



# Annual Report

September 2011-  
August 2012





# Table of Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| A Message from the Executive Director.....     | 1  |
| About Us.....                                  | 2  |
| Accomplishments and Highlights.....            | 3  |
| Agency Wide.....                               | 3  |
| Branch Updates                                 |    |
| Menomonee Valley.....                          | 4  |
| Riverside Park .....                           | 5  |
| Washington Park.....                           | 6  |
| Departments                                    |    |
| Education.....                                 | 7  |
| Urban Adventures.....                          | 8  |
| Citizen Science.....                           | 9  |
| Land Stewardship.....                          | 9  |
| Impact Report.....                             | 11 |
| Financial Report.....                          | 12 |
| Donors   |    |
| Foundations, Corporations & Organizations..... | 14 |
| Individual Donors.....                         | 16 |
| Tributes.....                                  | 20 |
| Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum.....     | 22 |
| Menomonee Valley - From the Ground Up.....     | 24 |
| Board, Staff & Advisory Council.....           | 25 |

# A Message from the Executive Director



Ken Leinbach, Executive Director

**Dear Friends,**

At the beginning of this year we talked about a tipping point, that magical moment when a good idea crosses an intangible threshold and suddenly “tips” the balance and spreads like wildfire. While I am hesitant to make that grand a claim, at the Urban Ecology Center we are creating something truly unique and powerful; a WIN-WIN-WIN approach to improved education for our kids, stronger neighborhoods, and more nature (and biological diversity!) right in the middle of the city.

The word is getting out about this Milwaukee idea, and it is because of your generous and deepened support that we are able to continue, improve, and expand on this important work.

Our third branch in the Menomonee Valley opened its doors in 2012. I hope you will agree that this culmination of years of work, planning, and the many donors, volunteers, and organizations working together have created a new gem for our southside community. We were honored (and pretty excited!) to break ground with Hank Aaron himself on the 24 acres of land that will become the outdoor classroom for hands-on, environmental education programs. And as the fiscal year closed, we ramped up construction on the formerly industrial land that will become part of the new Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum.

In the 2011-2012 fiscal year we invested in the staff and infrastructure needed to effectively meet the growing demand to serve more kids and families. We continued to build relationships and partnerships to strengthen our local community, while bringing awareness to global issues.

We did not get here by magic or by happenstance. It is because of your unwavering support through your time spent volunteering, your talent devoted to our community, and your treasure invested in our programs that we can continue to make a difference.

As we closed the fiscal year, we thanked Jeff Geygan for his service as Board President and welcomed Ed Krishok into this important role. We thank them both for their leadership and the significant and selfless commitment of time they each have dedicated to help the Urban Ecology Center connect kids and adults to nature.

With our deepest gratitude, we share our 2011-2012 Annual Report with you.

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Leinbach". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ken Leinbach  
Executive Director



Jeff Geygan  
Board President  
August 2010 - August 2012



Ed Krishok  
Board President  
August 2012 - present



# About Us

## Our Mission

The Urban Ecology Center fosters ecological understanding as inspiration for change, neighborhood by neighborhood.



## OUR BRANCH LOCATIONS



# Accomplishments & Highlights



We were hard at work in the 2011-2012 fiscal year, connecting people with the outdoors in an effort to help them live healthy, abundant lifestyles. With the support of our community, we are poised to make even greater impacts in Milwaukee and beyond. Our collective accomplishments are the result of cooperative efforts across all aspects of the Center.

## Agency Wide

The Urban Ecology Center is a place where people can learn about and enjoy nature...even in the city. We get people of all ages outside and active every single day! This year we engaged more schools, volunteers, visitors and participants than before, broke ground and finished construction on our Menomonee Valley branch, and continued to field calls from all over the world related to this unique Milwaukee idea: the Urban Ecology Center.

In the 2011-2012 fiscal year, we continued to build relationships and raise our profile with key organizations, including the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's leadership team and former U.S. Department of the Interior Secretary Ken Salazar. Peter Senge, internationally known organizational strategist, continued to help us foster relationships with the Society for Organizational Partnership (SoL Ed) and the Academy for Systemic Change, a global learning community composed of innovative leaders in business, education and science.

We were honored to break ground with Hank Aaron on the 24-acre park located along the Menomonee River between 27th and 37th Streets. The park will become our outdoor classroom for hands-on, experiential environmental education programs in the Menomonee Valley.

Finally, we invested in the staff and infrastructure needed to effectively operate and fund our growing organization. We launched a new website complete with online program registration and developed

our strategic plan to achieve our vision for the future. All of these assets improve our organizational sustainability and efficiency.

### Volunteer Engagement

Year after year, we are humbled by the support of the individuals and groups that come together to volunteer with the Urban Ecology Center. Whether they are pulling garlic mustard, helping to introduce urban youth to the Milwaukee River for the first time, or greeting visitors at the front desk, volunteers are continually having a positive impact on our community. This year has been no different.

This past year, volunteers committed nearly 130 hours to a two-week "Plant-a-Thon" that resulted in the planting of over 2,000 new trees, shrubs, grasses, and wildflowers for the Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum project. They helped in the design and the creation of Washington Park's new and improved animal room and helped create a wall-sized mosaic for the Menomonee Valley branch. Our volunteers continue to be a source of irreplaceable support for the Urban Ecology Center as program assistants, receptionists, land stewards, researchers, and much, much more.

Across all three branches, we had a total of over 2,000 individuals volunteer, visiting our Centers over 5,500 times. This resulted in a contribution of over 17,000 volunteer hours. We cannot thank our volunteers enough for their tremendous investment of time and talent to support this important work!



