

News of the Southeast Gateway Group of the Sierra Club DEC 2016 / JAN 2017 VOLUME 35, No. 6

Terra Cognita

From the Chair by Tom Rutkowski

Forget about the first column I wrote for this issue. Forget about all the polls and the thousands of other articles written before this recent election that set our soon to be exploded expectations. Forget about the goal of half a billion solar panels that Hillary planned to install in her first term. Forget about the many protests and arrests that seemed to finally halt construction of the Keystone pipeline. Forget about the rapidly accelerating transition to clean energy. Forget about adhering to the Paris climate treaty and America cooperating with other nations in confronting the mutual threat of climate change.

On November 8th, to almost everyone's surprise, millions of voters pushed what looked like a reset button; it turned out to be a panic button for the rest of us. For a while anyway, it seemed like that game changer of a candidate was going to erase all that was familiar. Trump, and by necessity the rest of us, would be improvising, making it up as we went along into this new, dangerous territory. We would be heading off the map into terra incognita.

It took a day or two to realize this is not an unknown place. It's still dangerous but all too familiar. Go back to the other side of the map and you'll see where we left off eight years ago. In fact this new place looks just like Scott Walker's Wisconsin that's been open for business for years. It looks like the place where Kathy Stepp appoints industry insiders to the DNR to protect the environment. It looks like the country where Dick Cheney invited the fossil fuel industry to write national energy policy. The novelty of many of the proposed cabinet members like Newt Gingrich and Rudy Guliani wore off in the 80's. Content with winning the biggest prize of all, the rule breaking, bad boy of a president-elect doesn't really want to make new policies; that requires a lot of work and study and a much longer attention span. He'll leave the details to others, and these others are predictable.



Artwork by Michiel van der Born

Shortly after the obligatory acceptance speech in which Trump praised his opponent and promised to heal the wounded psyche of the nation, TransCanada announced its intention to press for a permit for the Keystone pipeline. Just one year after Obama rejected the final segment of the pipeline, the company plans to convince the Trump administration of "the benefits, the jobs and the tax revenues this project brings to the table." Their announcement was remarkable only because of its timing. Filled with corporate insiders from fossil fuel companies and agribusiness, Trump's transition team is ready to move on what Paul Ryan has described as an opportunity to "go bold" even though fewer than twenty-six percent of eligible voters voted for Trump. Leading the energy transition team, Mike Cantanzaro, for example, is a former lobbyist for Koch Industries and Halliburton. We've heard of those companies too many times. We know where all this is headed.

Sure, you can forget about expectations and recent progress, but don't forget that species are dying out at a rate 1,000 times faster than normal background rates. Don't forget that access to clean water is too often threatened or in short supply. Don't forget that climate change will affect all of us but especially those most vulnerable, the poorest and the powerless. Don't forget about tipping points that, once crossed, will make reversing climate change almost impossible. Don't forget we still have a deadline to meet, a chance to pass down a predictable, livable planet to generations to come. Don't forget all that is at stake; this too is familiar.

We know that politicians will ultimately respond to the will of the people and that the majority of people want clean energy and clean air and clean water and a stable planet. Obama was easy enough to convince. This time around, we'll need a lot more people to assert that will and make it impossible to ignore. We can do this; we can push back. You already know what to do. You've been here many times before.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER

Saturday, Dec. 3: Arrive Together: Building a 21st Century Transportation System for Wisconsin, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM, MATC in Milwaukee (page 3)

Thursday, Dec. 15: ExCom meeting, 4:30 PM, Barnes&Noble, 2710 South Green Bay Rd, Racine

Thursday, Dec. 15: SEGG Holiday Potluck! 5:30 PM, Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church, 1700 South Green Bay Rd, Racine (page 3)

JANUARY

Saturday, Jan. 14: SEGG Planning Meeting, 9:00 AM at Em's Cabin, River Bend

Thursday, Jan. 19: Fighting the Good Fight, panel discussion with Wisconsin Activists, 6:30 PM at the iMET Center, 2320 Renaissance Blvd., Sturtevant (page 3)

FEBRUARY

Thursday, Feb. 16: Citizens Acting for Rail Safety will present a program on Oil Trains, 6:30 PM at the iMET Center (page 3)

National Drive Electric Week



From Amy Cagney, SEGG Member

National Drive Electric Week, of which Sierra Club is a sponsor, was September 10-18 this year. Events in Wisconsin were held in Madison, including a gathering sponsored by electric and hybrid car dealers.

