



Washington Park: Ready to Blossom!

Beth Heller, Senior Director of Education and Strategic Planning
and Willie Karidis, Branch Manager - Washington Park

Can you believe it's been only seven years since we hired our first staff member to start up our Washington Park branch? The growth there has been amazing! With the start of a new year, we, like many



of you, are reflecting on the past and thinking about our plans for the year ahead. These two perspectives, hindsight and anticipation, seemed like the best way to give an update on our Washington Park branch! Wait, we're getting ahead of ourselves. It all started with...

Fertile ground: Just as a seed needs the right conditions to grow, so did the launch of our Washington Park branch. In 2004 we were still working out of a double wide trailer in Riverside Park and faced demands for our services that we could not fit into our 1300 square foot space. While we were super excited to move into our new Riverside Park building, we also hoped to find a use for our old trailer. We could see a need across the city for kids to have the kinds of outdoor learning experiences that are so

important for childhood development and help build the foundation of knowledge about how the world around us works. So we thought let's "recycle" the trailer by filling this need in another neighborhood park.

With that idea in mind, next we had to figure out where to carry it out. We made a list of criteria for a good location for this entrepreneurial concept of relocating the trailer. The ideal park would:

- Have a high density of schools surrounding it
- Have easy walking or biking access for many people
- Be in a neighborhood that was interested in our services
- Be a green space with trees, fields and a body of water to support a variety of education programs
- Be in an area with a high crime rate. Since we knew our programs had the effect of reducing crime and making a park safe to use from our experience in Riverside Park, we were also looking for a location where we could double our impact.

As we explored locations, we engaged a team of UWM geography graduate students to do an analysis of Milwaukee neighborhoods using these criteria. Their research put Washington Park at the top of the list.

In the summer of 2005, we were invited to a meeting at the Washington Park Pavilion where a coalition of community organizations, including Neighbors United for Washington Park, Washington Park Beat, Lisbon Area Neighborhood Development Corp, Washington Heights Neighborhood Association and Washington Park Partners, asked us to consider opening a branch at Washington Park. With the support of the neighborhood and the great data from our graduate student team we began the process of creating our first branch.

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Branch Highlights



RIVERSIDE PARK

Last year we celebrated the Grand Opening of our Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum, a restored urban green space. Now we're excited to share some great news that will further our mission to preserve and protect the land (see details on page 9).



WASHINGTON PARK

We are expanding our public open hours and we have a new front door! New open hours are Tuesday-Friday, noon - 6pm and Saturday from 9am - 5pm. The new entrance door is on the east side of the building with the Urban Ecology Center awning over the top. Come visit us!



MENOMONEE VALLEY

Ring in the new year with winter fun at Three Bridges Park! The Hank Aaron State Trail is great for skiing and snowshoeing, so stop on by and borrow some equipment, then go out and explore!



A Sense of Tribe

by Jamie Fersching, Branch Manager - Riverside Park

Of all of the things the Native Americans have contributed to society, I think one of the most important is the tribe. Based on kinship, orally communicated customs and rituals and commonly shared values and beliefs, people within the tribes are attuned to others in the group and often work toward shared goals (e.g. food, shelter, healthcare, raising children, etc). They are also each others' support network. It's a social construct that has worked for thousands of years.

Presently, many of us who are not Native American do not primarily relate to this social construct; we do not talk about our friends and families as being part of our tribe. Nonetheless, I like to believe that in our own way we exist in tribes as well.

When I explain my motivation for moving back to Milwaukee eight years ago I say that I did it to be closer to my "tribe" – for kinship, support and shared values that seem more intimate than what I typically think of as community. Since being back in Milwaukee my tribe has grown to include new friends, many of whom are co-workers and people who frequent the Center.

At a recent staff meeting, we were asked to share one word that comes to mind when we think of the Center. The word that was shared with most frequency was "community." Each

personal definition of "community" was not shared, but I suspect that definitions would have related to the internal community within the Center, the member community and people in the communities in which we serve. These are people who share our values and who are our support system. While this entire network may seem large, I would venture to guess that each one of us has a subset of "Center people" who are included in our own tribes.

The tribes that we create within our larger community have been strikingly apparent in this past year. At the Center we have experienced a greater than average number of births and deaths within our families. In each case, a tribe of people came together to express so much genuine care and support. Many of the people were from the Center. Observing this, I didn't feel like I was living in a city of 600,000+ people, rather it felt like I was living in a smaller tribe. This was truly remarkable!

We are social creatures and the social constructs which we create help us define who we are. Some of us don't truly live in tribes anymore but there are positive characteristics of tribal societies that have that we all still relate to on a primal level. I'm grateful that I can be a part of the Center's community and encourage all of you to connect to our "tribe." 🌱

Many Thanks



Almost 10 years ago, Ginger Duiven, who had been an active member and volunteer, began her career at the Urban Ecology Center as a part-time membership coordinator.

She proved herself as an astute strategist and eventually rose to join the Center's Leadership Team. In her role as the Center's first Director of Development and Marketing, she has been an integral part of the Center's growth.

We are sad but also proud to announce that Ginger has decided to take a new step in her career. Beginning in January 2014, she will become the Executive Director of Literacy Services of Wisconsin.

