



NEW THINGS TO EXPERIENCE AT THE CENTER IN JANUARY!

by Ken Leinbach, Executive Director

I'm really excited to tell you about three new exhibits you'll find at the Center. When you visit this winter be sure to look for the giant puzzle, the *Gathering in the Wild* art show and the solar energy kiosk.

GIANT PUZZLE

1) "The cars are so small and people are barely visible, but ... hey! There's my house! And those big buildings must be UWM. Wait, I think I see the Urban Ecology Center, and look, there is my school and there is my favorite tree!"

One would think that this conversation was taking place in a plane cruising slowly at 15,000 feet above Milwaukee, but instead it is a student visiting the Center who just put together the new giant floor puzzle of high resolution aerial photos. Each piece, or 26-inch tile, represents approximately one square mile. When all 50 tiles are placed together you can see 50 square miles of Milwaukee! The puzzle matches perfectly the scale of the watershed of Southeastern Wisconsin which is painted on the Center's first floor, making the puzzle easier to put together. It is just like being in an airplane, but without the expense!

It is elegantly simple, yet remarkably captivating. Come and see for yourself!

Many thanks to volunteers Nancy Aten, Theresa Lins, Tom Schrader and Nancy Groethe for creating this exhibit, along with Fast Signs on Port Washington for discounting our printing.

ART SHOW

2) I look forward with great anticipation to our next art show opening *Gathering in the Wild* on Sunday, January 6th at 2 p.m. This show is the work of Debbie Jircik, Kirsten Christianson, Pat Hidson and Fran Cheney. The art work will be on display through March in our community room. I can tell, from interaction with these artists, that a visual treat is in store. What exactly this treat will be? Well, I invite you to see for yourself.

The pieces reflect the artists' impressions as they gather their materials in the wild. "Natural dyed silks, artists-made papers, gathered plant materials and branches are among the materials

Continued on page 5

ECO-FRIENDLY SNOW REMOVAL

by Mike Larson, Executive Assistant

As nature enthusiasts we have a love-hate relationship with snow. We enjoy taking hikes in the freshly fallen snow, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, ice skating and sledding- and love the snow for the fun that it brings. When it comes to removing the stuff from our driveways and sidewalks, however, we hate it!

As nature enthusiasts we also want to do everything we can to save the environment, but it seems that all of the best methods for helping us clear away snow and ice can turn a winter wonderland into an ecological nightmare! Rock salt contaminates our water and ruins vegetation and soil. Snow blowers are effective, but their two stroke engines spew carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide into our air and leech gasoline that will eventually trickle into our waterways. What's an environmentally conscious Wisconsinite to do? The following is a list of eco-friendly solutions that will leave you snow and worry free this winter:

- Nothing beats a good strong back and a shovel! This winter, consider removing snow the old-fashioned way (or paying the neighbor kid to do it). Shovels produce no greenhouse gases, will not poison our lakes and rivers, and are completely

Continued on page 10

WALKING ON HISTORY

by Beth Fetterley, Director of Education

As the snow and ice of winter decorate Milwaukee's landscape with geometric patterns, soft curves and a new spectrum of reflected light, my imagination visualizes how the Lake Michigan glacier might have appeared before it began to recede fourteen

thousand years ago. Like a masterful artist, the glacier left behind the city's gorgeous lakefront, neighboring swells of glacial till moraines, snaking eskers, kettle lakes, and erratic boulders randomly dropped on the landscape. Until a recent trip to Khumbu, the highest glacier on our planet, I struggled to draw a tight mental connection between a massive sheet of ice and Southeastern Wisconsin's unique geological features.



Continued on page 10



URBAN ECOLOGY CENTER

River Reflections is created and distributed through a team effort by the following people: Carijean Buhk, Ginger Duiven, Beth Fetterley, Judy Krause, Pat Mueller, Shirley Spelt and a volunteer mailing crew.

Contributing writers: Carijean Buhk, Beth Fetterley, Judy Krause, Mike Larson, Ken Leinbach, Steve Marshall, Chad Thomack, Tim Vargo and Susan Winans.

River Reflections is a publication of the **Urban Ecology Center**. The **Urban Ecology Center** is a 501(c)3 tax exempt nonprofit organization. Its facility and programming are made possible through the generous annual contributions of 82 foundations and corporations, over 2100 member and donor families and many in-kind donors. **No tax dollars are used to operate the Urban Ecology Center.**

To make a contribution, please see page 12 for the easy to use form or call Ginger Duiven at x106.

The **Urban Ecology Center** educates and inspires people to understand and value nature as motivation for positive change, neighborhood by neighborhood.

Our environmental community centers:

- Provide outdoor science education for urban youth.
- Protect and use public natural areas, making them safe, accessible and vibrant.
- Preserve and enhance these natural areas and their surrounding waters.
- Promote community by offering resources that support learning, recreation, stewardship and camaraderie.

Urban Ecology Center

Riverside Park, 1500 E. Park Place
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211
(414) 964-8505
Fax: (414) 964-1084
uec@urbanecologycenter.org

Hours of operation:
Monday - Thursday: 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Friday & Saturday: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sunday: 12 noon - 5 p.m.

Washington Park, 1859 N. 40th Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53208
(414) 344-5460
Fax: (414) 344-5462
jzocher@urbanecologycenter.org

www.UrbanEcologyCenter.org

DROPLETS

- **Congratulations to Jeff Anthony, our Urban Ecology Center Board Secretary, for receiving the 2007 "Outstanding Employee/Citizenship Award" from American Wind Energy Association.**
- **We are excited to announce the addition of two new members to the Center's Board of Directors.** We welcome Marc Andraca and Tom Zak as great additions to the dynamic group. They both bring skills, knowledge, and enthusiasm from A(ndraca) to Z(ak)! We look forward to introducing them to you in the next newsletter. Thank you Marc and Tom for making the commitment to help govern and guide the Center over the next two years.
- **Do you have access to printer paper that has been used on one side that is not needed anymore?** The Center prints its documents and materials on this kind of recycled paper. We could put more "one sided" paper like this to use. Note: the printing on the one side should not be sensitive or confidential information, of course. Ideally donations like this would have the paper stacked with the printed side facing the same direction in the stack so we can put it right in our copy machine and start printing on the clean side.
- **The Center has an open part time bookkeeper position starting in late January.** Submit a resume and cover letter to Judy or contact her for additional information at jkrause@urbanecologycenter.org.
- **Show off Milwaukee and urban environmental education.** Join Joey Zoher, Washington Park Program Manager, in planning the Wisconsin Association of Environmental Education 2008 Fall Conference held here October 29th - November 1st. Organize field trips, workshops, exhibits, entertainment, fundraising or publicity. Contact Joey at (414) 344-5460.
- **Reduce junk mail with Catalog Choice.** Catalog Choice is a free service that aims to improve the

WISH LIST

For Riverside Park

If you have a donation for the Center, please call Judy Krause, x102.

