

MARCH  
2009



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ISSUE 3

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### From the Editor:

Hi Everybody,

Reed here, filling in as newsletter editor. **Ken Chambers** stepped down as newsletter editor due to other schedule constraints.

Ken did a fantastic job as newsletter editor for our first year of monthly releases. We at TGN would like to give our special thanks for his hard work and dedication to TGN and related worthy causes. Ken's skills helped us establish a great working format and he has always been fun to work with.

**We are seeking a new newsletter editor** so please contact me at [reed@TexasGreenNetwork.org](mailto:reed@TexasGreenNetwork.org) if you or someone you know is potentially interested.

Many of you know my father, **Ric Sternberg** (videographer, musician, activist). Ric has worked recently on a variety of video productions focusing on the coal plant issues in Texas and, most recently, solar-related work. Please check out his latest project at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e8aqh5JCYz8&feature=channel\\_page](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e8aqh5JCYz8&feature=channel_page). If you like what you see, please go to: <https://www.environmenttexas.org/action/solar-power/video-voting?id4=ES> and vote for Ric's video, "Big Hot Texas Sun", in the competition.

This month, we are introducing a new look and feel for the newsletter with templates provided to us by the good folks at **Ammo Advertising**. ([www.ammoadvertising.com](http://www.ammoadvertising.com)) We also have plans to make the newsletter more dynamic, with more content housed and searchable online.

*Reed Sternberg*

*President & Founder (and temporary Newsletter Editor)  
Texas Green Network*

## ABOUT the TEXAS GREEN NETWORK

*User of LinkedIn? Join our LinkedIn group at:  
<http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=71190>*

## Texas Green Network Holding Candidate Forum at City Hall, March 25<sup>th</sup>

*Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup> 5:00-8:00pm*

*Austin City Hall City Council Chambers and Atrium  
301 W. Second Street, Austin, TX 78701*

*(Parking in the City Hall Garage is provided and will be validated when you register at our entry table)*

*Please RSVP at [rsvp@TexasGreenNetwork.org](mailto:rsvp@TexasGreenNetwork.org). More information is also available at our events page at [www.TexasGreenNetwork.org/Meetings.html](http://www.TexasGreenNetwork.org/Meetings.html).*

This month, The Texas Green Network is hosting a **Meet the Candidate Forum** for the upcoming elections. All candidates registered with the City Clerk have been invited. Candidates will receive questions in advance, focused on sustainability and the business community, and will have equal time allotted for introductions and questions by our moderator, Jan Triplett.

### All twelve candidates have confirmed attendance!

Mayor:

David Buttross, Josiah James Ingalls, Lee Leffingwell, Brewster McCracken, Carole Keeton Strayhorn

Place 1:

Perla Cavazos, Chris Riley

Place 2:

Mike Martinez, Jose Quintero

Place 5:

William Spelman

Place 6:

Sheryl Cole, Samuel Osemene

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We would like to thank **Randi Shade's office** (not running in these elections) for sponsoring the event. No candidate is being endorsed by the Texas Green Network or by our associates.

Join us to meet the candidates, network and learn more about the Texas Green Network. *Come early as the Mayoral portion will begin shortly after our 5pm start time and we will have a full schedule.*

## CALENDAR

### Austin Solar Energy Entrepreneurs Network

*March 25th Event Program: Solar, Smart Grid & Jobs*

Meet and discuss opportunities for starting and growing business in Central Texas in the Solar Energy Industry.

**Vision:** To establish Central Texas as a leading center of Solar Innovation

**Purpose:** Provide networking opportunities for professionals to generate and attract Solar Energy businesses to Central Texas.

Who should attend?

- Entrepreneurs who are starting, or looking to start a solar-based business
- Investors looking to invest in the fast growing solar industry
- Technologists looking to share ideas for new products or services
- Employers in the solar field looking to hire people
- People looking to join solar startups
- Attorneys, Bankers and service providers interested in growing with the solar industry

Solar energy, including photovoltaics, solar thermal, or concentrated solar power, is growing at a rate of over 30% per year and is forecast to be a \$70B+ industry by 2012. Central Texas is to become one of the nation's leading centers of innovation for this exciting and important technology. With resources like Austin Energy, the Clean

Energy Incubator, the University of Texas, and a strong base of venture capital and entrepreneurial talent, Austin can, and should, compete with other areas in establishing or attracting solar energy startups. It takes individuals and investors like you with a passion for renewable energy and a willingness to get involved in starting and growing new companies to make it happen. We welcome you to join us, network to find people with similar goals, or just be SEEN with solar entrepreneurs.

