



Do the Extra-ordinary!

by Ken Leinbach, Executive Director



Do you remember those little gift books you used to give as a kid? You'd spend hours, carefully creating hand-made "coupons" for someone special. The promise was to take an ordinary experience and add a little extra. One might say you'd do the dishes without complaining. Another would say you'd give your parents a hug or plan a movie night. They were fun to make and even more fun when redeemed ... well, except for the chores, but even those would change ordinary activities into extraordinary experiences as grownups would often join in to help.

We can all add a little extra to our ordinary lives. At the Urban Ecology Center, ordinary walks in the woods can become peaceful moments of reflection. A Friday off from school can become a family outdoor adventure on cross-country skis. We can help turn a cabin fever-filled Saturday into an afternoon of sledding followed by hot chocolate. Or an average evening into an extraordinary time of learning how to cook or brew beer with your best friend. Spend time together creating something extraordinary out of the ordinary. It's just a matter of adding that little extra.

During this holiday season, I challenge you to do something extraordinary with someone you love. Notice I didn't say buy, I said do. I guarantee that your recipient will remember the excitement of seeing a fox on a snowy hill as you explored together much longer than any material gift you give. To help you get started, please turn to page 3, where you'll find some "experience coupons" that you can share. I think you'll like them. And I know you'll like the experiences that will result. 🌿



Let's Be Real: Building Authentic Engagement

by Beth Heller, Senior Director of Education and Strategic Planning

"An oasis in a city to learn about nature and teach kids about nature."

This is what one community forum participant said about our Menomonee Valley branch when asked how he would describe the Urban Ecology Center to a friend. Another said "It is a place to have fun and laugh." And when asked about challenges we can help address in the neighborhood, we heard that we should continue to "increase safety along the bike path," provide more "options for kids in the neighborhood," and perhaps add programs to help address "balanced nutrition ... Kids eat unhealthy foods."

These are just a few of the hundreds of comments provided through community forums at each of our branches – conversations with our friends and neighbors that help us to stay real and relevant.

Over the past couple years, the Board and Leadership staff at the Center have created a number of structures and processes aimed at providing authentic, timely guidance from our members, neighbors and constituents. These structures are designed to complement the feedback we already receive through our school partners, the citizen science advisory board of research institutions and surveys that we do for individual programs.

As the Center has grown, we have worked deliberately on building a team of board and committee members with experience and expertise to navigate complex governance issues and support increasing fund development goals, while at the same time ensuring that constituents have influence in program, mission and leadership decisions. In order to provide opportunities for engagement, each branch now has an advisory committee made up of board, staff and neighbors. These committees advise the decisions of the

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Branch Highlights



RIVERSIDE PARK

Thanks to the generosity of Prairie Springs: The Paul Fleckenstein Trust we have welcomed nationally and internationally acclaimed musicians for a series of concerts to benefit the Urban Ecology Center. We invite you to come to the next concert in this series — a solo show by Michael Johnson in December!



WASHINGTON PARK

We're making plans and we need your input! Join the conversation as we discuss our dreams for the Washington Park building with Quorum Architects. We want to hear from everyone — members, neighbors, friends, young and old, as we move forward in this process. See page 2 for details.



MENOMONEE VALLEY

Stop by and check out our current art show! "Neighborhood and Nature: Inspired Art" features a collective of Plein Air painters who captured scenes or native plants and animals, the Menomonee River, activities at the Center and the neighborhood. The show will be on display through December.



Best Kept Secret

by Terry Evans, Branch Manager - Washington Park

"Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn." - Benjamin Franklin

The Washington Park community is calling for YOU! Tell a friend, a co-worker, a relative, or an organization. Tell everyone, at the top of your lungs. Tell someone about the great partnership opportunities at the Urban Ecology Center in Washington Park.

Recently we have been partnering with more and more youth-serving agencies, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee for example, across the entire city and have really enjoyed the opportunity to actively work with and teach our young people about the environment and being responsible stewards. The challenge has been and will continue to

be fun and rewarding. Studies have shown that being out in nature helps teens to become calm. Being outdoors reduces stress. What's more, the Center provides a safe, welcoming place where kids can just hang out after school. My hope is that more organizations that work with young people will become involved in outdoor science education and expose our young people to a more active lifestyle.

I invite you, your organization, or family and friends to stop in and learn about our environment and how you can get involved at the Center. The stories and memories are enough to keep you coming back.

The Urban Ecology Center in Washington Park is one of the best kept secrets on Milwaukee's north side. Let's not keep it a secret anymore! 🌿



DROPLETS

LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE TOPICS ON OUR WEBSITE

- **Did you know that over 2.5 billion people around the world don't have access to proper sanitation (including clean water, toilets and latrines)?** Lack of proper sanitation has negative consequences on human and environmental health, most specifically water quality. To raise awareness of this important issue, in 2013 the United Nations General Assembly designated November 19th as World Toilet Day. Celebrate the day with us by appreciating something that is easily taken for granted — access to proper sanitation.

