



# THE ALAMO SIERRAN

THE ALAMO GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB NEWSLETTER - VOL. 40 No. 8 SEPT 2006

## *Make San Antonio a 'Cool City'*

*Help San Antonio do its share to  
stop global warming*

Cities all over America are joining together to stop global warming. Many local leaders are finding their own solutions to this critical problem that the federal government chooses to ignore. Cities are behind a grassroots movement to cut energy use and reduce our dependence on oil, using readily available solutions to improve air quality and decrease the gases that contribute to global warming. Proactive solutions by forward-looking cities are re-energizing our nation, proving that we can solve global warming one city at a time.

The goal of the Sierra Club's Cool Cities campaign is for every community in the nation to reduce its  
*Continued on Page 2*

## *Cool Cities Fund Appeal*

*200 donations will earn us a  
\$2000 match*

**The Alamo Group of the Sierra Club needs your help to raise funds for Cool Cities S.A.** Our campaign goal is to convince the leaders of San Antonio and surrounding cities to fight global warming by signing the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, pledging to greatly reduce local carbon dioxide pollution. Please contribute what you can.

**Every penny you donate will be spent locally, and a matching grant will double your gift.** To earn that match, we must demonstrate broad support within the Alamo Group. At least 200 Sierrans must donate \$10 or more to activate the matching grant.

Your contribution will help the Alamo Group host meetings, inform  
*Continued on Page 2*

## *Word From the Chair*

*by Tom Dukes*

Money is power. Ask any politician or lobbyist. Money buys access, media consultants, and advertising. Most of our environmental opponents have plenty of money, but the Alamo Group does not.

I was painfully aware of that as I sat stamping envelopes with a leaky rubber stamp. I thought about it some more while cutting 2400 pieces of green paper with my trusty old paper cutter. One of those envelopes and one of those pieces of paper are tucked inside your *Alamo Sierran* this month, and I hope you'll take a long, thoughtful look at them.

Yes, I know; it's the usual plea for money, and you've probably seen far too many. But this one is different.

The Alamo Group is not only fully volunteer, it is basically self-sufficient. Only 50¢ of your annual Sierra Club dues ever reach San Antonio. Yep, that's right. The Alamo Group gets 50¢ of your dues each year: 4¢ per member per month. The Sierra Club's national and state organizations use your money wisely, so that's not the point. It's just that we need to fund our work, too.

A generous local donor has offered a \$2000 matching grant if at least 200 Sierrans will give \$10 or more. I hope we can count on you. Your gift will strengthen us in our local environmental battles.

After all, money is power.

**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 6:45, program at 7 P.M.**

### **September 19, 2006: Winter in Yellowstone by Tom Rust**

See the beautiful photographs of Yellowstone's landscape, animals, and plants that Tom Rust took last winter.

### **October 17, 2006: Grid-Wall, a Green Building System by Randy Carroll-Bradd and Solar Deflection by Jonathon Boyd**

## *Who Owns Texas Water?*

Private corporations are increasingly interested in purchasing publicly owned water systems or in contracting with them to provide some or all of their current services. The motive is profit, and cash-strapped utilities are often eager participants. But does the consumer win or lose?

Explore the issue of water privatization in the United States, the implications for consumers, and the sustainability of our increasingly scarce fresh water resources.

Join us on September 29-30 and October 1 at Trinity University's

Chapman Graduate Center for a free conference sponsored in part by the Alamo Group and the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club. Sessions begin at 5 pm Friday and end on Sunday afternoon. Call 210-999-8508 or email [jdonahue@trinity.edu](mailto:jdonahue@trinity.edu) for details.

## *Lunch with the Chair*

Ready to get involved but not sure what job fits your schedule and interests? Let's do lunch. The time is one hour, and the date and place can be arranged. Contact Tom Dukes at 828-3721 or [tdukes@ev1.net](mailto:tdukes@ev1.net) and together we can find the perfect use for your talents.

**Make SA Cool City continued**

contribution to global warming, and the Alamo Group wants San Antonio and surrounding cities to do their part.

More than 280 mayors, representing over 48 million Americans, have already signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement to reduce CO2 pollution in their cities to 7% below 1990 levels by the year 2012. In Texas, the mayors of Laredo, Dallas, Denton, and Austin have taken the pledge. We think that San Antonio should, too.

