



An Unusual Challenge ... Will You Raise Your Hand?

by Ken Leinbach, Executive Director

"Wow! Did I really just say that? ... I sure hope I didn't offend anyone," I thought as I stepped from the podium and returned to my seat. It is always a little dicey when I'm asked to speak extemporaneously. Even I am never quite sure what I will say. In this case, I issued a personal challenge to all in attendance at an evening business awards ceremony organized by the Shepherd Express. Upon receiving much positive feedback afterward, I thought that perhaps I should offer this to you as well!

Before the event I was having what I call a triangle day. This is when, traveling by bicycle, I have meetings at all three of our branches in one day. My work day began at Riverside Park for my first meeting. I then biked from the east side to the largely African American community on Walnut for a lunch meeting at our Washington Park branch. After lunch I had to book it to 35th Street to get to our south side Menomonee Valley branch located in a largely Latino neighborhood for an afternoon presentation. Following this I took the Hank Aaron State Trail through the factories of the valley, past Potawatomi, the Harley Davidson Museum and then through downtown back to Riverside.

I love triangle days. They are a fantastic way to see the whole city. The ride takes me through some intense economic extremes and crosses the bounds of our culturally diverse and segregated neighborhoods. It also includes industrial zones, universities, impressive nature, sports complexes and museums. I've thought about offering this as a tour because I find it so interesting. And on a bike one can actually interact with folks along the way — it's fun!

Now, back to the event. I loaded some jerk chicken onto my plate and struck up a conversation with the man serving the food. His name was

continued on page 10



Reclaiming Riverland

by Judy Krause, Director of Finance and Operations

While some activities outdoors are winding down (at least until there is enough snow to get out on skis or snowshoes), activity has increased on the land situated in the midst of the Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum. If your plans bring you to the Arboretum this winter (it's a great place for a walk in any season!), you will see a demolition project underway. This work began in December and will extend until March 2015.

You may remember that last winter Ken announced that we had purchased the property just west of our Riverside Park branch. That land is home to two buildings previously used for manufacturing steel products and as a wool mill. More recently, they were the home of Pieter Godfrey's materials reclamation business, specializing in brick, stone and wood. Pieter passed away unexpectedly in 2011 and eventually the active use of the property ended. In late 2013 we acquired the property which we now refer to as the Riverland. The warehouse that's coming down is located on the west end of the property, appears on Sanborn Fire Insurance maps as early as 1894 and is larger than a football field.

I've managed multiple building projects over the years, but this is the first time I've overseen the taking down of one. I believe it is the appropriate thing to do, but it has been a very difficult decision. You see, I have many memories of lively conversations with Pieter in that building as we collaborated on several projects. I marveled at the way he incorporated the unique wood and artifacts from his work into his living area. He was extremely proud to show off that incredible space.

So why take down the building?

Since Pieter's death, structural issues have multiplied, causing the warehouse to become unsound. Water damage due to cracked roof panels has destroyed much of what was inside. It is sad to see

continued on page 9

Branch Highlights



RIVERSIDE PARK

The Arboretum is beautiful to explore in winter but as you do, please be mindful of these changes. We are removing a building on the Riverland property (see article above). Also, the stairs in the south of the park and descending into the ravine will be closed. Lastly, please do not walk (humans or dogs) on the river ice as it is highly unpredictable.



WASHINGTON PARK

The Washington Park staff and Young Scientists are keeping close tabs on the depth of ice on the lagoon and prepping the skates for outdoor fun! Our winter wonderland is ready for outdoor play. We offer skis, sleds, snowshoes, skates and hot chocolate to make it easy for you and your family to enjoy. Come play!



MENOMONEE VALLEY

We want to know what you think! Join your neighbors on February 3rd or 5th for a Community Forum. We'll get to know each other, enjoy some local fare and then we'll listen while you share your thoughts on the Menomonee Valley branch, your ideas for programming, and your hopes for the future. All ages welcome!



Why What We Do Matters

by Glenna Holstein, Branch Manager - Menomonee Valley

The turn of the year is always a good time for reflection-- to ask, "Why do I do what I do?"

Sometimes it's really hard for me to answer that question. We live in a city plagued by segregation, disparity and systemic violence, within a country that often feels paralyzed by political polarization. Against this backdrop, I sometimes find myself planning a snowshoe program and wondering, "Isn't there more I could be doing?" and "Is this work really that important?"

I think the answer to both of these questions is "yes."

Yes, there is more to be done. It's critically important for me to constantly reflect on how I can do more to help fix what is broken

in my community, and to remember that our work at the Center is not the only good work being done. The more we can support the efforts of others doing amazing work in our neighborhoods, the stronger we all are.

And also, yes, this work is important and relevant for two reasons:

First: common ground. As a society, we tend to isolate and section ourselves in a way that makes it extraordinarily difficult for us to see across the racial, economic and political divisions we create. At the Center, we see our work as building common ground (sometimes literally!). A park is a place where everyone can find something to enjoy, a place where people can have shared experiences. We try to create spaces where

continued on page 4

Work With Us This Summer!

