



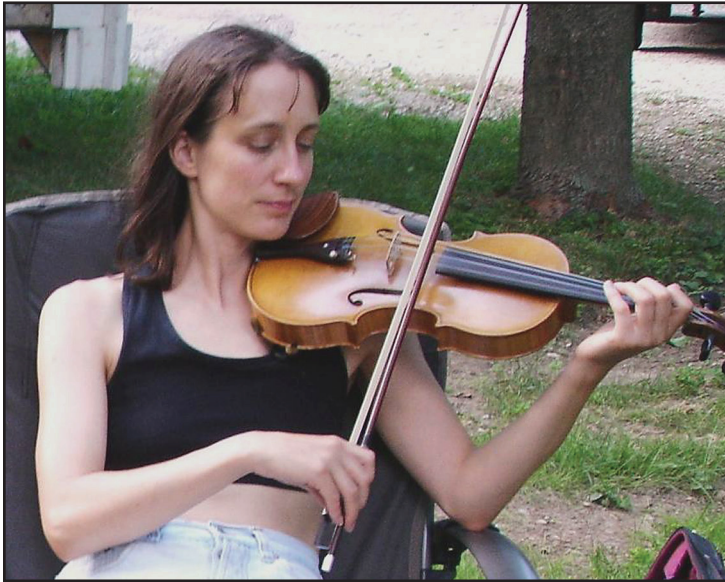
**SIERRA
CLUB**
FOUNDED 1892

GREAT WATERS GROUP NEWSLETTER

WWW.GREATWATERSGROUP.ORG

PHONE 414-258-5624

Winter, 2012 NO. 4



Entertainment for the Holiday Party will be provided by Liisa Church, who will play Irish, Bluegrass and original tunes.

Fun, camaraderie served at annual Holiday Party

Join us for our annual GWG Holiday Party on Sunday, December 2, 2012 at the Wil O Way Recreation Center in Wauwatosa. Enjoy the camaraderie and delight of like-minded folk. Members and non-members are welcome.

Doors open at 4 p.m. with drinks, snacks and a silent auction. We will, as always, have many great auction items. Enjoy a delicious dinner catered by Aladdin Deli at 5:30 p.m. followed by the music of Liisa Church, who will be playing a mixture of Irish, blue grass and original tunes. The cost of this full evening is \$25 per person.

Reservations are due by November 27. If you have any items to donate for the auction or any questions, please call Janet at 414-258-5624. If you can't make this get-together, please consider sending a donation to help us continue our efforts in our four-county area. Details are on our website at www.sc-gwg.org. Because Great Waters Group Sierra Club is not a 501(c)3 organization, donations are not tax-deductible.

(Continued on page 6)

Winter Programs

*Mayfair Mall, Community Room,
Room G110
Garden Suites East
Free and Open to the public.*

There is no program in December as our attentions are focused on our Holiday Party on Sunday, Dec. 2. Please plan to join us for our annual holiday get-together! See article on this page.

There is no program in January.

The Wilderness of Denali

Monday, February 18 7 p.m.

Willie Karidis spent 25 years living in and exploring the wilds of Alaska. In the winter of 2008, Willie spent 61 days in the backcountry of Denali National Park retracing the steps of Charles Sheldon, the founder of Denali who lived in the park 100 years ago. Join us to learn about Denali and how Willie set off to learn all he could about Sheldon and the wilderness but ultimately found true meaning about himself.

Currently, Willie is the Branch Manager of the Urban Ecology Center at Washington Park. Previously, he was the Executive Director of the Denali Education Center, Denali National Park, Alaska.

Join us before the talk at 6:15 for a chili potluck. Chili will be provided, and a vegetarian selection will be available as well. It is appreciated if you are able to bring something to share, but it is not necessary. Reservations aren't required, but contacting Dianne Dagelen at ddagelen@sbcglobal.net or 414-771-1505 two to four days prior helps us plan the food. Side dishes welcome, but not required.

Find us –

The GWG holds its programs at Mayfair Mall on the third Monday of some months in the Community Room on the lower level, Room G110. The room is located in the Garden Suites East area, entered most directly from the covered parking area on the east side of the mall.

