Imagine walking up two flights of stairs under a decommissioned, elevated freight rail surrounded by high rises, street vendors and droves of people. As you reach the platform, you emerge into the lush greenery of a vibrant park buzzing with thousands of visitors. Well above the hot pavement of the streets below, the dry, intense heat of the city is replaced by moist fresh air and shade. For readers familiar with New York City’s relatively new attraction, you may have guessed that this is The High Line, a 1.45 mile park, constructed in the heart of Manhattan not too far from the Hudson River.

New York City Mayor Bloomberg calls The High Line, “a treasured neighborhood oasis”. He stated, “In the three short years since the first section opened as a park, The High Line has become a significant generator of economic activity for the entire city and a celebrated icon for planners, designers and leaders around the world.” The rail (CSX) has donated an additional 4 blocks to the city to extend the park.

Along with keynote speakers Mayor Bloomberg, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar, Eco-entrepreneur Majora Carter, and Daphne Miller, MD, the Urban Ecology Center was invited to share its story with over 800 people traveling from around the world and the country. Participants in the Public Park Alliance’s Greater and Greener conference were charged with re-imagining urban parks for the 21st century. As

The Hidden Secret to Our Success
by Ken Leinbach, Executive Director

“Hello Ed, is this a good time to discuss the terms of the lease for the Arboretum project?”...“Wait, are you sure?”...“You mean you are in Hamburg, Germany and it’s midnight over there?”...“I can’t believe you took my call! Thanks for agreeing to help.”

And on another day...

“Hi Andre, we have a situation we need to address at the Center—do you mind taking a minute to discuss this with me?”...“Thanks”...“are you at an airport? I just heard an announcement in the background?”...“You are in Moscow on your way to Siberia! That’s crazy! You sound like you are in the same room with me, what time is it?”...“11pm!”...“Wow, thanks for taking my call!”

I am often uncomfortable with the credit that I get for the successes of the Urban Ecology Center. I’m sorry, but you just don’t grow a three branch multi-million dollar organization by yourself. It takes a lot of skilled and dedicated people...a lot of them. Many of you have had experiences with our talented staff, but the hidden secret behind our Center’s success is in fact my boss...or shall I say bosses. I’m speaking here of our Board of Directors. These are people like Ed and Andre that give of their valuable time to our important mission — even at odd hours from the opposite side of the world!

In the nonprofit world, it is actually a team of volunteers that is responsible for governing the agency and ensuring that the organization is fiscally sound. This same group hires, fires and manages the Executive Director...that would be me (thankfully, not fired yet). At any given time the Urban Ecology Center has somewhere between 20 and 30 Board members.

We have an exceptional Board and always have...it’s amazing!

Branch Highlights

RIVERSIDE PARK
Access for all! We want everyone to enjoy Riverside Park so we are repairing the park’s existing pavement and adding a new access point to the Oak Leaf trail. These additions will help people who use mobility devices and families with strollers to more easily get out into nature.

WASHINGTON PARK
Big changes at Washington Park! Our new Wisconsin Native Animal Room is opening late summer. Come see “Lake Wisconsin”, our 560 gallon fish tank, made possible by a Dream Big grant from Lead2Change. Read more about our Animal Room transformation on page 12.

MENOMONEE VALLEY
It’s time! We are thrilled to officially open our Menomonee Valley branch to the public on September 8! Join us for the celebration, then come visit during our open hours, Tuesday - Friday noon-7pm and Saturday, 9am-5pm. We’re excited to begin great work in a new neighborhood!

continued on page 11

Greater and Greener: A Global Perspective on Urban Parks
by Beth Heller, Senior Director of Education and Strategic Planning

Imagine walking up two flights of stairs under a decommissioned, elevated freight rail surrounded by high rises, street vendors and droves of people. As you reach the platform, you emerge into the lush greenery of a vibrant park buzzing with thousands of visitors. Well above the hot pavement of the streets below, the dry, intense heat of the city is replaced by moist fresh air and shade. For readers familiar with New York City’s relatively new attraction, you may have guessed that this is The High Line, a 1.45 mile park, constructed in the heart of Manhattan not too far from the Hudson River.

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New Fiscal Year, New Branch, New Newsletter!
by Jeff McAvoy, Marketing Communications Manager

Notice anything different about this newsletter? We’ve made lots of changes and I want to explain some of the thinking behind the decisions we made. In the end, I think we’ve come up with some great additions and I hope you’ll like the new design!

So, what’s new?

See for Yourself! (No really, see what’s happened with your support)
What better way to communicate the impact of our work to our readers than through photos? This new section is designed to show you what we’ve been up to. Captions help to provide some background information and context for what you’re seeing. We get to see these wonderful scenes nearly every day and we love it! We thought you would like to enjoy them as well.

