



Our Stories

by Ken Leinbach, Executive Director

"Ken, in addition to our gift for your early childhood program, we are also interested in giving you a little extra to write a book. We think that the story of the Urban Ecology Center is an inspirational one that needs to be told."

Wow! How cool is that? This remarkable, unsolicited gift came last year from a foundation that had just started their support. However, it has not been until very recently that we have actually figured out how to carve out the necessary time to put a book together. I mean, really, how do you even start?

Well, in typical Urban Ecology Center fashion we'd like to start with you!

I have assembled a committee of volunteers and staff to help me and we'd like to ask you for three things to help us get our creative juices flowing. You are welcome to offer ideas on any or all of them.

First, complete this thought: "The story of the Urban Ecology Center is a story ...". Write one line or perhaps a short paragraph in response.

Second, respond to this statement: "In writing the book, while I know that not everything can be included, you must have a part that addresses X, you have to include the story of Y, and I'll never forgive you if you do not mention Z." What you put down for X, Y and/or Z could be quite informative for our committee.

The third and final request is this: If you have a personal story, a poignant example, an inspirational thought or an amazing experience that relates to your experience with the Center, we'd love to hear it.

At a recent board of directors meeting I asked similar questions and was blown away by some of the responses. Here are just a few:

The story of the Urban Ecology Center is a story...

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More Than a Pretty Place

Beth Heller, Senior Director of Education and Strategic Planning and

Kirsten Beyer, Medical College of Wisconsin



"This is important work. More than that – this work has allowed me to realize the value I internally place on nature, play and children's health. It has taken me back to growing up as one of only three families living around a small lake we now fondly refer to as "Walden." It has allowed me to formalize my understanding of how nature's loose parts had a great influence on my play as a child, and also on the value I place on environmental protection and nature engagement as an



adult. This project has also made me a better parent, recognizing the things my children need to grow up strong, resilient, and healthy. My main lesson learned? I want to keep doing this work!" — Kirsten Beyer, coleader, "More than a Pretty Place" research project

Kirsten made this observation just after we presented the findings of our More than a Pretty Place research project to nearly 200 people from 30 different countries at The Power to Move Kids: 2014 Global Summit on the Physical Activity of Children. We had also witnessed the unveiling of the "Global Physical Activity Matrix", a report on physical activity of children, which identified Scotland and the US at the bottom and New Zealand and Mozambique at the top of the list. Only 5 of the 15 countries who completed their Global Matrix Score card had completed the section on "Active Play" — a core component of our research project. Delegates (medical, sports, physical education and urban design professionals, to name a few) attending the summit were interested in the Center's approach to activating

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Branch Highlights

RIVERSIDE PARK

Eight entrances to the Arboretum will be marked by rock cairns scheduled to be built in July. Each unique cairn will be made of rock from a different geologic era and will stand about 5-8 feet tall. Find all eight this summer - it will be fun and you just might learn something about Wisconsin's geologic history.

WASHINGTON PARK

Do you like music? Come to Washington Park for the free concert series, "Wednesdays at the Shell" sponsored by Milwaukee County Parks. Concerts are held at the Washington Park Bandshell every Wednesday from July 2nd through August 27th from 6 to 8:30PM. Come get your groove on!

MENOMONEE VALLEY

Three Bridges Park has been open for almost a full year! We'll be celebrating the one year anniversary with our Summer Celebration Festival on July 19. Come enjoy the park, and see how it looks after a whole growing season (and after thousands of plants were put in the ground in June)!



TEEN SURVIVAL CHALLENGE

This year's Teen Survival Challenge was a blast!

Teams, consisting of four teens and one adult chaperone, explored Washington Park taking on challenges like fire building, canoeing, biking, puzzles, team building, and more.

It was a fun day full of new experiences for all! Be sure to check out photos from the event on Facebook!



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A School Year of Firsts

by Katie Wipfli, Environmental Educator

"Miss Katie, I love nature!" "Nature is the best!" I absolutely love hearing these exclamations as students dance on Washington Park's Band Shell, climb fallen trees or dip nets into the lagoon. As my first year of teaching students in our school program comes to an end, I begin to reflect on everything I have learned during this year.

I will admit I was a little hesitant to be an outdoor educator in winter. All of my experiences, until this point, have been working during the spring and summer. I have always loved winter, but never fully embraced winter activities like cross-country skiing or snowshoeing. When those first snowflakes started to fall, I remember getting a little knot in my stomach. It turns out winter, minus the days of extreme polar vortex, were some of my favorite teaching days this year. Not only did I learn how to cross-country ski and snowshoe, also I was able to help students learn the same skills.

One snowshoe trip that will stay with me is when the lagoon at Washington Park was completely frozen. As we walked on the lagoon, the group of 7th graders started working together to build some snowmen. In no time there were eleven seventh graders,

who were fully equipped in snowshoes, running around the lagoon. They were rolling snowballs, collecting natural items to make eyes and noses, as well as donating their own winter gear to give their snowman special finishing touches. The snowmen were pretty adorable, if I do say so myself, not only because they had giant cattails for noses, but because the 20 minutes spent building those snowmen also built a connection to nature.

I love that we are able to do things here that students may not be able to experience in the classroom. For example, maple sugaring! Groups that are scheduled to come during the maple sugaring season, in March, are able to taste sap directly from the tree! Nothing brings a smile to my face faster than watching kindergartners with their tongues stretched as far as it can go to try and catch a drop of sap falling off of the spiel.

