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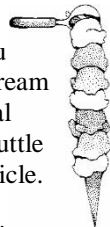
July/August 2006 Volume 34 No. 4

THE HEART OF ILLINOIS GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB ♦ P.O. Box 3593, Peoria, IL 61614 ☎ (309) 637-1393

HOI Group Meetings

**WED
JULY 19** Grandview Drive Hike to
the Spotted Cow, 6:30 p.m.

Enjoy the amazing beauty of Our Illinois River valley as you Walk to the Spotted Cow ice cream shop in Peoria Heights. Optional tasty treat after the hike. Car shuttle will bring you back to your vehicle. We are meeting at Grandview Drive Park at 6:30 p.m., which is at the east end of the drive, 1.8 miles from the corner of Prospect and Grandview Drive, Peoria Heights. If you are entering Grandview Drive off of Route 29 (turn west at the stoplight at East Lorenz), it is .7 miles up the hill and on your left. Wear comfortable walking shoes, bring water for yourself, and dress for the weather. *All are welcome!*



**WED
AUG 16** Dinner & Riverfront Walk,
6:30 p.m.

Meet at Kelleher's Irish Pub & Eatery at the corner of State and Water Street on Peoria's riverfront at 6:30 p.m. for dinner. After dinner join us for an optional leisurely walk along Peoria's riverfront. *Call 688-3908 for more information.*

Conservationist of the Year Nominations Sought

The HOI Executive Committee is seeking nominations for the **Heart of Illinois Conservationist of the Year**. The nominee does not have to be a Sierra Club member.

This individual's conservation efforts should have been pursued on a volunteer basis, not for pay. Your nomination should include a brief explanation of why you feel this person should be considered. The deadline for nominations is August 9th. The winner will be announced at our September Group meeting. Send nominations to John Wosik, c/o HOI Sierra Club, 12409 N. Blackhawk Ct., Dunlap; or call 243-2230.

Geology and Global Warming: A Recipe for Catastrophic Soup

BY RALPH GINN

Geologically, we are living in a warm period 10,000 years removed from the Wisconsin Glacier. In the past two million years ice sheets have advanced across the Northern Hemisphere and retreated again more than 20 times. It is known and almost universally accepted by geologists and astronomers that glacial cycles are initiated by small variations in the earth's orbit, which are caused by fluctuations in the gravitational pull of our solar system's planets.

Elizabeth Kolbert, a staff writer for "The New Yorker" has written a powerful and reader-friendly book on global warming and the exacerbating geology that is driving our civilization and thousands of species toward extinction....unless we, the perpetrators, mount fundamental changes in the way we live. Much of the material for this article is referenced from Kolbert's "Field Notes From a Catastrophe."

In the 1990s a 11,775 foot ice core was drilled at the Vostok station in Antarctica. This core contains climate records going back 420,000 years. The Vostok core reveals that our current carbon dioxide (the primary greenhouse gas responsible for global warming) level of 378 parts per million (ppm) is 80 ppm above the previous peak of 299 ppm that occurred 325,000 years ago. The Vostok core and ice cores going back 100,000 years from Greenland show that the earth is drawing very close to the temperature highs of the last interglacial period when sea levels were 15 feet higher than today's. A scien-

tist at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration put it like this, we've had higher carbon dioxide levels before, but we also had dinosaurs and the Gulf of Mexico covered Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas.

Since pre-industrial times, the carbon dioxide level has risen from 280 ppm to 378 ppm. Carbon dioxide is a persistent gas, with a molecular life of about 100 years and accounts for about 80% of greenhouse gases (methane, sulfur dioxide, ozone, water vapor are others). That these gases are driving global warming is not in question among creditable climatologists. Naomi Oreskes, professor of science studies at the University of California, San Diego surveyed 900 articles on climate change in scientific publications, that were printed between 1993 and 2003. She found not a single article that disputed the premise that anthropogenic global warming is underway. Public and political acceptance is a different story. James Inhofe, Senator from Oklahoma, calls global warming, "The greatest hoax perpetuated on the American people." One of the "authorities" Inhofe cites repeatedly is fiction writer Michael Crichton. The same source that President G.W. Bush found to be a persuasive authority on global warming.

