



SIERRA  
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# PRAIRIE DISPATCH

No. 29 Vol. 4

Newsletter of the Sierra Club, Cimarron Group

July - August, 2006

## Drought Does Have Some Advantages: Climate Change Easier to See

by James Martin, Conservation Chair

One advantage of the Oklahoma drought, for those of us who don't water our lawn-scapes, is that we don't have to mow so often. I did for the second time this season, sending red dirt in the air, and creating a neighborhood-scale dust-bowl. Watching for clouds on broadcast tv, I see only smiles and hair-cuts. "We sure could use some rain," they banter. But nobody mentions global warming.

Global Warming, for the disbeliever, is by now pretty well established. Even Frank Luntz, the pollster who devised the uncertainty strategy, is convinced. Only certain members of the Flat Earth Society, and the Oklahoma delegation in congress, insist otherwise.

Climate change is one of those little nuisances we can chalk up to a growing human population, and to the things we do and have. Even the small act of mowing a lawn contributes. Each gallon of burnt gas puts another 26 pounds of CO2 in the air, and lawn mowers kick up more than dust. Gallon per gallon – according to a California study – mowers produce 93x more smog than automobiles. Even the human breath, on average, contributes another 200 ml CO2 per minute.

Of course, these are miniscule values compared with the 5 ½ gigatons from combined human activity –

primarily, in the coal, oil, and natural gas industries – each year. Responding to this global magnitude, 163 nations have ratified the Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse gases. The United States has not. Most likely, this is due to those aforementioned industries, and to the influence their money buys.

Americans aren't going to give up their lawn mowers, or giant cars, anymore than they're going to stop breathing. And, we can't outbid ExxonMobil on congressional races. But, we can make a difference in small ways, like:

1. **Relax.** A heated debate does not clear the air. Keep it cool, and chill out. The vernacular recognizes how thoughts affect the environment. On average, a human brain consumes about 23 watts of energy every hour. So, make it energy-efficient. Turn off negative thoughts, like 'I can't...', 'I hate...', etc. These are a complete waste of energy and time.
2. **Wind-Power.** Sign up for wind-generated electricity, where available. Wind produces no greenhouse gases and is now cheaper than converting natural gas.

*See conservation corner, next page*

### Next Meeting:

July 20, 2006

We meet the **third Thursday of every month** at the Mayflower Congregational Church on NW 63rd between Portland and NW Expressway, just across from the Hometown Buffet.

**7:30 PM - Please Join Us!**

### July Meeting:

Thursday, July 20th, escape the heat by coming to our Ice Cream Social and picture sharing party. Bring photos of your favorite outing to share; maybe from some place cool? Pun intended! ☺ Come enjoy an evening with friends, and a chance to virtually explore some great places.

### August Meeting:

Backwoods will join us for our August 17th meeting and show off the latest in gear and clothing. This proves to be one of our most popular meeting programs so be sure to mark it on your calendar.

### September Meeting:

September 21st, Gaylord Young-Hein will do a presentation on "Reflections on the Seasons." It is a photo essay with slides, music, and commentary. The commentary comes from the notebooks of Henry David Thoreau, Gaylord was a charter member of our chapter. It is a wonderful slide show.



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Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

# View from the chair: Exciting News

By Olivia Waldkoetter



I wanted to share with all of you the exciting things going on within the group. As many of you may already know, the Sierra Club received a very generous bequest from the estate of Zerita Andrews, an Oklahoman. Over the last several months progress has been made in disbursing the bequest's funds.

Under the direction of the National Planned Giving Office a steering committee was formed and met last March. Representation was decided to be three members from the Cimarron Group, two from the Oklahoma Chapter and two from the National office. The Cimarron Group was represented by myself as Group Chair, James Martin as Conservation Chair, and David Franklin, former group chair. Tom Libby, Chapter Chair at the time, and Mark Derichsweiler, Chapter Treasurer, represented the Chapter. Phyllis Dunham, Southern Plains Regional

Coordinator and Bob Bingaman, National Field Staff Director flew in to represent the National interest.

Discussions at that meeting were driven by the fact that the national office has cut the national conservation budget by almost \$8 million dollars which placed the Oklahoma Sierra Club office funding in jeopardy. In fact, Arkansas lost one of their two programs. If the Oklahoma chapter were not contributing over \$15,000 each year to the program, we would have lost the Oklahoma Sierra Club Office.