We are hiring a total of 26 paid interns for the summer in the areas of Citizen Science, Research and Monitoring; Education and Community Programs; Green Building Management and Research; Land Stewardship; Marketing; and Volunteer and Visitor Services. Applications can be found by going to our website and clicking on the Jobs tab. Applications will

be reviewed as they are received, so early application is strongly encouraged. Final application deadline is Saturday, February 28, 2015. Some of the internships are for 10 weeks and some are for 12 weeks. If you are interested or know someone who is interested, please look into this great opportunity! 🍀

Thank You to Our Contributing Members

Many thanks to the local foundations, corporations and individuals who have donated to the Center. The complete list of contributing members who have given within the last two months can be found on our website at www.urbanecologycenter.org/thankyoulist.

Credits:



Carijean Buhk
Editor

The Urban Ecology Center Newsletter is created and distributed through a team effort by the following people: Carijean Buhk, Matthew Gnas, Roxanne Helmeid, Judy Krause, Jeff McAvoy, Pat Mueller and Jessica St. John.

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DROPLETS

LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE TOPICS ON OUR WEBSITE

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

Riverside Park

- 2 drawer vertical file cabinets
- Alka-seltzer tablets
- Anabat detector
- Apple PowerBook
- Bedsheets
- Blenders
- HD quality video camera
- Hybrid (or Electric) Car
- Ice cream buckets with lids
- iPad(s)
- iPod
- Log Splitter
- Paper shredder (new or gently used)

Washington Park

- 2 drawer vertical file cabinets
- 8ft folding tables
- Aquarium pumps & filters
- Bicycle air pump
- Blenders
- Boombox cd player
- Box fans or oscillating floor fans
- Chopping knives
- Gently used sweatpants, all sizes
- Hand gardening shears
- Igloo playmate-style cooler
- Large crock pots or nescos with lids (3)
- Podium

Menomonee Valley

- 20 Yoga Mats
- Animal homes (bird or wasps nests)
- Animal mounts, skulls & pelts
- Bird feathers
- Blenders (6)
- Chopsticks (4)
- Compound microscopes (8)
- Cooking oil
- Copy paper
- Drums (conga, cajon, djembe)
- Electric Power washer
- Field/trail cameras (3)
- Hybrid or Electric Car

SEE FOR YOURSELF! (No really, see who contributed to our success last year!)

Corporate Partners are Getting People Outside

By generously offering their time, talent and contributions, our corporate partners are helping us build a strong, vibrant community. Their significant support through sponsorships, grants, in-kind donations and hands-on volunteering helps us get people of all ages outdoors. We are immensely grateful for their partnership in this work.



73 corporations and businesses

last fiscal year contributed
\$458,208

19 businesses

provided volunteer groups through their employee or family community outreach events

627 volunteers

from these businesses contributed their time planting, painting, cleaning and building at our branches

1829 total hours

of service were given from these energetic, positive and hardworking groups!



Boots, bikes and much more!

Our business partners gave the Center in-kind donations totaling

\$226,441

If you'd like to support the Urban Ecology Center, consider volunteering or making a donation. Learn how at www.urbanecologycenter.org



Finding Inspiration in Washington Park

by Beth Heller, Senior Director of Education and Strategic Planning

"I want to feel safe, a sense of comfort."

"I want to come to a place where I can just be who I am."

"I want to know that my sisters are safe."

All of these comments came from teens responding to the question "How do you want to feel when you come to the Urban Ecology Center?" During the second half of 2014, we had nearly 80 people attend community forums and listening sessions in Washington Park, almost half of whom were children or teens. The quotes above came from youth who understand how important it is to have a place in their community where they can relax, unwind and just be.

Last September, Washington Park's Branch Manager, Willie Karidis, received the wonderful offer to be Chief Operating Officer for the Iditarod dogsled race. Since his departure, I've been a pinch-hitter for our Washington Park Branch Manager position.

Just a year before Willie left, the Milwaukee County Board voted unanimously in support of a five-year lease agreement with the Urban Ecology Center to allow full use of the entire Washington Park Pavilion. With the full lease in place, we then could begin to solicit ideas people had for our branch and future programming. Part of my role was to facilitate the community forums. As I've done this deep

dive into the Washington Park community, I found myself inspired not only by the teens quoted above, but by the community as a whole.

As a substitute member of the Washington Park Partners steering committee, I saw first-hand how residents, non-profits and law enforcement



Youth from Washington Park's Young Scientist Club

were working to build trust, aiming toward the shared goal of creating a safe neighborhood. The result: 30% reduction of crime in *one year*. People are passionate about reclaiming their neighborhood. And it's working!

In December 2014 United Methodist Children's Services, lead organizer for Washington Park Partners, was given a MetLife Foundation award for community partnerships with police in creating safe places. Competing with 560 cities across the country, Milwaukee as a whole received three of the eleven

awards given. Together we are envisioning a community where we all can feel safe. The teens' comments reflect this need.

Combining the work of neighbors, organizations and police we've witnessed a 56% reduction in crime over our first five years at Washington Park. With 22,000 visitors coming into the Washington Park branch last year, plus an additional 36,500 visits from people recreating in the park (44% of whom were children), we are helping to create that place our teens have requested: a place to unwind, relax, feel safe and be yourself.

