



# THE ALAMO SIERRAN

THE ALAMO GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB NEWSLETTER - VOL. 44 NO. 6 JUN/JUL 2010

## *Bicycle/Pedestrian Planner Speaks at May Meeting*

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) - a federally funded agency that helps coordinate cross-jurisdictional infrastructure planning among the county, city, and other governmental units - is promoting walkable, bikeable communities.

As part of this effort, the MPO's Bicycle/Pedestrian Transportation Planner, Lydia Kelly, spoke at the Alamo Group's May 18 meeting in the Witte Museum. Kelly described some of the MPO's programs and research efforts. These include the Walkable

*Continued on Page 2*

## *Thanks Volunteers for Helping With Our Spring Events*

This spring we had a crowded schedule of festivals to attend in support of our partners, and where we introduced thousands of people to the Alamo Sierra Club and its good works. Hundreds signed up for action alerts, electronic newsletters, recycling, volunteering, and training for the student coalition and outings leaders. None of this would be possible without the help of our volunteers. Thanks a million to Margaret Day, Jerry Morrissey, Loretta Van Coppenolle, MaryEllen Garcia, Dave

*Continued on Page 2*

## *Word from the Chair*

As I write this the first tar balls from BP's (British Petroleum) Gulf blow out are washing ashore. As global environmental disasters go, this massive oil spill may go down as the worst single manmade catastrophe in history. Unlike the bulk of citizens who stand by in silence or ignorance or who elect leaders committed to the evisceration of environmental regulation and oversight that led to this state of affairs, we Sierrans can take a small measure of comfort. We work to contain these threats and knew that it was only a matter of when, not if, the next big fossil fuel disaster would befall us. With the added scrutiny, the unbelievable number of regularly occurring similar, but smaller, cumulative assaults that poison our habitat and our health are revealed.

In Texas we have a once-in-a-decade chance to affect the way our state environmental agency, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality or TCEQ, does its business to defend our health and the natural resources we depend upon. The Commission is under 10-year, "sunset" review by lawmakers, who will make recommendations for improvements. The TCEQ too often protects polluters, not the public. Problems have been identified in the Commission's permitting process, enforcement, public participation, and governance. Lone Star Sierrans, in partnership with many allied groups, have organized a "Make Pollution History" campaign to address these issues. We need your help to make our voices heard over the well-funded industry lobbyists that wants to keep TCEQ in their pockets. Have you got time or a story about TCEQ to share? Email me or sign up at [www.actexas.org/signup](http://www.actexas.org/signup)

Then, at the local level, a major opportunity is opening up for needed

*Continued on Page 2*

**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.**

### **Tuesday, June 15: New Research About the Edwards Aquifer**

George Ozuna of the Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey, San Antonio office, will give an introduction to the hydrogeology of the Edwards Aquifer in the San Antonio area. In particular, Ozuna will present new research about an underground volcano from the area's geological past, located near Uvalde, that may be causing water to move south instead of east, as experts had always assumed.

### **Tuesday, July 20: Annual Pot Luck Social**

There will be no program at this monthly meeting. Instead we shall be having our annual Pot Luck Social. Bring your favorite dish to share with your fellow Sierrans. In order to save paper and a tree, we are asking you to bring your own plates and utensils. For those that forget, this year our club will have reusable ones available. Your club will provide ice tea, ice, and cups to use. The event starts at 6:30 p.m. in the Witte Museum.

### **August 17, 2010: Mission Verde Update**

## *New Fundraising Chair Gets Training From National*

*By Denali Endicott, New  
Fundraising Chair*

I recently had the opportunity to go to fundraising training at the Sierra Club's national office in San Francisco. As a new member, and as someone who is new to fundraising, this was an invaluable experience for me. In addition to learning some of

*Continued on Page 2*

## *Annual 2010 Fund Appeal*

It's that time again.....our annual fund appeal. One of the major expenses for your local club is the monthly newsletter. We are hopeful that many of you will consider and signing up for the electronic newsletter as a way to cut down this expense.

Funds for food and materials are also needed so we can continue with our Sierra Student Coalition campus green fund trainings next fall, and to ensure

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**Word from Chair Continued**

reforms. This summer San Antonio Mayor Julian Castro intends to initiate a year-long, citywide planning summit called "SA 2020." According to the city, this effort will be the first in 25 years to bring together local vision, talent, and expertise to set 10-year goals in infrastructure, arts, education, energy, and all the basic elements needed to build a vibrant community. I urge all of us Sierrans to make time to participate, in order to assure our sustainable visions and ideas dominate all areas of discussion and debate about San Antonio's future. Please let me know of your interest in participating.