Peter Senge



Ken Salazar

# Menomonee Valley

This year in the Menomonee Valley was focused on getting the branch ready to open its doors in September of 2012.

## Breaking Ground

We broke ground on the building on September 7th, 2011 and through the excellent work of teams from Uihlein/Wilson Architects, Berghammer Construction, and many companies right in the Menomonee Valley, our plans came to life. The dilapidated former tavern became a home for our newest environmental community center, complete with flexible learning and gathering spaces, reused materials that speak to the history of the Valley, ecologically-minded features such as a geothermal heating and cooling system, and (of course) a slide!

## Growing Our Staff

With the building ready, we needed a great staff to welcome our neighbors into the new Center. We conducted national searches for eight people who would become the Menomonee Valley team and we pulled together an incredibly dynamic and balanced group of people. Over 70% of the program staff is bilingual in English and Spanish and, in our new community where a large portion of the population is Spanish-speaking, this will allow us to deliver quality programming to all of our neighbors.

## Community Connections

Even before the Center opened to the public, our staff was hard at work making community connections. We recruited schools for our school-based education program, Neighborhood Environmental Education Project (NEEP), strengthened our partnerships with community organizations such as the Layton Boulevard West Neighbors, and engaged a local artist to lead community members in creating a mosaic that would bring the spirit of the river and its neighbors to our building's living room.

## Building Relationships

Our work in the Menomonee Valley extends far beyond the Center itself. It is one piece of our collaborative "From the Ground Up" effort with the Menomonee Valley Partners to increase community assets in the Menomonee Valley. This year, we hit another major milestone with the groundbreaking of a new 24-acre brownfield-turned-greenspace adjacent to the new Center. Slated to open in summer 2013, the land will be home to varied habitat for native species, as well as to biking and walking paths, and will become the new outdoor classroom for the Urban Ecology Center.

## Evaluating Our Work

We also saw a unique opportunity in the Menomonee Valley to measure the many impacts of our work, so we have partnered with the Medical College of Wisconsin to engage in an exciting community health initiative called "More Than A Pretty Place." This study seeks to understand how exposing children to nature and environmental education affects their health and wellness. With the participation of neighborhood schools, we will engage 5th and 6th-grade classrooms in a survey to measure the health impacts of NEEP during the 2012-13 school year. We hope that this pioneering study will help make measurable the connection between community health and access to green space and environmental education, and thus further efforts like ours all over the country.



At our Riverside Park branch, we planted, burned, moved soil, and focused on making Riverside Park more accessible.

## Restoration by Fire

With help from the Department of Natural Resources, Milwaukee County Parks, Dare Ecosystem Management and the Milwaukee Fire Department, a prescribed burn was conducted in Riverside Park. The burn took place over the prairie and the oak circle, and along the Milwaukee River flood plain. This successful technique knocked back the invasive species and allowed a more diverse suite of native species to emerge.



## Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum

Work continued on the Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum project as staff and thousands of volunteers got their hands dirty. In fact, over 10,000 volunteer hours were logged! Reed Canary Grass was smothered along the Milwaukee River flood plain in an effort to eradicate the invasive species. In its place, over 8,500 native herbaceous plants and shrubs were planted along the flood plain. In preparation for planting in the spring, an old factory building adjacent to the donated arboretum land site was demolished, filled, and is being sculpted to create the foundation of the Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum. All of this work will ultimately result in the creation of an Arboretum that will expand our outdoor classroom, as well as increase biodiversity and the quality of wildlife habitat.



## Expanding Accessibility

As we continued to expand, restore, preserve, manage, and naturalize the Park, we wanted the changes to be enjoyed by everyone. The Park Access Plan, which has been unfolding over several years, is nearly complete! The plan was created by the Urban Ecology Center, Milwaukee County Parks, and other community stakeholders to increase accessibility and use of Riverside Park. As part of this plan, the old, elevated pedestrian bridge leading into Riverside Park over the Oak Leaf Trail was replaced by a new, accessible, bridge. Additionally, the uneven trails leading into Riverside Park were re-paved, providing access to the historic Olmsted trails. Once complete, this universally accessible set of trails near the Center will reach from North Ave to Locust Street and from the Centennial Arboretum through Riverside Park. These additions will help people with limited mobility and families with strollers more easily explore and enjoy the natural wonders of the river valley. And for those folks who choose to enjoy the river by floating down it, a new canoe launch was installed to improve access by canoe or kayak.



# Washington Park

At Washington Park we continued to expand our reach into the neighborhood, helping to provide a safe place for environmental education and exploration in Washington Park.

## A Better Built Environment

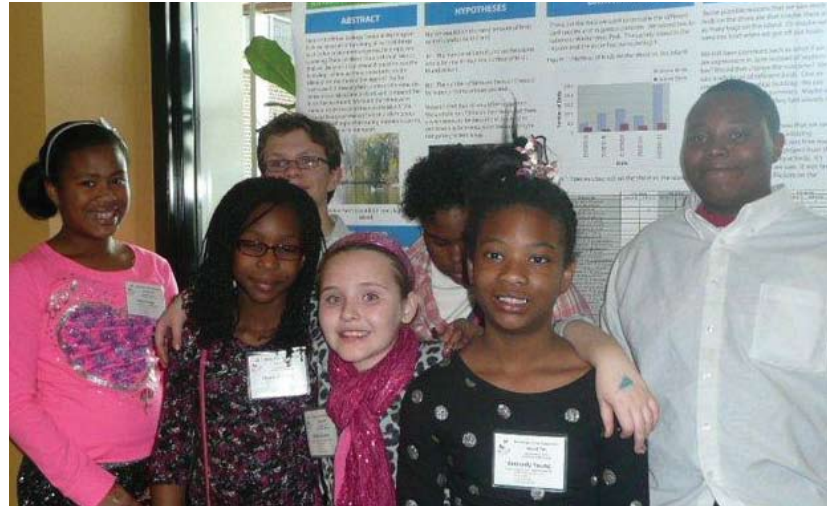
Several physical building improvements helped us better meet the needs of our community, programs, and visitors. Our partners at Milwaukee County Parks installed a new metal roof complete with a 5kW photovoltaic array and a solar thermal hot water system that will help offset our electric consumption and heat our water. Additionally, a new play trail and playground were installed. All of these additions will help us to engage people, bringing in more kids and families to Washington Park and introducing them to all the great things the Center has to offer.

