



# THE ALAMO SIERRAN

THE ALAMO GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB NEWSLETTER - VOL. 43 No. 1 JAN 2009

## A Word from the Chair by Loyd Cortez

Another year has come and gone, but the Sierra Club remains committed to its mission of protecting air and water quality, and saving natural landscapes. With your help and support, we can and will make a difference. Sign up for our Email Alert List. Get your Alamo Sierran electronically. Keep renewing your membership. These are simple things you can do to make our club strong and effective in our local community and region.

If you didn't come to our annual Holiday Party, then you missed out on some good home cooking. I want to thank everyone who came for sharing their food and friendship with fellow Sierrans. Many thanks to Loretta Van Coppenolle, Stephanie Buckholdt, Christine Buckholdt, and Jane Ward, who helped with the decorations and music. A bit of good news is that we sold almost all of our calendars at the party (none left now). For those of you who took home a calendar, your support is most welcome. Someone left behind a large glass bowl, so please contact me to retrieve it.

We also had a nice crowd of 13 people show up for our Sierra Social at the Candlelight Coffeehouse. I am glad to see that more of our members are getting out of the house to visit with their fellow Sierrans. Our next Sierra Social is at Azuca Nuevo Latino. See this newsletter or our website for details.

I recently saw the film "Fuel" and was so impressed with its statement that I would like for our membership to have another opportunity to see it. In order to have a chance to get the film back in San Antonio, you can visit the website <http://thefuelfilm.com/demand-it> and ask for the film to return to San Antonio. It has been suggested that we request the film come back to Alamo Quarry Theatre, 255 E. Basse Rd, San Antonio, TX 78209, 804-1115. If enough inquiries are posted, they will consider bringing it back. There is a solution to our addiction to oil and this film gives us a number of alternatives. I highly recommend that you go see it.

## Texas Legislature in Session: Please Act for the Environment!

The 81st Texas Legislative Session began on January 13. During the brief five-month session every two years, a flurry of legislation is passed, often with negative effects on the lands and waters of Texas. It is critical that Alamo Group members get involved through contacts with their legislators. There are many ways to contact your state representative and senator. One of the best and quickest ways is to phone their Capitol office in Austin. The following list provides that information in order of district number. You can find your state house or state senate district number by looking on your voter registration card.

*Continued on Page 2*

## Green Plumbers Workshops

Alamo Group members Barbara McMillin, Loretta Van Coppenolle, and Jane Ward recently attended a series of three workshops given by Eddie Wilcut, SAWS conservation chief, to enable water and energy conservation through plumbing. The workshops were designed for plumbers but members of the public were permitted to attend.

The Green Plumbers concept originated in Australia, where droughts have become extreme. Australia is mobilizing its plumbers to address water conservation since plumbers visit residences with water problems on an on-going basis and can easily spread the word on conservation, earning

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**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.**

### January 20, 2009: What's New in Electric Cars

Alfonzo Ranjel, president of the Alamo City Electric Automobile Association (ACEAA), will give us an update on progress in electric vehicle technology, including conversions. ACEAA is a group of hobbyists/enthusiasts who enjoy building, driving, and/or promoting battery-electric vehicles (EV) as a viable form of transportation.

### February 17, 2009: Protecting Forest Around Latin American Communities

Meredith McGuire of Trinity University will speak on helping our southern neighbors to retain their forest heritage as their communities develop.

## Intervening in our Dirty Energy Addiction

Our state is addicted to dirty energy. It's polluting the air, filling the atmosphere with greenhouse gases, and turning Texas into an asthmatic runner in the race to seize the prime economic opportunities of the clean energy economy. It's time to do an intervention!