**Bicycle Continued**

Community Program, which conducts workshops to discuss how communities can become more pedestrian and cycling friendly, promotes safety classes for children, and supports bicycle "rodeos."

The MPO also has a Bicycle Mobility Advisory Committee (BMAC), which provides a map of good bicycle routes in the region and has identified 280 miles of streets that could be striped for bicycle lanes. BMAC encourages implementing agencies to adopt BMAC recommendations when upgrading their streets.

In addition, the MPO is conducting a new study - using small GPS units attached to the bicycles of study participants - to record exactly which streets cyclists use. The results of the study will be provided to San Antonio's bicycle office (yes, there is one).

Kelly is herself a cyclist and an Alamo Sierran, and her enthusiasm for the subject is obvious. She is optimistic about the future of bicycle transportation in San Antonio, but acknowledges that implementation of plans can go forward only if there is "political will." She cites Portland, Oregon, as a city that long ago established a cycling and pedestrian culture.

For more information about the MPO and its cycling programs, go to [http://www.sametroplan.org/Bike\\_Walk/bike\\_walk.html](http://www.sametroplan.org/Bike_Walk/bike_walk.html).

**No Newsletter in July**

A reminder that this newsletter is the June-July edition, so you will not receive a July newsletter and there will be no presentation program on our General Meeting at the Witte in July! (See General Meeting story).

**Fundraising Chair Continued**

the regular ins-and-outs of fundraising, I learned the Sierra Club procedures for writing grants, soliciting corporate donations, and other fundraising activities. I also got to meet some of Sierra Club's top staff members and had the opportunity to talk to them about the Alamo Group and my fundraising ideas. They were very receptive, and I'm confident that the personal, face-to-face contacts that I made there will benefit Alamo Group's fundraising efforts.

As part of my training, I created a Facebook page for the Alamo Group. Please "like" us at <http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Sierra-Club-Alamo-Group/111731062197188?ref=ts>! If we can get more Sierra Club members using our web site and social media, the opportunities to raise funds, organize, and link people are tremendous. We have plenty of reasons to be excited about the future!

In closing, let me thank each and every one of you for making it possible for me to be a better fundraiser for Alamo Group. The sky's the limit!

**2010 Fund Continued**

that students have the tools and funds to green all local higher education institutions.

In addition we expect to need financial support for our efforts in our statewide Make Pollution History Campaign to reform the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. (See Word from the Chair.)

We shall also continue to use all the resources available to us, to push our elected officials and leaders to campaign for the use of energy efficiency and renewable energy sources like geothermal, solar and wind. Please help us to continue these educational, fact gathering, and advocacy efforts. Donate whatever funds you can give.

With your help and support, together, we shall strive that our children will never have to worry about not having clean water to drink, clean air to breathe, and a shade tree to sit under.

Please use the enclosed envelope to send your donations and make your check payable to Alamo Group of the Sierra Club or Alamo Sierra Club.

**Sierra Club Offers Many Ways to Get Involved**

By Karen Kimbell, New Membership Chair

When I joined the Sierra Club, I knew I'd be joining a group with a tremendous appreciation for the natural world, but I wasn't expecting to find such a vast array of opportunities in which to get involved and start making a difference in the community. From conservation to outings to water issues and much, much more, whether learning how to be more individually responsible or joining an activist group or backing a political leader, it seems there is something for everyone in the Sierra Club. And yet, we're struggling to get our members engaged.

As we build a membership committee and begin working to not only grow our member base but increase member involvement, I hope you'll join us for our upcoming Sierra Club 101's, become active in one of our committees, meet fellow members at monthly socials, get involved with political movements, and answer your phones when we call to find out more about your interests. We need to see some fresh faces, and yes, like Uncle Sam, We Want You!

The Sierra Club offers us so many great opportunities to get involved and become better stewards of our planet, but our strength is in our numbers...our members...you.

**Renewable Energy Roundup**

The 11th Annual Renewable Energy Roundup will be held in Fredericksburg, Texas, Sept. 24 - 26. There are hour-long lectures all day each day in at least four large tents. Learn the most current thinking on solar, wind, green building, and conservation. Phone 877-376-8638 for more information, or visit [www.TheRoundup.org](http://www.TheRoundup.org) for a schedule of lectures and activities. Many vendors will be present also. (Barbara McMillin)

**Volunteers Continued**

Wells, Teresa Ronquillo, Wendell Fuqua, Loyd Cortex, Richard Alles, Dave Klar, Larry Skwarczynski, Michelle Garza, Denali Endicott, Erica Zeitz, John Butchkosky, Meridith McGuire, Jim Spickard, Ellen Clegg, and Mark Duff.

