

#### GREAT WATERS GROUP **NEWSLETTER**

WWW.GREATWATERSGROUP.ORG greatwatersgroupsc@gmail.com

Summer, 2018 NO. 2



Great Lakes sparkling waters are for everyone, and they need protection. A City of Racine proposal to divert millions of gallons per day could pose a threat to them. See story on Page 5.

### Neighbors scold coal plant owners

By Dave Fidlin

Amid the fog of controversy and debate surrounding the Oak Creek Power Plant came an apology and a pledge to take greater strides to thwart the presence of coal dust on nearby private properties.

A standing room-only crowd of almost 200 environmental advocates, nearby residents and other interested persons gathered at the Oak Creek public library for a hearing after residents living near the plant discovered black coal dust covering homes, cars and a playground. Testing from a firm, Aspen Consulting, linked the dust to the plant.

Off to one side of the room were more than a half-dozen We Energies executives who took notes and promised to do better.

"You guys do what you want when you want," said Charles Michna, who lives 60 yards from the plant. "You guys are an ecological disaster to southeastern Wisconsin."

Groups such as the Clean Power Coalition of Southeast Wisconsin and the Environmental Accountability Group have launched a vigorous grassroots campaign, asserting coal dust contains such toxic metals as lead, mercury and arsenic. Inhaling particulate matter, the (Continued on page 4

### Program to address environmental justice

Four leading experts and community activists will address issues of environmental equity, justice and inclusion at the Great Waters Group's May 21 "Environmental Justice Matters" program beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the Wauwatosa public library.

In addition to the discussion of the history and current struggles of the environmental movement, there will be an update on the "Nearby Nature" project designed to develop outings and activities in neighborhoods impacted by poverty and racial injustice.

#### Speakers include:

• Brenda Coley - Milwaukee Water Commons.

#### **Summer Program**

Free and open to the public

Much of Brenda's consulting work has focused on cultural competency and diversity outcomes. She

has helped Milwaukee Water Commons build a culturally vibrant and diverse movement.

• Ryan Holifield - UW-Milwaukee, Geography and Urban Studies. Ryan's research has covered environmental justice policy and practice in the US Environmental Protection Agency, health risk assessment at (Continued on page 6)

Spring 2018

#### Notes from the Chair

A few weeks ago I was at a listening session co-organized by the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal organizer Miranda Erlich at the Oak Creek library. It was standing room only for the more than 150 mostly local people who attended. Most of the speakers were concerned about coal ash and their family's health and their inability to sell their homes because of their proximity to the Oak Creek coal-fired power plants.

But a sizable number spoke as we did to the need to use available options such as wind and solar power. As people poured out their emotions, I was reminded of the effort we put forth to educate the public, We Energies and the Public Service Commission on the ill effects of the pollution caused by coal, and that there is no such thing as clean coal, even though the term was often used at the time.

I wondered then, why didn't they listen? The science was compelling, but the decision-makers were not moved.

Several WE Energies employees and executives attended the hearing, and after listening to the testimony, they responded. To their great credit, the first one to speak, a vice-president, apologized! Their first responses were to the ash problem, and they said they would cover the outside piles of coal with a 4" barrier.

But it took some prodding from the audience to get them to respond to the need for clean air solutions. Their environmental representative did acknowledge the need and indicated how their plans do include more wind and solar, but, admittedly, on a long-term basis.

But why didn't the PSC and WE Energies listen back when they had a chance to build right? Many nearby residents joined our voices and spoke up for clean energy. How many are vocal now but not back then? How many are only now understanding the link to climate change? How many will extend that knowledge to local, state and federal political actions as we attempt to slow global warming?

If this does turn into political action, is it because it takes personal harm to translate into action rather than people educating themselves and then acting on that knowledge?

My hope is that we no longer are so insular that we have lost the ability to care for our children's future. Now is the time for us to learn and to educate others, including our decisionmakers, and to work to change them if necessary.

-Bill Moore

### Sierra Club targets racial injustice

By David Thomas Nearby Nature Chair

Since February I have been attending the YWCA's "Unlearning Racism" class. It is interesting to note the YWCA adopted the mission to "eliminate racism" in 1970. The YWCA classes have been an eye opener. We read, discuss and learn about the history of racial injustice and why things are as they are.

#### Sierrans to unite at Chiwaukee

Our friends and fellow Sierrans from the Southeast Gateway Group will join us on a service day at Chiwaukee Prairie in Kenosha County, one of the largest prairie complexes in the state and the most intact coastal wetland in southeastern Wisconsin. A lunch with all volunteers will be held following the workday.

