This is a party you just don’t want to miss!

Join Us for the Sierra Club Holiday Party & Wine Tasting

Saturday, December 14

Whitney Point on White Rock Lake, 6 - 10 pm

Fun! Fellowship! Wine Tasting & Catered Dinner!

Tickets: $15 Individuals; $15 Couples

Volunteers needed to decorate, set up, or take down. Call Rita Beving at 214-373-3806.

Enjoy our wine, taste our wine, and help our Sierra Club serve our community.

Please bring a bottle of your favorite wine or bring your favorite dessert to share!

Enjoy a wine tasting with catered dinner, music, and fun for all Sierrans and their guests!

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Issue 0658
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2008
Printed on 30% recycled paper
Legislative Workshop

Every two years, the Sierra Club holds a State Legislative Workshop where we meet to discuss issues that are likely to be on the legislative agenda for the next year.

If you are involved in organizing, educating, or campaigning around legislative issues that impact our environment, or you would like to get involved, this is the workshop for you! You don't need to be a member of the Sierra Club to participate. A passionate commitment to helping the environment is all that's needed!

There are several issues that are likely to be on the legislative agenda when the 81st Texas Legislature begins its session in January.

Do you want to:

- Strengthen air quality protections for Texas cities and rural areas?
- Expand the use of solar power and other renewable energy sources in Texas?
- Meet new energy demands in Texas through greater energy efficiency?
- Fund the acquisition of new parkland for the state parks system?
- Reform the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and expand the use of public transit for meeting transportation needs?
- Promote greater water conservation to meet Texas water supply needs?
- Have our political leaders finally acknowledge the need to address global warming emissions in Texas?

This year's workshop speakers will include a variety of speakers with an intimate knowledge of the issues and the Legislature.

Also, this year we'll be working directly with the Sierra Student Coalition and a new organization called ReEnergize Texas to focus on:

- renewable energy,
- energy efficiency,
- reducing global warming emissions and
- to promote student involvement in the upcoming legislative session.

If you would like to participate, please see the info below and register:

Date/Time: Saturday, November 15, 2008
Location: Lower Colorado River Authority offices, 3700 West Austin Boulevard in Austin
Cost: $25 if you pre-register before Nov. 11th or $30 at the door - includes lunch (vegetarian options available)
Link: http://texas.sierracal.org/events/LegWork/legwkshp_announcement.asp

Registration Form – Sierra Club State Legislative Workshop

November 15, 2008

Name ________________________________

Address __________________________________________

City ___________________________ Zip: ______

Phone (including Area Code): ______

E-Mail Address ______________________________

Please register ______ network for the workshop.

Unchecked = Pre-registration fee $35 per person. Deadline: November 11. Registration at the door is $30 per person. Student fee: $5 per person when pre-registering; $10 at the door – student ID required at check-in.

Number of people requiring vegetarian lunches: ______

Please make check payable to “Lone Star Chapter, Sierra Club.”

If paying by credit card, please provide the following information:

Charge my credit card ______ Type of card: MC ______; VISA ______

Name as it appears on card ______________________________

Credit Card # ______________________________

Expiration Date ______ Signature: __________________________

Special Student Forum on Renewable Energy, Climate Change and Energy Efficiency co-sponsored by ReEnergize Texas

Return form & payment by November 11 to:

Lone Star Chapter, Sierra Club

P. O. Box 1931

Austin, TX 78767

THE COMPASS 1 NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2008
NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

NO TURNING BACK

By the time you get this newsletter, the election results will be known and protectors of the environment will be waiting anxiously as to what direction our Nation will turn. Will the newly elected leaders try to turn back the clock on the last 40 years of hard won protections of clean air, clean water, forests, deserts and all who live in the natural world? Or will the new leaders realize the people are now demanding a quality of life that reverses the throw away society we have become where the pursuit of growth and profit at any cost has now begun to damage our daily lives and those of our children?

As Edward Abbey reminds us:

“Growth for the sake of growth is the ideology of the cancer cell.”

