Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

dallas sierra club news

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October General Meeting Program - Zion National Park

For our October meeting main program, Kent Trulsson will take you on a photographic tour of Zion National Park in Utah. Located at the western edge of the Colorado







Plateau where it meets the Great Basin, Zion is a land of stark contrasts. The red rock cliffs and canyons rival those of the Grand Canyon, both in color and depth. Some of the best canyon hikes in the world, including the Virgin Narrows, Orderville Canyon, Paranuweap Canyon and the "Subway", are found in Zion. With a vertical relief of 5,000 feet, life and vegetation zones range from sage desert to juniper woodlands to conifer forests, with lush riparian woodlands in the canyons. The rich geologic and human history of Zion are evoked by the early settlers' landmark names, such as the Temple of Sinawava, Great White Throne, and the Alter of Sacrifice. The photographs for this program are drawn from five different trips to Zion, both in summer and winter, taken by four different photographers. Through these photos, Kent will describe Zion's complex geologic history and spectacular landforms, in hikes such as the Virgin Narrows, only 20 feet wide at its narrowest and up to 2,000 deep, filled wall to wall with rushing water. If you are planning a visit to Zion National Park in the future, come to the October meeting for trip planning tips and suggestions, including how to secure the needed permits for the best canyon hikes.

Visit our website for complete information about our General Meeting, including a map.

Notes from the Chair

REPORTS OF SIERRA CLUB DEMISE GREATLY EXAGGERATED

After the obituary of Mark Twain was mistakenly published, the great author was compelled to send a cable from London with the now famous quote: "The reports of my death are greatly

exaggerated." Along this same thought, I have been hearing and reading enough negative observations of the current condition of our local Group, Chapter, and National Sierra Club to begin wondering if I needed to begin composing a final good-bye to our 100 year history. While I have always believed and boldly stated that our Club remains strong and primary in its sacred role of protecting those natural places and the living things therein, I sensed a rumbling of discontent and deep concern that we were hurting financially and maybe even losing that sharp edge of conservationist zeal.

But like Twain and those battle tested veterans of our Club, we can truly say the REPORTS OF SIERRA CLUB DEMISE GREATLY EXAGGERATED!

On September 27, 2009, let it be known to all Sierra Club members and also to those who wish for our "demise", that over 300 dedicated and interested lovers of our National Parks left their soft couches and easy chairs to gather for a public showing of the latest Ken Burns film – "Americas's Best Idea". These faithful members, their families and friends came together to jointly witness an inspiring and beautiful production which will equal in impact the ground breaking work of Al Gore's Inconvenient Truth. History will record that both of these great works of art will inspire and sustain not only the present generation of nature lovers, but the next generation of world wide environmental protectors.

I understand this one event alone will not solve the temporary economic trials of our Club, but it is a reminder that our core of volunteer leaders is alive and active. We may have been taking a well deserved rest after the stunning electoral "Green" victories of last November, but we can all be assured the Sierra Club will survive any challenges based solely on a short term lack of funds because our strength is not measured by money, but in our conviction to never give up and never give in to those polluters who would destroy the wilderness areas we all depend on for respite, recovery and even our very freedom to enjoy those wild places.

So be of good cheer, the Sierra Club is alive and well. Don't let anyone tell you different.

Your Chair, Wendel Withrow

Roll Beyond Coal Bike Rally on October 31

Bring your bike and your kids, have some fun and take a stand for clean energy and clean air in Texas. We can roll beyond burning coal for electricity in Texas! Join us for a fun-filled event supporting renewable energy, green jobs, and clean air with a brighter energy future beyond coal! Bike the 9.4 mile route around White Rock Lake with your family and friends starting at The Bath House Cultural Center on 521 E. Lawther Drive in Dallas. Prizes to be given for the best Halloween and Clean Air costumes! Registration: 8:30 am. Bike ride: 10:30 am. Cost: Adults-\$10.00. Students and children 12 and over-\$5.00.



Children under 12-Free. Sponsored by the Sierra Club. Pre-registration information and more details are available here or call organizer Lori Peniche at 972-980-7176.

