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Issue 0507
May 2007
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GREEN HOME TOUR

Saturday, MAY 26th

Tour open from 10:00 am - 5:00 pm
Tickets: $5 per adult - purchase at the door

The Dallas Sierra Club presents a tour of two green and sustainable structures; one a residence and the other a condominium.

The residential example is a green, sustainable, passive solar home designed by Architect, Gary Olp. The house, located in the White Rock Lake area at 9744 Northcliff Drive, Dallas, TX 75218, is just over 3,000 sq ft. Its electric bills have consistently been lower than average.

Mr. Olp will be present to provide information on the construction and materials used as well as answer questions on its features which include: Thermal mass, Low VOC paint, Durable/sustainable materials used for walls, Sustainable wood floors and cabinets, Passive solar design, Insulation, Structural insulated panels (SIP's), Native landscaping, and Heating/Ventilation system.

The condominium, BUZZ, is an example of a green and sustainable community by Change Chamber Development. The condominium is located at 1201 S. Akard, Dallas, Texas 75215. The sustainable community is the first of its kind in the DFW area and has an affordable price for the first time buyer.

Tours will be given by the developers. The complex includes a lot of cool perks for all occupants, including an electric eGO moped for zipping around downtown. Condominium features include: Rainwater system reclamation and silo, drought-tolerant landscape, low-e double pane windows, bamboo flooring, high efficiency appliances, insulation between floors, high efficiency air conditioning, and a future installation of photovoltaic panels for a Zero Energy design.

Whether you are planning on building a new house, remodeling, living green, or you just interested in green construction, this is the tour to take.

Tickets: $5 per adult - purchase at the door.
For MORE INFO or to VOLUNTEER contact: Lisa Silguero (214) 893-7990 - leave message or email tour@dallassierraclub.org

TrinityVote Campaign

The Dallas Sierra Club continues to fight sprawl, pollution, environmental damage, and pork and promote sustainability, natural, green, and open space, trails, parks and recreation by participating in the TrinityVote campaign, www.trinityvote.com. Trinity Vote is attempting a historic feat: allow the people of Dallas to decide whether or not they want a real park or a freeway in the downtown Trinity River park.

The proposed location of the high speed toll road would run through the park, take away 1/3 of the parkland, reduce the lakes and spew noise and pollution from auto traffic. This road also promotes sprawl and is proposed as a toll road for use by a small segment of motorists, which will do little to help transportation in the area. Since the bond money was narrowly approved in 1998, the cost has tripled to over 1 billion dollars, and the Army Corps of Engineers has stated that the road would flood regularly and that in no other city has a major freeway been built in a floodway designed for flood control.

The petition drive must get 50,000 signatures from registered City of Dallas voters in 60 days after filing the petition, currently planned for April 30. The May 12th election presents a great opportunity for us to get a large part of the necessary signatures, and we need lots of volunteers to help out. If we get enough signatures and they are ratified by the City of Dallas, the ordinance proposed on the petition would be placed on the November ballot as a referendum for Dallas voters. The ordinance is expected to give Dallas voters the opportunity to disallow the construction of major freeways including toll roads in the Dallas Floodway—the Trinity River green space that could become the downtown Trinity River Park.

The Dallas Sierra Club Ex-Com approved a motion to support the TrinityVote campaign at their April meeting. Please help us organize with Dallas Councilwoman Angela Hunt, so we can get 50,000 signatures within 60 days (starting April 30) to require the referendum on moving the toll road out of the park. Donations are welcome and very much needed for publicity, signs, and printing. E-mail davidgray@dallassierraclub.org or Rita Beving at rita@dallassierraclub.org to participate. Find out more at www.trinityvote.org or call 214-586-PARK.

Supreme Court Rules on Global Warming

In a 5-4 ruling, the Supreme Court told the Bush administration it cannot claim that the Environmental Protection Agency does not have the authority to regulate the greenhouse gases that cause global warming.

