

## ALAMO GROUP MEETINGS

General membership meets 6:30 p.m., third Tuesday each month, Witte Museum, 3801 Broadway.

### Tues., May 15: Medina River Natural Area

Protecting riparian habitat of Medina River Natural Area. *Approved by Alamo Area Master Naturalists for Advanced Training.*

### Tues., June 19: Thinking about Going Solar?

Bring curiosity and questions about installing solar to Lanny Sinkin of Solar San Antonio

### Tues., July 17: Annual Pot Luck Party. No Presentation

Join us for a meal and don't forget to bring your favorite dish to share.

## SIERRA SOCIALS

*Drinks, food, fun. If planning to attend, contact Loyd Cortez, 674-9489, loydcortez@earthlink.net.*

**Fri., May 25:** La Fogata, 2427 Vance Jackson Rd, 6-8 PM.

**Fri., Jun 22:** Candlelight Coffeehouse, 301 N St. Mary's, 6-8 PM.

**Fri., Jul 27:** Chris Madrid's, 1900 Blanco, 6-8 PM.

# The Alamo Sierran May

## The Alamo Group of the Sierra Club Newsletter

VOLUME 46, NUMBER 5

MAY 2012



## A Word from the Alamo Group Chair

### By Margaret "Peggy" Day

The Alamo Group always seems to have several petition drives as key parts of our conservation campaigns or to help our allies. This spring we are focusing on four issues, but there are others we urge our members to help with too.

One petition asks for local support of the Move to Amend. This is a national grassroots campaign for a constitutional amendment that overturns *Citizens United*, the Supreme Court decision allowing corporations to donate unlimited amounts of money in political races. The resolution proposes a constitutional amendment that eliminates personhood status for corporations and that declares that money is not the equivalent of free speech. The Sierra Club Board of Directors adopted a policy resolution in response to *Citizens United* last April and followed up this February with an endorsement of Move to Amend. For more information and to take action go to: <http://movetoamend.org/> and <http://www.sierraclub.org/policy/conservation/Citizens-United-Decision.pdf>

A second petition urges local leaders to support a plastic bag fee. This is because the San Antonio effort to voluntarily reduce plastic bag use, its "Change Is in the Bag Initiative," has not gone well at all. Fees are a method that

dramatically reduces plastic bag use and plastic pollution. Many other municipalities, counties, and countries have plastic bag fees or bans that produce dramatic change in behavior. Although our petition recommends a fee and that it be set at about 15 cents--5¢ to the store and 10¢ split between the City of San Antonio and Bexar County, which provides funds for education and cleanup costs, we would support a ban or a fee. See: <http://www.sanantonio.gov/swmd/Recycling/SingleUsePlasticBagProject.aspx>

The third petition opposes WalMart's plan for an 180,000 square foot supercenter, open 24/7, to be built on green space across the street from Phil Hardberger Park. The petition supports San Antonians United for the Protection of Hardberger Park, a grassroots coalition that opposes the project, claiming it will negatively impact the quality of life in that neighborhood. Local leaders are urged to adopt sustainable city planning and zoning to prevent this mistaken project and prevent future unsustainable, incompatible land uses in the Alamo Area. For more information and a petition see: <http://www.sau4hp.org/>

The fourth petition is directed to Environmental Protection Agency

Administrator Lisa Jackson. It urges support for enacting the EPA's proposed New Source Performance Standards. These standards would limit the amount of carbon pollution that new, coal-fired power plants are allowed to emit. For information and action go to: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regulation\\_of\\_greenhouse\\_gases\\_under\\_the\\_Clean\\_Air\\_Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regulation_of_greenhouse_gases_under_the_Clean_Air_Act) and <http://www.change.org/petitions/tell-the-epa-we-want-stronger-rules-to-fight-climate-change>

There are other petitions you can help with as well. One urges the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality or TCEQ to strengthen its lax compliance standards. You can submit comments at: <http://www5.tceq.texas.gov/rules/ecomments/>. Another petition requests studies that assess impacts of the proposed route for the Keystone XL pipeline through east Texas that threatens surface and ground water. For the best information and to take action go to: <http://stateimpact.npr.org/texas/tag/keystone-xl-pipeline/>

Sign up for our Action Alerts and you will automatically receive these and links to other issues as they arise. This makes it easy for you to act. Remember, decision makers weigh the opinions of their constituents. Add your voice so we can be heard.

