

ENVIRONMENT

Dot-to-Dot Detective!

Something bad might be hiding under the bark of your firewood!
Connect the dots to see ...

This tiny pest can destroy ash trees ... but YOU can help stop the Emerald Ash Borer Beetle (EAB). Tell your family: **Don't move firewood – burn it where you buy it!**

www.stopthebeetle.info
View the animated EAB lifecycle video at www.stopthebeetle.info/video



ASH TREE IDENTIFICATION

Ash trees have:

An opposite branching pattern where two branches come off the main stem, one on each side and opposite each other.

photos: Jeff Roe



Compound leaves with 5-11 leaflets. Leaflets may have finely toothed or smooth edges. Leaflets may be on a short stalk or without a stalk.



SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF THE EMERALD ASH BORER

SERPENTINE GALLERIES & D-SHAPED EXIT HOLES



- Larval feeding galleries typically serpentine
- Galleries weave back and forth across the woodgrain
- Packed with frass (mix of sawdust and excrement)
- Adults form D-shaped holes upon emergence

INCREASED WOODPECKER DAMAGE



- Several woodpecker species feed on EAB larvae/pupae
- Peck outer bark while foraging
- Create large holes when extracting insects.

CANOPY DIEBACK



- Begins in top one-third of canopy
- Progresses until tree is bare

BARK SPLITTING



- Vertical fissures on bark due to callous tissue formation
- Galleries exposed under bark split

EPICORMIC SHOOTS



- Sprouts grow from roots and trunk
- Leaves often larger than normal

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ENVIRONMENT

Northside nature tales and trails: those crazy Christmas bird counts

By Paul Noeldner

Looking out the window from a warm couch, it is hard to believe small creatures can survive the terrible cold we've been having. Yet brightly colored goldfinches, chickadees and downy woodpeckers still cling to snow-covered branches like forgotten Christmas tree ornaments. The Christmas Bird Count is a tale of crime, passion and just plain craziness about the birds that somehow survive our winters and the crazy people who spend a full day freezing outdoors every December looking for them.

The crime in this nature tale was committed every year until the early 1900s. Some people considered it an acceptable holiday tradition to celebrate Christmas Day by competing to shoot as many birds as they could find. That probably made sense in the Middle Ages, when peasants struggled to put up enough food to survive the winter, but the practice made no sense in more modern times.

The passion in this tale was growing public outrage about the senseless bird slaughter and alarming declines in native bird populations. An old tradition that had become, in effect, killing for fun was clearly not in the Christmas spirit.

The craziness in this tale is an idea proposed by Frank Chapman, an early Audubon Society member. On Christmas Day 1900, teams of bird and nature lovers competed by counting as many birds as they could find instead of shooting them. The idea took off and the Christmas Bird Count is now worldwide. The Christmas Bird Count population data are collected by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. The vast amount of information



Photo by Paul Noeldner

Jan Axelson spots a Great Horned Owl. From left to right: Kevin Riggle, Aszya Summers and Jan Axelson.

collected over a long period of time is of tremendous value in tracking, understanding and finding solutions to human impacts on the environment, such as DDT in the 1950s and climate change today.

The craziness continues. By Dec. 13, 2013, Madison lakes were already frozen solid and a thousand tundra swans had left the area. Undaunted, a team of Northsiders, led by Mike Rewey, joined a dozen other teams to count all birds within the 15-mile circle around the Capitol that defines the Madison Christmas Bird Count.

After a pre-dawn breakfast with Wild Warner members Trish O'Kane and Jim Carrier, the team drove and hiked the Northside counting birds — everything from a pair of lingering tundra swans

heard at Warner Park to a great horned owl, bluebirds and robins in Cherokee Marsh, and a kingfisher by spring-fed Token Creek. Aszya Summers and Kevin Riggle demonstrated how to steady binoculars by sitting in the snow in order to spot a lone white-throated sparrow in a crowd of little birds. Everything was fair game, including amazingly active bird feeders hosted by Jeanne Mawbey and Joleen Griffith. Their bird feeders provide only a fraction of the historic massive empire prairie harvest that no longer exists for birds due to human impacts.