Today, the United States produces nearly 25% of the planet's greenhouse gases. An American is responsible for 4 1/2 times that of a Mexican, 18 times that of an Indian, and 99 times more than a Bangladeshis. But, any measures to reign
(See Global Warming, page 2)



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Sign-Up for "Air Apparent"

Send a Letter for Strong Mercury Regulations to the Illinois Pollution Control Board

BY JOYCE BLUMENSHINE

The Illinois State Chapter Sierra Clean Air Committee has a new electronic newsletter titled "Air Apparent" and it's a great way to find out about the latest news regarding Illinois Clean Air issues. Send an email to Jenni-fer.Hensley@sierraclub.org to sign up for this gem. The latest issue includes news about hearings on the Illinois Mercury Rule, which are being conducted by the Illinois Pollution Control Board.

"Air Apparent" states that the proposed Mercury Rule will result in a 90% reduction of mercury by 2009, and would make Illinois the leader in the country for reducing mercury pollution in our air. The newsletter explains that "Mercury, a potent neurotoxin, poses a serious threat to the health of young and developing children. Acting similar to lead in a child's system, mercury, insidiously robs children of cognitive ability and fine motor skills." Sierrans are asked to write a letter of support of the proposed new Mercury Rule and strong standards on reducing mercury pollution. Write to: Illinois Pollution Control Board, James R. Thompson Center, 100 W. Randolph, Suite 11-500, Chicago, IL 60601.

The "Air Apparent" also has a special column "Dear Verena," which asks your state Clean Air Committee chair for answers on topics. In discussing "What is an Air Pollution Action Day" Verena writes about how particulate matter (PM) in the air causes health problems for people with asthma or respiratory problems. To check about your local air quality, go to <http://epa.gov/airnow>.

(Global Warming, from page 1)

in emissions of carbon dioxide must focus on the U.S. and China. The latter is projected to add three hundred-twenty 10,000 megawatt coal fired power plants by 2020. Coal burning power plants and automobiles are the major source of greenhouse gases and China's new plants, operating with old and dirty technology, as they are now designed, will create emissions of an additional 25 billion tons of carbon.

The inertia of climate change is rapidly becoming an irreversible force. Once underway, feedback loops will accelerate the rise in greenhouse gases and temperatures. The ice-albedo loop changes former sea ice to open water, increasing absorption of the sun's radiation by a factor of 9 times; temperature increases power a rise in water vapor (also a greenhouse gas) and the water vapor pumps up the violence of storms; melting permafrost in the Arctic and Antarctic releases

carbon that combines with atmospheric oxygen to produce more carbon dioxide; and possibly the most volatile feedback of all is the human factor, the earth has 6 billion and counting, each creating demands and wastes. Computer models are predicting that at the present level of greenhouse gases, 20% of the planet's species are doomed to extinction. At projected levels of acceleration, it is likely that 3 of 5 species will be extinct by 2100.

If we are capable of responding to the global warming threat, America has yet to show a sign. Our President and Congress seem incapable of solving routine problems, let alone impending disasters that require a view of the future beyond the next election. Elizabeth Kolbert sums up the dilemma, "It may seem impossible to imagine that a technologically advanced society could choose to destroy itself, but that is what we are now in the process of doing."

IDOT Presents Final Rt. 29 Plan

BY RUDY HABBen

Remember "No Way Corridor A!" and the public meetings to protest IDOT's proposal to build a freeway down the Illinois River bluffs from I-180 to Rt. 6? Well, IDOT held a public meeting on it's final proposed Peoria to Chicago highway on June 14th and it's a much scaled back and more environmentally friendly road. A proposed limited access road would follow the existing IL Rt. 29 from I-180 at Putnam to Chillicothe with bypasses at Henry and Sparland. Some riverside areas along the route could be added to the Marshall County Conservation Areas. A new freeway would be built from northwest of Chillicothe to Rt. 6 near the Caterpillar Mossville plant.