Are you one of our south side neighbors? You can provide your own inspiration by joining us at the Menomonee Valley Community Forums where kids, teens and adults will share their insights on February 3rd and 5th. In both cases, we offer a safe space, a sense of comfort and a listening ear. Come on over!

I want more people to be inspired by the communities surrounding our branches. With this in mind, I encourage you all to come to Washington Park on the afternoon of January 24th for the Center's Winterfest. You might witness some of the teens whose comments spurred the writing of this article as they ice skate with siblings, fly down the sledding hill, or simply "be themselves" while sipping hot chocolate. ❄️

Why What We Do Matters

continued from page 2

people who have different backgrounds can thrive together and build something together. After all, you don't have to agree on everything to be awed by the magnificent quiet after a fresh snowfall in the park.

Secondly (and this is exceedingly basic): love. Life in all its forms — plant, animal, human, white,

black, brown — is sacred and precious, and our survival as a society, and as a species, depends on truly taking that belief as our centering tenet. We cannot make this world better if we don't believe that the whole thing is worth loving!

So, why does this work? Not because it is the only good work or because it is the most important,

but because it is an important piece of the puzzle. We live in a city that desperately needs common ground and desperately needs us to believe that it is worth loving. And as silly as it might sound, I do believe that wintry snowshoe tromps through the park, alongside a neighbor, just might help us get there. ❄️

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



**Before Winterfest
Let's Build an Igloo!**

Help us build a multicolored igloo just in time for Winterfest! We'll learn about cold-weather shelters, then construct an igloo using food coloring and blocks of ice. Dress in warm, waterproof layers!

(WP) Sat., Jan. 10 | 10 - 11:30AM
For everyone | Adults: \$6
(Nonmembers: \$9) Children: \$4
(Nonmembers: \$7)

Winterfest!

Join us for winter fun outdoors!
Then warm up inside with hot cocoa
and homemade pie!

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

(WP) Saturday, January 24
NOON - 4PM | For everyone | Free!

Food and beverages available complements 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 and a puppet show and still get home in time for their afternoon nap. Space is limited. Please register all attending family members.

(WP) Saturday, January 24
10:30AM - NOON
For children ages 5 and younger
accompanied by an adult |
Free!

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

RIVERSIDE PARK



Learn about the wonders of trees from our Forester Caitlin Reinartz at her four-part **Tree Anatomy and Physiology** series. Come to one class or all four. Also, kids and adults alike will have the opportunity to go into the park at night on **Owl Prowls**. Be sure to attend the **Art Show Opening** for Joyce Winter and Michael Kutzer on January 8th. And save the date for the **Local Farmer Open House** coming up March 7.

— *Jamie Ferschinger,*
Branch Manager - Riverside Park

WASHINGTON PARK



Do you remember our colorful igloo from last year? We'd love your help building an even bigger one! At **Let's Build an Igloo** we'll teach you how it's done and get it started.

Then come see the finished product at our annual **Winterfest** on Saturday, January 24th! Every Saturday morning we offer either **Intro to Cross Country Skiing or Intro to Snowshoeing**.

— *Erick Anderson,*
Community Program
Coordinator - Washington Park

MENOMONEE VALLEY



We're delighting in winter in the Valley! Join us on any Saturday for an **Intro to Cross Country Skiing or Intro to Snowshoeing** (offered on alternating Saturdays), and then come back for an evening adventure: **Music Under Glass—by Snowshoe!** Or, just come borrow skis or snowshoes and explore on your own!

— *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

Owl Prowl for Families

A wintry forest just after dark is the perfect time to look and listen for our nocturnal friends, the owls! Bundle up for a fun and educational hike. Then warm up with a little hot chocolate.

(RP) Tue., Jan. 13 | 6:30 - 8pm

(RP) Tue., Feb. 10 | 6:30 - 8pm

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

¡Baile Folclórico!

Based on the many regional dance traditions in Mexico, Baile Folclórico weaves together folklore, beautiful costumes and ballet-like gestures. Come learn the basics of this traditional dance form!

(MV) Every Tue. except

Feb. 3 | 5 - 6pm

For adults and children ages 12 and older | Free - donations appreciated

Drama Class with Above the Clouds

Hosted by *Above the Clouds*, this class will help students learn voice projection, use of body as well as build confidence in their presentation skills. Visit abovethecloudsmilwaukee.com. To print out a registration form or stop by the Center to register!

(MV) Every Wed. | 4:45 - 5:45PM

For children ages 5-8 | Free - donations appreciated

Fire Time in the Rooftop Tipi

Enjoy the warmth of the fire in our rooftop tipi on these cold, winter days.

(RP) Every Sat. | 10am - 3pm

For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

Animal Feeding

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

(RP) (WP) & (MV) Every Sat. | 1PM

For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

Science Saturdays and Sundays

Come try these self-led activities. Theme: "Creatures of the River."

(RP) Self-led, drop-in program

available Every Sat. | 10am - 4PM and Every Sun. | 1 - 4PM

For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

Nature Rangers

Investigate animals and plants, learn about science, create research projects and more! The fee covers all Monday or Tuesday sessions in January/February.