## Riparian Habitat

There is more to a river than flowing water. A riparian area is the dense band of vegetation hugging the sides of a river. It covers the entire floodplain and can extend for miles. Riparian areas provide important wildlife habitat and are an important water source for the ever growing human population. Unfortunately, riparian areas are

often misunderstood and abused. People allow cattle to graze at the river's edge, they mow the "weedy" plants surrounding a river, and they clear trees for a "better view". All of these actions reduce a riparian area's capacity to retain water in underground aquifers. The dense vegeta-

tion found in riparian areas acts like a sponge; when rivers flood, the plants slow the rushing water allowing more to soak into underground aquifers. Learn more about riparian areas on May 15 and what makes them function

*(Continued to Page 3)*

**Save A Tree...:)**

Please help our club offset our newsletter paper copy printing and postage cost by considering receiving the newsletter electronically by email.

Contact loydcortez@earthlink.net to make the switch.

**Make Your Voice Be Heard!**

City council decisions, regulatory actions, legislation in Austin; we need to be ready to act at a moment's notice to support the good and stop the bad.

Sometimes all it takes is a simple phone call or email message to sway the opinion of our local elected leaders and officials.

Contact loydcortez@earthlink.net to add you to our club's action alert list.

**Our Facebook site** is up and running again. Check it out and "like" us at: [www.facebook.com/pages/Sierra-Club-Alamo-Group/](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Sierra-Club-Alamo-Group/)

**Outings: Hikes That Lead Us Into Summer**

**General Requirements:** *Wear clothes and shoes appropriate for hiking. Bring water and a snack. Minors allowed only when accompanied by parent/guardian or with Consent Form and Medical Authorization. Dogs not allowed unless specified, and must be leashed and socialized. Donations to Sierra Club always welcomed.*

**Full descriptions of these outings are found at <http://texas.sierraclub.org/alamo/Outings.htm>**

And Also At

<http://www.meetup.com/Alamo-Sierra-Club-Outings/>

Participants are encouraged to read the full descriptions and contact the Outings Leader.

**Saturday, May 12th: Hike the Canyon**

Same information and requirements as the **April 14th: Hike the Canyon.**

Contact Sierra Club co-leader Chris Anderson, (210) 838-1952, if you require additional information.

**Saturday, May 26th: The Oak Loop Seasonal Nature Walk**

This walk is jointly sponsored by the Phil Hardberger Park Conservancy, the Alamo Area Master Naturalists, and the Sierra Club. It will be lead by Wendy Drezek of the Sierra Club and staffed by an accompanying Master Naturalist.

Contact Wendy Drezek (493-0939) if you require further information.

**Saturday, June 9th: Hike the Canyon**

Same information and requirements as the **April 14th: Hike the Canyon.**

Contact Sierra Club co-leader Terry Jermolajevs, (830) 980-4183, if you require additional information.

**Saturday, July 14th: Hike the Canyon**

Same information and requirements as the **April 14th: Hike the Canyon.**

Contact Sierra Club co-leader Terry Platt, (210) 69S5-9570, if you require additional information.

**Let's Party!**

Every 4th Friday of the month, some of your members get together for a Social diner at different San Antonio eateries. Current places scheduled for some upcoming months can be found at the side panel of the front page of the newsletter. See the website for more details. If you don't have any plans on these days, then get out of the house and join us for a meal and a chance to "meet and greet" some of your fellow members.

If you would like to be reminded about our upcoming Socials, then contact [loydcortez@earthlink.net](mailto:loydcortez@earthlink.net) . Then one week before the next Social, you will receive an email notice reminder.

**Thinking about Going Solar?**

At the June 19 meeting, Lanny Sinkin, Executive Director of Solar San Antonio, will provide an overview of the state of solar in San Antonio. He will also explain the Bring Solar Home Campaign that Solar San Antonio conducts. This campaign is designed to make it easy and affordable for people to become solar adopters. A solar vendor will be present demonstrating the technology

**A Farewell to ExCom Member MaryEllen Garcia**

The Alamo Sierra Club regretfully announces the resignation of Executive Committee member, MaryEllen Garcia, effective as of June. She will be retiring after 23+ years as faculty at UTSA and relocating to Southern California to be closer to family. MaryEllen has been secretary for the ExCom meetings for more than three years and also organized our group's unit in the King William Parade in 2010 and 2011. She is the second one of our active members to leave for points West following Randy Carroll Brad's retirement in March.