IDOT only has funding to do the study. Construction is dependent on future federal funding and it may be built in sections over the next 15 years.

Although the proposed road is much better in it's environmental impact, the basic question remains, "Should over \$500 million be spent to let 7,000 to 10,000 drivers a day save 1 or 2 minutes driving from Peoria to Chicago?"

Yes, I want to join the Sierra Club! My check is enclosed.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Introductory \$25 Individual \$39 Joint \$47

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.

Please mail this to Sierra Club,
P.O. Box 52968, Boulder,
Colorado, 80322-2968

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WHAT TO DO?

What can we, the individual, do to slow global warming?

1. Buy energy efficient appliances, lighting and insulation.
2. When possible, walk, ride a bike, use public transportation.
3. Buy the most fuel efficient car that meets your transportation needs.
4. By many times over, the most important thing that you can do is to research and **VOTE** for candidates at every level of government that **PROMISE** to support clean power generation and clean car solutions to global warming.

Al Gore's Film on Global Warming Coming to Peoria

The website for "An Inconvenient Truth" <http://www.climatecrisis.net/findatheater/> states that the film opens in Peoria on June 24th. This is a movie you will not want to miss! The web link has movie clips and additional information.

Time is Short to IPCB Hearing on Toxic Landfill Decision

BY TOM EDWARDS

We have only a very short time to prepare for the Illinois Pollution Control Board's (IPCB) initial decision on whether to grant the Peoria Disposal Co.'s petition to overturn the decision of the Peoria County Board not to grant a permit to PDC to expand its 64-acre "hazardous waste landfill" on the west side of Peoria off Rt. 8 at Pottstown.

The IPCB accepted PDC's petition for review at its June 15 meeting. Then it set Thursday, June 29, as the date for a "teleconference call" between an IPCB official, PDC's attorneys, and the Peoria County Board as represented by State's Attorney Kevin Lyons and attorney David Brown, plus board chairman David Williams. As of June 19 the IPCB had not yet received any requests to take part in the teleconference from any of the public interest groups that turned out in force for the six days of public hearings here on the issue. However, they (including Sierra Club) can request representation in the teleconference on a "friend of the court" basis.

Moreover, IPCB people advised that individual letters to the IPCB on the landfill issue are welcome. Send to: Illinois Pollution Control Board, PCB Case 2006-184, 100 W. Randolph St., Suite 11-500, Chicago, IL 60601. The PDC appeal is posted to the Illinois Pollution Control Board website, <http://www.ipcb.state.il.us/> and is listed under the COOL tab for Clerk's Office Online. At the search window, type in the PDC case number PCB-2006-184.

Whether or not there will be a public court hearing on the PDC petition to overturn, or to modify, the Peoria County Board's decision depends on if "agreements" to avoid a hearing can be worked out between the county board representative and PDC in the teleconference, said a IPCB spokesman. However, no compromises were mentioned in the county board's discussion and action to deny PDC's expansion request.

PDC has known for well over two years that its toxic waste landfill operation here might now have to be terminated,

certainly time enough to have made plans for that. Toxic wastes from as many as 15 states are brought to PDC's Peoria landfill.

The full IPCB board has until Oct. 5 to render a final decision on whether or not to uphold the county board's vote to deny expansion of the landfill. Should the vote be upheld, PDC could still appeal to the Circuit Court of Appeals.

Under state law, the county has the prerogative to say no to expansion of a landfill. But the state itself has total re-

sponsibility for its operation. And the state EPA can lead in finding a new, much safer location and in finding better ways to deal with toxic waste.

The county board's vote came after the longest (6 days, 53 hours) public hearing ever here, and a record public turnout (for which the 500-seat Itoo Hall was rented), plus a record number of letters-to-the-editor. Petitions for closing the landfill with over 6,500 signatures were also submitted.