Join us on World Toilet Day for a presentation by Gigi Pomerantz, who is doing inspired work toward a solution! Learn about the issue and what Gigi is doing through YoutHaiti, a nonprofit dedicated to helping Haitian young people in their development of ecological projects in sanitation and water-source protection.

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

Riverside Park

Anabat detector
GoPro camera
Heavy bottom, stainless steel cookware
Log splitter
Office chairs (gently used)

Washington Park

8ft folding tables
Bicycle air pump (stand-up)
Large, 2-handled pots with lids (3)
Lego/blocks/K'Nex building toys
Wooden high chairs

Menomonee Valley

Digital camera
Field guides
Field/trail cameras
Snow pants (all sizes)
Yoga mats

THANK YOU
**HKE
MKE**
SPONSORS & PARTICIPANTS
Together we raised over \$30,000!

Our first-ever fundraising hike was a huge success thanks to over 250 participants, volunteers, donors and sponsors. For highlights visit: tinyurl.com/hkemke.



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: Lianna Bishop, Carijean Buhk, Matthew Gnas, Judy Krause, Jeff McAvoy and Pat Mueller.

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Experiential Gift Coupons!

Use the gift coupons below to give a unique experiential gift to someone special in your life!
Want to give more than we have printed here? Find these coupons on our website at urbanecologycenter.org/giftcoupons

Redeemable for...

- One amazing high five
- An epic bear hug
- A hearty back rub
- A board game match (at the Urban Ecology Center)
- My best joke
- A Secret Handshake
- A game of hide & seek
- _____
(other)

from _____

ONE XC SKI ADVENTURE!



on _____
(date)

with equipment
borrowed from the
Urban Ecology Center.

(equipment use included with Urban Ecology Center membership)

from _____

One excellent Day of Sledding!

- With a hot cocoa break at the Urban Ecology Center.



from _____

Good for one EXPLORATION HIKE

through

- Riverside Park
- Three Bridges Park
- Washington Park

guided by

_____ (gift giver)

in search of

_____ (birds, animal tracks, etc.)



A trip to all three Urban Ecology Centers!

Where we can...

- Meet native WI animals (all three)
- Drink coffee/tea/cocoa (all three)
- Play board games (all three)
- Race down the slides (Riverside Park & Menomonee Valley)
- Visit "Lake Wisconsin" (Washington Park)
- Just hang out (all three)
- Borrow skis, sleds or snowshoes (all three)

_____ (other)

from _____

Got another idea?

↓ Create your own! ↓

The amazing gift of

from _____



Cut out the
coupon you
want to give



Fill in
the details



Give
your
gift!



Have fun
with your
gift recipient!





You DO Live Here

by Glenna Holstein, Branch Manager - Menomonee Valley

This time of year always gets me thinking about gratitude (I probably say that in every November/December newsletter article).

This year, I want to share a story that perfectly captured for me why I'm so grateful to be a part of this work, and why I'm grateful for the support of so many people that make this work possible.

Last spring, I had the opportunity to teach a 3rd grade Neighborhood Environmental Education Project class at our Menomonee Valley branch. It was a glorious late spring day—sunny with just that faintest taste of summer coming around the corner. To be honest, I can't even remember what the intended topic was, I think it was "natural resources," but the heart of the class was really just getting kids out experiencing and enjoying

the park. We skipped rocks, we climbed trees, we tasted tart grape vines. It was great.

One of the kids was particularly taken with the grape vines. He jokingly pretended to be a grape-vine-obsessed-Mr. Hyde-like monster every time we came upon some. I love it when nature brings out kids' silly sides!

This kid was so excited about all of the activities that as we were walking I said to him, "You know, if you came back for our Young Scientist Club, you could do this kind of thing all the time after school." He said, (and I'm not making this up!) "Whoa...that would be like HEAVEN to me!" Later, as we were walking through the park he said, "Miss, I wish I lived here." I laughed, and was delighted to tell him, "you DO live here!"

This park is right in your neighborhood, and it's yours! You can come whenever you want!"

I really believe that connecting kids and adults to the nature that's right in their backyard can be fun, empowering and world-widening all at once, and this kid was such a great reminder of that.

I am so proud and happy to be part of this work every day! And I am deeply grateful to the amazing community of people—staff, volunteers, contributing members and our whole "Urban Ecology Center family" who support the work of creating meaningful and empowering experiences in Milwaukee's green spaces, and letting kids know that "heaven" can be right in their backyard! 🌿

Let's Be Real: Building Authentic Engagement

continued from page 1

board and staff and are charged with the task of maintaining open communication channels with the neighborhood. Community forums are an outgrowth of this work.