In 2003, the administration and EPA argued that EPA didn’t have the authority to regulate these gases. Earthjustice attorneys thought they were simply trying to dodge the issue and helped enlist a wide array of states, municipalities, and environmental and public health groups in challenging EPA’s inaction all the way up to the Supreme Court.

While this case has worked its way through EPA and the courts, scientific evidence of global warming has continued to mount. The Supreme Court told the EPA it can use its existing Clean Air Act authority to require control of greenhouse gas emissions by cars and other motor vehicles. The Act has successfully cut emissions of many pollutants, and it can do the same for greenhouse gases.
MAY PROGRAM

Cool Cities Campaign: Tuesday, May 8 at 7 pm

Our fossil fuel-dependent lifestyle raises a host of concerns: the high price of energy, national security, pollution, economic competitiveness and global warming, to name a few. Do you find yourself stuck, knowing that there’s a problem but not sure how you can be part of the solution? Do you think that it costs too much to take meaningful action? Come to the May General Meeting and hear Dallas Sierra Club Chair Ann Drumm explain how you can get involved in the Dallas Sierra Club’s Cool Cities campaign. You can make a difference!

Everyone is welcome. You don't have to be a Sierra Club member.

Volunteer Opportunities

Cool Cities training: contact Ann Drumm, 214-350-6108 or ann@dallasierracub.org

Trinity Vote petitions: contact David Gray, dbgray@ieee.org or 214-342-2019

Green Home tour: Help with our annual Green Home tour on Saturday, May 26. Two properties this year: Gary Olp's house near White Rock Lake and the Buzz Condominiums near downtown Dallas. Contact Lisa Silguero, lsilguero2001@yahoo.com or 214-893-7990.

Political committee: contact David Griggs, Texvol@aol.com or 214-244-5979

Membership committee: contact Ann Drumm, 214-350-6108 or ann@dallasierracub.org

How much do we really care about what you think?

The answer is, we care a lot, but unless you give us your opinions, we cannot act on them! The Dallas Sierra Club has a major goal for this year: to encourage more participation in volunteering and club activities. To that end, we have prepared an online research survey to determine current and desired involvement in club activities. The questions are formatted for an easy response, and will only take a few minutes. Please go to the website and click on the link to answer the 17 questions. Thank you for contributing to the future success of club efforts.

Results of the survey will be made available in a future COMPASS.
Minimizing Altitude Sickness Symptoms on Mountain Trips

The Dallas Sierra Club sponsors a number of trips to the mountains of Colorado and New Mexico each year. Some of these trips involve a sudden change in altitude, from just 600’ above sea level in Dallas, to a trailhead elevation of 8,000’ or 9,000’ about 12 hours later, to a camp elevation of 10,000’ or 11,000’ just 24 hours after leaving Dallas. In particular, our bus trips to Taos and the Pecos, Sangre de Cristo and Weminuche Wilderness areas can trigger symptoms of “altitude sickness” for some participants. This article answers the most frequently asked questions our trip leaders get about altitude sickness.

What is altitude sickness? Altitude sickness is a general term for several related illnesses caused by either sudden or extended exposure to high altitudes (over 8,000’). All of these illnesses spring from the same cause: low air pressure and oxygen concentrations at high altitudes, resulting in low blood oxygen levels. The most common and least severe form is called Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS). Much more severe and dangerous are High Altitude Pulmonary Edema (HAPE), fluid collection in the lungs, and High Altitude Cerebral Edema (HACE), brain swelling due to fluid collection.

Is some form of altitude sickness common on Dallas Sierra Club bus trips? For the conditions found on mountain Dallas Sierra Club bus trips, from 10% to 30% of the participants will experience some (usually mild) symptoms of AMS during the first one or two days at altitude; the higher the trip altitude, the greater the number of participants that will experience problems. We have never had a known case of either HAPE or HACE on a Dallas Sierra Club bus trip, mainly because our trip altitudes are moderate and our trips of short duration. We do send participants with persistent AMS symptoms down to lower altitudes before the AMS progresses to the more severe HAPE or HACE.

