

GREAT WATERS GROUP NEWSLETTER

WWW.GREATWATERSGROUP.ORG greatwatersgroupsc@gmail.com Winter, 2016 NO. 4

A satisfying drink of water can pose a major health threat to your children if you have lead pipes or laterals in your house.
See story on page 4.



Fun, food await party goers

Fun, music and food will make for a great gathering of green folk on Sunday, Dec. 4. Come and celebrate the season while continuing to build a strong environmental community. Join us at Wil O Way Recreation Center, 10602 Underwood Creek Parkway, Wauwatosa, located across from Hansen Golf Course, west of the clubhouse, up the hill and into the woods.

Doors open at 4 p.m. to make new friends and reconnect with fellow members. Beverages and snacks are available, and tempting auction items will be offered for silent bidding.

GWG musicians are welcome to bring a fiddle, tuba, accordion, trombone, dulcimer or bongos to play holiday



Guitarist Peter Donalds

songs during the merry making. Contact Cheri Briscoe at cherib@wi.rr.com or 414-312-1922 for more music information.

A Middle Eastern dinner including vegetarian options and suitable for a magic carpet is provided at 5:30 p.m. by Aladdin Deli of Milwaukee Public Market. Rounding out the evening will (Continued on page 7)

Winter Programs

Free and open to the public Mayfair Mall, Community Room #110, Garden Suites East Enter east side of mall at covered parking area by theater.

"Disappearing into the Woods: No-Trace Skills for Old Dogs and Novice Naturalists Alike" Monday, Nov. 21, 7-9 p.m.

We will learn how to improve our camping skills when experienced Boy Scout leader Mike Kelley explains the latest techniques of "no trace camping." Mike has more than 20 years of outdoor skills leadership with extensive training in reducing our impact while in the woods. This will be our chance to review camping skills and pick up tips to be better stewards of the land when pitching our tents. Even long-time campers will be surprised at new hints to leave no trace behind.

GWG Holiday Party

Sunday, Dec. 4, 4-8:30 p.m. See article in this Newsletter for details.

"The True Cost": a documentary film *Monday, Jan. 16, 7-9 p.m.*

A documentary film (2015) about the human and environmental costs of the clothing we buy. Apparel accounts for 10% of global carbon emissions, the second-largest industrial polluter behind only oil. Nearly 70 million barrels of oil are used each year to make polyester fiber, which takes more than 200 years to

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Notes from the Chair -

It's been an honor to represent our Great Waters Group as your Chair for the past three and a half years. For 2017 I will be continuing as Conservation Chair and Newsletter Chair as a member of the Executive Committee. However, as of January, I'll be stepping down as Chair.

Through your participation and support, our Group has grown in number and involvement while building an environmental community. Just recently our pot luck program for October filled the room to capacity to hear Eddee Daniel talk about Milwaukee as a Green City. At our October outing, 26 members hiked the Seminary Woods – in the rain. Thank you for showing up.

We have a lot of work to do, both locally and within our state. There are lead pipes in Milwaukee, Wauwatosa and Shorewood, and high capacity wells pumping the rest of Wisconsin dry. There is conflict over expansion of the I-94 Corridor and unsettled debate about transportation funding at the state level. Recent state law forbids local municipalities from restricting plastic bags while Wisconsin counties are fighting a state-long oil pipeline.

This Dec. 4 we can celebrate our accomplishments and pledge our support for the future by coming together for our annual Holiday Party. I hope to see you there.

Dianne Dagelen, Chair

Learn about holiday traditions on hike

Why do we sing about the holly and the ivy, or kiss under the mistletoe, or chop down an evergreen and dress it up in colors? Join us to celebrate the holiday season by learning about the plants that play such a large role in traditional holiday celebrations.

We will hike around Grant Park and talk about the biology of and traditions behind such holiday plants as mistletoe, holly, ivy, poinsettias and, of course, the Christmas tree.

Date: Saturday, Dec. 10. From 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Level: Easy

Location: Grant Park. Contact Dan for exact meeting loca-

tion.