From the Chair

By Janet Anderson

By the time you read this, the elections will be over. You voted for conservation and the environment and, regardless of which political party is elected, the conservation of and protection of our natural resources remain critical issues as they're precious, and their supply is finite.

There are actions we as individual citizens can take – that we have the power to do. We can pay attention to our very important environmental issues, particularly state and local ones. We can pay attention to how our legislators are voting – you may have referred to the legislative scorecard in the current Muir View. We can keep in touch with our legislators. We can learn more about energy, the use of fossil fuels and the destruction of our lands in the process, and the renewable alternatives like wind, solar, biomass, and geothermal. Sadly, the US lags significantly behind Europe and Asia in implementing alternative energy sourcing. Closer to home, Wisconsin lags behind its Midwestern neighbors. Where Iowa, Illinois and Minnesota boast

2,500-5,000 MW renewable energy, Wisconsin has only a fraction of that at 470 MW. We can do better.

And there are actions we can take collectively as Sierra Club members. We try to keep you informed about ongoing local issues – at least the ones we know of – the best we can. We can take the time to call or write our legislators, write a letter to the editor of our local papers and attend informational and SC hearings and events. Help us keep our fellow members informed. As the saying goes, “If you aren't part of the solution, you're part of the problem.”

So, turn it around – be part of environmental momentum moving forward for progress, be part of the solution. Let's work together. Our future is in all our own hands – it's our personal responsibility to actively stand up for the best environmental future we can have.

Quetico Park offers canoeing excellence

One of the world's premiere canoeing and camping experiences awaits you at Canada's Quetico Provincial Park where the John Muir and Cascade Chapters are offering a choice of five outings next summer.

For a fraction of an outfitter's price, you can learn the history of the storied International Boundary Waters Wilderness Area while you paddle the same waterways that voyageurs, trappers and ancient Ojibway traveled. All trips are for a minimum of eight days from put-in to take-out, and crews are limited to a maximum of nine.

No experience is required, but participants must fill out a medical history, indicate canoe experience and sign a liability waiver and then be approved by their trip leader. Forms are available for preview. It's customary for participants to make carpooling arrangements to the outing's starting point. Sierra Club outings insurance does not cover the time prior to or following the outing. Prices include group supplies, park permits and taxes, equipment, food and lodging. Contact trip leaders for additional information about registration, which includes a refundable \$100 deposit.

July 20 - 28, 2013 (9 days, 8 nights)

- Trip Leaders: Mike McQuilkin, 253-219-9208, sumcqu@comcast.net
Scott McQuilkin, 253-988-4394, lo86blazer@aol.com
- Departure Point: Camp Quetico, Atikokan, Ontario
- Optional Meeting Point: International Falls, Minnesota
- Cost: \$600

Traverse the park from north to south and enjoy world-class fishing for bass, walleye, and northern pike.

August 2-11 (9 days, 8 nights)

- Trip Leader: Nancy McDermott 608-238-1421, njmcderm@gmail.com
- Departure point: Moose Lake - Ely, MN
- Cost: \$600

A shorter distance, incorporating double portaging to keep pack weights down. Multi-day base camps with ample fishing opportunities and home-cooked, lightweight meals.

August 9-18 (9 days, 8 nights)

- Trip leader: Jane McMillan, 815-543-2756,
janellemcmillan@sbcglobal.net

- Departure point: Moose Lake - Ely, Minnesota
- Cost: \$600

Pictographs, waterfalls, two layover camps, voyageur history, laser-lit stargazing and excellent fishing.

August 24 - Sept. 2, 2013 (9 days, 8 nights)

- Trip leader: Bill Moore 262-785-9022, environ1@sbcglobal.net
- Departure point: Moose Lake - Ely, MN area.
- Cost: \$600

A choice of a variety of routes featuring Ojibway pictographs, waterfalls and fishing opportunities. Two layover camps.

September 19-22, 2013

- Trip leader: Nancy McDermott 608-238-1421, njmcderm@gmail.com
- Departure point Trego, WI
- Cost: \$125

A leisurely women-only trip covering 35 miles of the National Wild and Scenic Namekagon River in Northern Wisconsin. Limited to six participants.

CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.

