

**AUGUST
2009**



**VOLUME II
ISSUE 8**

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Join us too for our usual TGN open mike and refreshments. We encourage businesses from all around and especially those local to the area to join us and learn more about our efforts to affect positive change for our environment in the Texas business community.

We look forward to seeing you on August 26th.

Other great meetings going on at the Texas Green Network this year—

Wednesday, September 16th

*“Green Innovation for Business Unconference”
with Environmental Defense and others at 3M*

Tuesday, September 29th

Texas Green Network September Meeting at Austin Energy

Wednesday, October 21st

*Texas Green Network and Austin Eco-Network Joint Event
Co-hosted by Green Fern Events, with Bill Oliver and others at Casa De Luz*

Thursday, November 19th

Texas Green Network November Meeting Hosted by Austin Yoga & Alien Scooters

“Transportation Issues for Sustainable Business”

Tuesday, December 15th

Second Annual Green Holiday Bash at Barr Mansion

Hosted by the Texas Green Network, Austin Eco-Network, Eco Series, NetImpact and many others

Texas Green Network August Meeting with P.O.D.E.R. Texas

Wednesday, August 26th 5:00pm-8:00pm
Southwest Key Center, 6002 Jain Lane, Austin, TX 78721
(Map & info at
http://www.southwestkey.org/Contact_Us.html*)*
Please R.S.V.P. at rsvp@TexasGreenNetwork.org.

The Texas Green Network and P.O.D.E.R. (People Organized in Defense of Earth and her Resources, www.poder-texas.org) join together for a networking event also connecting the east Austin business community and the environmental leadership community.

Upon arrival, attendees will have the opportunity to sign up for 6-person “power-networking” groups facilitated by TGN. These groups will easily be able to find each other and can exchange contact information to keep in touch. They will also be a connecting point for those who would like to write a letter.

Susana Almanza of P.O.D.E.R. Texas will speak about P.O.D.E.R. and their efforts to move the hazardous Pure Casting facility from east Austin. Break out groups will have the option of drafting a group letter regarding this urgent issue, with guidance from the P.O.D.E.R. folks on the situation.

Aiden Cohen with the City of Austin Green Purchasing Program will also speak, filling us in on the city’s initiatives and how community businesses can participate.

Texas Green Network seeks a Part-time Web Developer

The Texas Green Network is seeking a part time web developer to help take our website to the next level. This is an opportunity for an individual passionate about the environment to use their technical skills to join the sustainability movement on the front line.

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What we are seeking:

- Experience building websites using Apache, PHP and MySQL and Shopping Cart/Paypal functionality
- Solid experience with CSS, Javascript and html
- Experience optimizing websites for cross-browser and cross-platform issues (Firefox, Safari, etc.)
- Aptitude for hand-coding websites, integrating online databases and integrating templates with back-end functionality
- 3+ years experience preferred
- Passion for the "green"/sustainability movement a must

The Texas Green Network is a business-to-business chamber of commerce accelerating the adoption of sustainable practices in the Texas business community. For over a year and a half, we have been building a multi-channel forum for networking, promotion and collaboration, recognizing that the profit motive must be addressed for the mainstream business community to successfully and completely adopt environmental stewardship. More information about TGN is available at www.TexasGreenNetwork.org.

This is a high exposure part-time internship opportunity that will turn into paying work for the right individual as the network grows. Please email your resume to jobs@TexasGreenNetwork.org.

About the Texas Green Network

The Texas Green Network seeks to accelerate the adoption of sustainable practices in the business community. Our vision is to provide an innovative, fun and rewarding infrastructure that fosters networking and communication among businesses, organizations, our government and individuals.

We do this through a variety of channels including our online member directory and website, monthly networking meetings, forums focusing on target issues, newsletter, partner events and more.

Step up to the open mike at one of our meetings and meet a passionate bunch of leaders and thinkers that make up the TGN community for over a year and a half now.

