



March 2007

#### Contents:

1. From the Prez
2. Upcoming Events
3. Issues and Activities
4. Membership

#### 1. FROM THE PREZ

"You know, it is something very strange: You learn to live with things. For example, something is taken away, like let's say, the freedom of the press or... yeah, let's say that your telephones are tapped so you say "Okay, I can live with that" and then the next day something else, and then you say, "Okay, I will have to live with that too," and so forth. And then after a few months, you realize that you have lost everything. But, you got sort of used to it." - Isabel Allende

This is one of my favorite quotes and it came to mind after trying to attend the "Growing Communities" workshop in Dallas today. The veteran community garden organizers that presented the program told stories of teens that were grossed out at the idea of someone eating a fruit or vegetable out of the garden and couldn't recognize a carrot or a green bean! We've watched the green spaces and gardens in our urban environment disappearing while our communities say "Okay, I will have to live with that too...". Will we? Can we? I can't and many others are coming to this realization. Bob Scott shared an article with me that I would like to pass along to all of you on the awakening of the medical industry.

[http://www.tpl.org/tier3\\_print.cfm?folder\\_id=2225&content\\_item\\_id=10709&mod\\_type=1](http://www.tpl.org/tier3_print.cfm?folder_id=2225&content_item_id=10709&mod_type=1) will, hopefully, get you to an article by Francesca Lyman entitled "The Geography of Health: Research shows that contact with nature can make us well."

We have some advocacy opportunities to let others know that we can no longer say "Okay, I will have to live with that..." since the TX Legislature is back in session. The Time Out Rally successfully gathered together 1500 advocates for cleaning up the TXU smokestack emissions.

Coming up are rallies for parks and clean air. I have listed those I know about below. Of course, there is also the mighty internet, pens, paper, and the telephone. The Texas Legislature website will allow you to set up your own bill lists with "My TLO" - a service that allows you to track bills that are of particular interest to you and to receive bill and meeting alerts. Go to <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/> and click on My TLO.

We also have some opportunities to re-educate ourselves and our fellow metroplex residents about what we had and what we need to protect. First, on March 3 is the TCEA general meeting on the Trinity River Vision. While learning more, we can look out at the Trinity River and imagine the vision.... Also in March we will bring the awesome Cross Timbers display to the Fort Worth Home Show at the Will Rogers Coliseum in a win-win partnership with the Cross Timbers Urban Forestry Council. Thank you to those of you who have volunteered. We'll be contacting you with hours in the next few weeks. If you and your organization haven't located some volunteers - the payback is a free entry to the show - we need some more volunteers!

Finally, in March we are also cosponsoring, with member organizations Arlington Conservation Council and The Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club, a global warming short course that will allow each of us to assess our footprint on the planet. Call it global warming or climate change the CO2 levels have skyrocketed to levels never seen before. If they continue to correlate with general global warming we are headed for major changes unless collectively we make some lifestyle changes. AND... March is SmartScape Month with the theme "Keep your Green". It's about water and the cost benefits directly to you, to our environment, and to the overall needs for water in Texas. Take a peek at this web site to learn more:

[http://www.nctcog.org/envir/SEEclean/stormwater/program-areas/public\\_education/march.asp#q1](http://www.nctcog.org/envir/SEEclean/stormwater/program-areas/public_education/march.asp#q1)

All of you should have received a notice from Bob Scott that dues are collected every January and it is time to show your support to TCEA! We are extending memberships through 2007 for those that joined since July 2006. The basic information is at the end of this newsletter. If you renewed already. Thank you! New members - Welcome! We hope that you will all renew or join and help 2007 be another year in which we made a difference.

## 2. UPCOMING EVENTS -2007

### **Global Warming Short Course...**

February 23 - March 23 on Fridays. 3 PM - 4:30 PM. Woodland West Library, 2837 West Park Row Drive, Arlington. This short course was created by the Northwestern Earth Institute. Goals are to explore personal values and habits as they relate to climate change, to understand the history and science of global warming, and to empower us to take action to curb global warming. The Sierra Club is coordinating materials and TCEA and ACC are hosting the course in Arlington. Cost of materials is \$18 - but don't let that be your barrier. Contact Bonnie at [bfbg@tx.rr.com](mailto:bfbg@tx.rr.com) if you want to come - or just show up on Feb. 23! You can find out more about these courses at <http://www.nwei.org/NWEI/Home.html>.

### **March TCEA general meeting: Trinity River Vision...**

.. March 3. 1:00 PM

Many of us have been reading about the Trinity River Vision and the Central City Project in Fort Worth. We've read words like river channelization, economic development, urban blight... So, what is and will happen in Fort Worth? We'll learn first hand from the Tarrant Regional Water District's environmental director, Woody Frossard. The meeting will be at the Tarrant Regional Water District in the meeting room that overlooks the Trinity and into Downtown Fort Worth. TRWD's headquarters is located on the northside, a little north of the Stockyards area off North Main St. at 800 E. Northside Dr., Fort Worth 76102. We invite everyone from all our member organizations to join us and learn about this huge project with so much potential if done right.