My first school year here is quickly coming to an end. Although there have been some difficult times, there have been even more times that give me a permanent smile. I have learned so much this year from other educators, and especially the students who remind me every day why I love being able to share nature with them. 🌿



DROPLETS

LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE TOPICS ON OUR WEBSITE

- **Urban Ecology Center is awarded one of 2014's top workplaces in Milwaukee!** The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel recently recognized us as one of Milwaukee's top small workplaces for 2014. The Center received this award based on surveys that asked employees to answer a variety of questions about their manager and job. The surveys measured several company qualities such as workplace flexibility, productivity and morale of its employees. Look for a further story about this award on our blog soon!
- **The Great Alaska Adventure 2014!** Come to Denali National Park with Washington Park's Willie Karidis on September 4-13, 2014. Willie lived on the border of Denali Park for many years and looks forward to sharing his love of this truly wild state with all of you. Contact Willie, wkardis@urbanecologycenter.org, to reserve your space with a \$50 nonrefundable deposit.
- **Wish List.** Visit urbanecologycenter.org/wishlist for an expanded list.
Riverside Park — 46" LCD or plasma tv • Alka-seltzer tablets • Anabat detector • Bedsheets • Hybrid or electric vehicle • Ice cream buckets with lids
Washington Park — 2-handled pots with lids (3) • 8' folding tables • Poultry wire (4' x 50') • Hardware cloth (4' x 50') • Measuring cup sets (6) • Measuring spoon sets (6)
Menomonee Valley — GPS Units
Headlamps • (backpacking style, 4)
• Ice cream scooper • Knife set • LED flashlights (3) • Yoga Mats (20)

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 urbanecologycenter.org/thankyoulist.

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

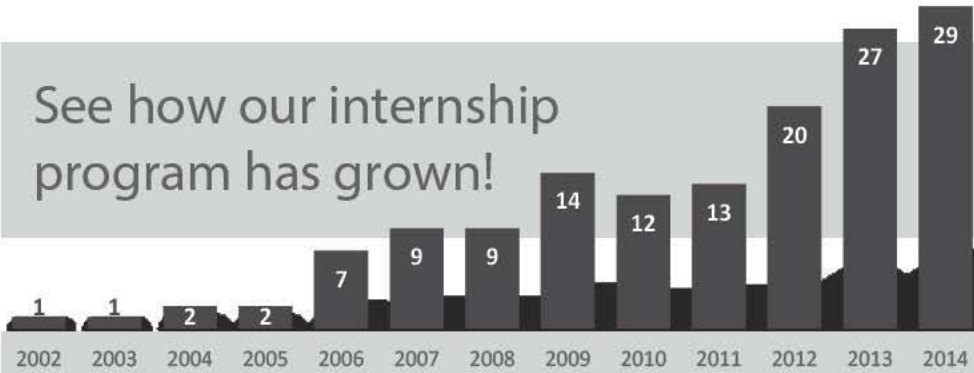
Urban Ecology Center's Summer Internship

is a dynamic employment opportunity for adults. It's a win-win. The Center gains valuable help during our busiest months and Interns get a summer they'll never forget!

Urban Ecology Center 2014 Summer Interns



See how our internship program has grown!



We have 45% more staff this summer thanks to our interns!

Interns will help plant over **15,000** native plants, trees & shrubs this summer alone!



Recognize anyone below?
10 summer interns have joined our full time staff since 2001

Internships include: education (teaching over 700 summer campers), volunteer services (engaging 200 folks ... and growing), land stewardship (will put 15,000 plants in the ground), visitor services (helping over 1,000 members and friends) and eco-friendly facilities management (working with 3 branches that have solar energy/heat, water conserving toilets and more).



If you'd like to support projects like these, consider volunteering or making a donation. Learn how at www.urbanecologycenter.org



Baby Parks and Plantings

by Kim Forbeck, Manager of Land Stewardship

In the spring of each year, all sorts of adorable baby animals can be seen. This spring, I saw baby Great Horned Owls (called owlets), baby White-footed Mice (called pups, pinkies or kittens) and baby Brown Snakes (called snakelets or hatchlings). We don't usually pay close attention to "baby" plants, but they're showing up now too!

We usually call "baby" plants seedlings or sporophytes depending upon the type of plant the offspring have emerged from. There are new plantings of baby plants at each of our three branches of the Urban Ecology Center. We are continuously improving the quality of wildlife habitat and outdoor educational space by removing non-native invasive species and planting to increase the biodiversity of native Wisconsin plant species. This habitat restoration happens very slowly over time.

In the 14 years I've worked at the Center, I've seen the ravine in Riverside Park go from a carpeting of invasive garlic mustard to one of the areas where native spring woodland wildflowers are most prolific. It is an amazing space to see new things popping up and blooming every week in the early growing season ... everything — bloodroot, mayapples, toothwort, spring beauty, jack-in-the-pulpit and more! Over the past year with the opening of Three Bridges Park, the Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum and an increase in plantings in Washington Park, we have planted thousands of "baby" grasses, wildflowers, shrubs and trees in our parks.

Habitat restoration is an exciting but challenging process. It's hard to patiently wait for a mighty Burr Oak to grow! Many of these plants began as tiny seedlings in the past few years and need

some time before we see them in full glory. But as we wait for a full prairie in Three Bridges Park, a mature woodland in Washington Park and a grand oak savanna in the Arboretum, we can see first-hand how ecosystems change over time.