- Adult gloves and mittens
- Animal heat rocks and heat pads
- Apple cider press
- Basking light bulbs and infrared light bulbs
- Children's & adult winter coats
- Compact, energy-efficient freezer
- Crayons, markers, pencils & pens
- Electric golf cart
- Garden hoe
- Gently used sweatpants
- Ice cream buckets with lids
- Kayaks
- Marbles
- Office chair with wheels
- Old towels for rags, any size
- Portable shade canopy
- Rain ponchos/jackets for little kids (kindergarten - 3rd grade)
- Reliable CD player w/"disc repeat"
- Sleds
- Small, foaming pump dispensers
- Step stools - one, two, three steps
- Sturdy 2-drawer file cabinets
- Triple-Beam balance scales

For Washington Park

If you have a donation for Washington Park, please call Joey Zoher, (414) 344-5460.

- Bird feeders
- Bird Seed
- Clipboards
- Crayons and markers
- Energy Star dehumidifier
- Field guides (esp. trees, birds, insects, flowers)
- Film canisters
- Fishing nets and poles
- Flat bedsheets
- GPS device
- Kites
- Kids boots
- Lined paper/notebooks
- Love seat
- Microscopes
- Musical instruments (acoustic - drums, guitars, mandolin, ukulele)
- Pens/pencils
- Plastic storage bins with lids
- Puppets
- Scarves
- Sleds
- Snowshoes
- Stopwatches

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HELP US MAKE 2008 THE YEAR OF PHENOLOGY

by Tim Vargo, Research Coordinator

"There are two spiritual dangers in not owning a farm. One is the danger of supposing that breakfast comes from the grocery, and the other that heat comes from the furnace."

- Aldo Leopold

This is my favorite quote from one of the most influential Wisconsin conservationists. I will go out on a limb and say that most of you do not own a farm, yet are not in danger of falling victim to these suppositions. Why? Because most of you already have an environmental ethic and we at the Ecology Center are continually trying to nurture that ethic in our community.

So what does Aldo Leopold have to do with the title of this article? Dr. Leopold was one of the greatest phenologists of all-time. Phenology is the study of the timing of natural events, derived from the Greek *Phainomai*, which means to appear. Phenologists keep accurate records of when things appear on and disappear from

a piece of land. They help us learn when Mourning Cloak butterflies "appear" from hibernation in the spring, when the call of the first Spring Peeper frog "appears" from the forest and when the bright yellow maple leaves "disappear" from their branches. Phenologists keep record of the occurrence of physical events like when the river freezes over, when the forest floor become blanketed with snow. They also keep track of behavioral events such as when paper wasps start building their nests and when snapping turtles emerge from the river to lay eggs.

Leopold's Sand County Almanac reads like a calendar as he discusses the timing of appearances on his property along the Wisconsin River. Dr. Leopold knew his land well and that his breakfast and his heat were intricately tied to that land.

Today, it is frighteningly easy to become disconnected with land. For many, heat comes from a dial on the thermostat,

Continued on page 9

HELP TEENS HAVE AN ADVENTURE

by Carijean Buhk, Publicity Coordinator

Help give teens an unforgettable outdoor experience on June 7th during our Teen Adventure Challenge. The Challenge is an adventure along the river in which co-ed teams of four teens and one adult bike, hike, canoe, rock climb and solve puzzles. There are many ways you can get involved before, during and after the race. Take a look at the following list and join the fun.

We need your kids! Get together a group of four kids and one adult and join in. Contact Chad at cthomack@urbanecologycenter.org or x115 for more information. Teams who reserve their spot by March 15th get a discount on the reservation fee.

The Challenge runs smoothly each year thanks to a number of dedicated and skilled volunteers. **If you are a trained EMT or certified in First Aid, Lifeguarding, or Small Craft Water**

Safety, we invite you to support the teams the day of the event by offering your skills on the course. Contact Susan at swinans@urbanecologycenter.org or x110 if you are able to help.

Canoeing, hiking, welding? If you like to build three dimensional pieces out of wood or metal the Teen Adventure Challenge needs you! We need someone to create trophies out of recycled or salvaged materials for our teams. Contact Ginger at gduiven@urbanecologycenter.org or x106 for more information.

Sponsor a team. The Teen Adventure Challenge is a unique fundraiser. Sponsors get publicity and the opportunity to help teens spend an amazing day outdoors. If you, your community organization or place of work would be interested in sponsoring a team, contact Ginger at gduiven@urbanecologycenter.org or x106.

VOLUNTEER CORNER

by Susan Winans, Volunteer Coordinator

Unless otherwise noted, please contact Susan at x110 or swinans@urbanecologycenter.org to sign up for the following opportunities

Volunteer for Winterfest 2008!

Celebrate the winter season. Volunteers working outside will assist with winter sports. Those who prefer to be indoors will greet visitors, serve food and warm beverages or lead children's activities. Contact Susan at x110 to sign up for a shift.

Snow Shovelers. Join us in the morning before programs start to shovel the walkways surrounding our building and help us get ready for the public. Please contact Judy at x102 for more information.

Data Entry. Do you have an eye for detail and experience working with Excel and other database programs? Help us manage our membership information. Contact Nikiya at x104 for information.

