



**GREAT WATERS GROUP
NEWSLETTER**

WWW.GREATWATERSGROUP.ORG PHONE 414-258-5624

Summer, 2013 NO. 2

Earth Day party gets record crowd

By Dianne Dagenen, Conservation Chair

Sacred Water and Sound Transit were the focal points for the record 143 people who attended this year’s GWG Earth Day Celebration at the new Menomonee Valley Urban Ecology Center on April 19. The opening eco-puppet pageant demonstrated the event’s twin environmental themes with large scale Bad River trout and wild rice plants displayed alongside a small scale Milwaukee bus.

Native American social justice advocate Bonnie Mayer educated her audience about the environmental and cultural damage posed by the proposed sulfide-based iron ore mining in the Penokee Hills and the Bad River watershed. Drinking water, fishing and wild rice harvests will all be impacted.

Cheryl Nenn of Milwaukee Riverkeeper followed with an informative report on water quality improvements while pointing to rivers that still need attention. And Dale Olen engaged children on stage with a participatory water drama, “Hear the Storm; Feel the Rain.” The audience played along, snapping fingers, patting laps and then clapping hands to simulate drizzle, showers and an eventual thunderstorm.

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Dale Olen led kids through a spirited water drama called “Hear the Storm; Feel the Rain” at the GWG Earth Day celebration.

Summer Programs

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

Grand Canyon Adventure

Monday, May 20, 7 p.m.

Private river trips through the Grand Canyon are controlled by an annual lottery. A group of Wisconsin boaters was lucky enough to obtain a permit and paddle the Colorado River through the canyon in March of 2012. Fifteen people were on the river for 20 days. In addition to showing photos of the canyon, river and

whitewater, presenter and GWG member Dave Wehnes will lead a discussion, and we will learn about the geology of the canyon as well as some of the water management issues. Wehnes is an avid sailor, who began kayaking with the JMC River Touring Section in the early 1970’s.

Programs takes a summer vacation in June, July, and August and will resume in September.

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.

You can help fight alarming Monarch migration decrease

By Dianne Dagelen, Conservation Chair

Several programs are available this summer where conservation minded people in the Milwaukee area can learn how to combat an alarming drop in monarch butterfly migration.

In a March 14 New York Times story, Michael Wines reported that the area of forest in Michoacan, Mexico, occupied by the butterflies had dwindled from as many as 50 acres to 2.94 acres in the annual census conducted in December, 2012. That was a 59% drop from the 7.14 acres measured in December of 2011. The decline was hastened when last summer's drought and record-breaking heat disrupted normal reproductive patterns.

In addition, critical feeding grounds in the American Midwest corn belt have been lost as farmers have used herbicide-tolerant crops to wipe out milkweed that formerly grew between the rows of millions of acres of soybean and corn, according to Chip Taylor, director of the conservation group Monarch Watch at the University of Kansas. "That habitat is virtually gone," Taylor said. "We've lost well over 120 million acres and probably closer to 150 million acres."

But you can help. Here are some of the ways you can support Milwaukee County's monarch migration:

A Sunday Teasel Task Force work group will be conducted throughout the summer beginning in mid-June. Exact dates and times will be posted at themonarchtrail.org. The group will plant and continue to water 500 to 600 plugs. Water tankers will be placed on site.

A milkweed sale will be held from noon to 3 p.m on Sunday June 23 at Hanson Parkway off Swan Blvd in Wauwatosa.

A Milwaukee planting party is scheduled for Sunday July 7 from noon to 3 p.m. This is a good activity for families and children. Rain date is July 14.

A Moon Party/Migration kick-off featuring music, kites, drummers and a dance group is set for Saturday, August 24 at a location to be determined. Overpass Light Brigade has offered to "light up" a message. Rain date is Aug. 25.



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



Joining the festivities at the John Muir Chapter's 50th anniversary celebration were (from left) Dianne Dagelen, Chris Zapf, Cheri Briscoe, Janet Anderson, Allen Becker, Bill Moore and Rosemary Wehnes.