Essentially, the plan is to use the bequest money to transition the Building Environmental Communities (BEC) program in Oklahoma to be an Oklahoma based Conservation program by 2010. Currently most of the funding for the Oklahoma Chapter office and its staff is provided through the BEC program, the nationally funded program.

After much deliberation a consensus was reached that the plan should meet certain objectives. They were :

- It must have a conservation

focus.

- Emphasis on building capacity in three areas. They are:
  - Increase membership
  - Increase donors
  - Increase club leadership
- Build a "self-sustaining" program
- Provide Measurable Results in both conservation and capacity.

The focal point of the plan is a state-wide meeting of environmentalists to be called "The Zerita Andrews Environmental Summit". The executor of her estate, Betty Javine, is happy with this idea. This "summit" will be an opportunity for environmentalists from around Oklahoma to meet and discuss environmental concerns facing the state and plan actions to address those issues.

Putting on an event of this magnitude will be a monumental task. We need volunteers to fill specific roles. I will hold a very short initial informational meeting for possible Summit volunteers after our regular July 20th meeting/ ice cream social. If you have an interest please contact me at [Olivia\\_waldkoetter@yahoo.com](mailto:Olivia_waldkoetter@yahoo.com).



Come enjoy food, fun, fellowship and some cool water! Beer, wine and pop provided...bring a dish to share! Spread the word, bring your friends!! July 30th: 4pm - 9pm. Yes, folks, it's time for our annual Swimming Pool Summer Social. Again this year it will be held at Becky & Neil Garrison s home - 373-0309 if you get lost. 12601 N Cemetery Rd. (map on the web)

### Conservor Corner Continued from page 1

3. **Conserve.** Buy energy-efficient appliances; use passive heating and cooling in your home.
4. **Save gas.** Sell your lawn in Sprawlville for a townhouse in a mixed-use neighborhood. Trade-up that SUV for a hybrid, scooter or bicycle
5. **Recycle.** Old materials require less energy than new ones to produce.
6. **Veg-Out.** Eat locally grown veggies. They're cheap, delicious and good for you.
7. **Plant a Tree.** Trees consume CO<sub>2</sub> and provide cooling shade.

Reduce concrete and asphalt wherever possible.

8. **Call your Mayor.** Ask him to sign the "US Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement." If s/he won't do it, get a new mayor.
9. **Join the Conservation Committee.** We meet on the second Wednesday of each month, 7pm, at the Gold Dome, 23rd and Classen in OKC.

We can all take a look at what we do and have. We live and die on this one blue planet, and there's more in the balance than just us.

E-mail [james.martin@yahoo.com](mailto:james.martin@yahoo.com) for more info.



Elections are coming up soon and your group political committee and the candidates they endorse can always use your help. To find out how you can play a part in electing candidates who will work for Oklahoma's environment, contact group political chair Susie Shields at [sshields@cox.net](mailto:sshields@cox.net)

# Get Outdoors

●Saturday, July 16th - Join Olivia Waldkoetter on a fun outing to the Woodie Guthrie festival. Meet at Oklahoma City Community College at 4pm, returning late. E-mail olivia\_waldkoetter@yahoo.com for more info.

●Saturday – Sunday, July 22<sup>nd</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> Car Camping at the Wentz Camp in Ponca City. Rated Easy. The beautiful Wentz camp and pool nestles between the shores of Lake Ponca and the lovely Lew Wentz golf course. Recreate yourself with swimming, volleyball, softball or horseshoes. Contact trip leader Bill Scimeca at wscim@swbell.net or 405-879-2040 to sign up. A donation to the newsletter fund of \$4 per person is suggested.


●July 24th - 28th – Raft / cleanup the Green River near Vernal, UT. This trip will go from the put in just below the Flaming Gorge Dam to end at Little Hole, approximately 46 river miles. With five days on the water and a relatively short distance to travel, plenty of time will be available to dayhike and do some clean-up of trash along the river. Rapids are class II with III possible. Those with personal kayaks and appropriate experience can join the trip as kayakers if you don't want to ride the rafts. Contact trip leader David Franklin by July 15th at 405-789-5377 or dfranklin@ussok.com to sign up. Assistant leader is John Bowen, an experienced river guide, but this is a non-commercial trip. Limit 10, minimum needed for trip is 6. More detail on the web. No fees for service trips, actual expenses (meals, etc) will be split amongst the participants.