Programs & Events Quick Guide
The “Quick Guide” was designed to give you the full listing of programs happening at our three branches with all of the essential details you need. Full descriptions of the programs and registration forms are now on the easy-to-use calendar section of our website. Additionally, because each program category is on a separate page, each page of the quick guide can act as its own stand alone flyer. Feel free to hang up whichever section(s) interest you most: Special Events, Family Programs, Adult Learning, Urban Adventures or Volunteer Opportunities/Interest Groups.

Branch Highlights
This brief new feature on the front page of the newsletter lets you know a quick update of what’s happening at each of our branches. Look for more information about activity at the branches in the articles.

You’ll notice lots of other little tweaks and changes throughout the newsletter too, like author photos and the new table of contents on the outer cover. Overall, we hope you’ll love the new changes as much as we do!

• Thanks to Heartland Advisors and many generous donors, our 5th Annual Summer Solstice Soirée and Auction was a huge success! We began the night by inaugurating Susie’s Bridge, our elegant new entrance to Riverside Park and our growing Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum. It was a perfect summer evening to celebrate the natural wonders that are right here in the city and the inspiration that they bring to our community. Our supporters are also an inspiration for the help they provide which helps us carry out our mission every single day.

Many thanks to our 2012 sponsors:

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This Place Is Real
by Glenna Holstein, Branch Manager, Menomonee Valley

I don’t remember the first time I walked into the Urban Ecology Center. This strikes me as unfortunate, because I have since witnessed many people’s first encounter with the Center, and it can be pretty incredible. I love watching people’s faces as the energy of the amazing work happening here breaks over them and they think, “This place is here? This is real?”

My most recent experience of this occurred at the new Menomonee Valley branch. One afternoon, I looked out the window and noticed a group of kids gathering on the bike path. I had seen them around often and was curious as to what they were up to. As I watched, it became clear that they were carefully laying rocks across the path, apparently hoping that some hapless biker would be amusingly upended by their construction.

continued on page 12
Summer is a busy time at the Urban Ecology Center! Take a look at some of the wonderful things that happened at our locations.

SEE FOR YOURSELF! (No really, see what’s happened with your support)

Summer campers canoed, created awesome recycled art sculptures, built forts, climbed our rock wall, biked, camped along the Mississippi River, and much, much more! That’s 28% more campers than we’ve had in past years!

19 interns learned about environmental education, urban adventures, visitor & volunteer services & more!

18 high school students began their 2 year internships with us this summer as High School Outdoor Leaders. As part of their training, they spent 7 days travelling and camping in Northern Wisconsin.

If you’d like to support programs like these, consider volunteering or making a donation. Learn how at www.urbanecologycenter.org
Taking Milwaukee by Bike: Summer Camp Style

by Will Bufe, Summer Environmental Education Intern

It was another sizzling hot week in Milwaukee, a prime cut from the legendary Summer of 2012. While most folks might prefer to sit around inside an air conditioned room to wait it out, the Urban Ecology Center’s Biking Adventures campers shifted their chains into high gear to beat the heat.

Our middle schoolers discovered just how much a bike could be used to support their own independence and serve as an efficient and economical mode of transportation. They learned safety tips for the trails and the streets to keep themselves safe. They felt their own energy powering their movement and excitedly began to see just how simply they could get around without using gasoline.

We cruised all over Milwaukee. We rode the Oak Leaf Trail up to Estabrook Park, hiked in the cool shade, and played a big game of bocce ball. We rolled through Lake Shore State Park and learned about our city’s water treatment plants. We covered miles of water on the Milwaukee River, paddling canoes into downtown, discovering a whole new perspective of the city’s skyline. We toured a bike shop. We climbed giant boulders and skipped rocks along McKinley Beach.

The campers even learned how to do their own bike maintenance, demonstrating difficult maneuvers like expert mechanics. The tasks they learned seemed a little daunting at first – most of them thought that changing a flat tire would be too complicated or difficult for them to complete. But they decided to take a stab at it, and quickly became masters of the art. Working together and demonstrating incredible leadership skills, they discovered new powers within themselves. In just a few minutes they had replaced their tubes and were excitedly pumping them back up again.

When the campers walked out of our Biking Adventures camp, they had become empowered bike riders. Most importantly, though, they had fulfilled the first rule they had set for themselves at the beginning of the week – Be awesome.

Greater and Greener

Continued from page 1

the Center’s representative, I was able to share our efforts and discover pockets of similar work scattered throughout the country. Much of the conference was geared toward practitioners and focused on best practices for creating ecologically sound, active and well funded green spaces. However, there was also a strong focus on the impact of urban parks for cities, and the following three impacts rose to the surface as themes throughout the conference.