For more information contact Jo Ann Duman at [jduman@juno.com](mailto:jduman@juno.com)

### **April TCEA business meeting...**

April 7. 1:00 - 2:30 PM. The Tin Cup, 1025 West Abram, Arlington.

## 4. ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

### **Time Out! Stop the Coal Rush Rally.**

On 2/11, we began with the Capitol Steps Rally opposing the "Coal Rush". This was followed by a meeting in the Capitol to prepare the participants for a day of lobbying on 2/12. This latter part was an excessive data dump and all in all very chaotic.

On 2/12, the lobby day participants showed up at the 9:00 am start time. The night before chaos was history as all came in, picked up their packets and dispersed quickly to visit the legislative offices. By 2:00 pm essentially all of the packets had been delivered.

At 2:00 pm there was a Legislative Forum addressing health impacts, air quality, global warming, and alternatives. This was a very good session. In fact, it was worthy of video recording for further review. All the presentations were excellent, but I thought that Karen Hadden's "Mercury and Toxic Impacts: Take Action Now!" was the most valuable. Her information was/is vital to any comments we make to our legislators in addition to all the other pollutants possible from burning coal. Why? because of the adverse health effects caused by this toxic heavy metal in our air. One estimate suggests that one plant emits approximately 170 pounds of mercury per year into our air. This may not seem like much, but this weight when vaporized into our air is a lot! As it disperses and falls onto our land and water, it pollutes and enters the food chain. Subsequent human ingestion of anything such as fish transmits the mercury.

The Rally had as a best estimate around 1500 present. Many bus loads of participants from NE Texas, Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio and lots of private transport. For the training session there had to be 150 to 200 present. For the actual legislative office visits, I estimate that there were 150. The Forum had maybe 80 present along with legislative office representatives.

For the most part the legislators were not to be seen, but their aides were very cordial and attentive in my experience. I only saw one of the legislators. I asked for a few moments and the response was a sharp No. An opportunity lost because I didn't react fast enough to invite myself to walk down the hall with him.

What' next? The TXU coal-plant permit hearings begin next week in Austin on the 21<sup>st</sup>. The public is invited to come hear a preview of the case against the plants at a big public meeting in Waco at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 20. The permit hearing's objective is to either grant the permit requests or reject the requests. Outcome is anyone's guess. --- Bob Scott

#### **Fort Worth Prairie Park**

Time is not working in favor of the 1,983 acres of virgin prairie on the western edge of Fort Worth. We urge you to continue to write, donate, and keep contact with this effort by following developments on the website for Save the Fort Worth Prairie Park at <http://www.fortworthprairiepark.org/> and the Great Plains Restoration Council at <http://www.gprc.org/>

#### **State Parks**

The Star Telegram has started a fundraising program to demonstrate to the governor and elected officials that citizens in Tarrant County want Eagle Mountain Lake State Park. If you want to show your support in this way, mail your donation (of any amount), payable to Eagle Mountain Park Fund, to: Plains Capital Bank Lock Box Center, PO Box 678523, Dallas, TX 75267

#### **5. MEMBERSHIP**

It's time to renew your membership in TCEA. We have a lot of challenges to our environment and hope that all of you will return as members and supporters. We hope that members of all our member organizations consider themselves a part of TCEA and participate with us and we hope that we can facilitate participation with each other when interests overlap. If you or your organization are not members and would like to join TCEA, please visit

<http://www.tceaonline.org/join.htm>. There you will find a .pdf form to download and mail to our membership chair, Bob Scott.

Here are a few websites of TCEA member organizations. Please visit these sites to find out about the upcoming events and activities sponsored by each of these organizations. (If your organization is a member of TCEA and is NOT listed below, my apologies. Please let me know and we'll have you included in all future newsletters. Thanks. Bonnie)

Arlington Conservation Council <http://www.arlingtonconservationcouncil.org/>

Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club <http://texas.sierraclub.org/fortworth/>

Fort Worth Audubon Society <http://www.fwas.org/>

League of Women Voters of Tarrant County <http://www.lwvtarrantcounty.org/>

League of Women Voters of Arlington <http://www.lwvarlington-tx.org/>

Blue Skies Alliance <http://www.blueskiesalliance.org/>

Friends of the Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge <http://www.naturecenterfriends.org/>

Westside Unitarian Universalist Church <http://www.westsideuu.org/>

Great Plains Restoration Council <http://www.gprc.org/>

Unity Church of Fort Worth <http://www.unityfortworth.org>

-----

Officer contacts:

President: Bonnie Bowman [bfbg@tx.rr.com](mailto:bfbg@tx.rr.com)

Treasurer: Jo Ann Duman [jduman@juno.com](mailto:jduman@juno.com)

Secretary: Marty Kissenger [kiss23@juno.com](mailto:kiss23@juno.com)

Membership: Bob Scott [roscott1950@sbcglobal.net](mailto:roscott1950@sbcglobal.net)

Program: Lon Burnam [lon.burnam@house.state.tx.us](mailto:lon.burnam@house.state.tx.us)

If you would like NOT to receive this newsletter - please hit reply, put unsubscribe in the subject line and send. The newsletter will be posted on the tcea website in the near future.