Morning Kitchen Helpers. Start your morning with one to two hours of light kitchen tasks. Prepare donated snacks for our visiting students, wash mugs and help us keep our kitchen organized. Sign up for one or more weekdays by calling Judy, x102.

Spread the word! Share information about upcoming events. Distribute posters once a month to local businesses and community organizations. Contact Carijean at x105 to volunteer.

Washington Park Center Sitters. We could really use some extra ears and eyes to join us at our new center after school, 3 - 5 p.m., when kids are hanging loose. If you live near by or have some extra afternoon time call Joey at (414) 344-5460.

Save these dates! We will be looking for volunteers to help us with the following events: Community Supported Agriculture Open House on March 15th, Earth Day on April 19th, and the Teen Adventure Challenge on June 7th.

SUMMER CAMPS 2008

by Mike Larson, Executive Assistant

Do you love the outdoors and want to share that same passion with your children? The Urban Ecology Center's Summer Camps may be just what you're looking for!

Campers of all ages will enjoy a variety of outdoor activities, games and songs. In just one week they will get the chance to go hiking, rock climbing, canoeing, fishing and swimming at the beach! Older campers will also get the chance to kayak, bike and go on an overnight camping trip. Your children are bound to find something they'll love!



Take Sam, for instance. On his first try at fishing, he hadn't had a single bite all morning. When it was time to leave, he begged the counselors to let him cast just one more time. A future outdoorsman was born when he reeled in his first bluegill! The smile on his face was bigger than the fish!

Or consider Alisha, whose mom told counselors that she was scared to death of heights and would never try rock climbing. Imagine her mom's surprise when she discovered that Alisha had made it to the top of the climbing wall *three times* that day!

Experiences like these will create memories for your children that they will never forget. This summer, let the Center help instill a love for nature and the great outdoors in your children!

The chart on the right is a preview of this year's Summer Camp schedule. Brochures and registration information will be mailed to our members and partnering schools by mid-January. Registration will open at that time.

Scholarships are available to give every child the opportunity to participate in our summer camps. Call Sarah Rohe at x125 for details.

URBAN ECOLOGY CENTER SUMMER CAMPS 2008

Early Adventurers - 3 & 4 years old by beginning of camp

Session 1 August 4-8; 9:15-11:15 a.m.

EcoKids - 4 & 5 years old by beginning of camp

Session 1 July 14-18 ; 9:30 a.m.-noon

Session 2 July 14-18; 1-3:30 p.m.

Session 3 August 4-8; 9-11:30 a.m.

Trailblazers - completed 5-year-old kindergarten

Session 1 July 7-11 (full day, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.)

Session 2 July 28-August 1 (morning, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.)

New!

Play With Your Food - completed grades 1-2

Session 1 July 21-25; 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Nature Explorers - completed grades 1-2

Session 1 June 30-July 3; 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Session 2 July 14-18; 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Session 3 August 4-8; 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

New!

Urban Park Rangers - completed 3-4 grades

Session 1 July 28-August 1; 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Outdoor Detectives - completed grades 3-4

Session 1 June 30-July 3 ; 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Session 2 July 7-11; 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Session 3 July 21-25; 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

New!

Young Naturalists Overnight Adventure - completed grades 5-6

Session 1 July 21-23, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.; July 24-25 Overnight

Young Naturalists - completed grades 5-6

Session 1 July 14-18, 9:30am-3:30pm

Middle School Overnight Expedition - completed grades 7-8

Session 1 July 7-8, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.; July 9-11, Overnight

Adventure Camp - completed grades 7-8

Session 1 July 28-August 1, 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

New!

SUMMER CAMPS AT WASHINGTON PARK!

Five week-long day camps will be held at Washington Park this summer. Contact Joey at (414) 344-5460 for more information.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WISCONSIN CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

Instruments & Nature - entering grades 1-4

Session 1 July 28-August 1, mornings at WCM, afternoons at UEC; 9 a.m.-4:15 p.m.

Session 2 August 4-8, mornings at WCM, afternoons at UEC; 9 a.m.-4:15 p.m.

STAFF CHANGES AT THE CENTER

by Judy Krause, Business Manager

NOT GOODBYE, JUST SEE YOU AROUND

Our volunteers are special people. They give their time, talents and energy to expand the reach of our programs. Sometimes situations present themselves that allow us to offer a paid staff position to a stellar volunteer. One such person was Kimberly Fein, our Rental and Facility Coordinator. In her role, Kimberly has been responsible for overseeing the building rental program, the front desk area and visitor experience, as well as the upkeep and custodial needs of our building. It has been no small role and one that was felt by the great majority of the 56,000+ child and adult visits to the Center last year. Though we know she won't be gone for good, we will be saying goodbye to Kimberly as a staff member at the beginning of 2008.

Kimberly started volunteering with the Center in 2004, as we were making preparations to move from the trailer into our new building. She helped organize our first volunteer recognition event, a sneak peek into the new facility and became one of our first volunteer receptionists. Since that time, Kimberly proved herself as extremely reliable, hard working and a true advocate of the UEC mission and the kids we serve. She joined

the staff in 2005. Her efforts led to the volunteer Park Ranger program, annual celebrations of International Migratory Bird Day, a partnership with the New Hope Project, a streamlined building rental process and a much more organized and well-kept facility. Kimberly's eagerness to work with volunteers, "can-do" attitude and energy will be missed dearly. We thank her for sharing her skills, passion and friendship with us and hope she'll be back as a volunteer soon!

NEW STAFF

We welcome Max Balan to the staff as our Custodian! Max has helped with our custodial needs for a few months and joined the staff in November. He is originally from Modova, Russia and moved here in 1994 with his family. He loves playing in the snow, being out in nature and playing chess. Everyone at the Center loves his positive, hard working and friendly personality. Max was instrumental in raising our tipi for the winter season and is always willing to lend a hand wherever needed. He is hoping to start an electrician apprenticeship soon with MATC. This winter, stop in and say hi to Max. Bring your book or newspaper and relax by the fire in our wood stove - Max lights it every morning for you.