First, cities are recognizing that vibrant parks are economic drivers. In addition to Mayor Bloomberg’s message above, Secretary Salazar, Millennium Park’s manager Edward Uhlik, President of Brooklyn Bridge Park Regina Myer, Majora Carter and many others, shared research, case studies, statistics and anecdotes of communities rebounding from extremely poor quality of life due to poverty, crime and other symptoms of our economic downturn. At the heart of each example was barren or abandoned land restored to green space, coupled with an engaged community of businesses, residents, education providers and governmental officials. In Milwaukee, we should be proud to know that the work started by the Menomonee Valley Partners over a decade ago, now a joint effort with the Center, is at the forefront of this model of economic revitalization.

Second, health of urban residents improves significantly with access to urban parks. The majority of the country’s population now lives in cities. As doctors face rising obesity rates, mental health issues, inactivity and what Daphne Miller, MD, coined as “indoor sickness,” they are beginning to “prescribe nature.” Across the country health care providers are investing in green spaces near their facilities and doctors are instructing patients to take walks so that their health will improve. These efforts are scattered though and not fully embraced by the medical community. The Urban Ecology Center is piloting a study with the Medical College of Wisconsin to quantify the positive effects of our outdoor programs. It’s work like this that will help drive changes.

Finally, from Los Angeles, to Chicago, to New York, urban parks are serving as a powerful context for education. As school systems struggle to re-design approaches to learning, a smattering of education centers are finding that student engagement improves within the context of natural spaces. For example, students from Brooklyn Academy of Science and the Environment (BASE) study at three campuses: their traditional classroom, the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens and Prospect Park. BASE students are performing better on the regent exams, attendance has more than doubled and learning is improving. More research is needed in order for educational leaders to fully embrace this approach to learning. As the Center continues to build rigor and depth into our academic achievement focused efforts, our results will be an important part of building the case for learning outdoors. So far, we have shown that attitudes toward learning and environmental literacy improve with our programs and have encouraging preliminary results to show that science content knowledge improves.

Imagine what we could accomplish in Milwaukee if all of 15,000 acres of parks were active, free of crime and serving as outdoor classrooms: a healthier, economically strong, more knowledgeable community. Let’s re-imagine this for our 21st century.

NEWSLETTER
An abbreviated listing of what’s happening at the Urban Ecology Center. Find full descriptions and register online at www.urbanecologycenter.org/calendar

CELEBRATE WITH US!

FALL FESTIVAL
As the air starts to get crisp and the leaves change color, celebrate Fall! Fun for the entire family includes: rock climbing, nature hikes, crafts, caramel apples, food, and more.
Saturday, Sept. 29th | 12 - 4PM
For adults and children
Free - donations appreciated

FALL FESTIVAL for Afternoon Nappers
A festival for the lil’ ones! Children 5 and under accompanied by an adult can enjoy a morning of fun including a craft, hike, puppet show and more and still get home in time for their afternoon nap. Space is limited.
Saturday, Sept. 29th | 10:30AM - 12PM
For children 5 and younger accompanied by an adult
Free - donations appreciated

AUTUMN CELEBRATION
Come celebrate a beautiful autumn in Washington Park! Join us for fall food and drinks, games, crafts, and fun for all ages!
Saturday, Oct. 6th | 1 - 4PM
For adults and children
Free - donations appreciated

MENOMONEE VALLEY BRANCH GRAND OPENING
Saturday, September 8th | Noon - 4PM
It’s time to celebrate! We are thrilled to be opening our branch in the Menomonee Valley and we hope you are excited too! Come check out our new building, enjoy family friendly activities and more.
3700 W. Pierce St. Milwaukee, WI 53215 FREE Public Festival

This events guide gives you a “snapshot” view of the programs and events happening at the Urban Ecology Center’s three branches. Full descriptions and details can be found on our website at www.urbanecologycenter.org/calendar
Autumn is an amazing time of the year to get outside. The intense heat of summer breaks, insects like grasshoppers reach the full glory of their maturity and trees reveal hidden pigments. The landscape is like a canvas that changes, sometimes radically, each day.

It is an almost magical time of the year and the Center offers a wide array of opportunities to engage with the changing environment. Monarch butterflies begin a harrowing journey down to Mexico in September. You can help scientists learn more about how this amazing feat is accomplished by participating in Monarch Tagging on Thursday, September 6, Tuesday, September 11 and Wednesday, September 12.

See how artists capture this magic by visiting the Nature’s Moment and Pulp Renderings, the latest environmentally-themed art show displayed through September in the Riverside Park Community Room during the Center’s open hours. Be sure to come back on Sun., October 7, for the opening of a new show featuring Marc Tasman’s brilliant photos, Kathleen Walter’s unique mixed media compositions and Tom Petri’s lifelike bird carvings. Double the visual impact on a canoe trip down the Kinnickinnic River and relax as leaves and sky reflect off the water.