Five nominated for Executive Committee

The Nominating Committee, chaired by Bill Moore, along with Camille Faherty and Janet Anderson, presents five nominees for the Executive Committee of the Great Waters Group (GWG) for the 2013-14 term. Because no other nominations were received from the GWG membership, there is one position open that may be filled by appointment at a later time.

Here are the candidates and a brief biographical summary submitted by each.

Ed Anderson

I have been a Sierra Club member since the 1990's. I was Political Chair from 2000 until 2005, and I assumed that position again last year. I have organized and run numerous outings over the last several years. To achieve our environmental goals I think it is important that we work to elect officials who share our values.

Heather Hansen

I am a Milwaukee native. I have a Master of Arts degree in anthropology, and I currently work as a client services specialist. I've been a member of Sierra Club for more than three years, and I was raised by two long-time Club members. I'm a life-long environmentalist whose current passions are sustainability and the impact that our food choices have on the environment, although I truly believe that if we are to minimize the effect of climate change we have to tackle it on all fronts. I am also an avid hiker and camper. For the past two years I've been the Great Waters Group Membership chair, and I look forward to continuing to serve on the Executive Committee.

Gary Hofmeister

I work with fellow chairpersons and SC Great Waters Group members to organize local canoeing, biking and hiking outings and other outdoor pursuits intended for the enjoyment of and education about our local ecology. I joined the GWG in early 2010 and assumed the

role of Outings Chair, and I'm looking forward to an exciting year. I'm an avid outdoorsman, active in canoeing, kayaking, camping, Alpine and Nordic skiing and cycling.

Rosemary Wehnes

I worked for Sierra Club as an organizer for almost 10 years. I previously co-chaired the River Touring Section of the Club's John Muir Chapter, and I'm currently President of the "Friends of Hart Park Foundation." I received a Master's Degree in Urban Planning from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. I live with my husband in Wauwatosa.

Chris Zapf

As a decades-long Sierra Club member I am willing to serve both as secretary and as a member of the Executive Committee for our Great Waters Group. It's always been my belief that in order to protect the environment we need to put people in it through activities like hiking, birding, biking, paddling and skiing. If we care about the special places where we recreate and/or find comfort, we will take the time and energy to protect them. The Sierra Club has always provided great opportunity and nurturance to express this belief and need.

Instructions: Your ballot for the volunteer Executive Committee elections for 2013-2014 is included in this newsletter.

* To vote, enter your Sierra Club membership number in the space provided on the ballot and then mark your vote for up to five candidates running for two-year terms.

* If you do not know your membership number, it is located at the top-right of the mailing label on your GWG newsletter. The membership number will not be used to identify you, but is needed to authenticate the ballot.

* Any ballot without a valid membership number or with more than five total votes (or ten (10) total votes for joint memberships) cannot be counted.

* Please mark your votes on the ballot, cut along the dotted line and mail the ballot to the address below. Ballots must be postmarked by December 31, 2012.

* For those of you receiving this notice by email, please print the ballot page, fill out as indicated above, and mail to: GWG Election Committee, PO Box 26798, Wauwatosa, WI 53226-0798.

Official Ballot: 2013-2014 GWG Executive Committee Election

Voter #1 SC Membership Number _____ Voter #2 SC membership Number _____
(for joint memberships)

Mark an X on the line next to your selections. Each member may vote for only/up to 5 candidates.

Voter #1 ___Ed Anderson ___Heather Hansen ___Gary Hofmeister ___Rosemary Wehnes ___Chris Zapf

Voter #2 ___Ed Anderson ___Heather Hansen ___Gary Hofmeister ___Rosemary Wehnes ___Chris Zapf

Mail completed ballot to: SC Great Waters Group Election Committee
PO Box 26798
Wauwatosa, WI 53226-0798

Power plant permit comments solicited

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources was seeking comments for a proposed wastewater discharge permit for the We Energies' Menomonee Valley power plant at a public hearing set for Nov. 14. The hearing was scheduled from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at 2300 N. Martin Luther King Drive where secure parking is available.

For the last 20 years, the Valley plant has been operating on its old permit, which requires only antiquated technology that is not in compliance with new laws, regulations or science. Valley's WPDES permit is one of the oldest expired water permits in the country, last being issued in 1987 and expiring in 1992. We Energies is requesting a five-year pass on current regulations.

