

Greening Greater Racine Large Group Meeting

November 12, 2016

Report on Environmental Organizations

Compiled by Allison Thielen



Citizens' Climate Lobby

Ross Astoria, Chair, Board of Directors

The local chapter of Citizens' Climate Lobby continued to meet with Speaker Ryan's office during 2016. Nationally, they are preparing for Congress to introduce a greenhouse gas mitigation bill in 2017 and can use help to build local support in the first district. CCL has 338 meetings set up with Congress this coming week and Ross is urging everyone in this room to get involved.

WATERshed Program

Nancy Carlson, Director

We just wrapped up the 4th grade field trips to the Root River, held at the REC. During the experiences we taught 1,500 students about their connections to the Root River and Lake Michigan. In the spring we brought approximately 1,500 7th graders to Lake Michigan. We have a new logo, facebook page and website.

Alliance for the Great Lakes

Todd Brennan, Watershed Project Manager

Together with Riverbend, Hawthorn Hallow and Nancy Carlson we had another successful year partnering with the WATERshed program. We also worked with the health department and students from Case High school to take part in the restoration and investigation of Sam Meyers. All told this helps to achieve our goal of creating a watershed literate citizenry in Racine. Lastly, we drafted and submitted a letter from Racine organizations to all Great Lakes Governors opposing the return flow plan for Waukesha's diversion application.

Great Lakes Community Conservation Corps

Chris Litzau, President

Corps members have worked in Racine County on invasive species removal, water sampling in streams and at Wind Point Beach, debris jam removals in streams, installation of solar arrays under SolaRacine and the implementation of Green Zones in Uptown and Lakeside neighborhoods for energy efficiency and water consumption audits.

Seno K/RLT Conservancy

Nan Calvert, Director of Education

It is an exciting time for Seno Conservancy because we will be enacting their brand new Strategic Plan that will strengthen and energize our vision and mission for the future. We also became a Mighty Acorns Partner this year and have our first 2 schools on board. We are also exploring the possibility of becoming a partner in the Oak Ecosystem Recovery Plan through the Chicago Wilderness.

Caledonia Conservancy

Suzi Zierten, Executive Director

Here are a few of the things Caledonia Conservancy has accomplished since last fall: started new membership program, added new landowner trail easements, completed School to Nature spring and fall programs, received UWP Non-Profit Leadership Excellence Award 2016, received SEWISC grant for removing invasive species, 6 board members attended Land Trust Alliance Rally 2016 in Minneapolis, completed LTA Accreditation 5-year renewal application, conducted bird & flower walks on CC properties, Eagle Scout projects completed on Short Road Trail Head, and had our first Annual Volunteer Picnic in October 2016.

Root River Council

Jim Chambers, President

Since last Fall the Root River Council has co-sponsored two RootWorks public presentations, a paddle and walking tour of the RootWorks site, established a committee to address the future of Horlick Dam and published a brochure to that effect, hosted two river cleanup events, and hosted Root River Festival at River Bend Nature Center.

Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network

Dave Giordano, Executive Director

In the past year, Root-Pike WIN has appointed a new Board President and Treasurer, hired a new Executive Director (Dave Giordano) and re-hired Program Manager Allison Thielen. We have a renewed focus on implementing the three EPA-approved watershed restoration plans for the Root River, Pike River and Wind Point watersheds and we have helped move more than 40 projects from “not-started” to “in-progress” or “complete”. We continue to coordinate the Respect Our Waters media campaign featuring Sparkles the Water Spaniel and work closely with the Southeastern Wisconsin Clean Water Network, made up of 18 municipalities plus UW-Parkside.

Root River Environmental Education Community Center (REC)

Laura Schulz, Director

The Root River Environmental Education Community Center (REC) offered public weekend canoe and kayak rentals, educational workshops for community members, and hosted several private groups and organizations at our center during the 2016 season. New to 2016, we offered well-attended half-off boat rentals on the last Sunday of the month, added 3 new kayaks and 2 gently used canoes to their fleet, and hired Director Laura Schulz.

Eco-Justice Center

S. Rejane Cytacki, Executive Director

The Eco-Justice Center piloted the Racine Area Youth Farm Corps program in the summer of 2016 involving 4 high school students and 2 young adults acquiring hands-on experience in planting, harvesting, cooking, and selling produce. We are in the final stages of completion of our hoop house which will extend the Eco-Justice Center's growing season.

Racine County Food Bank**HALO's Growing Home program****Jamie Williams, Urban Farmer**

Growing Home is a Local food program of HALO, Inc. We launched Racine's first urban farm CSA this year and brought over 300 fresh produce baskets over a 20 week period to members of the community through CSA subscriptions to 19 families. Half of these households were low-income families and previous clients of HALO.

Dan Taivalkoski, Executive Director

The Racine County Food Bank is in the process of assessing and adapting and implementing strategies and tools from UW Extension's "Safe & Healthy Food Pantry Project" through our affiliate emergency food outlets. In addition, we are part of the "GGR Food Council Survey Task Force" that is in the process of designing a survey to help identify the needs of food pantry clients and their barriers to accessing or preparing healthy foods.

Wild Root Market**Rose Nelson, President**

Wild Root Market has vetted more than 30 potential sites throughout the city and is currently completing due diligence on our preferred location. With 820+ Owners, the Board of Directors is seeking to hire an Outreach Coordinator. If you or someone you know is interested in this part-time position, please visit the Wild Root Market website for the job description.

River Bend Nature Center**Jeanne Dernehl, Executive Director**

River Bend has hosted over 22,000 children, families and adults who participated in environmental education or eco-friendly outdoor recreation programs over the past 12 months. The Center was the designated field trip host for every RUSD kindergartner in Oct 2016 (over 1300 children), and watercraft and environmental programs were developed and expanded. Significant inroads in removal of invasive plant species were accomplished.

Hoy Audubon Society**Rick Fare, Member**

Hoy Audubon Society continues to offer many free bird walks, field trips, and monthly programs to members of the community. A special interest has been taken in the Samuel Myers restoration project where we have bird walks, remove litter, help with planting, and recently held our "Big Sit". Hoy has started a "Trees We Love" pilot program. Anyone can nominate a tree that is an outstanding example of its species. This year 4 trees were selected from 18 nominations. The owners were awarded a plaque, framed photo of the tree, and a researched historical narrative. These awards are a means to officially recognize and acknowledge as well as steward and protect a cherished, landmark tree.

Sturtevant Beautification Committee

Rose Woodruff, Representative

Sturtevant Beautification held a workshop in June to instruct and plant a butterfly garden to attract Monarchs and other butterflies. In September we were rewarded upon finding seven Monarchs feeding in our new garden.

Weed Out! Racine

Melissa Warner, Director

Weed Out! Racine continues its restoration work in Colonial Park and elsewhere. A variety of community groups have contributed over 500 hours this year planting trees and shrubs and pulling garlic mustard, dame's rocket and burdock. We recently incorporated and now are a stand-alone 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

Root River Wild Ones

Christina Russin, President

We sold over 3500 plants at our native plant sale in June, raising enough money to donate to the Chiwaukee Prairie Preservation Fund to purchase one of the remaining privately owned lots at Chiwaukee Prairie, protecting it forever as part of a wetland of international importance. We also partnered with Weed Out! Racine to remove invasives from Colonial Park.

Friends of Island Park

Kay Gregor

The newly-formed Friends of Island Park group's mission is to preserve, improve, and promote the park's historical significance and its use for the enjoyment of all residents and visitors. Membership is open to all persons or organizations interested in Island Park. Contact Kay Gregor at 262-681-0159.