(RP) Every Mon. or every Tue. |

4 - 5:30PM

For children ages 5 and older |

\$10 (Nonmember: \$15)

Young Scientists Club

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

(WP) Every Tue. - Fri.

except Jan. 1 | 4 - 6PM

and Every Sat. | 1 - 4PM

For kids ages 7-12 | \$10

annual membership

(MV) Every Tue. & Thu. except Jan.

1 | 4 - 6PM and Every Sat. | 1 - 4PM

For ages 5-12 | \$10 annual membership

INTEREST GROUPS

Photo Club

(RP) Thus., Jan. 8 & Feb. 5 |

6:30 - 9PM

Urban Echo Poets

(RP) Thus., Jan. 8 & Feb. 12 |

7 - 8:30PM

Urban Stargazers

(RP) Thus., Jan. 8 & Feb. 12 |


7 - 8:30PM

350.org General Meeting

(RP) Tues., Jan. 13 & Feb. 10 |

7 - 8:30PM

Friends of Real

**Food: Potluck Dinner
and Program **

(RP) Weds., Jan. 14 | 6 - 8PM

Faith and Ecology

(RP) Tues., Jan. 20 & Feb. 17 |

7 - 8:30PM

Transition Milwaukee: All City Hub Meeting

(RP) Mons., Jan. 26 & Feb. 23 |

6:30 - 8:30PM

Early Morning Birdwalks

(MV) Every Tue. | 8am

(WP) Every Wed. | 8am

(RP) Every Thu. except Jan. 1 | 8am

Highlighted Programs

Art Show Opening

Reception:

Being/Seeing, with Joyce

Winter and Michael Kutzer

Joyce Winter paintings are a dance on paper using color, texture and space that connects memory and sensory impressions of our relationships with nature. **Michael Kutzer** paints one place, Seminary Woods, in its many moods. He is interested in how your ability to focus at multiple distances affects what you see in nature. Artists speak at 6pm. Show runs through March.

(RP) Thu., Jan. 8 | 5 - 7PM

For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

Menomonee Valley

Community Forums

Join your neighbors for "cafe style" conversations about what's going on at the Center and your ideas for future programming. We'll also enjoy a free meal together!

(MV) Tue., Feb. 3 | 6 - 7:30PM

(MV) Thu., Feb. 5 | 11AM - 12:30PM

For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

Art Exhibit: Other Faces of Africa — *Blooming of Education and Health in Mozambique and Malawi*

This one-day photo exhibit features photos of Mozambique and Malawi.

(MV) Sat. Feb. 14 | 9AM - 4PM

For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

Snowtopia

Help create our Snow City, replete with sky scraping snow castles and a kingdom of snow folk. There will also be sledding and a scavenger hunt hike. Snow dependent.

(RP) Sat., Feb. 7 | 12:30 - 4PM

For everyone who loves playing in the snow | Free - donations appreciated.

Throwback Series

September 2014 marked the 10-year anniversary of the grand opening of our Riverside Park building. To honor this benchmark, we are reviving "throwback" community programming from the past ten years with new twists! Visit urbanecologycenter.org/10years to see all our Throwback programs.

Snowshoe Olympics

Test your physical and mental agility in these fun and snowy challenges! Snowshoes provided. This program is snow dependent. This throwback program was last seen in 2011.

(RP) Sat., Jan. 17 | 10am - noon

For families and kids ages 6-10 | \$5/person (Nonmembers: \$7/person)

Speed Dating for Nature Lovers

Meet other outdoor and nature minded singles in these five minute "mini-dates." We'll keep track of who you think you hit it off with and connect mutual matches. Appetizers and beverages available. Registration required by February 12th.

(RP) Sat., Feb. 14 | 6:30 - 8:30PM

For adults | \$20 (Nonmembers: \$25)

HOMESCHOOL SERIES

Space Exploration

3...2...1 Blast off! We are heading into outer space for January and February's Homeschool Series. Come along and learn about the Moon, planets, and other celestial bodies that make up the universe.

(For children age 5 and older | \$7 (Nonmember: \$10) per class

The Earth and Moon

(MV) Tue., Jan. 6

Trip to UWM Planetarium: Solar System

(RP) Tue., Jan. 20 | 1 - 3PM

Trip to UWM Planetarium at UWM: Constellations

(RP) Tue., Feb. 3 | 1 - 3PM

Stars, Comets, and More

(WP) Tue., Feb. 24 | 1 - 3PM

Quick Guide

Naturalist Series

Tree Anatomy and Physiology

Have a burning question about trees that you'd like explained? This 4-week class will cover the basics of tree anatomy and physiology and will include plenty of time for questions and exploring topics that interest you. Class will be indoors.

Session 1: Tree Anatomy

(RP) Wed., Jan. 7 | 5 - 7PM

Session 2: Photosynthesis and Respiration

(RP) Wed., Jan. 14 | 5 - 7PM

Session 3: Plant Hormones and Their Effects

(RP) Wed., Jan. 21 | 5 - 7PM

Session 4: Surviving Winter, Senescence and Death

(RP) Wed., Jan. 28 | 5 - 7PM
For adults and teens | \$5/per session (Nonmembers: \$7/per session) Land steward or Docent volunteers: \$3/per session

Sustainable Coffee Tasting

Join coffee experts from the MKE Coffee Guild as you taste locally-roasted coffee from around the world.