At the end of the day, count coordinator Aaron Stutz declared a Madison area total of 77 species and 25,574 individual birds counted. That was half as many as 2012

due to the extreme cold, but there are still an impressive number of birds out there. It makes one think how tragic it would have been had they all been shot, and it inspires one to take a fresh look at the amazing power of life in the face of freezing cold.

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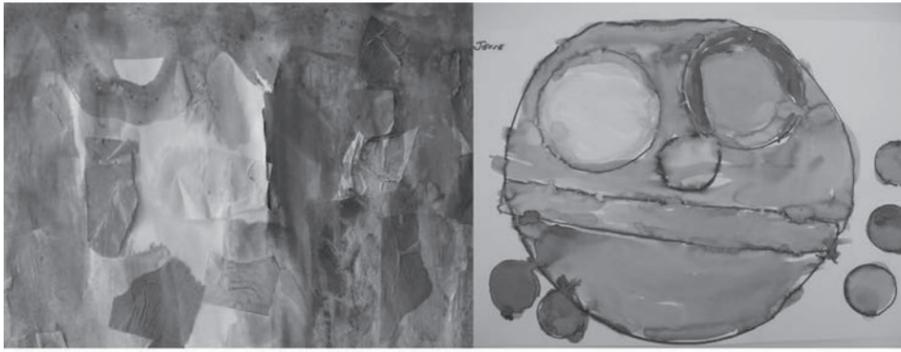
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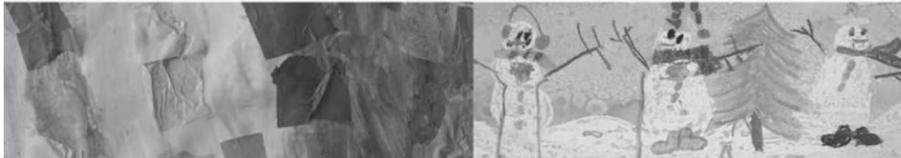
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ARTS



Beat the Winter Blues Party
Friday, February 7, 5:30-8pm at VSA Wisconsin



Come enjoy the improvisational acoustic blues of HED. From left to right: Andy Ewan and Doug DeRosa.

BEAT THE WINTER BLUES PARTY

FEBRUARY 7
5:30-8 PM
AT VSA WISCONSIN

Photos by Jonah Westrich

By Kathie Wagner
VSA Wisconsin

Looking for a way to chase away the winter blues? Come cure your cabin fever on a cold winter night at VSA Wisconsin's Beat the Winter Blues party Friday, Feb. 7, 5:30-8 pm, at 1709 Aberg Ave. Admission is free.

Listen and dance to the improvisational acoustic blues of HED, featuring Honor Among Thieves founding members Andy Ewan and Doug DeRosa, and Tim Haub (lead guitarist for Jim James and the Damn Shames). Stroll through the gallery and view the exhibition "What is Art? A Showcase of Expressive Responses."

"What Is Art?" highlights some of the work by adults with disabilities who took fall classes at the VSA Art Center. Individual and collaborative visual art in ceramics, mixed media, painting and more will be on view alongside visual representations from music and movement classes. The exhibition will be on view through April 10.

Purchase artwork for your home or office, choosing from 50 additional works of art by people with disabilities. Bid on valuable items in the silent auction. Enjoy refreshments, beer and soda, and learn more about a great nonprofit. Funds raised at this special event will benefit arts programs for children and adults with disabilities. This event is sponsored by Alexander Real Estate Services. For more information, visit www.vsawis.org or call 241-2131.



HED guitarist Tim Haub



Visitors mingling at the 2012 Beat the Winter Blues party.

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SCHOOLS & YOUTH

Latino Academy of Workforce Development receives grant for GED program

By Baltazar De Anda Santana
Latino Academy of Workforce Development

The Latino Academy of Workforce Development (LAWD) is entering 2014 with a bold new year's resolution, thanks to the Madison Community Foundation. The LAWD's resolution — to educate 200 adult students through its Spanish language General Equivalency Diploma (GED) program over the next two years — builds on the academy's success in graduating 62 GED students in 2013. LAWD was recently awarded a two-year grant of up to \$70,000 by the Madison Community Foundation. This funding creates a supportive pathway to needed education credentials, improved employment and post-secondary education for adult learners.