What are the symptoms of Acute Altitude Sickness? The initial symptoms of AMS usually occur within 6 to 12 hours of the arrival at altitude, but may not start until 48 hours after arrival. The first symptom is usually a mild, generalized headache which does not respond to over-the-counter medications. This may be followed by fatigue, appetite loss, dizziness or nausea. It is common for the face and fingers to swell. Occasionally, vomit will result from the nausea. At night, restless sleep and irregular breathing may occur. In rare cases, these symptoms may get progressively more severe after the first 24 hours. For most people, the symptoms disappear completely after 24 to 48 hours, as their bodies acclimatize to the lower oxygen concentration.

Are some people more prone to get AMS than others? Yes, some people almost always get some symptoms, for a given altitude, while others do not seem to ever be bothered. A person that is first affected by AMS at about 10,000’ altitude is likely to be similarly affected at about the same altitude on the next trip. Fitness and training do not seem to matter. AMS affects both sexes equally. Younger people are generally more affected. People who have recently had colds or gotten little sleep are more likely to have AMS symptoms. That said, it is impossible to predict if a person will be affected by AMS symptoms on a given trip.

What can I do to minimize or prevent the symptoms of AMS? There are steps an individual can take to minimize the chance of getting AMS symptoms, or at least limit the severity and duration of those symptoms. In selecting or planning a trip, pick a lower altitude trip if you know you are more susceptible to AMS. Before the trip, drink plenty of fluids and avoid drinking alcohol or taking sedatives or sleeping pills. Get adequate sleep, and stay in good health. During the trip, continue to drink plenty of fluids—enough to produce copious amounts of clear urine. Continue to avoid alcohol. Eat a high calorie, high carb diet. Spread out the effort of the first day’s hike, and avoid getting out of breath. Stop hiking early on the first day of the trip, and try to camp at the lowest possible altitude on the first night. If possible, hike to higher altitudes during the day than the final camp altitude. At night, do not completely zip up the door of your tent, and do not bury your head into your sleeping bag. If some symptoms persist on the second day of the trip, avoid or minimize strenuous activity. Plan to do the highest altitude section of the trip, such as peak-bagging, on the third or fourth day at altitude. Once exceeding a 10,000’ altitude, increase camp elevations by no more than 1,000’ per night. If all of these steps are followed, it is rare for AMS to progress to more serious conditions.

What should I do if the AMS symptoms get worse? If your AMS symptoms do not diminish after 48 hours, or if they seem to be getting progressively worse, you should move immediately to a lower altitude, usually at the trail head. If the symptoms persist even after reaching the trailhead, find a way to get below 8,000’ altitude. When altitude sickness symptoms are rapidly getting worse, it is very important to move lower as quickly as possible, especially if there are any of the HACE symptoms as described below.

What are the symptoms of HAPE and HACE, and what should I do if I have these symptoms? It is very important that everyone who hikes to high altitudes know the symptoms of these potentially fatal high-altitude illnesses. HAPE, a fluid buildup in the lungs, usually does not occur below elevations of 10,000’ or before three days at altitude. HAPE symptoms usually progress from a shortness of breath in the absence of exercise, to dry cough, chest pain, rapid pulse, and in advanced cases, sounds of fluid buildup in the lungs. HACE, a swelling of the brain, usually does not occur below 12,000’, or before four days at altitude. HACE symptoms include a severe headache, confusion, vomiting, irregular breathing with breathing stops, staggering gait, inability to balance, and finally, unconsciousness. For both of these illnesses, the most important treatment is to descend as much as possible (at least 2,000’ or 3,000’) as quickly as possible, and seek medical attention immediately.

General Calendar

5/2 • 6/6 First Wednesday. The Executive Committee (or Excom - the elected governing body of the Dallas Sierra Club) and other Club leaders meet to discuss Club plan and business for the future. See www.dallassierriclub.org/calendar for details, or contact the Group Chair.

5/7 • 6/11 Monday before General Meeting. Deadline for submitting material for The Compass. Send to editors@dallassierriclub.org.

