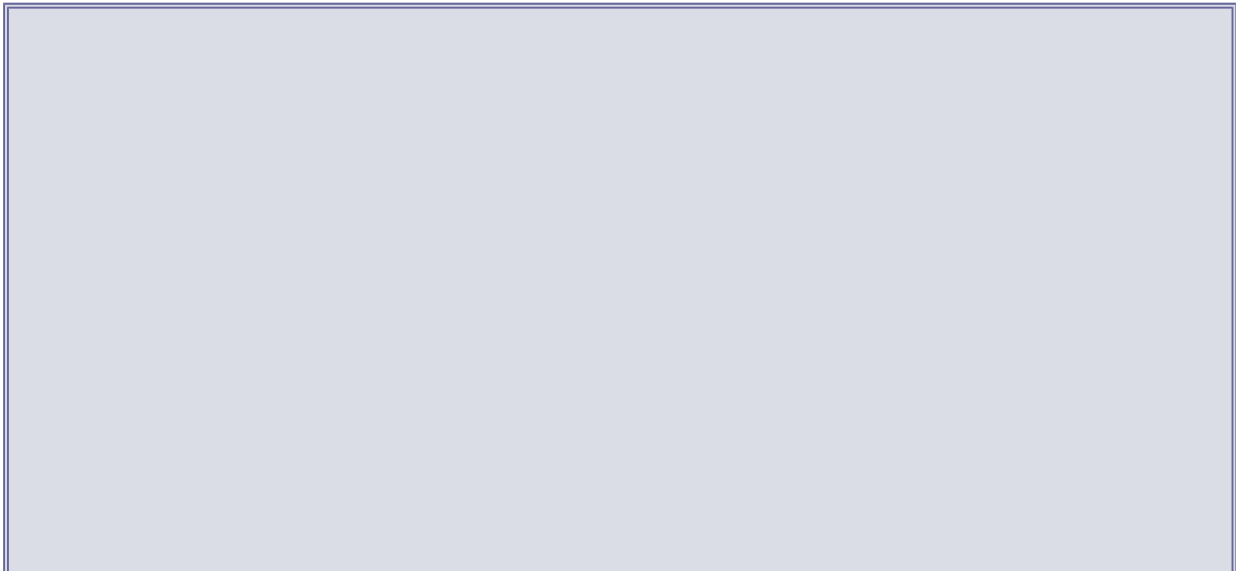
The article concluded:

The World Bank chief said it had been difficult to find long term capital for poorer countries but insisted: "We will show investors that sustainable energy is an opportunity they cannot afford to miss."

Fall is in the air....So are a few other things

As you may know, Alamo Sierrans, with a great deal of help from [Texas Campaign for the Environment](#), have been lobbying for a single use carryout bag ordinance. On November 12, District 7 City Councilman Cris Medina filed a Council Consideration Request (CCR). The proposal calls for a ban on single-use bags, as well as a cost-benefit analysis for paperless city council meetings and an update of the city development code to save resources. The CCR was supported by council members Ivy Taylor, Rey Saldana, Shirley Gonzales, and Ray Lopez.

It's easy to take action to ban single-use bags. Just go to our action alert and fill in a form that will automatically be sent to City Council.





If you would like more information on the issue, below are articles in the local news.