The grant supports pre-GED and GED classes and supportive services for 100 adults per year for two years. It includes \$35,000 in funding for 2014 and a grant for 2015 that matches support from new funders up to \$35,000. To qualify for the 2015 grant, matching funds must be committed by Dec. 31.

LAWD's unique education-through-community approach works closely with students, responding to their needs quickly and creating pathways to improved education and employment for the Latino community. To ensure stu-

dents receive high-quality classroom experiences, LAWD partners with the Madison Metropolitan School District and Madison College to provide pre-GED and GED instruction. With Madison Community Foundation's support and the support of the program's partners, students will work toward earning their high school equivalency diploma, improving their employment outlook, and pursuing post-secondary education.

LAWD is a program of Vera Court Neighborhood Center, Inc. that offers adult education, job skills training, computer courses, and business and employment development.

Madison Community Foundation encourages, facilitates and manages long-term philanthropy. Since 1942, foundation staff has helped people realize their philanthropic goals, allowing them to support charitable interests anywhere in the world. The foundation also awards grants throughout Dane County to build communities. More information is available online at www.madisoncommunity-foundation.org.

For more information regarding LAWD and Madison Community Foundation's support, please contact Program Director Baltazar De Anda Santana at 310-4573 or baltazar@latinoacademywisconsin.org.

East High: think spring — and fall

By Cynthia Chin
East High Math Department

East High students and current eighth-graders are in the process of selecting courses for 2014-2015. Be sure to investigate all the options and think ahead about what can be done now to develop skills for a livelihood tomorrow.

In addition to core academic skills, there are many opportunities at East to develop cultural competence and artistic talents, investigate specific career fields, and get a head start on earning technical certifications and Madison College/UW-Madison credits. Talk to counselors soon about dual credit options, advanced placement and the Youth Options program, all of which enable prepared and motivated students to begin their post-secondary studies early. For more about Youth Options, visit

alteredweb.madison.k12.wi.us/node/124.

East High Engineering students will be hosting seventh- and eighth-grade students for a daylong visit focusing on education and career opportunities in science, technology, engineering and mathematics in February, just in time for National Engineers Week. This visit, as well as some afterschool follow-up sessions in March, April and May, is funded by the Foundation for Madison Public Schools, the Madison East High Philanthropy Club and community fundraising activities of the Engineering Club. Thank you for your support of all these organizations.

For more information about engineering careers, visit www.discover.org, www.egfi-k12.org and www.fabfems.org.



Principal Sean Storch and Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation V.P. Amy Kerwin observe students and review curriculum in a science class.

Photo provided by Patricia Klecker

Northside employees show commitment to Black Hawk Middle School

By Patricia Klecker
Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation

What started last fall as a back-to-school supplies drive to benefit students at Black Hawk Middle School has grown into a year-round partnership with employees of Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation and Affiliates.

Great Lakes, which employs more than 800 at its headquarters on International Lane, is in the business of helping people go to college. Employees tend to share the company's belief in the value of education, and many get involved in education causes locally through its Great Lakes Gives program.

In September, Black Hawk and its students received more than 1,300 school supplies collected by Madison employees. The school has since become one of five schools across three states adopted by Great Lakes employees this year. This partnership grew out of the success of the supplies drive and one employee's experience shadowing Black Hawk Principal Sean Storch.

On Oct. 8, Great Lakes Vice President-Community Investments Amy Kerwin took part in "A Principal Experience," a program of the Foundation for Madison's Public Schools. Community leaders like Kerwin spent time in public schools, observing and interacting with students, educators and school officials.

At Black Hawk, Principal Storch walked Kerwin through his busy and varied day, from helping students off the bus, to dealing with discipline issues and assisting students with special challenges. Kerwin saw firsthand some of the school's strong points, including extremely dedicated and skilled educators. She also saw a range of challenges facing students, families and staff — and opportunities for Great Lakes employees to help address them.