So no matter what happens on Election Day, all Sierra Club members must continue to fight the pollution mongers as well as take the lead toward a simpler sustainable society. If we don’t, the gains will be lost and the planet’s future may tip in the balance. If the pro-environmental candidates do regain political control, the celebration will be great, but the opposition will surely be planning new ways to bleed the wilderness for profit.

Remember, true patriots are not only red, white, blue, and green, but they never give up. . . never.

Your Dallas Chair,
Wendel Withrow
wendel@dalliessierracub.org
(972)416-2500

Food and Our New Administration

By Terry Jensen

The fox instinctively understands it cannot use more energy chasing the rabbit than it receives from eating the rabbit. Yet Americans and their politicians seem to have forgotten the fact that we cannot use more energy to produce our food than we get from eating it.

In 1940, one calorie of fossil-fuel energy produced 2.3 calories of food energy. Now it takes 10 calories of fossil-fuel energy to produce one basic calorie of supermarket food.

The era of cheap and abundant food is drawing to a close in America. Our next administration will find that we are not only addressing price and abundance of food, but we are also facing the fact that the way we currently grow, process, and eat food in America will have to be addressed before we can make significant progress on climate change and energy independence.

The 20th-century industrialization of agriculture has increased the amount of greenhouse gases emitted by the food system from chemical fertilizers (made from natural gas), pesticides (made from petroleum), farm machinery, and modern food processing/packaging/transportation. When we eat from the industrial-food system, we are literally eating fossil fuel and spewing greenhouse gases.

Our health care crisis is another problem that has its roots in food. In the last 50 years, spending on health care has more than tripled and now accounts for 16% of national income. Those costs must be controlled before we can ensure the health of all Americans.

Michael Pollan writing for the New York Times conveys, “There are several reasons health care has gotten so expensive, but one of the biggest, and perhaps most tractable, is the cost to the system of preventable chronic diseases. Four of the top 10 killers in America today are chronic diseases linked to diet: heart disease, stroke, Type 2 diabetes and cancer.”

He continues, "You cannot expect to reform the health care system, much less expand coverage, without confronting the public-health catastrophe that is the modern American diet."

A new American administration must also face the fact that the health of a nation’s food system is actually a critical issue of national security. When a nation loses the ability to substantially feed itself, it is not only at the mercy of global commodity markets, it is also at the mercy of other governments.

Pollen warns that government and citizens alike must recognize "that the current food system — characterized by monocultures of corn and soy in the field and cheap calories of fat, sugar and feedlot meat on the table — is not simply the product of the free market. Rather, it is the product of a specific set of government policies that sponsored a shift from solar (and human) energy on the farm to fossil-fuel energy."

We do not have the cheap energy or even the water needed to keep the status quo or to expand the food system as America grows. The next administration must put the interests of America’s farmers, families, and communities above the interests of the food industry for national security, for health care, and for progress on climate change and energy independence.
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER PROGRAMS

November General Meeting – Audubon Center

Come learn about the new Audubon Center: who they are, what they do, why we need them, and things we can enjoy and learn when we visit the Center.

December General Meeting – Year In Review

Listen to Outings Chair Bill Greer as he tells stories and shows some of the best photos taken at Sierra Club events this past year.

Suburban Sierra Club Meetings

To shorten drives and make it easier for more people to participate, the Dallas and Fort Worth Sierra Clubs are adding more suburban meetings to our regularly scheduled general meetings:

- Second Tuesday: Dallas General Meeting, 7 pm
- Third Monday: Collin County, 7 pm
- Third Wednesday: Fort Worth General Meeting, 7 pm
- Third Thursday: Arlington, 2 pm
- Fourth Monday: Mid-Suburban–Communities around DFW Airport, 7 PM

DECEMBER 15-17 - CLEAN AIR THROUGH ENERGY EFFICIENCY (CATEE) CONFERENCE – PLANO.

More information is available at: http://esl.eslwin.tamu.edu/clean-air-conference/home.html

CALENDAR

11/5 • 11/3 First Wednesday. The Executive Committee (or Excom - the elected governing body of the Dallas Sierra Club) and other Club leaders meet to discuss Club business and plan for the future. See www.dallassierrarclub.org/ calendar for details, or contact the Group Chair.