Those in attendance learned how the cars worked, their prices, and their range on electric before needing a charge. Another event brought a number of electric car owners together to talk about their experiences with the cars.

Electric cars are quiet and do not add CO2 emissions into the atmosphere. The driving range on many models has greatly expanded in recent years. Federal rebates up to \$7,500, depending on income, are available.

I hope that SEGG and John Muir members can hold a Drive Electric event next year.



Yes! I want to make a difference.

I want to be a member of the Sierra Club and help preserve the beauty of our Earth.



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Regular	\$39	\$49	Sierra Club are not tax-deductible as
Supporting	\$75	\$100	they support our
Contributing	\$150	\$175	effective, citizen- based advocacy and
Life	\$1,000	\$1,250	lobbying efforts. You dues include \$7.50
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Student	\$25	\$35	SIERRA magazine plus \$1 for your
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Sierra Club

Thank You:

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COMMUNITY PROGRAMS



Holiday Potluck

Thursday, December 15

Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church (Space Ship Church) 1700 South Green Bay Road (Hwy 31) in Racine Plenty of parking is available.

The winter solstice approaches bringing shorter days and chillier nights. We anticipate (or dread!) the snow and wonder what 2017 will bring. It's the time for Sierra Club friends and members to come together, to share good times and good food!

Arrive at **5:30 p.m.** to share appetizers and conviviality. We'll aim to serve dinner around **6:15.** Volunteers are needed at **5:00** to help set up.

Please bring an appetizer, main dish, side dish, or dessert. Whatever is convenient for you. The church permits beer and wine.

Bring special highlights of recent trips to share!

We'll have a projector set up for you to show your digital photos (please provide them on a thumb drive) and a table for printed photos and other mementos.

We will also have potluck decorations!

In addition to your own place settings, please bring a tablecloth, a candle, or a bit of seasonal décor, if you can.

Together we will create a very festive atmosphere!

January Program:

Get Inspired!

Environmental Activists Fighting the Good Fight

There's a lot at stake for the environment under a Trump presidency. Myron Ebell, a climate denier, is taking the helm at the EPA, an agency Trump has identified as expendable. Trump also announced his plans for a coal comeback. Add in an oil magnate as Secretary of the Interior and another oil man for Energy Secretary and you see thousands of red flags ahead.

Feeling helpless? Looking for a leader? We've got a bunch!

Join us **Thursday**, **January 19**, **6:30 PM** at the iMET Center, 2320 Renaissance Blvd. in Sturtevant, as a panel of environmental activists from across the state will inspire us with stories about *winning the good fight*. Then we'll brainstorm our own strategy.

As a lover of nature and a steward of Mother Earth, you can sit on the sidelines and hope for the best, or you can FIGHT! Let's not sit this one out. We may not get another chance.

-Barb Brattin

SATURDAY, DEC. 3 - MILWAUKEE AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE ARRIVE TOGETHER:

Building a 21st Century Transportation System for Wisconsin

A statewide summit with speakers, workshops and story-sharing to address one of Wisconsin's most pressing concerns: creating a transportation system that works for everyone.

US Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx Invited!

9:00 - Breakfast
9:30 - Listening Session
10:30 - Plenary Session
12 Noon - Lunch
1:00 - 3:00 - Workshops & Trainings
3:15 - Roundtable Discussion
4:00 - Reception

Breakfast and Lunch provided.

Transportation support to the event available.

Find out more and register: bit.ly/TranspoEquityWI











Transportation Twice:

If you're interested in transportation issues, we have two upcoming opportunities for you! The first is on **Saturday, December 3**, **from 9-5 PM** at Milwaukee Area Technical College. *Arrive Together: Building a 21st Century Transportation System for Wisconsin* is sponsored by the Sierra Club, and we've had some big wins lately. (details left)

Last month, the same group gathered in Kenosha to persuade the city's decision makers to expand bus service to midnight and... hold onto your hats... they won! The Mayor promised, and the Mayor produced. Extended hours have been funded in the 2017 budget. Feeling powerful? Good. Join us in Milwaukee to support your Sierra Club leaders. We'll carpool, of course.

February Program:

The other opportunity to hear about transportation issues presents a twist on the subject: *Citizens Acting for Rail Safety (CARS)*, from the Milwaukee area, will present a program on Oil Trains. Here's how they describe their mission on Facebook:

We are a non-partisan grassroots citizens' organization working for the health, safety, and quality of life of people, communities and the environment threatened by ill-advised rail transportation of dangerous materials. We work to raise the visibility of dangers to our community and to establish citizens' right to know and participate in decisions about trains carrying dangerous materials through our neighborhoods.