Over the past two years, 134 community members engaged in one of seven forums offered at all of our branches. Participants included neighborhood residents and businesses, people coming to the Center for the first time and long standing members, and ages ranging from toddler to older adult. The hosts take notes, facilitating small group discussions so that everyone who attends is able to participate. Over a snack or meal, the forum participants have been able to dig deeply into interests, issues, assets and challenges faced by the Center and the community. At Riverside Park, we even incorporated a walk and a campfire into our forum this fall. Our spaces have been filled with creativity, laughter, listening, sharing and more listening. Forum feedback is guiding the growth and refinement

of our program offerings at all of our branches, is informing a plan for renovation at our Washington Park branch and is ensuring that the Board hears the voice of our constituents. This is the kind of authentic engagement we hope for.

In addition, the Board has instituted a new Impact Committee made up of neighbors, Board members, researchers and staff to ensure that the work happening across the entire organization has the desired mission-based effects. Under the guidance of this committee, the Center has refreshed its 8 year-old impact framework and is in the process of determining the best, most cost-effective approaches for ongoing evaluation.

These committees also serve as a pipeline to board membership. Over 30% of our current board members first served on a Board or project steering committee. Our Nominating and Governance Committee relies upon board committees to nominate community and

business leaders who also have the practice and commitment of serving on a committee. This has been one of the most reliable ways that we have been able to build such a strong, engaged and talented board. It is the authentic engagement of Board and committee members through our new structures that leads us to recommend the changes to the Article of Incorporation at the Annual meeting this year (described on page 10). We are aiming to formalize ways that ensure deliberate, informed decision making that reflects our culture of authentic community engagement.

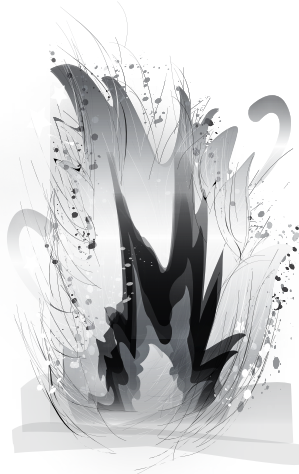
Want to get involved? We plan to host forums at least once a year at each branch. Next on the calendar is a community engagement session at Washington Park led by Quorum Architects focused on our facility renovation vision on November 17th at 5:30pm. It is sure to be fun, engaging and valuable. Questions? Please direct them to Beth at bheller@urbanecologycenter.org. 🌿

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

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

Come celebrate our volunteers and all that they helped us accomplish this year.



VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION PARTY

& ANNUAL MEETING

Wednesday, **November 18th**
5 - 8 p.m.

5 - 6PM
Campfire fun!

6 - 7PM
**Enjoy a delicious arrangement
of heavy appetizers**

7 - 8PM
**Annual meeting, entertainment
by the staff and a dessert bar**

(RP) For adults and teens | Free
Please register by November 11th

Candlelight Walk

Celebrate the Winter Solstice! Join us for a guided candlelit walk through Riverside Park as we listen to poetry and readings of the season. Then warm up inside by the fire while you enjoy cider, snacks and music. Walks begin every fifteen minutes. Registration not required.

(RP) Sat., Dec. 19 | 7 - 9PM

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

Candlelight Walk *for kids*

Enjoy the wonder of a winter night with stories for kids on an easy walk through the woods. Then warm up inside with games and treats. Walks will leave every 15 minutes. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

(RP) Sat., Dec. 19 | 4:30 - 6:30PM

For families | Adults: \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7) Children: \$3 (Nonmembers: \$5)

MICHAEL JOHNSON in concert

to benefit the Urban Ecology Center



(RP) Sat., Dec. 5 | 7 - 9:30PM
For adults | \$20 (Nonmembers: \$25)

World-renowned guitarist and story-teller, Michael is not only known for his memorable concerts, but his No. 1 hit song, "Bluer Than Blue" and his masterful guitar playing. Join us for this intimate, solo show. All proceeds go to support the Urban Ecology Center's mission.

Christmas Bird Count

Contribute to bird research during your morning hike. Data we collect contributes to an international database of bird population trends. Walk on the east or west side of town! *Dress for a long hike and bring money for brunch.*

(RP) & (MV) Sat., Dec. 20 | 8AM - 5PM

For adults and teens
Free - donations appreciated

EAST SIDE

Meet at the Riverside Park branch and hike to Capitol Drive along the east bank of the river, stop for a quick brunch and return along the west bank. Follow us and join the Lake Park birders that afternoon.