We thank Ginger for her commitment to the Center. We are so grateful for all she has done for us and will miss her greatly. We congratulate her and wish her well on her new job. 🌱



DROPLETS

LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE TOPICS ON OUR WEBSITE

- **Spontaneous Snow Outings.** Take advantage of the perfect snow days by joining us as we ski, snowshoe, build forts and sled. When the weather is right, we'll send out an invitation by email. Add your name to the mailing list! Email John at jela@urbanecologycenter.org.
- **What are you doing this summer?** We have summer internships available in education, research, land stewardship, visitor services and more! If you or someone you know is a high school student, college student or adult who is looking for a summer internship, tell them to check our website for more info.
- **Interested in helping to shape the future of Citizen Science at the Center?** The Citizen Science Team was awarded a Wisconsin DNR Citizen-based monitoring grant to implement a volunteer-led invertebrate monitoring program. If you are interested in helping the Center create an invertebrate monitoring plan, we invite you to learn how you can join our Volunteer Invertebrate Monitoring Planning Group. Contact Jennifer at jcallaghan@urbanecologycenter.org if you are interested.

Wish List. Below are some items we need for our three branches. Visit urbanecologycenter.org/wishlist for an expanded list.

Riverside Park

Anabat detector • Hybrid or electric vehicle • Nature storybooks • Trimble Juno GPS

Washington Park

Aquarium pumps & filters • Small air compressor • Large capacity dehumidifier • Fleece • Chopping knives • Hockey sticks

Menomonee Valley

Aquariums & terrariums • Bird or wasps nests • GPS Units • Headlamps • Field guides

SEE FOR YOURSELF! (See how you supported our mission last year)

\$2,419.54 cash given on site at our coffee and snack counter



3,257

people helped keep the Center operating last year, contributing

\$857,645



17 members have held their weddings at the Center

183 members have contributed their \$5 equipment lending deposit



249 people donated goods or services
Such as... GPS • **2,000 assorted bird books** • bike assembly services • children's winter jackets • 60 hours of reptile services • digital camera • and much more!

Washington Park: Ready to Blossom!

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The seed: Just as a seed has all the materials and plans for what the plant will become, we needed a plan for our new branch. Luckily, a team of Beth's business school colleagues at UWM were ready to take on that challenge as their final business plan project. That plan was brought to the board and leadership of the Center, refined and made ready for investors.

Energy: Just like a plant needs sunlight, a new venture needs financial support to grow. Five visionary funding partners invested in this project: the Harley-Davidson Foundation, Miller Brewing Company, the Trinity Foundation, the Windhover Foundation, and the Greater Milwaukee Foundation. These investors provided start-up funds, giving the Center time to build strategies for long term sustainability. Another critical partner was Milwaukee County Parks, whose land provides the necessary setting for our activities. The County Parks department was excited to bring the Center's activities to Washington Park, but not at all excited about our little run-down trailer. They offered us the park's pavilion -- a facility much better than the trailer -- which had running water, bathrooms, a kitchen, more space and amazing views of the beautiful lagoon. From an eco-friendly perspective, we couldn't get much greener than using an existing building. So we signed a lease to use **1/3 of the building**, a space three times the size of our trailer.

Water: Our aim is for children to develop and bring ecological literacy into the future, just as water carries nutrients to support a plant's future growth. The Neighborhood Environmental Education Project for schools consistently brings more children through our doors than any other program. Because we work with neighboring schools, those students become familiar with the park and return after school for outdoor play and exploration. We filled the school program quickly in Washington Park: the fertile ground we selected was well suited for our school partnership program. Demand for the school program was so high, we began sharing education staff from Riverside Park so

more children could flow through our doors.

Growth: The school program was like the "shoot" of a plant, providing strength for our new branch. Soon the emerging demand for after school and weekend programs was greater than were able to provide. So, we spread our leaves and launched our community programs, including the Young Scientists Club, lecture series, family programs and more.

This brings us to today. There is a tight "bud" waiting to burst at Washington Park. What it needs is the last key ingredient to survival: space. With only one classroom, we were not yet ready to fully blossom.

On November 7, 2013, the Milwaukee County Board voted unanimously in support of a five-year lease agreement with the Urban Ecology Center to allow **24/7 full use of the entire Washington Park Pavilion**. What does this mean for the community of Washington Park and for operations here at the Urban Ecology Center? Lots!

1) Extended Hours! We are particularly excited to be more available to visitors. Beginning on January 2, 2014, the Urban Ecology Center's public hours will be extended to 12pm – 6pm, Tuesday through Friday. Saturday remains the same: 9am - 5pm. Opportunities for members to borrow our lending equipment, visit Lake Wisconsin, the animal room and get warm in our facility will increase. We'd love for you to stop by to visit us, explore the park, or enjoy a mug of hot coffee.

2) A More Welcoming Entrance! No more confusion finding our front door; we are moving the entrance to the east door of the building. This is the door you see when you walk up the service drive from our parking lot off of 40th Street, with an awning announcing "Urban Ecology Center." Walk in and you will see our new front desk with Visitor Services Specialist, Terrance Davis, ready to greet you and show you around.

3) Rent the Pavilion! Starting in January, you will be able to rent the Washington Park building through the Urban Ecology Center facility rental program. Rent out a portion of the Washington Park branch for any of your special events and you will be able to experience the magic of this space. The building rental options include a kitchen, a large room with a stage and our more intimate "welcome" room. Please contact Robert Miller at 414-964-8505 ext 156, rlmiller@urbanecologycenter.org for further information.

4) Additional Programming! Another critically important benefit of leasing the entire building is our ability to schedule additional activities in Washington Park. From increasing participation in our school partnership program, hosting more B'earthday parties, and increasing the number of youth, family and adult programs, we will be able to engage more people than ever before.

This is why our new lease is so incredibly exciting. It is a joyful moment because we will have the space we need to truly blossom. We have been anticipating this change for more than two years and the wonderful, deep engagement of the community has pushed us to this moment.