GWG members travel to Muir anniversary

By Janet Anderson

April brought not only Earth Day, but the 50th anniversary celebration of our state John Muir Chapter of the Sierra Club. More than a dozen GWG members carpooled to Madison on April 20 to join the festivities while discussing the Club's future and learning about its many successes.

GWG was a sponsoring entity for the festivities, which included a luncheon, an evening event at the LEED-certified UW Wisconsin Institute for Discovery, and remarks from National Sierra Club Director Michael Brune. Wisconsin's own conservation champion, state legislator and Sierra Club activist Spencer Black, introduced Director Brune. A number of display boards in the lobby offered information on the history of the Muir Chapter, current environmental issues and people and activities in each of the various groups throughout the state.

Among the state and local political leaders on hand were State Representative and SC member Penny Bernard Schaber, Dane County Executive Joe Parisi, former Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk, State Senator Mark Miller and Congressman Mark Pocan.

GWG members in attendance included Dianne Dagelen, Chris Zapf, Cheri Briscoe, Janet Anderson, Allen Becker, Bill Moore, Dave and Rosemary Wehnes, Dennis Grzezinski, Sue Sedlachek, Marilyn Vohs, Tom Briscoe, Bill and Ann Schultheis and Ed and Mary Kay Anderson.



Young explorers like Damien Finnegan will learn about the wonders to be found in ponds at a June 8 outing at the Milwaukee County Grounds.

County Grounds pond holds hidden treasures

Experience the fun of discovery with children and explore hidden treasures when you bring your kids and/or grandkids to a June 8 outing from 10 a.m. to 11:30 at the Milwaukee County Grounds. Meet at the middle pond across from Wisconsin Lutheran College at 89th St. and Wisconsin Ave. and learn about habitat in your own backyard while getting to know other families that value the preservation of local fields and ponds.

Here's a chance to spot the tadpoles, learn about the metamorphosis of bull frogs while listening to them croak, and feed some nearby dried berries to the fish. Wear your galoshes, and bring a fishing net if you have one. Contact Conservation Chair Dianne Dagelen at diannedagelen@yahoo.com, 414-771-1505.

It's free and open to the public.

Kudos in Valley, challenge in Wauwatosa

By Dianne Dagelen, Conservation Chair

The Great Waters Group, along with other members of the Cleaner Valley Coalition, applaud We Energies' April 30 decision to file a plan with state regulators to complete conversion of its Menomonee Valley power plant from coal to natural gas by late 2015.

Our coalition of environmental, public health, civil rights, interfaith and community advocacy groups has been pressing the utility since 2010 to stop burning coal at the Valley plant. Our primary concern is for the citizens living near the Menomonee Valley, who tend to be people of color with low incomes. Coal pollution contributes to heart attacks, strokes and respiratory illnesses.

Your donations crucial to important GWG work

The Sierra Club's Great Waters Group works hard to protect Wisconsin's air, water and wild places, and it can only do it with your help. We need your donations to deal with many important environmental issues while improving the sustainability of our cities and promoting the enjoyment of nature.

For **tax-deductible donations** such as education, certain outings and portions of our newsletter, please consider sending a check payable to "Sierra Club Foundation." Write "Great Waters Group" on the memo line. For **non-tax-deductible donations** such as activities, office expenses, lobbying, or similar items, make your check payable to "Great Waters Group-Sierra Club."

Send your donations to: Treasurer, Great Waters Group of Sierra Club, P.O. Box 26798, Wauwatosa, WI 53226-0798.

We are grateful for your support.

In May of 2012, the utility announced that it would be converting the Valley plant. It began by replacing 30,000 feet of gas mains to transport larger gas quantities to the facility. On April 15, We Energies notified the Coalition of its intent to file application with state regulators to install natural gas burners that would replace coal burners for its boilers. The Coalition is committed to working with the utility to create an environmental building design and to include local minority workers for construction.

However, there is another Southeastern Wisconsin coal-burning power plant without modern pollution controls. It is situated in Wauwatosa. It spews particle pollution to vulnerable populations across the street at the regional medical complex that includes the Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, and at the Ronald McDonald House in close proximity. Pollution intensified in November 2012 when the plant's coal caught fire and burned for three days. The run-off from retardant foam used to fight the blaze caused all the fish in a nearby pond on the County Grounds to die.

