



The Newsletter of Sugar Grove Nature Center

Volume 8, Number 1

January/February/March 2012

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IMPORTANT MESSAGE REGARDING YOUR "NATURE OF THE GROVE" SUBSCRIPTION!

"The Nature of the Grove" is entering its eighth year of publication! It has come a long way since it first rolled off the presses in January 2005, growing in both size and scope. Currently, it is delivered to over 2500 mailboxes four times a year and is one of the primary marketing tools we use to let our guests know about upcoming programs, events, and news of the Nature Center.

We are updating our mailing list to reduce paper consumption, save on printing and mailing costs, and focus our resources. Please follow the instructions below so you don't miss an issue!

If you would like to continue receiving "The Nature of the Grove" you MUST do one of the following:

- ☀ To continue receiving the newsletter by mail, cut out the back page of this newsletter with your address label and mail it to Sugar Grove Nature Center, 4532 N 725 East Rd, McLean, IL 61754.
- ☀ You can also email us your address with "Mail Newsletter" in the subject line.
- ☀ To subscribe to the electronic version, send an email to info@sugargrovenaturecenter.org with "Start E-Newsletter" in the subject line. It will be delivered as a link to a pdf.

☀ Taking no action will result in being removed from the mailing list.

If you already receive the electronic version:

☀ No action is needed. You will automatically remain on the list.

We hope you choose to continue inviting "The Nature of the Grove" into your home!

Nature Center Staff

Angela Funk
Director

angela@sugargrovenaturecenter.org

Jill Wallace
Environmental Educator
jill@sugargrovenaturecenter.org

Randy Carriger
Education & Operations Assistant
randy@sugargrovenaturecenter.org

Daisy Kitty
Feline Relations Specialist
daisy@sugargrovenaturecenter.org

Sugar Grove Foundation Board of Directors

Linda Bristow, *President*

Gary Huppert, *Treasurer*

Craig Alexander, *Secretary*

Tricia Braid

Eric Funk

Richard Park

John Rehtmeyer

Don Schmidt

Eric Vaughn

— NATURE CENTER HOURS —

November - March
Tuesday - Saturday
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

April - October
Tuesday - Friday, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Sunday, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Our grounds, trails, & Imagination Grove
are open daily from dawn until dusk.

If the Nature Center closes or programs are
cancelled due to inclement weather, it will be
announced on our voicemail and Facebook.

— HAVE A WILD PARTY AT — THE NATURE CENTER

Sugar Grove Nature Center is a great place to host a birthday party! We provide the space, tables, and an exciting nature program. You provide the decorations, cake, and guests! The party lasts two hours---this allows ample time to eat cake, open gifts, play in Imagination Grove, and have an hour of "wild" naturalist-led activities. The fee is \$50/members, \$75/non-members for up to 15 participants and \$5 for each additional person. Maximum group size is 20 for ages 4-6 and 25 for ages 7 and up. You may choose from a variety of party themes. Reservations are required at least one month in advance. Call 309.874.2174 or e-mail jill@sugargrovenaturecenter.org for more information or to schedule your party!

— E-MAIL ALERTS —

Would you like to receive e-mail updates that include program reminders, local nature sightings, and nature news? E-mail info@sugargrovenaturecenter.org and place "Nature Alerts" in the subject line.

— VISIT US ON THE WEB OR LIKE US ON FACEBOOK —

www.sugargrovenaturecenter.org 🌿 facebook.com/sugargrovenaturecenter

The Nature of the Grove is a free quarterly publication of Sugar Grove Nature Center. If you would like to be added to our mailing list, either electronically or by postal service, please call 309.874.2174 or e-mail info@sugargrovenaturecenter.org.

Musings & Meowings by Daisy Kitty

Dear Readers,

Guests at my Nature Center are a very inquisitive bunch. My staff expertly fields questions such as, "What type of plant is this?" "Which are the best trails to hike?" and "Where is the bathroom?" Of course, the most often asked question is "Where is that sweet, adorable, and extraordinarily talented kitty, Daisy?" Okay, I may have embellished the sentence a tiny bit, but the sentiment is the same.

I am more than happy to let you in on some of the places that I enjoy kicking back and putting my furry feet up. Please keep in mind that while I enjoy meeting and socializing with my guests, occasionally I do need to sneak away for a quick catnap to keep me refreshed. Throughout my building are many nooks and crannies that are purrfectly suited for just such an escape. These must remain undisclosed, as all cats are entitled to a certain amount of secrecy. But here are some spots you might find me.

