



THE ALAMO SIERRAN

THE ALAMO GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB NEWSLETTER - VOL. 41 No. 7 AUGUST 2007

A Word from the Chair

The Volunteer Appreciation Potluck Dinner at the July General Meeting was a delightful event attended by about 75 members and guests. A variety of delicious food meant there was a favorite dish for everyone. We presented certificates of appreciation to many of the over 90 volunteers who contributed to the success of the Alamo Group in the past year. Loretta Van Coppenolle was recognized as Volunteer of the Year for the many hours that she contributed to Alamo Group activities.

Thanks to everyone who helped out with the preparation and cleanup for the dinner. I would like to especially thank Gina Pellegrino for making the flower arrangements and providing decorative placemat maps from around the world that created a light-hearted mood for the evening, Hector Gonzalez for deftly managing the sign-in and sales table, and Tom Dukes for organizing the dinner, printing certificates and emceeding the presentations with wit and good humor.

Thanks to those who continue to regularly volunteer as outing leaders, social event sponsors, mailing party helpers, newsletter contributors, and conservation activists. In the area of conservation, Alamo Group volunteers are working to draft a policy statement on energy issues focused on CPS Energy and the City of San Antonio. If you would like to volunteer in any of these roles (or others) please contact me or another Executive Committee member.

There is now an opportunity to subscribe to a trial of the electronic newsletter for the Alamo Group (see separate article). If you like the option and decide to discontinue the paper newsletter, you will help us save on expenses.

Finally, I would like to thank Saul Wilen for his wise counsel while he served this year on the Executive Committee. He resigned in June for personal reasons.

Jerry Morrisey

Paper or Electrons?

“test drive” our electronic newsletter - save resources and money

Have you tried our electronic newsletter? It's an easy way to save trees and let the Alamo Group devote more time and money to conservation, the reason we're all here in the first place. The paper Alamo Sierran you are holding is our Group's major expense: 70% of the annual budget. And in the past year alone, printing costs are up 31% and postage has climbed 29%. The paper

Continued on Page 2

CPS Energy Summit

CPS hosted an Energy Summit on June 13th. We were invited, as the brochure said, to “hear nationally recognized energy experts discuss challenges and opportunities and be a part of a collective dialogue as San Antonio and CPS Energy leaders prepare to make crucial decisions about our community's energy future.”

The deck was stacked - three out of four of the speakers were associated with the coal or nuclear industries. As you might expect, each of those speakers

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.

August 21, 2007: Gravel Strip Mines on the Guadalupe River

Kayce Kovacs of the Guadalupe River Environmental Action Team (GREAT) of Center Point will explain the threats to the river and local communities posed by gravel mining operations. Many Texas rivers are in bad shape due to mining. Texas lacks regulations to control the pollution and habitat loss from sand and gravel mines in river floodplains.

September 18, 2007: Film - Who Killed the Electric Car?

In the mid-1990s, quiet, fast electric vehicles appeared on California roads, but ten years later they were gone. This 2006 documentary tells why.

We Love Our Volunteers

Volunteers ARE the Alamo Group. Whether leading outings or writing letters to the editor, serving on city advisory boards or staying busy on the conservation committee, these special Sierrans are the strength behind our growing organization. Almost one hundred Sierrans were honored at the July meeting for their personal contributions to the environmental cause during the past year. Our thanks to each and every one of the Sierra Club volunteers named below, and our sincere apologies to anyone we missed.

Jonathan Allan, Anne Alexander, Ned Allen, Peter Allen, Richard Alles, James Allison, Rhoda Allison, Christine Anderson, Richard Anderson, Bill Barker, Helen Barker, Wendy Barker, Herb

Continued on Page 2

CPS Energy Efficiency Programs Unveiled

CPS Energy has announced a major commitment to energy efficiency with an expanded budget and new programs. Their Strategic Energy Efficiency Plan seeks to reduce the growth in demand for energy by 10% each year in an effort to reach a 40% reduction by 2011. CPS Energy is committing \$96 million to incentives that could reduce energy demand by 115 megawatts over 4 years.

