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NEWS RELEASE

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Sierra Club Gathering featuring keynote Tom Heberlein Celebrates 50 Years of Conservation Leadership with Awards, Outings, and Environmental Workshops

Madison – Around 100 Sierra Club members and supporters from throughout Wisconsin gathered at the Green Lake Conference Center for our Autumn Assembly, October 11-13. This year's event featured keynote speaker Tom Heberlein, author of *Navigating Environmental Attitudes*, workshops, musical entertainment with Ken Lonquist, and Awards, described below.

- **David Bender received the William O. Douglas Award**, which recognizes those who have made outstanding use of the legal / judicial process to achieve environmental goals, particularly those with national significance. Bender is a key player in the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign whose legal victories have triggered coal plant retirements, prevented new coal plant construction, and required forest protection and renewable energy investments that have reduced climate change threats in Wisconsin and throughout the nation.
- **H&H Solar Energy Services received the Torchbearer Award**, given to organizations external to the Club for consistently promoting practices that protect the environment. Madison-based H&H received the award for expanding energy efficiency and clean, renewable solar and wind energy throughout Wisconsin and avoiding the emissions of over 4 million pounds of carbon dioxide every year. They also received the award for partnering with the Chapter in our new Solar Homes program that offers a discount to Sierra Club members and support for the Chapter's conservation work for each installed solar system.
- **Chuck Quirnbach received the Good Citizen Award**, given to individuals external to the club who champion innovative programs or processes that protect the environment. Although the Wisconsin Public Radio reporter could not accept this award at our event, he was recognized for his comprehensive coverage of environmental issues in Wisconsin, including mining, wolf ecology, and the impacts of excess phosphorus on our lakes, rivers and beaches.
- **Chapter Chair Liz Wessel received the JJ & Pat Werner Award**, given to Sierra Club leaders in the John Muir Chapter who display an undying commitment to the goals and missions of the chapter. Liz received the award for implementing strategic planning, for her efforts on our Fundraising and Membership Committees, and for planning the Chapter's inspiring 50th Anniversary celebration with National Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune.
- **Former teacher and sand mining activist Pat Pople received the Wildflower Award**, given to a mentor for new and existing activists and to an educator that promotes a positive image for the club. Pople, of Chippewa Falls, founded Concerned Chippewa Citizens which later merged with other groups to become the Save The Hills Alliance. She publishes The Frac Sand Sentinel, a weekly e-newsletter on current sand mining topics around the country. She also participates in national Sierra Club groups on Fracking and Frac Sand Mining.

- **Clean Energy Committee Member Carol Johnson received the New Activist Award** for her enthusiastic participation in our issues and the organization for her efforts to support the Highland Wind Farm near her St. Croix County home and to garner local support for clean energy choice, which would allow landowners to host renewable energy systems owned by others on their property.
- **Clean Transportation Committee Member Hans Noeldner received the Merit Award** given to a Sierra Club leader who actively carries the Sierra Club message to decision-makers and the concerned publics. Noeldner won the award for encouraging dozens of mayors and other local officials to support increased transit investments in the state budget, for his clean transportation editorials, and for riding his bicycle from Oregon, Wisconsin to Lake Delton to testify in support of safe walking, biking, and transit at the state budget hearing.

The Autumn Assembly also included a slideshow to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter in Wisconsin, a tour of the Glacier Hills Wind Park near Cambria, and a hike in John Muir Park in Marquette County.

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Founded in 1892 by John Muir, the Sierra Club is America's oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization. The Sierra Club's mission is to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out those objectives. The Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter is made up of 15,000 members and supporters working to promote clean energy and protect water resources in Wisconsin.