12/8 Monday before General Meeting. Deadline for submitting material for The Compass. Send to editors@dallassierrarclub.org.

11/11 • 12/9 Second Tuesday, 7:00 – 8:30 PM. Sierra Club General Meeting
Come to the Center for Spiritual Living located at International Place Business Center, 4801 Spring Valley Road, Suite 115. Check www.dallassierrarclub.org for directions. Come at 6:00 PM for refreshments and socializing and to pick up activity materials.

11/19 • 12/17 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.

11/25 • 12/23 Fourth Tuesday. Inner City Outings Committee meeting at 7:00 PM at REI (Mapco 14Q). Guest/New Volunteer Orientation starts at 6:30 pm, meeting starts at 7:00 pm. Inner City Outings is a community outreach program of the Sierra Club that provides outings, such as day hikes and camping, for selected groups of disadvantaged youth. Screening required and training provided for all outing volunteers.

12/24 Fourth Wednesday every other month. Newsletter Mailing Party 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.

Fourth Thursday. Conservation Committee meeting at 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM - Updates on current campaigns, consideration of new issues, and requests for assistance by approved political campaigns. Meeting is upstairs in the meeting room at the Central Market store at Lovers Ln. and Greenville in Dallas, close to the Lovers Lane DART rail station. Come as early as 6:30 to grab some food and eat supper.

The Dallas Sierra Club’s general meeting is held the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Meetings are open to all interested persons. The meetings are held at The Center for Spiritual Living located at International Place Business Center, 4801 Spring Valley Rd., Suite 115, (Mapco 14L). Check www.dallassierrarclub.org for directions.
Big Bend Bus Trip

Our next bus trip visits Big Bend National Park over Thanksgiving weekend. Our bus is already over half full. This trip fills us fast so if you want to go don’t delay. You can find details and how to sign up on our web site: Outings Page. You can find out more about Big Bend National Park at this Park Service web site: http://www.nps.gov/bibe/index.htm.

Our bus trips offer a perfect way to avoid high gas prices, airport hassles, and summer heat. If you haven’t travelled the airlines lately trust me on this: it’s only getting worse. Our charter busses actually get better mileage than some of the big SUVs while carrying 40 hikers and all their gear directly to the trailhead. We split up into 5 or more groups when we arrive.

Bus Trip Notes: We use Red Carpet for all of our bus trips. We have been using them for two years now and we’ve had great service. One trip they showed up with a bus that had only 1,500 miles on it. It still had that “new car” smell. We have to provide insurance information to Sierra Club National so we know they are insured and have a good safety record. Red Carpet is a multi-state operation that has been around a long time.

We’ve got class Our Beginner Backpack and Wilderness Navigation classes were very successful once again. We will do a Wilderness Navigation field trip for graduates of the class who want to get some real experience. Check out our Outing Lists for details.

How the Outing Program Works

Dallas Sierra Club Outings are open to members and non-members. Some trips may require special qualifications and certifications. 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’s your responsibility to inform the leader before the outing. Oiling 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.

Radios and firearms are prohibited from outtings. Pets are not allowed unless specifically stated. All outings officially begin at the trail head or out start point. Leaders cannot assign carpools, but may help coordinate ride sharing for energy conservation and to promote fellowship. All non-commercial transporation is the responsibility of the individual. Car-pooling is SOLELY voluntary.

For more information, please visit www.dallassierracclub.org or contact the Outing Chair or Coordinators listed on the newsletter.

Notice: to receive the outings list monthly via email, visit www.dallassierracclub.org/subscribe

Young Sierran Events

Here are some highlights of what’s going on around the Young Sierrans and the Sierra Club Dallas over the next few months in 2008. Additional info for most of the events can be found at the OSC YS Homepage: http://phoenix.sierraclub.org/dallas/youngsierrans.asp - unless otherwise stated.