We also welcome Mike Larson who has joined our staff in the new role of Executive Assistant. Mike has worked at the Wisconsin Humane Society for over four years, most recently as the Wildlife Clinic Administrator. Mike brings with him exceptional organizational skills, an enthusiasm for working with volunteers and a passion for environmental conservation and education. At the Center he will oversee building rentals, manage the front desk area and visitor experience, as well as serve as an assistant to Ken Leinbach, Executive Director, and Beth Fetterley, Director of Education, on a multitude of projects. Mike lives in Bay View with his family. His oldest son is excited about the slide into the building at Dad's new job. We are excited to have him as part of the team and encourage you to stop in and meet Mike!

Lastly, we welcome Ben Van Orsdol as our new Urban Adventures Intern. Ben is a student at UW-Milwaukee, majoring in social work. Ben lives in the neighborhood and enjoys biking, fishing, music and exercise in general. He has worked as a wilderness therapist leading groups of at risk students through the deserts of Idaho, completed the National Outdoor Leadership School program and helped teens learn outdoor skills with Adventure Treks.

THREE NEW REASONS

continued from page 1

used in their unique art works, where the gathering can be as significant a part of the process as the creation," said Debbie.

"These impressions become words in an art piece ... a piece of silk gauze dyed with goldenrod and quilted with cattail fluff, little plants of silverweed and horsetail pressed and held together with handmade paper," stated Fran, "These pieces remind us of our own stories and bring us all to care for the wild world".

Thanks to the members of the arts committee for their work in providing this show.

SOLAR ENERGY KIOSK

3) "Dad, look the Ecology Center is producing enough power for 10 houses right now, even on this cold winter day! Hey, what just happened to the power? Oh I get it, a cloud just passed by. This is so cool!"

This real time data for our solar panels are now on display thanks to this amazing gift to the Urban Ecology Center from our partner for solar power, We Energies. In addition to assisting us in installing the largest solar power station in the

city, We Energies helped us create this new interactive exhibit. A large 42 inch flat screen monitor with touch screen capabilities introduces new visitors through pictures and words to our mission and teaches people about our solar power. The monitor sits on a beautifully crafted cart, allowing for flexible use of this engaging exhibit. It is another must see!

In addition to We Energies, we thank Drew Szabo, Kevin Little, and Gary Cox for making this exciting new resource available to our visitors.

JANUARY & FEBRUARY CALENDAR OF PROGRAMS

Unless otherwise indicated, participants meet at the Urban Ecology Center, 1500 E. Park Place. Scholarships are available for all fee-based programs. For general information call (414) 964-8505 or visit www.UrbanEcologyCenter.org Programs marked with an * are not accessible for persons with physical disabilities. All others have limited accessibility. Call if you have accessibility concerns.

SPECIAL EVENTS

WINTERFEST

Saturday, February 9

ESPECIALLY FOR AFTERNOON NAPPERS

Special program for kids ages 5 and under accompanied by an adult
10 - 11:30 a.m.

Free - donations appreciated
Call to register, 964-8505

Little kids can enjoy winter activities including creating winter crafts, listening to stories, and going for a short winter nature hike.

WINTERFEST FESTIVAL

Noon - 4 p.m.
For everyone

Free - donations appreciated

Join us for

Snowshoeing

Chili

Cross country skiing

Sledding

Hikes

Indoor crafts

**REI PEAK Pack & Everest
Base Camp presentations**

Entertainment:

**Bluegrass by
Cream City**

**Juggling with
Keith Armstrong**

URBAN ADVENTURES

Advanced registration required for all Urban Adventures. Payment due at time of registration. Cancellation Policy: When payment is required in advance for a program, you may cancel up to 48 hours in advance without penalty. If the Center cancels a program for any reason, the payment will be refunded or can be used toward a future program. Call the Center at (414) 964-8505 to register at least two days before the trip. Trips run as scheduled, rain or shine.

OPEN CLIMBS ON THE TOWER WALL

Sundays

No climb on December 22nd
2:30 - 4 p.m.

For everyone

Adults: \$10 (Members - \$7)

Kids: \$8 (Members - \$5)

Call to register, 964-8505

Payment due at
time of registration

Extend your skills on the Center's Tower climbing wall. Harnesses and belayers provided. All climbers must have a completed and signed waiver before climbing, available at the Center's reception desk and at www.urbanecologycenter.org. Registration recommended, walk-ins welcome.

INTRO TO CROSS COUNTRY SKIING

Saturday, January 19

1 - 3:30 p.m.

For adults & accompanied
children ages 12 and older

Adults: \$10 (Members - \$6)

Kids: \$8 (Members - \$5)

Call to register, 964-8505

Payment due at
time of registration

Learn how to cross country ski! Bring an adventurous spirit; we'll provide the skis and hot chocolate. We will begin on the athletic fields and then head into the woods or down the bike trail.

SNOWSHOE AT KETTLE MORAINE

Sunday, January 20

9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

For adults & accompanied
children ages 12 and older

Adults: \$20

(Members - \$15)

Kids: \$15 (Members - \$10)

Call to register, 964-8505

Payment due at
time of registration.

Explore the hilly terrain of the Southern Kettle Moraine State Forest. Dress in layers, wear sturdy and warm shoes, bring water and a lunch. Meet at the Center, transportation provided. If there is no snow, we will hike.

CROSS COUNTRY SKI AT KETTLE MORAINE

Sunday, February 10

9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

For adults & accompanied
children ages 12 and older

Adults: \$20

(Members - \$15)

Kids: \$15 (Members - \$10)

Call to register, 964-8505

Payment due at

time of registration
State Park Trail Pass required for anyone 16 years or older. Annual Pass is \$15; Day Pass is \$4.

These can be purchased the day of the program

Explore Southern Kettle Moraine State Forest on skis. Previous experience cross country skiing highly recommended. Dress in layers, bring water and a lunch. Meet at the Center, transportation provided. In the event of minimal or no snow we will hike (trail pass not required for hiking).