But expanding our programs means that we need your help! There has never been a better time to volunteer here at Washington Park. We offer individual, school and group opportunities, from volunteering at the front desk, to serving on the Center's Washington Park Advisory Committee, to large scale land stewardship projects. The possibilities are diverse, and volunteers provide a necessary role in our operations. If you are interested in volunteering, please plan to attend one of our volunteer orientations at any one of our branches. Then the fun begins!

This is truly a thrilling time for Washington Park. We look forward to going on this new, sensational journey together. 🌱

JANUARY & FEBRUARY

Quick Guide

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

Join us for winter fun outdoors!

snowshoeing a sled dog demonstration
cross country skiing ice skating
ice fishing sledding

*Then warm up inside with
hot cocoa and homemade pie!*

Food and beverages, compliments of Neighborhoods
United for Washington Park and Community Pies.



Winterfest for Afternoon Nappers

A festival for the lil' ones! Enjoy a morning of fun including a craft, hike, puppet show and still get home in time for their afternoon nap. Space is limited.

(WP) Saturday, January 25
10:30am - noon

For children ages 5 and younger
accompanied by an adult | Free!

Winterfest!

(WP) Saturday, January 25
Noon - 4pm | For everyone | Free!

All Urban Ecology Center Branches will be closed Jan. 1.
Our Riverside Park branch will close at 5pm on Jan. 2. Regular open hours resume on Jan. 3.

RIVERSIDE PARK



Did you know that Riverside Park has a quarterly art exhibit that highlights local artists? **Thea Kovac, Kurt Kleman and Tom Petri** kick off the 2014 season with their **opening on Jan. 16, 5-7pm**. Subsequent art openings will occur the second Tuesday in April, July and October. All are welcome to come and view this extraordinary local talent!

— *Jamie Ferschinger,*
Branch Manager - Riverside Park

WASHINGTON PARK



Winterfest is here once again on January 25th from noon-4pm. Come on by for some winter fun with the Door County Sled Dogs, skiing, snowshoeing, sledding and hopefully skating. Oh yes, we will have chili and baked potatoes and s'mores by the fire. Hope to see you there!

— *Willie Karidis,*
Branch Manager - Washington Park

MENOMONEE VALLEY



We have lots of ways to enjoy the snow in the Valley! Join us for **Skiing Adventures** (we have both a family and an adult session), **Tracking Animals by Snowshoe**, or **Sledding in Three Bridges Park!** And everyone knows that the secret to surviving a long winter is... delicious food! So come on by for **Shredded Winter Salads, K-pop and Korean Food, or Mediterranean Appetizers**. Yum!

— *Glenna Holstein,*
Branch Manager - Menomonee Valley

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

Quick Guide

Kindernature: Winter Fun

Parents and kids, ages 3-5 years old, will take a self-guided journey both indoors and out. Have fun creating a winter-themed activity and craft stations. Please dress for the outdoors.

(RP) Sat., Jan. 4, 11, Feb. 1, 8 |
9:30 - 11am
For families with children ages
3-5 | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Toddling Into Nature: Wild About Winter

Help your toddler ages 3-5 years old go on an adventure through outdoor and indoor play, stories and activities. Dress for the weather.

(RP) Thu., Jan. 9 | 10 - 11:30am
For families with children
ages 3-5 | \$5 per person
(Nonmembers: \$7 per person)

Junior Astronomers Club

Learn about the night sky. We will meet on the second Tuesday of every month to urban stargaze, learn cool facts and do fun crafts for all ages. Telescopes are available. Themes: **January** - Space Rocks! **February** - Telescopes

(MV) Tues., Jan. 14 &
Feb. 11 | 7 - 8:30pm
For everyone | Free -
donations appreciated

Martial Arts with Above the Clouds

Hosted by Above the Clouds, this class teaches kids and teens respect, discipline, physical awareness, integrity and self-confidence. No experience needed!

(MV) Every Wed. starting
Jan. 15 | 5 - 6pm
For youth ages 9-15 | Free - donations
appreciated | Register at the door or at
abovethecloudsmilwaukee.com.

Owl Walk

Come join us on this full moon hike to see which of our Wisconsin owl friends are living in this winter wonderland.

(WP) Thu., Jan. 16 | 5 - 6:30pm
For adults and accompanied children
Adults: \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)
Children: Free - donations appreciated

Community Pie Baking

Join Community Pies and our Young Scientists Club in baking from scratch using locally harvested fruit. The pies will be served at our Winter Festival!

(WP) Sat., Jan. 18 | 1 - 3pm
& Fri., Jan. 24 | 4 - 6pm
For adults and accompanied children
Free - donations appreciated

Nature at Night

Discover winter constellations and the entertaining stories that go with them on this guided walk through the park.

(RP) Mons., Jan. 27 &
Feb. 28 | 6 - 7pm
For everyone | Adults: \$5
(Nonmembers: \$7) Children:
\$3 (Nonmembers: \$5)

Sledding Fun in Three Bridges Park

Come one, come all, for a sledding extravaganza in Three Bridges Park. We'll warm up with hot cocoa afterwards. Borrow one of our sleds or bring your own.

(MV) Sat., Feb. 1 | 10 - 11:30am
For everyone | Free -
donations appreciated

DIY Bird Feeders

Join us as we turn our old pop bottles and milk cartons into bird buffets. Please bring your own used bottles; a limited supply will be available

(WP) Sat., Feb. 22 | 10 - 11:30pm
For families | Adults: \$7 (Nonmembers:
\$9) Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$6)

Animal Feeding

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

(RP) **(WP)** & **(MV)** Every Sat. | 1pm
For everyone | Free -
donations appreciated

Storytime in the Tipi

Drop in to enjoy the warmth of the fire every week or for a story time on the second Saturday of the month.