To learn more about Cool Cities, visit [www.coolcities.us/](http://www.coolcities.us/). It is a great source of information for citizens and local officials. Other communities are making a difference by investing in cleaner public vehicles, energy efficiency, and renewable energy; we could be doing all this and more. Each of these local solutions saves taxpayer dollars by reducing energy waste and improves public health by decreasing pollution.

It is time for San Antonio to take action. The Alamo Group's conservation committee is committed to convincing Mayor Hardberger to sign the pledge, and city agencies to take the steps that will reduce San Antonio's carbon dioxide pollution.

We are a grassroots organization and, as always, we need your help. Elsewhere in this newsletter you can read more about our plans and our need for funds and volunteers. Whether you can donate money or time or both, we need your support. Together, let's make San Antonio a Cool City.

Paula Stone

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**Fund Appeal continued**

and enlist community groups, distribute information packets, and lobby leaders and decision makers. We need money for brochure design and printing. We also need a modern laptop computer and projector for presentations associated with this campaign.

We face stiff opposition. A U.S. electric co-op recently spent \$100,000 to label global warming a myth. If we are to help set the record straight, we

need whatever you, as a concerned member of the world family, can give.

Please ensure that San Antonio joins the more than 280 cities already committed to this fight.

**Remember, we need donations from 200 Sierrans to qualify for the matching grant. Can we count on YOU?**

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**Cool Cities  
Strategy Session**

On Saturday, September 16, the conservation committee will formalize our Cool Cities strategy with the help of the national Sierra Club's Phyllis Dunham, a proven grassroots organizer and strategist. Phyllis is the architect of many successful Cool Cities campaigns. The session starts at 10 AM and runs until 3 PM; a light lunch will be provided. If you are truly concerned about global warming, now is your chance to get involved. Please call Dave Klar or Jerry Morrissey for details or to register.

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**Courage Endorsed**

The national Sierra Club has endorsed the candidacy of John Courage for U.S. Congressional District 21, which covers much of northern San Antonio and several other counties. Courage is a strong environmental candidate who has pledged to support higher fuel efficiency standards, more electricity from renewable sources, a moratorium on new coal plants, and greater forest protection.

A Sierra Club endorsement means volunteering locally to assist the candidate. To help John Courage achieve victory over incumbent Lamar Smith, (who has a League of Conservation Voters score of zero), call Loretta Van Coppenolle at 492-4620 or Courage headquarters at 826-3911.

Loretta Van Coppenolle

**Beating the Heat in Texas**

What better way to beat the heat than a float down the Comal River. This is exactly what a group of intrepid Sierrans did on July 29th. The Comal starts at the largest springs in Texas and winds its way through New Braunfels 2 1/2 miles to its junction with the Guadalupe River. Our group cooled off in our tubes for a couple of hours before hitting a local barbeque spot for lunch.

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**Tree Ordinance  
Under Attack**

San Antonio's tree preservation ordinance remains under siege. Developers continue to lobby for drastic cuts in preservation, and have formally submitted amendments to allow clear-cutting, eliminate 9 native tree species, and slash preservation of the understory.

Since some City Council members have indicated that they support these amendments, the danger is real. Revisions proposed by city staff are currently scheduled for a September vote, and the developer amendments could be tacked on at that time.

San Antonio may become a city with much less tree canopy and native understory unless citizens speak out. More air pollution, more flooding, and a hotter, less beautiful city could be the results of a weakened tree ordinance. Our recommendation is to defend the ordinance vigorously and encourage City Council to patch loopholes and strengthen enforcement.

Call, write, or email your councilperson and the mayor to tell them you do not want our tree ordinance weakened in any way. Visit our website at [alamosierraclub.org](http://alamosierraclub.org) for the latest developments, and contact David Klar at 495-2148 or Jerry Morrissey at 382-2614 if you have time to help with this campaign.

David Klar

**2007 Sierra Club  
CALENDARS**

Support your local Sierra Club group by purchasing your 2007 calendars from us. Loyd Cortez will again be handling the sale of these gorgeous calendars. You can contact Loyd at 674-9489; or just bring your money to the next General Meeting. Remember, you can't go wrong with a Sierra Club Calendar as a gift.