The couch in the Bird Viewing Room. It has soft cushions, pillows, plenty of room to stretch, not to mention the sights & sounds of the birds and other assorted creatures in the bird garden. What's not to love? In the morning, the sun comes in and I can soak up its warmth. Plus, my guests find it convenient to pet me while relaxing and enjoying the view. It is also my favorite spot to get to know my volunteers and let them know how much I appreciate them.

The fuzzy hedgehog beanbag chair. Unorthodox, yes. But it's low to the ground and easy to get on and off as well as extremely comfortable. I can curl into a ball and it conforms to my body. Most of the time the hedgehog is in the tent, so it's like having my own little room.

My chair in the office area. Someone has to supervise Jill and Randy! I can confirm that they are taking care of what is truly important- making sure my food and water bowls are full, my litter box is clean, and I am sufficiently petted. Sometimes they forget their priorities, but a loud "Meow" or two puts them right back on track. It's hard work being the boss.

The Touch Table. The name says it all. I think it was very nice of my staff to create an area specifically for me to lounge. There are other things on the table, too, that my guests enjoy examining if I am not there. Huge pinecones and deer antlers are good for me to rub my face against. Feathers are wonderful to play with. I'm not sure what the bones and turtle shells are for yet, I'm still trying to figure that out. But as long as I have my little patch of bison fur and owl wing to lie on and someone to give me love, I am one happy kitty.

Kitty Kisses,

Daisy 



p.s. Don't forget to re-subscribe to my newsletter (see page one). I'd hate for you to miss anything I have to say!

Maple Sirup Time

It's coming soon! The time of year when buckets decorate the sugar maples throughout Funks Grove. Sugar Grove Nature Center invites you to participate in this important part of Funks Grove Heritage. We offer a wide range of maple sirup programs for everyone! This programs fill quickly, so register early. Don't be left out in the cold!

FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Maple Sirup Experience Tours

Saturday, March 3, 2012

2-1/2 Hour tours begin at 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., & 3:00 p.m.

Fee: Members - \$5/adults, \$3/children (16 & under), non-members - \$7/adults, \$5/children. Registration & prepayment required. Forms are available on our website or by phone, 309.874.2174.

Have you ever tasted 'sweet water' dripping from a spile? Here's your chance! Gather around the fire at the sirup camp to learn how the Native Americans and early settlers collected and prepared sap. Visit the sugar shack where the smell of maple sirup hangs in the air. Journey into the sugarbush to tap a tree. Stop inside the Nature Center to sample a variety of sweet treats made with maple sirup including candy, cookies, fudge, and more! Dress for the weather, as you will be outside for a major portion of the program. Experience an important part of Funks Grove heritage!



SCOUTING GROUPS

Sirup for Scouts

Saturday, February 25; 9:30 a.m. - noon or 1:00-3:30 p.m.

Fee: \$5/scout, \$2/leaders; registration & prepayment required. Forms are available online at www.sugargrovenaturecenter.org, by e-mailing register@sugargrovenaturecenter.org, or by calling 309.874.2174.

Attention Boy and Girl Scout leaders! Your troop is invited to join in on the maple sirup fun! Scouts will learn how sap from the maple tree becomes sirup, and take part in the process from tree tapping to tasting! When registering, be sure to gather participant numbers for your entire troop so that no one is left out of this experience! *Note: in order to accommodate as many scouts as possible, we request that the number of adults in attendance is no more that one adult per five scouts, and no siblings, please. If you'd like to attend as a family, consider the Maple Sirup Experience Tours on March 3.*

PRESCHOOLERS

Little Tappers - Maple Sirup

Wednesday, February 15, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. OR 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. OR

Saturday, March 10, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Fee: Members \$5/child, \$8/child/non-members; adult chaperone & registration required.

This program is designed especially for children 3-5 years with an adult chaperone. We will sing songs and make a craft while learning how to make maple sirup and listen to a fabulous sirup story. Then, each child will get a turn at tree tapping and taste the real thing!



Maple Sirup Time

ADULTS

Maple Siruping Traditions in McLean County: Come Tap a Tree with Us!

Saturday, March 10, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Ages: 18+, fee: \$7/person. Register through the McLean County Museum of History by contacting the Education Department by telephone at 309.827.0428 or email at education@mchistory.org by March 2nd. Registration forms will also be available at the Museum and Nature Center.

Participants will need to provide their own transportation to Sugar Grove Nature Center.

