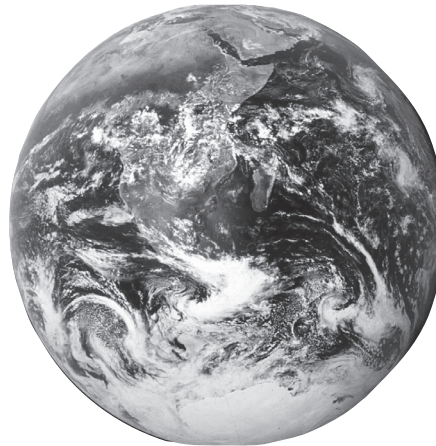




To Earth Day — And a Noisy Spring

By Don Ferber

The day this is being written has been known as Earth Day since 1970 in our part of the world. Earth Day is a celebration—and an opportunity to do more to protect and live in concert with nature. Such was the intent of former Wisconsin Governor Gaylord Nelson and many others who ushered in a new day of environmental consciousness 41 years ago. At that time, and in times since, we felt we were on a path that would return us to living in a more sustainable manner, and were turning away from a destructive course.



So it seemed. However, we seem to have suffered a reversal of fortune. Our current governor's perceptions of being green appear to pertain more to the pocketbooks of supporters than the natural environment that sustains us. Aldo Leopold taught us we were inherently tied to the land community as members and citizens, and that we must love and respect it. And yet, many proposals would pollute the land, water, and air that nourishes us, and impoverish many citizens and caretakers of the land.

We also just commemorated the birthday of Sierra Club founder John Muir who taught us so much about appreciating nature and our planet. He reminded us, "When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world." Unfortunately, we seem to be tugging at (or maybe bulldozing) many parts of nature with our actions. Leopold also taught us, "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity,

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Chair's Corner

I know I'm not the only one to have experienced both elation and depression along with a fair amount of stress over the history-making events in Madison and around the state these last few months. The extraordinary uprising of public workers and supporters over loss of rights is something almost none of us could have imagined in early January when Gov. Walker took office.

Yet despite setbacks such as the legislature's vote to strip workers' rights and the introduction of some truly anti-environmental legislation, I believe there is reason to hope we can turn the tide. The overwhelming turnout of Wisconsin workers at the Capitol and the courage of the Senators who left the state to slow down the attacks on state workers demonstrate the power and promise of democracy. I'm proud that the Sierra Club is standing with state workers and we will do what we can to make a difference. Go to our political page on the John Muir Chapter website to see what we're doing to help restore democracy and to oppose draconian budget cuts and new anti-environmental legislation at: <http://wisconsin.sierraclub.org>.

I expect to see the increase in Four Lakes Group and John Muir Chapter political activity continue through this summer and beyond. If you're interested in helping out,

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The Tragedy in your Tank

Adapted from a climatechronicle.com blog post on February 4, 2011 by Four Lakes member Rick Chamberlin. For many more details, refer to the original post.

All the gasoline retailers in my community of Sauk Prairie are connected in one way or another to the tar sands oil extraction despoiling millions of square miles of boreal forest in the Canadian subarctic.

Besides the atrocious environmental and public health damage at and near crude extraction sites, tar sands oil produces about three times the carbon emissions of conventional gasoline when mining, processing, and distribution is factored in. Drivers could shrink their carbon footprints far more by seeking retailers who sell non-tar sands gas than by trading a conventional vehicle for a hybrid-electric car.

Unfortunately, it may be impossible to find any in Wisconsin. Virtually all gasoline (and diesel fuel, home heating oil, and jet fuel) now sold in Wisconsin is derived, at least in part, from crude originating in the Athabaskan tar sands region of Canada.

Erin Roth, director of the Wisconsin Petroleum Council, told me suppliers of gasoline in Wisconsin sell blends containing 50 to 80 percent tar sands gasoline. The Marathon refinery in Minnesota, supplying all Marathon stations, including several in Wisconsin, uses 100 percent Canadian crude.

Roth could not name one Wisconsin gasoline distributor or retailer selling gasoline made without tar sands crude. "Percentages of crude change on a daily basis," says Roth. Many distributors, and some refineries,



buy based on price, which change constantly. Roth told me, "We will continue to increase the use of Canadian crude."

Who Uses Crude Oil?