5/8 • 6/12 Second Tuesday. Sierra Club General Meeting 7:00 – 8:30 PM. Come to the Center for Spiritual Living located at International Place Business Center, 4801 Spring Valley Rd., Suite 115. Check www.dallassierriclub.org for directions. Come early to pick up activity materials and afterwards join the socializing at Pappa’s Pizza.

5/16 • 6/20 Third Wednesday. Outings Committee meeting at 7:00 PM at REI (Mapco 14Q). Discuss schedules and issues. All outings leaders, future outings leaders, and interested Sierrans are welcome.

5/22 • 6/26 Fourth Tuesday. Inner City Outings Committee meeting at 7:00 PM at REI (Mapco 14Q). All outings leaders, future outings leaders, and interested Sierrans are welcome.

5/23 • 6/27 Fourth Wednesday. Newsletter Mailings Meeting at 7:00 PM at the Churchill Recreation Center at Hillcrest and Churchill Way (Mapco 15V). Help sort, bundle and label the newsletter. Just show up. Volunteer coordinator needed.
NOV 21-26, (WED-MON) THANKSGIVING BUS TRIP TO BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK.
We will have a day/halfbackpack trip to the Chisos Mountains, a wonderful backpack trip on the Outer Mountain Loop, a backpack trip to the superb remote Mesa de Anguila, plus others. If you’re never been to Big Bend, this trip is wonderful! Come to Big Bend National Park, a place to yourself to discover this unique part of Texas. If you’ve been before, come on back and explore another area! Contact: Arthur Kushin 214-926-2500 or arthur@dallassierracub.org

Sierra Singles Outings

MAY 9 (WED) MID-SUBURBAN SIERRA SINGLES DINNER Mingi at 6:30. oner dinner at 7 pm. Humon Dynasty 972 444-9760, 8150 North MacArthur Blvd, Suite 195, Irving/Valley Ranch 75003. Please bring a jacket, as weather can be questionable or permitting. The view of Dallas is awesome. No reservation necessary. Exit MacArthur from I-20. From Dallas, turn right on MacArthur, from Fort Worth, turn left on MacArthur. Restaurant is one block north on your right on the NE corner of MacArthur and Rankinway. Organizer: Terry Jensen 972-986-5887 or tfwinnies@gmail.com

Dallas Sierra Club Outings

HOW THE OUTING PROGRAM WORKS

Dallas Sierra Club Outings are open to members and non-members. Some trips may require special qualifications and capabilities. The leaders of Sierra Club outings are serving in a volunteer capacity and assume no responsibility above that of trip organizer. If you have a medical problem, it is your responsibility to inform the leader before the outing. Outing leaders are encouraged to participate in training and classes to increase their skills, but they are not paid professionals. They will assist you within their limitations. It is the responsibility of the participant to be aware of any personal limitations before going on an outing.

Radio and firearms are prohibited from all outings. Pets are not permitted unless specifically stated. All outings officially begin at the trailhead or outing start point. Leaders may assign carpool or transportation. Help coordinate ride sharing for energy conservation and to promote fellowship. All non-commercial transportation is the responsibility of the individual. Car-pooling is SOLELY voluntary, but the costs are shared. The usual method of sharing transportation cost is for all riders in the car, including the driver, to divide the cost of transportation equally. Before leaving, be sure this is something that works for you. The costs of an outing must be agreed upon. Reservations are not necessary for outings unless otherwise noted in the outing description. To participate in an outing, contact the leader. The leader will decide if the trip you are interested in is suitable for you based on your capabilities and the demands of the trip. There is usually a limit to the number of people allowed on a given outing; you must cancel, inform the leader as soon as possible so other applicants can go in your place. Please respect the wishes of the host leader who has volunteered his/her free time to allow you to go on the trip of your choice. If you have any questions, or if you need assistance, please contact either the Outings Chair or the trip coordinator. Please check coordinator listed on the newsletter back page.

