

IN THIS ISSUE

Celebrating Earth Day

Check out the group's plans
for Earth Day 2008
PAGE 17

Recycling

Gym-shoe recycling
events near you
PAGE 19

What's Happening

Schedules of Spring Valley
and NWCCG events
PAGE 19

For the most up-to-date news,
be sure to visit us on the Web:

[http://illinois.sierraclub.org/
NWCCook](http://illinois.sierraclub.org/NWCCook)

Protecting Wisconsin Wolves

By Laura Franzen

In January, our own Northwest Cook County Group member and State Energy Chair Tom Borchard joined Sierra Club Outings Leader Mark Ginger and the River Prairie Group for a two day Timber Wolf Tracking Outing in Wisconsin. With cross country skis, snow shoes, late night camp fires and wolf howls, it was a perfect winter excursion.

Mark led the two day outing at Tree Haven Education Center in Wisconsin. The group was shown how to winter-track the elusive Timber Wolf from experienced trackers from the Timber Wolf Information Network.

The Timber Wolf Information Network is a non-profit organization created in 1989 with the intention of educating about the timber wolf.

According to the Network, timber wolves have many, many square miles of range. People are lucky to see a print or hear them.



COURTESY : WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

They are extremely shy, but members of the Network taught this group of 20 what to expect.

"One of the things we learned was that wolves were not reintroduced to Wisconsin, like in Yellowstone," Tom explained. "This is a natural rehabilitation from the UP or Minnesota."

Being on the endangered species list helped immensely – they were made illegal

PLEASE SEE PAGE 17

Leave No Child Inside: A New Initiative

By Wendy Valentine

An eight-year-old girl runs down a mud path chasing a butterfly. Trying to catch a frog, a six-year-old boy jumps into a pond. Junior high school kids from an overnight camp row a boat out onto a lake and drop their fishing lines over the side as a hawk soars above.

Two brothers, ages nine and eleven, play a game on their Wii for the first two hours on Saturday morning. For several more hours they IM, check email, watch DVDs and talk on their cell phones.

In which of these settings would you prefer to have your child?

The Chicago Wilderness Leave No Child Inside initiative can help you find

places and things to do to get your kids out of the house and into nature. Time spent in nature will benefit children's health and as a result, those children will hopefully grow up to be stewards of local natural areas.

"Everyone can relate to saving our natural resources, children and nature," said Marty Kenahan, Regional Coordinator of the campaign.

Last spring, the Chicago Wilderness consortium kicked off Leave No Child Inside hoping to get people to stop and think about what Kenahan says is obvious, that children need unstructured time outside and a sense of wonder.

"Chicago Wilderness recognizes the growing body of scientific evidence demonstrating how important direct

contact with the outdoors is to healthy childhood development, with emphasis on fitness, creativity, cognitive functioning, and a sense of wonder," according to the program website.

Electronics, parental fears, over-structured schedules and the loss of green space contribute to children's disconnection from nature.

Inspiration behind the movement came from Richard Louv's book, *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*.

Louv discusses the diseases and lifestyles of today's urban and suburban children, citing studies concluding that when children spend more time outdoors,

PLEASE SEE PAGE 18

The Wolves of Wisconsin

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

to hunt. By the 1960's they had been virtually extirpated from Wisconsin. They are not flourishing yet. They need so much land. 15 or 20 bands of wolves now roam Wisconsin. Education is the key to keeping these animals protected."

No wolves were seen, but there was very little disappointment about this. "These are rare, elusive animals," Tom shared. "They do not come and perform for us at our whim. I was not disappointed not to see them. Just knowing that they are there, just beyond our sight and hearing and getting a feeling for them was well worth our while. The education was phenomenal."

The group stayed in dorm-style rooms for two nights, with decent, group style eating. The weather was perfect wolf weather, well below freezing with 18-24 inches of snow on the ground. It flurried the entire weekend. The light, constant snow allowed animal tracks to show up. The group learned winter survival skills, skied cross country, and took two snowshoe hikes. At night they gathered around the fire and did wolf howls. They did hear a response. Tom was not sure if it was an echo, a timber wolf or coyotes. Still, it was incredibly fun for the whole group.