According to the Legislative Reference Bureau, in 2007 83.5% of petroleum consumed in Wisconsin was used for transportation. Residential use came in a distant second at 6.7%. Industry and agriculture used roughly 4% each.

The U.S. currently imports about 1.5 million barrels of Alberta tar sands crude every day. New CAFE standards sought by the Obama administration will save 1.8 billion barrels of oil over the life of cars and trucks sold between 2012 and 2016, and allow drivers to save an average of \$3,000 in fuel costs over a vehicle's life. Carbon dioxide emissions would drop by over 900 million metric tons, resulting in about a 20% cut in emissions, but those reductions could be wiped out by, and a steep net *rise* in emissions could result from, increased use of tar sands gasoline.

Sierra Club Urges Changes

In a *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* 2008 *op-ed*, Shahla Werner, [Sierra](#)

[Club's](#) John Muir (Wisconsin) chapter director, noted the enormous impacts of tar sands on the environment, local communities, and human health. Last year during a hearing on the transportation section of Wisconsin's ill-fated Clean Energy and Jobs Act (CEJA), Werner testified that a low-carbon fuels standard (LCFS) limiting use of carbon intensive fuels, is an essential component of any clean energy legislation to reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions.

Despite the legislature's failing to bring the Clean Energy and Jobs Act to the floor for a vote last year, and the ubiquity of tar sands gasoline throughout Wisconsin, action steps abound to use less of this filthy fossil fuel.

One of the most important actions we can take, according to Werner, is to press for better transit options. Allowing communities to form regional transit authorities (RTAs) would be a significant step. It's puzzling that an RTA bill was defeated last year, because RTAs stimulate the construction and manufacturing industries, give employers better access to workers

Continued next page

(and vice versa), and sustain transit operations that hire locally, keeping dollars at home instead of sending them out of state or country for oil. But when you consider how much *money* the fossil fuel industry donates to candidates, and spends lobbying them once they take office, maybe it's not so surprising.

RTAs also allow Wisconsin to compete for federal transit dollars, ease costly traffic congestion, insulate communities from price shocks, and foster efficient development. They save citizens thousands of dollars in avoided costs of driving and parking a car, especially when gas prices rise. RTAs can also organize and modernize outdated, patchwork transit systems, and give communities a competitive edge in attracting and retaining business and residents. Currently Wisconsin has only three RTAs.

Supporting an electric vehicle infrastructure is also important, says Werner. Although Wisconsin relies heavily on coal for electricity, she says, electric vehicles would still be far less damaging to the environment than conventional vehicles because most charging would take place during off-peak hours.

Citizens can do several other things, politically and in their personal lives, to tame the tar sands fuels terror:

- Contact *Secretary of State Clinton* and *President Obama* to tell them the proposed Keystone XL tar sands pipeline, which would run from Canada to the Texas gulf coast, is not in our best interests.
- Push your state and federal representatives to end *tax breaks and subsidies for oil companies*, especially those dealing in tar sands crude.
- Tell your local filling station manager you don't like buying gasoline made from filthy tar sands (many managers don't know this); urge them to demand cleaner gas from their suppliers.
- Drive less. Take public transportation, carpool, bike, or walk whenever you can.
- Drive a more fuel-efficient vehicle.
- Purchase *carbon offsets* to mitigate damage done by your vehicle or other travel. I recently calculated I could offset all of my measurable carbon emissions

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Four Lakes Group Outings Spring/Summer 2011

For all outings: Wear weather and activity appropriate clothing (layered is best) and good footwear. Bring fluids to drink, and a snack or food as appropriate. Please contact the leader to RSVP, if you have questions, or with concerns about weather and to cancel. Check our Four Lakes Group web site or Facebook page for updates or added events.

Leader Contact Info

Don Ferber, 608-222-9376 or d_ferber@sbcglobal.net

Jon Higgins, 608-345-5997 or wisconsinhiker395@gmail.com

Marian Holton-Manuel, 608-273-3394 or at marianholton_manuel@hotmail.com

Kathy Mulbrandon, 608-848-5076 or kmulb@charter.net

Bike the Capital City Trail

Saturday, May 14, 9:30 AM

Enjoy the scenic 23 mile Capital City Trail loop trip as it winds through Madison and the countryside to enjoy the greenery and spring flowers. We'll start at Eagle School and ride east towards Lake Farm Park, north into Madison and return via the Southwest Bike Path. Meet at the Eagle School at 5454 Gunflint Trail. Don't forget a water bottle, snacks, and a helmet. A Wisconsin State Trail Pass is required. RSVP to Kathy Mulbrandon.