As temperatures grow cooler, fall becomes a time to reconnect to a community of friends. From cooking to bird watching to films and lectures, the Urban Ecology Center provides a safe, politically neutral gathering place to explore ways to move toward a more ecologically, economically and equitably sustainable future for this community. Check out the Adult Learning section to see our new offerings. Also, stop by the Interest Group section to learn about our monthly programs created and led by members of our community.

Don’t let shorter days deter you from exploring outside or cooler nights from connecting with friends. Whether you play in the leaves or learn to cook -- come visit us!

— Beth Heller, Senior Director of Education and Strategic Planning

All Urban Ecology Center locations will be closed on Labor Day, Monday, September 3.

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**ABOUT THE Quick Guide**

As our online tools improve, we strive to rely less on paper based communications. This “quick guide” is meant to inform you about the programs happening at the Urban Ecology Center’s three branches and give you a brief description and any essential information you may need for them. Full details and registration forms can be found on our website at: [www.urbanecologycenter.org/calendar](http://www.urbanecologycenter.org/calendar)

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**Fall in Love with Autumn!**

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— Beth Heller, Senior Director of Education and Strategic Planning

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**Get weekly emails about our programs!**

Sign up on our website: [www.urbanecologycenter.org](http://www.urbanecologycenter.org)

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**RIVERSIDE PARK**

This is the height of this growing season; there is no better time to challenge yourself to eat more locally.

Whether it is learning how to prepare or put up fresh produce, meeting local food producers, or discovering restaurants that support local farmers we can help!

**Start at the Eat Local Resource Fair, take the Eat Local Challenge, return for cooking classes or purchase an “Eat Local Cookbook”.

— Jamie Ferschinger, Branch Manager - Riverside Park

**WASHINGTON PARK**

The music of nature. We are excitedly entering our third year of partnership with Present Music!

Geniuses at Present Music and our **Young Scientists Club** explore Washington Park and together they **create original songs from the sounds and themes they find**.

Present Music is an acclaimed, leading new music ensemble that works with composers and schools to establish new music in Milwaukee. — **Willie Karidis**, Branch Manager - Washington Park

**MENOMONEE VALLEY**

Get ready for a fun-filled fall in the Menomonee Valley! For our first season of programming, we have lots of ways for you to get to know our newest outdoor classroom. **Explore this incredible area by bike or on foot** by joining us for one of our weekend family expeditions or **Citizen Science opportunities**.

Get in on the “ground floor” by becoming one of our first **Young Scientists, Park Rangers, or Photo Phenologists**! Looking forward to seeing you at MV! — **Glenna Holstein**, Branch Manager - Menomonee Valley

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**SEPTEMBER**

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Young Scientists Club

From hiking to gardening to helping with research to caring for our Center’s animals, every day in the Young Scientists Club is a new adventure.

**Every Mon - Thu | 4 - 5:30 pm**
For ages 5 through 12 | $10 annual membership (Plus suggested donation - $5)
Space is limited to 12 participants, please register ahead of time.

**Every Tues - Fri | 4 - 6 pm**
And every Sat | 1 - 4 pm
For kids ages 7-12 years old
$10 annual membership

**Every Tue. & Thu. | 4 - 6pm**
And every Sat. | 1 - 4pm
For ages 5-12 | $10 annual membership

Animal Feeding

Help feed the Center’s resident turtles, snakes and fish.

**Every Sat. | 1 pm**
For kids age 5 and older
$5 (Nonmember: $7)

E.B. Garner Fishing Club

Interested in learning how to fish?
Join E.B. Garner as he teaches you to cast, put on bait and take care of your fishing poles. Fun for all!

**Every Sat. | 4 - 7pm**
For kids and up
Free - donations appreciated

Monarch Butterfly Tagging

Join us as we carefully catch, tag and release monarch butterflies that are enroute to Mexico. This project will supply valuable data to scientists as part of MonarchWatch, a research project led by the University of Kansas.

**Every Wed. & Thu. | 6 - 7:30pm**
& Wed. Sept 12 | 5 - 6pm
For adults & accompanied children
Adults: $6 (Nonmembers: $9)
Children: $4 (Nonmembers: $7)

Bat Survey

Join Wildlife Technician Anne Reis and Bat Biologist Lainet Garcia-Rivera for a bat monitoring survey at Menomonee Valley. Meet outside the MV branch building at 7:15pm. Wear comfortable walking shoes and bring a flashlight.

**Every Tue. & Thu. | 7:15 - 8:30pm**
For adults and accompanied children
Free - donations appreciated

Getting to Know the Menomonee River

How can we tell if the water is clean? What kind of plants are growing in the river and on the shore? Are they edible? How many of them are native plants? We are going to answer all of these questions and more through hands-on activities and an excursion along the shore of the Menomonee River.

