

Palisades Views



Volume XXXXI No. 2

February 2012

Can solar energy power your home or business?

Andrea Wetzel, a Sierra Club member and employee of Day and Night Solar in Edwardsville, will speak on "The Current State of Solar Energy and its Future" at the February meeting of the Piasa Palisades Group.

Wetzel will discuss how solar energy can work for your home or business; the solar-energy marketplace, how it has changed in recent years and projections for the future; solar incentives that are available today, how to get them and how to figure your cost recovery.

"Renewable energy is often seen as only an option for the distant future," said former Piasa Palisades Group Executive Committee member Dave Gocken, who arranged for Wetzel to speak. "However, the facts and reality testify to that future being now."

Wetzel has worked closely with the Sierra Club's Three Rivers Project coordinator Christine Favilla to set up presentations about solar energy. She lives in Edwardsville and is a member of Edwardsville's Cool Cities Committee.

The meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 13, in the com-

munity room at First Unitarian Church, 110 E. Third St. in Alton. Everyone is invited to gather for dinner at 5:45 p.m. at Bossanova, 112 W. Third St. in Alton.

Gocken is reading a new book by Amory Lovins and the Rocky Mountain Institute, titled "Reinventing Fire: Bold Business Solutions for the New Energy Era."

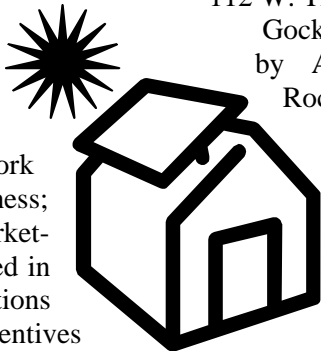
"The solar photovoltaics industry offers one of the most compelling

examples of ongoing cost reduction," the book states. "Since the 1970's, every 10-fold increase in production of crystalline silicon modules has made module production 50 percent cheaper.

"Today, such modules sell in bulk for \$1.40 per watt, down from best-in-the-class module prices in 2009 of over \$2.50 per watt. In May 2011, (General Electric's) global research director said that PVs may be cheaper than electricity generated by fossil fuels and nuclear reactors within three to five years because of innovations.

"Confirming this, by May of 2011, California shareholder-owned

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Six elected to ExCom

Six people were elected to the Piasa Palisades Group Executive Committee in last month's election.

They include returning members Amitie Flynn, Chris Krusa and Wayne Politsch, who will serve two-year terms; and Jim Bensman, who will serve a one-year term; and newcomers Alvin Harper and Carol Klinger, who will serve two-year terms.

Laura Asher will become ExCom chair, while Wayne Politsch slides into the position of vice chair, vacated by Dave Gocken. Virginia Woulfe-Beile is our new secretary, replacing Asher. Jill Mellenthin, a non-ExCom member, will continue as treasurer.

Below are a list of committee assignments and other positions:

Programs: Chris Krusa (assisted by Flynn and Gocken)

Membership: Gayle Borman

Conservation: Harper and Woulfe-Beile

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E-drives scheduled throughout region

Here's the information you've all been waiting for: Dates, times and locations for WITS electronic recycling drives! They will be in place from February through November (except Mother's Day and Easter Sunday).

Thank you in advance for properly recycling and disposing of your electronics! We would appreciate your help in spreading the news about E-drives to friends, family members and co-workers. These drives will

help Illinois residents to follow the new recycling law described below.

ALTON/JERSEYVILLE — Noon to 6 p.m. on the first Friday of each month at Bank of Edwardsville, 4415 Martin Luther King Drive in Alton.

COLLINSVILLE — Noon to 6 p.m. on the second Friday of each month in the parking lot at 223 W. Main St.

G L E N C A R B O N / EDWARDSVILLE — Noon to 6

p.m. on the fourth Friday of each month at Bank of Edwardsville, 2142 State Route 157 in Glen Carbon.

GRANITE CITY — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the second Saturday of each month at America's Central Port (former U.S. Army Depot Commissary parking lot), Seventh and "A" streets, off Illinois 3.

