



THE ALAMO SIERRAN

THE ALAMO GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB NEWSLETTER - VOL. 41 NO. 5 MAY 2007

Mayor Hardberger Signs Climate Agreement Cool Cities campaign pays off

San Antonio's Mayor Phil Hardberger celebrated Earth Day on Saturday, April 21 by endorsing the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, and the Sierra Club celebrated right along with him. Our Cool Cities campaign began last August to bring about this exciting event. The Climate Agreement signing ceremony took place at Woodlawn Lake during citywide Earth Day festivities. With the mayor's signature, San Antonio joins over 460 municipal governments throughout the

nation in pledging to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and curb global warming. Mayor Hardberger thus follows Shavano Park Mayor David Marne on the short but influential list of local leaders who have stepped forth to guide their cities to an energy efficient and globally responsible future.

We applaud Mayor Hardberger for his visionary environmental leadership, and look forward to assisting as San Antonio implements the policies that will

Continued on Page 2

Word from the Chair by Jerry Morrissey

This promising year has brought increased commitment to the development of sustainable energy policies at all levels from local to international. Locally the green building movement is gaining traction with the commitment to build 1100 energy-efficient homes based on standards developed by the Metropolitan Partnership for Energy. New city buildings will be more efficient since City Council passed a green building resolution on April 19th that included an amendment introduced by Chip Haass to build according to the LEED silver standard.

This momentum has been given a psychological boost by Mayor Hardberger's signing of the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement on April 21st. His pledge to commit San Antonio to reducing greenhouse gases will require the implementation of many energy-saving measures by businesses, government entities and individuals. One such measure is an effective cool roof program, as described in this issue by Beck Steiner.

Our local utility, CPS Energy, is making progress through increased use of renewable energy, purchasing an additional 240 MW of power from the Cottonwood Creek Wind Farm. The recommendations of the Conservation subcommittee of its Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) headed by Beck Steiner and including myself will be formally presented to the CPS Energy Board in May. Milton Randle of CPS Energy has been helpful in shaping the recommendations.

Already CPS Energy has identified increased energy efficiency as one of the methods to meet future demand and created a new management position to spearhead the effort. In initial discussions a target is to provide 20% of future demand through

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.

May 15, 2007: Selah, Bamberger Ranch Preserve

Jeffrey Greene, award-winning author of *Water from Stone*, traces J. David Bamberger's transformation from co-founder of Church's Fried Chicken to internationally recognized conservationist. Learn how Selah, once "the sorriest piece of land in Blanco County" became a renowned Hill Country preserve and the largest private land restoration project in Texas. Mr. and Mrs. Bamberger will attend.

June 19, 2007: San Antonio River Parks

Lauren Minarcik, Park Projects Specialist for the San Antonio River Authority, will give an overview of their projects planned for south of town.

San Antonio City Council Endorsements Cortez, Galvan, Guajardo, Obledo, De los Santos Endorsed

Based on questionnaires, interviews and voting records, the Alamo Group Political and Executive committees have endorsed candidates for San Antonio City Council that they feel are electable and will best work with the Sierra Club on environmental issues. The endorsed candidates are: District 4, Philip Cortez; District 5, Lourdes Galvan; District 7, Elena Guajardo; District 8, Mario Obledo; and District 10, Rey de los Santos. Thanks to the other candidates who came for interviews: kat swift, Mary Alice

Continued on Page 2

Step It Up 2007

Two hundred concerned San Antonians including many Sierra Club members attended the Step It Up 2007 rally for climate action at Alamo Plaza on April 16. Over 1400 rallies were held simultaneously around the nation. Though the turnout was embarrassingly small for a city of this size, our Club's attendance was good. Many members staffed the Sierra Club table and circulated through the crowd getting signed postcards to Mayor Hardberger asking him to sign the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement.