The Young Sierrans will host the White Rock Lake Clean Up Team as part of the 2nd Saturday, For The Love Of The Lake, monthly event. Kayak Power will provide all necessary gear. After an hour of cleaning up the lake, KF allows volunteers to paddle around the lake as long as they want (at no cost). Land-based clean up volunteers also exist with this group. Upcoming dates: 11/08 and 12/13. Meeting details and more info are available on the YS Blog.

YS Guided Tour of the new Trinity River Audubon Center (11/08)

Please join us for a guided tour of the new Trinity River Audubon Center and hike around the facility’s trails. Learn about the center’s (former Inter legislate and sustainable building development) and other background info from the center’s Education Director. Additional info can be found on the YS Blog.

41st Annual Turkey Trot in Downtown Dallas (11/27)

Come out to join the Young Sierrans at this year’s Turkey Trot - the largest Thanksgiving Day event held on the streets of the city. Dogs allowed and open to all levels of participants. More info can be found on the YS Blog.

Saturday/Sunday Day Hike (10-12/08)

We may schedule a local day hike between now and the middle of December. We’ll communicate using an invasion and post to our various sites.

Some type of friendly camping trip in spring 2009. If you’re interested in going camping as a friend and not part of a Sierra Club sponsored/laisy binding event, please email us.

Monthly Social Events.

Please refer to the OSC YS Homepage or the YS Blog for updates on our monthly happy hour and dinner events. It’s a great way to meet others! Upcoming: 11/19 Dinner in Addition: 12/8 YS Holiday Party in Dallas: 12/19 HH in Dallas.

If you have any questions, ideas, or would like to help the leadership team plan events for the Young Sierrans, please email us at youngerandesierracclub.org. We hope to see you all soon!

Regards,
Condace and Peter

Terry Jensen ear1@sierraneutral.com and James Bisyi 468-371-1338(h)

NOTICE: TO RECEIVE THE OUTINGS LIST MONTHLY VIA EMAIL, VISIT www.dallassierracclub.org/subscribe

THE COMPASS 4 NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2008
Peak Bus Comfort: Fourteen On Board Tips

By Laura Kimberly

You hear lots about the bus trip hikes and destinations, but what about the bus part?

Since 2007, the Dallas Group has chartered bus transportation with all forward facing seats, which are contoured for your back and bottom for the waking hours. These seats, with all their contours and undulations, convert into bunks for the sleeping hours. For sitting and sleeping, here are a few tips on comfort from trip pros.

Stay hydrated.
On the trip out, bottled water is provided. The ice chest is open to all if you want to bring a different kind of beverage. Write your name on your container (no glass) so that others do not assume it’s a freebie. Drink up. Don’t hit the trail behind on hydration. On the return to Dallas, soft drinks and beer are provided in addition to the water.

But not too hydrated.
What is consumed must be eliminated. Muse a little about how much liquid you are taking in and how long it will take your body to process it. With the right timing you may never need to step foot into the single onboard chemical toilet. Though it is all you’ve got while the bus is moving, use the facilities in the restaurants and gas stations when the bus is stopped. Be respectful of those who are bunking near the loo.

Be prepared for the temperature—on board and at the trailhead.
The AC is needed to keep the air from becoming stagnant on board; it will be cold. Carry on a jacket. At departure, the Dallas temperature may top 90 degrees, but the temperature at the trailhead or an interim rest stop can be 40 or 50 degrees cooler. The jacket will be handy for the journey and destination. Bring a blanket for cover as you sleep. While some people use their sleeping bag, to avoid accidently leaving it on the bus, and so that you can efficiently hit the trail, bring a separate blanket for the bus.

Cover your ears and eyes.
Block the sounds of snoring with ear plugs. Block the beams of passing traffic and street lights with an eye mask. According to bus trip veterans, these are the most important carry-on items for better sleep.

Bring appropriate sleeping accoutrements.
The trendy item on the new buses is a foam pad or Therm-a-Rest to smooth out those seat contours. In addition to the blanket and pad, bring a pillow; veterans suggest full size. Most people sleep in their clothes—loose fitting is more comfortable. Shoes that easily slip on and off make for fast exits and a better place in the line for food or the restroom. Optionally, bring a sheet to cover the bunk so that you rest assured that your face naps on an unsoiled surface.

