

**By Emerson Howell Nagel**

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## **Evanston Ecology Center website content**

Evanston Ecology Center programs and classes focus on environmental education, natural history and conservation.

Please register early! Classes fill quickly; please call us at 847/448-8256 for class status.

The Ecology Center is located at 2024 McCormick Blvd. (at Bridge Street).

EEA member fee = Evanston Environmental Association member fee.

### **Ecology Center Update**

The Ecology Center wants to help you with great “Green Solutions” this summer! Three of the classes we will offer should help you create solutions to life’s little challenges. These classes are Pest Control, Re-purposing Old Clothes and Beauty Products. Karen Taira’s last eco-friendly beauty products class at the Ecology Center was featured on CLTV’s Metromix Web site; you have a second chance to attend this popular class on August 13. You can discover other great ways to be more ECO-logical as well as ECO-nomical. The next time you’re at the Ecology Center, ask the staff for a complimentary alternative cleaning methods recipe booklet.

We would like to invite you to stop in and meet our new Environmental Educator, Claire Alden. She has taken on the “critter crew” responsibilities, as well as the Nature Pals, Tiny Trekkers and Small Fry Science classes. She also assists our interns, volunteers, school and scout programs, and, of course, special events and programs, in addition to other classes as needed.

Claire’s sparkling personality and dedication to quality environmental programming make her a wonderful addition to the Ecology Center staff. We are thrilled to have her enthusiasm and fresh ideas hard at work for our Center. Rounding out our permanent staff are instructors Stan Antoine and Paige Azuma; they are assisting with Home-School Science, children’s birthday parties, special events and more. Of course, we are all involved in summer camp: we love camp!

Speaking of summer, staff will be very involved this summer planning several major fall events.

The Evanston Environmental Association (EEA) collaborates with the Ecology Center staff, other City departments and community business sponsors to host the annual Green Living Festival (Sat., Oct. 3), a fabulous day of environmental and sustainable options! The Green Living Festival will inspire you to get “greener” and live more sustainably! We rely on volunteers to plan and conduct the festival, so if you want to get a little involved for an hour or two on that day or really want to pitch in and help plan, we would love your assistance. Call 847/448-8256 or e-mail us at [ecologycenter@cityofevanston.org](mailto:ecologycenter@cityofevanston.org).

Mark your calendars for our upcoming Duck Race and Pluck on Sat., Sept. 26 from 3-5pm. You can sponsor a duck for \$10 or buy a “Quack Pack of 3 ducks for \$25 bucks.” Proceeds benefit the EEA’s support of the Ecology Center.

At press time, the Ladd Arboretum had entered phase one of construction, but don’t let that deter you from spending some time running, biking or walking in the Arboretum. The Grady Bird Sanctuary awaits a visit; bring your binoculars or borrow a pair from us. Inside the Ecology Center, the “Animal Room” is open most afternoons and Fridays for visits, so stop in to see us this summer!

The EcoStaff

### **Special Event**

#### **CHEERS Canoeing Expo**

Does recreational activity on local waterways affect our health? The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) and the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), School of Public Health, began a three-year collaborative study in 2007 about the health effects of water exposure during recreational use of the waterways, including the North Shore Channel. This research will be the first U.S. study to address the health of individuals who engage in limited-contact water recreational activities, such as boating, fishing, canoeing, kayaking and rowing. Known as the Chicago Health, Environmental Exposure and Recreation Study (CHEERS), the study will enroll 9,300 volunteers by the end of the three-year period. The volunteers will be recruited from three different activity groups 1) people who have no water contact during recreation; 2) people who boat, fish, canoe, kayak or row in Lake Michigan, the Skokie Lagoons and the North Shore Channel upstream of the North Side Water Reclamation Plant; and 3) people who engage in these activities in all other Chicago area waterways. Volunteers will be recruited at seven sites along the Chicago Area Waterways. On the North Branch/ North Shore Channel, recruitment sites will include boat launches at North Avenue, Clark Park, River Park/Ronan Park, and the Skokie Rowing Center. In cooperation with the CHEERS study, the Ecology Center is reserving Saturday, June 13 for anyone who might like to participate in the study.

You will be asked a series of questions before you paddle on the canal and again when you return. You'll also receive several follow-up phone calls. It's a great opportunity to be a part of a study for developing better environmental water quality standards. Participants will receive T-shirts, as well as other products from UIC. Just sign up for a time slot; we'll provide canoes and instruction. For details or to reserve your space, call the Ecology Center at 847/448-8256. More info. is available at [www.cheerschicago.org](http://www.cheerschicago.org).

Location: Ecology Center

Age: 5 & up (children must be accompanied by adult)

Fee: Free Length: 1 session

Date Day Time slots

June 13 Sa 1pm, 2pm or 3pm

### **Family Ecology Programs**

#### **Family Campfires**

Join the Ecology Center staff for fun-filled campfires with nature themes. Each evening includes stories, songs and, of course, the ever-popular s'mores! Space is limited; pre-registration is required by phone or in person at the Ecology Center. 847/448-8256.