**Date:** Saturday, July 21, 10a.m. – 1 p.m. with lunch afterward.

**Location:** Chiwaukee Prairie SNA, Kenosha County. Contact Dan for exact meeting location.

**Leader:** Dan Buckler. RSVP to <u>Daniel.c.buckler@gmail.com</u> or 330-261-2088

In 1972 the Sierra Club asked its members if it should "concern itself with the conservation problems of such special groups as the urban poor and ethnic minorities." Forty per cent were strongly opposed, and only 15 per cent were in favor. It takes only a little digging to discover the racist history of some of the founders of the environmental movement including the Sierra Club.

In 1992, almost 100 years after its founding, the Sierra Club was severely criticized by the Southwest Organizing Project. The environmental movement, they claimed, with its lack of inclusion and all-white boards and staffs, was ignoring Native and Latino voices.

Rolling forward another 25 years, we find the Sierra Club finally instituting programs for fighting racial injustice and endorsing antiracist movements like Black Lives Matter. Critics who make the ludicrous claim of "reverse racism" are imagining that people of color get some kind of privileges not available to white folk.

Here are some readily available facts that show how blacks, for example, are the victims of severe bias in the realms of employment, education and health care.

• In basic income, the wage gap between white and black is (Continued on page 8)

## **Authors to discuss Boundary Waters**

Explorer-activists Dave and Amy Freeman spent an entire year in the Boundary Water Canoe Area in 2015-'16 after learning that sulfide ore mining was proposed near the area, which is the most visited wilderness in the United States. They will be bicycling from Minnesota to Washington, D. C., towing a canoe to draw attention to the problem, and they will share their story in Milwaukee on May 14.

The Milwaukee event will run from 7:30 to 8 p.m. at the Urban Ecology Center's Riverside Park location at 1500 East Park Place and will include a book signing. Boswell Book Company is co-sponsoring the event.

The Freemans listened to the call of the loon and the wolf, watched brilliant sunsets and heard the ice cracking as they visited countless lakes while gathering material for "A Year in the Wilderness" (Milkweed Editions, 2017, \$35), which they are promoting on their two-month, 2,000-mile ride to garner petition signatures in support of permanent protection for the Boundary Waters (www.savetheboundarywaters.org). The Sierra Club is one of the partners in the Save the Boundary Waters coalition.

The couple will share stories and photos from 365 days without a shower, flush toilet or real roof over their heads. Supporters regularly met them to bring supplies. During the winter they swapped their canoe for a dogsled and three canine companions.

They used solar panels to power electronic devices so they could

#### Lincoln Creek clean-up scheduled

As part its Nearby Nature program, the Great Waters Group adopted a stretch of Lincoln Creek on the north side of Milwaukee. Our task is to help rid the corridor of trash and other debris.

Date: Saturday, Aug. 18, 10 a.m.-noon.

Time: 10am – 12pm Location: Meet at 440

0 N. 35th St., Milwaukee. Clean-up is east of 35th and Congress

to 34th and Hampton

Leader: Rashi Grewel. RSVP to <a href="mailto:r3grewal@gmail.com">r3grewal@gmail.com</a>



Dave and Amy Freeman are taking their fight for the Boundary Waters to Washington in an unusual way.

blog and share their adventures with the outside world in their quest to save 1.1 million acres of wilderness.

Sulfide-ore mining, which is considered much more toxic than Minnesota's traditional taconite mining, creates sulfuric acid that could drain into the wilderness' waters. Despite previous victories for the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters, in late 2017 the Trump administration moved to renew expired mineral leases.

For their latest adventure, the Freemans departed on April 20 from Ely, Minn., towing a canoe. They plan to give more than 30 presentations at schools, libraries, outdoor gear stores and breweries, including one May 12 at Rutabaga Paddlesports in Madison and another May 15 at River Bend Nature Center in Racine. They hope to finish the week of June 12 in Washington, where they will meet with lawmakers.

Adventure is in the Freemans' blood. They have traveled more than 30,000 miles by canoe, kayak, and dogsled through wild areas from the Arctic to the Amazon. National Geographic named them Adventurers of the Year in 2014.