Please, give those baby plants a chance and stay on the trails in our parks. They are putting a lot of energy into setting down good strong root systems. Each day, each week and each year we will see amazing changes occur in the landscape. It's a beautiful thing to witness. Visit our sites regularly and observe these incredible changes happening in our parks as they are revitalized. Even better, volunteer to help us improve the habitat! Check out our website for regular Land Stewardship volunteer drop-in times at each of our branches. 🌱



From Visitor to Ambassador

by Glenna Holstein, Branch Manager - Menomonee Valley

One of the best things about being an organization focused on mentoring is that we get to experience both sides of mentoring, and we get to watch "mentees" become "mentors." I've had three great experiences recently watching the transition from "visitor" to "ambassador" and I thought I'd share them:

"Oh, is that the one in Washington Park?"

At the Shorewood pool I overheard two women talking about a meeting one of them had just had at the Urban Ecology Center. I assumed that, likely being East-siders, they were talking about Riverside Park, and was prepared to jump in with "do you know about our other Centers?" But what I heard instead was, "Oh, is that the one in Washington Park?" "Yes! It's just beautiful over there!" Not only did I get a healthy dose of assumption-checking, but I was just delighted to hear folks spreading the word about Washington Park!

"I want to work here!"

You may remember Marcel from earlier stories. In short, he was one of the first students I met at Menomonee Valley. Early on, he and his friends were hanging out in the Valley Passage, without much to do. The moment I invited him into the then-empty Center, he said "I want to work here!" Over the last two years, he has volunteered with us, learning from our Visitors Services and Community Programs team, as well as other volunteers. And ...

I could not be happier to announce that this summer, he will be joining our staff officially as one of our Outdoor Leaders! So now anyone who walks through our doors will have the chance to learn from him!

"Did you know..."

Jim Fry is a regular at Menomonee Valley. He knows a LOT — in fact, he is possibly the world's

reigning expert on LED lighting. Jim has spent a lot of time with our staff and one day he was hanging out in the lobby waiting for our Visitor Services Specialist Omar to finish a meeting. A neighbor who walked in wanted to know more about the membership benefits. Our volunteer receptionist was new, and I was about to step in to field questions, when I heard Jim's voice. "Did you know you can borrow all sorts of equipment? Kayaks, skis, camping gear..." He handled the question almost as well as Omar!

I feel both proud and humbled by all of these stories. They are wonderful reminders that every member of our community has knowledge, talents and passion, and one of my ideals for the Urban Ecology Center is to be a place where each person feels empowered to share those with others in the community—I think that is mentorship at its best! 🌱

JULY & AUGUST

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

High School Outdoor Leader Presentation

Get inspired as the High School Outdoor Leaders describe their experience as interns at the Center and their trip this summer!

If you are interested in what our hard-working teenagers have been up to, please come and hear their stories!



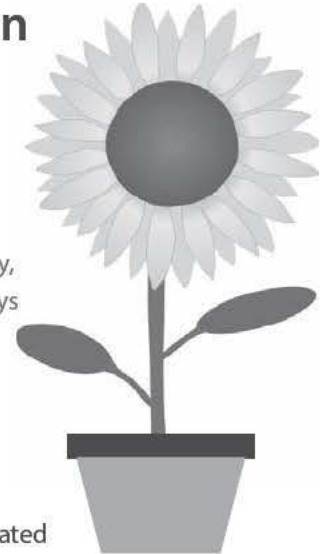
(RP) Thu., Aug. 28 | 7 - 8:30pm

For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

Summer Celebration Festival

Come celebrate summer in the Menomonee Valley!

We'll have activities for the whole family, as well as food, music and plenty of ways to have fun in Three Bridges Park!



(MV) Sat., Jul. 19 | 10am - 2pm

For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

Come walk a 100 miles in 100 days with the Mayor of Milwaukee! Join us at one or all of our branches. To keep track of your miles, please register at city.milwaukee.gov/Walk100



Riverside Park

Bring a picnic and join Mayor Barrett and our Executive Director on a walk from Riverside Park to a concert at Lake Park.

(RP) Mon., Jul. 14 | 5pm

For everyone | Free

Menomonee Valley

Join Mayor Barrett and Menomonee Valley Branch Manager Glenna Holstein for a walk through Three Bridges Park.

(MV) Wed., Jul. 30 | Noon

For everyone | Free

Washington Park

Our amazing Young Scientists will lead a walk through Washington Park with Mayor Barrett. What will we find along the way?

(WP) Wed., Aug. 9 | 5pm

For everyone | Free

All Urban Ecology Center branches will be closed July 4. In addition the Riverside Park branch will close at 5pm on August 20 - 21, the Washington Park branch will be closed August 20 - 21 and the Menomonee Valley branch will close at 5pm on August 19 and will be closed August 20 - 21

RIVERSIDE PARK



Want to get to know your city like never before? Explore Milwaukee's bike paths and riverways by **Pedaling and Paddling** with us on August 23rd. Learn how to maintain your bike with our new **Bike Maintenance Workshop** series. Also, save the date for the **Eat Local Resource Fair** on September 6th.

— *Jamie Ferschinger,*
Branch Manager - Riverside Park

WASHINGTON PARK



Did you know that every **Wednesday morning at 8AM** Tim Vargo, our Manager of Research and Citizen Science leads a **bird walk through Washington Park**? Tim has been leading this walk every Wednesday for the past seven years. Scarlet Tanager, Great Blue Heron, Yellow Rumped Warbler, yup, they all can be found here.

— *Willie Karidis,*
Branch Manager - Washington Park

MENOMONEE VALLEY



Our first full summer in Three Bridges Park! There are lots of opportunities to get out on the trail: join us for **Hank Aaron State Trail 5K Training, Biking in Three Bridges Park, or Savvy City Cycling for Women**. And don't forget to stop by for our first **Summer Celebration Festival on July 19th!**

— *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

Driven to Discover: Outdoor Inquiry Camp for Kids

Driven to Discover Information and Registration Meeting

Bring your kids and learn about this 10-week program that explores different aspects of being a citizen scientist. They'll create and complete their own research project to present at the Insect Fair in Minnesota.