Outings Highlights

Wilderness Navigation Class, November 3 and 5

Learn the fundamentals of finding your way in the wilderness in this two evening class. Among the subjects covered are: purchasing maps, how to read maps, how not to get lost, what to do if you do get lost, GPS, different kinds of compasses, and how to use your compass. If you have a compass, bring it to the class. If you don't have one, we will show you what to look for when you purchase one. The class will be held at REI (second floor program room). REI is at 4515 LBJ Freeway, north side, between Midway and Welch. This two-night class will start promptly at 6:30 PM and will finish at about 8:45 PM. The fee for the class is \$15 for Sierra Club members and \$20 for non-members (cash or check). No reservations are necessary; just show up. Leaders: Arthur Kuehne 214-353-2927(H) and Bill Greer 972-247-0446(H)

Annual Bus Trip to Big Bend National Park, November 25-30

The Dallas Sierra Club Thanksgiving Holiday tradition continues with our annual bus trip to Big Bend. There will be a variety of hikes that will visit different parts of this very scenic National Park. If you've never been to Big Bend National Park, you owe it to yourself to discover this unique part of Texas. If you've been before, come on back and

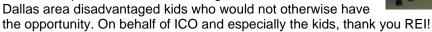


explore another area! Our chartered sleeper bus leaves Dallas around dinner time Wednesday and returns early morning on Monday. Some backpacking experience is required. Complete trip details, cost and reservation forms are at www.dallassierraclub.org/outings. Contact: Arthur Kuehne 214-608-3210(C)

For a complete list of our outings, visit our outings page.

REI Grant Award brings ICO smiles!

Volunteers from Dallas Inner City Outings, our club's outreach program, are all smiles as they accept a 2009 REI National Grant from Dallas REI Outreach Specialist Renee Shippey and Dallas REI store manager Bruce Gardner. The amazing award of \$5,000 will be a tremendous help toward program costs as we continue to provide wilderness outings for





For more information about the Dallas ICO program and how you can get involved or donate, please contact ico@dallassierraclub.org.

Recycling Round-Up

by Rita Raccoon

Updates

Thanks to Lori Peniche for these recycling updates . . .

- Origins will recycle cosmetic packaging, theirs and from any other company as well. Visit

http://tinyurl.com/mtp887 for details.

- North Haven Gardens will recycle plastic pots. http://www.nhg.com/recyclenhg.htm
- Goodwill offers a free program to reuse or recycle computer equipment to protect the environment and put people to work. Just drop it off at any Goodwill donation truck. Any computer, any condition. www.goodwilldallas.org

Truth and Consequences

Every item we buy has a hidden price tag: a toll on the planet, the people who make, ship or dispose of them, and our own health. These unseen impacts can have a tremendous effect. For example, an ingredient in sunscreen (benzophenone-3) primes the growth of a deadly coral virus. Considering that 4,000 to 6,00 metric tons of sunscreen wash off swimmers worldwide each year, the danger is most critical where many swimmers are drawn to coral reefs.

For a quick (20-minute) tale of the stuff we use and consume, view the short film The Story of Stuff, online at www.thestoryofstuff.com.

How can we understand the hidden costs of our convenience products? Industrial hygienists can use life-cycle assessment, or LCA, to deconstruct manufactured products into their subsidiary processes.

For more information:

Ecological Intelligence: How Knowing the Hidden Impacts of What We Buy Can Change Everything, by Daniel Goleman www.GoodGuide.com - how do your consumer purchases rate?

NCTCOG FY2010-11 Regional Solid Waste Grant Funding Process

The three subcommittees of the Resource Conservation Council (RCC), the "Time To Recycle" Subcommittee, the "Stop Illegal Dumping" Subcommittee, and the "Assuring Capacity for Trash" Subcommittee, are drafting the Fiscal Year 2010-11 Regional Solid Waste Grant Funding Process document. This document outlines the process that will be undertaken for the region's solid waste funding for the upcoming biennium.