Pay attention to the conversion drill.
Unlike on the pre-2007 era buses, before the leaders can convert the bus from sitting to sleeping quarters or vice versa, the driver must stop the bus and all passengers must disembark and remove all gear from on and under the seats. The re-boarding process starts with passengers assigned to rear bunks. Head for your section of the bus, board swiftly, and quickly “make the bed” at your section of the continuous bunk. If you board too late or too early you slow down the process.

Discern the dividing line.
Lacking partitions, the small TV monitors at intervals above the seats indicate the general dividing line between yours and your neighbor’s bunk. Be respectful of others’ space and face; work out the balance between short and tall and negotiate the head to toe, toe to toe, or head to head options.

Eat well; bring money—or food.
Look in the trip write up for information on food stops. Those stops are no longer common on the way out, though the bus does stop at a convenience store or fast food joint at about 10:00 p.m. so the seats can be reset as bunks. Bring your own snacks or dinner onto the bus. Some, but not all, trips also stop for breakfast early on the first morning. On the return trip, dinner may be at a buffet or restaurant. Bring enough money to cover your meals.

But not too much.
You can leave belongings on the bus, but leaving valuables or money is not advised. Take change out of your pockets before bunking. Coins tend to fall out as you toss and turn.

Attend to hygiene
Bring dental care items for a quick brush and floss after dinner. Other items to consider: a washcloth and small towel, soap, deodorant, and clean clothes. Maybe you wear your hiking clothes on the way out, but your neighbor—and you—will appreciate fresh attire for the return. Or wear the same set of comfortable bus riding clothes out and back; they should stay fresh enough.

Keep stuff handy.
Don’t pack any of the items you will want or need for the drive in your backpack, which will travel under the bus. Keep the carry on to a reasonable amount as stowage is limited to overhead bin space. Stow sleeping accoutrements in the cargo section designated for them by the bus leader; you will be able to retrieve them during the bunk conversion stop.

Take your medications.
The most frequently packed over the counter medications include aspirin or ibuprofen, antacids, motion sickness medicine, allergy relief, and lip balm. If you take prescription medications, bring them on the bus.

Be a true Sierra.
When blue bags are provided, please recycle your cans and plastic bottles. Don’t put trash in the recycle bag.

Enjoy the ride.
Movies are sometimes shown. Whether or not they are available, bring your own past times. Books, games, and conversation are the favorites. Meet your neighbor—get acquainted with a whole bus load of potential hiking companions.
ANNOUNCING 2009 BUS TRIPS!

Save gas and carpool with 39 fellow Sierrans and friends while we escape the city and enjoy the beauty of the mountains. Ride in luxury bus seats that convert to bunk beds at night. Just sit back, enjoy the scenery, get some rest and leave the driving to us. Dates and destinations are below. Mark your calendars now so you don’t miss out on any of these wonderful trips.

Complete trip details and reservation forms will be posted on the outings section of our website several weeks before each trip (dallasierraclub.org). All trips leave late afternoon or early evening on the departure date and return early morning of the last day.

Feb. 5 – 9  TAOS, NM
May 23 – 26  WHITE MOUNTAINS WILDERNESS, NM
            (near Ruidoso)
Jun. 30 – Jul. 6  SANGRE de CRISTO WILDERNESS
                (near Westcliffe, CO)
Sept. 3 – 8  WEMINUCHE WILDERNESS, CO
Nov. 25 – 30  BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, TX
Young Sierrans Attend Fundraiser with Sierra Club Director Carl Pope

Dallas Sierra Club
Executive Committee Election Ballot

Instructions: Vote for up to 5. If you have a joint membership, both members may vote. Send completed ballot to: Dallas Sierra Club Election, PO Box 800365, Dallas, TX 75380, or deposit in ballot box at Sierra Club General Meeting in November or December or at the Holiday Party (Dec. 14). All ballots must be received by December 16.

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<th>Candidate (Random order)</th>
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Note: Your mailing label must be on the back of this Ballot for validation purposes. If you are using a blank ballot, write your member number on the back of the ballot.