Leader: Dan Buckler. Please RSVP at

Daniel.c.buckler@gmail.com or 330-261-2088



Photo by Eddee Daniel

Eddee Daniel mused after our Menomonee River outing October 10th: "Most groups I lead on outings would have canceled with the rain. But not Sierra Club members. They show up."

Renewable energy reaches milestone

More than half of all energy generation capacity added in 2015 came from renewable sources as the world installed more than 500,000 solar panels a day and two wind turbines every hour, according to an Oct. 25 report from the International Energy Agency.



Thank you to everyone who contributed through workplace giving to the Sierra Club Foundation and Community Shares of Greater Milwaukee. The world installed more new renewable energy last year than coal as countries attempted to shift away from fossil fuels and take advantage of massive cost reductions in wind and solar technology.

Michael Brune, executive director of the Sierra Club, hailed the move as a "historic milestone on the transition to a clean energy economy."

However, the IEA also warned of barriers to entry in developing countries and renewed calls for "stronger policy efforts" in the heat and transportation sectors.

Friends of forest focus on Downtown

By Barbara Richards Member of Great Waters Group and Interfaith Earth Network

The Friends of Milwaukee's Downtown Forest Project (FMDF) is focused on the last remaining hillside in downtown Milwaukee that is undeveloped by glass, steel and concrete. Less than three acres in total area, the property is owned by Milwaukee County. Its official address is 320 E. Ogden, and it lies within a mile of some of the richest and some of the poorest neighborhoods in the city.

Our downtown area is undergoing a rapid and dramatic transformation from a long empty deconstructed freeway landscape to mixed condo and storefront non "living building" structures on the riverfront and adjacent areas. A new professional sports complex is also included in the mélange.

Creating an urban food forest on the proposed site would highlight the need for sustainability and resiliency by adding green space with a food focus to the mix of glass, steel and concrete. FMDF would highlight up to 15 Permaculture Guilds and a community garden that would promote urban forestry as a means to mitigate the heat island effect and urban rainwater run-off. It would also promote models of green infrastructure, green occupations and locally grown and harvested food. Guild boundary paths would draw pedestrian interaction, and signage would educate.

We will do our very best to bring this project to fruition. As momentum builds through this process we will see buy-in from many parts of the community. There is already great energy for making Milwaukee a center for Water Sustainability Concepts. FMDF will add to these efforts. If you are interested in being a part of FMDF, connect to us on Facebook or email us at findf-bar@gmail.com.

GWG offers communication options

Did you know that GWG publishes an e-letter. Has a Facebook page. A website?

In addition to our quarterly newsletter, our bi-monthly e-letter keeps us current on issues and events with short time frames. To be placed on our e-letter listserv, send an email to gwg.e-letter@wi.rr.com.

Get up-to-date information or check cancellations on our website at www.greatwatersgroup.org or www.sc-gwg.org.

On our GWG Facebook page, search for "Great Waters Group" – then, 1. 'like' us. 2. on the same dropdown box, check 'see first' and notifications 'on.'

For email: Contact us at gmail.com.



Beaver are among the adaptable species that can be found in the Vernon Wildlife Area in Waukesha County.

Outing will feature survival in the wild

The bitter cold of a Wisconsin winter can be daunting even for people living in heated homes, so how do our wilder brethren manage it?

On this snowshoe excursion into the Vernon Wildlife Area in eastern Waukesha County, we will talk about hibernation, migration, metabolism, fur and all those things that enable survival in cold temperatures. If there's no snow, we will still enjoy hiking this lovely area.

Date: Saturday, Jan. 28. Time: 10 a.m. to approximately 1 p.m. **Level:** Moderate.

Location: Vernon Wildlife Area in eastern Waukesha County. **Leader:** Dan Buckler. Please RSVP to <u>Daniel.c.buckler@gmail.com</u> or 330-261-2088.

