



"Rooted in Hope"

Racine Dominican Eco-Justice Center

Summer 2014

Vol. 9 Issue 1

Vision:
Justice for Earth

Mission:
Environmental education and
care of Earth in the context
of community,
contemplation, creativity,
and cultivation

Values:
Conservation
Education
Sustainability

For Programs & Tours
262-681-8527

eco-justice@racinedominicans.org

For Hermitage reservations
262-898-2581 (day)
262-681-2146 (evenings)

www.racinedominicans.org/eco-j.cfm



Alverno Intern

Laura Sonberg is interning at the EJC this summer. Originally from Chicago, Laura is a senior at Milwaukee's Alverno College, majoring in biology with aspirations to live and work on a farm. As "Assistant Garden Manager," she is learning about soil conditioning, composting, planting, mulching, watering, weeding, and harvesting vegetables. Laura is also helping with the care of our animals. Grace, our Golden Retriever looks forward to "running free" during morning chores

and playing ball with Laura at break times. In addition to her work at the Center, Laura participates in an internship seminar at Alverno and volunteers at Happy Endings cat shelter. When you visit the Center this summer you are likely to find Laura working in the gardens where she'll gladly share with you the activities she's been doing and what she has learned.



EJC Staff and Community

S. Janet Weyker, OP, Ex. Director
Kate Kirbie, Assistant to the Director
Michael Raschke, Maintenance
Laura Sonberg, Intern
S. Rose Marie Dischler, OP
S. Kathleen Bohn, OP
S. Mary Ann Weyker, OP

EJC Board Members

Charlie Tennesen, President
S. Alice Drewek, OSF, Vice-President
S. Rosalie Lauer, OP, Secretary
Michael Meier, Treasurer
Tiffany Behrends
Nan Calvert
Eric Carlberg
S. Evelyn Lins, OP
Marilynn Pelky
Amy Ray
William Sklba
Rose Woodruff

Humming and Buzzing

It's not just the bees that are busy at the Eco-Justice Center this time of year! Board and Committee members, staff and volunteers are also hard at work keeping the Center a vibrant and beautiful place with an exciting future. Our fresh Strategic Plan that began with a day of reflection and input in February, is almost ready for approval; additional funding resources are being explored by the Development Committee; curriculum for spring and summer camps have been established; the tree house is under construction; and celebrations of the seasons and eco-spirituality sessions are being held. We invite you to come for a visit, lend a hand if you have time, or become a supporting friend of the Center by using the enclosed envelope to make a contribution. Special thanks go to all who have contributed toward our needs through our winter newsletter; we received \$7,540 through your generosity in the past six months. We depend on your continued help to keep us humming and buzzing!



- Charlie Tennesen, Board President



The EJC's brand new log splitter, hand-built by Michael Raschke, was initiated on April 17th when a group of volunteers spent three hours making a good supply of fire wood for next winter.

"From here on, the primary judgement of all human institutions, professions, programs and activities will be determined by the extent to which they inhibit, ignore, or foster a mutually-enhancing human/Earth relationship."

-Thomas Berry



The asphalt damaged by destructive tunneling done by gophers over the years was repaired this spring. The smooth entrance to the barn is a great improvement.

Upcoming Events

June 21: Summer Solstice
 June 23-July 25 Ecology Camps at the Farm
 September 6: Fermenting Workshop
 September 13: Mandala Creations
September 21: Fall Festival
 September 23: Autumnal Equinox
 October 11: A Day of Felting
 October 18: Brick Oven Bake
 October 25: Composting Workshop
 November 13: Bread and Soup Making
 November 8: Bio-dynamic Farming
 December 6: Origami Workshop

Upcoming 10th Anniversary

October 4, 2014 will mark the 10th Anniversary of the Eco-Justice Center's founding. Thanks to a grant received from the Racine Community Foundation, a video telling the story of the Center's development over the years is being made this summer. It will be shown for the first time on Oct. 4th and can be viewed on our website after that. The video will be used at presentations and when we have displays at environmental and public events.

Fall Festival

In anticipation of the anniversary, our Fall Festival will feature a photo timeline showing the significant happenings at the EJC over the past 10 years. We encourage you to make a note on your calendar to attend the festival on Sept. 21st. In addition to the regular fun activities, we hope to have hay wagon rides, several new demonstration activities, and tours of the tree house! The Packers decided to play the Detroit Lions on the same day as our festival; fans can watch the game on a big screen TV in the barn and enjoy the EJC festivities on the same day! Free popcorn for all who dressed in "green and gold" for the festival!