(RP) Sat., Jan. 10 | 10 - 11AM

(RP) Feb. 14 | 10 - 11AM

For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Menomonee Valley Walking Tours

(MV) Every 1st Wed. of the month | 10 - 11AM

For adults | Free - donations appreciated

Changing the Conversation on Climate Change

Speaker: OFA Chapter Lead Paul Geenen

Milwaukee Organizing for Action's (OFA) new Climate Presentation uses infographics and more to explain the complex science behind climate change in a clear, understandable manner. OFA's presentation was created with help from the Climate Reality Project.

(MV) Thu., Jan. 15 | 5:30 - 7PM

For adults and teens | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Photo Phenology

Get out your cameras and watch the Valley change over the seasons and through the years! We hope to create a picture record to see how the Valley changes over time. Bring a camera if you can. No experience necessary.

(MV) Sat., Jan. 24 | 10 - 11:30AM

(MV) Sat., Feb. 28 | 10 - 11:30AM

For adults, teens and families | Free - donations appreciated

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 bird ecology, conservation and behavior. This is an ongoing series you can jump into at any point.

(MV) Sat., Jan. 24 | 3 - 4:30PM

(WP) Sat., Feb. 28 | 3:30 - 5PM

For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Global Warming — What Should We Do?

Speaker: Dale Snider, Ph.D.

Dr. Dale Snider will present a program about the effects of global warming on nature as well as on humans. Polar region changes, environmental issues in our country and their consequences will be addressed as well as ideas for dealing with global warming issues.

(RP) Mon., Jan. 26 | 5:30 - 7PM

For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Owl Prowl for Adults

A winter night hike is the best time to hear the hoots of our nocturnal raptors, the owls. Take an in depth look into the behaviors that make these birds amazing survivors.

(RP) Tue., Jan. 27 | 6:30 - 8PM

(RP) Tue., Feb. 24 | 6:30 - 8PM

For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Using Your Preserves Creatively

Need ideas for using all those jars of home-canned goods? In this class we will discuss and demonstrate new ways to use your preserved foods beyond jam on toast and salsa with chips. Fee includes samples and handouts.

(RP) Tue., Jan. 27 | 7 - 8PM

For adults | \$15 (Nonmembers: \$20)

Vegetarian Winter Soup from Scratch

When you know how to make homemade hearty soups, no amount of bitter cold can keep you down. In this demonstration we will discuss and sample three different styles of soup: puree, broth, and roux-thickened. Fee includes samples and handouts.

(RP) Tue., Feb. 3 | 7 - 8PM

For adults | \$15 (Nonmembers: \$20)

The Art and Science of Massage

In this hands-on workshop participants will learn the art and science behind giving a good, full body massage. Partners are necessary. Registration required by February 13th.

(RP) Sat., Feb. 14 | 2 - 4PM

For adults | \$20 per couple

(Nonmembers: \$30 per couple)

Good Food Book Club

Cosponsored by Slow Food WiSE

Join us for a bimonthly book club to explore food related issues. This month's book is *The Third Plate: Field Notes on the Future of Food* by Dan Barber.

(RP) Tue., Feb. 17 | 7 - 8PM

Free, donations appreciated

Research Lecture Series

Seventh Generation Earth Ethics: Native Voices of Wisconsin

Speaker: Patty Loew, PhD, Member of the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe

Relive the toils and triumphs of caring for the earth from Wisconsin's Native American communities and the philosophy that drives them. Loew profiles a dozen influential members from Wisconsin's Indian Nations each of whom employ the "Seventh Generation Philosophy," which takes into account the impact our environmental decisions will have for seven generations to come (some 240 years in the future).

(RP) Tue., Jan. 20 | 7 - 8:30PM

For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Managed Grazing: Linking Food, People, Animals and the Environment

Speaker: Anders Gurda, The Grazing Ambassadors Project

Every day we make choices about the food we eat. Is it possible to choose food that positively impacts our taste buds, the earth and everything in between? Anders Gurda will discuss the practice of managed grazing and how it impacts Wisconsin's perennial landscapes, wildlife habitat, animal welfare and human nutrition.

(WP) Tue., Feb. 17 | 7 - 8:30PM

For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

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



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

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

Cross-Country Skiing

Beginning

Introduction to Cross-Country Skiing

Trying to find a way to enjoy cold winter days? Learn how to cross-country ski! Bring an adventurous spirit; we'll provide the skis and hot chocolate. Make sure to dress in layers.

(WP) Sat., Jan. 3 | 10 - 11:30AM
(WP) Sat., Jan. 17 | 10 - 11:30AM
(WP) Sat., Feb. 7 | 10 - 11:30AM
(WP) Sat., Feb. 21 | 10 - 11:30AM

Be a part of the first Urban Ecology Center group to ski in Three Bridges Park!

(MV) Sat., Jan. 10 | 10 - 11:30AM
(MV) Sat., Jan. 31 | 10 - 11:30AM
(MV) Sat., Feb. 14 | 10 - 11:30AM
(MV) Sat., Feb. 28 | 10 - 11:30AM

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

Beginning Cross-Country Skiing for Families

Learn a fun way to enjoy the snowy Wisconsin winters! Kids and families will learn basic cross-country skiing skills and techniques then explore with us. Equipment provided.