The school is now helping Great Lakes employees understand its specific needs and suggesting ways they can help Black Hawk students succeed. Through the Great Lakes Gives program, employees are volunteering their time and talents at Black Hawk and contributing to drives for items needed by students and staff.

"Amy brought energy to the learning environment and we look forward to more visits from Great Lakes to keep the energy moving forward," said Principal Storch. "Our students and educators at Black Hawk are incredibly appreciative of the gift of school supplies, and we look forward to working together to meet other important needs."

Employees at Great Lakes are eager to continue strengthening their bond with Black Hawk as Northside neighbors sharing the goal of giving students the best possible learning environment and brightest possible futures.

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— Dorothy Wheeler, Former District 18 Supervisor

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April 1!

SCHOOLS & YOUTH

Students at Vera Court are rising to the occasion

By Becky Bauer

Rise Program Coordinator
Vera Court Neighborhood Center

Students in Vera Court Neighborhood Center's Rise program are not only succeeding in school, they are setting their own goals and exceeding them. The first half of the school year has seen several students gain confidence in both reading and math. One student sprinted into the Rise room after a reading level test and proudly proclaimed, "I am finally at grade level, and I raised my reading score by 12 points."

Some Rise students are even closing in on an incredible 4.0 GPA. All Rise students keep a vigilant eye on the academic success plaques on the wall, pushing to earn a spot on the wall by getting a 3.6 GPA or above. The Rise program partners with parents and teachers at Black Hawk Middle School, Sherman Middle School and East High School to help middle and high school youth reach their impressive goals.

To quote Albert Einstein, "Information is not knowledge." This simple, yet poignant, phrase is the keystone to what happens every day in the Rise program. In Rise, staff and students are in the business of sifting through the oceans of information at their disposal, working to figure out how to build the skills and confidence needed to not only succeed, but to become knowledgeable about the world around them. It is not enough to finish homework or study for a test. Rise students strive to think independently and engross themselves in the plethora of information that lies at their fingertips. Many students examine current events, maintain their own blogs, and investigate potential career choices with the help of Rise staff and volunteers.

Recently, Rise students welcomed Madison College's Sabrina Madison to discuss



Photo by Becky Bauer

RISE students participated in a day long program that allowed young women to explore careers and college opportunities in science, math, technology and engineering. From left: Erika E., Sira S., Jossie C., Terriana B., Quincy W. and Foluke S.

the college admissions process and students' future goals. Sabrina's visit was part of the Real Talk College Speaker Series, which is new to the Rise program this year. Sabrina engaged students in conversation about how their passions and hobbies could be translated into college majors and eventual careers. Students became engrossed in knowing what they need to do to get into college, as Sabrina explained admission requirements and how to navigate them. The session ended with students writing the beginnings of their future admissions essays. Sabrina left students with an important message — "Always ask yourself this question: What am I doing now, and what am I doing to prepare myself for the future?"

The Real Talk College Speaker Series is just one of the additional resources Rise students have had this year thanks to support from the Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation. These additional resources have helped students begin to plot their courses toward college entrance, graduation and successful careers.

Rise students have been working hard to establish themselves as learners and community members this school year. Jossie, a seventh-grade student, said the Rise program "gives me a place to do my homework where I feel safe and have fun, and the Rise tutors are there for us."

Patrick Schrank, Vera Court Neighborhood Center's fund and program development director and former coordinator of the Rise program, also sees the unlimited potential of the youth in the program. "Speaking on behalf of all Vera Court Neighborhood

Center staff, I can say that I am proud to work with the students in the Rise program. All of the youth who have committed to this program bring amazing skills to us at the center and to the broader community. And I'm incredibly happy to see us, as an adult community, recognizing students' potential and supporting their genuine growth."

If you would like to serve as a volunteer tutor or learn how you can help Rise students reach their potential, contact Becky Bauer, Rise program coordinator, at beckyb@veracourt.org or 246-8372.