Location: Council Ring at Grosse Point Lighthouse

Age Level: 2 and older Fee: \$4 R/NR

Length: 1 session

Class # Dates Days Time Topic

113119E9 May 29 F 7-8pm Raptors

113119F9 May 30 Sa 7-8pm Raptors

113119G9 June 5 F 7-8pm Skunks

113119H9 June 6 Sa 7-8pm Skunks

### Canoe the Canal

“Canoe the Canal” is back! Our June 21 trip is a Father’s Day excursion. Basic canoe instruction and safety is covered before heading out. Please register by phone or in person at the Ecology Center only. Programs will be held unless there is lightning; dress appropriately. 847/448-8256.

Location: Evanston Ecology Center

Age Level: 5 and older

Fee: \$17, EEA member; \$20 R/\$22 NR

Fee, child age 5-11: \$6, EEA member; \$8 R/NR

Length: 1 session

Class # Dates Days Time

113120C9 May 23 Sa 9:30am-noon

113120D9 June 6 Sa 9:30am-noon

113120E9 June 21 Su 9:30am-noon

Citizen Science: Be an Urban Bird Monitor

Citizen Science can be fun for the whole family! You can be part of an ongoing national urban bird monitoring program. Learn the most common birds in our area and how to easily identify them. We’ll also do a monitoring session and record our findings with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. All of this can be repeated at home as often as you like! Be sure to register all participants. 847/448-8256.

Age: 3 yrs. and older

Fee: \$4.50/person Length: 1 session

Class # Date Day Time

122124A9 July 18 Sa 4-5:30pm

Arboretum Bike Tour

Join the Ecology Center staff for bicycling in the Ladd Arboretum. On our bike trip, we’ll cover bicycle safety and make periodic stops for stretching and snacks. Everyone (adults, too!) must wear a properly-fitting bicycle helmet and bring a bike in good working order. 847/448-8256.

Location: Meet at the Evanston Ecology Center

Age Level: Varies; see below

Fee: \$4.50 per person Length: 1 session

Class# Date Day Time Child ages

122127A9 Aug 8 Sa 10am-Noon Under 6

122127B9 Aug 8 Sa 1-3pm 6 and up

Middle School Back to School Canoeing

Have one last summer blast before heading back to school. Learn basic and advanced canoeing strokes and follow the challenge course. Please register by phone or in person at the Ecology Center. Programs will be held unless there is lightning; dress appropriately. 847/448-8256.

Location: Evanston Ecology Center

Age Level: Entering grades 6-8

Fee: \$10 per person Length: 1 session

Class# Dates Days Time

122128A9 Aug 27 Th 3-5pm

122128B9 Aug 28 F 3-5pm

Free Access to Fishing

This popular free program, which is sponsored by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, is a great way to introduce children age 5-15 to the “catch and release” process. Equipment, bait

and fishing expertise are provided! Access to Fishing will be held every Saturday morning at Lovelace Park, Gross Point Road at Thayer St. through October. Note the new time: 10am-noon. No license is needed for those under age 16. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Questions? Please call 847/448-8256.

#### **Fishing Frenzy**

Bring a young person (age 5-15) for a special fishing day at Lovelace Park from 10am-noon on Sat., July 11. This program piggybacks on our Access to Fishing program (listed above) and is sponsored by the Evanston Playground and Recreation Board. Along with the usual equipment and bait, we'll have experts on hand, casting workshops, give-aways and snacks. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Once you learn how, you can keep coming to the Access to Fishing every Saturday through October. This program is FREE!

#### **Teen & Adult Classes**

##### **Green \$olutions Pest Control**

Learn some recipes and techniques for controlling garden pests. These treatments are nontoxic to humans and use everyday household items. 847/448-8256.

Location: Evanston Ecology Center

Age Level: 13-18 yrs.

Fee: \$25 per person Length: 1 session

Class # Date Day Time

123120A9 June 18 Th 6:30-8pm

##### **Re-purposing Old Clothes**

In this class, you will re-use everyday items to make something that is actually useful to you!

Bring in old T-shirts, and we'll show how to give them a new life. Price includes other materials needed. 847/448-8256.

Location: Evanston Ecology Center

Age Level: 16 & up

Fee: \$25 per person Length: 1 session

Class# Date Day Time

123121A9 July 16 Th 6:30-8pm

##### **Beauty Products**

Make it yourself! We'll show you how that chemistry you learned, but thought you'd never use, can help make your house greener. We'll make everyday items out of non-toxic ingredients.

You'll go home with at least one finished product and recipes for more products that you can make on your own. 847/448-8256. Price includes other materials needed.

Location: Evanston Ecology Center

Age Level: 16 & up

Fee: \$25 per person Length: 1 session

Class # Date Day Time

123122A9 Aug 13 Th 6:30-8pm