**When:** Wednesday, March 25, 2009 from 6pm – 8:30pm

**Where:** Scholz Garten, 1607, San Jacinto Street  
(Parking available on the street or adjacent garages)

**REGISTER HERE!**

***SEEN is a Special Interest Group of the CleanTX Foundation.***

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***All 12 candidates have confirmed attendance!  
(Please see front page for full announcement)***

### Austin-Wide Electronic Waste Drive Volunteers Needed!

**Free food! Free Tshirt!**

*Saturday, March 28, 8am – 4:30pm*

*Location: Lot 39, LBJ Library*

*(<http://tinyurl.com/ewasteLot39>)*

**Goal:** Collect and recycle electronic waste

The University of Texas Student Engineering Council and Goodwill are hosting an electronics waste collection and recycling event Saturday, March 28. Please register to volunteer at <http://tinyurl.com/ewasteVolunteer>

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More information is available by emailing [Volunteer.ewaste@gmail.com](mailto:Volunteer.ewaste@gmail.com)

Visit us **online** at: [www.engr.utexas.edu/sec/service](http://www.engr.utexas.edu/sec/service)  
Join us on **Facebook** (and invite all your friends): <http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=57638317421>

### **Solar 1st Saturday - Solar and the Stimulus Package - Austin**

*Saturday, April 4, 2009*

*ImagineSolar and Texas Solar Energy Society Present Solar First Saturdays*

ImagineSolar brings you seminars on hot solar topics! We are partnering with Texas Solar Energy Society for Solar First Saturdays. See the details below. Class discounts are offered to current TXSES members. Go to [www.txses.org](http://www.txses.org), learn about their work and become a member!

April Topic: IMPLICATIONS OF THE STIMULUS BILL ON THE SOLAR INDUSTRY/ April 4th, 9-12  
Learn how the stimulus bill will impact the solar industry and ultimately, consumers choosing, scoping and justifying a solar photovoltaic project.

**Date:** April 4th, 2009

**Time:** 9am to 12pm – we plan to get a lot done in three hours – be ready. For the Seminar, bring a pen and notebook. You don't need to have a laptop computer.

**Location:**

Habitat Suites  
500 East Highland Mall Boulevard  
Austin, Texas 78752

Habitat Suites is Austin's award winning "green hotel." Ecological Consciousness in Action is Habitat Suites' commitment to creating an environmentally sustainable future for us all.

Cost:

\$35 for members of the Texas Solar Energy Society  
\$50 for non-members

Register here with a credit card or PayPal using the secured payment services of Eventbrite. (2.5% service charge applies)

<http://imaginesolarseminar.eventbrite.com/>

### **Keep Austin Beautiful's Clean Sweep – Austin's annual citywide cleanup**

*Saturday April 4<sup>th</sup>. Sign Up to Volunteer Now!*

**Clean Sweep is a GREAT community service opportunity for companies, families, schools, and community and neighborhood groups.** Last year more than 7,000 people signed up to volunteer and 30 tons of trash was removed from Austin's public space in just 2 hours.

**Sign up now to volunteer at an Existing Project.** There are lots of projects that need volunteers and we still have spots available for the **canoe and kayak cleanup on Town Lake.**

**Want to lead your own project?** This is the perfect opportunity to clean your neighborhood or local creek. Its SO EASY - KAB will provide cleanup supplies, trash collection, and even help recruit and register extra volunteers for you.