**Inner City Outings Meeting**

**ICO Organizational Meeting Wednesday, May 23, 6:30 p.m.** -- Meet us at the Japanese Garden in Brackenridge Park to learn more about Inner City Outings and how you can get involved. ICO takes kids 8-18 who don't have access to outdoors/wilderness activities on nature adventures. We'll stroll the garden at 6:30, then convene the meeting at 7 under the grove of trees near the main St. Mary's St. entrance. Lemonade and snacks provided -- bring a lawn chair. Contact Anne Pearson for more information or to attend: 210-408-6321 / [anne.pearson@att.net](mailto:anne.pearson@att.net).

## The Documentary *Eating*

Learn about the environmental and

health impacts of American diet in this award winning documentary by Mike Anderson. New concepts about our eating habits are brought forward for

thought.

Join us at Lions Field, on Broadway @ Mulberry, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 23rd.

## The Answer? It Really is Blowin' in the Wind

By Rep. Lloyd Doggett (D)

**Grow, don't slow, our clean energy economy:** The production tax credit for wind energy is scheduled to expire in just a few months. As a result, wind power manufacturers and suppliers are already forecasting a slower 2013. Texas leads all states in installed wind power capacity, and the tax credit for producing electricity from wind has contributed to this success. Despite efforts of the majority in Congress, this is exactly the wrong time to slow down—clean energy can be the engine of economic growth for Texas and the United States. This is exactly why I am

a sponsor of a bill to extend this wind energy incentive. For several months, I was the sole Texas sponsor of this bill.

**Consistent policies, continued success:** According to a recent report from the Pew Charitable Trusts, the United States reclaimed the top spot from China for clean energy investment in 2011. Although this is certainly a step in the right direction for our clean energy future, it will be difficult to sustain this success with the intermittent policies that some in Congress continue to favor. According to the Pew report, other countries that have implement-

ed consistent policies have experienced steady growth in private clean energy investments. Our domestic wind and solar industry needs certainty, and a robust renewable energy sector creates jobs, keeps America competitive in a global marketplace, and decreases our dependence on foreign oil.

*U.S. Congressman Lloyd Doggett (D) has long worked for clean energy. He received the Texas League of Conservation Voters inaugural Environmental Champion Award.*

## Make the Switch

Your local club is running out of money. We spend approximately \$400 a month just for the paper newsletter expenses. If we don't get substantial donations to replenish our funds, we shall have to cut back on printing the paper newsletter to a quarterly issue ( 4 times a year ).

Our records show that out of approximately 2000 local club members, about 800 members have an email address on file. Here is where you can save a tree and help us on the printing and postal expenses to mail out the paper newsletter. Will you consider getting the newsletter by email rather than postal mail. To help you make a decision, everyone with an email address on record with the Sierra Club is also going to receive an email sample of the electronic newsletter.

Keep in mind that you can always view or print out a paper copy of the actual newsletter. Please make the change from paper to email and notify [loydcortez@earthlink.net](mailto:loydcortez@earthlink.net) to make the switch.

## We need your help!

We need volunteers to help out in getting the paper newsletter ready to be sent to the post office for mail out Alamo Sierra Club membership. Presently we meet at Whole Foods in the Quarry on the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 6:00pm to 8:30pm. We need to have a least 8 people show up in order to finish by 7:30pm. Lately we have been short handed and barely finished by 9:00pm which is closing time for Whole Foods. Sometimes we meet at one of our members's home, but we will always let you know in advance where we are meeting.

If you can help out, contact [loydcortez@earthlink.net](mailto:loydcortez@earthlink.net) so that we can add your name to our Newsletter Party List (as we call it).

## (Continued from Page 1)

properly from Peggy Darr, Nature Preserve Officer at the City of San Antonio's Medina River Natural Area.

Peggy Darr has a Master of Science Degree in Wildlife Biology from Louisiana State University and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Environmental Studies from the University of Vermont (her home state). As an undergraduate student, she also studied wildlife ecol-

ogy and conservation while abroad in Tanzania and Belize. She is currently the manager of the Medina River Natural Area, a 511 acre preserve owned by the City of San Antonio. Peggy is primarily an ornithologist and has done field research with a variety of bird species including spotted owls in Washington, piping plovers in Massachusetts, Attwater's prairie chickens in Texas, and ducks in North Dakota.