Fortunately, the Sierra Club has a 12-Step plan to address this addiction, and we're taking it to the 81st Legislature. The Lone Star Chapter's energy committee is mobilizing members around the state to support the Club's plan to increase efficiency, generate

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## Highlights from GREENBUILD 2008: Boston, 18-21 November

The US Green Building Council (USGBC) sponsored GreenBuild 2008, held in the Boston Convention Center (see [www.greenbuildexpo.org](http://www.greenbuildexpo.org)). Strong, positive energy and optimism permeated the meeting. Nearly 30,000 attended, including 1600 vendors/exhibitors. The USGBC (a 15-year-old Washington, DC-based organization) is architect-led and has developed the LEED (Leadership in Environmental and Energy Efficient Design) classification for Green Building. The meeting had "tracks" for contractors, developers,

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**Texas Legislature Continued**

House:

District		Phone (area 512)
Gonzalez-T.	35	463-0645
Kuempel	44	463-0602
Macias	73	463-0325
Gallego	74	463-0566
Martinez-F.	116	463-0616
Leibowitz	117	463-0269
Farias	118	463-0714
Gutierrez	119	463-0452
McClendon	120	463-0708
Straus	121	463-0686
Corte	122	463-0646
Villarreal	123	463-0532
Menendez	124	463-0634
Castro	125	463-0669

Senate:

Uresti	19	463-0119
Van de Putte	26	463-0126
Wentworth	25	463-0125
Zaffirini	21	463-0121

Other options include the Government section of your Yellow Pages, which lists legislators' local office numbers and often provides toll-free numbers. If you can't find your district or member in the preceding list, or wish to use email or regular mail, go to the website [www.capitol.state.tx.us/](http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/) and under Texas House or Texas Senate, select Members. For current issues and to sign up for Lone Star Chapter email alerts, go to [www.texas.sierraclub.org/](http://www.texas.sierraclub.org/)

**Green Plumbers Continued**

more money by identifying and rectifying water-waste problems, etc.

The three workshops occurred over a two-day period. The first day was concerned with Climate Care; the second day was split between Solar Hot Water and Inspection Report Service. In the first workshop, attendees were taught that water conservation generally means energy conservation and that low-flow toilets and showerheads are now being called high-efficiency toilets and showerheads to remove the negative connotation of the original term. The advantages of gas vs. electric vs. tankless water heaters were discussed. In new construction, where many plumbers work, Wilcut urged that water heaters be centrally located.

In the Solar Hot Water workshop attendees were instructed on how to install solar collectors on roofs, preferably with the help of a roofer, and how to connect

collectors to tanks. One solar system shown employs a compact, flexible rooftop material that is freeze tolerant, easily installed and competitively priced. It was pointed out that solar water heating can reduce hot water bills by as much as 50 percent.

The last workshop taught plumbers what the most likely causes of high water bills were and how to systematically hunt for leaks. Wilcut advocated a Plumbers to People program, in which interested green plumbers under contract to SAWS would fix leaks for low-income people. He pointed out that a recent survey found that 50 percent of San Antonio homes had known leaks which were often not repaired because home owners couldn't afford the repairs.

Another series of Green Plumbers workshops is expected to be held in February. The workshops are free of charge to interested professionals and members of the public. More information on the Green Plumbers program can be obtained by going to [www.greenplumbersusa.com](http://www.greenplumbersusa.com), by emailing [info@greenplumbersusa.com](mailto:info@greenplumbersusa.com), or by calling 888-929-6207.

**Intervening Continued**

more renewable energy, and prepare for coming regulation of carbon dioxide and other gases that cause global warming. The plan, "Cool Texas", available on the Chapter website at <http://texas.sierraclub.org/conservation/energy.asp>, and is the Chapter's energy policy Big Book for this session, the roadmap for restoring rational thinking.

The Legislature is poised to build on last session's landmark energy efficiency bill with increased steps to a clean energy economy. The Club seeks to:

- o Increase the amount of projected load growth that utilities must satisfy through efficiency;
- o Fund low-income efficiency programs for existing and new homes;
- o Adopt efficiency standards for appliances not yet covered (like pool pumps);
- o Adopt higher efficiency standards for new buildings, following the lead that cities like Dallas and Houston have recently set; and
- o Expand funding for the LoanSTAR program to perform efficiency retrofits on public buildings.

Increasing our state's renewable energy portfolio and helping other

technologies achieve the same success we've seen with wind is a priority. We're asking the Legislature to:

- o Require utilities to include a certain amount of on-site renewable energy in their portfolios;
- o Create a Renewable Portfolio Standard specifically for solar, similar to the one that sparked the wind industry's growth; and
- o Create a renewable energy storage portfolio standard to help integrate more wind and solar power into the grid and make Texas a leader in the development of this critical technology;
- o Establish a carbon emissions inventory;
- o Update the air permitting process for electric generation plants;
- o Create a Clean Energy Fund to promote research & development in emerging energy technologies; and
- o Adopt green fleet vehicle requirements for public entities to help Texas develop a vehicle-to-grid electric market.

