



Sierra

Newsletter of the Coulee Region Group

MAY 2023

"May your trails be crooked, winding, lonesome, dangerous, leading to the most amazing view. May your mountains rise into and above the clouds." - Edward Abbey

Locally Grown, Nationally Known
An online celebration of Wisconsin food, drink, and grassroots activism

Locally Grown, Nationally Known 2023
Wisconsin Chapter 2023

[DONATE](#)

Thursday, May 18 at 6:30 p.m.

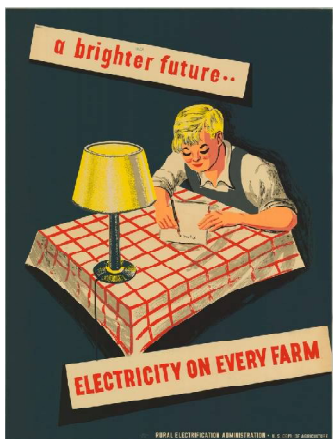
Have you ever tried Shroomschetta? It's just one of the mouthwatering, locally sourced goodies we'll hear about as we visit with our special guests from River Valley Ranch & Kitchens in Burlington, WI. River Valley is a sustainable mushroom farm that offers fresh mushrooms and a variety of delicious products at their farm store and regional farmers markets.

Join us from the comfort of your home, as we explore the connection between climate and food systems. This promises to be a fun-filled evening celebrating local food and drink and grassroots activism. Register today to reserve your spot and we'll send a link prior to the event!

Visit www.tinyurl.com/23LocalGrown to register.

May 3: Know Your Rural Utility

Join us online at 6:30 p.m. on May 3 to learn more about where many of Wisconsin's Rural Electric Cooperatives get their power and what we can do to transition them to clean energy.



Dairyland Power Cooperative is a generation and transmission cooperative that provides electricity for distribution co-ops across Wisconsin. From Scenic Rivers Electric Cooperative

to Bayfield Electric Cooperative, Dairyland provides power to 18 Wisconsin co-ops. Dairyland is also pursuing plans to build out their fossil fuel infrastructure by constructing a large, new gas plant in Superior. Not only would this plant negatively impact climate and health, it would be expensive.

The Inflation Reduction Act provides new opportunities, specifically for rural co-ops to invest in clean energy at a discount, making it a no-brainer that Dairyland should switch their plans.

Join us to learn more and take action! RSVP at www.tinyurl.com/WISC-RECs or call 608-315-2693.

Trempealeau Solar Open House

Despite predicted bad weather, a full house enjoyed an informative program about the new solar panels at the Shirley M. Wright Memorial Library in Trempealeau on April 15.

Library Director Jessica Schoonover talked about the library's journey to renewables, and how the many grants and donations received for this project have reduced the anticipated "payback period" to just four years.



Alicia Leinberger of Ethos Green Power Cooperative in Viroqua, the project installer, highlighted monitoring that helps Ethos and those with solar installations monitor their energy production. Representatives from MREA and the Couillard Foundation spoke about the Solar for Good program and other initiatives, like the Solar for Schools grants, that are speeding the transition to renewable energy.

Following the program, a Drive Electric Earth Day event in the parking lot allowed people to view and ask about a variety of EVs.

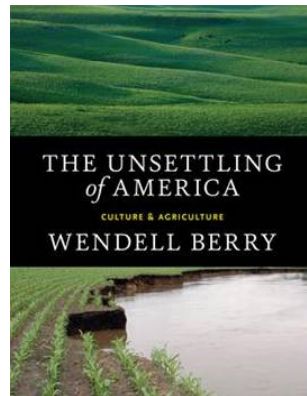
La Crosse Earth Fair



Despite cold and rainy weather, CRSC tabled at the La Crosse Earth Fair on April 30 at Myrick Park, highlighting the club's local work on clean water and renewable energy.

CRSC also sponsored the Drive Electric Earth Day electric vehicle display.

May 2: Online Book Club



Join fellow Wisconsin Chapter Sierra Club members on Tuesday, May 2 from 7 to 8 p.m. online to discuss this month's book club book, *The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture*, by Wendell Berry. Learn more: www.tinyurl.com/WISCMay23Bk

Conservation Lobby Day

CRSC Board member Ned Gatzke attended the Wisconsin Conservation Voters' in-person Lobby Day in Madison on April 25. Here's a summary of his report:

Several CRSC members and students from UWL, attended. Lee Donohue, Town of Campbell supervisor, gave an issues briefing on PFAS remediation, They discussed the \$106 million in Governor Evers' proposed budget for PFAS education, testing, and remediation.