Volunteer Leadership Council (VLC) Contact List

Dianne Dagelen, GWG Chair & Conservation Chair 414-771-1505 Bill Moore, Vice Chair 262-785-9022 Dan Buckler, Outings Chair 330-261-2088 Ed Anderson, Political Chair 414-520-2751 Chris Zapf, Member-at-Large 262-786-9584 John Bahr, Energy Chair 414-256-0932 Crystal Hoecherl, Secretary 414-614-3034 Roy Krueger, Treasurer 262-544-6893 William Baurecht, Program Chair 414-882-7218 Heather Hansen, JMC Delegate 812-360-0652 Communication Team: Janet Anderson, FaceBook 414-258-5624 Dianne Dagelen, Newsletter Chair 414-771-1505 Dave Wehnes, Website Administrator 414-453-1689 E-letterer & Website: Vacant; Volunteer(s) Needed Sandy and Dale Hofmann, Newsletter Editors 414-476-8636

Water pollution hits home

By Dianne Dagelen Conservation Chair

Do you have lead laterals connecting to your water main? Lead pipes or fixtures within your house?

I always thought of water pollution as a problem for lakes or rivers. Attending the August 18 Freshwater for Life Action Coalition (FLAC) town hall meeting, I learned the following about toxic water pollution in my own home.

The Lead Problem

Houses built prior to 1953 have lead laterals to provide water utility service. For the city of Milwaukee that means 70,000 houses. More than 8,000 in Shorewood, 10,000 in Wauwatosa.

Wisconsin fought to get lead out of paint, and to hold paint companies accountable in supporting lead abatement programs. Lead paint was outlawed in 1987. Lead in gasoline was eliminated in 1995. Subsequently, lead poisoning dropped overall among Milwaukee children six and under from 30% to 8.6% in 2014.

However, lead soluble water is thought to contribute to the high lead levels in 10 to 20% of children currently living in older, poorer sections of Milwaukee, primarily African American and

Equity Summit examines transportation issues

Transit users, community advocates and allies from around Wisconsin will gather at Milwaukee Area Technical College (700 W. State St.) on Dec. 3 for a Transportation Equity Summit to explore the impact of transportation on people in our state and how we can advocate for change.



Join us for breakfast and lunch or just for the 10:30 a.m. plenary

session entitled "Story Sharing – Getting Wisconsin's Transportation Priorities Straight" with national Sierra Club President Aaron Mair.

Register for the event at <u>transportationequitysummit.eventbrite.com</u>. Cost is \$10, but if you can't afford this, use promotional code: TRANSIT for free admission. For more information contact Cassie Steiner at <u>cassandra.steiner@sierraclub.org</u>) or 608-256-0565.

Hispanic neighborhoods. FLAC is attempting to hold the City of Milwaukee accountable.

The water coming out of your water main in Milwaukee and other lake shore counties is clean and pure from Lake Michigan via the Milwaukee Water Works (MWW) or other utilities. It's when it comes through laterals and out of faucets that drinkers need to beware.

Since 1996 MWW has added phosphorous as a corrosion control chemical to line the pipes to prevent lead leaching. However, after six hours of inaction, phosphorous fails to prevent leaching. Lead particles become soluble in water (like sugar granules). You can't see them.

How to Protect Your Drinking Water

According to MWW after six or more hours of inaction, you should flush your faucet till the water becomes colder, three to five minutes. Drink or use water for cooking only from the cold tap, not the hot water tap. Boiling makes the water more toxic. Every month remove and rinse faucet screens and aerators that may have caught lead debris.

However, many believe that expecting a thirsty child or even an adult to run a faucet for three minutes before taking a drink of water is unrealistic. In addition, many who have developed habits to conserve water as a precious resource are uncomfortable with "wasting" water by running the faucet.

Unless your water tests 0% lead, use a filter (NSF/ANSI Standard 53 certified water filter device) for drinking and cooking water. See a list of filters and test labs at milwaukeewaterworks.com (Click "Lead Awareness"). The ultimate fix: replace your lateral pipe line, and replace internal lead pipes and faucets.

Municipal Action

Many cities such as Milwaukee and Wauwatosa have been replacing old lead water service laterals with copper materials as they replace water mains. However, the replacement stops at the curb. The lead lateral from the curb to the house remains.

More importantly, the partial lateral removal causes fragments of lead to become dislodged, raising the toxicity of the water passing through them. Similarly, when there is heavy pavement pounding at a construction site, lead is being loosened in the surrounding laterals and released. Or when neighborhood fire hydrants are flushed at high pressure, or your water meter is replaced or your home plumbing is repaired or replaced. See the MWM website for special flushing instructions for these occurrences.