Engagement Calendar: \$14  
Wall Calendar: \$13



Every Saturday beginning at 8:30 AM there is a guided hike at GCSNA. Not all hikes are appropriate for children, so check the Texas Parks and Wildlife Website at <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/newsmedia/calendar/> for descriptions, or call (210) 688-9055 Ext. 286 for more information.

**Native Plant Symposium**

The Native Plant Society of Texas Annual Meeting and Fall Symposium will be held in San Antonio, October 19 – 22, 2006. For information contact Jerry Morrissey at [jlmorrissey@aol.com](mailto:jlmorrissey@aol.com)

Photography of Texas Flag Enthusiasm

**Lone Star Love**

by Kim Smith

September 8 - October 4,  
2006

Louis J. Blume Library

St. Mary's University  
One Camino Santa Maria  
San Antonio, TX 78228

Opening Reception

5:30-7:00 pm, Friday, September 8, 2006

**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.

**SEP 22-23, FRI-SAT: ADOPT-A-BEACH CLEANUP**

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 trash from a particular section of the beach. After that we'll swim, eat watermelon and share snacks. Those who want to camp a second night can do so. Difficulty: EASY: Cost: FREE. Leader: Marsha Meredith [675-4097; [marsha1205@sbcglobal.net](mailto:marsha1205@sbcglobal.net)].

**OCT 14-15, SAT-SUN: PEDERNALES FALLS BACKPACKING FOR BEGINNERS**

Have you ever had the desire to go backpacking but did not know if it really was for you? Our annual beginner's backpacking trip provides novices with instruction from veterans and a first backpacking trip at a park close to home. This will be a short backpacking trip designed primarily for the novice backpacker, but all are welcome. The leaders will have a required orientation for all participants on Friday October 6th, 7:00 PM (location TBA) to help those new to backpacking prepare for the trip. Participants provide their own equipment and food. There will be a limit of 10. Minimum age: 13. Difficulty: MODERATE. Donation: \$6 members, \$8 non-members. Participants pay their own state park entrance fee and provide their own transportation with car-pooling encouraged. Co-leaders: Bill Rogers [830-885-2523 or [rogers@uthscsa.edu](mailto:rogers@uthscsa.edu)]; Terry Platt [210-695-9570 or [taplatt@earthlink.net](mailto:taplatt@earthlink.net)]

**OCT 22, SUN: FRIEDRICH WILDERNESS PARK DAY HIKE**

Enjoy a modest hike around a city wilderness area on the northwest side of San Antonio. Enjoy some nice climbs and good views. Meet at 9 AM around the benches near the bathrooms south of the parking lot. Difficulty: EASY to MODERATE. Suggested minimum donation: \$2.00 per adult. Register with leader: Lee Dodge [[lsg999@earthlink.net](mailto:lsg999@earthlink.net), 647-0216].

**OCT 29, SUN: LEON CREEK GREENBELT HIKE**

Meet at O. P. Schnabel Park on Bandera Rd. at 9 AM for a 3-mile hike along Leon Creek and in Schnabel Park. Difficulty: EASY to MODERATE. Leader: Jerry Morrissey, [497-5470, [jlmorrissey@aol.com](mailto:jlmorrissey@aol.com)].

**NOV 17-19, FRI-SUN: LOST MAPLES CAR CAMPING AND HIKE**

Fall is a great time of year to enjoy the outdoors in Texas, and Lost Maples with its beautiful trees and trails is certainly one of the best places for camping and hiking. We'll have a new moon, so the skies will be dark with lots of stars. On Saturday we'll take 5 to 7 mile hike and have a potluck dinner that evening. Space is limited to 16. Difficulty: MODERATE to DIFFICULT. Suggested donation: \$4 per adult. Participants pay their own state park entrance fee and share the fee for the campsites. Car-pooling is encouraged. Leaders: Marsha Meredith [[marsha1205@sbcglobal.net](mailto:marsha1205@sbcglobal.net) or 675-4097] and Bonnie Mitchell [[drmittchell@quickca.net](mailto:drmittchell@quickca.net)].

**THUNDER HEART BISON**



Natural Healthy and Delicious  
Low-fat, Grass-fed Texas Bison  
The Red Meat That's Healthy to Eat  
Available at Select San Antonio Stores  
For more information call 210-930-0841  
[www.thunderheartbison.com](http://www.thunderheartbison.com)