SPONTANEOUS SNOW OUTINGS

Snow-play enthusiasts: this idea if for you! Sign up to join others interested in snowshoeing or skiing this winter. These spontaneous outings will be planned at short notice when the weather is right. Invitations will be sent by email. Email Chad at cthommack@urbanecologycenter.org to add your name to this list. Beginners welcome!

FAMILY PROGRAMS

WARM UP IN THE TIPI

Sundays
12:30 - 1:30 p.m.
For everyone
Free - donations appreciated



Warm up around a fire in the tipi while you read a book, tell a story, or simply enjoy the fire.

ANIMAL FEEDING TIME

Saturdays
1 - 2 p.m.
For everyone
Free - donations appreciated

Do you know what a snake has for lunch? Help feed the Center's resident turtles and snakes as you learn about the animals that inhabit the river valley.

SCIENCE SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS

Drop in program
Saturdays,
9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Sundays,
12:30 - 4:30 p.m.

For adults and accompanied children
Free - donations appreciated

Discover the world of science through self-led interactive activities and crafts.

January: Explore Your Senses.

February: Learn About Snow.

OWL PROWL

Tuesday,
January 15
6:30 - 8 p.m.

For adults and accompanied children
Adults: \$7 (Members - \$5)

Kids: \$6 (Members - \$4)

Call to register, 964-8505



Learn about the characteristics and habits of local owls, then head onto the Oak Leaf bicycle path, Riverside Park and adjacent areas to listen and look for owls. Dress warmly! We will stop frequently along the path to listen. We will end with a hot drink in front of the fire.

FRIDAY FIRES

Fridays, January 18 & February 15
7 - 9 p.m.

For everyone
\$5 per person or \$10 per family (Members - free, donations appreciated)
Call to register, 964-8505

January: Join us for an exciting night with singer, songwriter Peter Mulvey! Space is limited.

February: Barb and Tom Webber. Their music features folk, country, gospel, and blues: your basic Americana template. Winner of the folk WAMI award a few years back. Hear music from their three CDs, including the recently released "Only Way Home".

WINTER STORYTIMES

Saturdays, January 19 & February 16
10 - 10:45 a.m.

For kids ages 4 and younger accompanied by an adult
\$5 (Members - \$3)
Chaperones free
Call to register, 964-8505

Sit around the fire, listen to stories of the season and make a craft to take home.

CREATING MOBILES

Saturday, January 26
2 - 3 p.m.

For kids ages 5 and older
\$5 (Members - \$3)
Call to register, 964-8505

Join us for a short hike to explore Riverside Park in the winter and then come inside and create a nature mobile.

NATURE DETECTIVES

Sundays, January 27 & February 24
2 - 3:30 p.m.

For everyone
\$7 or \$24 for families of 4 or more (Members - \$4 or \$12 for families of 4 or more)
Call to register, 964-8505

Discover the natural world as we explore Riverside Park using magnifying glasses and doing scavenger hunts.



TRACKING MYSTERIES

Saturday, February 23
10 a.m. - noon

For adults & accompanied children
Adults: \$7 (Members - \$5)
Kids: \$5 (Members - \$3)
Call to register, 964-8505
Payment due at time of registration

Ever wonder what animals are around this time of year?

Come learn how to identify animal tracks and signs through fun interactive games.

MAPLE SUGARING IN RIVERSIDE PARK

Sundays, March 2 & 16
3 - 5 p.m.

For everyone
Adults: \$8 for both days, \$5 for one (Members - \$5 for both days, \$3 for one)
Kids: \$6 for both days, \$4 for one (Members: \$3 for both days, \$2 for one)
Maximum of \$15 per family
Call to register, 964-8505

Participate in the classic Wisconsin winter activity of collecting maple sap and boiling it down into syrup.

On the 2nd we will tap trees and on the 16th we will boil our collected sap into delicious syrup.



TEEN EXPLORERS

SLEDDING

Saturday, January 12
3 - 4:30 p.m.

For teens
\$3 (Members - \$1)
Call to register, 964-8505

Come sledding in Riverside Park with other teens and then sit by the fire and drink hot cocoa in the UEC. Weather dependent.



AFTERNOON MOVIE: EIGHT BELOW

Sunday, January 27
3 - 5 p.m.

For teens
\$4 (Members - \$2)
Call to register, 964-8505

Enjoy watching the movie *Eight Below* while sipping hot cocoa and eating popcorn.

WINTER HIKE/ SNOWSHOEING

Monday, February 18
Noon - 3 p.m.

For teens
Call to register by February 17, 964-8505

Go snowshoeing or on a winter hike with other teens at Lapham Peak State Park. Meet at the Center and we will take you to the park. Dress for the weather. Space is limited.

ART AT UEC

ART SHOW OPENING: GATHERING IN THE WILD

Sunday, January 6
2 - 4 p.m.

Show runs through late March

For everyone

Free- donations appreciated
Call to register, 964-8505

This art show is the work of four voices growing from the natural world - Debbie Jircik, Kirsten Christianson, Pat Hidson and Fran Cheney. They will work together to install a unique show that is a piece in itself - a collage of their images and written words.

ADULT LEARNING

ECO-HOMES
SERIES:ECO-FRIENDLY
FLOOR OPTIONS
FOR YOUR HOME

Thursday, January 17
6:30 - 8 p.m.
For adults
\$20 (Members - \$15)
Call to register, 964-8505

Bamboo, cork and linoleum flooring are earning a reputation as eco-flooring options. But what else is considered "green"? Learn about the many eco-friendly and healthful floor options available on the market today. What makes one floor green and another healthful? How do they compare to their non-green counterparts? What about installation and maintenance? What questions do you need to ask before you buy? Come and find out!

SAFE SNUGGLES -
HOW HEALTHFUL IS
YOUR BEDROOM?

Thursday, February 21
6:30 - 8 p.m.
For adults
\$20 (Members - \$15)
Call to register, 964-8505

Beating the winter blues by snuggling up in bed with a good book (or a good friend)? Sounds cozy, but is it a healthy place to be? We spend 1/3 of our lives sleeping so it's important to make sure our bodies are resting in a healthy, nurturing environment. Lyn Falk will share information about creating a non-toxic and environmentally sound bedroom so that you can enjoy sweet dreams with peace of mind.