WEST SIDE

Meet at the Menomonee Valley branch and hike to the Washington Park branch with a stop for brunch along the way. After, we'll take a shuttle back to the Valley.

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS & SPECIAL HOURS

Normal hours (as listed on page 11) apply except for days listed to the right

MENOMONEE VALLEY

November 12	Closed
November 18	NOON - 4PM
November 26 - 30	Closed
December 22 - 23	NOON - 4PM
December 24 - 25	Closed
December 26	NOON - 4PM
December 29 - 31	NOON - 4PM
January 1	Closed
January 2	NOON - 4PM

WASHINGTON PARK

November 26 - 30	Closed
December 22 - 23	NOON - 4PM
December 24 - 25	Closed
December 26	NOON - 4PM
December 29 - 31	NOON - 4PM
January 1	Closed
January 2	NOON - 4PM

RIVERSIDE PARK

November 26 - 29	Closed
December 21 - 23	9AM - 5PM
December 24 - 25	Closed
December 26 - 27	NOON - 4PM
December 28 - 30	9AM - 5PM
December 31	NOON - 4PM
January 1	Closed
January 2	NOON - 4PM

RIVERSIDE PARK



It is the wonderful time of year when two of my favorite events occur: the **Candlelight Walk** (one for adults and one for kids) and the **Christmas Bird Count**. Both events provide unique ways to celebrate this great season with your friends, family and neighbors.

— Jamie Ferschinger,
Branch Manager - Riverside Park

WASHINGTON PARK



Winter is here so come on out and get warmed up with our **Home Brewing Basics Series** in November and December. For more kid oriented fun, try a new cuisine at **Healthy Korean Cooking for Everyone**. Then share your vision for our building with Quorum Architects at our **Community Forum**.

— Terry Evans,
Branch Manager - Washington Park

MENOMONEE VALLEY



Feeling crafty during the holidays? Stop by for **Do it Yourself Thanksgiving Crafts** or **Make Your Own Christmas Ornament**. Or, if you want to get outside and stretch your legs, join our Young Scientists for a Thursday afternoon **Family Hike**.

— Glenna Holstein,
Branch Manager - Menomonee Valley

Quick Guide

Martial Arts Class

Hosted by *Above the Clouds*

Learn discipline, physical awareness and self-confidence. No experience needed! To register visit abovethecloudsmilwaukee.com.

(MV) Every Wed. through Dec. 9 | 5:15 - 6:15PM
For youth ages 9-15 | Free - donations appreciated

Family Birding Adventure

Birds are out in every season and you can find them everywhere, even in your own backyard! We'll take a hike in Washington Park and show you the basics of using binoculars and field guides and how to identify common backyard birds. Then we'll head inside to add our sightings to E-Bird, a real-time, online national bird database.

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

Geocaching in the Valley

We'll search for geocaches in the Menomonee Valley while we learn about the history of the land. Beginners welcome, GPS units provided.

(MV) Sat., Nov. 7 & Dec. 19 | 10 - 11:30AM
For adults and children ages 6 and older | Adults: \$6 (Nonmembers: \$9) Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Neighborhood Night at Menomonee Valley!

Do you live near our Menomonee Valley branch, but haven't had a chance to check us out yet? This is your chance! Come to this family-friendly open house. You'll get a "passport" that will help you explore the Center and what we offer. Then redeem the stamps on your passport for yummy treats and hot cocoa!

(MV) Tue., Nov. 10 & Dec. 8 | 4 - 6:30PM
For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

Family Hike

Explore the trails with us on a guided hike through Three Bridges Park. This is a perfect way to see the park as seasons change. We'll conclude with story time by the fire.

(MV) Thu., Nov. 12 & Dec. 10 | 4 - 6PM
For families with children | Free - donations appreciated

Saturday Preschool Series: *Animals Getting Ready for Winter*

Bring your 3-5 year-old and enjoy exploring nature together. We'll have seasonal indoor and outdoor play, songs, stories and crafts.

(RP) Sat., Nov. 14 | 10 - 11:30AM
For children ages 3-5 accompanied by an adult | Adults: \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7) Children: \$3 (Nonmembers: \$5)

Animal Tracker

Become an animal detective! We will search for tracks in the Valley and learn how animals prepare for winter

(MV) Tues., Nov. 17 & Dec. 15 | 4 - 6PM
For adults and children ages 6 and older | Adults: \$6 (Nonmembers: \$9) Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Three Bridges Park Scavenger Hunt

There are twelve objects hidden all over Three Bridges Park. Can you find them all?

(MV) Sat., Nov. 21 | 10 - 11:30AM
For adults and children ages 5 and older | Adults: \$6 (Nonmembers: \$9) Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Do it Yourself Thanksgiving Crafts

Get eco-friendly this Thanksgiving. Create your own decorations made entirely out of recycled items. We'll bring the raw materials — you bring your creativity!