## Lake Wisconsin

We also welcomed the addition of a 560 gallon fish tank (thanks to a cool, youth-driven grant program, Lead2Change) which has been affectionately dubbed "Lake Wisconsin." To accommodate the size of this tank we elected to build a new Wisconsin Native Animal Room for our fish, turtles, and other creatures to reside. We now have more room for our animals and their visitors, making it a comfortable space for all to learn and grow.

## Driven to Discover

The Young Scientists Club (YSC) at Washington Park engages youth ages 8-14 in science, research, and stewardship projects during afterschool and weekend hours. From water quality monitoring to gardening, the program promotes a sense of responsibility, both for self and place. This year the Young Scientists at Washington Park carried out an in-depth research project on habitat use by birds. They compared the distribution of birds on the large island in the Washington Park lagoon to a comparable area on the main land. The Young Scientists were selected to present their findings at the University of Minnesota's Driven to Discover research series—an incredible accomplishment for our ambitious youth.





Research shows two things which make a person environmentally aware: consistent contact with nature early in life and an adult mentor (parent, teacher, friend, Urban Ecology Center educator) who demonstrates positive behavior toward the environment. At the Urban Ecology Center, we provide the opportunity for this formative environmental experience with programs for children and adults of all ages.

## Inspiring Youth

During the 2011-2012 fiscal year, our Neighborhood Environmental Education Program (NEEP) served 40 urban Milwaukee schools, enabling 20,888 students to experience urban wilderness, take part in experiential science education, and build ecological intelligence.

Schools partner with the Urban Ecology Center for an entire year, transforming the experience from just another field trip to a permanent outdoor classroom experience, where science concepts taught in the classroom are reinforced with hands-on outdoor activities during multiple visits.

Each teacher works with a team of Urban Ecology Center Environmental Educators to choose and customize a series of classes from the 70+ course catalogue that complements the work students are doing in the traditional classroom setting. Our custom designed programs meet the needs and desires of the teachers and school districts and get kids outside and engaged in science education. Find our partner schools listed online!

Through a two-year pilot and implementation study of the impact of NEEP on participating students' understanding of science concepts, the Center for Urban Initiatives and Research (CUIR) at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee found that students improved their scores on the subjects of simple machines, electricity and magnetism, astronomy, and orienteering after participating in NEEP. These results are consistent with other indicators that demonstrate that NEEP as a whole improves understanding of science concepts.

NEEP is complemented by our Young Scientists Clubs, summer camps, and weekend family activities designed to involve, inspire, educate, and connect kids to each other, to caring mentors, and to the natural world. This year, across the Center's 42 summer camps, 626 children were connected to urban nature. With our school-based program educators in the lead, summer camp is more than fun; kids are learning through hands-on, inquiry-based activities every day of these week-long camps!

## Taking it to the Next Level: Developing Environmental Leaders

The Urban Ecology Center offers two formative experiences for youth and young adults: the High School Outdoor Leader Program and the Adult Internship program. As a green career pipeline, these programs develop urban leaders with the commitment and the capability to move our community toward a more sustainable future.

This past year's High School Outdoor Leader Program kicked off with a new format. Now a two-year paid internship instead of a one-year experience, the program attracted 88 applicants to the available 18 spots. While students build a wide range of skills that include leadership development, rock climbing, kayaking, scientific research, and public speaking, they also serve as mentors to summer camp participants, building greater self-awareness and transferring valuable knowledge to a younger generation.

The Adult Internship Program serves both as a green career pipeline and an entry point to the environmental field. Interns gain experience in a wide variety of programs at our three branch locations and build their resumes with science experience. Our internship program is in high demand with 190 applicants for 21 openings.

Both of these programs offer a guided experience in community leadership and employment in the environmental and science fields.



# Education Cont'd

Participants in the High School Outdoor Leader program and Adult internship program:

- Foster a relationship with their local environment
- Gain valuable leadership skills
- Gain a greater understanding of environmental issues

## Inspiring Adults

Community programs keep the Urban Ecology Center and our adjacent parks abuzz with activity. The Center provides engaging opportunities for adults to attend lectures, workshops, and festivals, and learn new outdoor adventure skills like canoeing, kayaking, cross country skiing, and snowshoeing.

At our Riverside Park branch, the 10th Annual Local Farmer Open House attracted over 1000 people, connecting people to local producers and CSA farms.

Our community is excited about sustainable food and over 600 people attended the Eat Local Resource Fair where we provided information and workshops on how to connect with local food resources and prepare for the two-week Eat Local Challenge. Washington Park hosted a successful winter lecture series for adults. Hundreds of people came throughout the year for lectures such as local historian John Gurda, filmmaker Chip Duncan, and inspiring environmentalist John Francis.

