



THE ALAMO SIERRAN

THE ALAMO GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB NEWSLETTER - VOL. 42 No. 7 AUG 2008

A Word from the Chair by Loyd Cortez

I am hopeful that you and your family had a wonderful 4th of July holiday. I know that many of you may have decided to stay home rather than travel because of the high fuel prices at the pump. I myself have postponed my trip to visit my daughter in Florida and my brother in Alabama where in both places, the gas at the pump is higher than here. I am fortunate to now have a better fuel efficient new Corolla than my old Q45 which I traded in.

In July we had our annual Pot Luck get together at the Witte. I want to thank everyone who came and brought their favorite dish to share with our very hungry membership. This is the best time for me because I get to sample many different dishes of food that I would not otherwise. Be sure to visit our website where you can see many photos of the get together.

I would like to remind you that the Alamo Group is in the midst of our annual summer fund appeal. The funds raised will support important conservation activities such as promotion of our local energy policy initiatives and other Group projects. Thanks to our benevolent members who already sent in a gift. To make a donation, mail your check payable to the Alamo Group of the Sierra Club, P.O. Box 6443, San Antonio, TX 78209-0443. If you can locate last month's newsletter you will find an addressed envelope was included for your convenience

Sierra Club Social

Well it is time to sit outside, drink a beer, and mingle with your fellow members. So come join us at La Tuna on August 15th, Friday, from 6-8pm. We shall be outside to enjoy our beautiful hot, hot, weather. There is a good assortment of food to wash down with a cold beer. Address is 100 Probandt, 224-8862. Call or email Loyd Cortez at loydcortez@earthlink.net , 674-9489. so we can get a head count. If you need a map, then go to our website for one.

Fund Appeal Donors

On behalf of the Alamo Group, we would like to thank all of the members who made a contribution to our Fund Raiser. The following donors gave their approval to print their names in the newsletter: Hall Hamond, John Miller, Joan Lyman, Teresa Tyler, John Pyeatt, Hardin Rhorer, Richard & Lee Carr, Albert Eisch, Jerry Townsend, Lynea Weatherly, Robert & Peggy Gracy, Jerry Morrissey, Donna Clark and Matthew Frondorf.

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 19, 2008: Kayaking Prince Williams Sound

Escape S.A.'s August heat by joining Karen and Russell Seal as they present their Alaskan kayaking adventure in beautiful Prince William Sound. The Sound was the site of the 1980's Exxon Valdez oil spill.

September 16, 2008: Border Wall Fight Continues

Cyrus Reed from the Austin Sierra Club Chapter office will present an update on the Border Wall fight in the Courts, in Congress, and on the ground in the Valley Westward up the Rio Grande.

Apartment Recycling June 2008 Progress Report

Recently, one of our members called to ask where she could recycle her plastic, aluminum, and metal items. Like many of us in San Antonio, she does not have access to curbside recycling, as she lives in an apartment. I gave her a couple of options, but I knew neither of these were fully adequate: she could ask a friend who lives in a house if she could place her recyclables in their bin or she could drive to either Vista Fibers (3003 Aniol St, tel: 226-6371) or BFI-ACCO Recycling Center (400 Probandt St., tel: 223-2618). By the way, if you'd like to know exactly where to recycle specific items in San Antonio visit this great site www.earth911.org.

Personally, I collect my recyclables and then drive them to one of these recycling centers a few times a month. Although the City of San Antonio does provide curbside recycling for homeowners, tons of "trash" produced

Political Chair News

Right now is a tough time to be an environmentalist. With the rising cost of gasoline, everything is increasing in price from groceries, to clothing and other necessities. Many laborers are finding it very difficult to balance their budgets when they have jobs at one end of town and quality babysitters at the other. We are at the cusp of a major lifestyle change in the United States. According to Jeremy Rifkin who presented a speech at the CPS Annual Energy Summit, the United States economy was built on cheap energy. The U.S. only has 5% of the world's population but uses 25% of the world's energy. It's a simple equation of supply and demand with other countries beginning to use more energy for their developing economies.

Here in San Antonio, our elected officials are wavering over the idea of drilling offshore and in pristine places such as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Continued on Page 2

Continued on Page 3

Political Chair News - Continued

despite the fact that new drilling would “not produce oil for more than a decade and would not affect today’s \$4-plus per gallon gasoline price.” (San Antonio Express-News, July 18, 2008.) Office holders who have been supportive of our issues are now feeling the pressure from labor and other organizations to lower the cost of energy at any price to the environment.

We must demand of our politicians a more long term approach for energy production as we embark on a “Manhattan” type project to change the entire energy structure of this nation. The Sierra Club must take up the burden of educating our politicians and the citizenry of San Antonio. Whether we like it or not, we are the only organization that has the respect and ability to be the conscience of this city. Our city officials are belatedly grateful for our contribution to the water conservation that our citizens have adopted. We need to provide that type of leadership today with the energy crisis.