Group chair Jerry Morrissey addressed the audience concerning the importance of greenhouse gas reduction in San Antonio. County Commissioner

Continued on Page 2

Word from Chair - Continued

energy efficiency was proposed. I believe that this percentage can be increased by a well-funded conservation program and the establishment of a citizen-based Conservation Committee to promote the program. One large-scale energy-saving project being considered is retrofitting schools with improved fluorescent lighting.

In summary, the Alamo Group and its members need to be engaged in promoting energy conservation efforts by San Antonio, other local cities and by CPS Energy.

Visit our website to view photos of the mayor's signing ceremony:
<http://AlamoSierraClub.org>

Climate Agreement - Continued

make a difference on climate change.

Thanks to the many Sierra Club volunteers who donated their time, energy, and money to help make our campaign a success. Special thanks for services above and beyond the call of duty to Sierrans Richard Alles, Donna Clark, Sharon Dukes, Jack Elder, Steve and Marty Hixon, Dave Klar, Barbara McMillin, Chris Riley, Joe Silman, Paula Stone, Loretta Van Coppenolle, Christal Villarreal, Jane Ward, and whomever we forgot to mention - you know who you are.

We celebrate today, but we aren't finished yet. Dozens of smaller local cities such as Kerrville, Alamo Heights, New Braunfels, and Floresville would benefit from a locally based Sierra Club Cool Cities campaign. This is truly one issue where we need to think globally and act locally. If you are a resident of an outlying city who would like to assist with a campaign specifically for your town, please contact Tom Dukes at 828-3721, tdukes@grandecom.net

Endorsements - Continued

Cisneros, Morris Stribling, and Bert Ceconi.

Thanks to Beck Steiner, chair, Russell Seal, Mary DiGiacomo, Lorreta Van Coppenolle, Christel Villarreal, Dave Klar and Jerry Morrisey of the Political Committee for interviewing candidates and making endorsement

recommendations. We are grateful to Beck and Russell for the hours spent contacting candidates to get them to return questionnaires, setting up interviews and completing the endorsement paperwork.

Jerry Morrisey

Step It Up 2007 - Continued

Tommy Adkisson gave an impassioned speech about the urgency of the problem, and State Representative Mike Villarreal spoke about how this critical issue will affect each of us.

As members of the oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization in the country, it is our duty to make our voices heard. Silently doing the right thing or simply complaining to friends is not enough; we must make a noise that our politicians can hear. And we must support the politicians who are exhibiting real leadership on the issues. Being in a group strengthens the feeling of community and gives great hope that we can actually affect the political process for good. A big thank you to everyone who attended the Step It Up Rally. I hope each of you will make time to share in the joy of participation at every opportunity.

Paula D. Stone

Cool Roofs

San Antonio could save up to \$20 million a year

The main goal of the Sierra Club's Cool Cities campaign is to reduce our energy use, decreasing our contribution to global warming. San Antonio is an "urban heat island" with temperatures 6 to 10 degrees higher than they should be. One culprit is dark roofs, which absorb sunlight and retain it as heat. Just as dark clothing on a sunny day makes it hard to stay cool, a dark roof wastes energy. Your air conditioner works overtime, your attic insulation is less effective, and your hot roof contributes its small part in preventing your whole neighborhood from cooling off at night.

What you need is a cool roof. A 'cool roof' must be a light color that reflects the sun's energy and of material that does not hold heat, but dissipates it quickly. Research shows a measurable

reduction in ambient air temperature in areas where such roofs are common.

There is a list of cool roofing materials you can discuss with your roofer. You can even buy a roll-on material at Home Depot that can be painted. Huge flat-roofed commercial buildings show significant energy savings with reflective roofing material - so much so that CPS Energy offers rebates for commercial buildings with cool roofs. The Sierra Club would like to see San Antonio implement a similar residential Cool Roof Program. With cool roofs, San Antonio could save up to \$20 million a year in energy costs while simultaneously reducing our contribution to global warming.