(RP) Mon., Jul. 14 | 4 - 5:30PM
For families | Free -
donations appreciated

Outdoor Inquiry Camp for Kids

Join us for this 10-week program and observe, monitor and collect data about butterflies, birds and insects. Then create a research project of your own to present at the Insect Fair in Minnesota.

(RP) Every Mon. from
Jul. 14 to Sep. 15 | 4 - 5:30PM
For children ages 8-12 years old |
Free - donations appreciated

Mural Making with Kristelle Ulrich

In collaboration with the Native American Awareness Project and Milwaukee Public Theater

Join our Young Scientists as they work with artist Kristelle Ulrich to create a multi-paneled mural for our Valley classroom. Join us for one session or come to them all.

(MV) Every Sat. until
Aug. 23 | 1 - 4PM
For children and teens ages 5-18 |
Free - donations appreciated

Animal Feeding

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

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

E.B. Garner Fishing Club

Local fishing teacher E.B. Garner teaches you the techniques that will help you "catch the big one." Equipment provided.

(WP) Weds., Jul. 9, 23,
Aug. 6 & 20 | 4 - 7PM
For everyone | Free -
donations appreciated

Kindernature:

Summer Frolic

Discover the wonders of summer. Explore nature through self-led, summer-themed activity stations.

(RP) Sats., Jul. 12, 26, Aug.
23 & 30 | 9:30 - 11AM
For families with children ages 3-5
years old | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7)

National Moth Week Celebration

In celebration of National Moth Week, we will be hosting a moth party and survey for all people who love evening Lepidopterans. Join us for crafts and snacks for the kids at 6:30PM followed by a presentation by local moth enthusiast Allysa Hallett at 7:15PM. Then we'll head out into the park for a blacklight moth survey at 8:15.

(RP) Fri., Jul. 25 | 6:30 - 10PM
For everyone | Free -
donations appreciated

Grandkids in the Park: Bugs

Hey grandparents and grandkids! Join us at the Washington Park Senior Center to discover the insects who make the park their home! We'll make a craft, learn identification skills and go insect hunting. Meet at the Washington Park Senior Center, 4420 W. Vliet St.

(WP) Wed., Jul. 30 | 1:30 - 3PM
For grandparents and grandkids |
Free - donations accepted | To
register, please contact Katie
Sufferling at 414-933-2332 or
ksufferling@interfaithmilw.org

Toddling Into

Nature: Bugs!

Help your toddler investigate the amazing world of insects! Our adventure includes outdoor and indoor play, stories and activities. Please register by July 28th.

(RP) Thu., Jul. 31 | 10A - 11:30AM
For families with children ages 3-5 |
\$5/child (Nonmembers: \$7/child)

Young Farmers:

Picking and Pickling

Come explore our community gardens in search of the perfect pickle! Learn the art of pickling and take home tasty samples while learning about food from farm to table.

(MV) Thu., Aug. 14 | 4 - 6PM
For families with children 5-12 years
old | Free for Young Scientist Club
members (Nonmembers: \$5)

Highlighted Programs

Art Show Opening Reception: *Intimate Nature*, *Kristin Gjerdset and Jamie Bilgo Bruchman*

Kristin Gjerdset sees the world underfoot — often overlooked, yet as deserving of reverence as grand scenery — tiny shrubs and flowers, visited by winged beings and fur-bearing creatures. Jamie Bilgo Bruchman notices the natural world in our everyday lives and asks questions: Where do things come from? How do they work? What does this mean? Artists speak at 6pm. Show runs through September.

(RP) Thu., Jul. 10 | 5 - 7PM
For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

Connected by Coffee - Film Screening and Discussion

Presented by Milwaukee Coffee Guild, coffee provided by Just Coffee Coop

Connected By Coffee is an inspiring and thought-provoking look into the lives and history of the people who grow the coffee we drink. This documentary follows two North American coffee roasters on a 1,000-mile journey across Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua. On the way they meet soldiers who have become growers, women who are controlling their own destinies and countless farmers joining together to form cooperatives.

(RP) Thu., Jul. 24 | 6:30 - 8:30PM & **(RP)** Thu., Aug. 21 | 6:30 - 8:30PM
For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$8)

Orienteering in the Menomonee Valley

Grab a map and compass and join us on an orienteering adventure. Compasses provided.

(MV) Sat., Aug. 23 | 10 - 11:30AM
For Families with children age 7 and
up | Free - donations appreciated

Grandkids in the Park: Trees

Spend a day with your grandkids as we make a craft, learn tree identification skills and go on a tree walk in the park. Meet at the Washington Park Senior Center, 4420 W. Vliet St.

(WP) Wed., Aug. 27 | 1:30 - 3PM
For grandparents and grandkids |
Free - donations accepted | To
register, please contact Katie
Sufferling at 414-933-2332 or
ksufferling@interfaithmilw.org

Modern Dance with Above the Clouds

Hosted by Above the Clouds. Register at abovethecloudsmilwaukee.com.

Every Wed. | 3:30 - 4:30pm
For children ages 6-12 | Free -
donations appreciated

Science Saturdays and Sundays

Come try these self-led activities available during the hours listed below. Theme: "Bird is the Word!"

(RP) Self-led, drop-in program
available Every Sat. | 10AM - 4PM
and 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.