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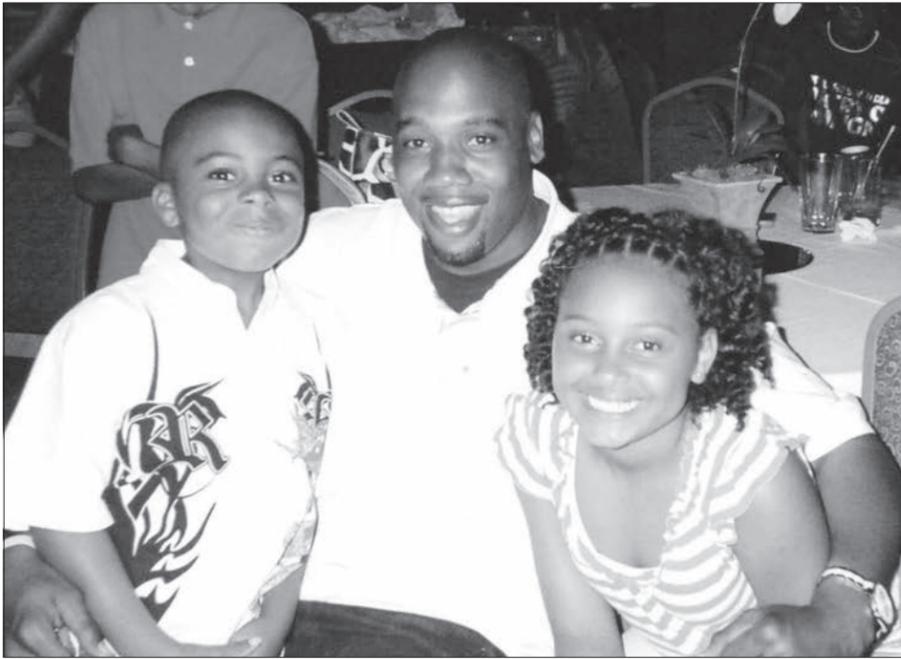
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SCHOOLS & YOUTH

Photo provided Shelton Evans and Alyssa Kenney



Kennedy Heights welcomes new youth coordinator

By Karen Seno
Kennedy Heights Community Center

Question: Who loves the Dallas Cowboys, chocolate ice cream, 1960s “slow jams,” and The Cosby Show?

Answer: Shelton Evans, the dynamic new youth coordinator at the Kennedy Heights Community Center. In his new role, Shelton plans activities, field trips, service learning opportunities and guest speakers for boys and girls in grades 4–8. He also facilitates discussion groups for youth and makes connections with parents to help support students’ academic and civic growth.

Shelton has deep roots in youth work. His experience includes work at the Boys and Girls Clubs in Janesville and Green Bay, the school district of Janesville, the Janesville Youth Football League and the City of Janesville Rec-Nites. Shelton has also been a foster parent, worked in youth ministry and served as a trainer/facilitator in the areas of bullying and diversity. So far, Shelton’s favorite feature of the Northside is its rich diversity. His favorite thing about the neighborhood center is the quality programs and services it offers children and families.

Vera Court’s new youth coordinator Shelton Evans with his niece and nephew.



Registration for kindergarten starts February 3

Madison Metropolitan School District

This year registration for 4-year-old kindergarten (4K) and 5-year-old kindergarten starts Monday, Feb. 3, from 1–6 pm at your neighborhood elementary school. You also can register your child for 4K at participating early care/education (ECE) centers that offer a 4K program.

4K registration information

All children who are 4 years old on or

before Sept. 1 and live in the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) are eligible (but not required) to participate in the 4K program. It is tuition-free (there is a \$35 consumable materials fee). This half-day program uses a curriculum which allows children to learn through play. Participants receive a jump start on school by learning the basic skills needed for entering kindergarten as a 5 year old and by learning how to thrive in a school setting.

Children participating in 4K gain

advanced language and math skills. The 4K program addresses cognitive, social and emotional skills during this critical period of a child’s life. The human brain develops more rapidly between birth and age five than during any other period of development. For more information, visit mmsd.org/4K or call 442-2933.