(RP) Mon., Jan. 12 | 4 - 6PM
(RP) Mon., Feb. 2 | 4 - 6PM
For families and kids ages 6 and older | Adults \$6 (Nonmembers: \$9) Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Beginning Cross-Country Skiing for Adults

Enjoy a twilight cross-country ski lesson that will build your skills and confidence. Learn basic ski techniques that will get you out exploring this winter. Equipment provided.

(RP) Mon., Jan. 19 | 4:30 - 6:30PM
(RP) Mon., Feb. 9 | 4:30 - 6:30PM
For adults and teens | \$10 (Nonmembers: \$15)



Sign up for our spontaneous "Snow and Go" group to enjoy active winter fun! Send an email with "Snow and Go" in the subject line to mziegler@urbanecologycenter.org

Intermediate

Intermediate Cross-Country Skiing Adventures

Currie Park

Practice your skills by navigating steep hills and sharp turns. Transportation and equipment provided. Completion of one of our Intro to Cross Country Skiing courses is required. Please register by Friday, January 30th.

(WP) Sat., Jan. 31 | 9:30AM - noon
For adults and accompanied teens | \$10 (Nonmembers: \$15)

Brown Deer Park

Practice your cross-country skiing skills and learn how to navigate hills. Equipment and transportation provided.

(RP) Sat., Jan. 31 | 9:30AM - 12:30PM
(RP) Sat., Feb. 28 | 9:30AM - 12:30PM
For adults | \$15 (Nonmembers: \$20)

Full Moon Cross-Country Ski

Join us each full moon for a cross-country skiing adventure through a serene, snow covered woods. Locations vary. Some cross country skiing experience required. Equipment and transportation provided. This program is weather dependent.

(RP) Sun., Jan. 4 | 5 - 8PM
(RP) Tue., Feb. 3 | 6 - 9PM
For adults with some cross country skiing experience | \$10 (Nonmembers: \$15)

Candlelight Ski Outing to Lapham Peak

Join us for an evening of cross-country skiing, cider and a bonfire at Lapham Peak. Transportation and equipment provided for this fun winter adventure! Registration is required by January 9th.

(RP) Sat., Jan. 10 | 5 - 10PM
For adults | \$20 (Nonmembers: \$25)

Advanced

Advanced Cross-Country Ski Adventure

We'll travel to Lapham Peak State Park and take on an advanced-level trail. This is for experienced skiers; completion of one of our Intermediate Cross-Country Ski courses is required. Transportation, equipment, and trail fees are provided. Please register by Friday, February 20th.

(WP) Sat., Feb. 21 | 9:30AM - 1PM
For adults | \$10 (Nonmembers: \$15)

Snowshoeing

Introduction to Snowshoeing

For thousands of years, snowshoeing has been an important form of travel and recreation in cold-weather climates. Join us to learn the basics of this classic sport. Equipment provided. Make sure to dress in layers and wear waterproof footwear.

(MV) Sat., Jan. 3 | 10 - 11:30AM
(MV) Sat., Jan. 17 | 10 - 11:30AM
(MV) Sat., Feb. 7 | 10 - 11:30AM
(MV) Sat., Feb. 21 | 10 - 11:30AM

(WP) Sat., Jan. 10 | 10 - 11:30AM
(WP) Sat., Jan. 31 | 10 - 11:30AM
(WP) Sat., Feb. 14 | 10 - 11:30AM

(WP) Sat., Feb. 28 | 10 - 11:30AM
For adults and accompanied children | Adults: \$6 (Nonmembers: \$9) Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Music Under Glass — by Snowshoe!

Join us for a snowshoeing adventure through Three Bridges Park that will culminate at the Domes for their Music Under Glass concert! Snowshoes, admission to Domes, and transportation back to the Menomonee Valley branch are all included. A great Valentine's date, or fun with friends, new and old! (If there's no snow, we'll still hike!)

(MV) Thu., Feb. 12 | 5 - 9PM
For adults and teens | \$10 (Nonmembers: \$15)

Snow Fun

Winter Survival For Family and Friends

Do you have what it takes to survive a cold, harsh Wisconsin winter? Come test out your skills as you face the elements in Washington Park. Bundle up, you're gonna be cold!

(WP) Sat., Feb. 7 | 10AM - NOON
For families | Adults: \$7 (Nonmembers: \$9) Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$6)

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer Orientation

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

(RP) Tue., Jan. 6 | 5:30 - 7PM
(RP) Fri., Jan. 16 | 3 - 4:30PM
(RP) Sat., Jan. 24 | 10:30AM - NOON
(RP) Sat., Feb. 7 | 10:30AM - NOON
(RP) Fri., Feb. 13 | 3 - 4:30PM
(RP) Tue., Feb. 17 | 5:30 - 7PM

(WP) Sat., Jan. 17 | 1 - 2PM
(WP) Tue., Jan. 27 | 5:30 - 6:30PM
(WP) Thu., Feb. 5 | 4:30 - 5:30PM
(WP) Thu., Feb. 26 | 5 - 6PM

(MV) Sat., Jan. 10 | NOON - 1:30PM
(MV) Tue., Jan. 20 | 5 - 6:30PM
(MV) Thu., Feb. 12 | 5:30 - 7PM
(MV) Tue., Feb. 24 | 5 - 6:30PM

For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Youth Project Squad

We have many short term projects that keep the wheels turning — equipment repair, plant/animal care, building maintenance, grounds keeping, etc. Help us keep our facility running smoothly and looking excellent. Work on various projects while learning new skills with our staff.