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Children victims of home pollution

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What Level of Lead Is Safe?

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has determined that 15 parts or less of lead per billion (15ppb) is a safe level. The EPA has only tested 50 of 70,000 houses every three years in Milwaukee, and only after flushing the tested faucet. Yet the EPA has declared Milwaukee tap water is "safe" to drink.

However, according to the US Center for Disease Control (CDC), there is no safe lead level, especially for children under six years of age and for pregnant women. Lead accumulates in your body. You cannot flush it out.

Health Impacts of Lead Poisoning

According to the Milwaukee Health Department, children's blood should be tested for lead three times before they turn three years old: "three before three". Contact your health care provider or local Health Department for more information.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (WDHS) reported in 2012 that more than 5.0 micrograms per deciliter of blood will cause health problems, including permanent brain damage. Other non-reversible effects could be peripheral neuropathy, seizure disorders and progressive renal dysfunction.

Dr. Pat McManus of the Black Health Coalition of Wisconsin reports that research since the 1990's shows that increased exposure to lead is associated with lower IQ and more violence-prone behavior. A Cincinnati MRI study in 2015 showed a correlation

Winter Programs

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decompose. We now buy five times as much clothing as we did in 1980. Christopher Cox, campaign manager of The Human Thread Campaign, will show portions of the film, explain its themes and answer questions.

Dissolved Lead in Our Drinking Water: Impact and Remedy

Monday, Feb. 20, 7-9 p.m.

Is your water safe to drink? Does your property have lead pipe service? What are the dangers, and how can we prevent them? What are the environmental social justice considerations? Carrie Lewis of Milwaukee Water Works and Kirsten Shead of Milwaukee Water Commons' drinking water initiative will address our concerns about toxic water pollution in our own homes.



A disturbing 8.5% of children in Milwaukee had dangerous levels of lead in their blood.

between children's lead levels and their brain's impairment in areas that regulate attention, emotions and aggression.

According to a Wisconsin Watch study, after 18 months of exposure to lead-tainted water, 1,746 children in Flint, MI, or 4.9% tested at 4.9 to 6.0 microns of lead in their blood. State and federal officials declared it a "state of emergency".

In 2014 in Wisconsin statewide, 3,922 children under six years of age tested at more than 5.0 microns of lead in their blood, or 4.5% of all tested. These are figures similar to those in Flint. However, in Milwaukee, 2,093 children or 8.5% tested at 5.0 to 8.5 microns of lead in their blood. And within Milwaukee's poorest zip code (53206) 19.9% children tested at those higher levels. Long time exposure has resulted in higher lead levels for Milwaukee than Flint. But no official "emergency" has been declared.

According to the 2013 US Census Bureau "American Community Survey" data, Milwaukee has the second-highest poverty rate in the US. Lead pipe mapping in Milwaukee reflects highest in the areas where poverty and crime are highest in the City's population. The pattern of lead tainted drinking water appears to mirror an image of environmental social injustice.

Ultimate Solution: Lead Pipe Removal

The cost to replace an individual lateral is \$3,000 to \$7,000, depending on distance. It would take more than 50 years to replace 70,000 pipes in Milwaukee, costing \$500 million. Milwaukee has 67% of all lead pipes in the state of Wisconsin. But only 20% of federal pipe replacement funds were recently allocated to Milwaukee by our state government.

Representative Gwen Moore proposes a Water Act trust fund of \$60 billion annually to replace our nation's water infrastructure. Senator Tammy Baldwin has introduced similar legislation with the "Leadership Act." Access to the state's revolving loan fund of \$11million is also being sought.

Clean, safe water is a human right. Removing lead from our drinking water is a matter of good health and social justice.

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A sweet deal awaits visitors to the Urban Ecology Center's Winterfest, thanks to the efforts of Young Scientists like this one who will be providing pie filled with fruit harvested from neighborhood fruit trees.