Notice: to receive the outings list monthly via email, visit www.dallassierracub.org/subcribe
Sierra Club Endorsements for May 12, 2007 City Council Elections

Springtime brings municipal elections in many communities across Texas. On Saturday, May 12, 2007, several local cities will elect mayors and city councils. Due to historically low turn out in local elections, and especially in run-offs, outcomes are often decided by a handful of votes. The results of these contests can often decide whose agenda controls city hall. Many of our critical state environmental concerns, on such issues as air quality and reservoirs, directly affect local municipalities. Your vote and participation in electing environmentally-friendly candidates to these city councils is vital.

The Dallas Sierra Club Political Committee, with the approval of the Dallas Group and the Lone Star Chapter Executive Committees, has made several endorsements this year in two local cities – Dallas and Richardson. All Sierrans in these communities should take notice of these candidates, learn about their positions, and vote in this year’s municipal elections on May 12th (and June 16th run-off).

In March, Political Committee volunteers in both Dallas and Richardson drafted questionnaires and background information on important environmental issues facing the two cities. Those questionnaires were sent to the 67 candidates running for the 14 single-member Dallas City Council districts and to the 12 candidates running for Dallas mayor. Questionnaires were also sent to the 16 candidates running for 4 single-member and 3 at-large districts in Richardson. Based upon candidate responses and additional information from incumbent records and interviews, the following endorsements were made and approved:

**DALLAS**

The Dallas City Council considers many issues with local environmental impact, including decisions on current issues involving air quality, recycling, reservoirs, and the Trinity River. These candidates show promise to support environmental positions either from their record as an incumbent or their commitment as expressed in the answers to their questionnaires:

District 2 – Pauline Medrano (Incumbent) – opposed to unnecessary development of new reservoirs, a strong proponent of conservation efforts and of utilizing existing reservoirs for Dallas’ water needs – running for a second term.

District 5 – Betty Culbreath – proponent of more grassroots community involvement in city environmental decisions, supports using existing reservoirs for water needs, and supports taking the toll road out of the Trinity River park – running for an open seat.

District 9 – Jill Kotvis – knowledgeable environmental attorney, environmental activist and supporter of many Sierra Club priorities – running for an open seat.

District 14 – Angela Hunt (Incumbent) – leader on the Trinity Vote campaign and strong supporter of taking the proposed toll road out of the Trinity River park – running for a second term.

The Committee also gave close consideration to responses from candidates in Districts 3, 7 and 15 (mayor), but reserve endorsement recommendations until a later time. In the Dallas Mayor’s race (District 15), the Committee received responses from Sam Coats, Roger Herrera, Darrell Jordan, and Ed Oakley. Watch for possible additional endorsements in some of these races prior to the run-off election on June 16, 2007.

**RICHARDSON**

Richardson is one of the Dallas areas older suburbs and is now experiencing issues related to its aging neighborhoods. These current city council members or challengers recognize that environmental issues impact quality of life, neighborhood, and economic development, as Richardson aggressively revitalizes its older areas:

Place 1 – Bob Townsend – forward-looking view indicates that environmental issues play a role in neighborhood revitalization.

Place 2 – Rhea Allison – supports energy efficiency standards in new and rebuilt homes in Richardson.

Place 3 – John Murphy – understands that sound environmental policy goes hand in hand with sound municipal economic development policy.

Place 4 – Mayor Gary Siagel – although unopposed, deserves credit for recognizing that environmental issues should play a strong role in Richardson’s planned revitalization and continued economic redevelopment.

Place 5 – Pris Hayes -- dedicated and knowledgeable about Richardson and regional water, transportation and other environmental issues facing the state.

Place 6 – Steve Mitchell – a strong ally for Richardson’s neighborhoods and how environmental policy relates.

Place 7 – No endorsement recommendation at this time.

If you live in Dallas or Richardson, please do not forget to vote and support these candidates in the Saturday, May 12th municipal elections and, if necessary, in the June 16th run off. Your vote could make the difference!

Check the back of your voter registration card for the number of your city council district. For voting locations, go to www.dalcoelec.org and check where your precinct votes.

To Volunteer – Contact David Griggs, Chair, Political Committee at 214-244-5979 or contact the campaigns directly and mention you are from the Sierra Club!