(MV) Sats., Jan. 3 & Feb. 7 | NOON - 2PM

(MV) Thus., Jan. 15 & Feb. 19 | 4 - 6PM

For families and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Fixin' Facilities

Come help maintain our building, vehicles, park and playground! Help with anything from building and painting, to repair and upkeep projects.

(RP) Wed., Jan. 7 | 3 - 5PM
For adults, families and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Weekly volunteer opportunities

Find these weekly events on the calendar on our website

- Burdock Brigades
- Dig It, Plant It, Grow It!
- Forestry Fridays
- Volunteer Papermaking
- Volunteer Park Ranger Crew



Serious Answers in Disguise

by Tory Bahe, Environmental Educator

I wanted to know how much the second graders visiting the Center that morning already knew about pollination, so I asked, "Can you name an animal that might want to eat nectar from flowers?"

"A bee!"

"Yes! Any others?"

"Bats?"

"Yep, some of them do!"

"Butterfly?"

"Absolutely!"

"Pikachu!"

His answer caught me off guard. I'm used to kids spotting sharks and alligators in the lagoon at Washington Park — and even the occasional troll under the bridge — but Pikachu?

The cute creature from the Japanese cartoon Pokémon sort of looked like the type of rodent that could act as a pollinator, and bees are black and yellow like the Pikachu, still, I couldn't figure out how this cartoon character made sense as a pollinator. I acknowledged his answer with some form of "Could be!" and quickly moved on to the next student's suggestion. Truthfully,

I would have forgotten about the answer — or perhaps filed it under "adorable things students have said" as I assume any teacher with a sense of humor must do — if it weren't for what happened in our afternoon class.



Kinkajou

photo by Dick Culbert from Gibsons, B.C., Canada

Later that day, I asked the same question to a different class from the same school. As you'd expect, we got lots of similar answers, including "Pikachu," suggested by a student that was clearly the identical twin of the boy in the morning class! My co-teacher Katie and I exchanged a look, both of us wondering what nugget of truth was behind their answers.

What did they know that we didn't? This time, my answer to the student was, "Wow, I don't know anything about that, but you've made me curious." I made a note to look into it more after class and moved us on to the hands-on activities and hike we had planned.

As it turns out, if you Google "Pikachu pollinator," *kinkajou* is among the first few hits. I had never heard of the fruit-eating, prehensile-tailed raccoon relative from Central and South America, but these kiddos clearly had! After a little more digging I discovered that the kinkajou may have been an animal on another cartoon, *Dora the Explorer*.

I learn things from my students every day, but experiences like these remind me to dig in beyond the obvious for the deeper reasons behind kids' questions, answers and behaviors. Kids — and adults too — often just want to get the answer right, but science is really more about trying to make sense of the world. Young kids are great at asking questions, observing and making connections. My job as a teacher is to encourage and engage that curiosity, allowing us all to discover something new. 🌱

Reclaiming Riverland

continued from page 1

the current state of this space Pieter was so proud of. The building is too dangerous to keep and too expensive to restore.

However, just as Pieter gave new purpose to old building materials, so too will we. We will salvage Cream City brick, doors, windows, cabinets, railing, lighting and more. Concrete will be crushed for reuse and steel will be recycled. All of this will be documented to verify our contractor is

meeting our recycling goals. And in the spring the area will be planted with native seeds.

We don't know what the future will hold for this land. It could become additional green space and/or a new structure could be built. But we knew that acquiring the property was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to work with the community to shape what the future could be, in a way that fits with the surrounding green space. A planning effort will need to occur,

and it could take years for these changes to be seen. It will take resources we don't yet have.

During construction, access along the driveway to the river will be blocked, but will re-open in the spring. You can still access the river and paths in the Arboretum through the stone arch or Riverside Park. Also, know that other structures, including the east warehouse, will remain and will be a part of the next chapter in the story of this land. 🌱

An Unusual Challenge

continued from page 1

Tex, a recently retired military man helping his family with their catering business. During our conversation I learned that jerk cooking is a way escaped slaves used to prepare meat in Jamaica where they'd bury the meat with wild herbs, spices, and hot coals under dirt so as to avoid tell-tale smoke giving their location away.

The event began and I was honored and surprised when the Urban Ecology Center won in the category of Community Champion! As I went up to accept the award, I chuckled to myself and thought, "What's going to come out this time?" And what came out did, in fact, surprise me.

After thanking the event coordinators and fellow finalists, I paused a moment and looked out at the diverse audience. I think because of my triangle day bike ride, my learning something new from Tex, coupled with the divisiveness that election season seems to bring out (the event took place in October), I said something like the following:

"While I am quite honored to accept this award for our community work on behalf the Urban Ecology Center, I have some serious worries about our city.

Recently, I had separate conversations with two women — one white, one African-American,

both middle aged. Curious about their views, I asked how they felt about Milwaukee. Their responses were like night and day.