Both our Riverside Park and Washington Park branches have become festival destinations. We hosted vibrant celebrations at the Fall Festival, Autumn Celebration, and Earth Day festivals. We're proud to have provided quality programming to neighbors of all ages and interests, and we can't wait to see where the next year takes us!



# Urban Adventures

Urban Adventures programming at the Urban Ecology Center is designed to get groups outside, physically active, working together, and having fun!

## Exploring Our Community

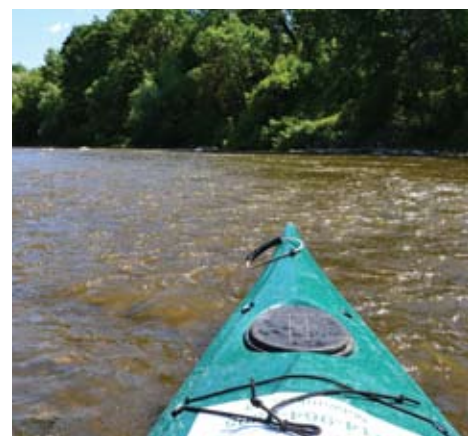
Through our programs, individuals and groups discover nature in the city, challenge each other through new experiences, and build new skills as a foundation for lifelong healthy living. This year's Urban Adventure programming spanned all four seasons and included snowshoeing, canoeing, kayaking, hiking, rock climbing, and biking; all were interwoven with environmental education. While unusually warm spring temperatures and an early thaw impacted our maple syrup production, springtime urban adventurers explored our local parks and waterways by bike, foot, and boat.

The spirit of adventure continued into early summer as our Teen Adventure Challenge, an outdoor race through the urban wilds along the Milwaukee River, had record attendance with 17 teams representing 95 participants and 76 volunteers helping throughout the day.

## Improving River Quality

Thanks to a grant from the EPA Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, we offered several opportunities specifically designed to explore the Milwaukee, Menomonee, and Kinnickinnic River systems. These programs highlighted projects meant to improve water quality within these waterways and attract recreationalists back to our rivers.

Together with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Alliance for the Great Lakes, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources UW-Extension Water Action Volunteer Program, we launched an aesthetics-monitoring project on these three rivers to monitor the presence of garbage, accessibility issues, and wildlife sightings, all of which provide an essential baseline assessment of these areas. Aesthetics-monitoring helps us identify important information about the status of our waterways and the data that is collected provides a means for assessing public perception.



The Urban Ecology Center's Research and Citizen Science Program serves as a meaningful bridge between academic research and the community-at-large, enabling collaboration and creating a more engaged, knowledgeable, and ecologically literate citizenry.

## Local Impacts

Conservation practices in Milwaukee continue to be informed by the research and citizen science efforts at the Center. For example, this past fiscal year, long-time volunteer Robin Squier and High School Outdoor Leader Ethan Bott spearheaded an effort to put a resolution through Milwaukee's Common Council (which passed unanimously) to designate the City of Milwaukee as a Bird City, a designation that recognizes a city's bird conservation practices. This certification makes Milwaukee the largest community to receive recognition from Bird City Wisconsin.

## Engaging Young Minds

The combination of the High School Outdoor Leader program and Citizen Science and Research efforts provide the platform and resources for young student researchers to explore their interests in ecological issues and aspire towards careers in the environmental field. Ethan Bott and Humzah Abdulla, both of whom

were involved with Citizen Science programs while High School Outdoor Leaders, worked to implement systems thinking into the environmental education curriculum at the Center, with a focus on improved learning skills for students.

Additionally, the Young Scientists Club at Washington Park carried out an in-depth research project on habitat use by birds and was selected to present their findings at the University of Minnesota's Driven to Discover research series. The Center was also chosen to participate on the Advisory Board of this initiative.

## Spreading Our Wings

The past year saw many exciting developments on a national level as the Research and Citizen Science team expands their reach. By attending the first annual conference on Public Participation in Scientific Research, serving on the Advisory Committee, and presenting research on the intersection of data management and stewardship, the Center continues to serve as a leader in citizen science research. The team also published a chapter in the book *Urban Bird Ecology and Conservation*, highlighting the Center's engagement of citizen science volunteers in migratory bird research.



The Center's land stewardship team is currently managing over 50 acres of urban land. Careful and thoughtful stewardship has helped preserve and restore land along the Milwaukee River Corridor, in Washington Park, and now along the Menomonee River.

Volunteers played an active and vital role in our land stewardship efforts. Our dynamic group of volunteers has been engaged in every aspect of land stewardship – from the removal of invasive species, to

the propagation of native plants on the landscape, to planting those plants into the ecosystem.

## Menomonee Valley

The landscape around the Menomonee Valley branch is a new point of engagement for our land stewardship team. We broke ground on the 24-acre park that will soon be our outdoor classroom. This cutting-edge, collaborative project combines the innovation of building soil, creating habitat for wildlife, and will provide hands-on opportunities to



explore the Menomonee River waterway. We are excited for this new park to become a Milwaukee destination for outdoor learning and recreation.

Additionally, the Center's Land Stewardship staff, Summer Interns, and High School Outdoor Leaders completed a 270 square foot green roof at the Menomonee Valley Center. This green roof is accessible to the public and will be used for programs, public education, and the demonstration of storm water management best-practices.

Prior to the opening of the Menomonee Valley branch, land stewardship volunteers have already logged over 100 hours of work on this burgeoning urban landscape!

## Washington Park

Since the Urban Ecology Center opened our Washington Park branch in 2007, the land stewardship team has been working with volunteers to create an improved habitat by planting a variety of native Wisconsin species throughout the landscape.