Be sure you VOTE EARLY - Early Voting dates for May 12 election – April 30 – May 8

April 30 through May 4 (Mon - Fri) 8:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.

May 5 (Saturday) 8:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.

May 6 (Sunday) 1:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.

May 7 (Monday and Tuesday) 8:00 A.M. - 7:00 P.M.

**Election Day – May 12, 2007, Run off – June 16, 2007**

**ENDORSEMENTS AT A GLANCE**

**DALLAS**

District 2 – Pauline Medrano (Incumbent)

District 5 – Betty Culbreath

District 9 – Jill Kotvis

District 14 – Angela Hunt (Incumbent)

**RICHARDSON**

District 1 – Bob Townsend

District 2 – Rhea Allison

District 3 – John Murphy

District 4 – Gary Siagel

District 5 – Pris Hayes

District 6 – Steve Mitchell

THE COMPASS

MAY 2007
LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

We're Itching To Speak - Invite Us!

Dear Sierrans: I want to speak to your Sunday School class. Can you get me an invitation? While you're at it, invite me to your business association, your homeowners association and your PTA meetings.

Public education and advocacy go hand-in-hand. Advocacy focuses on asking legislators to take action, which is what we're doing right now in Austin. Public education builds the critical mass of constituents who will support the legislators taking the action that we're asking for, and it encourages people to claim their personal power to be part of the solution.

Our Cool Cities campaign includes a presentation that we make to audiences about energy efficiency. Here's the basic sketch:

1. We remind people of our dependence on fossil fuels. We assert that there are at least 5 problems that result from that dependence (including global warming) and that it doesn't matter which one they care about because the answer to all of them is energy efficiency.
2. We highlight what cities are already doing to make city operations more energy-efficient.
3. We talk about what individuals have the power to do: make their homes more energy-efficient, choose efficient transportation, and promote energy efficiency in their workplaces, faith communities and schools.

This presentation is not political. We do not engage in debates about global warming science. We're all about empowering people to be part of the solution because they are hungry for that kind of information. We speak to Republicans and Democrats, liberals and conservatives, religious and secular – anyone who will give us an audience and a 30-minute time slot.

I'm training a team of volunteers to make this presentation so we can go far and wide into the community spreading the gospel of compact fluorescent light bulbs and home energy audits.

PLEASE invite us to speak to your community group! I will make the presentation at the May general meeting, so come watch on Tuesday, May 8. If you don't quake in your shoes at the prospect of public speaking, consider joining our speaker team. If you want to support our team in a non-speaking role, join our team of volunteers reaching out to community organizations to request speaking appointments.

Our Cool Cities campaign still needs volunteers for the lobbying teams. We have a particular need for volunteers who live in the southern sector of Dallas County: Duncanville, Desoto, Ennis, Lancaster, Waxahachie and Cedar Hill. But if you live in the northern sector, we'll put you to work on one of our existing Cool Cities teams. We're making great progress and look forward to announcing that more cities have signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement as a result of our efforts.

Young People Wanted

Are you an environmentally-conscious person in your 20s or 30s? Do you have a family member who fits that description? Check out our new Young Sierrans group! Contact Peter Wilson at peter.sierraclub@yahoo.com for more information or to request a copy of the latest monthly email newsletter. This new group is having a lot of fun, and although we Baby Boomers have to sit it out, we're real happy the young-uns are gettin' together. The Young Sierrans web page and calendar of events can be found at: http://texas.sierraclub.org/dallas/youngsierrans.asp.

Ann Drumm
Dallas Sierra Club Chair
214-350-6108
ann@dallassisterraclub.org
Learn about an innovative new housing model designed for “Aging in Community”!

We are creating an environmentally-sustainable 20-25 home neighborhood offering both personal privacy and the benefits of living in a supportive and caring setting.

Please join us on the First Saturday and Third Sunday of each month.

For more information contact
Janet - 972-322-4327 zucchi5684@cheqglobal.net
Bob - 972-365-6923 bob.martin@earthlink.net
Learn more at www.ElderCohousing.org

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