Want to know more? Join us February 16, at 6:30 PM at the iMET Center when we'll hear from real-life rail safety activists who are making a difference.



Recommended Reading: Climate Change Books

From Judy Rockwell

If you are looking for something to read or watch during the long winter months, here are a few suggestions. They also make great holiday gift-giving ideas!

Adult Non-fiction

Sixth Extinction: an Unnatural History. Elizabeth Kolbert. 2014.

Global Weirdness: Severe Storms, Deadly Heat Waves, Relentless Drought, Rising Seas and the Weather of the Future. Climate Central. 2012.

Climate Change: What Everyone Needs to Know. Joseph Romm. 2015.

Merchants of Doubt: How a Handful of Scientists Obscured the Truth on Issues From Tobacco Smoke to Global Warming. Naomi Oreskes. 2011.

Don't Even Think About It: Why Our Brains Are Wired to Ignore Climate Change. George Marshall.2015

Storms of My Grandchildren: The Truth About the coming Climate Catastrophe and Our Last Chance to Save Humanity. James Hansen. 2010.

Atmosphere of Hope: Searching for Solutions to the Climate Crisis. Tim Flannery. 2016.

This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs the Climate. Naomi Klein. 2014.

The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable. Amitov Ghosh. 2016.

Dangerous Years: Climate Change, the Long Emergency and the Way Forward. David Orr. 2016.

The Great Transition: Shifting from Fossil Fuels to Solar and Wind Energy. Lester Brown. 2015.

The Great Disruption: Why the Climate Crisis Will Bring on the End of Shopping and the Birth of a New World. Paul Gilding. 2012.

The Cartoon Introduction to Climate Change. Yoram Bauman and Grady Klein. 2014.

Adult Fiction

Green Earth. Kim Stanley Robinson. 2015.
The Water Knife. Paolo Bacigalupi. 2016.
Flight Behavior. Barbara Kingsolver. 2013.
Back to the Garden. Clara Hume. 2013.
The Collapse of Western Civilization: A View from the Future. Naomi Oreskes & Erik Conway. 2014.

DVDs

This Changes Everything. 2016. Merchants of Doubt. 2015. Planet in Peril. 2008. Six Degrees Could Change the World. 2008. Years of Living Dangerously. 2014.



Children

The Lorax. Dr. Seuss. 1971.

The Down to Earth Guide to Global Warming. Laurie David. 2007.

Macy McVoy's Global Warming Adventure. W. King. 2016.

Magic School Bus and the Climate Challenge. Joanna Cole and Bruce Degen. 2014.

A Warmer World: From Polar Bears to Butterflies, How Climate Change Affects Wildlife. Caroline Arnold. 2012.

Reduce! Reuse! Recycle!

From Amy Cagney, SEGG Member

The EPA estimates that the amount of garbage headed for the landfill during the holiday months increases by up to 25%.

Here's what they suggest to minimize your holiday waste:

- When shopping, carry purchases in your own cloth bags
- Buy items with minimal packaging, or no packaging, like concert tickets or gift cards
- Wrap gifts in recycled or re-used paper (you could also abstain from wrapping gifts, or use paper grocery bags and let the kids color and decorate them)
- Use greeting cards made of recycled paper; or send e-cards
- Instead of cut flowers, give potted plants that can be planted in the garden in spring I would also suggest making a charitable donation in a relative or friend's name.

Happy Holidays!



An Inconvenient Truth—Ten Years Later

By John Berge

Ten years ago, Al Gore came out with his book, *An Inconvenient Truth*, which is as hard to read now as it was then, and as significant. But even earlier (1978) glaciologist Lonnie Thompson reported on the melting and disappearing of glaciers in the high Andes apparently due to global warming from the increased use of fossil fuels. Later other scientists reported the shrinking of glaciers in North America, Europe, Asia and Antarctica. Recently, there have been several agreements signed intended to stop or at least slow this threat to our health, livelihood and wellbeing, but our pollution and the world's response marches on.

Thompson was quoted in Science News as saying: "The physics and chemistry that we've known about for 200 years is bearing out. We've learned so much in the last 10 years, but the fact that the unprecedented climate change of the last 40 years is being driven by increased CO2 hasn't changed." Last year was globally the warmest on record, and we seem to be seeing that almost every year, despite a very small respite probably due to volcanic activity.