Moonlight Hike, Indian Lakes County Park

Tuesday, May 17, 7 PM

Meet at the Indian Lake parking lot on Hwy 19, 2 miles west of Hwy 12. Enjoy a moonlight hike at scenic and diverse Indian Lake County Park. Learn about the geologic and settlement history of Indian Lake and observe the majestic oaks by night. Wear good walking footwear and bring fluids, a snack to share, and a light. Conducted with the Dane County Chapter of the Ice Age Trail. RSVP to Kathy Mulbrandon.

National Trails Day Hike, Cross Plains segment, Ice Age Trail • Saturday, June 4, 9 AM

On National Trails Day, help celebrate trails, including a national one in our own back yard. We'll join the Dane County Chapter of the Ice Age Trail to hike the Cross Plains segment. This fine segment was constructed in part in 2004 as a major trail project and includes a great view of Cross Plains and some nice restoration areas. Take Hwy 14 into

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Outings *from page 2*

Cross Plains, go four blocks past the stoplight to Caesar, then left on Lewis to the end of the cul de sac. RSVP to Kathy Mulbrandon.

National Trails Day Service Project, Festge County Park Saturday, June 4, 9 AM - 1 PM

Get dirty on National Trails Day! Join Dane County Parks for this REI sponsored service project to haul and stack invasive brush at Festge County Parks as part of ongoing restoration efforts there. Breakfast rolls and lunch will be provided, and you'll receive a free t-shirt from REI. Take Hwy 14 ~ 1.5 miles west of Cross Plains to Scherbel Rd. Turn right up the hill to Festge Park, Shelter #1. For more info, contact Don Ferber.

Quincy Bluff Hike, Adams County Saturday, June 11, 11:30 AM

Join us to hike Quincy Bluff Conservancy, which in early June has blue lupine in bloom, host to the endangered Karner Blue butterfly. We'll also learn about the geological, biological, and human history of this important spot in Wisconsin's Sand Counties. We'll hike 4 1/2 miles of mostly easy trail. The prairies and pine barrens can be sunny and part of the trail can be buggy. Families are welcome! Carpooling from Madison will depart at 9:45 AM from the west parking lot at the DOT Building at 4802 Sheboygan Avenue. Quincy Bluff is located at 2660 16th Drive in Adams County. For directions or more info, contact Jon Higgins.

Hike at Donald County Park Saturday, July 9, 10 AM

Donald Park is located in the Town of Springdale, southeast of Mt. Horeb off Highway 92, just west of Mt. Vernon. Donald Park is also known for its trout streams—Deer Creek and Frye Feeder, and Mt. Vernon Creek. The Donald Woodburn family donated the original 105 acres for this park which has grown to 480 acres containing oak woods, intriguing rock outcroppings with scenic vistas, and springs. We'll hike about 3-4 miles on well-established park trails. Meet at 10:00 AM in the parking lot by Pop's Knoll picnic area. Wear good walking footwear, and bring fluids, lunch or snack. RSVP to Marian Holton-Manuel.

Full Moon Hike, Indian Lake County Park Friday, July 15, 7:30 PM

Enjoy an evening hike at Indian Lake County Park in Dane County. We'll hike through prairies and forest at one of Dane County's largest parks on the night of the full moon. We'll learn about the cycles of our planet's companion and its influence on the evolution of our home world. The trails at Indian Lake are steep in some places and can be slippery or soggy after rain. Families are welcome! Carpooling from Madison will depart at 7:00 PM from the west parking lot at the DOT Building at 4802 Sheboygan Avenue. Indian Lake is located on SR 19 about 2 miles east of US 12 north of Madison. For directions or more info, contact Jon Higgins.

Summer Soiree and Picnic, Festge County Park Saturday, July 31, 9 AM – 3 PM

9 AM – Restoration outing
Noon – Picnic lunch
Afternoon – Hike or swim?

Join us for our annual summer festivities which will be held at Festge County Park just west of Cross Plains. This lovely wooded park offers fine views of Black Earth Creek Valley, areas for picnicking and hiking, and Salmo Pond, suitable for a refreshing dip. So far, we have a restoration outing planned where you'll learn more about native species and alien invaders, and of course our picnic potluck where we provide grill items and refreshments and you bring your favorite side dish. Stay tuned for more details. RSVP to Don Ferber.