In the 2011-2012 fiscal year, we began both wetland and woodland restoration at Washington Park. Beginning with the propagation of six hundred native Wisconsin plants, our goal is an additional 1,500 plantings for the spring of 2013. We planted understory trees, shrubs and wildflowers to create more layers, complexity, and plant diversity within this community and have hopes to replace some grass with forest and savannah species. This fiscal year, 70 trees and shrubs (including 50 native shrubs that will produce edible nuts and berries) and 50 wildflower species were planted in Washington Park! At the end of a very productive year, the land stewards engaged over 534 people and over 2,160 volunteer hours on healing the land in Washington Park.

## Riverside Park

Over the past 15 years there has been a dramatic increase in diversity and habitat quality in Riverside Park and along the Milwaukee River Corridor.

Hundreds of species of native Wisconsin plants have been planted in what was once an abandoned park with a degraded forest. With the tremendous effort by dedicated volunteers from churches, corporations, and organizations across Milwaukee, a total of almost 20,000 herbaceous plants and over 300 trees and shrubs were planted just this year!

Through a partnership with the City of Milwaukee Sanitation Department, the Land Stewardship team was able to compost over 300 truckloads of leaves, creating over 2,000 cubic meters of leaf compost to build and amend the topsoil for the Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum project. The first round of an extensive vegetation survey to catalog the diversity of species throughout the entire 40 acres of land within the Arboretum is nearly complete! This initiative will help us monitor our progress and document our impact within Riverside Park.

## Rotary Centennial Arboretum

Overall, volunteers logged more than 3,700 hours of work on the Milwaukee Centennial Arboretum land. From removing invasive species to planting a more diverse mix of natives, we continued to prepare for the opening of the Arboretum that will increase awareness and appreciation of the biological diversity found in our area.

This year the Arboretum was the recipient of a generous donation of land from the estate of our dearly missed friend and partner Pieter Godfrey. We completed a competitive process with a number of local artists for the design of an iconic archway sculpture to mark the entrance of the Arboretum.

As the fiscal year closed, we were poised to begin construction on the formerly industrial land, having finalized plans and selected a contractor to do the earthwork. Big things will be happening in the next year, as the project is on schedule to open in September 2013.



In the 2011-2012 fiscal year, the Urban Ecology Center continued to connect people with the outdoors in an effort to help them live healthy, abundant lifestyles. Whether providing environmental education to urban youth or protecting public natural land, we help connect people to place and experience. Our mission has far-reaching impacts, now spreading beyond the neighborhoods we directly serve. Through projects like the opening of the Menomonee Valley branch and the Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum, we are able to build effective partnerships and catalyze meaningful change in our community.

### OUR LOGIC MODEL SURVEYS TELL US THAT:

#### Academic Achievement Goes Up

**100%** of school partners believe that our programs boost academic performance and help kids to be more comfortable in nature.

**99%** of classroom teachers said that the kids would not get these hands-on activities without the Center.

The Center for Urban Initiatives and Research (CUIR) at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee conducted a two-year pilot and implementation study of the impact of NEEP on participating students' understanding of science concepts. The results are consistent with other indicators that demonstrate that NEEP as a whole improves understanding of science concepts.

#### Ecological Literacy Improves

Developed through:

- » Knowledge and academic success
- » Emotional connection to nature
- » Repeat visits
- » Cross-generational mentoring
- » Recognizing one's role in the community
- » Desire and ability to take action

#### Land Is Healed

The Urban Ecology Center is directly responsible for the restoration of **51 acres** and has been the catalyst for hundreds of acres of preserved and restored land along the Milwaukee River Corridor, and now along the Menomonee River as well.

This fiscal year almost **500 trees** were planted for the Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum which will become a highly biologically diverse urban habitat and a space for growing our future environmental stewards.

#### Crime Is Reduced

RIVERSIDE PARK

down by **90%**

WASHINGTON PARK

down by **56%**

The parks are used nearly **365 days** of the year, creating a community presence in the park. These efforts have paid off, and Riverside Park has gone from one of the city's crime hot spots in the '90s to a safe haven. Crime in Washington Park continues to drop since we opened in 2007.

#### The Community Is Engaged and Inspired

##### Community Groups

Numerous neighborhood associations and community interest groups meet at our facilities.

##### Volunteers

Over 2,000 volunteers log more than 17,000 hours at the Center each year.

##### Visitors

90,000 people connect to us and our resources each year.

#### Health Improves

The Center for Disease Control listed the Urban Ecology Center as one of **20 best practices** nationwide as a way to get kids active.

We have started a cutting edge research study, in collaboration with the Medical College of Wisconsin, to understand how activating a new urban park in the Menomonee Valley, with complementary outreach and education, affects the health outcomes among neighborhood residents.

# Financial Report

## The 2011 – 12 fiscal year proved to be another successful year at The Urban Ecology Center!

This year, our goals were to continue growing the member and program services provided to our community, in addition to carrying out two capital projects: a new branch in the Menomonee Valley and the new Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum in Riverside Park. To meet these goals, the Center increased the operating budget by 31%. We are pleased to report that the Center was able to meet and exceed the goals we set! The robust financial position in the following reports is a reflection of generous community support and the financial leadership of the Board of Directors, Finance Committee, and dedicated team of staff members who carry out our mission everyday.