Beck Steiner

Earth Day Volunteer Recognition

Many thanks to our tireless volunteers who made Earth Day events an opportunity for outreach. Loyd Cortez, Loretta Van Coppenolle, Saul Wilen, and Doris Johnston were on the shore of Woodlawn Lake. Loyd, Loretta, and Saul also visited the UTSA campus. Carolyn Wells, and Linda Gober joined Loyd and Loretta in New Braunfels, and Kathryn Campbell helped Loyd and Loretta at NW Vista College. Sierran Patti Gonzalez sponsored a table for Sierra Club information at the Socially Responsible Investment Coalition 25th Anniversary Dinner. And last but not least, our group has agreed to donate \$200 to efforts aimed at protecting the Guadalupe River.

Gravel Mines Degrade Guadalupe River

There are three gravel mines on the Guadalupe River near Center Point in Kerr County, one as large as 300 acres. They are stripping away riverside trees and gouging out the alluvial river bottom. Rock crushers, fed stone from other locations, have been brought in to produce road base for highways. The companies do not have to reclaim the "moonscapes" they are creating. Gravel and crushed rock are washed on the sites, using large amounts of river and well water. The resulting silt ends up in the Guadalupe during frequent rises of

the river. Land values suffer, and silt kills off fish and mussels.

One of these new gravel mines, near the Kendall County line, is close to many residences and a public school. Large amounts of particulate matter (dust) rain down on the community, making air quality unhealthy for everyone. Property values in the area have plummeted, but these polluters do not seem to care if people are hurt or a river is ruined.

Citizens in Center Point have formed the Guadalupe River Environmental Action Team (G.R.E.A.T.), led by Kayce Kovacs. They need financial assistance, because legal counsel probably will be needed. The Texas Rivers Protection Association (TRPA) has agreed to help should a contested case hearing be granted by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. TRPA has agreed to match donated funds, up to \$2,500. Tom Goynes 512-392-6171 represents TRPA and can provide further information.

The Alamo Group has already pledged \$200, but individuals can also donate to help G.R.E.A.T. achieve its goal of protecting the river. **Donations are tax-deductible, and should be sent to TRPA, 444 Pecan Park Dr., San Marcos, TX 78666. Indicate on your donation that you want it to go into the fund for G.R.E.A.T., Center Point.**

The Alamo Group of the Sierra Club has formed a task force to work on the Guadalupe River gravel-mine problem. Contact task force leader Jim Stoker at 828-0919.

Jim Stoker

Extension of SAWS Sewer Lines into NW Bexar County

San Antonio Water System (SAWS) has applied for a Certificate of Convenience and Necessity (CCN) from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality asking to extend sewer lines along creek beds into NW Bexar County and adjacent parts of Medina and Kendall counties. The Alamo Group took part in a concerted effort at the April 3, 2007 SAWS Board of Trustees meeting to ask that SAWS withdraw the CCN. Approximately 30 speakers gave reasons not to extend sewers in this area of the

Hill County.

The main arguments centered around water quality and higher density development in this still mostly rural section of the Hill Country. Placing sewer lines in creek beds provides easy access to the aquifer for sewage, should line breaks occur. SAWS argued that well maintained sewer lines will actually protect the Aquifer from pollution better than poorly maintained septic systems or potentially poorly operated private sewer systems.

Higher density development results in more impervious cover and greater flooding problems, reduced habitat for endangered species, crowded roads, increased noise, light and air pollution, and the need for new schools and public services. Use of resources to extend sewers into rural areas strains the ability to maintain and repair aging sewers in older parts of San Antonio. The problems caused by suburban sprawl need to be addressed through denser core development, not extended sewer lines.

The Sierra Club asks SAWS to hold a public hearing on the CCN and withdraw the CCN if the public does not support it.

Jerry Morrissey



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.