LIBRARY OF
SUSTAINABILITY
OPEN HOURS

Sundays, 12 - 2 p.m.
Mondays, 4-6 p.m.
For adults
Free - donations
appreciated
Call to register, 964-8505

Remodeling, adding on, or building a new home? Visit our Library of Sustainability for ideas to beautify your home while honoring the environment. This is a hands-on library of sample products for home construction and interior decorating. Resource person available.

LINKING PLANT
COMMUNITIES AND
ENVIRONMENTAL
VARIABLES IN THE
MIDWEST

Speaker: Dr. Eric Thobaben,
Assistant Professor, Biology,
Carroll College
Tuesday, January 8
7 - 8:30 p.m.
For adults
\$5 (Members - free,
donations appreciated)
Call to register, 964-8505

Wetland plant communities often vary as a function of their abiotic environments. Dr. Thobaben will present his dissertation research on a range of wetland plant communities in southwest Michigan with particular emphasis on linking wetland water sources to different plant communities. The relative importance of water levels, acidity and nutrient availability in different wetland plant communities will also be discussed.

UEC BOOK CLUB

Saturdays, January 26 &
February 23
10 - 11 a.m.
For adults
Free - donations
appreciated
Call to register, 964-8505

Newcomers and ongoing participants are invited to come enjoy the conversation and refreshments.

January: *Last Child in the Woods* by Richard Louv

February: *In Defense of Food* by Michael Pollan

ADULT BIRDING
WORKSHOPS:
BIRD PHYSIOLOGY

Part I: Saturday, January 26
3 - 4:30 p.m.
Part II: Saturday,
February 16
3:30 - 5 p.m.

For adults
\$10 (Members - \$5)
Free for regular birding
volunteers
Call to register, 964-8505

"Weight for weight, birds eat more food, consume more oxygen, move more rapidly, and generate more heat than any other vertebrates" (Joel Welty). We will look at the amazing adaptations birds have for dealing with these stresses before heading into Riverside Park for a twilight bird stroll. Binoculars provided.

CRYPTIC MATING
BEHAVIOR IN BIRDS

Speaker: Dr. Linda
Whittingham, Professor,
Biology, UW-Milwaukee
Tuesday, February 12
7 - 8:30 p.m.
For adults
\$5 (Members - free,
donations appreciated)
Call to register, 964-8505

Many species of birds form monogamous pair bonds but produce young sired by different males. This talk is about Dr. Whittingham's research to understand why some males are more successful than others in siring young.

URBAN ECOLOGY
CENTER TOURSWEDNESDAY WALK
WITH KEN

Wednesdays
9 a.m. - UEC Building
10 a.m. - Riverside Park
For adults and
accompanied children
Free - donations
appreciated
Call ahead to confirm (414)
964-8505.

You're invited to a special tour as you explore Riverside Park and/or our green facility with Executive Director Ken Leinbach (staff substitution on occasion).

BETH'S BUILDING TOUR

Wednesdays
5:30 - 6:30 p.m.
For adults and
accompanied children
Free - donations
appreciated
Call to register, 964-8505.

Explore our green facility and learn about its secrets and stories with Director of Education Beth Fetterley. This is a great opportunity for you to learn about the Center's innovative educational programming (staff substitution on occasion).



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

VOLUNTEER
ORIENTATION

Saturdays,
January 5 &
February 2
10:30 - noon

Thursdays,
January 17 &
February 21
6:30 - 8 p.m.

For everyone
Free - donations
appreciated
Call to register, 964-8505

Learn about the Center programs and how to get involved.

SATURDAY STEWARDS

Saturdays, January 12, 26,
February 9 & 23
9 - 10:30 a.m.
For adults &
accompanied children
Free - donations
appreciated
Call to register, 964-8505

Kick off your weekend by volunteering at the Center! Enjoy small and large projects around the Center and in Riverside Park. Working together is a great way to connect with others. Individuals and small groups, young and old, everyone is welcome.

BURDOCK BRIGADE

Tuesdays and
Saturdays, January 5, 19,
February 2 & 16
9 - 10:30 a.m.
Free - donations
appreciated
For adults &
accompanied children

Have a direct impact on our natural world by helping increase the biodiversity within the outdoor classroom of Riverside Park. The Burdock Brigade engages in hands on restoration activities such as removing exotic invasive plant species and planting native species.

INTEREST GROUPS

EARLY MORNING BIRDWALKS

Thursdays
8 a.m.
For adults & accompanied children
Free - donations appreciated

Interested bird watchers of all levels are invited to explore bird life with us. Binoculars available.

FRIENDS OF REAL FOOD

Wednesdays, January 9 & February 13
6 - 8 p.m.
For adults
Free - donations appreciated
Call to register, 964-8505

Share a potluck dinner and join the enthusiastic, informative discussion.

January: The Re-Enchantment of Agriculture: A New Look at Farming in Wisconsin. Jay Salinas will lead a discussion about the intersection of agriculture, humanities and the arts. Join us as we celebrate the vital process of growing and sharing food. Jay is an artist, educator, organic farmer and co-founder of the NeuErth Wormfarm CSA and the Wormfarm Institute.

February: In Defense of Food: The Myth of Nutrition and the Pleasures of Eating. We'll discuss Michael Pollan's new book about how to make thoughtful food choices that will bring us health and pleasure. Be sure to catch Michael on January 14th at the Schwartz Live/Alverno Presents author series.

UEC PHOTO CLUB

Thursdays, January 3 & February 1
6:30 p.m.
For adults
Free - donations appreciated

Explore nature in an artistic light and develop new skills.

URBAN ECHO POETS

Thursdays, January 10 & February 14
7 p.m.
For adults
Free - donations appreciated

Our purpose is to observe and experience nature, then to express these observations in poetry and essay. We will read and write and appreciate poetry with images from nature at its core.

URBAN STARGAZERS

Thursdays, January 10 & February 14
6:30 p.m.
For adults
Free - donations appreciated

Join us for information and stargazing.