Residential customers can take advantage of several new programs. Home Efficiency Rebates will cover upgrades such as ceiling and wall insulation, Energy STAR windows, solar attic fans, radiant barriers, and duct improvements. Installation of solar

Continued on Page 2

Paper or Electrons? - Continued

newsletter demands lots of fundraising effort and severely limits the time and money available for our important local conservation initiatives.

There is a better way: electronic delivery. By signing up to "test drive" our electronic newsletter you will receive your news faster than the post office can deliver it. You can read it on your computer or even print your own exact copy of the familiar "paper" version whenever you like. Try it and see. If electronic delivery suits your needs, let us know and we will discontinue your paper copy. You'll be saving resources and making the Alamo Group a more sustainable and effective organization. If you find that electronic delivery isn't your style, you can simply continue your paper newsletter as always.

To sign up for electronic newsletter delivery, contact Loyd Cortez at loydcortez@earthlink.net. Provide your name as it appears on your mailing label and the email address you wish to use. We'll do the rest. Thanks for your support and participation in the Alamo Group.

CPS Energy Summit - Continued

saw coal and nuclear as "unavoidable choices in our future energy mix."

They spoke about the massive amounts of money needed to bring their technologies on line. They spoke about long start-up times and even longer payback times. They spoke about ever rising utility bills.

They did not speak about increased cancer rates around nuclear facilities. They did not speak about "mountain topping" or what strip mining does to the land and water. They did not speak about terrorism.

The last speaker, Regional Administrator of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, started off by saying that he was "technologically challenged." Later he told us that he had "met high school students who knew more about nuclear than I do!" He also told us that he owned a "midlife crisis gas guzzler" that he couldn't afford to drive to work. Laughing, he said that was surely bad judgment but he never uses bad judgment to make decisions about nuclear permits. Whew...that's a relief.

Only L. Hunter Lovins, co-founder of the Rocky Mountain Institute, presented alternatives seriously. With charts, graphs and newspaper articles, she showed examples from across the nation of cities and businesses setting and meeting ambitious energy conservation goals. She showed how conservation and renewables are not only cleaner, faster, and safer - they are cheaper. She made the case for clean energy by using economics - coal and nuclear are simply too expensive.

One couldn't help but notice that only Lovins was interrupted by applause. Only Lovins received a standing ovation.

The meeting was held at the beautiful Pearl Stables. About 300 people attended, including the mayor, city council, CPS officials, and what appeared to be people from both the coal and nuclear industries. The Alamo Group of the Sierra Club made a fine showing with 25 members attending. We enthusiastically supported Ms. Lovins and expressed our concerns in the individual exit surveys. At the reception that followed, we spoke to politicians and CPS officials about our opposition to both coal and nuclear.

It is a good feeling to be heard. Twenty-five of us made a real difference in the tone of the summit. Just imagine if there had been one hundred of us. Stay informed about opportunities like this - sign up for our action alerts and join us in protecting San Antonio.

Paula D. Stone

Our Volunteers - Continued

Bartling, Mary Bradshaw, Mike Brannon, Chris Brown, Ruth Brown, Christine Buckholdt, Stephanie Buckholdt, April Caldwell, Tom Caldwell, Kathryn Campbell, Dick Carr, Lee Carr, Randy Carroll-Bradd, Donna Clark, Ellen Clegg, Stephen Colley, Margaret Cone, Loyd Cortez, Mary Gallatin DiGiacomo, Lee Dodge, Sharon Dukes, Tom Dukes, Olivia Eisenhower, Jack Elder, David Frank, Steve Funderburg, Wendell Fuqua, Linda Gober, Hector Gonzalez, Patti Gonzalez, Marty Hixon, Steve Hixon, Audrey Innes, Doris Johnston, Al Kaufman, Steven Kellman, Dave Klar, Melody Krumdieck, Valeria Lopez, Barbara McMillin, Marsha Meredith, Melissa Miller, Bonnie Mitchell, Jerry Morrissey, Kathy Newman, Mariana Ornelas, Will Pekel, Gina Pellegrino,