**Sat., Sept. 22 | 10 - 11:30pm**
For adults & accompanied children
Free - donations appreciated

Family Fishing Fun

Fall is the best time to fish the Menomonee River! Learn the basics of lure tying, casting, pole maintenance and then try your hand at catching the big one! Fun for the whole family--no experience or equipment necessary!

**Fri., Oct. 5 | 4 - 5:30pm**
For families with children ages 7 and up
Adults: $6 (Nonmembers: $9)
Children: $4 (Nonmembers: $7)

Menomonee Valley by Bike

Experience the Valley in a new way by hopping on your bike and pedaling the Hank Aaron State Trail. We’ll begin at the Center in Menomonee Valley and explore along the river. Learn about the economic and ecological revitalization happening in the Valley, and perhaps discover a new way to get around town! Bring your own bike, or borrow one of ours. Don’t forget your helmet!

**Tue., Sept. 18 | 2 - 4pm**
For adults & accompanied children
Adults: $6 (Nonmembers: $9)
Children: $4 (Nonmembers: $7)

Changing Seasons Family Hike

Fall and winter are coming right around the corner! Come along on a fall hike as we observe the signs of the season to learn about all the changes plants and animals undergo to prepare for the coming winter.

**Sat., Oct. 20 | 10 - 11:30am**
For adults & accompanied children
Adults: $6 (Nonmembers: $9)
Children: $4 (Nonmembers: $7)

Ooohhhhhhh... Creepy Critters!

Ever wonder why creatures like bats and spiders and snakes get such a bad rap? Celebrate Halloween by learning about Wisconsin’s “creepiest” critters, why they scare us, and why they’re so amazing. You’ll even get to face your fears by meeting some of these animals up close!

**Wed., Oct. 31 | 4 - 5:30pm**
For families with children ages 4 and up
Adults: $6 (Nonmembers: $9)
Children: $4 (Nonmembers: $7)

HOMESCHOOL SERIES

Healthy Harvest!

Plants have been growing all summer. Help harvest the beautiful bounty from our gardens! Then we will prepare a tasty dish with the food we harvest.

**Every Fri. | 4 - 6 pm**
For children age 5 and older
$5 (Nonmember: $7)

Migration MADNESS!

Just in time for the fall migration! We will search for birds on a birding hike and learn about fascinating migratory adaptation of local birds.

**Every Tue. | 2 - 3:30pm**
For children age 5 and older
$5 (Nonmember: $7)

Find full descriptions and details about these programs on our website

[www.urbanecologycenter.org/calendar](http://www.urbanecologycenter.org/calendar)

**All Urban Ecology Center locations will be closed on Labor Day, Monday, September 3.**

3 WAYS TO REGISTER:

1 ONLINE: [www.urbanecologycenter.org](http://www.urbanecologycenter.org)
2 BY PHONE: (414) 964-8505
3 IN PERSON: Just stop by!

(RP) = Riverside Park
1500 E. Park Pl.

(WP) = Washington Park
1859 N. 40th St.

(MV) = Menomonee Valley
3700 W. Pierce St.

= Accessible for persons with disabilities
Please call 2 weeks ahead of time

Some programs fill quickly! Register today to save your spot!
Some programs fill quickly! Register today to save your spot!
Canoeing Basics
Practice your canoeing technique on the still, quiet waters of the Washington Park Lagoon. All skill levels welcome.
(WP) Sat. Sept. 8 & 22 and Oct. 13 & 27 | 11am - 12pm
For adults and accompanied children | Adults: $6 (Nonmembers: $9) Children: $4 (Nonmembers: $7)

Birding by Canoe
Join Urban Ecology Center staff as we paddle a local waterway on the lookout for fall migrants. Birders of all experience levels are welcome. Bring a lunch and water. Canoes, paddles and PFDs provided.
(RP) Sat., Oct. 13 | 9am - 3pm
For adults and accompanied children: $35 (nonmember $40)

Canoe the Kinnickinnic River
The “KK” river has much to offer from great blue herons to beavers! Join us as we explore this urban waterway. We will also discuss the wonderful projects that are being done to improve this valuable resource. Meet at the Urban Ecology Center and we will ride together.
(RP) Sat., Oct. 20 | 12:30 - 4pm
For adults and accompanied children: $10 (Nonmember $15)

Open Climb
Unwind by climbing on our three story rock wall! All climbers must have a completed and signed waiver before climbing. No walk-ins. Must have a minimum of six people registered so gather some friends and sign up!
(RP) Every Tue. until Oct
30 | 4 - 5:30 pm
For adults, teens and children ages 6 and older accompanied by an adult
Adults: $10 (Nonmembers: $12), Children: $8 (Nonmembers: $10)

Water Safety Course
Come take a 30 minute water safety course to make sure you are ready to get out on the water. This training, or training through one of our scheduled canoe/kayak trips, is a requirement of the boat lending program. Registration required.
(RP) Every Thu | 6 - 6:30 pm
(RP) Every Sun | 1 - 1:30 pm
(WP) Every Sat | 10 - 10:30 am
For adults | Free - donations appreciated (Nonmembers: $5)
Membership required to borrow boats

Did you know?
Caving is the recreational pastime of exploring wild cave systems.
In contrast, speleology is the scientific study of caves and the cave environment.