The plant discharges 122 million gallons of heated cooling water per day into the south canal of the Menomonee River. It also withdraws up to 160 million gallons of water per day to cool the plant, killing an estimated one million fish per year in the process. And that doesn't include eggs and larvae. Temperatures over 95 degrees this summer increased phos-



Last summer's heat wave combined with the thermal discharge from We Energies' Menomonee Valley power plant to create a damaging algae bloom..

phorus, while drought caused algae and duckweed growths.

Given the extremely long wait for this permit, we are surprised by its failure to incorporate new thermal and phosphorus regulations. Let the DNR know about our concerns.

Make your voice heard on power line proposals

The Public Service Commission will be holding public hearings on proposed power lines running to a new We Energies County Grounds substation on Nov. 27. This is your chance to voice your concerns about the environmental impact of possible overhead lines while learning about this important issue. The hearings are scheduled for 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. at the

We Energies switching from coal at Valley plant

In a major victory for the Sierra Club and other members of the Cleaner Valley Coalition, We Energies announced plans on Aug. 17 to eliminate coal as the energy source for providing steam and electricity from its Menomonee Valley plant.

At a follow-up meeting at the Spanish Center, We Energies staff provided a detailed time line for both the laying of larger gas pipes beginning in 2013 and the conversion of the plant to burn natural gas by 2016. At the Coalition's request, the company made a commitment to use local workers in the construction process and promised to remove coal piles and coal ash.

Congratulations to the Coalition on its successful two year struggle to promote environmental justice while protecting hearts and lungs from particle pollution in the Menomonee Valley. Its next focus will be on the coal plant in Wauwatosa.

Wauwatosa Common Council chambers at 7725 W. North Ave.

Among the routes proposed by American Transmission Co. (ATC) are overhead lines going through Underwood Creek Parkway and the County Grounds, cutting an 80-foot swath of trees in its path. Preserve Our Parkways and People Friendly Power, the City of Wauwatosa and Milwaukee County all support underground lines at Walnut St. and Wauwatown Plank Rd.

You can be an effective voice for habitat protection by telling the PSC how transmission lines will affect you personally. Refer to the Spring 2012 Newsletter article at <http://sc-gwg.org/about-the-sierra-club/group-newsletters.html> for more information.

The PSC does not accept email or faxed comments, but you can submit Web comments until Nov 26 by going to "psc.wi.gov" and clicking on the "Public Comment" button on side menu bar. Click on "File a Comment" for docket # 5-CE-139. Or mail your comment to: PSC at PO Box 7854 in Madison, WI 53707. Identify the docket number on the envelope and on the enclosed comment. Spoken and written comments will be accepted at either of the Nov. 27 meetings. See ATC's routes at: <http://www.preserveourparkway.com/#proposed>

Renewable energy saves on costs

By John Bahr

Much has been said in recent political discussions about the cost of energy. Some claim that we can't afford renewable energy because it cost more than that generated from fossil fuels like coal, oil and natural gas.

When we look at the cost of electric energy, it is much more than the cost of generation. That's the direct cost. It's a lot more complicated than that. We also have to consider the health and environmental costs.

Most of us are aware of the environmental cost of burning fossil fuels. Coal-burning power plants produce one-third of all the carbon dioxide in our atmosphere. Climate change, which is directly related to carbon dioxide and other global warming gases in the atmosphere, is a well-documented problem.

The ice caps and glaciers are melting, the oceans are rising, and extreme weather is becoming more common. Some regions are seeing more major storms, flooding or drought. Plant and animal species are moving north out of familiar regions and into new ones, requiring changes in our food production practices. These changes result from human actions on top of regular natural cycles.

Each year we get closer to a "tipping point" where we can no longer stop the build-up of greenhouse gases resulting from human action. These buildups feed upon themselves. As the oceans and northern frozen tundra continue to warm, they will begin to release increasing amounts of long stored carbon dioxide and methane into the atmosphere. As more of these gasses are released, the process is accelerated.

As the permanent ice sheets melt, heat-reflecting ice is replaced by heat-absorbing rock and soil, increasing the rate of ice melt. At some point, there will be nothing we can do to stop global warming.