Kenneth Phelps, Terry Platt, George Rice, Chris Riley, Darby Riley, Stephanie Rhodes, Bill Rogers, Dan Rosenberg, Sky Rosenberg, Pam Scruggs, Karen Seal, Russell Seal, Brad Shaw, Joe Silman, Bill Sinkin, Kim Smith, Beck Steiner, Meredith Sterling, Jim Stewart, Ruthie Gold-Stewart, Ruth F Stewart, Eloise Stoker, Jim Stoker, Paula Stone, Christel Villarreal, Marilyn Wade, Steve Waller, Jane Ward, Barbara Welch, Carroll Welch, Carolyn Wells, Saul Wilen, George Windrow, Fred Wills, and Scott Wolfe. A special thank you to Loretta Van Coppenolle, whose initiative and determination made her the Alamo Group's Volunteer of the Year for 2007.

Increase your involvement in the Alamo Group. Add your name to this prestigious and growing list. Call Tom Dukes at 828-3721 to volunteer.

CPS Energy Efficiency Programs Unveiled - Continued

photovoltaic panels will be rebated at \$3 per watt up to \$10,000. Solar hot water systems will be rebated up to \$800 based on a rating system.

CPS Energy will be pursuing energy efficiency measures with large users (school systems and businesses) by providing rebates and incentives to upgrade their buildings. Significant savings will be accomplished through lighting retrofits, thermal roof upgrades, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning resizing and equipment installation, and the use of peak-demand cycling equipment. The school retrofit program is being evaluated at Marshall High in the Northside School District. In addition, commercial and industrial customers can obtain solar photovoltaic system rebates up to \$50,000.

The Alamo Group applauds the shift in emphasis at CPS Energy to energy efficiency as a new fuel source. Our Conservation Committee is working on a policy document on energy issues that we will use in our discussions with CPS Energy and the City of San Antonio. We support aggressive energy efficiency measures not only through rebates, but also via city building codes and regulations. We believe that much more can be planned for and accomplished.

Jerry Morrissey

Summer Fund Appeal Update

Our summer fund appeal is underway, and we are grateful to the generous members who have brought us halfway to our target of \$5000. Thanks to all who have contributed thus far. We appreciate your involvement and will print a list of donors next month.

If you have not made a contribution, please consider doing so. What you give supports and strengthens our expanding conservation activities. A lack of funds can be a real stumbling block when we join battle against those who budget more in a week for a single lobbyist than we can spend the entire year. Your contribution makes a big difference, no matter how small.

If you have misplaced the pre-addressed envelope that appeared in your June/July newsletter, you can mail your gift to the Alamo Group of the Sierra Club, P.O. Box 6443, San Antonio, TX 78209. Thank you for your involvement and support.

Tom Dukes

Dry Cleaning Alternative Better for the Environment

Turns out that getting your clothes cleaned at a traditional dry cleaner is more expensive than you thought. That's because the solvent used to clean the clothes - perchloroethylene or "perc" - is bad for your nervous system, can damage your kidneys and liver, and is a probable carcinogen. California already is phasing out the use of perc by means of a graduated ban on the solvent. That state's Air Resources Board considers the chemical a carcinogen with no safe level of exposure. Perc follows you home from the cleaners in the form of fumes given off by your freshly cleaned clothes.

But there's a new chain of "wet" cleaners in town that solves the solvent problem. It's called ClothesLine Cleaners, and the cleaning agents used by the chain are all non-toxic and biodegradable. The cleaning agents are citrus-based and the spot remover is a solvent created from collagen, banana oil, citrus oil and other natural compounds. If the entire nation were to adopt this "wet" method of dry cleaning, the industry would stop using some 10,000 tons of perc each year.

