



The Ecology Action Center News

Spring 2011

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9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday—Friday

Illinois Sustainable Living & Wellness Expo 2011

With spring quickly approaching, most of us are feeling well, but are we living well? April is a month of living well in an environmentally friendly way with its celebration of Earth Day, and now the Bloomington-Normal area can also learn to live well and live green at the 6th Annual Illinois Sustainable Living and Wellness Expo. The event will be held on Saturday, April 9th from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the IWU Shirk Center.

What exactly can you expect to find at the 2011 Expo?

- The Expo will kick off on Thursday, April 7th from 7-9 p.m. with "Fertile Ground—Faith and Sustainability: What they have in common", a panel discussion about the connections between sustainability and faith.
- Several key events will be happening all day in which the whole family can enjoy! Kids can enjoy the Green Zone, where they can participate in educational games that involve recycling. And, best of all, all activities are free! Many kids and young teens will also take part in our 6th annual Affordable Fashion Challenge. "Design on a dime" by re-using textiles and other materials to create trendy garments and even home décor! The contest deadline is March 31; more entry details are available on the EAC website.
- The main stage will be holding different events throughout the day as well, including a tai chi demonstration, Dave Berchtold on the acoustic guitar, and other live music. There will also be a cooking demonstration, in which Chef Shamon Bell, owner of The Dinner Bell, will prepare samples of some delicious foods with ingredients donated by local farmers.
- Similar to the past, this year's Expo will offer dozens of exhibitors hosting their own booths to speak about healthier and more sustainable living choices. These exhibitors cover areas such a chiropractic procedures, organic hygiene and lawn-care products, and much more! Workshops will also be held for an interactive experience with living green and living well.
- Do you like bargains? Well then, do we have a bargain for you! The Expo will have the opportunity for any visitors to select and take home donated items...for free! At the McFreecycle Free-For-All booth, you may find items such as clothing, toys, and even small household items. If you are interested in donating, please take your items to the IWU Wellness Office by April 1st at 302 Emerson in Bloomington.
- This year residents can recycle of unwanted or damaged electronics in an environmentally friendly way thanks to a special one-day event sponsored by IWU and the City of Bloomington in the Shirk Center Parking Lot from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- The Illinois Sustainable Living and Wellness Expo and ISU's Good to Go are also challenging visitors this year, by providing free valet-style bike parking at the Shirk Center for those who choose to bike instead of drive to the event! Driving less means saving on gas money and it reduces air pollution. But, if you cannot bike, remember that public transit and car-pooling are great alternatives to riding alone!





The future is here

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All of these wonderful exhibitors, workshops, and other events are available for the public free of charge! We hope to see you living well and living green at the Expo on Saturday, April 9th. For any further details, feel free to visit the Expo's website at www.islwe.org. The Illinois Sustainable Living and Wellness Expo is brought to you by Illinois Wesleyan University Wellness and the Ecology Action Center.

Welcome to EV Town

*This is Bloomington-
Normal's year for electric
vehicles (Part 1 of 2)*

By Carl Roberts

Cars powered by electricity have been a commonplace in science fiction and futuristic entertainment for decades. Car shows in the last few years have even exhibited prototypes for electric vehicles (EVs) that might be built in the future.

But the timeline for when they would be available to the general public has always been a vague "someday down the road."

The future is here

Well, that day has arrived. In the year 2011, electric cars will start appearing all around Bloomington-Normal and McLean County, and this community will start to be known as EV Town. Charging stations will be built at various businesses throughout the Twin Cities, and drivers will be able to have charging stations and isolated-circuit wiring professionally installed in their garages for charging electric cars overnight.

Business and community leaders from throughout the Twin Cities have been working hard to turn the vision for electric vehicles into an exciting reality. The Bloomington-Normal EV Task Force was formed, and the members have been quickly getting up to speed by actively contacting automobile manufacturers, electric-charging-station experts, and leaders in other communities that have experience with EVs.

"We have been doing anything and everything we can to make electric vehicles a practical means of transportation," said Jeff Pritts, EV Task Force chairman. Pritts, who is general manager of the Bloomington-Normal Marriott Hotel and Conference Center, said, "The use of electric cars is really exploding."

Each EV will go 85 miles or more before needing to be recharged. That is twice the average number of miles per day driven. Pritts said, "They are ideal for driving around town, but they will also be a practical means of transportation for people living in nearby towns and rural McLean County." For example, employees of the Marriott and other companies who commute from places such as Peoria will be able to charge their vehicles while they are at work.