MAY 11, FRI: GOVERNMENT CANYON DAYHIKE

The days are beautiful and not hot yet, so it is time to get out for an afternoon as we explore our own state natural area, Government Canyon near Helotes. We will hike around 7 miles looking for wildlife. The history of the area will be discussed, including its evolution into a state natural area. Bring your binoculars as we search for wildlife. The trail will be rocky with some elevation gain, so sturdy hiking shoes are a must along with two quarts of water. Entrance fees are the responsibility of each hiker. Limit of 6 hikers. Children 12 and above are welcome with parent. For information and reservations, contact Terry Platt, taplatt@earthlink.net.

MAY 11, FRI - MAY 13, SUN: PEDERNALES FALLS CAMPOUT

Spend a long weekend on a joint outing with the Austin Group camping at the park on the Pedernales about 50 miles west of Austin. Activities include swimming, hiking, tubing, and loafing. Cost of \$35 includes breakfast and lunch on Saturday and Sunday and dinner on Saturday night. Trip limited to 14 participants. Contact Ellen Clegg at eclegg@uiwtx.edu or 283-5045 or Steve Funderburg at steve.funderburg@lsijv.com or 317-4186 for more information and to sign up.

MAY 19, SAT: STONE OAK PARK DAYHIKE

Explore a new northside Natural Area Park in District 9 off Hwy 281. Easy guided walk on a 1+ mile, mostly-paved trail. Leaders will discuss the karst topography and Hill Country plants present in the park. Admission is free. Meet at 9 AM in the parking lot of Stone Oak Park (Phase I) which is on the north side of Stone Oak Parkway, across from Canyon Ridge Elementary School. Contact Jerry Morrissey at jlmorrissey@aol.com or 382-2614 for detailed directions.

MAY 20, SUN: MISSION TRAIL BIKE RIDE

Join us for a quiet Sunday morning bike ride along the historic Mission Trail in southeastern San Antonio. This ride will be along all paved trails and roads - a standard road bike will be perfect. Meet early and be ready to ride at 8:30 AM at the grass parking lot just southeast of the paved parking lot at Mission Concepcion on Mission Road, just off I-10. Contact Lee Dodge at LSG999@earthlink.net or 647-0216.

JUN 2, SAT: GOVERNMENT CANYON SNA HIKE

Probably one of the last chances to hike Government Canyon State Natural Area before it gets too hot. And there's no guarantee that June 2 won't be hot. We'll start early and hike anywhere from 7-10 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 boots or sturdy hiking shoes. Drainages contain lots of limestone rocks and small boulders. 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. Participants must carry at least 2 liters of water. Entrance fees are the responsibility of each hiker. Donations to the Sierra Club (Alamo Group) will be accepted. Limit of six hikers. Children 12 and over welcome with parent. For information and reservations, contact Scott Wolfe, papawolfe@sbcglobal.net.

Volunteer Opportunities

Solar Fest: Saturday, May 19, Maverick Park; Jerry Morrissey 382-2614

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 Mail Party: 2nd Tuesday, 7 p.m. Jim Stewart 692-0727
 Outings Committee Meeting: 4th 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
 Saul Wilen 692-1268
 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
 Saul Wilen 692-1268

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
 District 1: Roger Flores Jr.; 207-7279; district1@sanantonio.gov
 District 2: Sheila McNeil; 207-7278; district2@sanantonio.gov
 District 3: Roland Gutierrez; 207-7064; district3@sanantonio.gov
 District 4: Richard Perez; 207-7281; district4@sanantonio.gov
 District 5: Patti Radle; 207-7043; district5@sanantonio.gov
 District 6: Delicia Herrera; 207-7065; district6@sanantonio.gov
 District 7: Elena Guajardo; 207-7044; district7@sanantonio.gov
 District 8: Art Hall; 207-7086; district8@sanantonio.gov
 District 9: Kevin Wolff; 207-7325; district9@sanantonio.gov
 District 10: Chip Haass; 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, 210-629-8586
www.WholeEarthProvision.com