

# May/Aug 2014



## Newsletter of the Chippewa Valley Group

WISCONSIN.SIERRACLUB.ORG/CHIPPEWA

May

Monthly Meeting Big Water Bikers

## 14 Migratory Bird Day



### **30** Powell Lake Hike

# June1SIERRA CENTURY



- 18 Solstice Paddle & Bike
- 19-28 Blue Hills Trail Building

July 19 Photography Workshop May Monthly Meeting Big Water Bikers' Big Tour Wednesday, May 7, 7:30 PM Room 117 Phillips Science Hall UW-Eau Claire

## BIG WATER BIKERS RESCHEDULED TO OUR MAY 7 2014 MEETING

## PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE FOR THIS MEETING

This program, originally scheduled for our December 2013 monthly meeting, had to be postponed at that time due to impossible weather-related driving conditions for the presenters.

On May 1, 2012 two adventurers, **Kris McNeal** and **Zach Chase**, hit the saddle and began their documented journey around the Great Lakes of North America. Together they spent 97 days bicycling 5,521 miles on a journey that took them through 2 countries, 8 states, and over 20 major cities. As they undertook this epic journey the team filmed with High Definition cameras to document our experiences.

This expedition was born from their discovery of bicycle touring and love for the Great Lakes region. It was their wish to put all of their efforts into getting a first hand and intimate look into discovering the importance of this amazing region. With the experiences they documented, they were planning to create an educational adventure film capturing the importance of the Great Lakes in order to create a bond with those living near and beyond the scope of the Great Lakes, a region holding 1/5 of the world's fresh surface water. This feature documentary will be the first to capture the Great Lakes region by bicycle, showing our interactions with the Great Lakes, its communities, and the incredible landscape that surrounds them. **www.bigwaterbike.com** 

Our Chippewa Valley Group was a co-sponsor of the Big Water Bikers, following up on a suggestion of **Steve Scoll**'s at an ExCom meeting. Thanks, Steve. and thanks to **Jeremy Gragert** and **Paul Hoff** for arrangements.



We'll again gather before the meeting at **Stella Blue's** at 5:30 for a quick meal and chat with our speakers!



## What is the Chippewa Valley Transit Alliance?

Jeremy Gragert, Conservation Chair

The Chippewa Valley Transit Alliance (CVTA) is a non profit organization based in Eau Claire, Wisconsin that works to create a united voice for bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit riders in the Chippewa Valley region, with representation on its board from Eau Claire, Dunn, and Chippewa counties.

Founded in 2011, CVTA works with city and county governments and community organizations to improve access to safe, affordable, and environmentally sustainable transportation options locally. On the state and federal level, CVTA works to build support for stable funding and sound policies that advance a multimodal approach to transportation. CVTA believes that everyone, regardless of the age, income, or ability, should have access to transportation that also respects our environment.

CVTA is leading efforts to create an urban bicycle map for Eau Claire, Altoona and Chippewa Falls, and is working to expand and improve public transit services within and between the communities of the region, including connections to major cities throughout Upper Midwest. CVTA works with the West Central Wisconsin Rail Coalition to eventually bring passenger train service back to Eau Claire. CVTA has a strong interest in reaching out and being connected with communities, large and small, throughout the Chippewa Valley. As a board member, I am always interested in learning about local needs and opportunities for us to help local advocates improve transportation in their communities, whether that be with building a bicycle trail, making a pedestrian crossing of a street safer, or creating a bus connection.

To contact the Chippewa Valley Transit Alliance (CVTA), email: chippewavalleytransitalliance@gmail. com

Address:

Chippewa Valley Transit Alliance, Inc.,



P.O. Box 524, Eau Claire, WI 54702 www.chippewavalleytransitalliance.com

## Overpopulation no Problem? Paul Ebel

Human overpopulation of the earth appears difficult for many people to believe is a problem.. Recently, in conversations with a number of highly educated individuals, I realized that often people are resistant to the idea that the earth is overpopulated. Many believe that the earth could easily hold 2-3 times as many people, and feel that much of world poverty and starvation are just resource distribution problems. But such views turn out to be simplistic and inaccurate. On closer examination, we find many environmental issues are generated by high human densities. Some of these include:

Inadequate fresh water supplies Deforestation; loss of ecosystems Global warming Mass extinctions Overcrowded starvation and epidemics Warfare for diminishing resources Loss of personal freedoms Depletion of croplands



These and more problems connected to high human populations can be found in a very informative entry: '*Human Overpopulation*' in Wikipedia online. This article is loaded with information about how overpopulation is negatively affecting the world.