(RP) Drop-in hours:
Every Sat. | 10am - 2pm
Story times:
Sat., Jan. 11 & Feb. 8 |
10:30am - 1:30pm
For everyone | Free - donations
appreciated

Science Saturdays and Sundays

Theme for January and February is "Do You Consume?"

(RP) Drop in program
Every Sat. | 10am - 4pm
Every Sun. | 1 - 4pm
For everyone
Free - donations appreciated

Young Scientists Club

From hiking to gardening to helping with research to caring for our animals, every day is a new adventure.

(RP) Every Mon. | 4 - 5:30pm
For ages 5 through 12 | \$10 annual fee
(Plus suggested daily donation - \$5)

(WP) Every Tue. - Fri. | 4 - 6pm
and Every Sat. | 1 - 4pm
For kids ages 7-12 | \$10
annual membership

(MV) Every Tue. & Thu. | 4 - 6pm
and Every Sat. | 1 - 4pm
For ages 5-12 | \$10 annual membership

All Urban Ecology Center
branches will be closed
Jan. 1. Regular open
hours resume on Jan. 2

HOMESCHOOL SERIES

Homeschool Series:

Chemistry Concepts

Experiment with different states of matter to learn their properties and chemical reactions!

January 14: Super Solid
at Washington Park

January 28: Fluid Fun at
Menomonee Valley

February 11: Go Gas
at Riverside Park

February 25: Chemical
Reactions at Washington Park
1 - 3pm

For children ages 5 and older |
\$7 (Nonmember: \$10)

GIRL SCOUTS

Animal Tracker

Learn the basics of tracking animals in the snow and look for tracks on a snowshoe hike.

(WP) Sat., Jan. 18 | 9am - noon
For Brownies, grades 2-3 | Please
visit www.gswise.org to register

Cross Country Skiing

Winter in Wisconsin is unique and exciting. Experience the thousand-year old sport of cross country skiing and explore the Washington Park's beautiful 135 acres.

(WP) Sat., Feb. 15 | 9am - noon
For Cadettes, grades 6-8 | Please
visit www.gswise.org to register

Save the date



Local Farmer Open House

Meet local farmers and learn how you can buy directly through Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). Learn more about this way to eat locally at Introduction to CSA presented by Jamie Ferschinger, then learn new recipes at Cooking from Your CSA Box presented by Annie Wegner LeFort.

(RP) Saturday, March 8 | 11am - 3pm
For everyone | Free - donations appreciated



The Great Alaska Adventure 2014!

Come to one of our slide show presentations to learn how you can join us in Alaska! Discover Alaska when fall colors are peaking and wildlife are preparing for the long winter ahead. Reserve your space with a \$50 nonrefundable deposit. Contact Willie if you have any questions, wkaridis@urbanecologycenter.org

Slide shows/sign up:

(RP) Tue. Mar 4 or Wed., Mar. 19 | 7pm

Trip: September 4-13, 2014

Quick Guide

Menomonee Valley Walking Tours

(MV) Every 1st & 3rd
Wed. | 10 - 11am
For adults | Free - donations
appreciated

Walk With A Doc

Join community doctors and nurses
each month for a relaxed and safe one-
mile walk through Washington Park.
Put on a pair of comfortable shoes and
walk with us.

(WP) Sat., Jan. 4 | 9 - 10am
For adults, teens and accompanied
children | Free - donations appreciated

Beesentations: Bees and Beekeeping Revealed

Join us for an introduction to bees and
beekeeping.

(MV) Sat., Jan. 11 & Feb. 12 |
10am - noon
For adults | \$10 (Nonmembers: \$15)

Sustainable Coffee Tasting

Enjoy your morning coffee with us!
Join coffee experts from the MKE
Coffee Guild as you taste locally
roasted coffee from around the world.

(RP) Sat., Jan. 11 & Feb. 8 | 10 - 11am
For adults | \$8 (Non-member: \$10)

From Beak to Tail: All About the Life of Birds

Join Tim Vargo, Manager of Research
and Citizen Science, for an in-depth
look into the wonders of bird ecology,
conservation and behavior.

(RP) Sat., Jan. 11 & Feb. 22 |
2:30 - 4pm
For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

What Will Climate Change Mean for Milwaukee?

Debra Jensen, Planning Services
Supervisor, Milwaukee Metropolitan
Sewerage District (MMSD) will discuss
how the MMSD incorporates predicted
changes into their facilities and
operations.

(MV) Tue., Jan. 14 | 7 - 8:30pm
For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

In Search of Winter Birds

Join Western Great Lakes Bird and
Bat Observatory ornithologist Bill
Mueller and Wisconsin's Citizen Based
Monitoring Network ecologist Owen
Boyle on a day-long birding adventure
in Central Wisconsin.

(RP) Sat., Jan. 18 | 6am - 6pm
For adults | \$45 (Nonmembers: \$50)

Shredded Winter Salads

Who says that salads can't be made
in Wisconsin during the winter? Julie
Seidlitz will teach you how to create
quick and easy dishes that have so
much flavor, you might miss them
when you go back to lettuce salads in
the summer! Fee includes food cost
and is non-refundable.