Ice covers less and less of the Arctic Ocean in the summer and it is predicted that it will be gone as early as 2052. This is a positive feedback situation since ice reflects much more solar energy than dark, open water. The less ice present in the Arctic summer, the more energy the open water absorbs and so more ice disappears. The summer ice cover minimum has decreased 7.5 percent per decade or from around 6.5 million square kilometers in the early '80s to about 3.5 million square kilometers early in this decade.

On the other end of the globe, the Larsen B Ice Shelf collapsed, shattering 3,250 square kilometers of ice that had been stable for at least 12,000 years. In between those two geographical extremes, we are seeing a small but significant rise in sea level, about 3 mm per year. Some areas, like the eastern coast of the United States, have experienced even more. Worldwide, approximately 200 million people live within 5 meters of sea level. While scenarios vary, few scientists expect sea levels to rise more than 1 to 2 meters by the end of this century. That is small consolation to those living on islands in the Indian Ocean, much of Bangladesh or along the Florida and Carolina coasts that are within that range. Higher sea levels will be exacerbated by increases in the number and intensity of hurricanes and tropical storms producing larger storm surges and greater flooding.

Gore predicted both increased flooding and drought; we are currently seeing both. He also predicted that these would lead to major conflicts. Syria experienced three years of drought and decades-long shifts in rainfall and rising temperatures prior to the current conflict which has caused the deaths of hundreds of thousands and displacement of millions. While other causes such as clashes over gas pipelines, religion and a dictatorial government may have been primary, drought and global warming have certainly been contributing factors.

So each of us should be asking ourselves: What are we, as individuals and families, doing to reduce our carbon footprint, our use of fossil fuels, our contribution to global warming or climate change?

Mt. Pleasant Lutheran Church has recently replaced all of its light bulbs with more energy efficient ones. My family has switched to all wind generated electricity. How much energy, or CO2, these changes will save is yet to be determined, but each of us can and should do more.

The Wisconsin Public Service Commission recently approved spending 7.7 million dollars on Focus on Energy renewable energy rebates for the next two years--money that was moved from an underperforming renewable energy loan program. These rebates could help put solar electric installations on dozens of larger businesses and on up to 500 Wisconsin homes. *Could your home be one of them??*



The 2017 Sierra Club Calendars are here!

Wall-size wilderness calendars are \$14.00 each.

Handy, desk-top engagement calendars are \$15.00 each.

Calendars will be available for purchase at the next few meetings or by special order.

Contact Judy Rockwell at 262-742-4306 or jirockwell@gmail.com for more information.

Trees We Love

By Sue Schuit Photos by John Krerowicz

Woodman, spare that tree!
Touch not a single bough!
In youth it sheltered me,
and I'll protect it now.
-George P. Morris



Stately Sycamore

Several years ago my husband pointed out a poignant, beautifully written article by Kevin Nolan of Cassity Tree Service in Racine. The article was Kevin's lament bemoaning the removal of a beautiful 200 year old Bur Oak, due solely to the whims of a new homeowner. Kevin's homage to this superb Oak, his tale of the against-all-odds

survival of a young oak sapling, and the Racine events that this superb tree had silently stood sentry to in its 200 year history, brought me to tears. Kevin's search for ordinances that would have helped to protect this living piece of history,

this truly splendid gift of nature, proved fruitless; the Bur Oak was removed in 2014.



Bur Oak King

This moving article was a subject I pondered many times in the ensuing months. How could a program be created that could enhance appreciation, respect and stewardship for trees? What could, even for a small moment, inspire folks to look at trees with appreciation, reverence and a sense of wonder of their magic, their majesty and the mystery of their ageless secrets silently soaring above our heads?

And the seed was sown. I approached Hoy Audubon Society asking for their support and 501(c)3 status to apply for grant funding. This program fits well with Hoy's mission statement and we received funding support and sponsorship from the WE Foundation, National Audubon and Ketterhagen Memorials.

Nomination forms were designed and distributed, an ad hoc committee was formed and we were thrilled to

receive 18 nominations in this, our first year. Nominations were received from Union Grove, Burlington, Racine and Kenosha; for Catalpas, Cedars, Oaks, Maples, American Beeches, European Beeches, Sycamores, Willows, Apples and Elms. We were delighted.

Every nomination was photographed for consideration. Kevin Nolan site visited, measured diameter and height and estimated approximate age. We discussed, received advice, we voted and we awarded. Trees We Love, 2016 funding sponsored 4 tree awardees. Each received a bronze plaque, a framed picture and a historically researched narrative written from the tree's perspective. It has truly been a labor of love!