### Anti-litter project planned for waterways

Led by the Northwest Side Community Development Corporation (NWSCDC) and Friends of Lincoln Park, an anti-litter campaign will be launched soon under the direction of Rashi Geewal. Special attention will be paid to neighborhood waterways such as the Lincoln Creek Greenway.

Several groups will join in the effort, including Residents for Change, a block club group that has done many litter cleanups Summer 2018

with NWSCDC. The Milwaukee County Parks Department is an important stakeholder in all Lincoln Park Friends efforts. Funding is provided by a 2017 Sweetwater mini-grant and by the Nearby Nature project of the Sierra Club Great Waters Group

View the website <a href="www.LincolnParkFriends.org/CleanWater/">www.LincolnParkFriends.org/CleanWater/</a> . for tips and links for keeping our neighborhoods and waters clean.

# Volunteers step up for Nearby Nature

Nearby Nature is a justice, equity and inclusion initiative of the Great Waters Group that is focusing its efforts on Milwaukee's 30th Street Corridor and Lincoln Creek Greenway. The project is funded by the Sierra Club Foundation as a pilot through November of this year.

Roughly 15 volunteers spent a cold morning clearing buckthorn from the edge of a beautiful maple tree forest on March 24 in our first service outing of the year at Havenwoods State Forest.

In April we began an outings program with the Daniels-Mardak Boys and Girls Club. We are funding an environmental educator from the Urban Ecology Center to meet and get outdoors with kids every Thursday evening. On April 12 fifteen kids from ages 9 to 12 spent the period picking up trash in conjunction with the Milwaukee Riverkeeper Spring Cleanup.

On April 21, we held a very successful cleanup along Lincoln Creek in the area from 35th and Congress to 34th and Hampton. Altogether between the two cleanups, 79 volunteers picked up 155 bags of trash, over a dozen tires and lots of miscellaneous debris. [photo by Eddee Daniel]

Coming in May are a couple of events we hope you'll attend:

Date: Sunday, May 13 Mother's Day picnic and paddle on Lincoln

Creek. Bring your own boat. **Location:** Lincoln Park landing.

Leader: David Thomas. david@thomerwald.net for info.

**Date:** Monday, May 21, 6:30 p.m. "Environmental Justice Matters"

program.

Location: Wauwatosa Public Library

### GWG looking for your input on educational programs

By Bill Baurecht Program Chair

Do you have an idea for a GWG public educational program? We want your recommendation.

We will have an open meeting to select programs for fall 2018 and winter/spring 2019, and we're collecting program recommendations. Share yours by calling me at 414-882-7218 or contact any GWG volunteer leader ask her or him forward your recommendation.

You are also invited to select programs. If you're interested, let one of us know, or call me. I will need your email address so that I can forward the program recommendations to you in late May before the meeting.

Those who want to discuss and vote for our programs will set the date of the meeting, May 29, 30, or 31. We will meet from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Collectivo Coffee in Wauwatosa, at 68th and Wells streets.



Sierra Club members do their part in combatting litter in urban settings like Lincoln Creek.

## Coal plant owners get earful from neighbors

(Continued from page 1)

organizers say, can aggravate asthma and respiratory symptoms.

"Every day you're burning dirty coal, customers are paying with their health," said Dana LaFontsee, spokesperson for the Clean Power Coalition.

Not all of the speakers were sold on the power plant leading to harmful health impacts, however. Robert Drenzek, a member of the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 420, has worked at the power plant for four decades. Drenzek said he is part of the union's negotiating team. Throughout his tenure, Drenzek said he has worked with hundreds of employees on such issues as health insurance benefits.

"Coal is dirty — absolutely. It's hell to get out of your laundry — absolutely," Drenzek said. "But I'm not aware of anybody that has any chronic respiratory issues."

Caledonia resident Carl Lindner, who also lives near the plant, implored We Energies to consider other energy alternatives, such as solar. "We all know clean energy is coming," Lindner said. "It's just a question of when. The question is how fast will you do it? That comes down to money.

### Racine water request under review

Reprinted from Midwest Environmental Advocates e letter.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is currently reviewing the City of Racine's proposal to divert up to seven million gallons per day of Great Lakes water to Foxconn's manufacturing plant in the Village of Mount Pleasant. The DNR must decide whether the proposal meets the strict standards for granting an exception to the Great Lakes Compact's ban on diversions.

Over 800 stakeholders, including individuals and organizations from Canada, Wisconsin and the other Great Lake states, as well as the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Illinois attorney general, submitted comments to the DNR, raising significant concerns or questions about the application's failure to sat-

isfy key provisions of the Great Lakes Compact and lack of information about potentially harmful environmental impacts of the diversion.