(MV) Sat., Nov. 21 | 10AM - 4PM
For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

Make Your Own Christmas Ornament

Make the perfect sustainable gift for friends and family — a handmade tree ornament! Materials provided.

(MV) Sat., Dec. 19 | 10AM - 5PM
For everyone | Adults: \$6 (Nonmembers: \$9) Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

Sledding the Slopes of Menomonee Valley

Join us for snow and sledding followed by Aztec Hot Chocolate. The perfect winter activity! If there is no snow, we will hike.

(MV) Sat., Dec. 12 | 10 - 11:30PM
(MV) Fri., Dec. 18 | 4 - 5:30PM
For families and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Healthy Korean Cooking for Everyone!

Learn how to make delicious Korean food at this hands-on cooking class for families. Menu items include: Kimchi Pancakes and Braised Tofu with Winter Vegetables. Please register by December 9th.

(WP) Sat., Dec. 12 | 1 - 3PM
For adults and accompanied children | Adults: \$6 (Nonmembers: \$9) Children: \$4 (Nonmembers: \$7)

EcoArt Wednesdays

Join us for nature inspired recycled arts and crafts. Take home your very own creation every week!

(MV) Every Wed. except Nov. 18, Dec. 23 & 30 | 4 - 5:30PM
For families with children age 12 and younger | Free for Young Scientist Club members (Nonmembers: \$5 per child)

Fire Time in the Rooftop Tipi

Warm up from playing outside. Drop in and enjoy the warmth and light of the fire in our rooftop tipi.

(RP) Every Sat., except Nov. 28, starting Nov. 21 | 10AM - 3PM
For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

Animal Feeding

Help feed the Center's resident turtles, snakes and more!

(WP) & **(MV)** Every Sat. except Nov. 28, Dec. 26 & Jan. 2 | 1PM
(RP) Every Sat. except Nov. 28 | 1PM
For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

Science Saturdays and Sundays

Come try these self-led activities. Theme: "Wonder About Water."

(RP) Self-led, drop-in program available Every Sat. except Nov. 28 | 10AM - 4PM and Every Sun. except Nov. 29 | 1 - 4PM
For everyone | Free - donations appreciated

Nature Rangers

Investigate animals and plants, learn about science, create research projects and more! Sign up for either the Monday or Tuesday session. Fee covers all sessions in November and December.

(RP) Every Mon. or every Tue. through Dec. 15 | 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 Nov. 26, 27 & Dec. 22 - Jan. 1 | 4 - 6PM and Every Sat. except Nov. 28 & Dec. 26 | 1 - 4PM
For kids ages 7-12 | \$10 annual membership

(MV) Every Tue. & Thu. except Nov. 12, 26, Dec. 22, 24, 29 & 31 | 4 - 6PM and Every Sat. except Nov. 28 & Dec. 26 | 1 - 4PM
For ages 5-12 | \$10 annual membership

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

HOMESCHOOL SERIES

Physics of Construction

Bring your hard hats and work belts and study the physics and concepts behind building structures. Starting with simple machines, we will build up to creating our own towers using what we've learned.

Simple Machines

(WP) Tue., Nov. 10 | 1 - 3PM

Build it!

(RP) Tue., Nov. 24 | 1 - 3PM

Physics of Construction

(MV) Tue., Dec. 8 | 1 - 3PM
For children ages 5 and older | \$7 (Nonmember: \$10)

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer Orientation

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

(RP) Sat., Nov. 14 | 10:30AM - NOON

(RP) Fri., Nov. 20 | 3 - 4:30PM

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

(RP) Sat., Dec. 12 | 10:30AM - NOON

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

(WP) Sat., Nov. 7 | 10:30 - 11:30AM

(WP) Tue., Nov. 24 | 5:30 - 6:30PM

(WP) Wed., Dec. 9 | 5:30 - 6:30PM

(WP) Tue., Dec. 29 | 3 - 4PM

(MV) Tue., Nov. 3 | 5:30 - 7PM

(MV) Thu., Nov. 13 | 5:30 - 7PM

(MV) Sat., Dec. 5 | 10:30AM - NOON

(MV) Tue., Dec. 15 | 5:30 - 7PM

For adults and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Youth Project Squad

Help us keep our facility running smoothly and looking excellent. Work on various projects — equipment repair, plant/animal care, building maintenance, grounds keeping, etc. — while learning new skills from our staff.

(MV) Sat., Nov. 7 &

Dec. 5 | NOON - 2PM

For families and teens | Free - donations appreciated

Home Brewing Basics Series

In this two-session series, we will explore the natural process of fermentation and brew a batch of ale together. The price includes four bottles of finished beer.