(MV) Sat., Jan. 18 | 12:30 - 1:30pm
For adults | \$10 (Nonmembers: \$15)

Thinking About Our Thinking

This two-part series will explore how
people think about their relationships
with the earth and each other. You'll
leave with practical strategies on how
to identify the assumptions we have
and shift your thinking about eco-
friendly behavior. Register by Jan 17.

(RP) Mons., Jan. 27 & Feb. 3 |
5:30 - 7:30pm
For adults and teens | \$35
(Nonmembers: \$40) for both sessions

Photo Phenology

Get out your cameras and watch the
Valley change over the seasons and
through the years!

(MV) Sat., Jan. 25 & Feb. 22 |
10 - 11:30am
For adults, teens and families |
Free - donations appreciated

Data Workshop

Want to learn more about the data we
collect in our scientific research? Join
this introductory workshop aimed at
Citizen Scientists, like you, who are
interested in data analysis.

(RP) Mon., Jan. 27 | 6 - 7pm
For adults | Free - donations
appreciated

Chopping Explored! Basic Knife Skills

If the thought of slicing and dicing all
those vegetables prevents you from
cooking from scratch, come and learn
how to "sharpen" your basic knife skills
from chef Annie Wegner LeFort.

(RP) Mon., Jan. 27 | 7 - 8pm
For adults and teens | \$10
(Nonmember: \$12)

Indian Food to Cure the Winter Blues

In this hands-on class, you will learn
to make a paneer dish (Indian cheese),
Muth (a small bean), Rice with Yogurt
and Spices and a Mango Lassi. Register
by Jan. 26.

(RP) Thu., Jan. 30 | 6 - 8:30pm
For adults and teens | \$35
(Nonmembers: \$40)

Health and Nutrition for Families

cosponsored by TreeSchool Co-op
Get practical advice about how you
and your family can eat better from Dr.
Robert J. Fox of The Shalom Center.

(RP) Sun., Feb. 2 | 1 - 3pm
For adults | Free - donations
appreciated

K-Pop and Korean Food!

Join instructor Saehee Chang for a
delicious, musical experience that
combines Korean K-Pop music and
food. Learn to make Korean Seaweed
Rolls, Spicy Rice Cakes and more!

(MV) Sat., Feb. 8 | 1 - 3pm
For adults | \$35 (Nonmembers: \$40)

Examining the Mental Health Potential of Milwaukee's Food Justice Movement

Kristin Nelson explores basic concepts
of food justice and explores our local
diverse food justice movement.

(WP) Tue., Feb. 11 | 7 - 8:30pm
For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

The Art and Science of Massage

In this hands-on workshop participants
will learn the art and science behind
giving a good massage. Partners are
necessary. Register by Feb. 14.

(RP) Sun., Feb. 16 | 2 - 4pm
For adults | \$10 per person
(Nonmembers: \$15)

Cooking Indian Comfort Foods

Learn to cook a dish with rice in a
buttermilk curry, Aloo Saag (potatoes
and spinach), a lentil soup and
chutney. Register by Feb. 14.

(RP) Tue., Feb. 18 | 6 - 8:30pm
For adults and teens | \$35
(Nonmembers: \$40)

Mediterranean Appetizers

Julie Seidlitz will teach you how to
create heart-healthy, Mediterranean
appetizers that feature beans, nuts and
olive oil. Fee includes food cost and is
non-refundable.

(MV) Sat., Feb. 22 | 12:30 - 1:30pm
For adults | \$10 (Nonmembers: \$15)

ART AT THE CENTER

Art Opening — *Water and Light*: Kurt Kleman, Thea Kovac and Tom Petri

Abstraction and intimacy, water
and light connect Kurt Kleman's
dramatic large-scale acrylic paintings
("shimmer" series) and Thea Kovac's
vibrant watercolors ("Floating
Light" series). You might become
mesmerized by our rivers and lake
all over again. In a delightful and
engaging counterpoint are bird
carvings by Tom Petri. Artists will
speak at 6pm. Refreshments provided.
Show runs January through March.

(RP) Thu., Jan. 16 | 5 - 7pm
For everyone | Free -
donations appreciated

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

Quick Guide

Intro to Cross Country Skiing

Learn how to cross country ski! We'll provide the skis and hot chocolate.

For families with children ages 5 and up

(RP) Sun., Jan. 12 | 1 - 3pm

(RP) Mon., Jan. 20 | 4 - 6pm

For families with children ages 12 and up

(WP) Sat., Jan. 4 | 10 - 11:30am

(WP) Sat., Jan. 18 | 10 - 11:30am

(WP) Sat., Feb. 8 | 10 - 11:30am

(WP) Sat., Feb. 22 | 10 - 11:30am

For adults only

(RP) Sun., Jan. 19 | 1 - 3pm

(RP) Mon., Feb. 3 | 4 - 6pm

Adults: \$6 (Nonmembers: \$9)
Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Intermediate Cross Country Skiing

Learn advanced techniques including ways to ascend and descend hills. Use our equipment or bring your own.

For families with children ages 5 and up

(RP) Sun., Jan. 26 | 1 - 3pm

(RP) Mon., Feb. 24 | 4 - 6pm

Adults: \$6 (Nonmembers: \$9)

Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

For adults only

(WP) Sat., Feb. 1 | 9am - 1pm

\$10 (Nonmembers: \$15)

(RP) Sun., Feb. 2 | 1 - 3pm

\$6 (Nonmembers: \$9)

(RP) Mon., Feb. 10 | 4 - 6pm

\$6 (Nonmembers: \$9)

Skiing Adventures:

Join the first Urban Ecology Center group to ski in Three Bridges Park. For beginner and intermediate skiers.

