



# SOUTHEAST SIERRAN

News of the  
Southeast Gateway Group  
of the Sierra Club

JUNE / JULY 2016  
VOLUME 35, No. 3

## Speaking for the Trees

From the Chair  
by Tom Rutkowski

Given the relative academic freedom of Walden III, I would, from time to time, teach a class in environmental literature. Students came to class curious, but convinced they had never read anything they could identify as environmental literature. I would begin with Dr. Seuss's The Lorax, a book I was sure they had listened to or read at least once. Using a rhyme scheme, a bouncy meter, and those whimsical illustrations, Dr. Seuss had a unique way of cutting through complex issues, revealing adult folly in a way that children could plainly see. Read The Lorax and see the foolishness that leads to consumerism and the exploitation of the natural world.

Blind to the effects that his industry has on world of truffula trees and brown bar-ba-loots, the Once-ler keeps making and marketing sneeds, that supposedly indispensable thing that no one really needs. Seuss warns us that our mindless obsession with the latest sneed and the single-minded focus on business will leave us with a barren world.

It's an outcome and a warning that might be even more relevant now than when the book was first published in 1971. When we hear the argument that climate change is too costly to address or that Detroit water is too expensive for the people of Flint, we can see a single-minded focus that discounts the value of nearly everything else.



**"UNLESS** someone like you cares a whole awful lot nothing is going to get better. It's not."  
—Dr. Seuss, from THE LORAX

Knowing that environmental devastation is a lot to drop in the lap of a six-year old, Seuss ends with some hope as the regretful villain tosses a last seed to one of the young people who has to live with that mess he's created. Through this personal favorite of Dr. Seuss, he planted the seed for many future environmentalists.

At a recent listening session, DNR secretary, Cathy Stepp, responded to a staff member's Lorax-like declaration that their agency was intended to represent the "deer and the butterflies and clean air and clean water". In a statement that embodies the Once-ler's myopic view of the world, Cathy Stepp said, **'Well, the last time I checked, they don't pay taxes and they don't sign our paychecks.'**

It's a great line for a stock villain, one you might hear from Mr. Potter in *It's a Wonderful Life*, or maybe Mr. Burns, the owner of the local nuclear plant from *The Simpsons* or, yes, even the Once-ler if it had a better rhyme scheme. Only such a character could make the natural resources on which so much depends, those same resources the secretary was hired to protect, look like a bunch of lazy freeloaders and parasites.

Image from Dr. Seuss's The Lorax

*Continued on page 3*

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## MAY

**Saturday, May 28:** Join us for a club-sponsored bike ride starting at the DeKoven Center (park on the street) traveling north to the Wind Point lighthouse and back. 9:00 AM (page 4)

**Saturday, May 28:** SEGG/Weed Out! Racine, Colonial Park, 9-Noon. Working to remove honeysuckle, buckthorn, garlic mustard, dame's rocket and burdock.

Park in the lot at the end of West High Street, walk in across the bridge. Wear long trousers, sturdy shoes and socks. Bring drinking water and be warned, traffic on Northwestern Ave. (Hwy 38) is one-way traveling southeast during construction.

## JUNE

**Sunday, June 5:** Exhibition Opening for environmental artist, Roy Staab, at Villa Terrace Museum in Milwaukee, 10:30-5 PM. Free and open to the public for special event. (page 6)

**Monday, June 6:** Butterfly Workshop, 6-8 PM, Village of Sturtevant Municipal Building, 2801 89th Street. (page 3)

**June 17-19:** The Midwest Renewable Energy Fair, Custer, WI. The nation's longest running event of its kind offering over 250 workshops on energy and sustainable living.

[www.theenergyfair.org](http://www.theenergyfair.org)

**Sunday, June 19:** SEGG White River Canoe/Kayak Outing, downtown Lyons, 1 PM. (page 5)

**Saturday, June 25:** SEGG/Weed Out! Racine, Colonial Park, 9-Noon. (see May listing)

## JULY

**Thursday, July 18th:** Ex Comm Meeting, The Olive Garden at the intersection of Green Bay Road and Highway 11 in Racine at 4:30 PM.