Join the McLean County Museum of History, in partnership with Sugar Grove Nature Center, for a fun and educational afternoon exploring the traditions and history of Maple Siruping in McLean County. The workshop will begin with a short talk by Mike Funk, who owns and operates Funks Grove Pure Maple Sirup. He will share some of the history of his family's early sirup making traditions after the Funks settled the area in the 1800s, up to the formation of Funks Grove Pure Maple Sirup, a family business that continues to this day. In addition, participants will experience the Native American method of boiling sap, learn about the biology of the maple tree, sample tasty maple snacks, and actually tap a tree.

HOMESCHOOL FIELD TRIPS

Tuesday, March 6 or Thursday, March 8; 10:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m., bring a sack lunch.

Fee: \$5/student (ages 3 and up), \$2/teacher or chaperone. Registration & prepayment required.

Forms are available at www.sugargrovenaturecenter.org.

Homeschoolers of all ages can participate in the Maple Sirup Experience on one of two days set aside especially for them! This program fills quickly, so get your registration in soon!

SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS

Sugar Grove Nature Center is pleased to continue offering the Funks Grove Maple Sirup Experience for first grade classes and up. We invite your school to take part in this unique educational experience. The program provides a unique opportunity for students to actively engage in the production of maple sirup as they explore its history from pre-settlement to current day through demonstrations and hands-on activities. Every student will have the opportunity to tap a maple tree and take home a small bottle of Funks Grove Pure Maple Sirup.

The four-hour experience costs \$5/student. Registration is underway and dates are filling fast. Available dates are February 21, 22, 23, 24, 28, & 29, or March 1, 7, & 9. Call 309.874.2174 or email angela@sugargrovenaturecenter.org for the most up-to-date availability. Your field trip can be reserved with a \$100 deposit by check or money order and a completed registration form, available online at www.sugargrovenaturecenter.org.

PURCHASING MAPLE SIRUP

Funks Grove Pure Maple Sirup, located 1/4 mile south of Funks Grove Road on Route 66, will begin selling fresh Maple Sirup as soon as the sap is finished boiling down (usually after March 1st)! They also carry delicious handmade maple candies as well as other related merchandise. Call 309.874.3360 for availability or more information.



Corps of Discovery

COMMUNICATING NATURE: CREATING A FUNKS GROVE CORPS OF DISCOVERY

Mondays, March 12 & 19; April 2 & 9 (there will be a break on March 26); 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Fee: \$100, includes all course materials, individual and group instruction, and snacks. Please bring a lunch. Registration and prepayment are required through the Illinois Natural History Survey website: www.inhs.illinois.edu/outreach/COD.html. Class is limited to 24 participants.

The dynamic, changing landscape of Funks Grove provides a perfect opportunity for interested, committed citizens to participate in the aesthetic documentation of this historic setting and its biological diversity. We invite you to embark on the Funks Grove Corps of Discovery!

Over the 5 week (4 class) period, participants will develop their skills in photography, writing, sketching, and the creative integration of these disciplines. In addition, we will explore physical journaling, photo-journaling, and keeping a sketch journal. These skills will then be used to record the natural wonders of Funks Grove, both today and into the future. No previous artistic skills are required.

Individuals successfully completing *Communicating Nature* will have the opportunity to continue with the program, developing projects such as displays, brochures, and signage. *Corps of Discovery* groups are located throughout Illinois and the Midwest, each tasked with documenting the passage of time and its effect on the local landscape throughout the years.

This project is significant from a historical perspective. Illinois served as the start for one of the greatest exploratory endeavors undertaken on the North American continent - the Lewis and Clark Expedition. This expedition generated perhaps the most famous nature journals ever compiled during the two-year exploration of the American West. Whereas Lewis and Clark traveled thousands of miles to document the diverse American West, today it is the landscape of Funks Grove that will move, evolve, and diversify and the individuals who will stay put.

Our leaders in this journey will be Dr. Michael R. Jeffords and Susan L. Post. Dr. Jeffords is a retired Senior Professional Scientist at the Illinois Natural History Survey, an entomologist, free-lance photographer, and writer. He was the staff photographer for the *Illinois Steward* magazine.

Susan Post is a retired Research Scientist at the Illinois Natural History Survey, a photographer, free-lance writer, was the staff writer for the *Illinois Steward* magazine and authored *Hiking Illinois*. Together, they co-authored *Illinois Wilds*, a coffee table book about the natural habitats of Illinois.



Funks Grove
Corps of Discovery

January, February, & March Programs

Your interest may be the deciding factor to run a program! Most programs require advanced registration. Please try to register at least 7 days in advance. Waiting until the last minute may result in a program being cancelled due to low enrollment or missing out because it is full. Please register by e-mailing register@sugargrovenaturecenter.org or by calling 309.874.2174.