For families with children ages 5 and up

(MV) Sat., Jan. 18 | 10am - noon

For adults only

(MV) Sat., Feb. 8 | 10am - noon

Adults: \$6 (Nonmembers: \$9)

Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Introduction to Snowshoeing

Learn how to snowshoe! We'll provide the equipment. Dress in layers.

(WP) Sats., Jan. 11 & Feb. 1 | 10 - 11:30am

For adults and accompanied children ages 12 and up | Adults: \$6 (Nonmembers: \$9) Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Young Scientists Club - Ski Adventure

Learn to ski, make new friends and drink some hot cocoa! For Young Scientists Club members and families from all three branches.

(WP) Sat., Jan. 11 | Noon - 4pm

Young Scientists Club membership is required | Free - donations appreciated

Outdoor Winter Survival

Learn fire building, shelter construction, water collection and more! Dress in layers.

(RP) Sat., Feb. 8 | 1 - 3pm

For families and children | Adults:

\$6 (Nonmembers: \$9) Children:

\$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Winter Survival For Family and Friends

Come test out your skills as you face the elements at Washington Park.

(WP) Sat., Feb. 8 | 10am - noon

For families | Adults: \$7 (Nonmembers: \$9) Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$6)

Ski the Legacy - Lincoln Park

Rediscover Lincoln Park as we view the results of a recently completed Great Lake Legacy Act restoration project. No snow? Then we'll hike. Registration required by February 6th.

(RP) Sun., Feb. 9 | 1pm - 3:30pm

For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Valentine's Day Singles Sledding

Join us for an evening of sledding. We'll have an outdoor campfire, s'mores and hot chocolate.

(RP) Fri., Feb. 14 | 5 - 7pm

For adults | Free - donations appreciated

Tracking Animals by Snowshoe

Ever wonder what animals are doing in the winter? Let's find out! Strap on some snowshoes and join us to search for signs of animal activity. We'll learn how to identify tracks and how animals survive the cold. No snow? No problem! We'll hike instead.

(MV) Sat., Feb. 15 | 10 - 11:30am

For everyone | Adults: \$6

(Nonmembers: \$9) Children:

\$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Ski the Kettle Moraine

Join us for a day of skiing in the Lapham Peak Unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest.

(RP) Sun., Feb. 16 | 10am - 3pm
For adults | \$45 (Nonmembers: \$50)

Women in the Outdoors: Winter Workshop

Join us as we learn wildlife signs and tracking, cross country skiing basics and winter tree identification. Registration required by Feb. 19.

(RP) Sat., Feb. 22 | 9am - 1:30pm

For women | \$35 (Nonmembers: \$40)

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer Orientation

Come find out how you can contribute your time and talents to the Center.

(RP) Fri., Jan. 3 | 3 - 4:30pm

(RP) Tue., Jan. 14 | 5:30 - 7pm

(RP) Sat., Feb. 8 | 10:30am - noon

(RP) Fri., Feb. 28 | 3 - 4:30pm

(WP) Thu., Jan. 9 | 5 - 6pm

(WP) Wed., Jan. 29 | 5 - 6pm

(WP) Sat., Feb. 15 | 10:30 - 11:30am

(WP) Tue., Feb. 25 | 5 - 6pm

(MV) Tue., Jan. 7 | 5:30 - 7pm

(MV) Sat., Jan. 18 | 10:30am - noon

(MV) Thu., Feb. 6 | 5:30 - 7pm

(MV) Tue., Feb. 18 | 5:30 - 7pm

For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

New at WP Compost Crew

Help create and distribute compost for our community vegetable gardens and make leaf compost for native plantings.

(WP) Weds., Jan. 8, 22,

Feb. 12 & 26 | 4:30 - 5:30pm

For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Weekly volunteer opportunities

Find these weekly events on the calendar on our website

Compost Crew	Forestry Fridays
Burdock Brigades	Volunteer Park
Volunteer	Ranger Crew
Papermaking	

INTEREST GROUPS

Photo Club

(RP) Thus., Jan. 9 & Feb. 6 | 6:30 - 9pm

Friends of Real Food: Potluck Dinner and Program

(RP) Weds., Jan. 8 & Feb. 12 | 6 - 8pm

Milwaukee's HOME GR/OWN Initiative: Public Forum

(RP) Thus., Jan. 16 & Feb. 20 | 5:30 - 6:30 pm

Urban Echo Poets

(RP) Jan. 9 & Feb. 13 | 7 - 8:30pm

Urban Stargazers

(RP) Thus., Jan. 9 & Feb. 13 | 7 - 8:30pm

Faith and Ecology

(RP) Tues., Jan. 21 & Feb. 18 | 7 - 8:30pm

Transition Milwaukee: All City Hub Meeting

(RP) Mons., Jan. 27 & Feb. 24 | 6:30 - 8:30pm

Early Morning Birdwalks

(MV) Every Tue. except Dec. 31 | 8am

(WP) Every Wed. except Jan. 1 | 8am

(RP) Every Thu. | 8am

All Urban Ecology Center branches will be closed Jan. 1.
Regular open hours resume on Jan. 3



New Year, New Land

by Ken Leinbach, Executive Director

I knew the call would come eventually, I was just hoping it would take a little longer to happen. When it did come, however, I was incredibly thankful that it left an opening and was not final.

"Ken, we've decided that we need to sell the property and have some interested buyers who have offered some very attractive numbers to us," she said, "however, we'd love it if there was a way for the Center to have it. We cannot give it away but we might be able to give you time. How long do you think you would need to make a run for it?"