Waukesha water agreement sidelined again

By Nicole Bukowiec, JMC Intern

After months of debate, the City of Waukesha believed it had reached an agreement to purchase Lake Michigan water from the City of Oak Creek, but a ruling from the Public Service Commission has at least temporarily derailed a deal that would entail \$183 million in construction projects.

The PSC has ordered a shift of \$376,000 in costs of service from the community of Franklin to a retail base made up of Oak Creek residents and businesses. Oak Creek is challenging the PSC ruling in court, and Water and Sewer Utility General Winter



Hikers make the most of gorgeous fall weather at the Lion's Den Gorge Nature Preserve.

Hikers enjoy happy trails

A total of 21 people enjoyed a beautiful sunny fall weekend on two separate hikes, both led by Janet Anderson. A visit to the West Bend segment of the Ice Age Trail at the Glacial Blue Hills Area gave us a first-hand view of the gorgeous glacial geology that predominates in Washington County. Hiking along eskers and viewing kettles in the woodland valley is the best way to learn.

A second hike the next day brought us to the Lion's Den Gorge Nature Preserve where we walked through a deep, wooded ravine and learned about its wetlands, bluffs and woods.

Then there are the health problems. Burning coal releases 40% of the mercury that poisons our lakes and enters our food chain. It also releases large amounts of sulfur and nitrogen that cause acid rain and the resulting environmental damage. The American Lung Association reports that particulate matter pollution from burning coal kills approximately 13,000 people per year.

So, when you hear people say, "We can't afford to use renewable energy in place of 'less expensive' fossil fuels, tell them we can't afford not to.

Manager Steve Yttri is refusing to sign the agreement pending the results of that challenge.

The PSC order would require Oak Creek to subsidize the costs of delivering water to Franklin, and Oak Creek has declined to add Waukesha to its service area until the court case is resolved.

Waukesha is under a court order to find a new water source by 2018 because its ground water is rapidly depleting and contains more than three times the safe federal limits of radium. It had also negotiated with Racine and Milwaukee to buy Lake Michigan water, but talks with Milwaukee broke down.



**Protect America's Environment
for Our Families, For Our Future**

*Great Waters Group of the John Muir Chapter
P.O. Box 26798
Wauwatosa, WI 53226-0798*

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Snowshoe trek scheduled for January 26th

“Over the ground lies a mantle of white....” well, you know the rest. Come join us in the winter wonderland for a snowshoe trek. Don't have your own snowshoes? We can offer some suggestions.

We usually snowshoe hike on the Ice Age Trail at a DNR station, though it depends on snow conditions. We gear our snowshoe hike to the beginner to intermediate level. Remember, it's just hiking in the snow! Join us afterward for a potluck featuring chili and a hot beverage. If there's no snow, we will hike or will look for another trail.

Date: Saturday, January 26, 2013

Time: Starts at 10am. Allow 2-3 hours

Leader: Janet Anderson at 414-258-5624 or janeta16@sbcglobal.net.

Location: To be determined, depending on snow. Call or email Janet for further details and finalized location and to sign up.



Thank you to everyone who contributed through workplace giving to the Sierra Club Foundation and Community Shares of Greater Milwaukee.

Volunteer Leadership Council (VLC)

Janet Anderson, GWG Chair: 414-258-5624
Heather Hansen, Vice Chair & Membership: 812-360-0652
Dianne Dagelen, Conservation Chair: 414-771-1505
John Bahr, Energy Chair: 414-256-0932
Gary Hofmeister, Outings Chair: 262-821-1088
Camile Faherty, Treasurer: 414-529-1826
Chris Zapf, Secretary: 262-786-9584
Rosemary Wehnes, Delegate to JMC: 414-453-1689
Ed Anderson, Political Chair: 414-962-6077
Sandy and Dale Hofmann, Newsletter Editors: 414-476-8636

Holiday Party . . .

(Continued from page 1)

We're looking forward to seeing you on Dec. 2. Reserve your place now.

Location: Underwood Wil O Way Recreation Center, 10602 W. Underwood Creek Parkway, Wauwatosa (located across from Hansen Golf Course - up the hill and into the woods)

When: Doors open at 4 p.m.; dinner at 5:30 p.m.

Check: Checks should be made payable to “Great Waters Group-SC” and sent to:

Heather Hansen
2520A N 64th Street
Wauwatosa, WI 53213