●August 13<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> - California High Sierra Hiking and Lake Tahoe Exploring. Trip is full: wait list only.

Still need an outings chair! Contact Olivia, the group chair, at olivia\_waldkoetter@yahoo.com if you are willing to take on this important role or for more info.

**OKLA. CITY: Town & Country Village,  
122nd & N. May Ave. A (405) 751-7376**

## Backwoods



**PATAGONIA**  
**VASQUE**  
**MOUNTAIN HARDWEAR**  
**ASOLO**  
**BLUEWATER**  
**SAGE**



Sierra Club Presents  
Free Movie Night  
featuring  
"The Sierra Club Chronicles"  
6:30 p.m. Thursday,  
July 13th (every 2nd Thursday)  
Gold Dome Building  
N.W. 23rd & Classen,  
Wine and cheese  
reception before the July 13th  
movie at 5:45 PM  
Join us August 10th when  
we will be showing  
"Wal-Mart: the high cost  
of low price"

## ICO and You!

Hello! I am Lois Pokorny, the new chair of the Inner City Outings Program (ICO). I am hoping and expecting to find the same great level of support from club members for the ICO outings as you have always shown in the past.

I will be interested in hearing from everyone with an interest in volunteering to lead or accompany an Inner City Outing. The outings will be starting again in the fall with the start of school. In the beginning, we will continue to take students from an Oklahoma City elementary school on day hikes, usually to the Wichita Wildlife Refuge. As we are able to expand, we can add organizations for a more diverse program.

I will be including more in the upcoming newsletters, as the plans become more detailed. However, I would like to hear from you now about your ideas and availability!

Email Lois at lpkomo@cox.net, call her at 405-728-0832 or check out <http://oklahoma.sierraclub.org/ico> for more info.

*Picture of new ICO Chair, Lois Pokorny, in Tomatlan*





photo/Kevin Walsh

It's time for America to get smart about energy and be less dependent on dwindling oil reserves. We need to increase our use of clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar power.

**Add your voice to protect the planet. Join the Sierra Club today.**

**Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!**



My Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_  
 State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone # \_\_\_\_\_  
 email \_\_\_\_\_  
 Check enclosed, made payable to Sierra Club  
 Please charge my  MasterCard  Visa  AMEX  
 Exp. Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 Cardholder Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Categories	INDIVIDUAL	JOINT
<b>INTRODUCTORY</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47

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## Volunteer Directory

### Executive Committee (ExCom)

The ExCom meets on the first Wednesday of every month from 7:30pm to 9:00pm. All Club Members are welcome to attend. Please contact any ExCom member for the current month's meeting location.

Chair	Olivia Waldkoetter	821-2304
Vice-Chair	Bill Dinger	848-3824
Secretary	Kathy Cunningham	942-6911
Treasurer	Kathy Scurlock	942-6343
Member	Susie Shields	297-0179
Member	James Martin	361-2373
Member	Martha Holland	946-4962
Member	Lois Pokorny	728-0832
Member	Jay Trenary	831-5535

### Committee Heads

For more information on an activity, contact the respective committee head listed below.

Conservation	James Martin	361-2373
Conservation Vice-Chair	Esther Houser	282-8074
Outings	open	
Inner City Outings	Lois Pokorny	728-0832
Social	Carolyn Ford	843-2278
Legislative	Susie Shields	297-0179
Membership	Martha Holland	946-4962
Enviro. Educ. Programs	Susie Shields	297-0179
Volunteer Coordinator	Olivia Waldkoetter	821-2304

The **PRAIRIE DISPATCH** is published for the benefit of the members of the Cimarron Group of the Sierra Club. Group members receive this publication free. Non-members may subscribe at the rate of \$10 per year. Send subscription requests to Andy Scurlock, 3333 NW 20th, Oklahoma City, OK 73107 (Ph:942-6343) or [tascurlock@cox.net](mailto:tascurlock@cox.net).

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