**Saturday, July 23:** Highway 38 Cleanup. Meet in the parking lot of Blessed Hope Church, corner of Hwy. 38 and Four Mile Road at **8:30 AM** (note earlier starting time) for check-in, safety equipment and area assignments. Wear weather-appropriate clothing, good walking shoes and insect repellent. Contact John Berge for more info: 262-633-8455 or [jberge35@wi.rr.com](mailto:jberge35@wi.rr.com)

**Saturday, July 30:** SEGG/Weed Out! Racine, Working in Colonial Park 9-Noon (see May listing)



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**Thank You!**

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From the Chair

## Speaking for the Trees

Continued from page 1

How can one make such an absurd statement and not be greeted by howls of anger or laughter or be dismissed from a job so obviously in conflict with such a statement? It's partly because we're barraged by even more outrageous statements about walls on Mexico's or Canada's border, about rampant voter fraud, or carpet bombing Syria to find out if "sand can glow in the dark".

Curious about the DNR's mission, I found it, arranged in poetic lines, there on the agency website:

*To protect and enhance our natural resources:  
our air, land and water;  
our wildlife, fish and forests  
and the ecosystems that sustain all life.  
To provide a healthy, sustainable environment  
and a full range of outdoor opportunities.  
To ensure the right of all people  
to use and enjoy these resources  
in their work and leisure.  
To work with people  
to understand each other's views  
and to carry out the public will.  
And in this partnership  
consider the future  
and generations to follow.*



From Dr. Seuss's The Lorax

Given the reductions in DNR staffing, the revision of the mission statement is probably not a high priority for a staff that is, like so many others, overwhelmed and beleaguered; but if you look closely, past all those words like "sustainable" and "healthy" and "rights" from a more thoughtful time, you can see the new motto emerge.

All you need to do is change one word and you have it- **To Ensure the right of some people to use these resources in their work.** Anything else would be some kind of doublespeak. Before it comes to this, you might want to register your support for the values embodied in the current mission statement. Go ahead. Call the DNR and tell them that you sign their paycheck and pay taxes. Tell them you speak for the trees and clean air and clean water. At least the staff will know what you mean.

-Tom Rutkowski



## BUTTERFLY WORKSHOP



The Sturtevant Beautification Committee will hold a butterfly workshop on **Monday, June 6, from 6-8pm**, at the newly constructed butterfly garden located at the Village of Sturtevant municipal building, 2801 89th Street.

Information will be available on how to attract butterflies to your garden by using pollinating plants and host plants. Proper soil preparation and planting techniques will also be discussed.

Attendees will be invited to help plant our first butterfly garden. Additionally, the first 15 persons (limit one per family) who attend will be given a free native plant so they can begin their own butterfly garden.

The plant give away is made possible through a grant from the Potpourri Garden Club.

Sturtevant Beautification Committee is a Racine-Kenosha Master Gardener Project and a member of Greening Greater Racine, an environmental initiative in the greater Racine area.

Dear SEGG members:

*From Amy Cagney, SEGG Member*

You may recall that last year at this time I wrote a short article about tending your yard. I asked that you cut the grassy areas with a push mower to avoid the use of gasoline, and, perhaps most importantly, to avoid the use of chemicals and fertilizers on these areas. I want to provide important information about these chemicals, and then add a personal note.

A commonly used chemical is 2,4-D, which was one of the active ingredients in Agent Orange, the defoliant used in the Viet Nam War. Studies have detected 2,4-D inside homes following outdoor application. Studies have found that 2,4-D can be tracked from lawns into homes, leaving residues of the herbicide in carpets, on surfaces, and in indoor air.

Exposure to pesticides can lead to acute and chronic health effects. There are many symptoms of acute exposure, some of which include: sweating, headache, fatigue, slow pulse, nausea and diarrhea, central nervous system depression, loss of coordination, confusion.

Children are often more susceptible to the toxic effects of pesticides than adults; they take in more pesticides to body weight than adults, and have developing organ systems that are more vulnerable and less able to detoxify toxic chemicals.