Nothing half-baked about Young Scientists

Young Scientists from the Urban Ecology Center's Washington Park branch and community volunteers have been coming together since 2010 to make pies filled with fruit harvested from neighborhood fruit trees and bushes and other sources. The pies are served to participants at the summer, autumn and winter festivals.

It's a grassroots movement and creative effort that combines nature's bounty and neighborly sharing with yummy pies. Here's the recipe for building a delicious sense of community.

Young Scientists are mentored by volunteers a few days before each festival to make 60 pie crusts (30 tops and bottoms). Everyone returns the day before the festival to make the fruit filling and top the pies with cutout designs and lattice. They then generously serve the festival pies and enjoy the fruits of their labor. Young Scientists learn the art and science of pie making as well as intergenerational community building.

The next pie making will take place during the week before Washington Park's Winter Festival on Jan. 28. If you'd like to join the Community Pie volunteers by picking/donating fruit or by making/baking and serving pies at Washington Park, contact: David Glenn (majsweetie@gmail.com) or Janine Arseneau (janinea@execpc.com).

Sanctuary Woods deserve protection

By Barb Agnew Friends of the Monarch Trail

The east portion of the County Grounds, known to some as the Sanctuary Woods is one area that still contains old growth trees and an isolated wilderness feel—with the wildlife to go along with it. It is home to the forked aster, long eared owl and butler garter snake as well as the great horned owl, and it is a potential flying squirrel habitat.

The woods is part of the Menomonee watershed, which serves as a migratory bird corridor, helping to qualify Milwaukee County as a Bird City in 2015 with a "high flyer" status. Alarmingly, the Sanctuary Woods is not protected by Parkland zoning and is owned by, and considered "surplus land", by Milwaukee County.

After nearly a year of creating a land use plan, Wauwatosa is now showing an east/west road extending across from Discovery Parkway to the village—bisecting some of the most valuable habitat areas. In addition, this road has proposed development along one side suggesting high rise apartments overlooking County Grounds Park.

A resolution introduced to the Milwaukee County Board, Committee on Parks, Energy and Environment requests a task force create an environmental report to identify the natural features and wildlife that would be impacted by the road and development. This resolution passed in Committee on Oct. 25.

Once the report is presented, it will be up to citizens to decide what is more important: "economic development" or the future of this unique environmental and migratory corridor? Sustainable alternatives such as a pedestrian/bike path could be considered. Stewards of the environment should watch for updates on how the task force proceeds and how they can help.



Owls that make their homes in the Sanctuary Woods at the Milwaukee County Grounds will be in danger if development trumps the environment.



Family fun at the Washington Park lagoon will be featured at the Urban Ecology Center Winterfest in January.

Winterfest scheduled for Washington Park

With the lagoon frozen over and the hills covered in snow, Washington Park is the perfect place for an afternoon of adventure. Join us on Saturday, Jan. 28, from noon to 4 p.m. for some family winter fun at the Urban Ecololyy Center Winterfest. The event is free and open to the public.

There will be ice skating, sledding, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, arts and crafts and more. Warm up with free food and beverages and the company of your neighbors. Ask about our free "Afternoon Nappers" program for ages 5 and younger from 10:30am to noon. Call 414-344-5460 for more information

Fun and food on tap for party goers

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be a sing-along with acoustic guitarist Peter Donalds, accompanied by screen-sized lyrics so all can join in.

All this for the great price of \$25 per person. Send your check payable to "Great Waters Group-SC", to our Treasurer: Roy Krueger, 237 Madison St. #56, Waukesha, WI 53288. Or bring your check to our November program. Reservations are due by Nov. 30.

Contact Dianne Dagelen at <u>ddagelen@sbcglobal.net</u> or 414-771-1505 with questions or auction items to donate or a desire to volunteer.

Official Ballot 2016 GWG Executive Committee Election

Mark an X on the line next to your selections. Each member may vote for only/up to 3 candidates.

Voter #1_Bill Baurecht_Heather Hansen_Crystal Hoecherl
Voter #2_Bill Baurecht_Heather Hansen_Crystal Hoecherl

Mail* completed ballot to: SC Great Waters Group Election Committee PO Box 26798 – Wauwatosa, WI 53226, *postmarked by Dec. 28, 2016* Or bring to our GWG Holiday Party Dec. 4.