The white woman spoke of how everything seemed to be moving in the right direction with a downtown renaissance, the museums on the lake, the arts and culture. She included the Urban Ecology Center as a part of the positive growth of the city.

The African-American woman's answer was completely different. She spoke of how the streets were less safe for her children, the schools were in decline and how even the potholes in the streets were not fixed. She saw the Urban Ecology Center in Washington Park as an exception to the rule.

It was like these women were describing two completely different cities. On a triangle day (which I explained to the audience) I witness both of these "cities" and more.

I believe that in a true community there is some common ground; some unity. But how can there be unity when residents of the same city have such vastly different experiences? It is hard to take full pride in a city with this inequity and, because I do love this city, I desperately want it to be better.

There is no panacea for this problem. We at the Urban Ecology Center along with many other companies and individuals in this room tonight are doing what we can but it doesn't seem to be enough. Tonight, however, I have a simple idea ... a challenge I would like to ask of you personally that collectively may actually help.

This idea just came to me as a result of a conversation I had a few minutes ago with someone I just met: Tex, over behind the food table.

Here it is:

I would like to challenge each and every one of you, no matter your background, to invite someone who is different from you over for dinner sometime over the next year. I mean actually invite someone into your home to make it meaningful and personal. Perhaps it is someone whom you know from work, your faith community, a sports team or some other familiar environment. However, I'd like this invitation to be slightly uncomfortable ... meaning you cross a barrier that you do not normally cross. Invite someone to dinner who is of a different race, or from a different economic standing, or a different political view or even a different age.

If each of us does this one act, I think it might just make a difference. Once we've crossed a barrier like this we might find that, not only did it not hurt us but we actually enjoy it! We may learn something new (like about jerk chicken!). Then perhaps, just perhaps, we might even want to do it again with someone else. What do you think?"

I offered the challenge and everyone in the room accepted by raising their hands. It was a beautiful thing and I hope they follow through. I know that I will.

So what about you? Are you willing to take up the challenge? Will you raise your hand? 🙋

2015 Summer Camps

Registration starts early February

For preschool - 8th grade, camps at all three branches



Watch for details at urbanecologycenter.org



NEWSLETTER

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, 3300 members and many in-kind donors the Center provides safe parks and programs for over 300,000 people per year.

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

The **Urban Ecology Center** fosters ecological understanding as inspiration for change, neighborhood by neighborhood. Our Environmental Community Centers:

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

LOCATIONS & HOURS

Riverside Park

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

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

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!

BECOME A CONTRIBUTING MEMBER

By making your gift, you become a contributing member of the Center. Your support provides learning opportunities for thousands of urban youth each year and allows you to enjoy contributing membership benefits at all three of our branches.

Choose a Contributing Member Level:

- Student** - benefits one college student \$30
- Individual** - member plus one guest \$35
- Family** - two adults, and all children or grandchildren under 18 in a household plus one guest. \$45
- Other** - contributions above \$45 receive family level benefits and can help us:
provide a membership for a family in need (\$90)
provide a Summer Camp scholarship (\$200)
restore urban land with native plants (\$500)
Please enter an amount \$_____

Give a gift membership:

Gift memberships are a great way to connect your friends and family to the natural world.

Recipient Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email _____

Occasion _____ Deliver by _____

Membership Type: Individual \$35 Family \$45

Send the announcement card to: Me Gift Recipient Card picked up

Total \$ _____

Name I would like to remain anonymous

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Charge my Card Check enclosed (payable to Urban Ecology Center)

Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____ 3-digit code _____

Signature _____

Everyone is welcome! Thanks to generous donors we are able to offer need-based scholarships for memberships. For more information and to apply, please contact our Membership Staff at (414) 964-8505 or drop into one of our Centers and speak with our Visitor Services staff.

My gift is in honor of or in memory of _____

My employer (list below) has a matching gift program _____

I would like information about estate and planned giving

Please return this form to: Urban Ecology Center, 1500 E. Park Place, Milwaukee, WI 53211.

Did you know you can become a contributing member securely online? Visit urbanecologycenter.org and click membership.

Winterfest!

Saturday, January 24
Noon - 4pm
(WP) For everyone | Free!

*Join us for winter
fun outdoors!*

**Winterfest
for Afternoon
Nappers**

(WP) Saturday, January 24
10:30am - noon
For children ages 5 and younger
accompanied by an adult | Free!

FSC logo

IN THIS ISSUE

AN UNUSUAL CHALLENGE ... WILL YOU RAISE YOUR HAND?

by Ken Leinbach, Executive Director

FINDING INSPIRATION IN WASHINGTON PARK

by Beth Heller, Senior Director of Education and Strategic Planning

WHY WHAT WE DO MATTERS

by Glenna Holstein, Branch Manager - Menomonee Valley

RECLAIMING RIVERLAND

by Judy Krause, Director of Finance and Operation

SERIOUS ANSWERS IN DISGUISE

by Tory Bahe, Environmental Educator

SEE FOR YOURSELF! (NO REALLY, SEE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO OUR SUCCESS LAST YEAR!)

Volunteers from
19 corporations and
businesses gave

1829

hours of service
last year