### Audited Statement of Financial Position as of August 31, 2012 (Accrual Basis)

| <b>Assets</b>                            |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Cash and cash equivalents                | \$ 2,121,083                |
| Riverside Park Building Maintenance Fund | 562,401                     |
| Receivables                              | 2,980,529                   |
| Prepaid expenses                         | 168,543                     |
| Property and equipment                   | 6,144,313                   |
| Endowment                                | <u>48,477</u>               |
| <b>Total assets</b>                      | <b><u>\$ 12,025,346</u></b> |
| <b>Liabilities</b>                       |                             |
| Accounts payable                         | \$ 63,395                   |
| Line of Credit                           | 200,000                     |
| Accrued payroll and benefits             | 134,233                     |
| Deferred revenue                         | 219,572                     |
| Other liabilities                        | <u>62,627</u>               |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>                 | <b><u>\$ 679,827</u></b>    |
| <b>Net Assets</b>                        |                             |
| Unrestricted                             | \$ 6,917,197                |
| Temporarily Restricted                   | <u>4,428,322</u>            |
| <b>Total net assets</b>                  | <b><u>\$ 11,345,519</u></b> |
| <b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>  | <b><u>\$ 12,025,346</u></b> |

### Audited Statement of Activities for the year ended August 31, 2012 (Accrual Basis)

| <b>Revenues</b>                                     |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| Individual Contributions                            | \$ 2,684,536               |
| Community Shares                                    | 11,403                     |
| Corporate Grants                                    | 1,594,933                  |
| Private Grants                                      | 2,535,211                  |
| Government Grants                                   | 247,049                    |
| Fundraising Events                                  | 143,551                    |
| Membership Dues                                     | 66,588                     |
| Earned Income                                       | 428,196                    |
| <i>Program Service Fees</i>                         | 355,284                    |
| <i>Rental Income</i>                                | 46,010                     |
| <i>Other Revenues</i>                               | <u>26,902</u>              |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b><u>\$ 7,771,467</u></b> |
| <b>Expenses</b>                                     |                            |
| Program Services*                                   | \$ 3,100,971               |
| <i>Education</i>                                    | 1,330,753                  |
| <i>Community Improvement</i>                        | 1,115,641                  |
| <i>Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability</i> | 654,577                    |
| Fundraising   | 304,032                    |
| General Administrative                              | <u>386,906</u>             |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b><u>\$ 3,791,909</u></b> |
| <b>Change in Net Assets</b>                         | <b><u>\$ 3,919,558</u></b> |

\*Our program services revolve around three main impact areas: Education, Community Improvement, and Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability. Our operating expenses are allocated accordingly.

While reporting favorable current year results, the Center has also been strengthened for future success. The Center maintained a keen focus on strong cash and reserve levels, a positive ratio of assets to liabilities and a robust fundraising pipeline. In addition, we continued to focus on the staff and infrastructure needed for the continued sustainability of the Center. New contributions to our endowment this year continue to build toward a bright financial future.

We have provided two financial statements to give the most accurate picture of our organization. Our Audited Statements include capital projects such as the Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum and the Menomonee Valley branch building project, whereas our Operating Statement of Activities shows the day-to-day costs of performing our core mission. Our operating revenue was \$2.5 million, while our total organization revenue was \$7.8 million for the 2011-12 fiscal year.

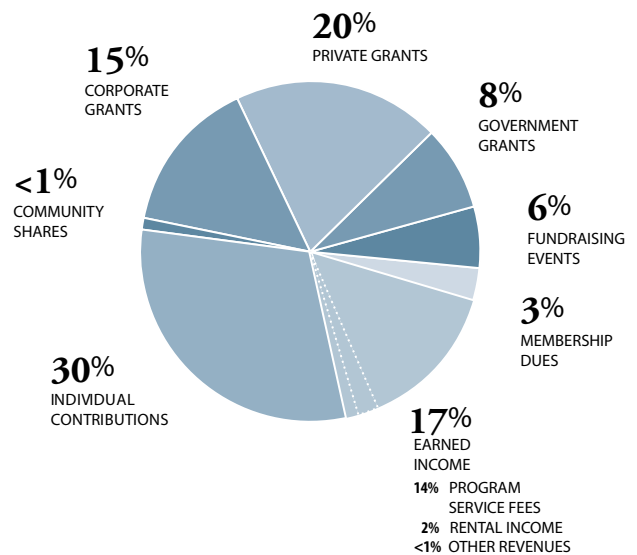
Please visit our website at [www.urbanecologycenter.org](http://www.urbanecologycenter.org) for additional information including the IRS Form 990 and our annual financial statements as audited by the Milwaukee-based public accountants of Scribner, Cohen & Co.

## Operating Statement of Activities for the year ended August 31, 2012 (Cash Basis)

### Revenues

|                             |                     |     |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|-----|
| Individual Contributions    | \$ 775,538          | 30% |
| Community Shares            | 11,403              | <1% |
| Corporate Grants            | 394,151             | 15% |
| Private Grants              | 520,062             | 20% |
| Government Grants           | 198,374             | 8%  |
| Fundraising Events          | 161,009             | 6%  |
| Membership Dues             | 68,227              | 3%  |
| Earned Income               | 420,747             | 17% |
| <i>Program Service Fees</i> | 354,436             | 14% |
| <i>Rental Income</i>        | 46,430              | 2%  |
| <i>Other Revenues</i>       | <u>19,881</u>       | <1% |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>\$ 2,549,511</b> |     |