The Loan Star Chapter Political committee is making the final endorsement decisions on legislative statewide offices as this is being written. Locally this list of recommended candidates will contain some surprises. Many of you will be asking “why did you endorse this guy?” Your endorsee seems to have a dismal voting record. We had to make some tough decisions. We only endorse in contested races. In one race where the opponent is very unlikely to listen to us at all, the committee agreed to endorse an incumbent who supported us on one very important issue and even acted as the major sponsor of the bill even though his overall environmental voting record was not good. We must remember that the Sierra Club is a non-partisan organization that needs office holders that our lobbyist can access. If we can access a politician then we can educate them.

You may ask what else can I do in this election cycle as a Sierra Club member to protect our environment and natural resources. Members can help the candidates the club is endorsing by volunteering for campaign duties such as working on mail outs, block walking or phone banking to get the vote out. You can email me at rseal@sbcglobal.net to find out which campaigns are being

supported by the Sierra Club. Members can donate to our political action committee which will help in targeted contested races where we can make a difference. Send your donations payable to Sierra Club Political Committee of Texas and mail them to Hector J Gonzalez, 615 Willow, San Antonio, TX 78202-1247.

Russell Seal, Alamo Group Political Chair.

Apartment Recycling - Continued

in apartments, condos, and private businesses is simply thrown in landfills each year. These landfills are located in areas that the city has to purchase or lease at a great cost to us. Before she hung up, the caller said, “What a shame that such a beautiful city has to be surrounded by landfills.” I wholeheartedly agree! That’s how many of us feel. When we choose to recycle we help our environment both locally and globally. We help keep San Antonio beautiful, we cut energy use, and we stop creating new landfills (and certainly nobody wants to live next to these landfills). Recycling makes environmental and economic sense. It is my hope that within the next year (or few years) we will convince San Antonio officials of the need to pass a city ordinance (as other cities in Texas have done) that requires apartments, condos, and private businesses to recycle. This takes me to our first order of business.

Although I have mentioned the Sierra Club’s apartment/condo recycling petition at our monthly meetings on several occasions, I wanted to alert our many other members who haven’t been to one of our recent gatherings that we need their help to reach the 1,000-signature mark by mid-June. We already have about 500 signatures (yeah!), but we still need to reach out to many others. You can sign the electronic petition by going to <http://alamosierraclubrecycling.blogspot.com/> and clicking on the recycling petition poster. We will continue to collect signatures after July, but once we reach our immediate goal we’ll begin discussing this important issue with our city council. These signatures are critical, as they show that many in our community care about recycling.

The final topic I’d like to address is to announce that the Sierra Club now also has a Recycling Committee. During the past few months I have been working on

recycling issues with the help of other Sierra Club members (like Loretta Van Coppenolle, thanks Loretta!) but there’s so much work to be done in this area that this seems like an opportune time to create this committee. If you’ve often thought that you wanted to be more involved with the Sierra Club, but couldn’t make our monthly meetings do consider joining us in the Recycling Committee. We meet every first Saturday of the month at 11:30 a.m. at Panera’s (located on 999 E. Basse Road). I look forward to seeing you at the next Recycling Committee meeting or at our regular ASC meeting!

Patricia Martinez

Come Celebrate Our 40th Anniversary in October!

Volunteers are needed to take part in the planning committee for the Alamo Group’s 40th Anniversary Celebration. This occasion will take many volunteer hours to prepare and carry out. The Alamo Group is looking for people who are willing to join this volunteer committee. The 40th Anniversary will be a celebration of local environmental successes in our community, in addition to educating the public on the need for conservation. If you are interested in helping to plan the 40th Anniversary Celebration, please contact Paula Stone at paula@PaulaStoneInteriors.com or 393-7351.

What is the true cost for leaving on a 100-watt light bulb?

As for any other electrical appliance, the hourly cost of operation can be calculated by multiplying the input in watts by the cost per kilowatt-hour and dividing by 1000; for example, a 100-watt lamp operated on electricity that costs 10 cents per kilowatt-hour will cost $100 \times 10 / 1000 = 1$ cent per hour to operate.

If left on for an entire month of 720 hours, the cost for just one 100-watt lamp would be \$7.20 per month.

Remember, every thing left on draws power. Fans, phone chargers, sleep mode electronics (TVs & computers) are some of the many electronics that get left plugged in for the entire 720 hours of the month.

OUTINGS

THUR, AUG 14: MOONLIGHT HIKE IN EISENHOWER PARK

Meet at 7:00 PM for a brown bag supper, or just come at 7:30 PM for the hike. Meet at Eisenhower Park on NW Military, 2 miles north of Loop 1604. Fees: donations accepted. Leader: Jerry Morrissey 382-2614 or jlmorrissey@aol.com. Assistant Leader: Chris Anderson 838-1952.

AUG 16-20: ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK MULTI-DAY BACKPACK

For experienced and well-conditioned high country backpackers only (this must be demonstrated before leader approval). This trip requires individuals to make their own travel arrangements, bring their own equipment and food, and arrive in time to acclimate to the altitude (as well as wind down after the road trip). We will meet the afternoon of August 16 at a reserved car camping site (Glacier Basin) and start the 4 day, 3 night journey the next morning. We will begin and end at Long's Peak Trailhead. Total distance including side trips is 32 miles. Do not spend money on travel arrangements until leader approves your participation. To discuss trip details and experience required, contact leader Scott Wolfe at papawolfe@sbcglobal.net.