CALENDAR

Houston Clean Energy Jobs Under Attack by American Petroleum Institute

Tuesday, August 18th at 11:30

Last week Greenpeace USA obtained a leaked memo from the American Petroleum Institute (API) that details plans to launch a national astroturf campaign to stage "Energy Citizen" rallies and attack clean energy legislation at staged public events. The first of these events will occur TODAY in Houston at 11:30 at the Verizon Wireless Theater downtown. They're hosting the rally on behalf of EnergyCitizens -- but in fact they'll just be busing in employees to eat hot dogs on an extended lunch break to listen in on the rally.

It is imperative that leaders in the green business community respond to these negative attacks. We all know the potential for economic growth and job creation from a new clean energy economy, but currently all that the media is hearing is scare tactics from Big Oil. Business leaders need to stand up and show Texans that supporting policies to create new green jobs and clean energy industries is just what this state needs. Texas has already seen the economic opportunities afforded through investments in wind power and energy efficiency. If we let API win the PR campaign on renewable energy, Texas is going to miss out on its share of the 1.7 million well-paying jobs that this bill is expected to create.

If you or a representative from your business is willing to stand with other citizens in favor of clean energy and green jobs, please contact Sarah McDonald at citizen.sarah@gmail.com, or by phone at 210-316-9523.

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Roll Beyond Coal Planning Session

Thursday, August 20, 2009 6:00pm - 8:00pm
Sierra Club
1202 San Antonio St. upstairs
Austin, TX, 78701

Sierra Club and partner groups are planning Roll Beyond Coal, Rallies for Clean Energy in cities around Texas including Austin this Fall. Come to this meeting if you're interested in having fun working with the Austin team to make this a positive and impactful event. Let's influence the City to continue the transition to clean energy and Roll Beyond Coal.

Straw Bale Wall Raising Workshop

Saturday, August 22, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Instructor: Bill Christensen, Sustainable Sources
Location: Between Blanco and Wimberley, Texas (off RR 2325)
Experience Level: Beginner to Intermediate
Fee: \$75 - Registration required
To register, click [HERE](#). If you don't already have a DBL account, you will be asked to create an account. Once you have created an account and are logged in, select "Current Events" from the "What would you like to do?" pull down menu.

Walls built of straw bales offer incredible thermal insulation, sound isolation, beauty and permanence. Over seventy-five straw bale structures have been built in Central Texas over the last two decades, ranging from garden walls to three storey homes and even commercial buildings.

Straw bale wall raisings, like old-fashioned barn raisings, bring people together to share knowledge, skill, work, food and camaraderie. During this upcoming workshop participants will learn many of the skills needed to build a house of straw, including:

- – Preparing foundations for straw bale walls
- – Stacking and securing bales
- – Making custom bales
- – Stabilizing with external pinning, as required
- – Attaching window and door bucks

The project is a 2,000 square foot home for Cindy and Eric Gerber, where the wood-framed floor, wood columns and SIP panel roof are ready to receive the straw bale wall infill. This workshop offers the fairly rare opportunity to learn how to stack straw bales on edge, as opposed to the more common flat position.

Bill Christensen, founder of Sustainable Sources and one of the co-founders of the Sustainable Building Coalition (DBL's predecessor), will lead the workshop.

Fee for the workshop is \$75 and includes a healthy vegetarian lunch and all necessary workshop materials and tools. Water, tea and snacks will also be provided. Enrollment is limited to twenty people. Register for the workshop at <https://www.z2systems.com/np/clients/dbl/login.jsp> or contact Gayle at 512-478-9033.

Texas Green Network August Meeting with P.O.D.E.R. Texas

Wednesday, August 26th 5:00pm-8:00pm
Southwest Key Center, 6002 Jain Lane, Austin, TX 78721
(Map & info at http://www.southwestkey.org/Contact_Us.html.)
Please R.S.V.P. at rsvp@TexasGreenNetwork.org.
(Please see front page for the full story on this event.)