Matriarch Sugar Maple



Below the Sugar Maple

The Trees We Love, 2016 awardees are:

Bur Oak King, 14828 Plank Rd., Racine, proud stewards: the Knutson family.
49" Diameter at Breast Height, 70' Height, age approx. 245 years.

Matriarch Sugar Maple, 613 51st Dr., Union Grove, proud stewards: the Bergs family. 33" DBH, 85' Height, age approx. 165 years.

Mother of the Woods–The European Beech Queen, 1121 Lake Ave., Racine, proud stewards: Lochnaiare Inn, the Johnson family. 56" DBH, 60' Height, approx. age 224 years.

Stately Sycamore, 12th St. and Horlick Dr., Racine, proud stewards: the City of Racine. 39" DBH, 95' Height, approx. age 110 years.

It is our hope to continue and expand Trees We Love in coming years. We have been thrilled with the response, the enthusiasm, and the many folks who have come forward to share with us their heritage trees, their personalitrees, their landmark trees, their Trees They Love. As Henry Thoreau said, "It's not what you look at that matters, it's what you see."

Interested in hearing more about Trees We Love? Please contact Sue Schuit at 262-752-5955 or salav@wi.rr.com

SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATORS

Senate District	Assembly District	County	Name	edress
- 11		Walworth/Whitewater	Stephen L. Nass	Sen.Nass@legis.wisconsin.gov
11	31	Walworth/Clinton	Amy Loudenbeck	Rep.Loudenbeck@legis. wisconsin.gov
- 11	32	Walworth/Lake Geneva	Tyler August	Rep.August@legis.wisconsin.gov
- 11	33	Walworth/Mukwanago	Cody Horlacher	Rep.Horlacher@legis.wisconsin.gov
21		Racine/Racine	Van Wanggaard	Sen.Wanggaard@legis.wisconsin.gov
21	61	Kenosha/Salem	Samantha Kerkman	Rep.Kerkman@legis.wisconsin.gov
21	62	Racine/Caledonia	Tom Weatherston	Rep.Weatherston@ legis.wisconsin.gov
21	63	Racine/Rochester	Robin Vos	Rep.Vos@legis.wisconsin.gov
22		Racine/Kenosha	Bob Wirch	Sen.Wirch@legis.wisconsin.gov
22	64	Kenosha/Kenosha	Peter Barca	Rep.Barca@legis.wisconsin.gov
22	65	Kenosha/Kenosha	Tod Ohnstad	Rep.Ohnstad@legis.wisconsin.gov
22	66	Racine/Racine	Cory Mason	Rep.Mason@legis.wisconsin.gov

NATIONAL ELECTED OFFICIALS

President	US	Barack Obama	https://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/
WI Senator	WI	Ron Johnson	www.ronjohnson.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact
WI Senator	WI	Tammy Baldwin	www.baldwin.senate.gov/contact
Representative	1st Congressional Dist.	Paul Ryan	http://paulryan.house.gov

SEGG encourages you to contact your legislators on the issues you care about. Telephone numbers and "snail" mailing addresses are available on the legislators' websites.



Explore, Enjoy And Protect The Planet

2016 SEGG Leadership

Executive Committee

Tom Rutkowski (Chair)	natom@wi.rr.com
Betsy Georg (Secretary)	bgeorg@hotmail.com
Judy Rockwell (Vice Chair)	jjrockwell@gmail.com
Allan Sommer (Outings Chair)	sommerallan4@gmail.com
Barb Brattin	bb81435@gmail.com
Karen Hermansen	ehermansenjr@wi.rr.com

Other Group Leaders

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Melissa Warner (Program Chair)	melissa.warner3@sbcglobal.net
Mary Schroeder (Hospitality)	ilovedogsandcats2@yahoo.com
Rebecca Eisel (Webmaster)	SeggWebAdmin@gmail.com
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Vickie Stellato (Conservation, Raci	ine. Co.)aik@wi.net

The newsletter of the Southeast Gateway Group of the Sierra Club is published six times each year by the Group newsletter staff.

Please send any articles, photographs of group activities, letters, calendar submissions, corrections and comments to:

Nicole Reid nreid23@wi.rr.com

Please use subject line: **SEGG Newsletter**

Deadline for February/March Issue:

Jan. 1, 2017

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Award-winning Beech Tree, photo by John Krerowicz More *Trees We Love* on page 6

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