(WP) Every Tue. - Fri. except
Jul. 4, Aug. 20 & 21 | 4 - 6PM
and Every Sat. | 1 - 4PM
For kids ages 7-12 | \$10
annual membership

(MV) Every Tue. & Thu. except Aug.
21 | 4 - 6pm
and Every Sat. | 1 - 4PM
For ages 5-12 | \$10 annual membership

GIRL SCOUTS

Introduction to Canoeing

Paddle and steer your canoe under bridges, around an island and across the lagoon in Washington Park. Basic safety and canoeing skills will be taught and practiced.

(WP) Sat., Jul. 19 | 9AM - NOON
For Juniors, grades 4-5 | To register,
please visit <https://www.gswise.org/>

Hop, Crawl or Fly

Join an entomologist for an active morning chasing, catching and studying a wide variety of insects living in the city. Plus, you can earn your Bugs Badge!

(WP) Sat., Aug. 9 | 9AM - NOON
For Brownies, grades 2-3 | To register,
please visit <https://www.gswise.org/>

Quick Guide

Naturalist Skills Series

Invertebrate Investigations!

We'll practice sampling techniques, analyze adaptations and examine the contributions invertebrates make toward healthy habitats.

(RP) Sun., Jul. 27 | 2:30 - 4PM
For adults | \$7 (Nonmembers: \$10)
(NEEP and Docent Volunteers: \$5)

Fungamentals

We will explore to see what fungi we can uncover and witness their important role in the ecosystem.

(RP) Sat., Aug. 9 | 10 - 11:30AM
For adults | \$7 (Nonmembers: \$10)
(NEEP and Docent Volunteers: \$5)

Campfire Cooking Series

Breakfast ☺

Learn the art of making breakfast over a campfire. Materials provided.

(RP) Fri., Jul. 18 | 5:30 - 7PM
For everyone | Adults: \$7
(Nonmembers: \$10), Children: \$5
(Nonmembers: \$8) Registration is required by 5PM on July 17th

Dinner ☺

Discover the joy of dinner over a campfire. All materials provided.

(RP) Fri., Aug. 15 | 5:30 - 7PM
For everyone | Adults: \$7
(Nonmembers: \$10), Children: \$5
(Nonmembers: \$8) Registration is required by 5PM on August 14th

All Urban Ecology Center branches will be closed July 4.

From Beak to Tail:

All About the Life of Birds ☺

Join us for an in-depth look into bird ecology, then a dusk walk.

(MV) Tue., Jul. 1 | 5:30 - 7PM
For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum Docent-Led Tour

Excited to explore the Milwaukee Rotary Centennial Arboretum? Then come on a tour lead by one of our trained volunteer docents!

(RP) Tues., Jul. 8 | 5:30 - 6:30PM
(RP) Sats., Jul. 12 & 26, Aug. 9 & 23 | 10:30 - 11:30AM
(RP) Thu., Jul. 17 | 5:30 - 6:30PM
(RP) Tue., Jul. 22 | 10 - 11AM
(RP) Sat., Jul. 26 | 10:30 - 11:30AM
(RP) Thu., Jul. 31 | 10 - 11AM
For everyone | Free - donations appreciated (Nonmembers: \$5)

Kids with Cameras:

Participatory Photo Mapping for Urban Environmental Action ☺

Learn how Photo Mapping helps young people share their stories of place including healthy food, contact with nature and safe places to play. Speaker: Samuel Dennis Jr., PhD, Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, University of Wisconsin.

(WP) Tue., Jul. 8 | 7PM - 8:30PM
For adults | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Trees of Riverside Park and Southeast Wisconsin ☺

Learn how to identify southeast Wisconsin native trees as well as our common invasive trees and shrubs. Each session is a stand-alone class; come for all the sessions and learn all of the trees native to our area.

(RP) Weds., Jul. 9, 16, 23, 30 & Aug. 6 | 5 - 7PM
For adults | Free - donations appreciated

Sustainable Coffee

Tasting ☺

Join the MKE Coffee Guild and taste locally-roasted coffee from around the world.

(RP) Sats., Jul. 12 & Aug. 9 | 10 - 11AM
For adults | \$3 (Nonmembers: \$5)

Behind the Scenes Tour - Michael Fields Agricultural Institute ☺

Take a behind-the-scenes look at the Michael Fields Agricultural Institute — a nonprofit focused on education, policy and research in sustainable agriculture. Transportation and lunch at Wild Flour Bakery included.

(RP) Sat., Jul. 26 | 9AM - 2PM
For adults | \$15 (Nonmembers: \$20) | Register by July 23rd

Photo Phenology ☺

Take photographs and draw pictures of the natural area around the Center.

(MV) Sats., Jul. 26 & Aug. 30 | 10 - 11:30AM
For adults, teens and families | Free - donations appreciated

Weave a Watercolor Paper Basket ☺

Instructor Linda Gaalaas will guide you through the process of weaving a colorful, 3 inch by 4 inch basket from painted watercolor paper strips. All materials provided.

(RP) Sat., Jul. 26 9:30AM - 12:30PM
For adults and teens | \$25
(Nonmembers: \$30) Registration required by July 23rd

Frozen Summer Treats ☺

Learn how to make unique popsicle flavors using fresh fruits (and vegetables)! In this demonstration we'll discuss flavor-pairings and more. Recipes for making ice cream, sorbet and ice cream sandwiches included.

(RP) Mon., Aug. 18 | 7 - 8PM
For adults | \$15 (Nonmembers: \$20) Please register by Aug. 15th

Exploring Native Plants

Join us for a guided walk through our prairie and wetland habitats. Learn to identify different native plants and understand their natural history.