The Texas Green Network and P.O.D.E.R. (People Organized in Defense of Earth and her Resources, www.poder-texas.org) join together for a networking event also connecting the east Austin business community and the environmental leadership community.
(Please see page 1 for the complete story.)

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Green Innovation for Business -- Austin Unconference

Wednesday, September 16, 2009

from 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM (CT)

Registration at <http://greeninnovators-aus.eventbrite.com>

(Co-sponsored by Texas Green Network)

--Connecting business innovators to improve the environment

Are you driving environmental innovation within your company?

- Do you have ideas for operating more efficiently?
- Are you exploring "greener" products or services?
- Are you looking for new ways to engage employees, customers, suppliers and other stakeholders in sustainability?
- Do you have insights about what motivates or blocks environmental innovations in your business?
- Do you want to redefine "business as usual" for your company and your industry?

Environmental Defense Fund and Ashoka are organizing events in Washington DC, Boston, Silicon Valley and Austin. These "unconferences" will bring together dozens of professionals engaged in making their organizations more efficient, sustainable and leading-edge. Our goal is to connect you with other internal innovators to share experiences and ideas, explore new trends and opportunities, and brainstorm out-of-the-box solutions to the challenges we're all facing.

Unlike traditional conferences, there will be no formal panels or speeches. We'll use an participatory, "open space" format. All participants will have an opportunity to share, discuss, network, collaborate and learn throughout the day.

What will you get?

- New ideas for saving money and making money while helping the environment
- Practical lessons about what works (and doesn't work) in trying to make a company more sustainable

- New relationships with partners and colleagues in other businesses as well as non-profits, academics, and government.
- The opportunity to share what you have learned and multiply its value

Who should attend?

- Individuals working in corporations, from small to large, directly involved in sustainability efforts
- Senior management committed to, or curious about, the opportunities that sustainability initiatives can offer
- Staff and management of non-profits working in partnership with corporations to improve environmental performance
- Staff from public sector agencies working with corporations and/or pursuing entrepreneurial innovations to take more sustainable practices to scale
- Academics and consultants creating tools, forging partnerships and supporting models of what works in business sustainability

For more information visit the Green Innovation for Business Unconference wiki or contact Dave Witzel or Odin Zackman

Wimberley Valley Watershed Association Fundraiser with Eliza Gilkyson at the Salt Lick

Save the Date: 5-9 pm, Sunday, October 18

Mark your calendar for an evening of music and fun with **Hill Country Singer-Songwriter Eliza Gilkyson**, and great food at the **Salt Lick** to support **Wimberley Valley Watershed Association (WVWA)** - *working to save Jacob's Well and keep the water flowing.*

More information coming soon . . .

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Border Energy Forum

United States ★ Mexico

Moving together toward a clean energy future
Uniendo fuerzas para un futuro con energía limpia

BORDER ENERGY FORUM

A vibrant and growing economy consistent with a clean and healthy environment for both sides of the border has been the vision shared by Border Energy Forum participants and organizers since the first forum was held in El Paso in 1994.

FORO SOBRE ENERGIA DE LA FRONTERA

Una economía dinámica y creciente en consonancia con un medio ambiente limpio y sano para ambos lados de la frontera ha sido el ideal compartido por los participantes y organizadores del Foro sobre Energía de la Frontera desde su inicio en El Paso en 1994.

BORDER ENERGY FORUM X

October 23-24, 2003 Austin, TX

News & Announcements

Coal & Carbon: The Basics

Austin Energy's #1 fuel source is Coal, which is responsible for 71 percent of the utility's carbon emissions.

Austin wants to be the #1 City for Climate Protection.

How does Austin reconcile these?

The following cartoon explains why this issue is important:

<http://powersmack.org/basics/>

For more info on coal and Austin, explore PowerSmack.org/Coal.

Austin EcoNetwork is on the move again

Do you have space and want us to be with you?