Session 1: Brewing Equipment, Recipes, Preparation & Fermentation

(WP) Wed., Nov. 11 | 6 - 8PM

Session 2: Bottling and Aging

(WP) Wed., Dec. 9 | 6 - 8PM

For adults age 21 and older | \$15 for both sessions (Nonmembers: \$20 for both sessions)

My Family In the Wilderness

In 2012, Sarah Moore lived in the north woods of Wisconsin for 11 months as part of a wilderness immersion program. Come hear how families lived in hand made lodges, foraged for food, cooked over fire and learned the ways of our hunter gather ancestors.

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

For adults | Free (donations always appreciated)

Photo Phenology

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

(MV) Sats., Nov. 21 &

Dec. 19 | 10 - 11:30AM

For adults, teens and families | Free - donations appreciated

Ojibwe Language Study Group

(RP) Every Mon. until

Dec. 14 | 6 - 8PM

Community Vegan Potluck

(RP) Tues., Nov. 3 &

Dec. 1 | 6:30 - 8PM

Photo Club

(RP) Thus., Nov. 5 &

Dec. 3 | 6:30 - 9PM

350.org General Meeting

(RP) Tues. Nov. 10 &

Dec. 8 | 7 - 8:30PM

Coyotes and Red Fox in the City: *The UW Urban Canid Project*

Learn how David Drake and his team are radio-collaring coyotes and red fox in the Madison area to better understand how these competitors are using (and maybe sharing) the human-dominated landscape. Speaker: Dr. David Drake, Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology, University of Wisconsin.

(RP) Tue., Nov. 10 | 7 - 8:30PM

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

Walk and Talk Series

Walk and Talk

Explore the Menomonee Valley branch and Three Bridges Park or Washington Park on a guided tour.

(MV) Wed., Nov. 11 | noon - 1PM

(WP) Thu., Nov. 19 | 4 - 5PM

For everyone | \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7) | Registration required by

5pm the day prior to each tour

Community Forum: *Washington Park Building Renovation*

Join Quorum Architects for a brainstorming session on the planned renovation of the Center's Washington Park facility. A light meal will be served at 5:30 followed by learning and discussion.

(WP) Tue., Nov. 17 | 5:30 - 7:30PM

For everyone | Free -

donations appreciated

INTEREST GROUPS

Friends of Real Food: *Potluck Dinner and Program*

(RP) Wed., Nov. 11 | 6 - 8PM

Faith and Ecology

(RP) Tues., Nov. 17 & Dec. 15 |

7 - 8:30PM

Urban Echo Poets

(RP) Thus., Nov. 12 &

Dec. 10 | 7 - 8:30PM

Urban Stargazers

(RP) Thus., Nov. 12 &

Dec. 10 | 7 - 8:30PM

Why I Care About Poo: *Global Sanitation, Ecological Vitality and Human Health*

Celebrate World Toilet Day with Gigi Pomerantz of Youthaiti as she covers the importance of proper sanitation throughout the world and its impact on ecological and human health.

(RP) Thu., Nov. 19 | 7 - 8PM

For adults | Free - donations appreciated

From Beak to Tail:

All About the Life of Birds

Take an in-depth look into bird ecology, conservation and behavior. You can jump into this ongoing series anytime. The program features a dusk walk. Binoculars provided.

(RP) Sat., Nov. 21 | 2 - 3:30PM

(MV) Sat., Dec. 12 | 2 - 3:30PM

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

Student Research Symposium

Students and volunteers of all ages conduct scientific research in our outdoor spaces. Learn their discoveries including an analysis of migration timing changes in birds, results of our park use surveys and more! This program will highlight original research conducted in 2015 by the Young Scientists Club, students and volunteers.

(WP) Tue., Dec. 8 | 5 - 7PM

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

Transition Milwaukee: *All City Hub Meeting*

(RP) Mon., Nov. 23 | 6:30 - 8:30PM

Good Food Book Club

(RP) Tue., Dec. 15 | 7 - 8PM

Early Morning Birdwalks

(MV) Every Tue. | 8am

(WP) Every Wed. | 8am

(RP) Every Thu. except Nov. 26, except Dec. 24 & 31 | 8am

It Takes a Community to Put on a Great Summer Camp!



by Matt Flower, Environmental Educator

Despite my bias, I can honestly say that the Urban Ecology Center puts together a summer camp experience that even the most pristine and remote wilderness camp could never provide. One consistent comment parents and kids say about our summer camps is that we always do something fun and different every day in ways that showcase our great city.

Milwaukee is a vibrant urban landscape with many gems waiting to be uncovered and part of our summer camp experience is to uncover those gems. We still provide a healthy dose of outdoor exploration, of course, but I think we offer aspects that might surprise you. They are an incredible mix of fun, fascination, adventure, exploration and opportunity.