Tom highly recommends the trip

and advises Sierra Club members to keep an eye out—it will offered again next year. "It is the preeminent conservation, education, and outdoor activity!" he said.

Trip Overview

Nice Dorm facilities. Snowshoeing, winter cross country skiing and educational programs. Option to hike on Friday to extend the trip. Modestly priced at \$169 – 2 nights, two breakfasts, 1 dinner. Equipment provided.

Schedule

Friday: Wolf Ecology Class

Friday Evening: Introductory talk conducted by a volunteer tracker from the Timber Wolf Information Network.

Sat. Morning: Winter Ecology Class including shelter building and tracking.

Sat. Afternoon: Snowshoe hike/cross country skiing (with guide) looking for wolves all the time. Learned about habitat of wolves, denning spots, space requirements, habits. Given an idea of how much space they really need. As a treat, also learned about beavers.

<http://www.uwsp.edu/CNR/treehaven/>
<http://www.timberwolfinformation.org/>

—*Laura Franzen, co-editor of the leaf, is a freelance writer and communications consultant.*

From the Chair

Earth Day 2008 will be celebrated on April 19. This annual event has been growing and getting more exciting and fun every year.

We will be working in a new area of Spring Creek Forest Preserves, the Headwaters. When I asked one of the guest speakers and Master Natural Areas Restorer Extraordinaire, Stephen Packard, to describe what work we will be doing in this unique area, his reply was: "We will be clearing brush and planting seeds in an area of rolling hills where an ancient bur oak grove stands amid restored natural shrubland, open oak savanna, and hundreds of acres of prairie and marsh in the early stages of restoration."

Steve has been one of the main motivators behind the restoration work in this area. I got involved with restoration on the North Branch of the Chicago River in the 1980s because Steve was able to convince several Sierra Club members and the Cook County Forest Preserves that the gnarly mess of buckthorns should be removed from the Forest Preserves. I am pleased and honored that he will be joining us again this year.

If you are able to help with planning Earth Day or other activities please call or email me. To talk to me about your interests, my home phone number is 847-967-7835, email is misky272000@yahoo.com. I hope to see you soon.

On the Executive Committee elections, congratulations to Barbara Hill, Tom Borchard, and Joe Fauci.

—Donna Hriljac

Earth Day 2008

Feel the dirt in your hands amidst rolling hills and ancient oak groves.

April 19, 2008, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Spring Creek Headwaters, Spring Creek
Clear Brush - Plant Seeds — Bring a Friend!

Contact Donna Hriljac — 847.967.7835, misky272000@yahoo.com.

Lunch and Speakers

12 p.m. to 1 p.m.

(possibly Rep. Melissa Bean and Stephen Packard!)

After the speakers, workers can cut more brush and others can go on tours.

Spring Creek Headwaters

To get to the Headwaters parking area take Higgins Road north of I-90 and west of Rt 59/Sutton Rd. Turn north onto Wichman Rd.

We will provide tools, great company, guest speakers, tours of the area, snacks and lunch.

Wear sturdy shoes and long pants and work gloves if you have them. Old clothes with long sleeves. In cooler weather wear layers, in warmer weather, bring sunscreen, and a hat. **We will cut** invasive brush and burn it, maybe pull weeds. The sites we have been working on since 2004 have seen dramatic improvement. Rare bird populations have spiked, in some areas, 950 percent. And we have only impacted 10 percent of the total area! Let's keep up the good work!

Sponsors: Sierra Club NWCC Group, Spring Creek Stewards, Audubon of Chicago, Riding Club of Barrington Hills, Cook County Forest Preserves Citizens for Conservation, REL, Boy Scout Troops



the leaf

Spring 2008

Disclaimer: Published quarterly, *the leaf* is the official newsletter of the Northwest Cook County Group of the Sierra Club. Opinions expressed in articles are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Sierra Club. *the leaf* may be redistributed as long as the content remains unaltered and full credit is given both to the author and to the Northwest Cook Group. Copyrights for the print and electronic content belong to the Sierra Club and the Northwest Cook County Group.