The Wisconsin Compact Implementation Coalition, of which MEA is a member, submitted comments to the DNR during the public comment period and recently submitted a letter asking the governors and premiers of the Great Lakes States and Canadian Provinces to formally review the City of Racine's proposal for itself.

The letter draws attention to a series of questions raised by the City of Racine's proposal that strike at the heart of the Compact's ban on diversions and urges the governors and premiers that comprise the Great Lakes—St. Lawrence River Water Resources Regional Body to intervene and resolve these critical questions at the regional level.w

#### **GWG** volunteers welcome

Do you have a little extra time to volunteer with us in our Great Waters Group? We are all volunteers, and with our increasing membership, we could use your help. We are looking for YOU to join our communications team to help get information out to our Great Waters Group members via our multiple media sources.

Please contact Janet at janeta16@sbcglobal.net. Thank you!

## Quetico outings offer north woods adventure

Don't miss the opportunity to enjoy the wild north woods on canoe outings offered by the John Muir Chapter. In addition to outings to the Quetico Provincial Park on the Canadian side of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, we have a Wisconsin outing for women on the Namekagon/St. Croix River, governed by the National Park Service:

- Women's Namekagon/St. Croix River, July 12-15. Leaders: Vicki Christianson, 715-827-0379, <u>vicki.christianson@yahoo.com</u> and Nancy McDermott 608-238-1421 <u>njmcderm@gmail.com</u>. There is a waiting list.
- Men's Quetico trip, Aug. 10-19. Leader: Janet Clear 608-833-1339 janetclear@gmail.com. This is a date change.
- Co-ed Quetico trip, Aug. 3-12. Leaders: Nancy McDermott, 608-238-1421, njmcderm@gmail.com and Will Stahl, 920-725-9185, wrsy55@sbcglobal.net. There is a waiting list.

For more details and a complete list of outings visit http://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/outings-events. If you are on a waiting list, there is a very good chance that you will get to attend because of cancellations.

## Some good, some bad news on factory farms

Midwest Environmental Advocates has been helping families living near factory farms fight to protect their clean water for years. The latest news on this unrelenting fight is mixed.

Last month, the state Supreme Court agreed with the Wisconsin attorney general that the state's appeal of a citizen victory in Dane County Circuit Court should be heard in Waukesha's District Four.

The debate over venue is another delay in the years-long struggle for Kewaunee County residents, many with polluted drinking water, working for more accountability from the state Department of Natural Resources in Contained Animal Feeding Operation water pollution permitting.

Here is some good news: a Milwaukee County circuit court judge allowed another case against the DNR to proceed. Clean water advocacy groups – including the Clean Water Action Council, Milwaukee Riverkeeper, Friends of the Central Sands and the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation – challenged a settlement in a lawsuit by the Dairy Business Association against the DNR over CAFO practices.

The DNR and DBA settled the lawsuit before public interest groups had a chance to intervene, but now we have our chance to have a judicial review.

-Reprinted from Midwest Environmental Advocates E letter by permission.



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

Summer 2018 5

# Foxconn threatens nearby wetlands

By RT Both Political Chair

Last August Governor Walker signed a legislative package that gave Foxconn \$4 billion dollars in Wisconsin taxpayers' cash and broad exemptions from state environmental regulations.

Environmental groups said the company's plans to build a sprawling \$10 billion plant in Wisconsin needed more scrutiny, not less. One of the things the state will allow Foxconn to do is plow under acres of wetlands at its proposed Mount Pleasant location.

The Foxconn deal has had a broad negative impact on state environmental policy. It encouraged Wisconsin Republicans to "take a fresh look," as Rep. Adam Jarchow (R-Balsam Lake) put it, at wetlands protections statewide. The result was (SB 600/AB 547), which the Sierra Club referred to as the Wetlands Destruction Act.

According to Tracy Hames, executive director of the Wisconsin Wetlands Association, 80 per cent of Wisconsin's wetlands are located on private property. The Wisconsin legislature's action gives property owners broad latitude to deploy their backhoes in non-federal wetlands.

However, as Hames explained at the Great Waters Group's March program, these so-called "isolated" wetlands are critically important in preventing floods, improving water quality, reducing erosion, supporting rare plants, and providing habitat for trout and waterfowl.