# OUTINGS

**SAT., JUNE 12: GOVERNMENT CANYON STATE  
NATURAL AREA BACKCOUNTRY HIKE**

This hike will be jointly sponsored and led by the Friends of Government Canyon and the Sierra Club. Join us in learning about the canyon as we walk beautiful trails in the backcountry. We are planning a six-mile walk out the Joe Johnston Route, including the Overlook Trail.

GCSNA is located at 12861 Galm Rd (take FM 1560 west from Helotes to Galm Rd). There is a \$6 entrance fee (\$3 seniors) for those without a State Park Pass. Participants must be 13 or older. No pets please; minors must be accompanied by an adult. Meet at the Visitors Center at 8:00 a.m. for an 8:15 departure.

Difficulty: MODERATE. Bring two liters of water, wear sturdy shoes, and bring small snack for when we stop at the overlook. Call leader Stan Drezek (493-0939) if you require any additional information.

**SAT., AUG. 14: GOVERNMENT CANYON STATE  
NATURAL AREA HIKE**

This hike will be jointly sponsored and led by the Friends of Government Canyon and the Sierra Club. Join us in learning about the canyon as we walk beautiful Bluff Spurs Overlook trails of the Backcountry. Assuming it is a hot day, we will just walk the short 3.2 miles covering both overlooks. A great walk to get in before the day really heats up.

GCSNA is located at 12861 Galm Rd (take FM 1560 west from Helotes to Galm Rd). There is a \$6 entrance fee (\$3 seniors) for those without a State Park Pass. Participants must be 13 or older. No pets please; minors must be accompanied by an adult. Meet at the Visitors Center at 7:45 AM for departure by 8:00 a.m. with a planned completion by about 10:30 to truly beat most of the heat.

Difficulty: MODERATE (some steep sections & heat). Bring two liters of water and wear sturdy shoes, hat, and sun-block. Call leader Stan Drezek (493-0939) if you require any additional information.

Aug. 23 - 30 or 31: Grand Tetons and Yellowstone (Northern Rockies Sampler)  
At press time, this hike was fully booked, but you can add your name to a waiting list.

This will be a 4-day backpack in The Grand Tetons called Teton Crest plus a 1 or 2 days of hiking in Yellowstone. Teton Crest begins near Jackson Hole (after a tram ride to 10,450 ft)

and has an 11 mile stretch from Marion Lake, along the Death Canyon Shelf, over Mt Meek Divide, through Alaska Basin, and up to Hurricane Pass that is one of the best anywhere.

Then, off to Yellowstone for a very long day hike (over 20 miles) called Sky Rim (up in the High Country of the Gallatin Range), a hike along The Black Canyon of the Yellowstone (an all downhill 18 miler along the mighty Yellowstone River the whole way), or Union Falls (a 15.2 mile out and back to one of the best waterfalls in the Park). This trip can be done the other way as well, starting in Yellowstone and then going to the Tetons. All this fun begins August 23rd and lasts 7-8 days. For information contact Scott Wolfe; 724-2707.

**SAT., OCT. 23: EXPERIENCE THE BEAUTY:  
THE NEW MEDINA RIVER GREENWAY (DOG  
FRIENDLY)**

A first time ever walk for the Alamo Group of the Sierra Club. Walk the paved new section of the Medina River Greenway 3.5 miles (7 mile RT) from Applewhite Road to the terminus. Meet 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot just south of the Medina River on the west side of Applewhite Road for an 8:45 SHARP departure. Anticipated completion time of 12:15 p.m.

To get there take Exit 149 (Spur 422/SH 16) off south IH 35. Turn left at light toward Poteet, take left after 5.3 miles onto Lonestar Pass (Spur 66) toward the main gate of the Toyota Plant. At the main gate turn right (south) down Applewhite Road to the parking lot.

Difficulty: MODERATE. Bring one liter water as none is available. Donations to Sierra Club encouraged. Must call leader Stan Drezek (493-0939) to reserve spot. Ellen Clegg will serve as Assistant.

## Recycling: Just the Facts

Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run your television for almost three hours.

Recycling all the 100 million cell phones discarded annually would save enough energy to power 194,000 homes a year.