The first 4,000 registered volunteers get a **free event t-shirt** and all volunteers are invited to a **FREE volunteer party with:**

- Free lunch
- Live music by La Tampiquena
- Kids environmental activities
- Interactive recycled art (garbage art and t-shirt screen printing)
- Rock climbing wall
- Great door prizes

For a complete list of projects and to sign up visit <http://www.keeppaustinbeautiful.org/cleansweep>

### **Pecan Street Project - Part II**

*April 5th, 2009 4-6pm*

*1200 E. 12th St. [ Pollen Architecture & Design ]*

**Featuring:**

**Brewster McCracken [Mayor Pro Tem]**

**Michael Webber, Ph.D. [UT Austin]**

**Dan Holladay [SEMATECH]**

*rsvp: [info@ecoseriesaustin.com](mailto:info@ecoseriesaustin.com)*

*[ limited seating - refreshments provided ]*

*\$5 donation collected at the door.*

*All proceeds benefit Urban Roots*

### **Earth Day**

**Gateway to the Green Economy**



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<http://list.namasteinteractive.com/c.html?rtr=on&s=eagv,zfdh,4stz,evn4,6ask,6auz,jscz>  
<http://list.namasteinteractive.com/c.html?rtr=on&s=eagv,zfdh,4stz,evn4,6ask,6auz,jscz>

And together we can change the future of urban America, one block at a time.

#### PRIZES

The competition jury will award three cash prizes, and three honorable mentions.

The prize for each of the three finalists is \$25,000.

The prize for each of the honorable mentions will be \$1,000.

Jury-to-date:

**Sergio Palleroni**

Basic Initiative

**Pliny Fisk**

Center for Maximum Building Potential

**Cameron Sinclair**

Architecture for Humanity

**Peter Head**

ARUP

**Eric Corey Freed**

Organic Architect

#### Schedule and Timeline:

*Competition Launch: January 26, 2009*

*Registration Deadline: April 15, 2009*

*Entry Deadline: April 30, 2009 by 11:59pm pdt*

*Jury Session: May 2009*

*Winning Designs Announced: May 21, 2009*

*Questions, please contact: [nicole@urbanrevision.com](mailto:nicole@urbanrevision.com)*



With just 19 days left until we turn off the lights on March 28, Earth Hour is continuing to grow in the US and around the world. Here's a quick update on some of the recent developments:

**A CAPITAL IDEA:** Washington, D.C. will join nearly 1,000 cities around the world in going dark for Earth Hour. The word came last week from the District's Environment Director George Hawkins who said Earth Hour was "a symbolic but important step in showing the world we're serious about the climate." At 8:30 p.m., officials will turn off non-essential lighting on buildings and facilities owned by the city.

**A TOTAL OF 44 U.S. CITIES AND TOWNS** have now pledged to "turn out" for the largest climate event in history, with more signing up each day. A complete list of cities can be found at: [EarthHourUS.org/map.php](http://EarthHourUS.org/map.php)

**BUT WHILE THE U.S. IS OFF TO A GOOD START...** we've got some major catching up to do with countries much smaller than ours. Australia is the current leader with 144 cities signed up, but France is a close second with 137. Canada, boasting a total population about one-tenth of ours, has 96 cities signed up, while Italy has 77 and Denmark has 58. Come on, America! There's still plenty of time to bring Earth Hour to your hometown, school, campus or organization. Visit [EarthHourUS.org/toolkits.php](http://EarthHourUS.org/toolkits.php) for tools, tips and information.

"U. S. A. ... U. S. A. ..."

**EDWARD NORTON "VOTES EARTH"...** The acclaimed actor and environmental activist supports WWF's climate change campaign by agreeing to become the official Earth Hour Ambassador for the US. He joins a list of notables that includes Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Janeane Garofalo, Melissa Etheridge, Alanis Morissette, Cate Blanchett, Jo Dee Messina, Vince Gill, Wynonna Judd, Amy Grant, Kathy Mattea and many more.

**DRESSING TO GO DARK:** Finally – the latest Earth Hour fashions, including t-shirts, hats, baby onsies and tote bags are available at [EarthHourUS.org](http://EarthHourUS.org).