All Urban Ecology Center locations will be closed on Labor Day, Monday, September 3.

Some programs fill quickly! Register today to save your spot!

Find full descriptions and details about these programs on our website
www.urbanecologycenter.org/calendar
Volunteer Orientation
Want to spend more time outside? Interested in sharing your gifts with the community? Come find out how you can contribute your time and talents to the Urban Ecology Center.
(RP) Sat, Sept 8 | 10:30am - 12pm
(RP) Fri, Sept 14 & Oct 12 | 3 - 4:30pm
(RP) Tue., Sept 18 | 5:30 - 7pm
(RP) Sat, Oct 6 | 10:30am - 12pm
(RP) Wed., Oct 24 | 5:30 - 7pm

Compost Crew
Come and help keep the Center’s compost systems working full steam!
(RP) Every Tue. | 2 - 4 pm
For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Burdock Brigade
Help us restore our parks by removing exotic invasive plants and propagating and planting native species.
(WP) Every Thu. | 4 - 5:30 pm
Washington Park Senior Center
Every Thu | 10:30am - 11:30am

Volunteer Papermaking
Feeling creative? Join other Center volunteers and learn the art of recycled papermaking to create beautiful gifts for our Center’s supporters.
(RP) Every Wed. | 4 - 6 pm
For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Work Outside Wednesdays
Green up your thumbs in our native nursery or while you keep the Center’s gardens looking great and welcoming to wildlife.
(RP) Every Wed. | 2 - 4 pm
For adults, families and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Volunteer Orientation
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(RP) Sat, Oct 6 | 10:30am - 12pm
(RP) Wed., Oct 24 | 5:30 - 7pm

(WP) Fri., Sept 7 | 4 - 5pm
(WP) Sat., Sept 22 | 10 - 11am
(WP) Fri., Oct 5 | 4 - 5pm
(WP) Sat., Oct 20 | 10 - 11am

(MV) Sat., Sept 15 and Oct 27 | 10:30am - Noon and Wed, Sept 26 | 5:30 - 7pm
For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

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Find full descriptions and details about these programs on our website
www.urbanecologycenter.org/calendar

3 WAYS TO REGISTER:
1 ONLINE: www.urbanecologycenter.org
2 BY PHONE: (414) 964-8505
3 IN PERSON: Just stop by!

(RP) = Riverside Park
1500 E. Park Pl.

(WP) = Washington Park
1859 N. 40th St.

(MV) = Menomonee Valley
3700 W. Pierce St.

= Accessible for persons with disabilities
Please call 2 weeks ahead of time
The Board has remained blessedly free of internal politics allowing for a high degree of efficiency and output. In short, we get stuff done.

Now you may think from this description that we are all like-minded. We aren’t. Far from it, in fact. We have liberal environmentalists working closely with folks who don’t believe in global warming. I do not lie. We have those who need numbers to understand, and those like me who do better with words. We have business executives working closely with community activists and education experts. We have people with a deep faith tradition and those that do not participate in any formal religion. We all grow from the diversity. It’s fun to learn how others tick! We have cultural diversity and age diversity too...but not enough. These are areas we are striving to improve. Perhaps due to this diversity, this is not a rubber stamping kind of Board, but a group that challenges and asks the hard questions and in turn makes difficult decisions...but we do this from a place of respect, transparency and dialogue.

The Urban Ecology Center, somehow over the years, has been able to maintain a remarkable Board of Directors. A diverse array of Milwaukeeans coming together around a shared vision, all rolling up their sleeves and using their respective talents to move this organization forward in a positive direction. If you know anyone who has been, or is, on our Board, be sure the thank them for their contribution to this diversity, this is not a rubber stamping kind of Board, but a group that challenges and asks the hard questions and in turn makes difficult decisions...but we do this from a place of respect, transparency and dialogue.

The Hidden Secret to Our Success ... Continued from page 1

The Board meets as a full group every other month and groups of Directors meet monthly in smaller working committees. Those committees are focused on important functions like Finance, Development and Marketing, Nominating and Governance, Human Resources or the overall leadership and coordination of the Board through the Executive Committee. Or they might lead a branch advisory committee -- one for Washington Park, Riverside Park and soon to be the Menomonee Valley. Or they participate on a task force for special projects like the Rotary Centennial Arboretum Project. Everyone has a responsibility and none of our work at the Center could be done without them.