SAT, SEPT. 6: BRACKENRIDGE PARK WALK

Meet at 8:30 AM at the main train station in Brackenridge Park for a 1 - 2 hour moderately paced walk through the park. We will explore the new trails in the park and the recently restored Japanese Tea Garden. Difficulty: easy. Fee: donation accepted. Leader: Ellen Clegg eclegg@els.edu or 210-283-5045 (work). Assistant leader: Marsha Meredith, MarshaM@satx.rr.com.

SUN SEPT 21: DOG-FRIENDLY/PEOPLE FRIENDLY DAYHIKE ALONG LEON CREEK GREENBELT.

Well-behaved dogs on leashes and well-behaved people with or without dogs are welcome on a 3- to 5-mile hike along the Leon Creek Greenbelt. Start time: 9:00 AM. Enjoy hiking the relatively flat trails along Leon Creek with or without a dog. Call to reserve a slot, since participation is limited. Difficulty: Easy to Moderate. Fees: Donations accepted. Leader: Jerry Morrissey, jlmorrissey@aol.com, 382-2614

SAT, SEPT 27: GOVERNMENT CANYON STATE NATURAL AREA DAY HIKE

We'll start early and hike anywhere from 7 - 13 miles, weaving in and out of small canyons and creek drainages typical of the eastern boundary of the Balcones Escarpment. The rocky terrain is not very steep but requires sturdy hiking shoes. Lots of limestone rocks and small boulders in the drainages. Exiting the drainages provides the welcome contrast of typical hill country woodland and an occasional meadow. A brief picnic with snacks might be in order about halfway through. Entrance fees are the responsibility of each hiker. Limit of six hikers. Children 12 and over welcome with parent. Difficulty: MODERATE to DIFFICULT. For information and reservations, contact Scott Wolfe, papawolfe@sbcglobal.net, 724-2707.

SUN, SEPT 28: MISSION TRAIL BIKE RIDE

This bike ride is along paved trails and roads that are along the San Antonio River and that lead from mission to mission in the SE part of San Antonio. We will stop to take quick walks through some of the missions along the way. Distance may be up to 18 miles round-trip, depending on participants. Pace will be "no riders left behind." Minimum age is 12. Helmets are required. Be ready to ride by 8:30 AM in the grass and gravel parking lot southeast of the paved parking lot in front of Mission Concepcion on Mission Road. Difficulty: Moderate. Fees: Donations accepted. Leader: Lee Dodge, LSG999@earthlink.net, or 647-0216.

SAT-SUN, OCT 18-19: PEDERNALES FALLS BEGINNER BACKPACK

Have you ever wanted to try backpacking and never had the time or opportunity? Then this trip is for you. No prior experience is necessary for this trip, only a willingness to camp out overnight in a tent. We will be backpacking at Pedernales Falls State Park during the cooler fall. We will backpack to the primitive camping area overlooking the river, a distance of about four miles in order to get away from the crowds. This will give you ample time to adjust to your equipment and get a good taste of how much fun backpacking can be. Experienced backpackers will assist you and share their many years of backpacking experiences. As we sit around the campfire on Saturday night we will hear the many tales of outdoor adventures. The trip will start early Saturday morning and end early Sunday afternoon. A mandatory meeting will be held

on Wednesday evening, October 8, to go over equipment and supplies needed as well as the trip plans. Individuals provide their own food. (Easy) Suggested donation is \$6/members and \$8/non-members plus park entrance and camping fees. Signup deadline is October 6. Leaders are Bill Rogers (rogers@uthscsa.edu) and Terry Platt (taplatt@earthlink.net).

SAT, OCT 25: GOVERNMENT CANYON HALF-DAY HIKE

Join us for a long (10+ miles) but slow (4.5 hrs) hike into the lower half of the protected habitat area. Arrive at GCSNA (12861 Galm Rd) at 8am, \$6 GCSNA registration, bring water and snack. Leaving from headquarters at 8:30 AM promptly. Difficulty: Moderate (speed) Hard (length). Assistant Leader Chris Anderson, anchorpt11@yahoo.com. Contact Leader Stan Drezek (493-0939) to sign up, or for questions.

SAT, OCTOBER 4: VOELCKER PARK SHORT WALK.

Join us for a 1.25hr hike through this new park-to-be. Meet NW Military Drive just south of Wurzbach Parkway at 8am. Difficulty: EASY. Donations to Sierra Club accepted. Contact Stan Drezek 493-0939 to sign up.

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loydcortez@earthlink.net

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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.	Russel 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
Jerry Morrissey		497-5470
Sandy Redmond		872-5390
Jane Ward		829-5575
Hector Gonzalez		226-6069
Paula Stone		393-7351
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
Membership	Sandy Redmond	872-5390
Publicity	Linda Higby	(585) 330-1890
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
Recycling	Patricia Martinez	454-5920
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 of the Sierra Club
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Yes, I want to help safeguard our nation's precious natural heritage. My check is enclosed.

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MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

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