**KIDS TURN OUT FOR EARTH HOUR:** Get your children involved in saving the world through [EarthHourKids.org](http://EarthHourKids.org). Here's a sampling of the fun to be found there:

- **Where in the World is Earth Hour?** Worldwide. Just like New Years Eve, Earth Hour will travel from time zone to time zone starting at 8:30 pm in New Zealand. Around the planet we expect a thousand cities to participate. Teachers, students and families can learn more at [EarthHourKids.org](http://EarthHourKids.org), and click on the following link to play our *Geo*

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Bee: [EarthHourKids.org/whereintheworld.html](http://EarthHourKids.org/whereintheworld.html).

- Are you a conservationist? Teachers, students and families can learn more about ways to reduce their CO2 footprint and increase their energy efficiency at home and at school. On [EarthHourKids.org](http://EarthHourKids.org), take our *Earth Hour Power* fun and quick quiz and find out your score at [EarthHourKids.org/sur.html](http://EarthHourKids.org/sur.html)
- Empower children to write to President Obama and Congress. Click on [EarthHourKids.org/Write.pdf](http://EarthHourKids.org/Write.pdf) for everything you need to get started. Teachers, students and families can visit [EarthHourKids.org](http://EarthHourKids.org) to learn more about Earth Hour and climate change.
- Earth Hour Everyday. How can one kid make a difference? Practice Earth Hour every day. Click to learn more and play our Memory Game: [EarthHourKids.org/memory.html](http://EarthHourKids.org/memory.html). Teachers, students and families can visit [EarthHourKids.org](http://EarthHourKids.org) to learn more about Earth Hour and climate change.

OUR SPONSORS ARE CERTAINLY DOING THEIR PART TO RAISE AWARENESS: Coca-Cola will publicize Earth Hour on its sign in Times Square and in cinema lobbies nationwide. Esurance has put its TV Earth Hour ad, starring Erin Esurance, into wide circulation on Comedy Central, BET, Discovery, E!, MTV, Nick at Nite and other channels. The Earth Hour message will appear on more than 500 Wells Fargo ATM screens in Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Dallas, Albuquerque and San Francisco.

WE'RE NOTHING WITHOUT YOU... AND YOUR FRIENDS... AND THEIR FRIENDS: Our planet urgently needs your help. Don't be shy about urging friends, family and any random people you happen to meet to support Earth Hour. All the details for turning out on March 28th at 8:30 pm and becoming part of this historic call for global action on climate change can be found at [EarthHourUS.org](http://EarthHourUS.org).

When in doubt...VOTE EARTH! Thanks for your support.  
The Earth Hour US Team



Turn Out. Take Action.

**March 28, 2009**

**8:30 pm**

[www.EarthHourUS.org](http://www.EarthHourUS.org)

[www.EarthHourKids.org](http://www.EarthHourKids.org)

### **RhizomeCollective Sounds International Call: Code Violations May Force Eviction**

*Austin, Texas – March 11, 2009* - The RhizomeCollective is a consensus-run 501c3 nonprofit organization that has operated a center for community organizing and urban sustainability in an East Austin warehouse since 2000. This warehouse was inspected on March 3rd by officials from the Building and Standards Commission of the City of Austin. On Thursday, March 5th The Code Enforcement Division of The City of Austin delivered a letter outlining a list of code violations to the Collective. The City mandated that the residents and organizations based in the warehouse must vacate before March 16th. The Collective is looking into all options, but is preparing to vacate the warehouse by the deadline. Before this inspection, the Collective was in negotiations to buy the warehouse from its current owner.

The RhizomeCollective is making every effort to work with the City on this matter. Contractors are currently completing an estimate of the cost required to bring the building into compliance with city building codes. Based on conversations with contractors, the Collective does not believe it will be possible to get an estimate, obtain permits and complete the work by the City's deadline.

The RhizomeCollective including Inside Books, Bikes Across Borders and Food Not Bombs is making an international call to supporters. The Collective is seeking monetary donations, in-kind donations, funding

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sources and statements of solidarity. Donate through the link below.

In 2004, the City of Austin donated a 9.8 acre brownfield in the Montopolis neighborhood to the RhizomeCollective. The property served as a legally operated municipal landfill from 1967 to 1970, and was illegally dumped on for approximately fifteen years following the closure of the landfill. In the same year, the EPA awarded the RhizomeCollective with a \$200,000 Cleanup Grant as part of their Brownfields Program. From January 2005 to July 2006, 680 tires, 10.1 tons of trash, and 31.6 tons of recyclable metal were removed from the brownfield. This property is not being affected by the code violations on the warehouse.