It's that last word, opportunity, which I'd like to focus on. Just look at the list of people, nonprofits and businesses that donated either time, goods, services or financial support specifically for our 2015 summer camps.

Anonymous (2)
A and C Live Bait Shop
Melanie Ariens, Milwaukee Water Commons
Ayco Charitable Foundation
Todd Berens
Cabela's
Thomas Callan
Cargill
Kevin A. Carr
Barbara A. Connolly-Blick
Ananda Deacon
Discovery World

Janet Eggie
Kevin Fitzpatrick
Fondy Food Market
Gloria & Steven Foster
Greater Milwaukee Foundation -
Children's Experiential Opps Fund
Sam Guyton, Generation Z
Eva Hagenhofer
Laura Herzog
David Johnson
Jorgensen Family Fund
JPMorgan Chase Bank
Ken Knetzger
MaryBeth Kressin
La Lune Collection
Lakeshore State Park
David LesStrang
Priscilla Y. Lietz
Helen L. Loewi
Robert Matthias
Mary E. McAndrews
Sandra McLellan
Sarah Minella
Dave Mueller, Hunger Task Force Fish Hatchery
Mary Louise Mussoline
Milwaukee County Parks
Milwaukee Public Libraries
Mitchell Park Domes
Steve Morse
Murray Hill Pottery
Jake Newborn
Our Daily Salt
Geoffrey Pearson
Pinehold Gardens
Planet Bead
Gene & Ruth Posner Foundation, Inc.

Rockwell Automation
Shorewood Public Library
George T. Stone
Carolyn Sweets
UW-Milwaukee Art Department
UW-Milwaukee Planetarium
Weiss Family Foundation
Whole Foods Market
Wisconsin Bike Fed
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Wisconsin Dragonfly Society
Wisconsin Society for Ornithology

The gifts these folks provided led to fun experiences such as fishing, biking, cooking, pottery, drawing, building, painting, photography, astronomy, gardening, music and memories that will last a lifetime.

Seeing them listed here makes me realize how fortunate I am to work for an organization that forms partnerships with such caring, talented and generous supporters. So to those listed, thank you from the bottom of my heart. If you recognize a name above, let them know you support the Urban Ecology Center, too.

I suppose you can say that healthy living is what keeps a community vibrant. Together we offer that in many important ways for kids and their families — teaching them life-long skills to keep them active, outside and having fun. I absolutely love teaching summer camps and now you know why. 🌿



2016

SUMMER CAMPS

Week-long day camps for
Preschool - 8th grade

Scholarships Available

Registration starts
January, 2016

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

Here's to Our Extraordinary Volunteers!



"The difference between ordinary and extraordinary is that little extra." - Jimmy Johnson

I often hear how extraordinary the Urban Ecology Center is as an institution in Milwaukee. How did we get this reputation? Well... I'm not 100 percent sure but I have do have a pretty good theory.

The difference between ordinary and extraordinary — the secret to our success that is not shared with the world often enough — is the little extra from you, our volunteers!

You give just a little bit more every time you're here — be it your time, talent or treasure. This "little bit more" has resulted in a presence that has become collectively quite extraordinary.

We are grateful for the "little extra" you share with us every day. As Shakespeare wrote in Twelfth Night,

"I can no other answer make but thanks, and thanks, and ever thanks."

With gratitude, Ken Leinbach, Executive Director

5,174 + **21,593** = **\$480,234**
volunteers hours of work saved through volunteer help in 2014-2015*

*Based on UEC fiscal year and Independent Sector total value of volunteer hours for Wisconsin of \$22.24 per hour



Volunteers help in many ways including land stewardship, teaching, greeting visitors, performing music, citizen science research, equipment maintenance, photography and artwork. **Almost any skill imaginable can be used at the Center!**

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

Welcome to Our New Staff

We've seen quite a bit of transition over the past couple of months and we'd like to introduce you to some of our fantastic new staff members!

First, we are pleased to announce that the Urban Ecology Center has two new directors! **Jen (Feltz) Hense** is our Director of Development and **Jeff McAvoy** is our Director of Marketing and Communications. These two fantastic individuals have joined our Leadership Team and are helping to make key decisions that will shape the future of the Urban Ecology Center.

These two positions had previously been combined into one, but as our organization has grown the need for focused leadership in each area has increased. This also represents a shift in our leadership team structure and increases our team size by one.

Jen, our Development Director, comes to us from the YMCA of Greater Waukesha's Tri-County YMCA where she was the Executive

Director. She began her new role with us on September 20th at our recent HKE MKE event.

Jeff, who was promoted to the role of Director of Marketing and Communications, has held a marketing position at the Urban Ecology Center for the past six years. During that time he has helped build a marketing team and many of the communications channels that the Center now uses regularly.