(WP) Sat., Aug. 30 | 10 - 11:30AM
For adults | \$7 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Menomonee Valley Walking Tours ☺

(MV) Every 1st Wed. of the month | 10 - 11AM
For adults | Free - donations appreciated

INTEREST GROUPS

Friends of Real Food: Potluck Dinner and Program ☺

(RP) Weds., Jul. 9 & Aug. 13 | 6 - 8PM

Photo Club ☺

(RP) Thus., Jul. 10 & Aug. 7 | 6:30 - 9PM

Faith and Ecology ☺

(RP) Tues., Jul. 15 | 7 - 8:30PM

Urban Echo Poets ☺

(RP) Thus., Jul. 10 | 7 - 8:30PM

Urban Stargazers ☺

(RP) Thus., Jul. 10 | 7 - 8:30PM

Transition Milwaukee: All City Hub Meeting

(RP) Mons., Jul. 28 & Aug. 25 | 6:30 - 8:30PM

Early Morning Birdwalks

(MV) Every Tue. | 8AM
(WP) Every Wed. except Aug. 20 | 8AM
(RP) Every Thu. except Aug. 21 | 8AM

Find full descriptions and details about these programs on our website

www.urbanecologycenter.org/calendar

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

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
3700W. Pierce St.



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

Quick Guide

Hank Aaron State Trail 5K Training

Get ready for this year's Hank Aaron State Trail 5K Run/Walk! Join us as we use Three Bridges Park and the surrounding community as training grounds for running/walking, stretching and breathing exercises.

(MV) Sats., Jul. 12 & Aug.

2 | 9:30 - 10:30AM

For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Pedal and Paddle Milwaukee

Explore Milwaukee's bike paths and river ways pedaling and paddling! Equipment provided (or bring your own) for a day of cycling the city and canoeing the Milwaukee River - a trip that will also include anchoring at a riverside restaurant.

(RP) Sat., Aug. 23 | NOON - 5PM

For everyone | \$20 (Nonmembers: \$25) Registration required by 5pm on Friday, August 22nd

Water Safety Course

Take this 30-minute, on land, water safety course and get ready for summer paddling. This training, or training through one of our scheduled trips, is a requirement of our canoe/kayak lending benefit for members.

(RP) Every Sun. | 1 - 1:30PM

(RP) Every Mon. | 6 - 6:30PM

(WP) Every Sat. | 10 - 10:30AM

(MV) Every Fri. starting Jul. 11

except Jul. 18 | 5 - 5:30PM

For adults | Free - donations

appreciated (Nonmembers: \$5) |

Membership required to borrow boats

Climbing Wall

Open Climbs

Enjoy climbing our three story rock wall. Equipment is provided and trained belayers are on hand to assist.

(RP) Every Tue. through Aug.

5 except Jul. 15 | 6 - 8PM

(RP) Every Wed. except

Aug. 20 | 4:30 - 6:30PM

(RP) Every Sun. | 2 - 4PM

For adults, teens, and families | Adults:

\$10 (Nonmembers: \$12); Children: \$8

(Nonmembers: \$10) Climbing passes

available for in-person purchase

Free Open Climbs

Curious about rock climbing? Come try it out for free!

(RP) Sun., Jul. 6 & Aug. 3 | 2 - 4PM

For everyone | Free -

donations appreciated

Night Climbs

Calling all nocturnal thrill seekers! We'll bring out our flash lights and our best music to give you a climbing experience you won't forget!

(RP) Tues., Jul. 15 & Aug. 12 | 8 - 10PM

For everyone | Adults: \$10

(Nonmembers: \$12) Children:

\$8 (Nonmembers: \$10)

Canoeing

River Rhythms Paddle

Canoe or kayak to Pere Marquette Park to enjoy live music. Boats and pfd's are provided. Bring a blanket and picnic dinner. **Meet at the Milwaukee Rowing Club Boathouse, 1990 N Commerce St.** To register non-paddling kids, please contact Lesley Sheridan at lsheridan@urbanecology.org.

(RP) Wed., Jul. 9, 23, Aug.

13 & 27 | 6:30 - 10PM

For adults and families | Adults:

\$15 (Nonmembers: \$20) Paddling

kids: \$7 (Nonmembers: \$10) Kids

under 10 who do not paddle:

Free - donations appreciated

Milwaukee River Paddle: Lime Kiln Park to Mequon-Thiensville Dam

Escape the city and experience this beautiful upriver stretch of the Milwaukee River. The trip will end with a look at the Mequon-Thiensville Fishway. All equipment provided.

(RP) Sat., Jul. 26 | 8:30AM - 2PM

For adults and teens | \$35

(Nonmembers: \$40) Registration is

required by Thursday, July 24th at 5PM.

History of Milwaukee by Canoe

Discover the history of downtown Milwaukee as well as explore ecological issues facing the river today. **Meet at the Milwaukee Rowing Club Boathouse, 1990 N Commerce St.**

(RP) Mon., Jul. 28 | 5:30 - 8:30PM,

Sun., Aug. 17 | 9AM - NOON

& Mon., Aug. 25 | 5:30 - 8:30PM

For adults and families | \$10

(Nonmembers: \$15)

Canoeing Basics

Learn canoeing techniques on the still, quiet waters of the Washington Park Lagoon. All skill levels welcome.

(WP) Sat., Aug. 2 | 11AM - NOON

For adults and accompanied children |

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

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

Milwaukee River Paddle: Mequon-Thiensville Dam to Kletzsch Park

Enjoy a relaxing Sunday afternoon paddle on this 8-mile stretch of the Milwaukee River. Meet at our Riverside Park branch. All equipment provided.