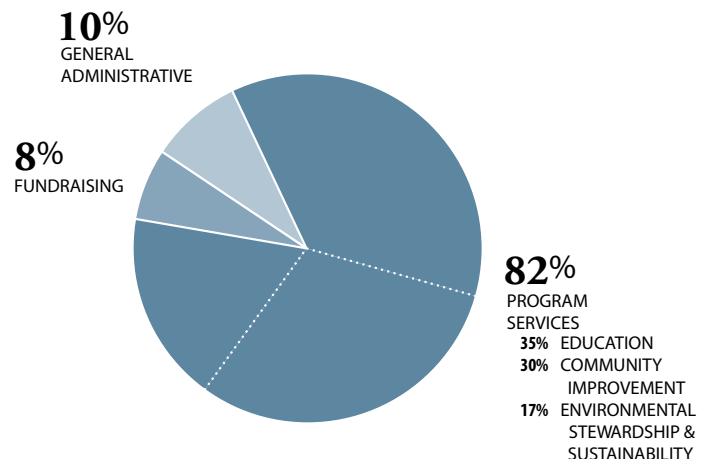
### FY 2011-12 Operating Revenues



### Expenses

|   |                     |     |
|---|---------------------|-----|
| Program Services*                                   | \$ 2,031,591        | 82% |
| <i>Education</i>                                    | 871,837             | 35% |
| <i>Community Improvement</i>                        | 730,909             | 30% |
| <i>Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability</i> | 428,845             | 17% |
| Fundraising   | 199,185             | 8%  |
| General Administrative                              | <u>253,480</u>      | 10% |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>\$ 2,484,256</b> |     |

### FY 2011-12 Operating Expenses



**Change in Net Assets** **\$ 65,255**

\*Our program services revolve around three main impact areas: Education, Community Improvement, and Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability. Our operating expenses are allocated accordingly.

# With Gratitude

*The Urban Ecology Center thanks our generous donors for their support in the 2011-12 fiscal year.*

We are grateful for the support of the following foundations, corporations, and individuals who made a contribution in the 2011-2012 fiscal year to support our programs or operations. Donor levels reflect total giving for the year, including contributions to Menomonee Valley-From the Ground Up and the Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum projects. All donors who gave to special projects are also recognized on subsequent pages, including those that gave exclusively to those projects. Although membership donations are not listed here due to space constraints, we are deeply appreciative of this critical support.

*A complete donor list that includes membership donations and a list of our volunteers can be found at [www.urbanecologycenter.org/annualreport](http://www.urbanecologycenter.org/annualreport).*

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Every effort was made to ensure that this list of donors is accurate. If you made a gift between September 2011 and August 2012 and your name is not listed, or is listed differently than it should be, please contact Cassie Mordini, Individual Giving and Events Specialist, at cmordini@urbanecologycenter.org or by phone at (414) 964-8505.

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Challenge and in  
memory of:****Janet Fleming Ruggeri**

Nancy Ruggeri

## Legacy Giving

The following individuals have demonstrated their commitment to the Urban Ecology Center's mission through a legacy gift. As the Center continues to grow, we are dedicated to planning for a sustainable future. The significant impact of the contributions made by these individuals will help ensure the Urban Ecology Center's financial health for generations to come. Thanks to these bequests, the Center can continue to work to create a world where every child can explore nature every day of every year of his or her life.

**Gertrude "Tula" Erskine****Georgia Snider****Lorrie Otto**

A legacy society to recognize and thank donors for their commitment during their lifetime is currently under development.

If you would like more information, or if you have included the Urban Ecology Center in your will or estate plans and would like to be recognized, please contact Cassie Mordini at (414) 964-8505 ext. 104 or [cmordini@urbanecologycenter.org](mailto:cmordini@urbanecologycenter.org).

# Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum

The Urban Ecology Center has been working to improve the assets and accessibility of Riverside Park for the community since our founders formed a grassroots group in the early 1990s. The Park Access Project was an outgrowth of our plans to serve more students from the Riverside Park branch. This past fiscal year, we nearly completed the Park Access Plan with the replacement of the pedestrian bridge and by re-paving the trails leading into Riverside Park.

In 2008, the Milwaukee Rotary Club selected our proposal to create an Arboretum to celebrate their centennial anniversary in 2013. Since then, many new volunteers and donors have built on the momentum from the original Park Access Project. Listed below are the supporters to date for this remarkable community effort to improve and expand the natural oasis of Riverside Park. Those listed in **green** are new donors since the 2010-2011 annual report.

## Riverside Park Access Project Donors

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The Urban Ecology Center received financial support in the amount of \$953,450 from the Environmental Protection Agency's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (EPA GLRI).

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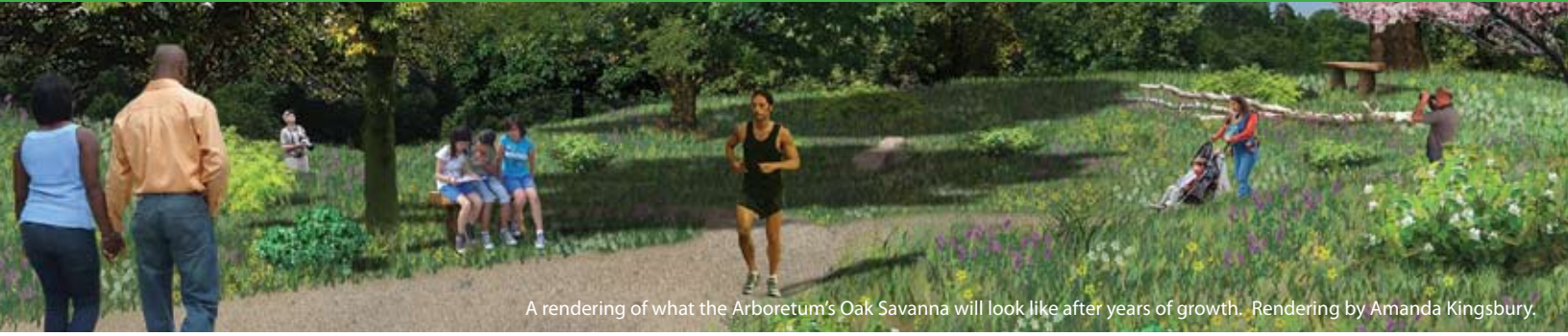
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Don Zien





# Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum



A rendering of what the Arboretum's Oak Savanna will look like after years of growth. Rendering by Amanda Kingsbury.