The Collective is an internationally recognized model for intentional communities that comprise a massive movement focused on justice and autonomous sustainability.

In the nine years of its existence, the collective has collaborated with many local, national and international organizations by providing free or low cost space and through direct participation in their initiatives. The Collective has provided space to people working with the organizations mentioned above and, to name a few others: The University of Texas, Campaign to End the Death Penalty, Acción Zapatista, Rosa Clemente and Monkey Wrench Books. Members of the Collective have supported initiatives including projects of Indymedia, PODER, El Comité Obrero Fronterizo, Pastors for Peace, The American Friends Service Committee, The Student Farmworker Alliance and communities in both Mexico and Cuba. Inside Books sent over 18,000 books to Texas prisoners last year. Bikes Across Borders has organized more than fourteen bike delivery caravans since 2001, sending over 700 bicycles to Cuba, Mexico, and Central America. Projects directly benefiting the community have been prioritized at the Collective such as the creation of educational systems for sustainable living in urban areas, workshops on puppetry and street theatre, after-school programs focusing on bicycles, gardening and the arts.

The people affected include those who work at the warehouse in order to: furnish books to Texas prisoners,

feed the homeless, teach neighbors how to fix their bicycles, run independent media projects and organize workshops on urban sustainability. The work performed here over the past nine years is a point of pride for the Collective, the greater Austin community and communities worldwide.

This is an official communication arrived at by consensus of the Collective. For more information, please contact Laura Merner.

*Contact Info: Laura Merner, Collective Member  
Phone: (201) 739-6341, Email: lorax@riseup.net*



Consider:

1300 scientists from 95 countries found that 15 of the 25 ecosystems vital for life on earth are now degraded or overdrawn. By 2050, scientists predict that climate change will displace 150 million refugees.

U.S. students significantly trail behind peers from industrialized nations in their ability to apply math and science knowledge in real-life contexts.

In 2008, 17 out of the 50 largest U.S. cities had high school graduation rates lower than 50%.

UpLift Austin's mission is to transform public schools into sites of unexpected color, spirit and opportunity by educating youth in the fundamentals of sustainable design through the real-life renovation of their own schools. Through hands-on projects led by local design professionals, students learn about promising "green" career fields and sustainable living practices.

In the last seven months, UpLift Austin has quickly grown from a personal undertaking to a community movement, which has mobilized over 50 active team members and hundreds of supporters. The momentum that UpLift

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Austin has stirred – with little funding or reputation - indicates that they have the potential to make a huge impact in our community.

Despite these advancements, UpLift Austin needs your help right now more than ever! They begin programming at Garza Independence High School in one month and anticipate major seed funding to arrive by May. However, they are in immediate need of Bridge Funding, which will keep them operating for the next couple of months.

If you value what UpLift Austin is offering to our community and schools, please consider donating and also please share their mission with others who are aligned with their vision.

*To donate:*

<http://www.austincommunityfoundation.org/upliftaustin>

*To learn more about UpLift:*

[www.upliftaustin.org](http://www.upliftaustin.org)

*To contact UpLift:*

[info@upliftaustin.org](mailto:info@upliftaustin.org)

**Texas Green Network Contact Information**

Reed Sternberg, *President, Spokesperson, Marketing*  
[reed@TexasGreenNetwork.org](mailto:reed@TexasGreenNetwork.org)

Paul Severin, *Director of Operations*  
[paul@TexasGreenNetwork.org](mailto:paul@TexasGreenNetwork.org)

Andee Chamberlain-Hill, *Director of Membership*  
[andee@TexasGreenNetwork.org](mailto:andee@TexasGreenNetwork.org)

Jan Triplett, *Director*  
[trip@TexasGreenNetwork.org](mailto:trip@TexasGreenNetwork.org)

**Texas Green Network**

PO Box 302526, Austin, Texas 78703

Telephone number: 512-917-7749

Fax number: 512-692-6182