Producing items from recycled plastic uses two-thirds less energy than making plastic items directly from petroleum.

Recycling steel saves 75% of the energy that would be used to create steel from raw materials - enough to power 18 million homes.

Every ton of mixed paper recycled saves the energy equivalent of 185 gallons of gasoline.

## Sierra Socials

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

**Fri., June 25, Candlelight  
Coffeeshouse, 301 N. St. Mary's,  
6-8 p.m.**

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

**Fri., July 23, Chris Madrid's,  
1900 Blanco, 735-3552, 6-8 p.m.**

*A good place to have a tasty burger, salads, cold beer, and wine.*

**Fri., Aug. 27, La Fogota, 2427  
Vance Jackson Rd, 6-8 p.m.**

*Join us on the patio for good Mexican food and a margarita.*

**Fri., Sept. 24, Blue Star Brewing  
Co., 1414 South Alamo, 212-  
5506, 6-8 p.m.**

*Good choice of cold, micro-brewed beers to wash down the good food.*

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# MEETING DATES AND CONTACT INFO

General Meeting: .....	3rd Tuesday 7 p.m. ....	Peggy Day .....	829-5632
Executive Committee Meeting: .....	3rd Thursday, 7 p.m. ....	Peggy Day .....	829-5632
Newsletter Submissions: .....		Wendell Fuqua ....	jaleyd@grandecom.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. ....	Jerry Morrissey .....	497-5470
Conservation Committee Meeting: .....	1st Thursday, 7 p.m. ....	L. Van Coppenolle .....	492-4620

## ALAMO GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OFFICERS & MEMBERS

Margaret (Peggy) Day . Chair Person .....	829-5632
Loyd Cortez, Vice Chair Person .....	674-9489
Wendell Fuqua .....	373-0748
Hector Gonzalez .....	226-6069
MaryEllen Garcia, Co-Secretary .....	344-1581
Karen Kimbell, Co-Secretary .....	365-3174
Dave Wells .....	271-0640
Scott Wolfe .....	724-2707
Teresa Ronquillo .....	844-8720
Sharon Dukes (non voting) Treasurer .....	828-3721

### ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACTS

Programs .....	Barbara McMillin .....	734-4170
Fundraising .....	Denali Endicott .....	629-2434
Publicity .....	Teresa Ronquillo .....	844-8720
Mailings .....	Jim Stewart .....	692-0727
Membership .....	Karen Kimbell .....	365-3174
Newsletter .....	Wendell Fuqua .....	373-0748
Website .....	Richard Alles .....	494-2088

### COMMITTEE CONTACTS

Outings Chair .....	Jerry Morrissey .....	497-5470
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 .....	Carolyn Wells .....	271-0640
Tree Conservation .....	Richard Alles .....	494-2088
Volunteer Coordinator ...	Vacant	
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: Julian Castro; 207-7060;	mayor@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 1: Mary Alice P. Cisneros; 207-7279;	district1@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 2: Ivy R. Taylor; 207-7278;	district2@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 3: Jennifer V. Ramos; 207-7064;	district3@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 4: Philip A. Cortez; 207-7281;	district4@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 5: David Medina, Jr.; 207-7043;	district5@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 6: Ray Lopez; 207-7065;	district6@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 7: Justin Rodriguez; 207-7044;	district7@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 8: W. Reed Williams; 207-7086;	district8@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 9: Elisa Chan; 207-7325;	district9@sanantonio.gov
Dist. 10: John G. Clamp; 207-7276;	district10@sanantonio.gov

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Alamo Group website address  
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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.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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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

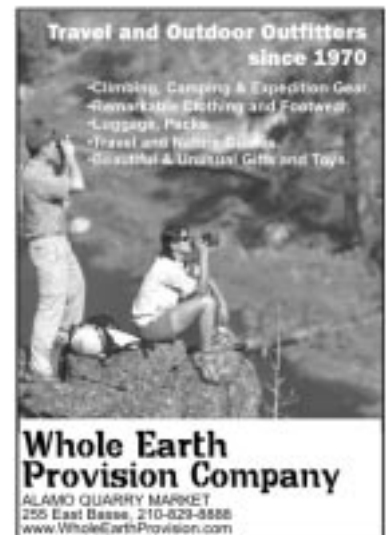
	INDIVIDUAL	JOINT
INTRODUCTORY	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47
SUPPORTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
CONTRIBUTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
LIFE	<input type="checkbox"/> \$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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