



The Warbler

A Periodic Newsletter of the Friends of the Welty Environmental Center, Inc.

Volume 6: Issue 2

April 2006

ANNUAL MEETING: 30 APRIL 2006

INVITATION

You Are Invited To Attend the Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Welty Environmental Center. This year's program will begin at 2:00 PM at the Welty Environmental Center (**not** the picnic shelter) in Beckman Mill County Park. The park is about 6 miles west of Beloit, Wisconsin on County Road H, one mile south of State Highway 81. The Center is nestled in the trees and wetlands of the park, and in view of Raccoon Creek and the rustic and historic Beckman Mill. Come for the meeting, speakers, and to enjoy the sights and nature of the park. Friends and family will enjoy the event as well and are welcome.

MADDOX TO BE GUEST SPEAKER

FWEC is excited to announce that the guest speaker for the Annual Meeting will be **Mike Maddox**, Horticulture Educator for the Rock County UW-Extension and Rotary Gardens, the first public-private partnership of its kind in Wisconsin. His presentation, titled "Treemendous Trees," will address the environmental, economical, physiological, and social benefits that trees bring to our lives. Instinctively, we know trees are a "good thing." We seek out trees for recreation. We commemorate special events by planting trees in someone's honor or memory. We plant trees for shade, for bird habitat, or for any one of a number of other reasons. But how do we prove to members of our communities, to developers, and to city/county planners that trees have positive economic and social value? Come listen to Mike's presentation to hear the answer to that question.

EVENT ACCOMMODATIONS

The Annual Meeting will be held in our temporary Center at the southeast corner of Beckman Mill Park. Please park in the lot near the picnic shelter. Beverages will be served.

NOMINATIONS TO BOARD

Four Directors-at-large will be completing their terms of service on the Board. Three of these directors, Neil Deupree, Brad Paulson, and Robert Schwaegler, have agreed to be re-nominated to serve another two-year term. Samira Bourkadi, a Personal Banking Officer at M&I Bank, has agreed to be nominated for the fourth position. An additional position, completing a term that will end next year, remains open at this time. We welcome your suggestion of a nominee.

Our Treasurer, Richard Newsome, is completing his fifth year in that position and thus is not eligible for re-nomination to that post. We thank him for his dedicated service, and expect him to re-join the Board in the near future. Theresa Barrett, Office Manager at Caritas, the non-profit food bank and clothing source for poor and disadvantaged people in Beloit, has agreed to be nominated to a three-year term as Treasurer. She has a strong background in bookkeeping and computer skills, and has experience with several non-profits in Rock County.

Dave Dobson, Nominating Committee Chair

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I was pleased to be present two months ago for a visit "from on high." The Creamery Building at Beckman Mill Park was the venue, as the Friends of Beckman Mill, the Friends of the Welty Environmental Center, and Rock Co. Parks Department hosted a visit from WI Department of Natural Resources, Secretary, Scott Hassett, and WI Secretary of Agriculture, Rod Nilsestuen, and their various assistants, for a short ceremony. There was not much advance notice of the visit, and Tanya did an admirable job of quickly coordinating hospitality.

In the ceremony, Secretary Hassett presented a check to Jim Welsh, Executive Director of the Natural Heritage Land Trust, for 358 acres being added to Avon Bottoms Natural Area, which is considered one of the finest remaining examples of flood-plain forest in the State. It is located in sections 22 and 28 of Avon Township. Rock County Parks owns 14.8 acres, including Sugar River Park, across the road from Avon Bottoms.

As we strolled around the mill pond, I enjoyed conversation with Pat Leavenworth, State Conservationist with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. She was enthusiastic about what we are doing at the Welty Center; she agrees that conservation is doomed if we fail to educate the next generation to appreciate and understand the natural environment.

I am sad to report the death of Peter Maiken on March 5 after a seven month battle with lung cancer. As a former Board member, Pete encouraged FWEC to have a 10 minute video professionally produced to use to introduce WEC to community groups. He would be pleased to know that the video has been used in 6 presentations so far this year. One of these groups was the Beloit Noon Kiwanis, which has generously funded our request for a tent/canopy.

I challenge each of you to think of groups that might be interested in learning about the Welty Center. Please send your suggestions, and the name of a suitable contact person to Tanya Zastrow, or to me.

Stephanie Dobson, President



Secretary Hassett (right)
Mike Guisleman (left)

UPCOMING WELTY CENTER EVENTS

(FWEC members may receive discount fee rates; ask for details when you register)

Saturday, April 29. *Interpretive Trail Guide Training Session.* 10:00 AM - Noon: Well-trained trail guides can greatly enhance the experience Welty Center visitors have at Beckman Mill Park. Trainees are strongly encouraged to attend both this and the 6 May session. The trail will have its grand opening during the Welty Nature Rendezvous.

Sunday, April 30. *Annual Meeting of the Friends of WEC.* 2:00 PM,

Saturday, May 6. *Interpretive Trail Guide Training, second session.* 10:00 AM - Noon:

Thursday, May 25. *Lil' Eco-Buddies - Water.* 6:00 - 7:00 PM: For ages 3-5 with parent. Registration fee required.

Saturday, May 27. *Welty Nature Rendezvous.* 9:00 am - 2:30 PM. Fun for the whole family!

Thursday, June 1. *Invasive Species Month Kick Off.* 6:00 PM: Learn about invasive species and what you can do to help. For all ages.

Thursday, June 15. *Eco-Buddies - Crazy Nuts.* 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM: For ages 6-13. Registration fee required.