What Wisconsin needs are tax breaks for farmers and others who want to preserve non-federal wetlands on their property. Currently, property that contains a wetland is taxed at the same rate as productive agricultural land, which does not encourage the preservation of these urgently needed marshes.

#### Much to enjoy at Perrot Park

Hike to the top of Brady's Bluff for a panoramic view of the Mississippi River, bike to a wildlife refuge to bird watch and hike some more to the Little Bluff Mounds Interpretive Trail with a panoramic view of Trempealeau before ending the day with a glass of wine at the Elmaro Vineyard. You can do it all at Perrot State Park at our September outing. Troubadour, Eddie Allen will entertain after Saturday night potluck. Other meals are on your own.

**Date:** Sept. 7 - 9

Location: Perrot State Park, Trempealeau, WI

**Leaders:** RSVPs or for more information, contact Chris Zapf (<u>zapfchristine@sbcglobal.net</u> or 414-429-8069) or Bill Moore

(environ1@sbcglobal.net or 262-785-9022)



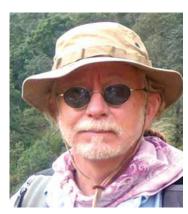
Brenda Coley



Ryan Holifield



Yvonne McCaskill



David Thomas

#### Justice will be addressed

(Continued from page 1)

hazardous waste sites, social justice and brownfield redevelopment.

• Yvonne McCaskill - Century City Tri-Angle Neighborhood Association (CCTNA).

Yvonne is a long-time grass-roots neighborhood activist. As part of the of the Century City Economic Development Neighborhood Compact, her Association has engaged in green infrastructure activities to promote environmental stewardship within the 30th Street Corridor.

• David Thomas – Sierra Club Great Waters Group. David is a longtime Sierra Club outings leader who has been working in the Lincoln Creek Greenway neighborhoods to raise awareness and involvement in nearby natural spaces.

#### **Come to Kettle Moraine area**

Lend your labor to the efforts of the Southern Kettle Moraine State Natural Areas Volunteers in restoring prairie and savanna to southeast Wisconsin. Enjoy the beautiful landscape and contribute to its protection. Bring a bag lunch for afterwards.

**Date:** Saturday, June 9 and July 14. 9 a.m. to noon. Lunch afterward.

**Location:** Whitewater Oak Opening or Bluff Creek SNA. Contact Dan for exact meeting locations.

**Leader:** Dan Buckler. RSVP to <u>Daniel.c.buckler@gmail.com</u> or 330-261-2088

# **Expert explores** fertilizer issues

Reprinted by Permission from the Nature Conservancy Spring 2018

Franklin Farm, along the Mackinaw River in Illinois, is home to an almost decade-long experiment looking at ways to reduce the amount of fertilizers washing into rivers. The following are questions and answers from Krista Kirkham, an aquatic ecologist for the Nature Conservancy in Illinois, regarding discoveries made at the farm.

**Q.** Water polluted with fertilizer is a big challenge for farmers and conservationists. When TNC's partnership began with Franklin Farm, what was the plan?

**A.** When we started this project, the questions were, "Are wetlands good at reducing nitrogen and phosphorus run-off? And if they are good, how big do they need to be?"

**Q.** You built three sets of wetlands of varying sizes to test the filtering effect. What did you find?

**A.** To make a long story short, yes, wetlands are quite effective at reducing nitrate levels and particularly ortho-phosphorus levels, a major component of fertilizers.

**Q.** How do wetlands work?

**A.** In the simplest terms, people define wetlands as "nature's kidneys," and that's somewhat true. Really, you're giving water a chance to slow down and interact with the sediment, where bacteria will do the work for you.

**Q.** And, as Franklin Farm research has shown, the wetlands don't need to be huge to make a big difference, right? You monitored the size of 3 percent, 6 percent and 9 percent of nearby fields.

**A.** Right. We found, regarding nitrate, that even at the smallest wetland, we're seeing a reduction of 12 to 24 per cent. Then, it's 36-44 per cent. At the 9 per cent one, we see a little more reduction, but it's much less of a jump. That told us we don't even need a big one to see some pretty significant results, and that's really encouraging.

#### **Nearby Nature outing planned**

Join the Sierra Club on a look at the flora and fauna of a highly urbanized area of Milwaukee, a focus of the Nearby Nature program of the Great Waters Group.