KIDS

Little Wonders: Tracks in the Snow

Ages 3-5 with an adult chaperone

Wednesday, January 18; 10:00-11:30 a.m. or 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Fee: \$5/child members, \$8/child non-members; registration required.

Whose footprints are those in the snow? We'll take a closer look at the critters that run, hop, and even fly through the winter woods. Create a craft, listen to a story, and enjoy a tasty snack at this fun, interactive program.

Little Wonders: Little Tappers

Ages 3-5 with an adult chaperone

Wednesday, February 15; 10:00-11:30 a.m. or 1:00-2:30 p.m. OR Saturday, March 10; 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Fee: \$5/child members, \$8/child non-members; registration required.

This program is designed especially for children 3-5 years with an adult chaperone. We will sing songs and make a craft while learning how to make maple sirup and listen to a fabulous sirup story. Then, each child will get a turn at tree tapping and taste the real thing!

Little Wonders: Mud!

Ages 3-5 with an adult chaperone

Wednesday, March 21; 10:00-11:30 a.m. or 1:00-2:30 p.m.

Fee: \$5/child members, \$8/child non-members; registration required.

Dress to make a mess! This program will explore a favorite thing of spring: squishy gushy mud! Find out what animals live in and make their houses out of mud. Create a craft, listen to a story, and enjoy a tasty snack at this fun, interactive program.

Sirup for Scouts - Saturday, February 25; 9:30-noon or 1:00-2:30; see page 5 for description.

Maple Sirup Experience for Homeschoolers - Tuesday, March 6 or Thursday, March 8; 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.; see page 5 for description.

Upcoming programs...

Homeschool Program with Miller Park Zoo: Exploring Animal Senses

Ages 6-12 years old

Friday, April 13, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Fee: \$10/child members of SGNC or MPZ, \$14/child non-members; registration required.

Class will take place at Sugar Grove Nature Center. Registration is through SGNC. Please fill out the form at www.sugargrovenaturecenter.org/registernow.pdf and send in with payment.

Miss Shannon from Miller Park Zoo and Miss Jill from Sugar Grove Nature Center have partnered up and created a fun class for homeschool students. We'll learn how animals use their senses to help them survive. Then we'll go outside to see what our senses can detect. A special critter guest will be visiting from the zoo, as well!

Continued on page 8.



January, February, & March Programs

Continued from page 7.

ALL AGES

Family Nature Exploration Day

Saturday, January 7, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Free, no registration required.

Bring the family out for a day of fun at the Nature Center! A winter guided hike will take place at 11:00 a.m. to look for tracks in the snow and enjoy the brisk weather. Stop inside to create a make-and-take craft at any time, and don't miss animal feeding time at 1:00 p.m. Make a day of it!

Blacksmith Demonstration

Saturday, January 21; 9:00 a.m.-noon

Free, no registration required.

On the third Saturday of every month, the public is invited to observe members of the Illinois Valley Blacksmith's Association as they work at the forge, across the parking lot from the Nature Center.

Acoustic Irish Music Jam Session

Saturday, January 21; 10:00 a.m.-noon

Free, no registration required.

Acoustic musicians of all levels are invited to join an Irish-music jam session at the Nature Center on the third Saturday of every month. Experienced players will be on hand to lead beginners through a couple of tunes at a slow pace to start, then will progress to an up-to-speed session of traditional Irish tunes. Listeners (and players) are welcome to come-and-go as they enjoy all of the other activities at Sugar Grove Nature Center. For more details, contact Martha Tyner at mtyner@iwu.edu.

Family Nature Exploration Day with Buckskinner Encampment

Saturday, February 4, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Free, no registration required.

Don't miss this special Family Nature Exploration Day. In addition to our guided hike at 11:00 a.m., animal feeding at 1:00 p.m., and make-and-take craft, visit a buckskinner encampment in Imagination Grove! Meet and talk with Rick Erickson, our buckskinner reenactor, as he tans a deer hide, shows his tools-of-the-trade, and explains how buckskinners would survive the long cold winters in Illinois.

Blacksmith Demonstration - *Saturday, February 18; 9:00 a.m.-noon; see January 21 for description.*

Acoustic Irish Music Jam - *Saturday, February 18; 10:00 a.m.-noon, see January 21 for description.*

Tom Ulrich Nature Photography Presentation

Monday, February 27; 7:00 p.m.