Eligible political jurisdictions including cities, counties, school districts, and special districts with solid waste authority will be encouraged to submit project applications for local and cooperative implementation activities consistent with the Regional Solid Waste Management Plan. These funds are generated by solid waste disposal fees collected by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), and are the only TCEQ funds available for solid waste implementation projects to local governments. The solid waste funds support local and regional activities to implement the Regional Solid Waste Management Plan. For more information about this grant program or the Regional Solid Waste Funding Process, visit www.nctcog.org/envir/SEELT/funding/index.asp or contact Kathleen Graham, Environment and Development Senior Planner, at (817) 695-9217 or kgraham@nctcog.org.

Sewell Lexus of Ft. Worth Builds Gold-Level LEED Certified Building

Sewell Lexus Ft. Worth has a new Gold-level LEED certified building, which houses pre-owned sales and the service team at Sewell Lexus of Fort Worth The building is one of fewer than 20 buildings in North Texas to achieve the Gold-level LEED certification to date and the first Lexus sales facility nationwide to earn LEED certification. "The Sewell family of automotive dealerships is committed to making environmentally sustainable building practices an integral part of our business," said Carl Sewell, chairman of Sewell Automotive. "By pursuing LEED certification with future new construction and building remodels, we aim to help conserve energy and North Texas' environment, as well as provide our customers and employees a better environment in which to

carry out business."

Highlights of the building's green features are:

- A storm water control system that uses a cistern to collect rainwater running off the roof to be re-used for landscape irrigation.
- Water-efficient landscaping reducing the need for watering by 50%.
- Ultra-efficient lavatory fixtures reducing the use of potable water by 30%.
- Approximately 90% of building waste recycled, diverting it from landfills.
- 90% of all regularly occupied spaces with direct line of sight to the outdoors, reducing the need for electric light and creating a healthier work environment.
- Light-colored roof tile that reduces the amount of electricity needed to cool the building.
- Optimized energy efficiency by building to ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers) Advanced Energy Design Guide standards.
- Air monitors that check the quality of air being supplied to the building, monitoring for pollution and contamination.
- Low-emitting carpets, paints, adhesives and sealants that reduce the level of chemical gases in the air.
- An in-house recycling center that encourages recycling of paper, glass and metal.
- Preferential parking for low-emitting and fuel-efficient vehicles.

In addition, Sewell is purchasing green energy certificates to help offset the use of electricity in the building. The company is paying for the production of wind-generated electricity equal to 70 percent of the building's energy consumption. "We hope other businesses will see the benefits of participating in the LEED program," said Ken Clayton, Sewell's corporate facilities manager and inhouse LEED Accredited Professional (AP). "Not only is improving the environmental impact of your buildings the right thing to do, but there are solid business incentives to make it worthwhile. LEED serves as a tool for buildings of all types and sizes. LEED certification offers third party validation of a project's green features and verifies that the building is operating exactly the way it was designed to. For more information, visit www.usgbc.org.

Sierrans and Service

by Teresa Wilkin, Service Outing Coordinator, teresawilkin@gmail.com

by September 11, 2009 was proclaimed by President Obama as the first annual National Day of Service and Remembrance. The non-profit, MyGoodDeed Inc. worked tirelessly to achieve the April 2009 enactment of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, which authorizes the greatest expansion of national service in America since FDR created the Civilian Conservation Corps. So now a day on the calendar that has since 2001 connoted terror and helplessness to many Americans is being transformed into one that represents increased service opportunities and elevates service as a core ideal and problem-solving strategy in American society.

One source of such opportunities is Sierra Club Service trips. Since retiring five years ago and moving to Dallas, I have tried to fit in at least one national service outing each year. In fact, last year I did two. In September last year, I noticed that the service trip to the "Galapagos of California" was scheduled the week immediately preceding a service trip I had had my eye on for a couple of years, that to Catalina Island. So I signed up for both of them! It was the perfect time of year to be in the Channel Islands off the coast of California, and I really was pleased to have Catalina as my destination after five nights on Santa Cruz Island. That just wasn't enough time to soak up the special ambiance of this infrequently visited part of the U.S. west coast.