For the health of area residents and medical patients, it is
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Young artists learn all about nature by making eco-puppets

By Dianne Dagen
Conservation Chair

If you've attended any of our four Earth Day Celebrations, you've seen or participated in an Eco-Puppet Pageant. The "puppets" made of re-cycled products like paper bags, coat hangers or cardboard are large scale environmental facsimiles of things like the moon, Earth, a Monarch butterfly, Asian carp or milkweed. Each year, under master puppet builder, Judy Dubrosky, we add to her original collection with puppets that reflect the current chosen environmental themes.



Jose Atlano completed the Bad River brook trout for GWG's Eco-puppet parade.

This year we reached out to the Young Scientist Club at the Menomonee Valley Urban Ecology Center to involve the children there in learning about nature through puppet-making. Keeping to our themes of "Sacred Water. Sound Transit," we came together on two dif-



Alvaro and Angel Colin worked with the Urban Ecology Center's John Ela.

ferent Saturdays to make a Bad River brook trout and a Milwaukee River rainbow trout, wild rice plants and a Milwaukee bus with passengers. These items were proudly carried by their makers and others at the head of the parade.

Campers will gather at Boulder Junction

Beautiful Boulder Junction where the scenery is spectacular and the bugs are busy in the summertime will be home to GWG hikers, bikers and campers for three days and two nights starting Friday, June 28.

A group led by Chris Zapf will learn the joys of one of Wisconsin's most popular areas for outdoor activity. They'll camp in the Crystal Lake Area of the Northern Highland - American Legion State Forest, enjoying a potluck dinner on Saturday night and taking a hike around the lake on Sunday morning. Bring a swimsuit and a dish to pass. Two campsites are reserved, so space is limited to 12 campers. Contact Chris at 262-786-9584 or e-mail her at zapfchristine@sbcglobal.net for more information or reservation.

143 at Earth Day

(Continued from page 1)

Earth Poet Suzanne Rosenblatt read two of her poems, "The Changes in the Lake" and "Mass Transit Destruction," referring both to troubled waters and sound transportation, while Nick DeMarsh of Milwaukee's Transit Riders Union clarified and illustrated the connections among social, environmental and economic justice in accessing transport.

Rev. Will Brisco, president of MICA (Milwaukee Inner-city Congregations Allied for Hope), closed with an inspirational message urging everyone to take care of Mother Earth and share her resources with their fellow citizens. Music was led by the Singers of Notre Dame Middle School, whose selections included "De Colores." Joan Janus facilitated the Re-cycle art table where adults and children explored ways to make flowers from wallpaper petals. Food was provided by the Congregation of the Great Spirit.

Oz outing to expand nature knowledge

Treasures of Oz 2013 invites you to Ozaukee County on June 15 to visit eight natural treasure sites, some of which are not usually open to the public. After broadening your nature knowledge, you can end your day of adventuring at Celebration Headquarters at Forest Beach Migratory Preserve, just a few minutes north of Port Washington. You'll enjoy good food, down-home music, interesting exhibits and learning about raptors.

Among the guided attractions are the Ozaukee Washington

Land Trust's Forest Beach Migratory Preserve site, the awesome views from the Port Washington Coal Dock, the Cedarburg Bog Boardwalk provided courtesy of the UWM Field Station, the Blue Heron Wildlife Preserve along the Milwaukee River, the enchanting trail at Quarry Lake, the wetlands restorations of the Armin Schwengel Waterfowl Production Area, the Kurtz Woods State Natural Area, and the Shady Lane Natural Area at Hawthorne Hills County Park. The tour will begin at 9 a.m. and end at 3 p.m.



The dunes at Kohler are not only wild and beautiful, but they're dog friendly.

Take man's best friend along to Kohler dunes

Dianne Dagelen, Conservation Chair

Stress got you up a tree? You and your dog can enjoy a spirited stroll on the breathtaking Kohler Dunes Cordwalk while learning about sand dunes and inter-dunal wetlands on June 15. This hike is open to dogs, their owners or anyone who likes dogs but doesn't have one.