Fee: Members of Sugar Grove Nature Center and JWP Audubon \$5/adult, \$2/children under 12; Non-Members \$7/adult, \$3/children under 12; IWU Students free with ID; registration required.

Location: IUW's Center for Natural Sciences (CNS) Building, 201 E. Beecher, Bloomington, IL

Award-winning nature photographer, Tom Ulrich, returns to Illinois to take us on a photographic journey of his travels over the past year. He will focus on the nature of New Zealand and Glacier National Park with a special feature of the warblers and hummingbirds of Ecuador. To learn more about Tom Ulrich and view his work, visit www.tomulrichphotos.com.

Maple Sirup Experience Tours, *Saturday, March 3; see page 4 for description.*

Note: Family Nature Exploration Day will not take place in March due to the Maple Sirup Tours.

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E-mail register@sugargrovenaturecenter.org or call 309.874.2174 to register.

January, February, & March Programs

ALL AGES, *continued from page 8.*

Blacksmith Demonstration, Saturday, March 17; 9:00 a.m.-noon; see January 21 for description.

Acoustic Irish Music Jam, Saturday, March 17; 10:00 a.m.-noon, see January 21 for description.

Twin City Amateur Astronomers Public Viewing Session: Reasons for the Seasons

Saturday, March 24, 7:30-9:30 p.m.

Free; no registration required.

Don't miss the first astronomy public viewing session of the year! Join the Twin City Amateur Astronomers (TCAA) as they explore the stars and other prominent sky objects, such as planets, nebulae, and galaxies. A presentation will be followed by a sky tour using a laser pointer and telescope viewing. The program may be cancelled in the event of a cloudy sky. Phone Carl at 309.830.4085 or Lee at 309.324.2804 to confirm if you are unsure. For additional information, visit www.tcaa.us.

Great Garlic Mustard Smackdown

Saturday, March 31, 10:00-11:30 a.m. OR 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Free; registration required.

Garlic mustard is an exotic invasive plant that crowds out native species, such as bluebells and spring beauties. Families, groups, and individuals of all ages are invited to take a stand against this bully of the forest! After a briefing on the enemy, you will be armed and sent into the woods. Snacks will be provided and prizes will be given to those showing bravery in combat. This is a great opportunity for those needing volunteer or community service hours. If you are interested in joining the fight but cannot make it on this day, please contact us for one-on-one training.

ADULTS

ABC Winter Wonderland Run

Saturday, January 7, 9:00 a.m.

There is no fee, but donations in any amount are encouraged. Funds collected will benefit our nature play area, Imagination Grove. No registration required.

The ABC (Adventures Benefiting Children) Runners invite everyone to join them for a winter run in Funks Grove, which includes 7 & 9 mile road courses. Shorter distances can be enjoyed by turning around at a chosen mile marker. Run on roads or wind your way through wooded trails. Afterwards, warm up in the Nature Center with coffee, tea, hot cocoa, coffee cake, and other treats! Today, the Nature Center will open at 8:30 a.m. Runners are encouraged to bring their families to explore the Nature Center while they run. No unattended children, please.

Stewardship Work Day

Saturday, January 7; 9:00-11:00 a.m.

Free, No registration required for individuals. Groups interested in helping must contact the Nature Center at least one week prior to the workday to determine whether the planned activity is suitable.

Don Schmidt leads a faithful group of volunteers in a variety of stewardship activities every other Saturday. Stop out on occasion or join the group on a regular basis to assist with exotic species removal, seed collection, and other projects. Work days include learning about Illinois' natural history first-hand, while spending a nice morning with friends who believe in the importance of being stewards of the environment.

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Forms for prepayment can be found at www.sugargrovenaturecenter.org/registernow.pdf.



January, February, & March Programs

ADULTS, *continued from page 9.*

Backyard Sugaring

Saturday, January 14; 10:30-noon

Fee: \$5/members, \$8/non-members, registration required.

Have you ever thought about tapping that maple tree in your yard? Learn how with instructor, Jim Wilson, who has been transforming sap from his backyard into sirup for years! This program will give you the basics and direct you to the resources needed to turn your kitchen or garage into a sugar shack!

Watercolors Series with Cynthia Kukla: A Special Focus on Color, Winter

Sunday, January 15; 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Fee: \$35/members, \$40/non-members, registration and prepayment required, form available at www.sugargrovenaturecenter.org/registernow.pdf. Supply list will be sent upon registration.

