

March 31, 2008

## UPDATES

### **Plastic bag ban in Calgary**

The Sierra Club Chinook Group is planning to usher in Earth Day 2008 by urging Calgary city council to follow other jurisdictions around the world in implementing a ban on free plastic bags in Calgary. This initiative is being coordinated through the Chinook Group's ongoing waste reduction campaign.

Coinciding with a letter to council will be an event to clean up bags littering the Edworthy Park off-leash area at 11 am on Saturday, April 19, followed by a veggie-dog roast in the picnic area of Edworthy Park (weather permitting). Participants will meet at the entrance to the dog park at the end of Spruce Drive SW. For more information, or to offer suggestions or participate in planning the event, contact Grady Semmens at: [communications@sierraclubchinook.org](mailto:communications@sierraclubchinook.org)

For more information about the environmental impacts of plastic bags, see the new website: <http://www.droptheplasticbag.org/>

### **Bike to Work Day – April 21**

Monday, April 21 is Calgary's second-annual Bike to Work Day. The first event held last year was organized by Parks Foundation Calgary and endorsed by the City of Calgary to encourage more Calgarians to use pedal power to get to and from work. Hopefully there won't be a foot of snow on the ground for this year's event!

### **We Can Solve It.org**

Nobel laureate and former U.S. Vice President Al Gore just announced his new plan to launch what is, according to the Washington Post, "one of the most far-reaching public advocacy initiatives in recent years." The Alliance for Climate Protection has started its "We" campaign, a three-year, \$300 million endeavor that aims to translate North American awareness of climate change into effective policies to curb global warming. It plans to enlist 10 million volunteers through massive media communication, including commercials. In Mr. Gore's own words, "It's important to change the light bulbs, but it's much more important to change the laws." For more information or to join the campaign, visit: [www.wecansolveit.org](http://www.wecansolveit.org)

### **Robert Bateman's Get To Know program**

The Get To Know environmental program for children was developed by renowned Canadian artist and conservationist Robert Bateman. The program is designed to reconnect children with nature and includes lessons and virtual hikes through a number of parks in Canada. The material is a fun way for children and adults to learn about plants, animals and ecosystems. Several Calgary schools have incorporated the program into their classrooms and material is also available for families and youth groups. More information about the Get To Know program is available at: <http://www.gettoknow.ca/>

### **Jack Leslie Youth Environmental Grant**

Applications are now being accepted for the 2008 Jack Leslie Youth Environment Grant. The grant supports youth initiated (12-18), youth driven projects that have a positive impact on the environment in Calgary. The Jack Leslie Youth Environment Grant funds one project conducted by an individual up to \$500, as well as two projects conducted by a group or organization up to \$1000 each. Deadline for applications is April 28.

The Jack Leslie Youth Environment Grant is a creative partnership between Child and Youth Friendly Calgary, The City of Calgary, and the Parks Foundation. The grant recognizes the positive impact Jack Leslie, former Mayor of Calgary, made to the city and the environment. For more information, contact: Ros Doi, program co-ordinator  
Phone: (403) 266-5448  
Website: <http://www.cyfc.ca>

### **Wilderness first aid course**

The Calgary Area Outdoor Council is generously sponsoring a wilderness first-aid course for members of local outdoors and environmental non-profit organizations. The Sierra Club Chinook Group will be putting together a group for this free course, called "Remote Responder First-Aid & Backcountry Emergencies" that will likely take place in April, May or June. This offer is open only to current members of the Sierra Club of Canada. (See the membership link at the end of this newsletter if you're not already a member.) To reserve a spot, email Alex Taylor: [alex@sierraclubchinook.org](mailto:alex@sierraclubchinook.org)  
For more information about the course, see: [http://www.caoc.ab.ca/PDF%20Files/Outdoor\\_Update\\_200803.pdf](http://www.caoc.ab.ca/PDF%20Files/Outdoor_Update_200803.pdf)

**To subscribe or unsubscribe to our email newsletters and updates list, visit:**  
<http://lists.sierraclubchinook.org/mailman/listinfo/updates>

## **EVENTS**

### **Next Chinook Group meeting - April 2**

The Chinook Group's next monthly public meeting will take place on Wednesday, April 2 at 7 pm at the Calgary Area Outdoor Council building (1111 Memorial Drive NW). Meetings are free and open to the general public. Next months' meeting topic:

In his movie, An Inconvenient Truth, Al Gore described how people move directly from denial to despair as they become aware of global warming. How do we assist people to become more ecologically literate and to feel empowered to take action as environmental citizens?

Two American environmental movements have faced this issue, and are developing some intriguing answers. Step It Up ([www.stepitup2007.org/](http://www.stepitup2007.org/) and [www.stepitupalberta.ca/](http://www.stepitupalberta.ca/)) has facilitated citizens to organize waves of creative demonstrations across the US, more than 1,400 in total in the last event in November 2007.

Focus the Nation ([www.focusthenation.org](http://www.focusthenation.org)) is a university-based movement that held teach-ins on global warming at over 1,900 universities, colleges, organizations, and schools at the end of January. A similar Teach-in on global warming was organized at the University of Calgary in February.

What can environmental groups like Sierra Club learn from these models as we build a movement here in Calgary and Alberta? Come to the next Sierra Club presentation and find out!