PARTICULARS ON THE PDC TOXIC WASTE LANDFILL

BY TOM EDWARDS

There was a massive international conference in Toronto June 19-23 on "Livable Cities." That is exactly what we are working for in Peoria in regard to Peoria Disposal Co.'s "hazardous waste landfill".

Due to huge citizen involvement, including extensive research, the Peoria County Board voted 12 to 6 May 3rd, after a record public hearing turnout, not to permit expansion of PDC's landfill for toxic wastes from throughout the Midwest. Now PDC is appealing the decision to the Illinois Pollution Control Board (see adjoining story).

- PDC's toxic waste landfill is the last such landfill still operating in the upper half of the nation from near Indianapolis to the Rocky Mountains, and one of only 13 remaining commercial toxic waste landfills in the nation. Toxic wastes come from up to 15 states.

- It's IPCB permit allows PDC to receive 843 of the most toxic chemicals known short of nuclear waste at its landfill, but requires only limited testing of groundwater for only 22 of them. Of this number, 19 are in "the 20 most dangerous substances found at (the nation's) superfund sites," according to PIRG (Public Interest Research Group).

- Location of PDC's toxic waste landfill must be one of worst places in Illinois:

- a) It sits atop the sand-gravel aquifer from which most of the Peoria area's

water supply is pumped, according to Illinois State Water Survey maps.

- b) It is immediately adjoining and upwind of the entire City of Peoria, but the state requires no testing for air pollution at the landfill, even though most of the 843 chemicals allowed can volatilize into the air.

- Studies in New Jersey and five European countries revealed a greater incidence of birth defects near such landfills, attributed to air pollution, and 15% more strokes in adults living near them in New York state. Lloyd's of London will not insure hazardous waste landfills.

- According to the 2002 federal EPA Toxic Release Inventory, Peoria County's TRI is by far the highest of any Illinois county, and 16th highest in the nation. The primary reason is the PDC toxic waste landfill, according to the federal inventory.

- PDC says it wants to put 2.2 million more tons in its landfill. That is twice what it says has been put there since 1987 when EPA regulation essentially started, which would make it by far the highest hill in that area. Also, how much was buried there before 1987 is not reported. Dumping began in 1940.

If Illinois wants to continue being the destination for much of the nation's toxic waste, then it needs to find a far safer place to put it. And we need federal-state research to find means to (a) detoxify hazardous waste, and (b) recycle it to beneficial uses instead of burying it in the ground where it remains forever hazardous and a menace. Finally, permanent ultra-safe closure and perpetual monitoring is needed.



HOI Group Calendar

July

12 **Executive Meeting, 7 p.m.**
WED Joyce Blumenshine's home, 2419 E. Reservoir Blvd., Peoria. Call 688-0950 for directions.

19 **Grandview Drive Hike to the Spotted Cow, 6:30 p.m.**
WED See front page for more information. *Everyone is welcome!*

23 **"Barry Cloyd in Concert" Fundraiser, 5 p.m.**
SUN Enjoy an outdoor concert for a good cause! Folk music, contemporary sounds, and kids songs will be performed by noted Peoria singer and guitar player Barry Cloyd. "Barry Cloyd in Concert" is a fundraiser for Heart of IL Sierra and Peoria Families Against Toxic Waste to raise money for legal expenses regarding the Peoria Disposal Company Hazardous Waste Landfill. The concert will be at the Universalist Unitarian Church, 3000 W. Richwoods, Peoria (west on Richwoods off of Sterling), in the back yard (in the fellowship hall if raining) 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. A dessert buffet, lemonade, iced tea, and coffee will be available. Suggested donation is \$5. a person or \$10. per family. Bring lawn chairs or a blanket to sit on. This event is sponsored by Heart of IL Sierra Club and Peoria Families Against Toxic Waste (and is not sponsored by the church). For more information phone 688-0950.