(RP) Sun., Aug. 3 | NOON - 5PM

For adults and teens | \$35

(Nonmembers: \$40) Registration is

required by Friday, August 1st at 5PM.

Full Moon Canoe

With the full moon above and reflected city lights below, we'll paddle down the Milwaukee River. **Meet at the Milwaukee Rowing Club Boathouse, 1990 N Commerce St.**

(RP) Sun., Aug. 10 | 7:30 - 10PM

For adults and teens | \$20

(Nonmembers: \$25) Registration

and non-refundable payment

required by August 9th at 5PM.

Biking

Savvy City Cycling for Women

Join the Bike Federation and the Bellas Donnas to safely navigate city streets with confidence. Bring your bike and helmet. Limited bikes and helmets available to borrow (call at four days in advance to reserve a bike).

(MV) Wed., Jul. 9 | 5:45 - 7:30PM

For adults and teens | Free -

donations appreciated

Bike Three Bridges Park

Explore the Three Bridges Park and Menomonee Valley. Bring your bike and helmet or borrow ours (call four days in advance to reserve a bike).

(MV) Sat., Aug. 16 | 10 - 11:30AM

For adults and families with children

age 7 and up | Adults: \$6 (Nonmember:

\$9) Children: \$4 (Nonmember: \$7)

TEEN PROGRAMS

Teen Biking Adventure

Do you like to bike, but don't know where to go? Or maybe you do, but you want to meet some awesome people? Join us on a bike adventure through Milwaukee! Bring your bike (and helmet, of course!) if you have one. If not, you can borrow one of ours. Please register by July 19th.

(WP) Sat., Jul. 26 | 9AM - NOON

For teens | \$7 (Nonmembers: \$10)

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer Orientation

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

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

(RP) Fri., Jul. 18 | 3 - 4:30PM

(RP) Sat., Jul. 26 | 10:30AM - NOON

(RP) Sat., Aug. 2 | 10:30AM - NOON

(RP) Tue., Aug. 12 | 5:30 - 7PM

(RP) Fri., Aug. 29 | 3 - 4:30PM

(WP) Tue., Jul. 15 | 4:30 - 5:30PM

(WP) Thu., Jul. 31 | 5 - 6PM

(WP) Fri., Aug. 22 | 3:30 - 4:30PM

(WP) Sat., Aug. 9 | 10:30 - 11:30AM

(MV) Tue., Jul. 8 | 4:30 - 6PM

(MV) Thu., Jul. 24 | 5:30 - 7PM

(MV) Tue., Aug. 5 | 4:30 - 6PM

(MV) Thu., Aug. 28 | 5:30 - 7PM

For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Bike Maintenance Workshop Series

Help keep our bikes rolling! Learn a specific skill such as replacing brake cables or truing a tire, then practice by fixing our program bikes. Come and get your hands greasy for a good cause!

(RP) Sun., Jul. 13, 27, Aug.

10 & 24 | 1 - 3PM

For adults and teens | Free -

donations appreciated

Weekly volunteer opportunities
Find these weekly events on the calendar on our website

Burdock Brigades (except Aug. 21)

Compost Crew

Dig it, Plant it, Grow it (except Aug. 21)

Forestry Fridays (except Jul. 4)

Volunteer Park Ranger Crew

Work Outside Wednesdays (except Aug. 20)

Your Stories

continued from page 1

"... that is preposterously optimistic. A story of saying 'boy that would be a cool thing' then ignoring that it would be impossible in most people's opinions, and then through infectious enthusiasm, persistence, collaboration, penny-pinching, patience, luck, deep listening and dedication actually making it happen! Then best of all, sharing it with everyone!"

"... where a suit and tie business person can tap a maple tree with a hipster, an urban high school student or a stay-at-home mom. It's a place where race and age and sex and ideological barriers fall away."

"... of a deliberate attempt to engage and educate communities on the importance of becoming a more attentive audience to the birds, bees, butterflies and trees that surround and entertain them."

"... about the power of hope, optimism and creativity. It's a story where people are using a 'PhD in the Obvious' to positively affect urban fortunes."

"... that provides an outlet for a community's pent-up desire to protect natural spaces in the city."

"... about a place that builds parks, restores land, teaches children, mentors young adults all while doing stewardship, science and building a healthier and safer neighborhood."

"... of over and over again setting out to do what seems like a daunting, maybe impossible task

... and getting it done through collaboration, cooperation, a spirit of inclusion, transparency and fun. It's a place of 'miracles' that involves and attracts children, families, schools, organizations, volunteers, philanthropists, scientists, artists, writers, speakers and more. "

One board member told an incredibly poignant father-daughter story that brought us all to tears, about a recent bike ride with his coming-of-age child.

"My high-school aged daughter would come home from school feeling somewhat overwhelmed — grappling with atrocities highlighted in her history class and fretting over the severity of environmental degradation discussed in her Environmental Science course. Add this to the common news about corruption in churches, violence in our schools and drugs in sports — her exasperation with humanity was becoming palpable. Then something unexpected and special happened on a sunny Saturday morning bike ride through Three Bridges Park.

The two of us were riding our bikes through the Menomonee River Valley and I happened to share how incredibly polluted the river and the land once was and how families were warned to stay away from this place. I then told her the powerful story of how so many "regular" people came together to clean up the river and create this beautiful place. She took notice of the nature around her and over the course of the ride visibly lightened in a way I had not seen in some time.

While the story I told was about healing the land, the real story that day was about reclaiming and inspiring a child's heart and allowing time to form the bond of family. That is where the power in the story of the Urban Ecology Center resides."