Kindergarten registration information

All children who are 5 years old

on or before Sept. 1 and live in the Madison school district are eligible to attend kindergarten. Families who are new to Madison or have a child starting school with the MMSD for the first time must attend registration. If your child attended a MMSD 4K program, you do not need to attend the Feb. 3 registration, but you will need to attend enrollment in August. For more information, call your school office or visit mmsd.org/kinder.

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SCHOOLS & YOUTH

Growing Together from page 1

The Growing Together committee coordinates fundraising and construction, and works to encourage community activities that will last beyond the measurable outcomes.

The current playground equipment is out of date, broken and not accessible. Although a small amount of the equipment at Gompers Elementary and Black Hawk Middle Schools has been replaced over the years, much of it has been there since the school opened 52 years ago. Like most school districts in Wisconsin, MMSD no longer has funds available to support extra-curricular resources like replacing outdoor equipment. Most school districts rely on their parent-teacher organizations to maintain and replace outdoor equipment.

Typically, parent-teacher organizations raise funds through schoolwide fundraising events and solicitations, something that is not practical given the high level of poverty among our families. In 2001 Gompers' low-income population was 8.6 percent of the student body. Today it is more than 54 percent. Black Hawk Middle School's low-income population is more than 71 percent, which is the third highest poverty level of middle schools in Madison.

At the same time, given that 30 percent of Wisconsin's children are overweight or obese, it is imperative that we do something to improve physical fitness.

Out of its modest beginning, the Growing Together committee formed a greater plan that would involve the Northside of Madison. Needs were identified and prioritized, and a business plan was developed and divided into five phases. Here are the five phases and the status of each:

Save the date: BOSS Fun Run and Growing Together Community Carnival, Silent Auction

Friday, May 16, will be an exciting day on the Northside of Madison. Black Hawk Middle School will participate in the annual BOSS Fun Run. It's a friendly competition between the three East High feeder schools: Black Hawk, O'Keeffe and Sherman middle schools (BOSS).

This is a fundraising event, and each middle school designates what the funds they raise will be used for. Black Hawk will donate money raised to the Growing Together Initiative. Volunteers and donations (money and prizes) are needed. For more information, contact Dawn Henkel at 241-4896 or Principal Sean Storch at 204-4360.

The biennial Growing Together Community Carnival and Silent Auction will be held immediately following the BOSS Fun Run at Black Hawk Middle School. There will be games, food, a dunk tank, bouncy houses, silent auction, music, prizes and more for all ages. This event raises funds for the Growing Together Initiative. Volun-



The 2012 BOSS Fun Run was a huge success and helped move the Growing Together Initiative forward. In the background of the top photo is the current playground, which the group is hoping to replace.



unteers, sponsorships and donations (money, prizes, and items for the silent auction) are needed. For more information, contact Renae Huffman at 206-2153 or Jeanette Paulson at 249-6496.

1. Fiskars© School and Community Garden The garden, located on Wheeler Road, was installed in May 2011. There are plots open to the community, as well as plots set aside for Gompers Elementary and Black Hawk Middle Schools.

2. Gompers School and Community Playground Playground equipment was installed in August 2012.

3. Gompers/Black Hawk and Community Playground We are currently fundraising for playground equipment for

grades 3-5 at Gompers Elementary and grades 6-8 at Black Hawk Middle School.

4. Growing Together Fitness Trail We plan to install a quarter-mile track, with fitness stations positioned around the track.

5. Updated sports fields We plan to install a smaller playground inside the track so parents who are using the track can keep an eye on their children.

Phases 1 and 2 have been completed through the generous financial support of many individuals and businesses, the help

of volunteer builders and equipment from Vogel Brothers Construction Co., and the efforts of hundreds of school and community volunteers.

Excellent schools are good for families, neighborhoods and businesses. Check out www.gompers.eagles.com to learn more about the Growing Together Initiative and to view designs and photos. For information about how you can help, contact Renae Huffman at 206-2153 or renae.huffman@att.net.

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Photos provided by Dawn Henkel and Renae Huffman