

Palisades Views



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Professor to speak on burns

Ever wonder why prairies and forests are purposely set on fire?

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville biology professor Kurt Schulz will speak on "The Larger Science Underlying Prescribed Burns" at the January meeting of the Piasa Palisades Group.

"After advocating fire suppression for much of a century, the conservation community ultimately recognized the necessity of fire to maintain many North American forest community types," Schultz said.

"Prescribed burning has now become a widely-used management tool in much of the Midwest.

"Surprisingly, we have not resolved some of the fundamental

questions regarding both the historical role of fire and the problems of reinstating it in the modern landscape.

"In this talk, I will address the complexities of determining what our original fire-dependent landscape was like, the changes wrought by burning and problems reinstating fire in modern forests. Be assured, there are no pat answers here."

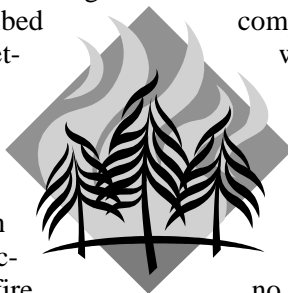
The meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 9, in the community room of First Unitarian Church, 110 E. Third St. in Alton.

Everyone also is invited to join the speaker and other members for dinner at 5:45 p.m. at Bossanova, 112. W. Third Street in Alton.

Schulz earned bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and a doctorate from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He joined the SIUE biology department in 1993.

Schulz's research has focused on forest ecology, especially the role of shrubs in forests and the biology of invasive species. He teaches courses in botany, ecology, field biology and statistics.

Schulz also coordinates development of the new SIUE Nature Preserve and assists with projects at Watershed Nature Center.



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 ckkrusa@charter.net. For more information, call him at (618) 288-2681 (home) or (410) 490-5024 (cell).

Time to party!

The Piasa Palisades Group will try something new this year with its Winter Gala, which has been held at The Nature Institute in Godfrey for years.

Group co-founder Rich Keating has graciously offered to open his home for the social event from 6 to 10 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 28. The address is 1236 Harrison St. in Edwardsville.

As usual, we'll share a potluck of hors d'oeuvres and desserts. Please bring a dish and, if desired, your beverage of choice.

If you'd like to show photos of your latest adventure or favorite natural place on earth, put them on a flash drive.

To reach the Keating home, take Franklin Avenue east from Illinois 159, north of the AMC theater and south of downtown Edwardsville.

After going through a major intersection at Troy Road, continue six blocks, pass Leclaire Elementary School and turn right on Harrison.

Proceed to the last house on the left. The street abruptly veers right. You will find plenty of parking alongside the playground/park. If you get lost, call (618) 656-3647.

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CALENDAR

Sunday, Jan. 1 Annual New Year's Day hike in the area of Pere Marquette State Park that burned in November. Meet at 8 a.m. at the Sierra Club office in Alton and carpool or caravan. Eat breakfast in Grafton, tentatively at the Wild Goose Saloon. Those up for hiking will head to the parking lot on Power Line Road (Google N38 59.969 W90 28.149 for a map). Bring a lunch and water and be prepared for some hill climbing. Finish mid-afternoon. For more information, contact Jim Bensman at (618) 463-0714 or jbensman1@charter.net.

Saturday, Jan. 7 American bald eagle count. All are welcome to help with this annual inventory. Meet at 7 a.m. at the Sierra Club office in Alton. Caravan to Pere Marquette State Park Lodge for breakfast then proceed to designated spots along the Mississippi River in the Batchtown area. Bring warm clothes, snacks, water, binoculars and bird books. For more information, call Chris Krusa at (618) 288-2681.

Sunday, Jan. 8 Piasa Palisades Group monthly moonlight hike. Details regarding time and location still are being finalized. Check the website at www.illinois.sierraclub.org/piasapalisades or call trip leader Virginia Woulfe-Beille at (618) 977-2319. The full moon actually occurs on Jan. 9, but members will be attending the monthly meeting.

Monday, Jan. 9 Piasa Palisades Group monthly meeting (see related article). Biology professor Kurt Schulz will speak on "The Larger Science Underlying Prescribed Burns." 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.

Monday, Jan. 16 Trail clean-up as part of America's National Day of Service. The Sierra Club will celebrate Martin Luther King's birthday by picking up trash along a two-mile stretch of the National Scenic Byway (Illinois 100). Check in and get supplies at 8:45 a.m. at Clifton Park Terrace Park parking lot. Work from 9 to 11 a.m. Bring plenty of layers of warm clothing and reusable water bottles. We will provide safety vests, work gloves, trash bags and snacks. For more information or to register a group of volunteers, contact Christine Favilla at (618) 462-6802 or Christine.favilla@sierraclub.org.

Saturday, Jan. 28 Annual Winter Gala of the Piasa Palisades Group (see related notice). Meet from 6 to 10 p.m. at Rich Keating's home, 1236 Harrison in Edwardsville. Bring a dessert or hors d'oeuvres to share and, if desired, your favorite beverage. To show photos of your latest adventure, put them on a flash drive. Dress up or down; it's your choice. If you get lost, call (618) 656-3647.

NON-CLUB EVENTS

Tuesday, Jan. 10 Plants of the Bible talk by retired Southern Illi-

nois University Edwardsville biology professor Richard C. Keating. Was there an apple tree in the Garden of Eden? Early oral traditions and translation difficulties frequently obscured original species identifications. But biblical studies have identified more than 100 plants used in the early agriculture-based Middle East. Over thousands of years, many modern crops — and weeds — originated there. This illustrated talk will outline the ecology, botany and agricultural practices of the region many recognize as the "Cradle of Civilization." Meet at 7 p.m. at Main Street Community Center in Edwardsville.



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. A "must-see" for environmentalists, according to Rich Keating. For more information, call (618) 650-5774 or visit <http://artsandissues.com>.

Editor's note: It's winter! If you're wondering whether meetings or other events are cancelled due to bad weather, check the Piasa Palisades Group website at <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/piasapalisades> or the answering machine at (618) 462-6802.