Three nominated for Exec Committee

The Great Waters Group Nomination/Election Committee, chaired by John Bahr, presents nominees for the GWG Executive Committee for the 2017-18 term. Please support your Group by participating in the election. Following are biographies submitted by the candidates:

Bill Baurecht has been a member of the Sierra Club for many years and has led and participated in national lodge, service, base camp, family, and grandparents/grandkids outings. A certified national outings leader, Bill shares his love of mountain hiking, knowledge of Western culture and history, and support of national and state parks and monuments with participants. As a member of the Ice Age Trail Alliance he volunteers to maintain trails and build new segments.

Heather Hansen works as a client services rep in a logistics company. She has been a life-long outdoors enthusiast and environmentalist. Her goal is to leave the planet in better shape than she found it. She has been our delegate to the John Muir Chapter of Sierra Club for the past two years.

Crystal Hoecherl's overseas work provided a global perspective on the environment. In the 1990's with UNICEF after the first Gulf War she worked on immunization, providing health education and caring for land mine and burn victims. In China, air pollution's effect on respiratory illness was apparent. Crystal has been employed as a school nurse for Milwaukee Public Schools since 2005. She enjoys cross country skiing, hiking, biking, camping and kayaking.

To vote, clip out the ballot provided here (or print out emailed page), mark the ballot with your selected candidates and return by mail or in person at our Holiday Party.

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

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Opportunities everywhere for paddlers

Don't miss the opportunity to enjoy the wild Northwoods by canoe. Outings include Quetico Provincial Park and others in Wisconsin.

Our outings leaders are experienced veterans with Wilderness First Aid training and Sierra Club's Outings Leadership Training. For candidate participants, no experience is required, but a friendly personality, positive attitude and good physical fitness are invaluable assets.

There are no fees to participate, but Quetico outings have direct shared costs of about \$600, which cover group supplies, equipment, food, lodging, park permits and taxes. A refundable \$100 deposit reserves your spot. Not included are personal travel costs, permits and fishing licenses. Contact outings leaders or visit greatwatersgroup.org for more details.

Quetico Provincial Park Offerings

Spanning the international border between northeast Minnesota and Canada, Quetico Provincial Park offers travelers more than 2,000 lakes and a million acres of remote wilderness, all while navigating the rugged beauty of its towering rock cliffs, majestic waterfalls and virgin pine and spruce forests.

July 28-Aug. 6 – (8 days, 7 nights; paddle/portage/camp)

Co-Leaders: Vicki Christianson 715-827-0379 <u>vicki.christianson@yahoo.com</u>, Janet Clear - 608-833-1339, <u>janetclear@gmail.com</u> and Nancy McDermott 608-238-1421 njmcderm@gmail.com

Outing Departure Point: Moose Lake - Ely, MN area. Outing Cost: \$600

Aug. 11-20 – (8 days, 7 nights; paddle/portage/camp)

Co-leaders: Peter Brands 262-888-3516 <u>pbrands@gmail.com</u> and Tim Karaskiewicz 414-397-8768 <u>tkaraskiewicz@mitchellairport.com</u> Outing departure point: Gunflint Trail, MN. Outing cost: \$600

Aug. 18-27 - (8 days, 7 nights; paddle/portage/camp)

Co-Leaders: Nancy McDermott 608-238-1421 njmcderm@gmail.com and Will Stahl 920-725-9185 wrsy55@sbcglobal.net Outing Departure Point: Moose Lake - Ely, MN area. Outing Cost: \$600

Wisconsin Outings

July 13-16: Women's Namekagon River paddling trip

Leader: Vicki Christianson 715-827-0379

vicki.christianson@yahoo.com

Outing Departure Point: Trego, WI. Outing Cost: \$150 including \$50 deposit

Date TBD: Apostle Islands Adventure

(4-8 days, 3-7 nights) Island camp/hike; optional sea-kayaking

Leader: David Thomas - 414-344-1044, thomasdp@thomerwald.net,

Tom Ryan - 608-831-5533, thryan1@yahoo.com
Outing Departure: Bayfield, WI. Outing Cost: TBD