Since color is one of the hardest areas to gain confidence with when you paint, Cynthia has designed a special set of workshops to help you gain in confidence with using color. The seasons naturally will guide us. In winter, we will explore a limited palette, especially the Old Master's Palette and analogous colors. This will be perfect for the muted subjects available in the winter, especially with Funks Grove as a setting. Those working with acrylics are welcome to participate, too. There will be four workshops held throughout the year (one each season, dates to be determined), and you don't have to attend every session if it doesn't fit your schedule.

Stewardship Work Day - *Saturday, January 21; 9:00-11:00 a.m.; see January 7 for description.*

The Science of Interpretation for Non-formal Educators, Friday, Jan. 27, see page 12 for description.

Backyard Birdwatching Basics

Saturday, January 28, 10:00 a.m. - noon

Fee: Free/members, \$5/non-members; registration required.

We will review basic bird identification techniques and show you how to identify more than 25 common winter feeder birds! Learn how to attract birds to your property by providing the appropriate feeders, feed, and other features. Then find out how easy it is to submit data for the Great Backyard Bird Count, held February 17-20! This program is sponsored by the John Wesley Powell Audubon Society.

Stewardship Work Day - *Saturday, February 4; 9:00-11:00 a.m.; see January 7 for description.*

Winter Tree Identification

Friday, February 10; 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Fee: \$25; lunch, snacks, winter tree identification guide, and other resources included. Registration and prepayment required, forms available at www.sugargrovenaturecenter.org/registernow.pdf. Continuing Education Units and CPDU's available. For questions, contact Paula Wager, Education Coordinator for the McLean County Soil & Water Conservation District at 309.530.6615

Join Trees Forever, University of Illinois Extension, McLean County Soil & Water Conservation District, and Sugar Grove Nature Center as they team up to host a "Winter Tree Identification Workshop."

Participants will receive in-depth training and practice identifying trees by their bark and twigs. The class will begin indoors learning basic plant morphology, characteristics, and terminology and studying twig specimens in an interactive format. Class will then move outdoors to explore Funks Grove and practice identifying trees by putting your new skills to work!

Continued on page 11.



E-mail register@sugargrovenaturecenter.org or call 309.874.2174 to register.

January, February, & March Programs

ADULTS, *continued from page 10.*

Basket Making Workshop

Saturday, February 11, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Fee: \$40/members, \$45/non-members; all materials included. Registration and prepayment required by February 3, form available at www.sugargrovenaturecenter.org/registernow.pdf.

Try your hand at weaving! Create a beautiful Peck Basket with instructor Trish Handel. These baskets are great for fruit, gift baskets, gardening, or decorating the home. The finished size is 15" long, 8" wide, and 9" tall, including handle.

Stewardship Work Day - *Saturday, February 18; 9:00-11:00 a.m.; see January 7 for description.*

Great Backyard Bird Count: Stop In & Count!

Saturday, Feb 18, drop in between 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Fee: Free, no registration required.

We will be participating in the Great Backyard Bird Count, and would love your help! The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent. Anyone can participate, from beginning bird watchers to experts. Assistance will be on hand throughout the day to help you conduct a bird count. For more information on the Great Backyard Bird Count, visit <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/>.

Tom Ulrich Nature Photography Workshop

Tuesday, February 28; 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Fee: \$35/members of Sugar Grove Nature Center and JWP Audubon, \$40/non-members; registration and prepayment required. Form available at www.sugargrovenaturecenter.org/registernow.pdf.

Digital photographers are encouraged to attend to learn about histograms, white balance, composition, quality, and digital work flow. This workshop will be held at the Illinois Corn building on west Route 9 in Bloomington (directions will be provided upon registration). Don't miss this opportunity to learn valuable information and gain insight on photo technique from a skilled expert! To learn more about Tom Ulrich and view his work, visit www.tomulrichphotos.com.

Stewardship Work Day - *Saturdays, March 3, 17, & 31; 9:00-11:00 a.m.; see January 7 for description.*

Maple Sirup Traditions in McLean County, *Saturday, March 10, see page 5 for description.*

Corps of Discovery, *Mondays, March 12 & 19, April 9 & 16; see page 6 for description.*



THANKS FOR DONATING!

We've had a wonderful outpouring of groups and individuals that have brought us items from our wish list on their visits, including girl and boy scout troops, daycares, and many others. Pictured left is Ella C's birthday party. She generously requested that her guests bring donations instead of gifts! To see our Wish List, visit our website and click on the "Make A Difference" link.



Annual Appeal Update

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to our Inaugural Annual Appeal!
We appreciate your generosity.