It is the Board of Directors that allows the Urban Ecology Center to sing. Do you know how much I knew about financial management or human resources policy when I started here at the Center? Well, to be honest...nothing. For this reason and much, much more I have needed help...a ton of it. What I have discovered over time is that asking for help is a powerful act. If your need is legitimate, your purpose is pure, and your vision is clear, people are willing to use their talents to assist. And not just any people. We are talking about people who are leaders in their own realms where they are running huge organizations or managing key departments in global companies to name just a few of our Board’s talents. Did I mention legal advice? OMG, without this legal help we wouldn’t have a single lease, partnership or branch!

We sit with overwhelming riches when it comes to volunteer expertise. Because of this I feel like one of the luckiest Executive Directors around! I am blown away by the deep intellect, profound dedication and amazing skill set we have represented. And then to beat all...Board and committee meetings are actually fun! Sure, they are sometimes intense when hard decisions need to be made, but they are always filled with laughter, too. I, and I think all of us would say this, learn so much because of the diversity of the group. Despite the relatively large size, over the years the Center’s Board has remained blessedly free of internal politics allowing for a high degree of efficiency and output. In short, we get stuff done.

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At the latest Board meeting my bosses elected officers for the coming year. The Board leadership is:

President: Ed Krishok, Managing Director, International Legal Affairs, Harley-Davidson Motor Company
Vice President: Monique Charlier, President, Rivet, LLC
Treasurer: Peter Campbell (re-elected to serve a second term), Associate Managing Director, The Private Bank

Our current Board directors are:

Marc D. Andraca, Jennifer Breceda, Peter Campbell, Monique Charlier, John Clancy, Eric Crawford, Derek Deubel, Danni Gendelman, Jeff Geygan, Mary Gute Witte, Dennis Grzezinski, Troy Hilliard, Edward Krishok, Cora Lee-Palmer, Theresa Lins, Blake Moret, Will Nasgovitz, Bill Rumpf, Molly Schissler, Mary Staten, Carl Trimble, Kathy Werlein and Andre Williams.

Finally, I’d like to give particular thanks to the following three very special outgoing Board members.

Theresa Lins has been with us for almost a decade. She has served on just about every committee and become an integral part of our family. Her hard work early on with marketing got our name out to the community and her recent work with governance has been critical to our growth.

Marc Andraca of Johnson Controls has been with us for four years and as Board Vice President has been a key driver of our recently completed strategic plan. Marc and his wife Deb have led our Hoot in the Night summer camp fund raiser for the past two years.

Jeff Geygan taught me how to keep a meeting moving and end on time. His finance expertise came at a very important time for the Center. Jeff put together an incredible team for our finance committee before shifting over to become our Board President for the past two years. He and his wife Kathy were instrumental in creating our popular annual fundraising event, the Summer Solstice Soiree and Auction.

We will deeply miss Theresa, Mark and Jeff. I share my deep gratitude to each of you for your service to the Urban Ecology Center. 🌈
This Place Is Real
Continued from page 2

I was unsure what to do. I didn’t want to yell at them—they are the reason we are here, after all. But I couldn’t ignore them either. So I went outside, introduced myself, told them about the Center and the community mosaic project that was happening in preparation for the Grand Opening, and said “You know, for the mosaic, we thought it would be cool to have rocks incorporated in the design. Since you guys have conveniently collected a bunch of rocks, would you mind bringing them inside and donating them to the project?” And, I kid you not, those teenage boys picked up as many rocks as they could carry (even filled their pockets!) and brought them inside with me.

And as soon as they were in, I saw that “this is real?” look come over their faces. I showed them the slide, the overlook, the future animal room, and they were hooked! “Come back tomorrow!” I said as they left smiling, “You can help with the mosaic!”

And they did! One of them, Marcel, has come back nearly every day to help with the mosaic and has even come to a Volunteer Orientation. In fact, he was recently overheard telling some of his friends, “Yeah, this is the Urban Ecology Center … I pretty much work here!”

As I said, I don’t remember my first day at the Center. But I do distinctly remember that feeling of belonging that I can see Marcel experiencing. And as I am watching our newest branch take shape and already begin to have an impact, I could not be prouder to say that I “pretty much work here.”

Where’s the “Thank You” list?

Our list of supporters has grown so large that we can no longer print it in the newsletter. The list can instead be found on our website at www.urbanecologycenter.org/thankyoulist. Many thanks to the local foundations, corporations and individuals who have donated to the Center within the last two months. We are extremely grateful for your patience during this transition.

We thank all of you who have become members, renewed your membership, given a gift membership or made a donation to our mission. We work hard to recognize all our supporters accurately. Contact Cassie at 964-8505 or cmordini@urbanecologycenter.org if your name has not appeared as you expected.