KNITTING CIRCLE

Sundays, January 13 & February 10
3 - 4:30 p.m.
For everyone
Free - donations appreciated

If you are new to knitting, or an experienced knitter, join us for coffee, good conversation and knitting.

PATHS TO A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Tuesday, January 15
6:30 - 8 p.m.
Tuesday, February 19
6 - 8 p.m.
For adults
Free - \$5 suggested donation (Members: free, donations appreciated)
Child care provided at \$6 (Members: \$4 per child)
Call to register, 964-8505.

Contact relocalize@milwpc.com for details about our meetings.

January: Nuggets of Wisdom.

We'll be mining YouTube to find the best video shorts on issues of interest to our group -- sustainability, peak oil, etc. Should be funny, inspiring, poignant and enlightening.

February: Potluck and Discussion. Please bring a dish to share (dinnerware provided) and also share your challenges and successes in talking with friends, family and neighbors about sustainability.

VEGETARIAN POTLUCK

Thursday, January 17 & February 21
6:30 - 8 p.m.
For adults & accompanied children
Free - donations appreciated

Bring a plate and fork along with your meatless dish to share at our picnic style meal.

ASTRONOMY NOTES: LOOKING EAST

by Steve Marshall, Community Volunteer

Thanks to Art Paque, our Astronomy Notes feature has been a part of our newsletter for four years. We thank him for his dedication to providing our readers with a bimonthly look at the stars. Starting in January you'll be able to find a chronological list of astronomical events on our website thanks to Art and Woody Hagge. Thank you to Steve Marshall, Jon Bales and Sue Sujatha Govindarajan of the Urban Stargazers who have graciously offered to continue the Notes tradition.

In our light-polluted urban environment stargazing can seem limited to airplanes (moving), antennas (red and flashing) and seasonal decorations. But for Milwaukeeans, the great lake provides relief. A short trip to Lake Park, Riverside Park or other wooded areas close to Lake Michigan offers spectacular winter viewing, especially with binoculars. So pick a park bench away from the street lights and let your eyes adjust.

Starting at dusk in mid-December a series of bright constellations ascend in the east with brilliant stars and some challenges. Dark starts early! Ursa Major "big dipper", Gemini (Castor and Pollux), and Orion (Betelgeuse-red and Rigel-blue) stand out from left to right, with the planet Mars, orange and brightest in the middle. Just to the right of Mars are M35, an open star cluster and M42 and M43, glowing clouds of gas where new star clusters are forming. Working upward you will find M45 "The Pleiades", Auriga (Capella-yellow), Taurus (Aldebaran-orange), Cassiopea "the big W" and Perseus. Just below Cassiopea look for the famous "double cluster". Lean way back to spot Andromeda connected to the great square of Pegasus and an elongated fuzzy patch M31, the biggest and closest of all spiral galaxies (excepting our very own Milky Way) straight overhead.

Time for hot chocolate as you wait for new wonders Canis Minor (Procyon) and Canis Major (brilliant blue Sirius) to arise. If looking on your own seems daunting, join the Urban Stargazers the second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Center.

THE YEAR OF PHENOLOGY

continued from page 3

and food comes from the store. Some of us have the luxury of supplementing heat with fireplaces and wood stoves and food from a garden plot. Yet there is an easy way to become reconnected with land through phenology.

I am asking for your help to create a detailed phenology of Riverside Park and the Milwaukee River for 2008. As you walk through the park on your own or with a program and you see or hear or smell things, let us know. An easy way to do this is to write your observations on the white board at the Center's entrance. Or you can e-mail me at tvargo@urbanecologycenter.org. In return, I will make these observations available to you on our website.

We can all learn from these observations. Whether it be using biological indicators to track global climate change or learning when the maples were right for tapping (for a hint see page 7).

NEW HORIZONS STUDENTS GO LONG

by Chad Thomack, Urban Adventures Coordinator

When people hear the word orienteering, many think of using a map and compass to find your way through an unknown environment, but one day last November it meant knowing which direction to run a football passing route.

It was a chilly day and I was working with a group of students from Shorewood's New Horizons Charter School. This group of at-risk students come to the Center two days a week to learn about the environment, life, career possibilities and outdoor recreation skills. This day's class was about orienteering.

Now getting high school students to be interested in learning how to use a map and compass can be like pulling buckthorn: a hard task that takes some patience and ingenuity. The class began with a short introduction on how to determine directions by using clues from nature, such as the sun, migrating birds or wind. Then students were introduced to basic compass skills.

Basic orienteering begins with the phrase "put red in the shed and follow Fred." People wanting to orienteer should not find someone named Fred and follow

him; rather "Fred" is the name given to the direction of travel arrow, "red" is the part of the needle that points to magnetic north and the "shed" is the inner arrow that is pointing at the 0 or 360 degrees on the compass dial.

This group of students just happened to be all boys and as we went out on that windy, cold day to use the compass I promised them we'd play football. It was icing on the cake for them. No matter what else I had planned, playing football got them to keep going. I was the quarterback and they would run routes based on degrees that I gave them. I'd shout "150° north" and they would have to figure out which way to run. If they didn't run in the right direction, they didn't get the ball. It was an instant hit and success. They had no idea that I had infused learning orienteering with football. They had so much fun they could have continued all afternoon.

As we walked to the van one student said, "now we are going to take Park Place east to Oakland Avenue north." It was an infusion of science and sports. Who would have thought that playing football could be so educational.

ECO-FRIENDLY SNOW REMOVAL

continued from page 1

- reusable. In addition, a vigorous morning shoveling will burn almost 500 calories an hour, making it healthy for you and our planet!
- Looking for a way to avoid slipping on icy surfaces? Consider using an environmentally friendly abrasive material such as sand or wood ash instead of chemical salts on your sidewalks. If you must melt the ice, try using Calcium Magnesium Acetate (CMA) instead of rock salt. CMA is less harmful to vegetation, fish, aquatic life and soil. It is also advertised as being less corrosive than distilled water. If you're having a hard time finding it, ask your local hardware or garden supply what they recommend for eco-friendly deicing.
- If you must use a snow blower, consider buying an electric and replace that old gas guzzler. They are great for patios, sidewalks and short driveways. Looking for something heavy duty? Honda makes a hybrid snow blower with emissions 30% lower than EPA Phase 2 standards. It has the best of both worlds: the power of a standard gasoline snow blower with a significantly lower environmental impact.
- Having trouble getting your car out of the alley? Leave it in the garage! Strap on a pair of cross country skis or grab your bus tickets and do yourself and the environment, a favor!