Sharon & Tony Becker ❁ Charlene Burns ❁ Sandra Bush ❁ Eve Chandler
Charles N. Cherry, Jr. ❁ Mercy & Bill Davison ❁ Darryl & Stephanie Fernandes
Mr. & Mrs Richard C. Funk ❁ Joseph Grabill ❁ Carol Hahn ❁ Tom Haynes ❁ Doris Henderson
Renee Mullen & Bob Mosley ❁ Marty & Patsy Oman ❁ Eric & Nicole Pierce ❁ Patty & Jack Pitts
Janet Rasmussen & Phil Thornton ❁ Michael Regnier ❁ Dennis & Judy Rollins ❁ Marcia Rossi
Sherrie & Bill Snyder ❁ Bette Tambling ❁ James Taylor ❁ Bill & Barbara Thatcher
Carl & Carolyn Wenning ❁ Wallace & Betty Yoder

If you have not yet done so, please consider a gift to Sugar Grove Nature Center. Any amount is truly significant in helping us provide a welcoming environment for people to learn about, experience, and enjoy the nature and beauty of Funks Grove.

Yes, I Want to Help Sugar Grove Nature Center!

I proudly enclose my gift of: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Other: _____

Email: _____

Please check here if you do not want your name listed in the newsletter.

Please make check payable to
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Sugar Grove Nature Center
4532 N 725 East Road
McLean, IL 61754



309.874.2174

www.sugargrovenaturecenter.org



THE SCIENCE OF INTERPRETATION FOR NON-FORMAL EDUCATORS

Friday, January 27, 10:00 a.m.-noon

Fee: \$10/members, \$15/non-members, registration required.

Is your message being delivered correctly? The average student, teacher or nature center visitor assesses their visit within the first three minutes of your presentation...did you make the grade? As a host, educator or assistant tour leader, your communication strategy has the potential to make a stellar, or not so stellar, impact on your organization. Visit with us as we explore best practices in communicating your message to visitors. Participants will learn the basics of interpretive strategies, tips to engage and dazzle your audience with professional practices and even create your own program agenda. We are thrilled to have Sarah Livesay, a remarkable leader in Environmental Education in the state of Illinois and beyond, share her extensive experience and passion for interpretation and programming.

Funks Grove Featured in Lincoln Book

SUGAR GROVE FEATURED IN NEW BOOK: *ABRAHAM LINCOLN TRAVELED THIS WAY- THE AMERICA LINCOLN KNEW*

Acclaimed landscape photographer Robert Shaw has teamed up with renowned Lincoln historian Dr. Michael Burlingame to produce a new book entitled *Abraham Lincoln Traveled This Way-The America Lincoln Knew*. The 276-page hardcover book is a culmination of five years of research and hundreds of days of photography in ten states and the District of Columbia. Shaw traveled over a hundred thousand miles in the making of the images for the book, which range from the Mississippi River to New Hampshire. Beginning at Lincoln's birthplace in Kentucky, it moves through his younger years in Indiana, offers a comprehensive view of his twenty-nine years in Illinois, his travels to The White House and the years of the Civil War, and concludes with a poignant epilogue by Michael Burlingame.

This is a collection of captivating images and scholarly excellence which takes readers on a visual journey that is unique among books about Abraham Lincoln. Dr. Burlingame's writing and Shaw's images are woven together with Lincoln's own words to create an elegant and exciting exploration of Lincoln's life story.

A photograph of the Sugar Grove prairie at Sugar Grove Nature Center in Funks Grove graces the cover. Shaw explained that he chose the site because the landscape provides a perfect example of the land that Lincoln traveled. Several other photographs of Sugar Grove can be found throughout the book.

This book will make a great gift for the Abraham Lincoln admirer in your life or provide a beautiful conversation piece on your coffee table. Sugar Grove Nature Center will be selling copies of this new book with all profits benefitting the Nature Center (Cover Price, \$36 plus tax). Books may be purchased Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Sugar Grove Nature Center in Funks Grove. We will also gladly mail books; shipping fees apply.



PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS



Best of Show
Sherrie Snyder, "Morning Snack"

Sugar Grove Nature Center would like to thank everyone who participated in the 2011 Nature Photography Contest. Central Illinois, truly, is a beautiful place to live! Congratulations to this year's winners: Tyler Brandt, Hope Brannon, Tonya Guo, Christine Hearn, Jim Limer, Lauren Monk, Joyce Preston, Rainey Shulz, Jerry Sievers, Bill Snyder, Sherrie Snyder, Sabrina Walsh, Dave Weth, & Krista Wilson.