Friday, June 16. *Grandparents and Grandkids, Together in Nature - Fishing.* 1:00 - 3:00 PM: For ages 6-10 with Grandparent. Registration fee required.

...AND A WONDERFUL ASSORTMENT OF SUMMER PROGRAMS FOR ALL AGES!

VISIT WWW.WELTYCENTER.ORG FOR DETAILED INFORMATION ON ALL PROGRAMS

ANNOUNCING THE 3RD ANNUAL WELTY ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER NATURE RENDEZVOUS

Celebrate spring at beautiful Beckman Mill Park on **Saturday, May 27** for the Welty Nature Rendezvous, a free event for the entire family. Enjoy the natural setting of Beckman Mill Park, attend presentations and demonstrations, learn how you can take action for conservation, browse and shop at numerous exhibitor booths, eat breakfast and/or lunch, and have fun. Place a bid in the silent auction.

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

8:30-10:00 -French toast/sausage breakfast at the picnic shelter. Also, there will be guided bird walks highlighting colorful spring migrants, leaving from the picnic shelter.

9:00-10:00 - Insects Among Us (meet at the Center)

9:30-10:30 -Yoga by the Dam

10:00-2:00 -Kids and adult activities and exhibits

10:00-11:00 - Rain Garden/Prairie Program

11:00-1:00 - Live Reptile Show for all ages

Noon-1:30 -Lunch at the picnic shelter

Noon-1:00 - Basket Weaving Class

1:00-2:00 Hybrid Cars: tax and environmental benefits

Look for additional items and events posted during the day in or near the picnic shelter.

!Volunteers are needed to help at this event. Jobs range from serving food to tending an exhibit table.

!In-kind donations of picnic supplies, items for the silent auction, and baked goods also are welcomed.

!Please contact Tanya Zastrow at 361-1377 or email to info@weltycenter.org if you can help.

PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Over 200 gallons of collected sap was turned into over 4 gallons of pure maple syrup as twenty five third grade classes from the School District of Beloit ventured to Big Hill Park for the maple sugaring programs. What a success! Last year, there was a problem with name tags for the kids not sticking to their coats in the cold weather. A special thanks go to Dave and Stephanie Dobson who spent a few hours making 500 tree-cookie name tags! It was well worth it as one teacher commented in her program evaluation that the students were very impressed that WEC made the extra effort to get to know the them.

The maple sugar programs consists of three stations: maple tree identification and photosynthesis, process of making maple syrup, and a video on the history of maple sugaring. Classes are split into three groups and rotate between the three stations. Volunteers are critical in making these programs successful! Beloit College students came through as they helped tap the trees and prepare the grounds. Many of the students tended stations during the programs. FWEC members came through also as they also led stations and helped at the pancake breakfast.

This year, on March 18, 2006, Welty held a pancake breakfast in conjunction with the Maple Sugar Fest. Once again the City of Beloit provided face painting for the kids and the Logan Museum of Anthropology exhibited real Native American artifacts from maple sugaring. The pancake breakfast served up tasty pancakes with pure maple syrup from Hoghaven Maple Farms. They provided the maple syrup for the breakfast and also sold maple syrup. It was a popular item and they sold out of all the maple syrup they brought! An estimated 250 people attended the festival and enjoyed pancakes. Thank you to all the volunteers that made these programs and festivals possible and a success! We appreciate you! Special thanks to Sam Niehans for all his hard work with the pancake breakfast!

Tanya Zastrow, WEC Program Director



Tanya & the kids at Big Hill Park

Help Wanted!

This spring, volunteers are needed to help with gardening, habitat improvement, and removal of alien plants from Beckman Mill Park. Please contact Val Dunagan (362-4703) or Dick Newsome (365-2609) if interested.

Join the Friends of the Welty Environmental Center, Inc. Today

Help support environmental education and programming in our region. FWEC members receive issues of this newsletter and information about programming and events. We have 501(c)(3) tax exempt status, and are solely a private, non-profit educational organization. All dues and contributions are tax-deductible.

Membership Dues for Calendar Year 2006 (select one)

Student/Child (\$5) Individual (\$10) Family (\$15) Organizational (\$100) Life (\$1000)

We welcome your support. Please give the greatest **total contribution** (including dues) you can this calendar year.

Level	Amount	Level	Amount
Dues	\$5-15	Cardinal	\$100
Swallow	\$25	Bluebird	\$150
Killdeer	\$50	Crane	\$250
Goldfinch	\$75	Great Blue Heron	\$500 +

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State, Zip: _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Total (Dues & Contribution): \$ _____

Make check and mail to: Friends of the Welty Environ.
Center, Inc., P.O. Box 131, Beloit, WI 53512

Mission Statement

"To provide leadership in environmental and ecological education to students, teachers and individuals of all ages so that the residents of this region can make informed decisions leading to the respect for and the enjoyment, preservation and sustainable use of our natural resources."

FWEC Board of Directors

Stephanie Dobson: *President* Sam Niehans: *Vice President*
Richard Newsome: *Treasurer* David Dobson: *External Secretary*
Nancy Stabb: *Internal Secretary*

At-large Directors:

Heidi Andre Neil Deupree Hugo Henry
Tom Klubertanz Robert Schwaegler
Brad Paulson Mike Powers

"Warbler" Newsletter Editors

Nancy Stabb Tom Klubertanz

FRIENDS
OF THE



WELTY ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER, Inc.
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Visit us at www.weltycenter.org