Yard treatments and household pesticides have been associated with childhood leukemia and other forms of cancer.

Information included in Risks from Lawn Care Pesticides, John Wargo et al., Yale University 2003.

On the personal side, I have become sick from these chemicals for over 20 years. I have had to deal with neighbors who would not cancel chemical applications even when I sent them a letter from my doctor stating I had a toxic reaction to the chemicals.

Because these chemicals are toxic, I would like to ask all SEGG members (800 at last count), to make arrangements to not use chemicals/fertilizers on their grass or in their yard.

If you need more information, please e-mail me at:  
[cas\\_53404@yahoo.com](mailto:cas_53404@yahoo.com)

Thank you!  
-Amy Cagney



## An SEGG Outing

### Racine Lakeshore and Root River Path Bike Ride



Join Us!!

Join fellow Sierrans on a club-sponsored bike ride, **Saturday, May 28 at 9 AM**. We will start at the DeKoven Center (park on the street) and ride north to the Wind Point lighthouse and back. We'll ride through Colonial Park, admiring the work of the crew doing the weed removal, and past the fish ladder, at least one way.

It will be about 15-18 miles round-trip. Almost all types of bikes will be appropriate; the trail through Colonial Park is gravel for about ¼ to ½ mile.

Wear a helmet, please! We want to preserve the brains of those who are smart enough to be Sierra Club members or nonmembers who choose to associate with SC members.

The ride will be at a relatively leisurely pace. We will admire or take note of certain things like bridges, Frank Lloyd Wright houses (from the outside), fish traps, lighthouses, our Great lake, invasive species, free woodland, and more. Call or email Allan Sommer to reserve a spot: [Sommerallan4@gmail.com](mailto:Sommerallan4@gmail.com)

262-716-6955

Save the date!

## Autumn Assembly

October 7-9, 2016

Bethel Horizons Camp and Retreat Center, Dodgeville, WI

part retreat /  
part conference

camp / hike / relax  
reconnect with nature



*From Barb Brattin*

As a Sierra Club member, you already know that time in nature is essential to a child's healthy development. Growing Up WILD is a project of the Council for Environmental Education, an organization dedicated to making sure every child gets that developmental need fulfilled by providing curriculum and training to early childhood educators, librarians, and caregivers.

If you are a teacher, librarian, parent, or grandparent eager to introduce young children to nature, you can receive Growing Up WILD materials by participating in free, interactive, hands-on workshops offered by these local Wisconsin Project WILD coordinators:

Urban Ecology Center  
1859 N 40th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53208  
[www.urbanecologycenter.org](http://www.urbanecologycenter.org)

Wehr Nature Center  
9701 West College Ave., Franklin, WI 53132  
<http://county.milwaukee.gov/WehrNatureCenter10115.htm>

Growing Up WILD programs are also offered at the Kenosha Public Library. Check the Youth Program Schedule at [www.mykpl.info](http://www.mykpl.info) for more information.

## White River Canoe/Kayak Outing

The White River connects Geneva Lake to Echo Lake in Burlington and ultimately drains into the Fox River.



**JOIN US!!**

### An SEGG Outing

I will lead a canoe/kayak trip on a short, but beautiful section of the White River on **Sunday, June 19 at 1 PM**. Meet at the park where Ore Creek and the White River connect in beautiful downtown Lyons (in the gravel parking lot south of Water St., on Mill St.). We will transport boats to the launching spot on Sheridan Springs Road, then move all the cars back to the park for parking (there is no parking on Sheridan Springs Road).

The river is not a wild one, but it is scenic and clear. If you tip over you only need to stand up to save yourself! It is a good river for beginners. Expect 2-3 hours to make the trip-and that is counting the boat drop-off and trip back to the parking area. The end has some optional whitewater! There are several options for refreshments in Lyons after the trip.

Call or email Allan Sommer to reserve a spot.