## Tributes

### **In Memory of Mark Smith**

Edward and Kimberly Apfelbach  
Carol Butchart and Paul Moran  
Robert and Christy Ciecko  
Kristine Devitt  
Carolyn and Brian Esswein  
Sarah Koepke  
Patrick Kressin  
Edward Loving  
Nancy Martin  
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Joseph Pepitone  
Erin and Emily Ruth  
Ronald and Jean Schmidt  
Jessica and Erik Schmitt  
Robert Smith  
Sandy Smith  
Carmel and Mark Sweet  
Christin and Oscar Wille  
Lawrence Witzling

### **In Honor and Memory of Pieter Godfrey**

Jen Hagenow  
Tom and Monique Meyer  
Kathleen Raab  
Verne and Marion Read

With the help of hundreds of volunteers, the Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum has been in the planning, design and development process since 2008. After a productive summer in 2012, 255 trees, 3,208 shrubs and 7,620 herbaceous plants were planted!

In the fall of 2012, we launched **Deep Roots: Native Tree and Plant Sponsorship Program**. This program helps us transform post-industrial land into a flourishing native ecosystem.

### **Nurture Sponsorship**

Scott and Kathleen Yanoff

### **In Memory of Walburg Hanstein**

Else Ankel

### **In Honor of Mary Gemlo**

Lucy Greer

### **In Honor of Tresca Meiling and Patrick Bader**

Carol Dede

### **Biodiversity Sponsorship**

Megan Kelly

Claudia Koehler

### **In Honor of Kat Grinker**

Michael and Sharon Grinker

### **Visionary Sponsorship**

Evelyn Ericson

### **In Memory of Marge O'Callaghan and In Honor of Linda, Kathy and family**

Renee and Mike Dries  
Jim Schleif and Bill Morley

### **In Honor of Maddy Cook**

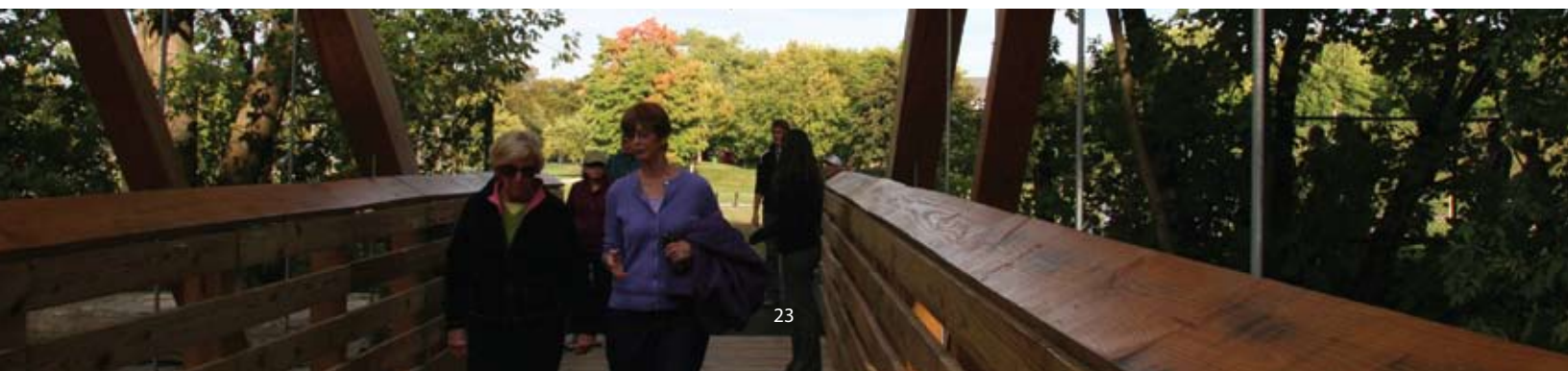
Ron and Joan Cook

### **In Honor of Matthew**

Eva Hagenhofer

### **In Honor of Helen Hutchinson Woodburn**

Judith Woodburn



# Menomonee Valley-From the Ground Up

Menomonee Valley—From the Ground Up is a collaborative effort of the Urban Ecology Center, Menomonee Valley Partners, the State of Wisconsin, and the City of Milwaukee. Thanks to the support of these private sector donors\*, whose pledges and gifts range from \$10 to \$2.3 million and were made in support of this effort as of January 23rd, 2013. Those listed in **green** are new gifts since the 2010-2011 annual report.

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With an overwhelming response from the community, project partners have secured \$22.5 million toward the \$26 million goal. Want to learn more? Visit [www.MenomoneeValley-FromtheGroundUp.org](http://www.MenomoneeValley-FromtheGroundUp.org)

*\*Private sector funds raised for this effort are directed to UEC/MVP Project Inc., a third fiscal entity formed by the Urban Ecology Center and Menomonee Valley Partners specifically to fund and implement Menomonee Valley—From the Ground Up.*

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Judy Krause and Susan Winans  
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2011-2012

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| Kim Forbeck          | Jeff McAvoy          |
| Hart Ford            | Lindy Meer           |
| Lainet García Rivera | Emily Michi          |
| Stefan J. Gendelman  | Regina K. Miller     |

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| Indaca Brown   | Kasandra Scott    |
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| Roger Coleman  | Charles Uihlein   |
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