All-electric Mitsubishi i-MiEV



EV website for Bloomington-Normal

The EV Task Force is creating a website called EV Town (www.evtown.org) that is targeted to go live by the end of March. The website will include information the Task Force members have gathered in addition to a number of links to websites about EVs, including those of the manufacturers of EVs and charging stations.

"The EV Town website will be an excellent place to learn about electric vehicles," said Pritts. "You will also be able to get your questions answered at the website. And, if we don't know the answer, we'll find it for you."

Innovative Mitsubishi Electric Vehicle will be available locally

The demand for EVs is so great, more than 50,000 people are already on the waiting list for the two EVs currently available in the United States, the Nissan Leaf and Chevrolet Volt. So how do you get your hands on an EV?

"The all-electric Mitsubishi i-MiEV -- which will be called the i in the United States -- will be available in Bloomington-Normal in late November or early December 2011," said Geoff Fruin, Normal assistant city manager. "Because of the community's close relationship with Mitsubishi -- due to Normal being the location of the only Mitsubishi manufacturing plant in the United States -- Mitsubishi is going to make 1,000 i's available locally during 2011-2014."

At least 300 i's will be available for sale or lease locally each year during the three-year period. Our community's Mitsubishi dealer, O'Brien Mitsubishi in Normal, will have a test vehicle on site and will be able to explain how the vehicle works and answer questions. Mitsubishi is planning to introduce a website in mid-March that includes a form for preordering the i. (The current website for the i. is www.new-imiev.com and for O'Brien Mitsubishi is www.obrienteamnormal.com.)

Task Force members are working with other auto manufacturers as well to see if it is possible to bring their electric vehicles to EV Town. "Mitsubishi stepped up in a big way, but this is not only a Mitsubishi initiative," said Fruin. "We would also like to partner with other manufacturers of EVs."

Two i-MiEVs coming to Town of Normal in March

The Town of Normal will receive two leased i-MiEVs in March. Since the i will not be available yet in the United States, the two cars will be the i-MiEV version that is currently sold in Europe.

"The purpose for these two cars is to introduce EV technology to the Bloomington-Normal community," Fruin said. "People will be able to test drive the i's and learn how easy it is to charge them." The Task Force members will be showcasing the demonstration i's at special occasions, sporting events and businesses throughout the Twin Cities.

Part 2 of this article -- featuring the costs and environmental impact of the i along with information about different charging options and other electric vehicles -- will appear in April's electronic EAC Action News. You can sign up to receive the Action News by e-mail at www.ecologyactioncenter.org.

**"Because of the community's close relationship with Mitsubishi... Mitsubishi is going to make 1,000 i's available locally during 2011-2014."
-Geoff Fruin**



Make a difference in your community—help create and maintain a healthier environment!

New Member Benefit! Early Bird, Discounted Registration for Eco-Adventure Camp!

For the first time, Ecology Action Center members will have the opportunity for priority registration for our popular summer environmental day camps for kids. These camps are held in cooperation with Normal Parks and Recreation, and registration has always been handled strictly through their office. But this year, we will have a limited number of slots (8 per camp) that we can sell before public registration. As an added bonus, these slots will be sold at a \$10 discount! So it really pays to be an EAC member! Registration information is available on the EAC website.

Ecology Action Center seeks nominations for McLean County Green Awards

Are you making a difference with your environment? Nominations for the World of Difference Awards and the Recycling and Waste Reduction Awards are now being accepted at the Ecology Action Center.



Our mission at the EAC is to inspire and assist McLean County residents to create and preserve a healthy environment. So, we want to know who in McLean County is making a difference!

These annual awards recognize outstanding projects, activities, or individuals in McLean County that promote environmental awareness or conserve natural resources. Nominations can be for any business, organizations, schools, or individuals in the area.

The recipients of these awards will be announced on Saturday, April 9th at the Illinois Sustainable Living and Wellness Expo held at the Shirk Center at Illinois Wesleyan University.

Applications are available online at www.ecologyactioncenter.org or you can feel free to stop by the Ecology Action Center at 202 W College Avenue in Normal.

All submissions are due by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 31st.

Earth Hour

**Saturday, March 26th, 2011 at
8:30 p.m.**

What is Earth Hour?

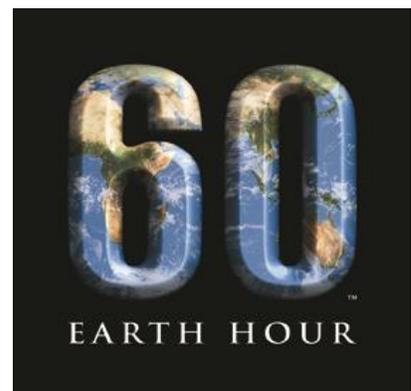
Earth Hour is a worldwide event in which one hour is designated for participants to shut off their lights as a global display of action against climate change.