ClothesLine Cleaners also provides customers with biodegradable hangers instead of the usual wire, and encourages

them to buy EnviroBags for transporting their clothes to and from the cleaners. San Antonio entrepreneur Derba Mills, owner of the five-store ClothesLine Cleaners chain, powers her shops with WindTricity, runs the delivery van on biofuel, and stocks the shelves in her stores with environmentally friendly home cleaning supplies.

Ms. Mills says she has experienced some animosity from local traditional dry cleaners, who aren't keen on seeing the success of an alternative dry cleaning method. But in May, her efforts for the environment garnered the attention of the Texas House of Representatives. In a resolution sponsored by San Antonio Rep. Frank Corte, Ms. Mills was cited for her vision of "a business that combines profitability with concern for the ecological well-being of the Lone Star State."

Wendell Fuqua

clothesline
CLEANERS

dry cleaning
EVOLVED

The future is here.

404.0026
www.ClotheslineSA.com

OUTINGS

NOTE: No dogs, radios, recreational drugs, or unescorted children are allowed on Sierra Club outings. Public consumption of alcohol is prohibited during scheduled activities. Outings are usually suitable for the whole family; check with the leaders about details and to verify dates. All fees will go fully to offset trip and administrative costs and to support the conservation efforts of the Alamo Group.

AUG 24-26, FRI-SUN: GUADALUPE RV CAMPGROUND CAMPOUT

Enjoy a weekend with members of the Alamo Group at the Guadalupe RV Campground, a private campground between San Antonio and Blanco. Have fun with rope swings, tubing, and swimming in the sacred waters of the Guadalupe River, relaxing under the shade of venerable live oaks at our campsite, and hiking on the campgrounds. On Sunday, bicyclers will take a 30-40 mile ride through the Hill Country on quiet country roads. Potluck dinner on Friday night; Saturday breakfast, lunch and dinner, and Sunday breakfast will be furnished by

the club. Fees: \$30 per adult 18 years and older; \$15 for kids 6-17 accompanied by an adult; kids under 6, free. Fee includes camping for two nights and Saturday and Sunday meals. Contact Steve Funderburg (317-4186), sfunderburg@rkci.com or Ellen Clegg (488-7787), eclegg@els.edu for more information or to reserve your place on the trip.

SEP 21-22, FRI-SAT: ADOPT-A-BEACH CLEAN-UP

What can be more fun than joining with other Sierrans in this international event? We'll camp at Padre Island National Seashore south of Corpus Christi Friday night. Saturday morning we'll spend 3 hours (9-noon) picking up and cataloging debris from a particular section of the beach. After that we'll swim and picnic. Those who want to camp a second night can do so. Difficulty: EASY. Cost: FREE. Contact Marsha Meredith at 675-4097 or MarshaM@satx.rr.com

SEP 29, SAT: MUD CREEK PARK DAYHIKE

Explore an undeveloped park inside Hwy. 1604 in the Mud Creek drainage. It has shady trails, open areas, a creek, limestone cliffs, and plants and animals of the Hill Country. This is a moderately difficult hike of 2+ miles. Sturdy hiking shoes required. Meet in the HEB parking lot at the corner of Hwy. 281 and 1604 at 9:15 AM. Contact Jerry Morrissey at jlmorrissey@aol.com or 382-2614.

SEP 30, SUN: MISSION TRAIL BIKE RIDE

Join us for a bike ride on paved trails and roads between the historic missions of San Antonio. Total trip length will range from 18-27 miles, depending on participants. Meet at Mission Concepcion in the grass parking lot SE of the paved parked lot at 9:00 AM. Must bring and wear helmet. Difficulty: MODERATE. Contact leader Lee Dodge at LSG999@earthlink.net or 647-0216.