HARDIN — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the fourth Sunday of each month in the University of Illinois Extension

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2012 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chair/youth	Laura Asher	llasher@sbcglobal.net	(618) 465-8586
Vice chair	Wayne Politsch	politschw@aol.com	(618) 466-6150
Programs/political/ Cool Cities	Chris Krusa	clkruza@charter.net	(618) 288-2681
Membership/office/ hospitality	Gayle Borman	cgborman@hotmail.com	(618) 254-2250
Youth/social media	Amitie Flynn	alflynn@mail.lc.edu	(618) 639-0828
Conservation/youth/ social media	Alvin Harper	alharpe@siue.edu	(618) 462-6802
Secretary/conservation/ fundraising/hospitality	Virginia Woulfe-Beile	coxist1221@aol.com	(618) 465-1842
Chapter/technology	Jim Bensman	jbensman1@charter.net	(618) 463-0714
Outings/fundraising	Carol Klinger	ciklinger@charter.net	(618) 288-5506

OTHER COMMITTEES AND STAFF

Treasurer	Jill Mellenthin	jmellenthin@yahoo.com	(618) 465-5490
Newsletter mailing	Carole Massalone	carolem3@charter.net	(618) 462-0288
Three Rivers staff	Christine Favilla	christine.favilla@sierraclub.org	(618) 462-6802

SIERRA CLUB OFFICE

Piasa Palisades Group	223 Market St.	Alton, IL 62002	(618) 462-6802
	E-mail:	Website:	FAX:
	ppg_sc@yahoo.com	www.illinois.sierraclub.org/piasapalisades	(618) 462-0282
		462-0282	

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Monday, Feb 13 Piasa Palisades Group monthly meeting. Andrea Wetzel of Day and Night Solar will speak on "The Current State of Solar and its Future" (see related article). Meet at 7:30 p.m. in the community room of First Unitarian Church, 110 E. Third St. in Alton. For more information, call (618) 462-6802.

NON-SIERRA CLUB EVENTS

Thursday, Feb. 2 Screening of the movie "Green Fire: Aldo Leopold and a Land Ethic for Our Time" with comments by guest speaker Curt Meine. Meet at 7:30 p.m. in Dunham Hall Theater at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. Part of the university's Arts and Issues series. For more information, call (618) 650-5774 or visit <http://artsandissues.com>.

Saturday, Feb. 11 Basketry workshop at La Vista Ecological Learning Center in Godfrey. Weave a handy tote bag with over-the-shoulder cloth handles. Perfect for books, small amounts of groceries, a water bottle and more. Hours are 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The cost is \$30. Limit of six participants. Instruction, materials and drinks provided. Bring a sack lunch. To register, call (618) 466-5004.

Tuesday and Wednesday, Feb. 14-15 Energy Conservation and Management Training at Lewis and Clark Community College in Godfrey and Southwestern Illinois College in Belleville. Co-sponsored by the Alton Cool Cities Committee. For more information, call Matthew Asselmeier with the City of Alton at (618) 463-3500, Lewis and Clark at (618) 468-2874 or SWIC at (618) 235-2700.

Groups sponsor essay contest

[Prairie Rivers Network](#) and the [1 Mississippi Campaign](#) believe inspired and engaged individuals are essential to protect the Mississippi River for today and in the future.

They are sponsoring an essay contest called "Our Upper Mississippi River: Connection, Inspiration, Transformation."

Whether you have visited the Upper Mississippi River once or lived next to it all your life, your story can be the spark for others to learn more about this wondrous river, to love it as you do and take action to protect its water and habitats for people,

wildlife and river communities.

Tell us, "How has the river inspired you?" "How has the changed your life?" and "How do you protect this river you love?"

Tell us, "How has the river inspired you?"

Contest entries must be submitted by e-mail between Jan. 1 and March 16. The winning essay will be published in the [newsletters of Prairie Rivers Network](#) and the [1 Mississippi Campaign](#), an audience of over 5,000!

For more information, contest rules and an entry form, visit www.prairierivers.org/umressay/ or contact Cecily Smith at csmith@prairierivers.org.

NOTICE

The Piasa Palisades Group has an e-mail action list for members who want to receive breaking news, announcements and action alerts on local and regional environmental issues. Why not join this effort? You always can unsubscribe later, if desired. Send your name and e-mail address to Chris Krusa at clkrua@charter.net. For more information, call him at (618) 288-2681 (home) or (410) 490-5024 (cell).