Now that was a board meeting to remember!

And now we would love to hear from you ...

We've set up an online form you can use to give us your answers; you can find it at urbanecologycenter.org/book. Or you can send your responses to Shameka Tyler at styler@urbanecologycenter.org or to her attention at 1500 E. Park Place, Milwaukee 53211.

QUICK DISCLAIMER

We are realizing, as we dig into this new chapter (clever eh?) of documenting our story, that a book is a very big project. It may take upwards of a year or more to get something written and even longer to actually get it published*. AND we are making no promises to anyone that any of their stories or ideas will be incorporated in the book. Some might, but what we mostly are seeking at this early stage are thoughts to point us in the right direction. Hope you can help us!

*If anyone happens to be or know an agent or have a direct link to a publisher please contact Shameka as we are all ears! 🦋



Driven to Discover

by Lesley Sheridan, Community Program Coordinator

This summer and fall, bring your inquisitive 8 – 12 year olds to Driven to Discover: Outdoor Inquiry Camp at Riverside Park. This 10-week program guides kids through the process of discovering answers to their own questions while being active outdoors.

Each week your kids will practice a new aspect

of citizen science (observations, questions, hypotheses, methodology, data collection, interpreting results) or explore new topics (butterflies, birds, insects, etc.). They will be encouraged to wonder about the things they discover and try to answer their own questions. The program culminates with a mini-research project and joining other youth

from all over the country to present their research at the Insect Fair at the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities campus in December (travel and lodging is covered at no cost).

Driven to Discover will meet on Mondays from 4 - 5:30PM. Join us Monday, July 14th at 5PM to learn more and complete the registration materials. 🦋

More Than a Pretty Place

continued from page 1

underutilized play spaces (urban parks) as an innovative way to build healthy, active lifestyles for kids. With each conversation, people reinforced that our work is relevant, not only for Milwaukee, but across the globe in both developed and underdeveloped countries.

Three years earlier, we seized an extremely rare opportunity at our Menomonee Valley branch — capturing a moment in time when we could gather information before a program and a natural space were available to kids, and again after both of these neighborhood assets were opened. Each day the Center planned to engage kids in learning, exploring and being active. It was intuitive to make the claim that our programs elevated activity levels, thereby promoting healthy behaviors. But in order to actually make that claim, we needed evidence. Gathering a group of core partners: Medical College of Wisconsin (Kirsten Beyer), Center for

Urban Initiative and Research (Jessica Bizub), Menomonee Valley Partners (Corey Zetts) and Urban Ecology Center (Beth Heller), we captured our vision for the project and submitted a grant to the Healthier Wisconsin Partnership Program. It was funded and off we went!

After the summit, we looked out over Toronto, a metro area of seven million people and Lake Ontario, one of our sister great lakes to the northeast, and reflected on our three years (so far) of working together. We both noted that it resulted in more than the evidence we initially sought.

Our most important finding is that kids love and value nature. Generally speaking, they believe it makes them healthier, teaches them new things, calms them down when they are upset, and offers them freedom, excitement, and yes, time to be dirty. Another finding of significant

importance is that, as we all thought, the Urban Ecology Center's programming is working. Kids who participate in the Neighborhood Environmental Education Project have reduced fears of outdoor play in nature, are likely to come back to the Center and come back more often. Also, Three Bridges Park is itself making a difference. We saw an increase in the amount of kids who reported that they knew a place to play outside in nature since the development and opening of the park.

"For me," said Beth, "the rewards of this partnership have been both personal and professional. From a personal perspective, this project satiated an ongoing desire to learn and to continue to challenge my inner scientist by digging deep into a research project with an extremely high level of academic rigor. Since my background in community health was limited, I also had to have the courage to say 'I have no idea what you are talking about' to the academic partners. It was humbling, but it opened the door for learning and is part of the richness in bringing academic community partners together."

These findings are extremely exciting, especially given the global context of physical inactivity for children who need ways to develop healthier habits. We now have evidence indicating that our model of connecting kids to nearby nature is a viable solution. For more information about this study, contact Beth (bheller@urbanecologycenter.org).



This newsletter was sent to print before our 2014 Summer Solstice Soiree occurred.

Check our website for a recap of the event and a complete listing of sponsors.

We thank our sponsors and attendees for their committed support of our mission.

Many thanks to our *Sponsors*



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Credits:

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

Contributing writers: Kirsten Beyer, Kim Forbeck, Beth Heller, Glenna Holstein, Ken Leinbach, Lesley Sheridan and Katie Wipfli.

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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
wkaridis@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.

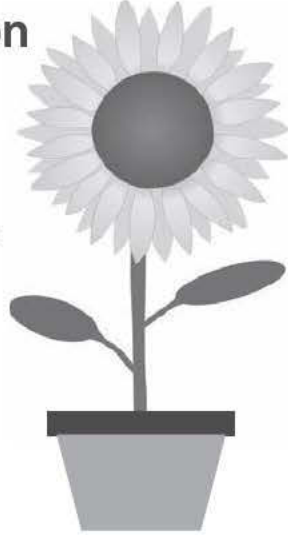
Did you know you can become a contributing member securely online? Visit urbanecologycenter.org and click membership.

Summer Celebration Festival

Come celebrate summer in
the Menomonee Valley!

(MV) Sat., Jul. 19
10am - 2pm

For everyone
Free - donations appreciated



FSC logo

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MORE THAN A PRETTY PLACE

Beth Heller, Senior and Kirsten Beyer

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

29 SUMMER INTERNS

joined our staff in June to help
with our programs and facilities