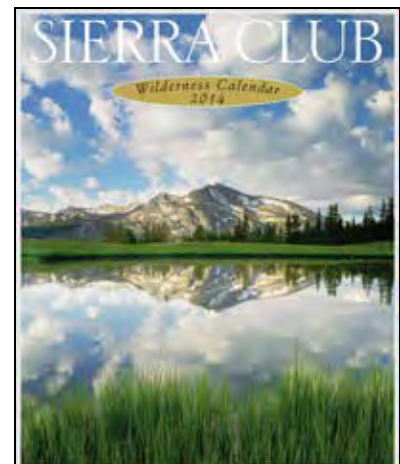
- [Plastic bag ban proposed for San Antonio](#), by Josh Baugh, San Antonio Express-News writer, November 11.
- [Plastic bag ban needs more study](#), Express-News Editorial Board, November 15.
- [Shopping bags' role debated](#), by Drew Joseph, Express-News writer, November 17.
- [Viewpoint: Proposed ban on plastic bags is shortsighted](#), by Clarke Bird, Guest Commentary in North Central News, Express News, November 19.
- [No more study; just ban plastic bags](#), by Margaret Day, Express-News, November 22 online edition, November 25 print issue.
- [Two letters to the editor](#) from Sierrans Gay Wright and Christel Villarreal, Express-News, November 26.
- [S.A. already has plan for plastic bags](#), by Josh Baugh, Express-News writer, November 29.

Buy Your 2014 Sierra Club Calendars and Support Inner City Outings

Support your local Sierra Club's Inner City Outings group by purchasing your 2014 calendars from us. Anne Pearson will be handling the sale of these beautiful calendars.

Contact Anne at 408-6321 or just bring your money to the next membership meeting or the holiday party. Remember, you can't go wrong with a Sierra Club Calendar as a gift. The engagement calendar is \$15 and the wall calendar is \$14.

These will be available at our meetings and events until they are sold out.



Big Bend National Park Outing

There were ten people on the Alamo Group outing to the park November 1-6. An excellent trip other than the unusual rain that started early on the 3rd and carried on for 36 hours, luckily mostly light, excepting the nighttime downpour. We did five hikes. Turned back from the South Rim halfway due to the cold rain and wind. Next time for the

South Rim, and more!

So, couple soggy spots in tents! One flat tire! Great fun, stories and sharing during social hours after the hikes! Nobody got hurt! Lots of good photos were taken by many of us. Here are just a few.

Kevin Hartley



At Santa Elena Canyon



At Hot Springs historic site on the Rio Grande



There was a healthy tarantula population

Executive Committee Election

Our Alamo Group Executive Committee (ExCom) has three vacant positions. Refer to the November newsletter. Members may vote for candidates with the ballot in the November print edition of *The Alamo Sierran*, pages 2 & 3. Short biographies of the candidates are included there. Your participation will be much appreciated!

Sign Up for Action Alerts

The Sierra Club is all about citizen action on critical issues. Quick citizen input often spells the difference between victory and defeat for important measures at the local and state levels. Sign up now to receive our local e-mail Conservation Action Alerts and let your voice be heard. **Call (674-9489) or email Loyd Cortez** and we'll add your name to our growing list of environmental activists.

Outings: Beautiful Central Texas Weather Beckons

Visit the [Alamo Sierra Club Outings page](#) on Meetup for detailed information about **all** of our upcoming Sierra Club Outings.

Lion's Field Events

Monthly films and presentations for your edification and enjoyment

December *Water – Vista Ridge Update*

Because of the holidays, there will be no Lion's Field Event this month.

Wednesday, January 22nd: *Coal Tar Based Pavement Sealants*

Stephen Kale is a member of the San Antonio Citizens Environmental Advisory Committee and is leading its effort to persuade the City to prohibit the application of coal tar based pavement sealants. He will explain why the chemicals in these sealants pose unacceptable risks to human health and the environment. See Mr. Kale's bio.

Wednesday, February 26th: *Bees, Beekeeping and Colony Collapse*

A film will be shown on these topics. In addition, the Sierra Club encourages you to take action by supporting the "Save America's Pollinators Act."

Our Lion's Field events are **free** and open to the public. They occur on the fourth Wednesday of each month at the Lion's Field Adult Center, 2809 Broadway @ Mulberry. Programs begin at **6:30 p.m.**

Visit our [Lion's Field Events page](#) for a map and additional information.

Social Events

meet and greet your Sierra Club friends

Because of the holidays, there will be no social event in December. But be sure to make the scene at our Holiday Party on December 10th.