#### What Happens to Closed Coalburning Power Plants? Bill Bean

The Beyond Coal campaign of the national Sierra Club has resulted in the closing of many electricity-generating plants and the delay or prevention of new plants. Tougher pollution laws and cheaper natural gas from fracking have also caused a shift in power generation. But an article in the (Hammond, IN) Times newspaper of November 28, 2013, indicates the fight for clean air and water may not end with the closing of a coal-fired facility. A closed power plant located on Lake Michigan at the Illinois-Indiana border was sold to a company which is storing an oil refinery byproduct known as "petcoke" at another property it owns. The company is facing lawsuits over the storage of huge exposed piles of petcoke near the Calumet River, a tributary of Lake Michigan. If they use the newly acquired property to store more of the petcoke the chances of rain runoff or wind carrying the product into the lake will be even greater.



Petroleum Coke (Wikipedia)

The BP oil refinery in Whiting, Indiana has been the source of the petcoke and it is expecting to triple the output of that material as more Canadian tar sands oil is brought into the area by pipelines. Eventually the petcoke is exported for use as a coal substitute in countries with lower environmental standards. Will it contaminate Lake Michigan as a source of drinking water and ruin a great place for recreation? As a former resident of the area, I hope not.

EXCOM ELECTION RESULTS Elected for 2-year terms at our March 2014 meeting were Paul Ebel Margo Miller Jane Schley

### **Events - Paul Ebel**

## May 14/Wed 8 am-8 pm Welcome Back Bird Day

In celebration of International Migratory Bird Day on Wednesday, May 14, come witness the return of songbirds to Wisconsin from their wintering grounds in the tropics. Join expert birders from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at five sites across the City of Eau Claire to view migrant birds and learn about their incredible northward journey. Binoculars, a spotting scope, and bird guides will be available at each site. Participants will be working toward a citywide goal of spotting 100 species of migrant and resident birds. All ages are welcome! You can visit any or all of the sites which include Braun's Bay at Carson Park, Owen Park near the bandshell, Little Niagara along the Chippewa River on the UWEC Campus, Truax Prairie at Kane Road and 10th Avenue (near Menards HQ), and the Dells Pond Overlook at the end of Ruby Lane (just off Riverview Drive).

The event is part of the First Annual Eau Claire Welcome Back Bird Day, sponsored by the Gaylord Nelson Audubon Society, Bird City Wisconsin, and Wisconsin DNR. You can find additional information at gaylordnelsonaudubon.org. -Jeff Henry



## May 30/Fri 8-10 am Birds and Blooms -Powell Lake

Hike and explore the Powell Lake property, a parcel within the Lower Chippewa River State Natural Area. We will visit floodplain forest, emergent wetland, and dry mesic prairie. We'll stop to identify bird, plant, and insect species, and hear a discussion of DNR management strategies. The property was the site of an LCRA workday; so volunteers will have a chance to see the fruits of their labor. Location: 1010th St./Fuller Rd. (Dunn - Eau Claire County line). Map: goo.gl/maps/7ZuK7. Meet at the dead end. 8-10 AM. Bring field guides, camera, snacks, water bottle. Bill Hogseth, DNR biologist, will

## <u>June 1/Sun 7-10 am</u> Sierra Century Bicycle Tour

lead.

Sierra Century Bicycle Tour • Sunday, June 1, 7-10 AM. Fully supported, 12, 30, 60, 80, or 100 miles bike ride. Start and end at Beaver Creek Reserve's Wise Nature Center. Choose your own pace; sag wagon support. Four rest stops with food and beverage. Meal available on return to Beaver Creek. Registration \$20 by May 24, or \$25 up to the day of the ride. Age 16 and below \$8. Commemorative T-shirts will be available for \$12. See registration form and info at wisconsin.sierraclub.org/chippewa/ century.htm. The proceeds from the event go toward environmental education grants to area schools. For more information, or to volunteer, please contact: Steve Scoll: stevescoll@gmail.com 715-556-1891.