30 **Matthiessen State Park Outing, 8 a.m.**
SUN Meet at Forest Park Nature Center at 8:00 a.m. or 9:30 a.m. at the lake shelter in the park. We'll hike the Dells area. From DNR: "Hikers will marvel at the plant and animal life along the trails, and have an unparalleled view of geological wonders as they travel through the park." Call 693-8587 for more information.



Recycle Your Aluminum Cans and Help Raise Money for the HOI Sierra Club



Save your aluminum cans over the summer and help raise money for the Heart of Illinois Sierra Club! Drop off your cans at Forest Park Nature Center parking lot at our September 20th Group meeting, or on Saturday, September 23rd, from 10 a.m. to noon. Your donation will help finance HOI Group operating expenses, including this newsletter. Please call 243-2230 for more information.

August

9 **Executive Meeting, 7 p.m.**
WED Joseph Laszlo's home, 330 S. Barnewolt Dr., Peoria. Call 637-4692 for directions.

16 **Dinner & Riverfront Walk, 6:30 p.m.**
WED See front page for more information. *Everyone is welcome!*

20 **Newsletter Deadline**
SUN Send articles for September/October to: John Wosik, 12409 N. Blackhawk Ct., Dunlap, IL 61525, or johnwosik@insightbb.com.

28 **Newsletter Mailing, 6:30 p.m.**
MON Peoria Pizza Works, 3921 N. Prospect Rd., Peoria Heights



Thanks to everyone who attended our June picnic and participated in our annual White Elephant auction. This year we raised a record \$494 in support of the HOI Sierra Club!

Other Events: (Not sponsored by the Sierra Club but provided as a public service.)

Prairie Dawgs Work Crew



The Prairie Dawgs meet the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month at Jubilee State Park. Work includes prairie burns, brush cutting, eradicating alien plants, native plant seeding, and planting root stock. Call Doug Franks at 691-7993 for more information.

Illinois Chapter Sierra Office on the Move! Your Donations Greatly Needed!

As of July, the Chapter Sierra office in Chicago will be at a new address: Illinois Chapter Sierra Club, 200 North Michigan Ave., Suite 505, Chicago, IL 60601. Their phone number will be the same 312-251-1680 and FAX 312-251-1780.

Please help support the tremendous work of the Illinois Chapter, and give our dedicated state staff a boost during the extra efforts that are needed to move and maintain on-going programs. While much of the work of Chapter staff does not show up in our newsletters, you need to know that their work is critical to the success of local group efforts and the environmental issues with which we are all concerned. The state chapter staff represent us in Springfield and Chicago with critical contacts with legislators. In addition to monitoring legislation and lobbying, chapter staff provide key support for the Water Sentinels water monitoring programs, represent us in pollution regulations and other rule making with the Illinois Pollution Control Board, organize press conferences and supply many press releases to major news media. Check out the Chapter website at <http://illinois.sierraclub.org> for state environmental updates, our Chapter Director Jack Darin's blog, and Illinois Sierra conservation campaign news. Your donation to the Illinois Chapter helps local groups and makes it possible for the important work the Chapter does to continue. Please send your generous donation to their new office address above. The Chapter has to raise a major part of their funds from state members, and folks, that is us! --- Joyce Blumenshine

Heart of Illinois Sierra Club

Hotline: Local Meetings & Outings • Action Alerts
 Contacts • Leave Messages (309) 637-1393

Executive Committee

- Chair** Joyce Blumenshine 688-0950 joblumen@yahoo.com
- Vice-Chair** Rudy Habben 685-5605
- Conservation Chair** Joseph Laszlo 637-4692 laszloja@excite.com
- Membership Chair** Norman Ewing 686-4122
- Political Chair** David Grebner 688-3908 moseynme@mtco.com
- Newsletter Ed./Sec.** John Wosik 243-2230 johnwosik@insightbb.com
 Wendy Marquis 243-9982 rockymtpoohbear@mchsi.com



- Treasurer** Grayce Mesner 246-8397
- Outings Chair** Chuck Buchna 693-8587
- Calendar Sales** Emiko Yang 691-5213

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