With the help of the Texas Legislature, our rehab patient will be well on the way to a clean energy future by next summer, but the Club needs your help to make this recovery happen. We need you in Austin Feb. 17-18 for our Clean Energy/Green Jobs conference and Lobby Day. We'll train you on the evening of Feb. 17 for meetings that you'll have with legislators and staff during the day on the 18th. Van Jones, founder of Green for All ([www.greenforall.org](http://www.greenforall.org)) and an inspirational voice in the movement to create green-collar jobs, will be a featured speaker on the 18th. You won't want to miss him!

We also need members to schedule meetings throughout the session at their legislators' local offices. And we're supporting the Re-Energize Texas Student Summit at the Capitol on March 28-30. Let your own students know that this is a great opportunity to raise their voices for their own clean energy future, and come down with them to show your support!

This is no time to sit on the sidelines and wish the addict would clean up its act. Get involved in our intervention! Contact me and I'll let you know just what you can do.

Ann Drumm  
 Lone Star Chapter Energy Chair  
 214-350-6108  
[anndrumm@swbell.net](mailto:anndrumm@swbell.net)

**GREENBUILD Continued**

investors, educators, real estate agents, appraisers, public health, social justice, economics, policy, and so forth. Two workshops covered the "100 Days Session." This Presidential Climate Action Project 100 day plan for Obama to jump-start federal leadership on energy security and climate change includes 300 distinct proposals ([www.climateactionproject.com/about.php](http://www.climateactionproject.com/about.php)).

All day Tuesday, 18 November, "Building Tomorrow: New Communities and Cities" covered the international drive to create "zero-carbon, zero-waste cities." Green urban renewal and new cities in the desert or on landfill were described in Canada (Vancouver), Dubai, Korea, China, and Germany. Opening speaker Christine Todd Whitman, former NJ Governor and EPA administrator under Bush, was the only speaker all week who mentioned the need for nuclear power and clean coal. (Her consulting company CASEnergy Coalition works with nuclear and coal industries.)

The Mayor of Boston, Thomas Menino welcomed the meeting to Boston, the first major US city to require LEED Standard for private development and LEED Silver for public buildings. Boston is also planning green affordable housing.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, Nobel Peace Prize recipient, congratulated the audience on electing Barack Obama and for focusing on green building, which he sees as a social justice issue critical for the future of the world.

Van Jones, founder and president of Green for All and author of "The Green Collar Economy," discussed his successful Green Job training programs in northern California.

Dr. Howard Frumkin, MD, MPH, DrPH, Director, National Center for Environmental Health, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (US Center for Disease Control) works to maintain and improve the health of the American people by promoting a healthy environment and by preventing premature death and avoidable illness and disability caused by toxic substances and other environmental hazards. Dr. Frumkin emphasized the characteristics of a "Healthy Built Environment": diversity, pedestrian-friendly, clean air and water, and green buildings.

A National Academy of Sciences panel presented their "Review and Assessment of the Health and Productivity Benefits of Green Schools": <http://www8.nationalacademies.org/cp/CommitteeView.aspx?key=296>

Global Warming and the Concentration of Poverty: Economics of Green Job Creation ([www.peri.umass.edu](http://www.peri.umass.edu)): The short-term \$100 billion green economic recovery package would

- \* Create nearly four times more total jobs than spending the same amount of money within the oil industry, and 300,000 more jobs than a similar amount of spending directed toward household consumption.

- \* Create roughly triple the number of good jobs - paying at least \$16 an hour - as spending the same amount of money within the oil industry.

- \* Reduce the unemployment rate to 4.4 percent from 5.7 percent (calculated within the framework of U.S. labor market conditions in July 2008).

- \* Bolster employment especially in construction and manufacturing. Construction employment has fallen from 8 million to 7.2 million jobs over the past two years due to the housing bubble collapse. The Green Recovery program can bring back those lost 800,000 construction jobs.