New Kids in the Family

"April Rose" and "Pattie Kay", female Alpine kids, joined the goat family this spring. They were bottle fed for several weeks before weaning. We look forward to the possibility of making cheese and soap from goat milk in the future. The goats and their climbing apparatus are a big hit with all our visitors.

Tree House Progress

Still under construction, we hope the tree house will be ready for use by our summer campers! Bruce Zahn, architect for the house addition and hermitage, has contributed many, many hours of research and design to make this tree house possible. Jon Behrends, a professional contractor, provided his expertise to build the structure with the help and muscle of Michael Raschke. We are also grateful to the 92 persons who contributed funds for the tree house and the anonymous donor who matched all the funds given through our last newsletter appeal. The names of donors, architect and builders will appear on the tree and leaves that will decorate the west side of the tree house. We are excited about seeing nature from a new perspective while enjoying the amazing little house in the trees!



Eco-Spirituality Series

Eric and Melissa Carlberg, the couple who provides music and songs for many of our Solstice and Equinox celebrations, brought another reflective program to the EJC this year. On one Friday for four months, a group gathered for environment-focused reflection, songs, stories, and conversation. Sessions featured a unique story of creation including a reflection with seeds, an ashes service, blessing the hands of us farmers and gardeners, and a creative story about our daily interaction with nature and plastic. The series will begin again next January.



The Carlbergs playing music at "Ashes to Ashes, Loam to Loam," part of the Eco-Spirituality Series.

First Spring Camp

This year we offered our first "Fun at the Farm" Spring Break Camp for children ages 5-8. Campers enjoyed four days of their spring break learning about the farm animals, bees, plants, and chickens. After meeting the animals on Monday, children made masks and dressed up as their new friends. Tuesday the campers transformed into bees including the queen, her attendant and a lazy drone. Wednesday brought songs of plants and a game of hot potato. While every day was fun and interactive, the big day everyone was waiting for was Thursday when the campers got to see a chick hatching from its egg. The chicks did not disappoint. We look forward to offering spring break camp again Tuesday-Friday, April 7-10, 2015.



Volunteers

Volunteers are necessary to keep the Eco-Justice Center functioning and looking its best. Each year community members donate more than 5,000 hours to help in a variety of ways. This spring we've had students from Racine Montessori School, The Prairie School, and Lewis University, groups from Johnson Bank, and Conway Express, along with many individual volunteers. Thank you for your hard work; we couldn't do it without you!



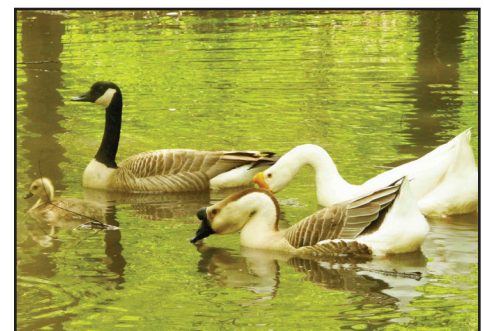
Wish List

- Easy-up canopy tents
- Whole corn
- Sand paper
- Paint brushes (1" and 2")
- Fiskars hand pruner
- White latex paint (exterior)
- White primer (exterior)
- Yard tarps
- Pine chip animal bedding
- Sponges
- Sharpie markers
- Bungee cords
- Half-pint glass jars with lids
- "Forever" postage stamps



Vineyard

Despite the harsh winter, all 16 grape vines survived and are growing well. This year we are noticing clusters of tiny grapes at nearly every bud! However, to ensure a strong root system, we are again pinching off the clusters. Next summer we expect to be enjoying home grown grapes, juice, and jelly; perhaps, we may even venture into making wine.



"Little Squirt," a lone gosling has joined the big boys at the EJC. It has bonded with Will, Rosie, Chives and the ducks on the pond.

Eco-Justice Center
Sponsored Ministry of
Sisters of St. Dominic
7133 Michna Rd, Racine, WI 53402



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Fall Festival

Sunday, Sept. 21st
11am-4pm

Live Music • Delicious Food • Silent Auction • Demonstrations
Veggie Stand • Gift Shop • Kid Games • Pony Rides



Seasons of the Sun

Have you attended a Solstice or Equinox celebration at the EJC? Four times a year we celebrate the changing of season and invite you to join us. The solstice on June 21st, marks the beginning of summer. We will gather outside the barn at 7pm with a bonfire and process to the Medicine Wheel Garden for a ceremony of stories, songs, drumming, and learning the history of the Medicine Wheel. Bring a light appetizer to share after the ceremony. This year our Seasons of the Sun Celebrations are funded with support from the Forest County Potawatomi Foundation.

Forest County
Potawatomi
FOUNDATION



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Tax deductible donations can also be made on line through Pay Pal on our website.