*Explore, enjoy
and protect the
planet.*

Palisades Views

is a monthly publication for and about Sierra Club members.

To submit a newsletter item:
440 W. Union St.
Edwardsville, IL 62025
(618) 656-8132
palisadesviews@gmail.com

**DEADLINE FOR MARCH:
SATURDAY, FEB. 25**



Three Rivers coordinator outlines plans for 2012

Dear Sierrans,

We are a month into the new year, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank members of the Piasa Palisades Group Executive Committee and each volunteer who has contributed his or her time, knowledge and energy to our success in the past year.

You are the heart and soul of this grassroots organization, and we couldn't do it without you!

Our many partners and community leaders also have dedicated themselves to the betterment of society, and we sincerely appreciate their efforts. We look forward to working with them and others in 2012.

This year, we will continue to focus on education, recreation and conservation of our natural resources and branch out into the new area of clean energy advocacy. We will continue to work on issues affecting rivers, watersheds, forests and prairies and all habitats in between, while also recognizing the importance of improving air quality in the region.

DRIVES

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parking lot, 818 S. Park St.

At other times, you can take electronics to the locations below and drop them off for free or call for a pick-up (fee charged):

Somtech Recycling (by appointment only), 415 Ridge St. in Alton; (618) 593-2981 (cell) or (618) 463-2954 (office)

TOTALL Metal Recycling, 2700 Missouri Ave., Granite City; (866) 470-5763 (toll-free)

WITS, Inc., 647 E. Holly, St. Louis; (314) 382-1650

Best Buy, 6670 Edwardsville Crossing Drive, Edwardsville; (618) 659-9895 (takes two pieces at a time)

We will advocate for clean air and energy by monitoring permits for air-quality emissions, attending public hearings and encouraging others to attend public hearings.

We will work to minimize the negative effects of burning fossil fuels to create energy and encourage a transition to cleaner alternatives, including energy efficiency, geothermal, wind and solar. We will engage in administrative advocacy to increase requirements for the percentage of clean energy included in utility portfolios.

Through these efforts, we will try to help reduce harmful pollution and climate change. We hope to have you right along with us, helping to improve our region's water and air quality and the quality of life for you and your neighbors.

Also, look for more involvement from us in the sustainable-agriculture movement, including local gardens, farmers markets, school cafeterias, soup kitchens and restaurants. We are planning a late

Public Act 95-0959, the Electronics Products Recycling and Reuse Act, was signed into law on Sept. 17, 2008. It requires electronics manufacturers to collect and recycle or process for reuse residential televisions, printers, computers (including laptops) and monitors (collectively known as "covered electronics devices" or CEDs) and other "eligible electronics devices" (EEDs) at no charge to consumers.

An amendment to the act, which took effect Jan. 1, prohibits landfills from knowingly accepting any CEDs for disposal. Their burning or incineration also is prohibited.

spring farm-to-table, local food event and seeking new committee members.

Please let me know if you're interested in helping to bring "hunter-and-gatherer-style" healthy eating to the forefront in our community! We will be publishing articles on local gardens and food projects, so drop me a line and let me know about yours at christine.favilla@sierraclub.org.

Naturally yours,
Christine Favilla

Three Rivers Project coordinator

EXCOM

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Political: Krusa

Outings: Klinger

Newsletter: Teri Maddox (editor) and Carole Massalone (mailings)

Hospitality: Woulfe-Beile and Borman

Youth coordinators: Asher, Flynn and Harper

Fundraising: Woulfe-Beile and Klinger

Chapter delegate: Bensman (Politsch as alternate)

Cool Cities: Krusa

Office: Borman (coordinator) and Bensman (technology)

Social media: Harper and Flynn

SOLAR

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utilities had contracted for 8.6 GW (gigawatts) of new PV power, 4.4 GW of which is cheaper than the benchmark price (from a new combined-cycle gas plant), but is to build in 2012-2017 before a gas plant can be built. Another 45 GW or so of additional PV bids are expected in the state power auction, many at grid competitive prices."