Other issues on the agenda for citizen lobbyists included

- * funding for Local Communities Grants which would help local municipalities find and apply for federal and other clean water and energy funding opportunities;
- * \$10 million to support job training and re-employment in a clean energy economy,

- * funding for automatic voter registration whenever eligible Wisconsin residents interact with a state agency,
- * \$400,000 for a DNR plan to help restore *manoomin* (wild rice) in Wisconsin waters, including some backwaters of the upper Mississippi, and public education in Wisconsin ceded territory waters.

At the afternoon lobby sessions, Senator Pfaff supported these requests. Representative Oldenburg supported all but the automatic voter registration request, noting that the decision about what legislation came up for a vote was not up to him.

Even if you weren't at lobby day, you can still email or call your representatives about these issues. Learn more at www.tinyurl.com/WICV23BudgetAsks

World Migratory Bird Day

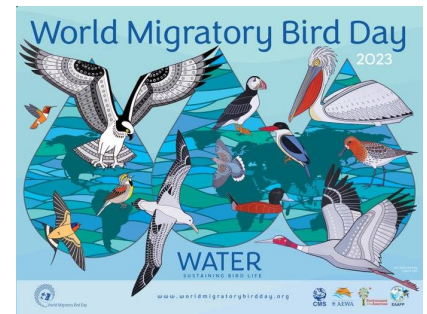
World Migratory Bird Day is an annual global awareness-raising campaign to celebrate the amazing journeys of migratory birds, and to inspire worldwide conservation of migratory birds and their habitats. World Migratory Bird Day is a time to reflect on the cyclical nature of bird migration as well as the fact that there are varying peak migration periods in the northern and southern hemispheres.

The Coulee Region Audubon Society will host a WMBD event on Saturday, May 6 at Myrick Park from 6:30 to 11:30 a.m., including a 6:30 a.m. bird walk, a family bird walk at 9:30, a bird presentation by River Valley Raptors at 10:30, and more. Visit their web page for more information: www.couleeaudubon.org.

The Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge will host a WMBD event on Saturday, May 13 which will include guided bird hikes, bird banding, and other family-friendly activities. Learn more at www.tinyurl.com/TNWRWMBD23.

The Mississippi Valley Conservancy will host a guided bird hike on Saturday, May 13 at Sugar Creek Bluff near Ferryville from 7 to 9 a.m. www.mississippivalleyconservancy.org/events/world-migratory-bird-day-hike

Other virtual events will be held during the first weeks of May including a history of WMBD on its 30th Anniversary, programs for students, a book club event, and "Dawn Chorus," an invitation to submit recorded bird sounds. Learn more at www.migratorybirdday.org/virtual-events/



More May Events

5/ 9: Why No Mo May? a Sustainability Chat at 2 p.m. online. www.tinyurl.com/SusInst-NMM

5/13: Bumblebee Talk at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve at 10:30 a.m. kvr.state.wi.us/Events/Calendar

5/13: Monarchs & Land Ethics talk, Kickapoo Valley Reserve, 1:30 p.m. kvr.state.wi.us/Events/Calendar

5/17: Jackson County Wellness Extravaganza at Lunda Memorial Arena, Black River Falls 4-30 to 7:30 p.m. www.tinyurl.com/brfwellness0523

5/17: Citizen Scientist Monarch Monitoring, Kickapoo Valley Reserve, 6 to 7 p.m. kvr.state.wi.us/Events/Calendar

5/20: Pace and Pedal Run, Walk, Bike, Black River Falls www.jacksoninaction.org/pace-and-pedal

5/25-27: Mississippi Valley Conservancy tree planting at Trempealeau Lakes. www.tinyurl.com/mvctree-plant52023

The CRSC Board of Directors meets monthly to discuss chapter and group business and plan events and programs. Members are welcome to attend the online meetings. If you would like the link to attend the next meeting, Tuesday, May 30 at 6:30 p.m., email CRSierraClub@gmail.com or call 608-315-2693.

June Potluck Meeting

Mark your calendars now for our annual June potluck gathering. We're not yet sure about where, but we do know when: Tuesday, June 27. We may host a volunteer event along with the potluck. Watch for more details in our June newsletter.



Energy Fair early bird tickets are available until May 15!
TheEnergyFair.org

NEED A NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Please email CRSierraClub@gmail.com or call 608-315-2693 if you can take over the newsletter in 2024 and beyond. The current editor needs a break.

ATTENTION: High school juniors and seniors!

\$300

Environmental Stewardship Award

The Coulee Region Sierra Club (CRSC) will recognize and award \$300 to a high school junior or senior who has demonstrated engagement and initiative in protecting the natural environment.

Application

includes:

- Environmental resume
- Short essay
- Brief portfolio



Submit application by:

July 1, 2023

- Eligible students must reside in the CRSC region which includes Crawford, Grant, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Richland, Trempealeau, and Vernon counties.
- For more info, visit sierraclub.org/wisconsin/coulee/Education or tinyurl.com/CRSC-Students.