EDITORS

Laura Franzen
Llh304@comcast.net
Robin Kedzior
robinblue@juno.com

LAYOUT AND DESIGN

Paras Bhayani
pbhayani@gmail.com

COPY EDITOR

Helene O'Neill
hroneill@aol.com

CHAIR

Donna Hriljac
misky272000@yahoo.com

CONSERVATION CHAIR

Vacant

ENERGY CHAIR (STATE)

Tom Borchard, 847.390.8386
thomas.borchard@illinois.sierraclub.org

FUNDRAISING CHAIR

Vacant

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Greg Stolzer, 847.561.5004
gstolzer@hotmail.com

OUTINGS CHAIR

Scott Etienne
scott.etienne@illinois.sierraclub.org

POLITICAL CHAIR

Barbara Hill, 847.991.3204
barbara.hill@illinois.sierraclub.org

VISIT US ON THE WEB:

www.illinois.sierraclub.org/NWCook

Getting Children Outdoors

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

that when children spend more time outdoors, obesity and related diseases like diabetes can be lessened, as can childhood mental disorders.

"Studies suggest that nature may be useful as a therapy for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), used with or, when appropriate, even replacing medications or behavioral therapies," Louv wrote in his book.

Louv explains what he refers to as nature-deficit disorder and how it can be the result of the "environmental/cultural change." A "rapid move from a rural to a highly urbanized culture," changed the daily lives of children. Instead of "doing farm chores, baling hay, splashing in the swimming hole, climbing trees," today's urban children watch TV, play video games, sit at computers and engage in structured physical activities primarily.

Fortunately for those living in the Chicago Wilderness areas, we have 360,000 acres of forests, prairies and other protected open spaces and an existing network of institutions working to achieve the goals of Leave No Child Inside. Other groups throughout the nation also run LNCI programs.

The Chicago Wilderness consortium has more than 200 allied private and public organizations working to protect natural environments from Southeastern Wisconsin, across Northeastern Illinois and Northwestern Indiana.

Learn more and find local natural areas at KidsOutside.info and Chicagowilderness.org. Anyone interested in volunteering for LNCI should contact Marty Kenahan at 312-545-1007 or mkenahan@gmail.com.
—Wendy Valentine is a freelance writer living in Palatine, Ill.

Goals of Leave No Child Inside

The Chicago Wilderness Leave No Child Inside initiative is an effort to promote children's health and foster generations of kids who care about nature and will protect it. Leave No Child Inside seeks to:

- Get more children outside in local nature and increase the amount and quality of time they spend there
- Actively engage adults – parents, caregivers, young adults, educators, decision-makers, and others – in providing access and opportunities for children to explore and play in nature
- Bring nature to children: Create safe places and programs to provide more and improved outdoor nature exploration opportunities for children
- Foster a regional conservation ethic and promote overall environmental welfare for the benefit of children and all the region's residents

Upcoming Events and Volunteer Opportunities for Leave No Child Inside

April 19, 2008: Dia del Nino at the UIC Pavilion; Especially in need of Spanish speaking volunteers.

May 17-18, 2008: Chicago Green Festival at Navy Pier.

June 3-8, 2008: Family Fun Festival at Millennium Park; any and all foreign language skills will help welcome international visitors.

Volunteer contact: Marty Kenahan at 312-545-1007 or mkenahan@gmail.com

Links and Inner City Outings for Kids

Join Colin Tysoe, chair of Chicago Inner City Outings (ICO) (and our own NWCC group member!) at the NWCCG Program Meeting on May 8, 2008. Colin will be giving a presentation entitled Inner City Outings; Helping Treat Nature Deficit Disorder.

Links:

www.Chicagowilderness.org

www.Chicagowilderness.org/explore/sites/index.cfm

www.KidsOutside.info



Announcements

Gym Shoe Recycling Project: Bring your old gym shoes to Spring Valley Nature Center between March 13 and April 30. There are restrictions on what can be recycled. Call 847.985.2100 for more information.

A Member of the Family: Congratulations to John Yapelli who, after hundreds of volunteer hours at Spring Creek Forest Preserve has landed a job as Restoration Specialist with the Forest Preserve District of Cook County! Who says nice guys finish last? Way to Go, John!