We have loved having our HQ in the back house of the owners of MyGreenCasa.com, but they need to use the space for their new business so it's time for us to transition to a new location.

Who knows if we can find another multi-roomed office in a building that's green, with kitchen, bathroom w/ shower, private entrance, homey meeting space, and great location (SoCo), but we are open to the possibility! We will consider all offers, especially those that involve bartering office space for exposure on the Austin EcoNetwork.

Core requirements - centrally-located, near bus routes (our whole staff buses and bikes pretty regularly), at least two rooms with at least one big enough to have a table that 6 people can sit and work, space for file cabinets and bookshelves, and access to a quieter place to have phone calls and one-on-one meetings. Wifi is the only "utility" that we definitely need. Access to a nice big meeting space where 10-20 people can fit in would be stellar too.

A few of the benefits for you (if we are sharing space) #1 Interminably cheerful, active, eco-minded people around #2 Visibility and foot traffic - we have been able to host community meetings several days per week - this could be good for retail or professional offices that could use more exposure #3 Organic snacks around #4 Invitations to go dance, swim, kayak, and attend cool green community events with our staff #5 Advertising on the Austin EcoNetwork (assuming you are in alignment with the values of the site).

Letter to Pure Casting in East Austin

Many of you are familiar with the issue of the Pure Casting facility in east Austin, one being spearheaded by P.O.D.E.R. (People Organized in Defense of Earth and her Resources, www.poder-texas.org) but others are not. As a follow up to our story in last month's issue, we thought we would share the letter with you that they have written.

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We realize that many of you will be attending our August 26th networking event for just that. But we think many of you will find the Pure Casting story a compelling one, a discussion that will be lead by P.O.D.E.R. (Regardless of your reasons for joining us next Wednesday, we are happy to have you.)

Here is a quick preview of letter that was written:

July 22, 2009

*Mayor Lee Leffingwell
and City Council Members
P O Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-1088*

*Re: Relocation of Pure Casting facility and building
affordable housing*

Dear Mayor Leffingwell and City Council Members:

I have had the opportunity to hear from numerous East Austin residents and activists about the challenges faced to improve the quality of life in East Austin neighborhoods. In particular the fight to cleanup the environment in East Austin and to protect the community's health has been critical for long term residents and has also paved the way for the new development being seen in this community. Since 2001, concerned citizens have fought for the rezoning of hundreds of industrial and commercial properties in order to complement neighborhood compatibility. Unfortunately, numerous hazardous industrial properties remain adjacent to schools and homes in this community - a situation that would be deemed unacceptable in the more upscale communities of Austin. As you are aware, as long as these facilities continue to do business, they keep their past zoning designation. Therefore, additional work is needed to relocate these facilities to an industrial park area and/or a non-residential area.

Pure Casting Company operates an industrial metal castings plant at 2120 E. 4th Street, next to Zavala Elementary School in the heart of a residential area. This plant poses a significant health and safety hazard to the residents, and the children in particular, of this

community. As a by product of their work, Pure Casting uses and emits various chemicals into the air and huge 18-wheeler trucks enter the neighborhood to pickup and drop off merchandise. It is unacceptable, unethical and immoral for school children and families to have to breathe these emissions and tolerate constant industrial traffic and noise pollution.

Together, we have the opportunity to bring desperately needed affordable housing to East Austin and to protect the health of the residents. We request that the Austin City Council use some of the \$10.5 million Affordable Housing Bond money set aside for year 2009, to purchase the Pure Casting property. This site is ideal for affordable housing, since it is adjacent to city-owned property (the Brown Building), and surrounded by single-family homes, Zavala Elementary, and the historic Pan-American Recreation Center.

Please do the right thing by fighting for the safety of East Austin and creating much needed affordable housing!

Sincerely,

To join us at the August 26th joint event, please r.s.v.p. at rsvp@TexasGreenNetwork.org.

Texas Green Network Contact Information

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Texas Green Network

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