### June 18/Wed Solstice Paddle & Bike Ride

(Rain Date Thursday, June 19) Meeting location and time to be determined. For information, contact:**Renee Ebel:** 715-379-0933 or **reneespfe@gmail.com** (paddle) **Scott Kmetz:** 715-864-5440 or **mjskmetz@charter.net** (bike)

## <u>June 19-28/Thur-Sat</u> Rejuvenate Ice Age Trail in the Blue Hills

A mix of trail building and rejuvenation is ongoing during this extended period in the Blue Hills: bridges, boardwalks, signage, mowing, tread work. Come for a day, or come as long as you want; camp at Murphy Flowage. Register at http://mobileskills. iceagetrail.org/blue-hills-hemlock-creeksegments.

#### July 19/Saturday 10 am Photographic Workshop

Lake Wissota State Park. Meet at the entry parking lot at 10 AM. We will explore nature and landscape photography in film and digital methods. Additional activities can include a hike and a bike ride. Paul Ebel: 651-335-8759 or **paulebel44@yahoo.com**; Caryn Treiber: 715-684-9374 or **ctreiber@discover-net.net** 

### **Beaver Creek Reserve Events**

www.beavercreekreserve.org Click <u>View all events</u>

**Bird Hikes** May 3, 10, 17 6:30 AM **Phenology for Elders** May 15, June 6 9:30 AM **Wildflower Walk** May 8 9 AM **All About Dragonflies** June 11 9 AM

Ice Age Trail Events iatchippewa.org

**Chippewa Moraine Sunday Hikes** May 4 , Jun 1, Aug 3 **Trail Improvement Days** May 17, June 14, Aug 23-Richard Smith Email: **chapter@iatchippewa.org** Phone: 715-967-2164

## Do You EXCEL?? Be our Group Treasurer!

We **still** need a volunteer to replace Eleanor Wolf.

Some computer skill with spreadsheets such as Excel will be helpful for you as her successor, but if you are a computer user, help will be available for you in learning the current Sierra report format which is Excel. This can be both a valuable learning and a service experience for you! You do not have to be one of the seven ExCom members to be Treasurer! Contact Eleanor at **715-835-4829** for more information about this vital job within Sierra Club!

Become more active in our great Club!





#### Welcome, New Members! February & March 2014

Augusta David Watson, Martin Loftsgordon Chetek Dale Lehner Chippewa Falls Vivian Dahl, Greta Anderson, Terrence Halfen, Helena Irene Pruzek, Jackie Schult, Jonnie Turner Conrath Gary Tepler Cornell David F and Bonnie S Barry Durand Mr/Mrs Harold C Bauer, Kathy Brunner Eau Claire Tim Coburn, Ruth Waller, Bonnie Golden, Margaret Bielecki, Carol Patterson, Thomas Kernan, Kathleen Nelson, Erin Brantner, Bhenni Johnson, Dean Johnson, R E Mitchell, Joanne Stange Fairchild Esther Henzl Fall Creek Kevin and Rosemary Lynch, Mark H and Karen G Wise Hawkins Kathy Kudu Knapp Cynthia Brinkman Ladysmith Nancy Bricco Menomonie Jerry Wickman, Paula Feigal, James Daine Mondovi Mike Koch. Morden Randen New Auburn Jackie Moos Osseo Katherine Smith Pepin Gary Johnson, Lynn Peterso Prairie Farm Katherine Seidell Rice Lake Ruth Weber, Ronald G Berg, Dale and Carole Crisler, Debbie Johnson Turtle Lake Matthew Widell, James Perala

## Local Birding

A "West Side with Rich Kremer" program on WPR's 88.3 FM, which aired 4/14/2014, dealt with current birder activities in our area and featured interviews with **Bill Hogseth** and author **Steve Betchkal.** A local affiliation with Audubon is in the making. There is a birding club at BCR. The demise of the Chippewa Wildlife Society was mentioned. The audio of this program can be obtained in the audio archives on the WPR website **wpr.org.** (One way to find it is to type **betchkal** in the search box.)

Jane Schley, who is on our ExCom seems to know good birding spots around our area, as do Jeff and Patty Henry.

### Eau Claire Yard Waste Disposal

Below is from the EC County website: Good tidings and great joy!