**Sommerallan4@gmail.com**  
**262-716-6955**

## The Bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus

*From Ross Astoria, SEGG Member*

For many years, Citizens' Climate Lobby volunteers have been discussing climate and energy with federally elected officials of both parties. Global warming, of course, remains one of the most polarizing policy topics between the parties, and when CCL volunteers meet with their Representative or Senator, they work to find common ground and to understand where they disagree. Especially given the continuing deterioration of the biophysical environment, this appears a slow work. Progress, however, is being made.

After several years of face to face meetings with Citizens' Climate Lobby volunteers, two members of Congress, Republican Curbelo and Democrat Deutsch, formed the first ever Bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus earlier this year. The two Representatives are growing the caucus Noah's Ark style--every member must join with a member of the other party. The caucus presently has twelve members and counting. On a conference call, Representative Curbelo told CCL volunteers that he is continuing to build the caucus and was confident that it would form the nucleus for federal climate legislation in the coming years.

(<http://ccl.podbean.com/e/ccl%E2%80%99s-march-2016-international-call-with-rep-carlos-curbelo/>)

The apparent indifference of Congress to climate change is frustrating, but beneath the surface there's a heavy percolation of ideas and discussion on climate. One meeting by one meeting, citizens are clearing the obstacles which are preventing Congress from acting on those discussions. The Bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus is a major development in the right direction.



# No Red Dye!

From Carol Berrier,  
SEGG Member

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology warns us not to use red dye in hummingbird feeders. Many commercial nectar solutions contain red dye.



Red dye in feeders is harmful.

A hummingbird consumes 10 grams of nectar solution per day. This means it ingests 17 times more red dye for its body weight than the maximum daily limit recommended for humans.

Red caps, bases, or decorations on feeders are adequate to attract the birds. Hummingbirds that have been fed red dye have higher mortality rates and tumors of the bill and liver.

Instead mix a more natural nectar with a ratio of 4 parts water to 1 part white sugar. I use a two-cup Pyrex measuring cup, fill with 1 cup water, add 1/4 cup sugar and put in the microwave. Heat until sugar has dissolved and nectar begins to boil. Cool before filling feeder.

Extra sugar may appeal to the birds, but it is NOT healthy and is harder for them to digest. Clean feeders every few days.

For orioles, use a ratio of 6 parts water to 1 part sugar. Orange halves, suet, grapes, peanut butter mixtures and watermelon are recommended. We all know they like jelly! Insects are an essential part of both species' diets.



## Environmental Art Exhibition

Milwaukee-based environmental artist, Roy Staab has created a site-specific installation for the Villa Terrace Museum on Milwaukee's lakefront. Manipulating invasive reeds and sand willow, he meticulously arranged large-scale, geometric patterns on the garden grounds with poetic and pleasing symmetry.

The work is called **Shadow Dance (image on page 8)** after Matisse's painting of a group of figures in a circle. Using his own vocabulary, it is the artist's interpretation of a formal French garden. Staab's installation is a beautifully balanced, delicate architecture constructed in elegant harmony with nature.

Staab has created site-specific installations across the US and in a dozen countries over four continents.

The exhibition, *Roy Staab: Nature in Three Parts*, featuring the installation and other works is on view June 5-September 18. A free exhibition opening is on Sunday, June 5 from 10:30-5 PM. Normal admission Wednesdays-Sundays is \$7.

[www.villaterracemuseum.org](http://www.villaterracemuseum.org) for more info.

## Ice Age Trail Hike Event a Success

From Allan Sommer

In spite of the threat of rain or snow showers, the day was surprisingly beautiful, a little chilly but clear with a slight breeze. Eleven hikers ranging in age from 11 to 73 met at the Bald Bluff parking lot on April 9 at 9AM to hike almost 4 miles northeast to the Horserider's Camp, and then back for a total of 7.9 miles. Nearly 3,000 calories were spent according to one activity-tracker.

Only after taking in the spectacular view (by Midwest standards) at the top of Bald Bluff did the group continue on. The trail was very hilly, intent on showing its glacial origins by highlighting the impact of the eskers, kames and kettles and the topographical relief. The next significant stop was to do a very short side-trip to the Stone Elephant where a few more pictures were taken. The group enjoyed a communal lunch and a chance to sit at the Horserider's camp.