We will explore the dunes and beach at the dog-friendly state park located in Sheboygan along Lake Michigan. Carpoolers can meet at 8:30 a.m. at the North Shore Park and Ride on Port Washington Rd. off of Silver Spring and I-43. We will leave at 8:45. To join us in Sheboygan, meet at the north parking lot past the Kohler Andrae Park Office between 9:30 and 9:45 a.m.

We will have lunch on the beach after the hike. Swimsuits are optional. Contact Heather Hansen at heather.lee.hansen@gmail.com (812-360-0652) by June 14 with a head count of people and dogs. All families, friends and dogs are welcome.

Riders to explore urban parks

Cheri Briscoe will be leading a pleasant summer bike ride with a couple of little hills for cardio work and an opportunity to discover beautiful urban park scenery on Saturday, June 29.

The trip starts at the Lake Park Bistro parking lot at 10 a.m. and proceeds south where bikers can check out a ravine for wildflowers, birds and contemplation, then pedal down to McKinley Park. It crosses the Brady Street Bridge and follows the Oak Leaf Trail through Riverside Park and Cambridge Woods where it crosses Capital Dr. and passes through Estabrook and Lincoln Parks on up to Kletzsch Park.

We'll circle to the back side of Kletzsch and then return to Lake Park via the Urban Ecology Center to Newberry Rd. to Lake Park. If you're participating in The Park People's Oak Leaf Discovery Tour Passport program, bring your passport. You can get four passport stamps and one keyword. If you don't have a passport, you can buy one from Cheri for \$4. See www.parkpeoplemke.org for more information.

Plan for up to three hours for the 22-mile round trip. Bring water and a candy bar or power bar, helmet and a bike lock. We can stop for a lunch break at either Culvers or the Beer Garden. Contact Cheri at 239-7883 or cherib@wi.rr.com to let her know you're coming and leave a phone number so that she can reach you if weather conditions cancel the ride.

Summer



Wildflowers will be everywhere as bikers pedal through the ravine near Lake Park with Cheri Briscoe. This yellow trout lily identified by Milwaukee County Natural Areas and Trails Manager Brian Russert had just blossomed.

Kudos in Valley

(Continued from page 3)

imperative that We Energies also convert the Wauwatosa coal plant to natural gas. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation will soon be reconstructing nearby Watertown Plank Road for the Zoo Interchange project, and this would be an opportune time for the company to refit its 50-year-old gas mains under the road that leads to the plant. That would support an eventual conversion.



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for Our Families, For Our Future**

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Hike & Bike scheduled for Upper Peninsula

You can stroll along sandy beaches or pedal atop 300-foot tall sandstone cliffs while learning about the natural history of scenic Grand Island at our third annual, four-day Hike & Bike in Upper Michigan.

Arrive Thursday Aug. 1 at the group campsite on Pete's Lake, 10 miles south of Munising, MI. On Friday, we'll hike the lovely Bruno's Run Trail as it snakes 8.6 miles through the

Bikers to get scenic tour of Milwaukee south side

Scenic South Shore, Sheridan, Warnimont and Grant Parks will be the setting for bikers who explore Milwaukee's south side with Sierra Club member Jane Stoltz on Saturday, June 22.

The 35-mile round trip starting at 10 a.m. is a mostly flat compilation of bike trails and South Milwaukee urban riding. We'll start at South Shore Park on the east (Lake Michigan) side of the pavilion. You can choose to shorten the distance at any time, and you may want to visit the South Shore farmers market before departing. Get there early to get a parking spot. If you have questions, email Jane at milwbirder@yahoo.com

Hiawatha National Forest, stopping for lunch and possibly a dip in one of nine pristine lakes. Saturday features a ferry ride to beautiful, protected Grand Island and then a mountain bike excursion 23 miles along the colorful cliffs. If you're not a biker, there's a 2.5 mile (one way) hike to the piney undisturbed beach at Trout Bay on the island. There will be lunch at North Beach, and we'll share what we've learned while we enjoy a potluck dinner back at the campsite.

Moderate physical ability is required. Contact Ed Anderson at 414-520-2751 with questions or to make reservations.

Volunteer Leadership Council (VLC) Contact List

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