WALKING ON HISTORY

continued from page 1

Last November, I trekked to Everest's Base Camp in Nepal. Contrary to what one might think, my eyes and ears were drawn down into the valley even more so than up toward the 29,035 foot peak. In an attempt to capture the power of stepping out of mountains onto the glacier, I wrote this in my journal:

"As we descended the lateral moraine to the Khumbu Glacier, we could hear a low rumbling sound like



an avalanche or distant thunderstorm... only the sound was continuous, not intermittent. I searched [the slopes of a neighboring mountain called] Nuptse for evidence of a huge avalanche. Upon inquiry, Narendra, [our guide] responded, "Not an avalanche... the glacier is moving." Incredible. As we neared the glacier, the low thunderous sound was drowned out by the rushing sound of a glacial river. The melting, trickling, rushing echoes of water accompanied us to base camp, occasionally interrupted by a sharp "pop" of ice splitting under pressure."

The surface of the glacier was not snow and ice covered, as one might expect. Rather, most of the glacier's surface was barely distinguishable from the rocky trails leading down to it. It was almost completely covered by rocks, ranging in size from sandy particles of soil to boulders as large as a car. All were being carried on this thunderous mass of ice. The glacial river ate blue, gray and white tunnels through the glacier. How many years will it take before the only evidence of this river will be a winding esker like the ones I've studied in Wisconsin? I thought. Then, we approached a massive boulder perched precariously upon a narrow pedestal of ice. I couldn't help reflecting upon the glacial erratics commonly seen at home in fields, standing alone as if abandoned. Lovely.

This winter, as life with snow and ice begins to feel tedious, I hope to be able to share a perspective that appreciates the beauty created.

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Membership benefits include discounts on programs, invitations to members only events, the ability to borrow our equipment, a one year newsletter subscription and more.

For information, visit our website at www.UrbanEcologyCenter.org.

Choose one:

- Individual (\$25) includes guest
- Family (\$35)
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Financial assistance is available. Please call Ginger Duiven, Development Manager at x106 or gduiven@urbanecologycenter.org for details.

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- A community program (\$50)
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My neighborhood park is

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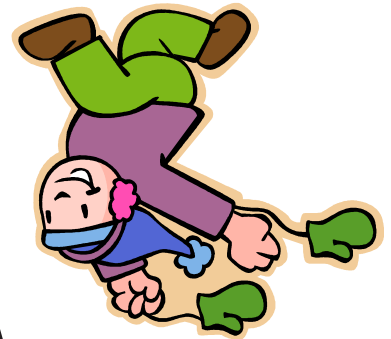
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Riverside Park, 1500 E. Park Place
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www.UrbanEcologyCenter.org



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Contact the Center for details (414) 964-8505 or visit www.UrbanEcologyCenter.org. Hours: Monday - Thursday 9a-7p, Friday - Saturday 9a-5p, Sunday 12 noon-5p

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 Science Saturdays (every Saturday) topic: Learn About Snow
3 Science Sundays (every Sunday) topic: Learn About Snow	4 Library of Sustainability Open Hours	5 Burdock Brigade	6 9a Building Tour with Ken 10a Walk with Ken	7 8a Birdwalk Intro to T'ai Chi Photography Club	8 9a Saturday Stewards	9 9a Saturday Stewards Winterfest: Especially For Afternoon Nappers 10a Festival Noon
Noon Library of Sustainability Open Hours 12:30p Warm Up in the Tipi 2:30p Open Climbs on the Tower Wall	4p Library of Sustainability Open Hours		5:30p Beth's Building Tour	5:30p Intro to T'ai Chi 6:30p Photography Club		1p Animal Feeding Time
9a Cross County Ski at Kettle Moraine	11 9a Burdock Brigade	12 9a Burdock Brigade	13 9a Building Tour with Ken 10a Walk with Ken	14 8a Birdwalk	15 7p Friday Fires: Barb & Tom Webber	16 9a Burdock Brigade 10a Winter Storytimes
Noon Library of Sustainability Open Hours 12:30p Warm Up in the Tipi 2:30p Open Climbs on the Tower Wall 3p Knitting Circle	4p Library of Sustainability Open Hours	7p Cryptic Mating Behavior in Birds	5:30p Beth's Building Tour 6p Friends of Reel Food	5:30p Intro to T'ai Chi 7p Urban Echo Poets Urban Stargazers		1p Animal Feeding Time 3:30p Adult Birding Workshops: Bird Physiology Part II
Noon Library of Sustainability Open Hours 12:30p Warm Up in the Tipi 2:30p Open Climbs on the Tower Wall	17 Noon Teens Winter Hike/ Snowshoeing	18 9a Burdock Brigade	19 9a Building Tour with Ken 10a Walk with Ken	20 8a Birdwalk	21 8a Birdwalk	22 9a Saturday Stewards 10a Tracking Mysteries 10a UEC Book Club: In Defense of Food by Michael Pollan
	4p Library of Sustainability Open Hours	6p Paths to a Sustainable Future	5:30p Beth's Building Tour	5:30p Intro to T'ai Chi 6:30p Eco-Homes: Safe Snuggles - How Healthy is Your Bedroom? 6:30p Volunteer Orientation 6:30p Vegetarian Potluck		23 1p Animal Feeding Time
Noon Library of Sustainability Open Hours 12:30p Warm Up in the Tipi 2p Nature Detectives 2:30p Open Climbs on the Tower Wall	24 9a Burdock Brigade	25 9a Burdock Brigade	26 9a Building Tour with Ken 10a Walk with Ken	27 8a Birdwalk	28 5:30p Intro to T'ai Chi	
	4p Library of Sustainability Open Hours		5:30p Beth's Building Tour			