This call, which came almost exactly a year ago, catalyzed the most amazing fundraising feat I have ever been a part of. We immediately launched a very quiet, very targeted, very fast, and - almost miraculously - very successful campaign and within just a little over two months we actually had the wherewithal in pledges to compete with these well heeled developers. Long story short, we are pleased as pie and tickled pink to be able to share with our Urban Ecology Center family (meaning you), and the Milwaukee community as a whole (meaning everyone else), yet another milestone in the amazing two decade effort to preserve and protect the urban lands along the restored Milwaukee River corridor.

To get the picture, think of the land in question like a round donut with a big hole cut out of the middle. The yummy ring of cake consists of the Urban Ecology Center headquarters and the Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum, which includes the following sections: 1) the Oak Leaf Trail on the east, 2) Riverside Park to the north, and 3) the ever improving Milwaukee River wildlife corridor to the south and west. This sanctuary of accessible nature and learning is the chocolate glazed deliciousness that our amazing community (again you!) has created together out of practically nothing for the past 20 years! Now imagine a 4.5 acre hole in the middle of this 40 acre arboretum. From the beginning this "donut hole" has been a materials reclamation and recycling business run by the late Pieter Godfrey. This

is not land anyone would give awards to for natural beauty, but the two cream city brick industrial buildings surrounded by numerous piles of stone, coupled with the smell of fresh cut lumber from the converted saw mill had its own gritty charm -- not totally incongruous to the Center's mission for urban sustainability, I might add. This "donut hole" was for sale.

Now imagine two universes:

In one universe, this donut hole is converted into 200 units or more of stacked housing with associated parking similar to the condominiums, apartments and dorms that sprouted up when we successfully cleaned up this urban stretch of river some 15 years ago. Think 24-hour lights and traffic and the sounds of congestion near the owls, herons, turtles and migrating birds and bats we so diligently study. Think of the tens of thousands of school children and visitors who now flock to this land as well, each having to avoid the daily traffic that housing of this type brings.

In the other universe, this land is controlled by the Urban Ecology Center, a nonprofit that emerged organically from this very same neighborhood community and is still run by its community-based board of directors representing many thousands of neighborhood members and friends. Think more park land, more nature, expanded learning, perhaps an ecological campus or an ecologically minded business, living community or school. The perfect exclamation mark to the spectacular Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum which we introduced to Milwaukee in September.

Well guess what? Thanks to the incredible and quiet support from 28 of our very best of friends (drum roll please!) universe two is our new reality! As of December of 2013, the 4.5 acres, two industrial buildings and all the contents within and on the land belong to the Urban Ecology Center! Can you believe it? We spent all summer and fall kicking the tires, checking the lights and slamming the doors (so to speak) to make sure we were not doing something stupid

by purchasing an albatross of environmental issues, or a sink hole of crazy work, and in November, with the data in, our board made the unanimous vote to move forward.

Now, before people get too excited, or enraged as the case may be, let me quickly clarify two important points:

1) It should go on record that the Urban Ecology Center is not anti-development. We actually support well designed stacked housing in an urban environment like ours. More people living efficiently in the city means less nature-killing urban sprawl, less need for fossil fuels to get people out to distant homes and less infrastructure needed to reach distant places with water, sewage and waste removal. At the same time, however, where these buildings are placed matters. It is our opinion that keeping a buffer of land and natural views near to the Milwaukee River is important. This is why we were a lead partner in the creation of the Milwaukee River Greenway Coalition and the zoned overlay district that protects it.

2) We purchased this land, with the help of our friends, so that we can have full control of what happens next. What that vision is, however, is yet to fully emerge and is sure to take quite a lot of time -- and, yes, it will require more resources than we currently have available to us. It may take a few years before we can even get started as our hands are still a little full with some other pretty incredible projects. It also should be stated clearly from the outset that we do not know for sure that we will be able to save both of Pieter Godfrey's buildings, in fact preliminary studies make it seem improbable that more than one can be saved.

We saw this purchase as a once in a lifetime opportunity, something that it was imperative to seize now as a generational opportunity for the future. We do have a crazy amount of work ahead, but it is work to be celebrated with excitement and anticipation. Wow! 🌱



What is Environmentalism? Depends on Who You Ask

by Erin Shawgo, Evaluation & Volunteer Coordinator

I came to the Center two and a half years ago as a summer camp intern. As my role has changed from environmental educator to volunteer coordinator and community health evaluation coordinator, I have found myself reflecting on a question that has repeatedly come up in the various roles I've held: What is environmentalism?

It didn't take long in my role as an educator to notice that how I engaged with nature wasn't universal. Activities I loved as a child, like catching bugs or sitting quietly in the woods or playing in snow, while appreciated by some, could be terrifying, disgusting or down right boring to some of my students. I took on the mentality that I needed to convince kids to like these things, it was necessary in order to "foster ecological understanding and inspiration for change."

To my surprise, this approach didn't always work. I noticed how I was projecting my experiences onto the students, instead of understanding that each of us have our own relationship with nature, and our connection to it is going to play out differently. Telling my students how to experience nature wasn't honoring the diversity of perspectives we each brought to environmentalism, but rather it was making nature seem exclusive in how it could be enjoyed.

Understanding and inspiration can't be forced. The same dilemma occurred in my role as volunteer coordinator and community health evaluation coordinator. In trying to understand what motivated people to volunteer and how outdoor play improved health, I came to the conclusion that the voices within the community I was working with were necessary contributions

to this working definition of environment.