#### Yard Waste Directory

NEW FOR 2014! Yard Waste is now accepted at the Jeffers Road site during normal hours of operation on Tuesdays (from 7 am to 10:30 am) and on Saturdays (from 1 pm to 5 pm). Yard waste consisting of leaves, grass clippings, pine needles, and other grassy vegetation will be accepted at the site. A roll-off drop box will be provided to place the items either in paper bags or as loose material. No plastic bags of any kind, pumpkins, gourds, garden produce or other household food waste is being accepted as part of this program. Please be aware that this waste stream is being used in a local composting program and we would like to keep any contamination out.

## Eau Claire County Clean Sweep

This year's Clean Sweep dates are May 10 July 12 Sept 13 Nov 8 8 am to 12 noon at WRR Environmental Services, 5200 Ryder Rd in Eau Claire. Details are in the "Beaver Creek Reserve Recycler" publication for 2014, which was mailed to residents and is online on the EC County website.

#### <u>The Prairie Enthusiasts,</u> <u>Chippewa Savannas Chapter</u> theprairieenthusiasts.csc@gmail.com

The following is part of an e-mail from **Kathy Stahl**, Chapter Chair.

#### Hello Prairie Enthusiasts,

Prairies thrive on prescribed burns and our chapter wants to be ready to accomplish that as skillfully as possible. We depend upon volunteers for conducting the prescribed fires and we need qualified, trained people. That leads to two requests:

(1) For all of you who have experience/ training with prescribed burns, TPE Central is asking that we submit names, training, and experience of those who will be on our burn crews. If you are willing to volunteer to help us with prescribed burns, we would appreciate your sending your name, email address, and phone number to Kathy Ruggles (kathyaruggles@gmail.com) or Mark Leach (mkleach@merr.com). They will contact you to complete the information needed by TPE Central. Please send your name to Kathy or Mark by May 1st. (2) To develop more burn crew members, Kathy Ruggles, Mark Leach and John Thomas will be conducting a Basic Crew Member Training on May 10th starting at 9 and going to 5. The training will be held at Simply Dunn in Downsville and there will be a charge of \$10 for TPE members and \$20 for nonmembers. You need to be 18 years of age to take the course or 16 years old with parental authorization. In the classroom, they will cover the basics of fire behavior and management. There will be hands-on experience with tools. If the weather conditions are suitable, you will also have experience with using those tools to ignite and extinguish a grass fire. It is important that you wear suitable clothing and footwear for burning: natural fiber clothing (cotton, or wool, not polyester) and leather boots. A bandana can be helpful for smoke control. And bring a bag lunch for the noon break. To register for the basic crew member training, please contact Kathy Ruggles at kathyaruggles@gmail.com by May1st.

## **Chippewa Valley Paddlers**

(The following is from the CVPaddlers webpage, found at **groups.yahoo.com.** Also note the River Touring Section of our John Muir Chapter offers tours and instruction —see their current schedule in your April-June 2014 issue of *The Muir View*)

"Chippewa Valley Paddlers is a group that originated in 1985. Members have changed over the years, but several original members are still paddling with the group. Many members also enjoy other outdoor activities such as biking, hiking, and skiing. We are a very active group and enjoy the outdoors. We invite you to join us."

May 17 Yellow River paddle Donna & Steve May 31 Jump River paddle Jim & Sue June 7 Totogatic River paddle Jim C. June 18 Solstice paddle & bike Renee & Rosemary June 28 Chippewa River paddle Odielia July 10 Brat Feed Kris & Penny July 12 Three rivers paddle Anne St. Croix, Totogatic, Namekagon July 26 Hay River paddle Jenny Aug 2 Namekagon River paddle Kris Aug 17 Flambeau River paddle Kris Sept 6 Bois Brule River paddle ??? OR 13 Looking for volunteer



### **Chair's Notes**

Caryn Treiber, CV Group Chair

#### **Conservation Congress**

A press release from the WI Sierra Club with the final voting tabulations on resolutions introduced at the statewide Conservation Congress April 14th showed overwhelming majorities opposing the proposed taconite mine in northern WI, supporting the repeal of the 2013 Act 1 new mining, and directing the DNR to establish stronger air standards for frac sand mining to protect public health. Each of these resolutions was approved by nearly or greater than a 2 to 1 margin. The DNR tabulation of results can be found at

#### dnr.wi.gov/About/WCC/springhearing.html

#### Earth Green Award Dinner

The April 15th annual Gaylord Nelson Memorial Earthgreen Award dinner was a great gathering of community conservationists enjoying lively dialogues and an excellent presentation on food production given by our awardee Andrew Werthmann, an Eau Claire city councilman and environmental activist. Thanks to Eleanor Wolf for organizing the event and to her and all the others who cooked and served the food and wine, and to Bob St.Louis for setting up the visual technology!