In no particular order, here are other staff who have been newly hired or recently promoted to a new role:

Amy LaMacchia is our new Donor Relations Manager. **Lianna Bishop** was promoted to the new role of Corporate and Foundation Relations Manager. **Brittany Peters** was promoted to Membership and Development Systems Coordinator. **Chris Steinkamp** is our new Evaluation Coordinator but don't worry, he will continue his half-time Volunteer Coordinator

role at Menomonee Valley as he adds this new half-time role. **Shameka Tyler** is now the full-time Human Resources Specialist. **Kirsten Maier** is a full-time Environmental Educator at Riverside Park. **Emily Bablitch** is a new full-time Environmental Educator at Washington Park. **Jaime Cano** is the new Visitor Services Specialist at the Menomonee Valley. **Davita Flowers-Shanklin** has two new roles. She is the Volunteer Coordinator at Washington Park as well as our Development Specialist. **Martha Sudermann** is joining us this year as our Lutheran Volunteer Corps intern, serving as a Community Program Educator. **Francis Sullivan** is our new Community Program Assistant. **Alex LaBonte** is an Environmental Educator working at both Riverside Park and Washington Park.

With a larger leadership team, a full staff of brilliant and enthusiastic individuals, and thousands of dedicated and inspiring volunteers, we are well poised for future success! 🌱

Come to our Annual Meeting on November 18th!

It's time to celebrate! Join us on November 18th for our Volunteer Appreciation Party and Annual Meeting as we thank our wonderful volunteers for the tremendous work they do (see page 5 for details). Among those volunteers being recognized are members of the Urban Ecology Center Board of Directors.

We'd like to thank the following directors who have graciously agreed to serve another two-year term: **Monique Charlier, Pete Campbell, Penny Cruse, David Froiland, Dennis Grzezinski, Ed Hammond, Troy Hilliard, Antoine McDuffie, Joshua Morby, Jim Schleif, Jeff Spence, Daniel Van Housen** and **Mary Witte**.

We would also like to recognize the following new Directors: **Joseph Brooks, David Carr, Tony Haning, Rebecca Mitich, Kate Nelson, Callan Schoonenberg** and **Judge Derek Mosley**. All Center members in attendance can vote to approve these new Directors.

We would like to recognize the following Directors who are leaving the Board: **Jennifer Bolger-Breceda** and **Molly Schissler**. The entire Urban Ecology Center family thanks you for your service, dedication and wisdom.

One of the purposes of this year's Annual Meeting is for the members to consider and act on a proposed amendment to the Urban Ecology Center's Restated Articles of Incorporation. As part of an effort to provide opportunities to engage and activate our members in a more meaningful way, last month the Board of Directors recommended a new system to elect our Directors. If approved and made effective, the amendment would result in the Urban Ecology Center's members no longer being considered "statutory" members under Chapter 181 of the Wisconsin Statutes. This change would, among other things, result in the transition of the responsibility for electing Directors from the members to the Board itself.

The amendment would not impact the Center's student, individual or family membership benefits, as described in our member benefits booklet. Rather, it is recommended within the context of new, more robust and authentic engagement processes for members and constituents.

The recommendation comes on the heels of a renewed focus on the Washington Park, Menomonee Valley and Riverside Park Advisory Committees — three committees of the Board specifically created to engage the voice of our community. These committees are made up of Board, staff and community members at each branch and have the responsibility to solicit and respond to feedback provided through activities such as community listening sessions. For more information read *Let's Be Real: Building Authentic Engagement* on page 1. 🌱



NEWSLETTER

LOCATIONS & HOURS

See page 5 for Holiday Hours

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.

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
tevens@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.

Candlelight Walk

Celebrate the Winter Solstice with a guided candlelit walk through Riverside Park as we listen to poetry and readings of the season. Then warm up inside by the fire while you enjoy cider, snacks and music. Walks begin every fifteen minutes. Registration not required.

(RP) Sat., Dec. 19 | 7 - 9PM

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

Candlelight Walk *for kids*

Enjoy the wonder of a winter night with stories for kids on an easy walk through the woods. Then warm up inside with games and treats. Walks will leave every 15 minutes. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

(RP) Sat., Dec. 19 | 4:30 - 6:30PM

For families | Adults: \$5 (Nonmembers: \$7) Children: \$3 (Nonmembers: \$5)

FSC logo

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IT TAKES A COMMUNITY TO PUT ON A GREAT SUMMER CAMP!

by Matt Flower

WELCOME TO OUR NEW STAFF

COME TO OUR ANNUAL MEETING!

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

Thank You Volunteers!



5,174 people
volunteered during our
2014-2015 fiscal year!