**Date:** Saturday, Aug. 11, 10am – 12:30 p.m.

**Location:** Meet at Meaux Park (1904 W Villard Ave. Milwaukee). Contact Dan Buckler for exact meeting location.

**Leader:** Dan Buckler. RSVP to <u>Daniel.c.buckler@gmail.com</u> or 330-261-2088

Volunteer Leadership Council (VLC)
Contact List

Chair and Vice-Chair (vacant) John Bahr, Energy Chair 414-256-0932 Roy Krueger, Treasurer 262-544-6893 Crystal Hoecherl, Secretary 414-614-3034 Heather Hansen, JMC Delegate 812-360-0652 Barbara Richards, Conservation Chair, Newslettter Chair 414-259-0731 William Baurecht, Program Chair 414-882-7218 Chris Zapf, Volunteer Chair 262-786-9584 Ed Anderson, Membership Chair 414-520-2751 Rashi Grewal, Fundraising Chair 908-240-7043 Rose Both, Political Chair 262-751-4802 Karen Samelson, Publicity Chair 414-481-1596 David Thomas, Nearby Nature Chair 414-810-2286 Dan Buckler, Outings Chair 330-261-2088 Janet Anderson, Communications Chair 414-258-5624 (Communications, E-Letter, Facebook, Website) Dave Wehnes, Website Super Administrator 414-453-1689 Dale Hofmann, Newsletter Editor 414-476-8636 David Hetzel, Newsletter Reimbursement 414-228-9512

# Find your balance on climate change

By Mike Arney

While I was riding up to a climate conference recently, a fellow traveler told me about motivational juggler Dan Thurmon and his book, "Off Balance On Purpose." He liked Thurman's point that "life balance" is not a fixed goal, but an ongoing process of adjustment and returning to center. Climate change can be very un-balancing.

It's April 18 as I write, and we're having a blizzard. Is this an example of extreme weather brought on by climate change? Or is it just a fluke? I don't know, and it's disconcerting.

But my conservative colleague was gleeful: "Did you hear they cancelled the global warming conference in Minneapolis? Too much snow!" That threw me off, too.

The whole idea that we are messing up the planet in profound ways just by living our lives is pretty destabilizing. It's tempting to fall down in depression or disengagement, to sit this one out.

Wobbly though we may be, we need to stand up. Our love for what is good about ourselves and the planet is stable ground. It gives us courage to try new things and to try again when we stumble.

Are you ready to take your next step in support of a stable climate? Let a Sierra Club member know. If you like, let me know. I'd love to hear about it at <a href="milwaukeewest@citizensclimatelobby">milwaukeewest@citizensclimatelobby</a>. org or 414-350-2728

Summer 2018 7



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### Environmentalists take on racial injustice

(Continued from page 2)

26.7%. This means an African/American person would have to work an extra 13.9 weeks to earn what a white person makes.

- Recently the unemployment rate for white workers was 4.3% but 8.1% for black workers. Blind studies of job applicants with the identical resume' showed that whites were given job offers at twice the rate of blacks.
- In education, in 2012, 6% of white children attended schools considered "high poverty" while 40% of black children attend high poverty schools. Graduation rates in black vs. white communities follow similar disparity.
- A recent report showed that infant mortality for black children in the US is twice the rate for white children. Black children are facing discrimination even before they take their first breath.
- I recently read an article titled "Slavery Didn't End, It Just Evolved". After centuries of slavery, 100 years of "Jim Crow" and even 50 years after the civil rights act and the enactment of open housing laws our society has just not taken the steps it needs, to end racism.

How we begin this transformation will be the subject of future articles. But just stepping away from denial and being open to talk about race is a start. Some call these disparities the essence of "white privilege" or "systemic racism." Whatever you call it, it is

part of the air we breathe and baked into our culture.

Why bring this up? I think the Sierra Club is coming to the realization that we cannot fight climate change with only 60% of the population on our side. An all-white environmental movement does not have a future.

Because you are white and have privileges that others do not does not make you racist. But pretending the problem doesn't exist or looking the other way, is not culturally sustainable any more than climate change is sustainable for the planet.

#### Monarch friends will gather

Join the Friends of the Monarch Trail for a fun, easy and educational event where we will be planting seedlings into flats for next year's planting projects.

Date: Sunday, June 24, Noon – 3p.m.

**Location:** Barb & Dick's Flower Shop, 12326 W Watertown Plank Rd., Milwaukee.

**Contact:** Jean Brooks. RSVP or inquiries to <u>jeanbrooks1@mac.</u> com or 414-559-7886