I continue to question how to make environmentalism more inclusive, striving to understand how it looks in others' lives, beyond the confines of flannel and hiking boots, allowing it to be more dynamic and comprehensive. I can't say that I've landed on a clear cut answer, but working at the Center has given me the chance to really explore how we can all contribute to redefining environmentalism through the way we cook, dance, play outside and how valuing each person's contribution is essential.

My time here has helped me see that my own experiences and motivations don't apply to all, and that the work toward inclusivity requires asking the question: What does environmentalism mean to you? 🌱

2014 Summer Camps at the Urban Ecology Center

Registration starts **January 17**

Camps at all three branches



*For preschool
- 8th grade*

Watch for details at urbanecologycenter.org

Looking for the perfect place to hold your wedding, reception or party?

Host your gathering at the
Urban Ecology Center!

We have a variety of spaces available for large or small groups. For more information, visit urbanecologycenter.org/facility-rentals.

Thank You to Our Donors

Many thanks to the local foundations, corporations and individuals who have donated to the Center.

The complete list of donors who have given within the last two months can be found on our website at urbanecologycenter.org/thankyoulist.

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 members 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.

Credits:

The Urban Ecology Center Newsletter is created and distributed by the following people: Carijean Buhk, Ginger Duiven, Demetria Dunn, Judy Krause, Jeff McAvoy and Pat Mueller. Contributing writers: Jamie Ferschinger, Beth Heller, Willie Karidis, Ken Leinbach and Erin Shawgo.
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LOCATIONS & HOURS

All Center locations have special hours during the holidays. See the Program & Events Quick Guide for details.

Riverside Park

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

Hours of operation:
Monday - Thursday: 9am - 7pm
Friday & Saturday: 9am - 5pm
Sunday: Noon - 5pm

Washington Park

1859 N. 40th St.
Milwaukee, WI 53208
(Mailing address: 4145 W. Lisbon Ave., 53208)
(414) 344-5460 Fax: (414) 344-5462
wkaridis@urbanecologycenter.org

Hours of operation:
Tuesday - Friday: Noon - 6pm
Saturday: 9 am - 5pm

New hours starting Jan. 2!

Menomonee Valley

3700 W. Pierce St.
Milwaukee, WI 53215
(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 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 _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

My neighborhood park is

Riverside Washington Menomonee I love them all!

I would like to volunteer. Please contact me.

Charge my membership to: Master Card Visa

Card Number _____ - _____ - _____ - _____

Expiration Date _____ / _____

Signature _____ Date _____

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



FSC logo

IN THIS ISSUE

WASHINGTON PARK: READY TO BLOSSOM!

by Beth Heller and Willie Karidis
Can you believe it's been only seven years since we hired our first staff member to start up our Washington Park branch? The growth there has been amazing! With the start of a new year, we, like many of you, are reflecting on the past and thinking about our plans for the year ahead.

A SENSE OF TRIBE

by Jamie Ferschinger
Of all of the things the Native Americans have contributed to society, I think one of the most important is the tribe.

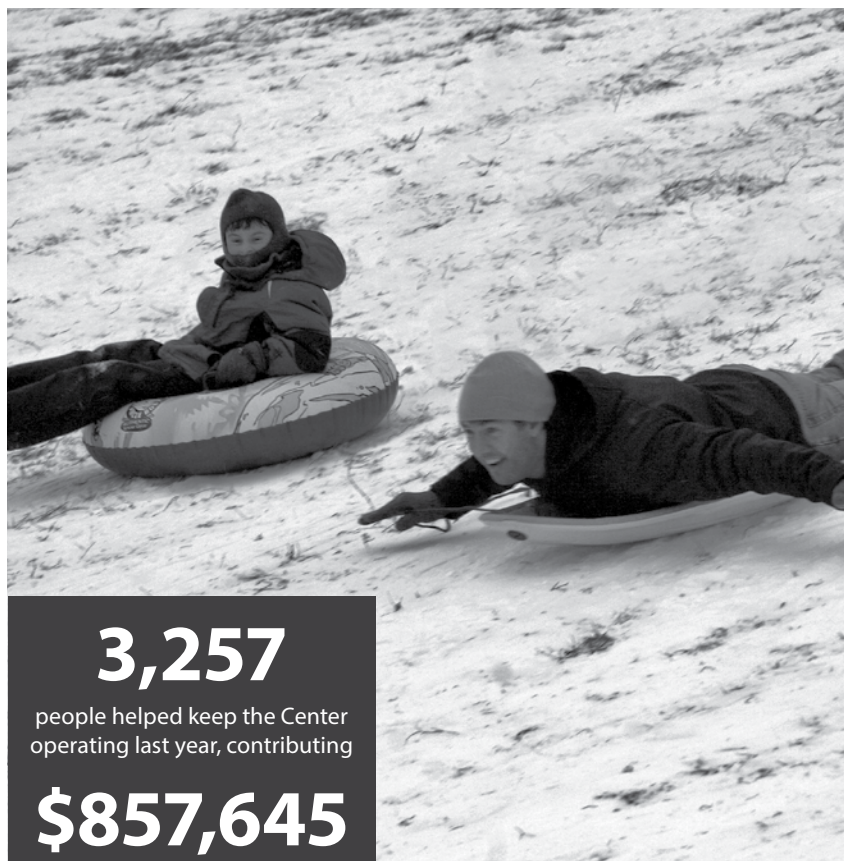
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SEE FOR YOURSELF! (NO REALLY, SEE WHAT'S HAPPENED WITH YOUR SUPPORT)



3,257

people helped keep the Center
operating last year, contributing

\$857,645