Hemlock Draw Hike Saturday, August 6, 11:00 AM

Hemlock Draw Conservancy is home to a small chunk of northern Wisconsin habitat located in the Baraboo Hills.



Four Lakes Group Sierra Club Contacts

on the web: www.4lakes.org
e-mail: contactus@4lakes.org

Dave Blouin*, Chair, (608) 233-8455, burroak15@charter.net; also political chair

Don Ferber*, Conservation Chair and Volunteer Coordinator (608) 222-9376, d_ferber@sbcglobal.net

John Rider*, Treasurer, (608) 663-8874, jrider@tds.net

Beverly Speer* (608) 241-8979, bjsmadison62@gmail.com

Lacinda Athen*, Webmaster, RAH Chair; (608) 274-7870, lacinda.athen@gmail.com

Claire Gervais, Healthy Lawn Team (608) 233-8455, cmgerva@gmail.com

Ron Haeger, Inner City Outings
(608) 444-0612, rhaeger@gmail.com

*Executive Committee members

Due to its geology, Hemlock Draw is significantly cooler than most of southern Wisconsin, providing a refreshing alternative on hot summer days. We'll learn about the role the last ice age played in creating this small oasis and that places like Hemlock Draw play in biodiversity for climate change. Heavy rains have made parts of the trail rugged and expect mosquitoes. Crossing the creek may involve rock hopping or wet feet. Carpooling from Madison will depart at 9:45 AM from the west parking lot at the DOT Building at 4802 Sheboygan Avenue. Hemlock Draw is located 2 miles north of Leland in Sauk County along Hemlock Road. For directions or more info, contact Jon Higgins.

**Moonlight Hike at the Ice Age Trail Junction
Tuesday, September 13, 6:30 PM**

Meet at the Hwy PD Ice Age Trail trailhead. Stroll through prairies, admire old oaks, and learn about native landscapes and wild flowers. This segment is about 2.5 miles. Bring a light, water, and a snack to enjoy while watching the moon. This hike will be with members of the Ice Age Trail Alliance. Take Verona Rd. to Cty PD. Turn right for ~ 2 miles just past the High Point Rd. stoplight. Turn left into the parking lot by the sheds. RSVP: Kathy Mulbrandon.

Cruisin' for Cuisine Dinner Series

Enjoy the company of fellow Sierrans while sampling fine local cuisine. We try to mix locations and price points, so we hope we'll hit a spot you like! Open to members and non-members alike, so bring a friend if you'd like. Please RSVP a week in advance to Lacinda Athen at lacinda.athen@gmail.com or 608-274-7870 and she will make reservations for the group. Meeting time will be provided when you RSVP.

Tuesday, May 10th – ***Graze***, 1 South Pinckney Street

Tuesday, June 6th – ***Jolly Bob's*** Outdoor Garden, 1210 Williamson Street

Tuesday, July 12th – ***Captain Bill's*** Outdoor Patio, 2701 Century Harbor Rd

Tuesday, August 16th – ***Sardine*** Outdoor Patio, 617 Williamson St



May Monthly Program

“HOME,” the movie • Wednesday, May 18, 7 PM

Goodman Community Center, 149 Waubesa St., Bolz A

We call our planet “home,” but we often don't treat it as a home we value. Come see this visually stunning film that tells the story of how in the past 200,000 years, humans have upset the balance of planet Earth that was established in its 4 billion years of evolution. The film-maker, Yann Arthus-Bertrand, shot exclusively aerial footage from over 50 countries to provide us with his sense of awe about the planet we live on, and to share his concerns over what we are doing to it. It is a film that will move and inspire you. Please join us for this touching film.

All CO2 emissions created in the making of this film were offset to provide clean energy to those who don't have any. Free and open to the public. Snacks and refreshments provided. ■



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for less than \$200 per year. That's a lot less than a hybrid or electric car costs.

- Avoid gasoline made from corn ethanol. Until ethanol is widely rendered from non-food sources and recaptures more energy lost in the process, it will continue to increase gasoline's carbon footprint and drive up world food prices. It also decreases gas mileage.