Jane Ward

**OUTINGS**

**SAT, JAN 17: BASTROP STATE PARK DAY HIKE**

Join us for a hike in the Lost Pines, a loblolly pine and hardwood forest isolated from the Piney Woods of East Texas by over 100 miles. We'll hike 10-11 miles on a soft and generally level trail. As usual, sufficient water should be carried as there are no sources on the trail. This is a dog-friendly outing and carpooling is an option. Entrance fees are the responsibility of each hiker. Donations to the Sierra Club are greatly appreciated. Leader: Scott Wolfe at [papawolfe@sbcglobal.net](mailto:papawolfe@sbcglobal.net)

**SUN, JAN. 18: STONE OAK PARK DAY HIKE**

Enjoy a brisk winter walk on the Recharge Zone on the north side of San Antonio. Meet at the park on Stone Oak Parkway at 10 AM for an easy to moderate hike. Donations to the Sierra Club accepted. Contact leader Jerry Morrisey 382-2614 or [jlmorrisey@aol.com](mailto:jlmorrisey@aol.com) for directions.

**SUN, FEB 1: MUD CREEK DAY HIKE (DOG FRIENDLY)**

Discover or renew your acquaintance with a quiet north-central San Antonio park just

inside Hwy 1604. This easy to moderate 3-mile hike begins at 10 AM. Boots are recommended due to some rocky trail sections. Dogs on leashes are welcome. Donations to the Sierra Club accepted. Contact leader Jerry Morrisey 382-2614 or [jlmorrisey@aol.com](mailto:jlmorrisey@aol.com) for directions.

**FRI-MON, FEB 13-16: GOOSE ISLAND CAR CAMP/WHOOPING CRANE BOAT TOUR**

Come spend Valentine's Day doing the big bird thing! Camp Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights at Goose Island State Park. Arrive Friday PM for group potluck. On Saturday explore Rockport and take whooping crane boat tour. Saturday dinner in Rockport (on your tab). Sunday explore Aransas National Wildlife Refuge (extra fee). Sunday dinner at your individual commissary or local restaurant. Monday AM return home. Trip cost of \$50 covers campground and boat tour. For more info or to reserve a spot contact leader Ellen Clegg, [eclegg@els.edu](mailto:eclegg@els.edu)

**SAT, FEB 28: SALADO CREEK WALK**

Meet at 8 AM at trailhead (Blanco to Longfield to Old Blanco to Voelcker Lane). Enjoy SA's newest jewel. Approximately 4.5 miles (round trip), beautifully flat and treed. Accessible and suitable for all ages. Difficulty: EASY. Cost: donations to the Sierra Club welcome. Leader: Stan Drezek 493-0939.

**SAT, MAR TBA: CANYON LAKE GORGE TRIP**

Contact leader Jerry Morrisey, 382-2614 or [jlmorrisey@aol.com](mailto:jlmorrisey@aol.com) for status of this outing.

**Sierra Socials**

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

**JAN 16, AZUCA NUEVO LATINO, 713 S. ALAMO, 6-8 PM**

We have not held a social here before. If you like Mexican cuisine, and have not tried Azuca, check it out. If it is not too cold, we may try to sit outside. The restaurant can be reached at 225-5550.

**FEB 13, MAD HATTERS TEA HOUSE, 320 BEAUREGARD, 6-8 PM**

Come join us for a good cup of soup and salad or sandwich.

# MEETING DATES AND CONTACT INFO

General Meeting:	3rd Tuesday 7 p.m.	Jerry Morrissey	497-5470
Executive Committee Meeting:	3rd Friday, 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
Jane Ward		829-5575
Hector Gonzalez		226-6069
Mary Ellen 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
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
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

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*Alamo Group website address*  
[www.alamosierraclub.org](http://www.alamosierraclub.org)

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

PERIODICAL

## Membership

**Yes**, I want to help safeguard our nation's precious natural heritage. My check is enclosed.

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

email \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed, made payable to Sierra Club

Mastercard  Visa Exp Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Cardholder Name \_\_\_\_\_

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Contributions, gifts and dues to the 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 \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

### MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

	INDIVIDUAL	JOINT
INTRODUCTORY	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
REGULAR	<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	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
LIMITED INCOME	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32

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