She has also given a variety of wildlife-related presentations including one on Texas shorebirds at the Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival in Homer, Alaska.

# Meeting Dates and Contact Information

General Meeting	3rd Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.	Peggy Day	829-5632
Executive Committee Mtg.	3rd Thursday, 6:30 p.m.	Peggy Day	829-5632
Newsletter Submissions	Deadline last day of month	Loyd Cortez	674-9489
Political Committee Mtg.	2d Thursday, 7 p.m.	Dave Wells	271-0640
Newsletter Mail Party	2d Tuesday, 6-8:30 p.m.	Whole Foods	
Outings Committee Mtg.	1st Wed., every odd month., 7 p.m.	Jerry Morrisey	382-2614
Conservation Committee Mtg.	1st Thursday, 7 p.m.	Russell Seal	289-9088

**Alamo Group of the Sierra Club**  
**Executive Committee Officers & Members**

Margaret (Peggy) Day, Chair Person	829-5632
Loyd Cortez, Vice Chair Person	674-9489
MaryEllen Garcia, Secretary	344-1581
Karen Dalglish Seal	226-8101
Hector Gonzalez	226-6069
Dave Wells, Treasurer	271-0640
George Rice	737-6180
Gay Wright	343-0222
Mobi Warren	496-4942

**Administrative Contacts**

Programs	Barbara McMillin	734-4170
Fundraising	Vacant	
Publicity	Gay Wright	343-0222
Editor	Loyd Cortez	674-9489
Membership	Vacant	
Mailings	Vacant	
Website	Richard Alles	494-2088

**Committee Contacts**

Outings Co-Chairs	Jerry Morrisey	382-2614
	Stan Drezek	493-0939
Political	Dave Wells	271-0640

**Conservation Contacts**

Conservation Chair	Russell Seal	289-9088
Assistant Chair	L. Van Coppenolle	492-4620
Green Buildings	John Hertz	413-4100
Education	Ken Clifton	646-6833
Fluoride Issues	L. Van Coppenolle	492-4620
Organic Gardening	Dave Klar	485-6880
Recycling	Carolyn Wells	271-0640
Tree Conservation	Richard Alles	494-2088
Transportation	Barbara McMillin	734-4170
Water Issues	George Rice	737-6180
Climate Change	Mobi Warren	496-4942
Drought	Alyssa Burgin	381-4021
Endangered Species	Mobi Warren	496-4942

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**U.S. Congresspersons**

Charlie Gonzalez	472-6195
Lamar Smith	821-5024
Henry Cuellar	271-2851
Francisco Canseco	561-8855

**City Council (Continued)**

Dist. 2: Ivy R. Taylor	207-7278
Dist. 3: Leticia Ozuna	207-7064
Dist. 4: Rey Saldana	207-7281
Dist. 5: David Medina, Jr.	207-7043
Dist. 6: Ray Lopez	207-7065
Dist. 7: Cris Medina	207-7044
Dist. 8: W. Reed Williams	207-7086
Dist. 9: Elisa Chan	207-7325
Dist. 10: Carlton Soules	207-7276

**City Council**

Mayor Julian Castro	207-7060
Dist. 1: Diego Bernal	207-7279

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

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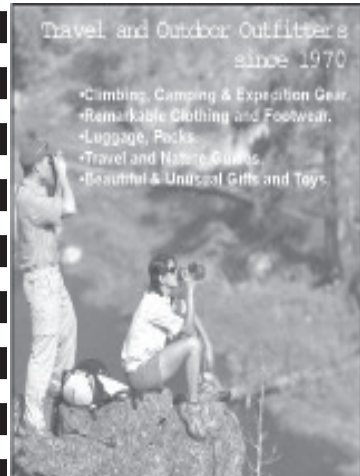
Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
<b>Special Offer</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$49
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35

Contributions, gifts and dues to 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 for your Chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 421041, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041

or visit our website [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org) F94Q W19131

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Join online today and receive a **free Weekender Bag**  
Go to our website at <http://Alamosierraclub.org>



**Whole Earth Provision Company**  
ALAMO CLARRY MARKET  
255 East Basin, 210-520-8888  
[www.WholeEarthProvision.com](http://www.WholeEarthProvision.com)

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

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