Mishka Lysack is an assistant professor in the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Calgary teaching social work practice, environmental issues, and family therapy. He organized the first Teach-In on Global Warming at the University of Calgary, and is the co-chair of the Curriculum and Research Portfolio of the university's Sustainability Stewardship Working Group. Mishka's current teaching and research interests include exploring the links between social work practice, ecological grief, healing patterns in sustainable lifestyles, and environmental social action.

### **Nuclear power in Alberta: Dr. Jim Harding talk**

Citizens Advocating Use of Sustainable Energy (CAUSE) is co-hosting, with Pages Bookstore, a public presentation by Dr. Jim Harding on Thursday, April 17 at 7:00 p.m. at the Memorial Park Library. Dr.

Harding will speak on the topic of his book: *Canada's Deadly Secret: Saskatchewan Uranium and the Global Nuclear System*. For more information, visit: <http://nuclearfreealberta.ca>

### **ISEEE Speakers Series – April 17**

This month's subject for the University of Calgary Institute of Sustainable Energy, Environment and Economy (ISEEE)'s public lecture series is "*Global Energy Perspective: Scientific Challenges in Sustainable Energy Technology*" by Nathan Lewis, the George L. Argyros Professor of Chemistry, California Institute of Technology.

Dr. Nathan Lewis has served as the Principal Investigator of the Beckman Institute Molecular Materials Resource Center at Caltech since 1992. His presentation will describe and evaluate the challenges – technical, political and economic – involved with widespread adoption of renewable energy technologies.

Thursday, April 17, 7:30 pm, MacEwan Hall ballroom, University of Calgary.

To reserve a seat or for more information, email: [iseeespk@ucalgary.ca](mailto:iseeespk@ucalgary.ca) or call: (403) 210-9786

## **OUTINGS & TRIPS**

### **Bragg Creek walking tour - Clear cuts past, present and future – April 26**

This will be a short outing in the afternoon of April 26th. Meet at 1pm and we should be done by 4pm. That gives plenty of time to explore the town of Bragg Creek or its surroundings on your own before, or stop for dinner after the tour before heading home!

Ralph Cartar, U of C professor and member of the Bragg Creek Environmental Coalition, will be conducting a walking tour of a few Bragg Creek area logging areas, leaving from the West Bragg Creek ski trail parking lot. The (easy-level) hike will pass through sites that were logged in the 1980s and then pass through sites slated to be logged by Spray Lakes Sawmills in the near future. Ralph has been active with the Save Kananaskis group, who also runs the Tag A Tree program (so if you have tags from last summer at the folk fest or elsewhere that you haven't had a chance to put up yet, bring them with you!), and will be able to answer questions the group may have about logging practices in the area and plans for this summer.

**Who:** All levels of hikers and those interested in learning more about the Kananaskis logging issue and the proposed park for the area (for more information in advance, visit the very informative website: <http://www.savekananaskis.ca/>).

**What to bring:** As always, keep an eye on the weather to see how many layers to bring. Bring along any snacks you may want to have on an afternoon walk. Light to moderate hiking boots should do the trick, but runners will probably work too as long as the trails aren't too wet.

**RSVP** to Chad Nixon at [chadnix@gmail.com](mailto:chadnix@gmail.com) by April 23rd if you are interested. When responding, please indicate if you have or need a spot in a car on the way out and/or back and we can help put people in touch with each other. Once you have RSVP'd, Chad will have a map to send to you for the meeting spot at the West Bragg Creek ski trail parking lot.

### **Outings meeting - April 24**

Please join us at Kaffa Coffee house in Marda Loop at 7pm for the spring Outings meeting. We are looking for ideas for the May-August outings, and also for interested individuals who might want to become more involved with the outings programs as leaders of future outings.

Current ideas for outings include the annual outings leader training weekend in Nordegg, a bike ride outing (road or mountain, TBD), the annual weekend backpacking trip, a trip to a U-Pick farm, and the usual assortment of day hikes.

Hope to see you there! If you think you can make it, please RSVP to Outings Co-ordinator Laura Hickman at: [laura@sierraclubchinook.org](mailto:laura@sierraclubchinook.org)

**To be added to our Outings email list, go to:**

<http://lists.sierraclubchinook.org/mailman/listinfo/outings>

## **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

### **2008 Calgary Earth Day Extravaganza**

This event will be held at the TELUS World of Science on Sunday, April 20, 2008. The event will be hosted by environmental groups from Calgary and across Alberta, and will feature fun and educational environmentally-themed games for the whole family.

Volunteers are needed to host the Sierra Club table and fun games for kids. If you are interested please e-mail [melannie@sierraclubchinook.org](mailto:melannie@sierraclubchinook.org) or call the Sierra Club office and leave a message 233-7332.

### **California visit, August 1-3**

A new volunteer opportunity for interested Sierra Club members: We will be hosting a paid event for a group of Sierra Clubbers visiting the Canadian Rockies from Southern California. We are looking for a couple people to form a committee to help organize this event. We will need to plan for an outing, meals, music, etc.

If you are able to help out please e-mail [melannie@sierraclubchinook.org](mailto:melannie@sierraclubchinook.org) or call the Sierra Club office and leave a message 233-7332.

**To be added to our Volunteers email list, go to:**

<http://lists.sierraclubchinook.org/mailman/listinfo/volunteers>

## **Chinook Group Vision Statement**

The Sierra Club of Canada - Chinook Group is an environmental organization that changes consciousness through political influence, education, advocacy and fun!

Not a member yet? Join Sierra Club of Canada today at: <https://getinvolved.sierraclub.ca/renew.php>