Group Calendar

April 10, 2008—Coyotes in Chicagoland

Join Chris Anchor from the Cook County Forest Preserve and learn how we can best co-exist with these “neighbors.”

May 8, 2008—Inner City Outings

Colin Tysoe, our own NWCC group member and Chair of Chicago Inner City Outings (ICO), will be giving the group presentation entitled Inner City Outings; Helping Treat Nature Deficit Disorder. Chicago ICO provides opportunities to children and youth from economically disadvantaged neighborhoods to explore the outdoors.

Many children have never even visited the forest preserves that adjoin their communities. In addition to hiking, camping, nature center visits and games, they also do service projects such as habitat restoration. Come learn about this fabulous program!

May 17, 2008—NWCCG Restoration Workday

Help us continue our restoration work for Spring Valley Nature Sanctuary in Schaumburg. Helping to restore native habitat is our way of saying thanks to Spring Valley for letting us use the nature center. Meet in the Spring Valley parking lot at 8:45 a.m. We will work until about noon. Gloves and tools provided. Contact Greg at gstolzer@hotmail.com for more information.

June 12, 2008—An American Icon

Join Clayton Daughenbaugh, Midwest Field Organizer for the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance for a very special presentation. Robert Redford narrates this slideshow documenting citizen efforts to designate public lands in southern Utah’s spectacular canyon country as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. It’s a spectacular journey through redrock splendor.

Program meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month, September through June, at Spring Valley Nature Sanctuary at 1111 East Schaumburg Road in Schaumburg. Meetings start at 7:00 p.m. and the program, focusing on natural history or green issues, starts at 7:30 p.m. Meetings are free and open to all. For more information contact Greg Stolzer at gstolzer@hotmail.com or 847.561.5004.

See the Outings section of *Lake & Prairie* for more information.

Spring Valley Events

The Schaumburg Park District’s Spring Valley Nature Center & Heritage Farm offers numerous educational programs and events that help people forge connections with the natural world.

Sunday, May 4 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Backyards for Nature Fair and Native Plant Sale

An extensive variety of native wildflowers, ferns, grasses, and shrubs are available for purchase at this annual event. Native Illinois plants are better adapted to our climate and soils than the cultivars commonly sold at nurseries and require no fertilizers, pesticides, and less water once established. They also help support native butterflies, birds, and other wildlife. The fair will also include the sale of birdhouse kits and information on backyard bird feeding, home composting, controlling aggressive exotic plants, children’s garden activities, and native wildflower seedlings to take home. Native plants may be pre-ordered at discounted prices (prior to April 25) or purchased on the day of the fair. Call 847.985.2100

Saturday, May 3 from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m.

Breakfast with the Birds

A casual naturalist-led walk through Spring Valley’s varied habitats to seek out the many colorful migratory birds passing through. The program will conclude with a light breakfast at the log cabin and is suitable for young or old, novice or experienced bird watchers.

There is a \$7/resident or \$9/non-resident fee.

Friday, May 16 from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Nature’s Night Life

Provides adults with an opportunity to learn ways of deepening their own understanding of local ecology as well as emotional connections to nature through guided evening activities along the trails. The program concludes with refreshments around a campfire. There is a \$7/resident or \$10/non-resident fee.

Sunday, June 1 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Spring Wild Edibles

The event will introduce participants to the ancient art of foraging for wild plants. You can learn to identify, harvest, and prepare a variety of wild plants during the morning walk. This program will conclude with a mini-feast of wild delicacies.

There is a \$12/resident or \$18/non-residents fee.

Saturday, June 21 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

A Summer Solstice Celebration

This family program will include an evening adventure on the trails, a sampling of natural treats and other refreshments, and a twilight wagon ride through the prairie. The cost is \$15 per family (resident) or \$22.50 per family (non-resident).

Spring Valley is located at 1111 E. Schaumburg Road, just west of Meacham Road. The site’s grounds and 3+ miles of trails are open every day from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. during the winter. For more information on facility hours and other programs, please call 847.985.2100 or visit www.parkfun.com. Pre-registration is encouraged for many Spring Valley programs, since some do fill up quickly.