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National service outings with Sierra Club are truly rewarding and give one the opportunity to visit and learn about conservation

efforts in other states, to meet like minded individuals who enjoy shared tasks, and to break a sweat on behalf of the environment, all at a cost which is usually considerably less than outings where service is not the organizing principle. And in some cases, as in Catalina, our work earned us each a certificate from the Catalina Conservancy for the hours we contributed working on Conservancy projects, painting, removing flammable underbrush, sorting seeds in the nursery, and tidying up roadsides. Those hours can then be reported on one's annual tax return as a charitable contribution.

For my national Sierra Club service outing this year, I'm not even leaving the state of Texas. This month, I'll join a crew in West Texas working in the Fort Davis Preserve to improve the Nature Conservancy's trail system. In return for our efforts in daylight hours, the organizers are promising a star-gazing party on one of our nights at the world-famous McDonald Observatory.

But it is far from necessary to leave town in order to participate in Sierra Club service projects. I have volunteered to try to increase the number of service projects included in the Dallas Group's outing list. So far this year, we have sponsored two service outings, both to the Oak Point Preserve in Plano. The first one in January drew an enormous response, likely because of the fact that we promoted it through the National Day of Service website in conjunction with the Presidential Inauguration. When we went back in April to help clean out the creek, the response was considerably less. Too bad we do not inaugurate a new President every season!



Participants in those two service outings have now been invited by Plano to become individual stewards of the park on an individual basis. So service outings are a good way to learn about the volunteer opportunities that exist in our public places.

The Inner City Outings committee, ably led by Liz Wheelan, also organizes service outings to get inner city kids involved in appreciating and conserving our outdoor resources. Last December, I joined Liz and a group of students from Pegasus School at the brand new Trinity River Audubon Center (TRAC) in South Dallas where the kids made seed balls in one of their indoor classrooms.



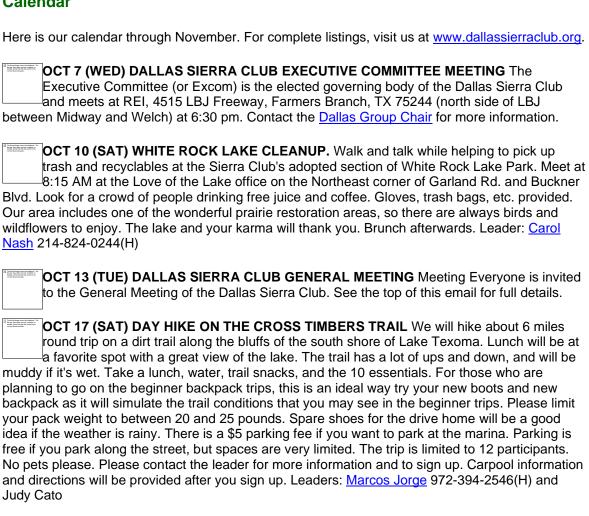
During that outing, we talked with the TRAC volunteer coordinator about bringing a group of adult

volunteers to the facility. Details for that outing have now been finalized and you can find them on the Dallas Group's outings list. They are planning a large celebration for their one year anniversary the second weekend in October, and have indicated they would welcome a crew from the Dallas Group to come out on the first weekend of October to tidy up the park and get it ready for the one year anniversary event.

For those of you who have not had a chance to visit TRAC, a welcome addition to the metroplex, this will be a fun and engaging way to become familiar with the facility. And for those of you who already know about it, here is a way to show your appreciation for this top-class environmental learning institution. So look for that service outing on the outings page if you are interested in joining us for service to your environment.

Please contact me with your ideas for where and how Dallas Group can be of service!

Calendar



OCT 17-18 (SAT-SUN) BACKPACK OUACHITA TRAIL IN OKLAHOMA Meet Saturday morning at Winding Stair Campground on Hwy. 1. Backpack 4.6 miles to camp overnight at