As Shahla Werner says, awareness is half the battle. Few people know how *devastating* tar sands fuels are to the Canadian wilderness, native peoples, and our planet's climate. As citizens and drivers, at least we can try to drive the point home: Tar sands oil should stay in the ground. ■

Socializing With Sierra Club Online and Off

By Lacinda Athen

Sierra Club is great in large part through its membership and the close connections members build with one another through advocacy and volunteering. But the Club has always been careful not to be “all work and no play.” Our outings program testifies to that, as do the statewide Autumn Assembly gathering and our long time “Cruisin’ for Cuisine” dinner series. And we are always looking for more outlets to help us socialize as Sierrans. Because the best way to turn strangers into friends is through repeated face time. That is what we’re trying to offer, and we need YOUR help to make it successful.

To take advantage of online and offline socializing, we offer a couple of new options. First, we’d like to invite you to join our Facebook page. It’s a great way to connect with other members in the Four Lakes area and stay in touch with all current events, outings, dinners, issues, and alerts. Far more happens with the Sierra Club than our quarterly newsletters or even our eNews can track. By connecting online, you’ll always know what is happening, and can discuss it with other Four Lakes members! To join, just log in to Facebook and search for “Sierra Club - Four Lakes Group” and “Like” our page.

Also new is a summer Cruisin’ for Cuisine dinner series. A strong core group enjoys getting out and sampling Madison’s finest local restaurants, and we want to keep it going over the summer. We’ve selected some outdoor dining spots to try, and encourage you to join us! SStay



tuned, as we may add other social events, like wine tastings, meetings at places like “Dane Dances” or the Union Terrace, or a late afternoon bike ride with dinner afterwards. Our city offers such great opportunities for outdoor activities that we should take advantage of them before the snow flies again! To be sure you

get notified for dinner and social outings, besides our hikes, paddles, and bike rides, sign up for the Outings News email list by contacting Kathy Mulbrandon, our Outings Chair at outingschair@4lakes.org. You can also check our Outings list online at <http://www.4lakes.org/sierra-club-outings-calendar>. ■

CHAIR from page 1

please contact me. The Sierra Club will play a prominent role in the months ahead, but it will take activists and leaders to ensure success.

The month we marked the retirement of a true environmental champion, Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk. Kathleen’s strong and steady hand ensured progress on multiple fronts from protection of our lakes and streams to curbing harmful sprawl threatening farmland and drinking water. We wish her the best in whatever endeavor she takes on next. We’re also thrilled that Sierra Club endorsed candidate and strong environmental legislator Joe Parisi has begun his tenure as Dane County Executive and we look forward to continuing the great work begun by his predecessor. Thanks to all the Four Lakes Group volunteers who helped Joe’s campaign.

As always, please contact me with any questions or concerns or to inquire about volunteering at burroak15@charter.net or 233-8455. ■



Four Lakes Group Sierra Club
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Madison, WI 53703

<http://4lakes.org>

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Newsletter and Enews

Our goal is environmentally responsible, cost effective communication with all of our members. Our primary modes of communication are this newsletter, the Four Lakes Enews and the 4lakes.org web site. We mail newsletters to members for whom we do not have email addresses or those who request a hard copy. Others receive an email notice and can download the latest issue from our web site. You can help save trees and reduce use of print materials and inks that use energy and can have harmful environmental effects. It also saves funds we can use toward our essential missions. Please consider sending us your email address to receive your newsletter electronically. An added advantage is that you can get our Enews newsletter that is sent out 2-3 times a month and will keep you connected and more up to date on what's happening. Please contact Don Ferber at:

• By email to d_ferber@sbcglobal.net • By phone at (608) 222-9376 • By mail at 4700 Allis Ave., Madison, WI 53716

Volunteer Opportunities

Love being outdoors, but want to 'stay local'? If you're in Madison, or looking for an excuse to come here, we have two special occurrences to offer you.

Saturday mornings, weather permitting, the Four Lakes Group has a table at the Dane County Farmer's Market to help promote and discuss our issues. It's a great event to be at anyhow, so if you're looking for an added excuse to come to downtown Madison, we're happy to offer you an opportunity. You can buy local, but think global! Contact Don Ferber at d_ferber@sbcglobal.net or 608-222-9376.

We're also continuing our Recycling Away from Home efforts at east-side Madison festivals to help reduce waste going into the landfill, and we also plan to work with the community and festival organizers to move towards further waste reduction efforts. More info and a link to the schedule of events is at <http://www.madisonrah.org/>.