Why should you participate?

Earth Hour is a growing every year and raising awareness. By participating, it gives people a chance to come together and have a voice about the growing environmental issues.

Last year's Earth Hour had the largest support to date! For more information on how to participate in this year's Earth Hour, check out www.earthhour.org/TakeAction.

Share your plans with us by emailing eac@ecologyactioncenter.org or at our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/EcologyActionCenter



*For further
information
about Earth
Hour, visit
earthhour.org*



Who's monitoring your watershed? Why not you?

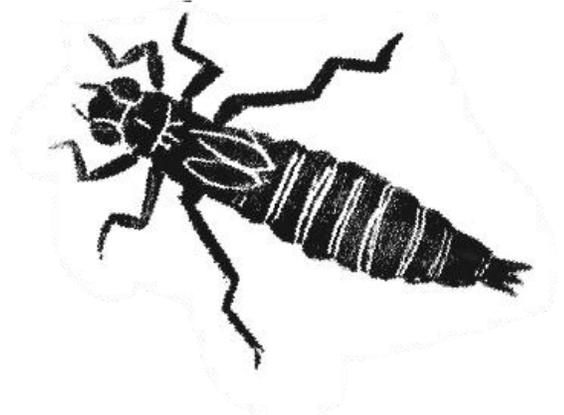
Illinois RiverWatch Citizen Scientist Training Workshop

Date & Time:

Friday, May 6, 2011
9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Location:

Sugar Grove Nature Center
4532 N 725 East Road
McLean, IL 61754
Phone: 309.874.2174
www.sugargrovenaturecenter.org



Workshop Information:

Join RiverWatch to become a part of a large network of volunteers who steward and protect Illinois streams. RiverWatch certified volunteers, referred to as Citizen Scientists, play an important role in helping identify potentially degraded waters and areas that may need better protection. Citizen Scientists examine indicators of water quality like stream habitat and the diversity of species such as dragonfly nymphs, beetle larva, midges, and snails. This interactive workshop will give you the tools to test water quality and collect reliable data to track changes in stream conditions over time. No previous experience is necessary, just enthusiasm and the willingness to learn.

A certified RiverWatch trainer will introduce you to RiverWatch and stream monitoring. The workshop will include a classroom and field component. In the classroom, you will learn how to identify the myriad of tiny creatures (macroinvertebrates) that live in our streams and serve as indicators of water quality.

Afterwards, we will practice sampling at a local stream. You'll be amazed by the macroinvertebrates we find! Equipment will be provided so everyone can take part in the training and learn to collect data like a professional! Data on streams dating back to 1995 are maintained by the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center (NGRREC) in an online, user-friendly database. Visit ngrrec.org to learn more about RiverWatch.



Registration Information:

Registration is required. To register, contact Vera Bojic at 618-468-2881 or email vbojic@lc.edu. Cost is \$50 per person and can be paid in advance or at the workshop. Please bring a lunch. Children may attend for free but must be accompanied by a parent or guardian that is enrolled in the program. If you wish to pay in advance, please send a check payable to Lewis and Clark Community College, Attn: Vera Bojic, 5800 Godfrey Road, Godfrey, IL 62035. No cash or credit cards accepted. The registration deadline for this workshop is April 29.



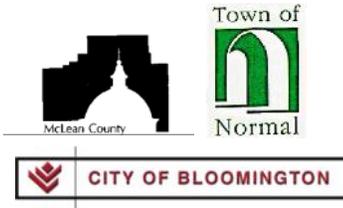
Recycle the Ecology Action Center Newsletter by passing it on to someone else after you have read it.



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Calendar of Upcoming Events

March 26, 8:30 p.m.: Earth Hour, Worldwide

March 27, 3:00 p.m.: Greenfire: Aldo Leopold and a Land Ethic for Our Time. Heartland Community College Astroth Community Education Center

April 5, 5:30 p.m.: Green Drinks, Medici

April 7, 7p.m.: Fertile Ground— Faith and Sustainability: What they have in common. IWU Memorial Center, Joslin Atrium

April 9, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.: Illinois Sustainable Living and Wellness Expo, IWU Shirk Center

April 22: Earth Day, Worldwide

May 3, 5:30 p.m.: Green Drinks, Medici

June 4: McFreecycle Free-For-All, White Oak Park

June 7, 5:30 p.m.: Green Drinks, Medici

June 25: Yard Smart Garden Walk

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interact, and
share with the
EAC through your
favorite social
media sites!*



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