#### **Beehive Collective**

April 29th was the Beehive Collective's presentation on the formation and extraordinary uniqueness of local ecology, and hopeful protections of it from destruction from frac sand mining and sulfide mining. The group's visuals were amazing wallsized graphics that took years in their making. Thanks to Jeremy Gragert for organizing their appearance here and having our CV Group co-sponsor their presentation.



James Hanke from Xcel Energy gave our March program at North Star Middle School

Photo: Jeremy Gragert

# Earth Green Award Dinner 2014



Andrew Werthmann and Caryn Treiber



Andrew discussed farming practices in his presentation

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## **Registration Fee Includes**

 Bean burritos, lemonade, and ice cream at the the Nature Center until 5 p.m.

- · Detailed map and cue sheet
- Food and drink at 4 rest-stops

 Support vehicles throughout the ride to ensure that all riders return by 5 p.m.

## Liability Waiver

Before beginning the ride, each participant must sign the liability waiver below.

## Safety

The Sierra Century

Protective headgear is required for all participants. Children under 16 must be accompanied by a responsible adult over 21. All traffic regulations must be observed.

For More Information Call: 715 556-1891 Email: stevescoll@gmail.com Web: wisconsin.sierraclub.org/chippewa/ century.htm

## Liability Waiver

I, the undersigned, know that bicycling is a sport carrying significant risk of personal injury. I know there are obstacles, hazards, environmental conditions, and risks which in combination with my actions can cause me severe injury. I agree to take an active role in understanding and accepting these risks. I also agree that I, not the Sierra Club and/or its staff, volunteers, and sponsors, am responsible for my safety while I participate or train for the Sierra Century. I hereby waive, release, and dismiss all claims for damage and personal injury which I may incur before, during, or after the above named event, against any and all ride officials, persons, or organizations involved with the Sierra Century. While bicycling in this event, I agree to wear a helmet and obey all traffic laws.

## Sierra Club

c/o Bob St. Louis 3352 Fear St Eau Claire, WI 54701

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Chair	Caryn Treiber*	N9021 590th St Colfax WI 54730	684-9374
Vice Chair	Margo Miller*	221 Washington St Eau Claire WI 54701	835-4549
Treasurer	Eleanor Wolf	1810 Birch St Eau Claire WI 54703	835-4829
Political/JMC Del.	Caryn Treiber*	N9021 590th St Colfax WI 54730	632-2055
Events/Earthgreen	Paul Ebel*	P.O. Box 141 Menomonie WI 54751	651-335-8759
Programs	Paul Hoff*	2519 Keith St Eau Claire WI 54701	834-5418
Conservation, Sec'y	Jeremy Gragert*	451 Lincoln Ave Eau Claire WI 54701	612-220-1970
JMC ExCom at-large	Jane Schley*	1414 Emery St, Eau Claire, WI 54701	834-2864
Programs	Donna Martin	20279 77th Ave Chippewa Falls WI 54729	720-8890
Newsletter/Web Pg	Bob St. Louis	3352 Fear St Eau Claire WI 54701	834-3774
John Muir Chapter	Shahla Werner	222 S Hamilton St, Suite 1 Madison WI 53703	608-256-0565
Membership	Patty Henry	2014 Ruby Ln Eau Claire WI 54703	832-1387
Ice Age Tr/Publicity	Richard Smith	27200 145th St New Auburn WI 54757	967-2164
Population	Paul Ebel*	P.O. Box 141 Menomonie WI 54751	651-335-8759
Calendar Sales	Dave Rice	1415 Highland Ave Eau Claire WI 54701	835-3490
Sierra Century Ride	Steve Scoll*	N12096 730th St Wheeler WI 54772	556-1891