OCT 5-7, FRI-SUN: ENCHANTED ROCK STATE PARK

Leaders: Steve Funderburg (317-4186), sfunderburg@rkci.com and Ellen Clegg (488-7787), eclegg@els.edu

OCT 13, SAT: BRACKENRIDGE PARK DAY HIKE.

Explore Brackenridge Park, near the heart of San Antonio. Rediscover this urban jewel, with its upgraded trails, fanciful artwork, and fascinating history. Optional brunch at a funky eatery nearby. Meet at 9:00 AM. Difficulty: EASY. Cost: donations accepted. Leader: Sharon Dukes, tdukes@grandecom.net or 828-3721.

OCT 27, SAT: PEDERNALES FALLS STATE PARK BEGINNER BACKPACK

Leaders: Terry Platt, taplatt@earthlink.net and Bill Rogers, rogers@uthscsa.edu

NOV 16-18, FRI-SUN: LOST MAPLES CAR CAMPING & BACKPACKING

Incomparable fall colors among the bigtooth maples in this beautiful Hill Country gem. Mark your calendars now. Full details to come. Leaders: Car Camping - Marsha Meredith, MarshaM@satx.rr.com; Backpacking - Lee Dodge, LSG999@earthlink.net

MEETING DATES AND CONTACT INFO

General Meeting: 3rd Tuesday 7 p.m. Jerry Morrissey 497-5470
 Executive Committee: 4th Monday, 7 p.m. Tom Dukes 828-3721
 Newsletter Submissions deadline 3rd Thursday (Thursday before ExCom) . Fred Wills user261695@aol.com
 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 Monday, 7 p.m. Paula Stone 393-7351

ALAMO GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OFFICERS & MEMBERS

Jerry Morrissey Chair Person 497-5470
 Loyd Cortez Vice Chair 674-9489
 Carolyn Wells Secretary 271-0640
 Tom Dukes 828-3721
 Hector Gonzalez 226-6069
 Eloise Stoker 828-0919
 Paula Stone 393-7351
 Fred Wills 673-9566
 Sharon Dukes (non voting) Treasurer 828-3721

ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACTS

Programs Eloise Stoker 828-0919
 Membership Loyd Cortez 674-9489
 Publicity George Windrow 408-1988
 Mailings Jim Stewart 692-0727
 Newsletter Fred Wills 673-9566
 Website Tom Dukes 828-3721

COMMITTEE CONTACTS

Outings Chair Lee Dodge 647-0216
 Political Committee Beck Steiner 342-6694
 Outreach & Education .. Carolyn Wells 271-0640

CONSERVATION CONTACTS

Conservation Chair Paula Stone 393-7351
 Co-Chair Dave Klar 495-2148
 Endangered Species Fred Wills 673-9566
 Fluoridation L. Van Coppenolle 492-4620
 Genetically Modified Organisms Michele Petty 490-4133
 Organic Gardening Dave Klar 495-2148
 Recycling L. Van Coppenolle 492-4620
 Tree Conservation Richard Alles 494-2088
 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: Roland Gutierrez; 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: Kevin Wolff; 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

PERIODICAL

Membership

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

Name _____
 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

F94Q **W 1913** -1 **SIERRA CLUB**
 FOUNDED 1892
Sierra Club
 P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO, 80322-2968

Join Online!

Join online today and receive a free Expedition Pack! Just go to our website at <http://alamosierraclub.org> and click

Join the Sierra Club

Travel and Outdoor Outfitters since 1970

• Climbing, Camping & Expedition Gear
 • Remarkable Clothing and Footwear
 • Luggage, Packs
 • Travel and Hiking Guides
 • Beautiful & Unusual Gifts and Toys

Whole Earth Provision Company
 ALAMO QUARRY MARKET
 255 East Base, 210-629-8888
www.WholeEarthProvision.com