Steady Change
by Willie Karidis, Branch Manager, Washington Park

It’s fascinating to watch the place where you work become transformed. The progress can take on many forms -- slow as molasses, steady as an Ornate Box Turtle or fast and furious. No matter at what speed you are moving, visitors inevitably come in and comment, “Wow, it looks so different!” or “You all have been doing so much work!” However, when you are caught up in the day to day, it’s sometimes hard to see the change -- “smell the roses” as it were, along your journey. It was a comment from a regular visitor that caused me to step back and really take a look at what we’ve accomplished.

We are working hard at Washington Park to build a better home for our programs, visitors and animal residents. Through the help of dedicated volunteers, enthusiastic staff and Milwaukee County Parks, the transformation is starting to become real and noteworthy. Bit by bit we are adding new displays and green features.

The most recent addition to the building is our new Wisconsin Native Animal Room. Thanks to the generosity of long time supporter, Janine Arseneau, we were able to begin construction and will have it completed by the time you read this.

Our new Animal Room will house “Lake Wisconsin”, a 560 gallon fish tank, made possible by the organization Lead2Change and their Dream Big grant. Daniel Rawley, one of our Outdoor Leaders, submitted the grant and won the $5,000 award. “Lake Wisconsin” will greet visitors to the Center and house native species of fish including bowfin, short nosed gar, bluegill, perch and bullhead. In addition, the Wisconsin Native Animal Room will have displays which include different species of frogs, turtles, snakes and salamanders. Sometime in the future, if we are lucky, a little eastern screech owl will be found in the room as well.

We know that the physical changes we are making to the Center will help us continue to deliver quality educational programs. This is what it’s all about. At the end of the day, how many lives have we impacted, what lessons have we taught and what have people learned? Education is a strategic process of meaningful moments. Our new Wisconsin Native Animal Room will help us deliver those moments with more frequency and meaning. It makes all the work worthwhile.

Please visit us during our open hours and take a look for yourself.
This newsletter is a publication of the Urban Ecology Center, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Thanks to the generous annual contributions of 215 foundations, corporations and organizations, over 2700 member and many in-kind donors the Center serves over 80,000 people per year.

To make a contribution, please see page 14 for the easy to use form, visit our website at www.urbanecologycenter.org or call the Center at (414) 964-8505.

The Urban Ecology Center fosters ecological understanding as inspiration for 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, volunteerism, stewardship, recreation, and camaraderie.
- Practice and model environmentally responsible behaviors

LOCATIONS & HOURS

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 St., Milwaukee, WI 53208
(Mailing address: 4145 W. Lisbon Ave.,
Milwaukee, WI 53208)
(414) 344-5460 Fax: (414) 344-5462
wkaridis@urbanecologycenter.org

Hours of operation:
Tuesday - Friday: 4 - 7 p.m.
Saturday: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Menomonee Valley
3700 W Pierce St.
Milwaukee, WI 53214
(414) 431-2940
gholstein@urbanecologycenter.org

Hours of operation:
Tuesday - Friday: noon-7pm
Saturday: 9am-5pm

www.UrbanEcologyCenter.org
Find us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter!

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY TODAY!

MEMBERSHIP

Did you know you can give a donation, join or renew your membership securely online? Visit www.urbanecologycenter.org and click either “donations” or “membership”

Renew or begin your membership, choose one:
☐ Individual ($25) includes guest ☐ Family ($35) ☐ Student ($12)

Financial assistance is available. Please call the Center at (414) 964-8505 and ask to speak to someone on our membership team for details.

Give a gift membership:
☐ Individual ($25) includes guest ☐ Family ($35) ☐ Student ($12)

Recipient Name _______________________________________________________
Address _______________________________________________________________
City, State, Zip ___________________________________________________________
Day Phone ____________________________ Eve. _____________________________
Email ______________________________

Send the announcement card to ☐ Me ☐ Gift recipient
Occasion ____________________________ Deliver by ____________

DONATION (IN ADDITION TO MEMBERSHIP)

Please accept my gift to support:
☐ Provide a membership for a low income family ($35)
☐ Provide an educational program for families ($75)
☐ Provide a summer camp scholarship ($195)
☐ Support a high school summer intern ($600)
☐ Restore native plants to an acre of public land ($1000)
☐ Sponsor a school for a year, 24 field trips for city kids! ($5000)

Total Enclosed ____________________________

Please make your check payable to: Urban Ecology Center and return it with this form to:
Riverside Park, 1500 E. Park Place
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53211
www.UrbanEcologyCenter.org
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By Will Bufe

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SEE FOR YOURSELF! (NO REALLY, SEE WHAT’S HAPPENED WITH YOUR SUPPORT)

574
Kids attended
Summer Camps