We finished around 2:30 without having to use any of the first aid materials brought along. I think all of us considered this to be an outing that would bear repeating next year.



Hikers at Bald Bluff on the Ice Age Trail

# SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATORS

Senate District	Assembly District	County	Name	edress
11		Walworth/Whitewater	Stephen L. Nass	Sen.Nass@legis.wisconsin.gov
11	31	Walworth/Clinton	Amy Loudenbeck	Rep.Loudenbeck@legis.wisconsin.gov
11	32	Walworth/Lake Geneva	Tyler August	Rep.August@legis.wisconsin.gov
11	33	Walworth/Mukwanago	Cody Horlacher	Rep.Horlacher@legis.wisconsin.gov
21		Racine/Racine	Van Wanggaard	Sen.Wanggaard@legis.wisconsin.gov
21	61	Kenosha/Salem	Samantha Kerkman	Rep.Kerkman@legis.wisconsin.gov
21	62	Racine/Caledonia	Tom Weatherston	Rep.Weatherston@legis.wisconsin.gov
21	63	Racine/Rochester	Robin Vos	Rep.Vos@legis.wisconsin.gov
22		Racine/Kenosha	Bob Wirch	Sen.Wirch@legis.wisconsin.gov
22	64	Kenosha/Kenosha	Peter Barca	Rep.Barca@legis.wisconsin.gov
22	65	Kenosha/Kenosha	Tod Ohnstad	Rep.Ohnstad@legis.wisconsin.gov
22	66	Racine/Racine	Cory Mason	Rep.Mason@legis.wisconsin.gov

## NATIONAL ELECTED OFFICIALS

President	US	Barack Obama	<a href="https://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/">https://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/</a>
WI Senator	WI	Ron Johnson	<a href="http://www.ronjohnson.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact">www.ronjohnson.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact</a>
WI Senator	WI	Tammy Baldwin	<a href="http://www.baldwin.senate.gov/contact">www.baldwin.senate.gov/contact</a>
Representative	1st Congressional Dist.	Paul Ryan	<a href="http://paulryan.house.gov">http://paulryan.house.gov</a>

SEGG encourages you to contact your legislators on the issues you care about. Telephone numbers and "snail" mailing addresses are available on the legislators' websites.



## Explore, Enjoy And Protect The Planet

### 2016 SEGG Leadership

#### Executive Committee

Tom Rutkowski (Chair).....natom@wi.rr.com  
 Betsy Georg (Secretary).....bgeorg@hotmail.com  
 Judy Rockwell (Vice Chair).....jrockwell@gmail.com  
 Allan Sommer (Outings Chair).....sommerallan4@gmail.com  
 Barb Brattin.....bb81435@gmail.com  
 Karen Hermansen.....ehermansenjr@wi.rr.com

#### Other Group Leaders

Jeff Sytsna (Treasurer).....jeff12759@aol.com  
 Melissa Warner (Program Chair).....melissa.warner3@sbcglobal.net  
 Mary Schroeder (Hospitality).....ilovedogsandcats2@yahoo.com  
 Rebecca Eisel (Webmaster).....SeggWebAdmin@gmail.com  
 Barry Thomas (Conservation, Kenosha, Co.)...bthomas6@wi.rr.com  
 Vickie Stellato (Conservation, Racine, Co.).....gik@wi.net

The newsletter of the Southeast Gateway Group of the Sierra Club is published six times each year by the Group newsletter staff.

Please send any articles, photographs of group activities, letters, calendar submissions, corrections and comments to:

**Nicole Reid**  
**nreid23@wi.rr.com**

Please use subject line:  
**SEGG Newsletter**

**Deadline for**  
**August/September Issue:**  
**JULY 1, 2016**



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<http://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/southeast-gateway>

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- and more ways YOU can make a difference!



Environmental Art Installation (in-progress) by Milwaukee-based artist, Roy Staab.  
See page 6 for details and view newsletter photos in full-color on our website:  
[www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/southeast-gateway/newsletter](http://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/southeast-gateway/newsletter)