To view their winning photos in color, visit us online at www.sugargrovenaturecenter.org/2011npcwinners.htm.

Start taking your photos now for 2012!



Making A Difference

WELCOME TO OUR NEW & RENEWING MEMBERS!

SENIOR/STUDENT

Marlene M. Aeschleman ✨ Karen Bergmann ✨ Sherry McGuire ✨ Bill & Rosalie Seymour
Larry & Darlene Tamburini ✨ Wayne Trotter ✨ Muriel R. Walker ✨ Jan Ward ✨ Margaret Wilson

SUGAR MAPLE

R. Charles & Laura Baue ✨ Eve Chandler ✨ Richard & Anna Marie Chrisman ✨ Peter & Kristine Dedrich & Family
Barbara Ellis ✨ Joe, Sarah, Caleb, & Josiah Flint ✨ Mabel Gast ✨ David Gehrt ✨ Anthony & Nicole Gould
Sue Gunder ✨ Tonya Guo ✨ C.J. Harrington ✨ John & Peg Kirk ✨ Gene & Marianna Lessen
Clayton & Angela Matteson ✨ Landon & Jessie McDougald ✨ Elaine McManus ✨ Rick & Bobbie Nelson
Lucy Patterson ✨ Joyce Preston ✨ Bob & Suzanne Quiggins ✨ Cindy Quinn ✨ David Roughton
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Schwab ✨ Ken & Fran Smith ✨ The Torry & Kelli Steffen Family ✨ The Vose Family
Sabrina Walsh ✨ Jamie & Charlotte Warmbir ✨ Doug & Sharon Welch

PAW PAW

Mary Jo Adams ✨ Jim & Deb Bacigalupo ✨ Kandy Baumgardner ✨ Janet Beach Davis & Family
Tony & Sharon Becker ✨ Eric Bill ✨ Jim & Roberta Bortell ✨ Joy Butler ✨ Don & Phyllis Clay ✨ Orlyn & Jana Edge
Saad & Julie El-Zanati ✨ Bob & Lynn Fearneyhough ✨ Frank & Janet Fraembs ✨ Rob & Becky Glinka
Don & JoAnn Hartman ✨ Tom & Mary Haynes ✨ Matt & Connie Hughes ✨ Bill & Penny James
April & Savannah McClellan ✨ Norma Nelson ✨ Greg Nussbaum ✨ Marty & Patsy Oman
The Michael Regnier Family ✨ Connie & John Rich ✨ Shirley Roemer ✨ Sue Rovens & Charlie Edwards
Ed & Marilyn Sams ✨ Juergen & Meredith Schroeer ✨ The Shultz Family ✨ Jeff & Lynn Spicer
Bill & Barbara Thatcher ✨ Karen Timmerman ✨ John Tobias ✨ Ryan Weishalla & Tara

AMERICAN SYCAMORE

Kenneth & Stacey Bill ✨ The Jill Daley Family ✨ The Dunlap Family ✨ The Fernandes Family ✨ Lee Green
Doris Henderson ✨ Bill & Lorraine Hetzler ✨ Carla Hickey ✨ Phil Houser ✨ Mary Lou Lael ✨ Fred & Elaine Noyes
Doug & Kay Oehler ✨ Jeffrey & Dionne Otto ✨ Jack & Patty Pitts ✨ Joni Poisel ✨ Louise Smith
Vernon & Laura Veal ✨ Tom & Carolyn Weiland ✨ Jim & Rachel Wilson

SHAGBARK HICKORY

Judie Bey ✨ Angelo Capparella & Gretchen Knapp ✨ Mike & Della Harris ✨ Ed & Judy Hines
Illinois Prairie Community Foundation - David & Pearle Jeffries Donor Advised Fund

BLACK WALNUT

Ina M. Rehtmeyer

PAUL A. FUNK FOUNDATION

In the mid-1990's the dream of creating a Nature Center in Funks Grove was well on its way to reality after the Funks Grove Cemetery Association purchased the area known as Sugar Grove. The Paul A Funk Foundation has provided funding for Sugar Grove Nature Center from the very beginning and has continued to support our daily operations with an annual gift. Their continued support is vital to the programs that thousands of visitors enjoy throughout the year.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Our thoughts and deepest sympathies go out to the friends and families of Lillian Harris. Thank you to those who chose Sugar Grove Nature Center for her memorial. Contributions received in her memory will be so helpful in enabling us to continue sharing nature and touching lives. We hope this will be of some comfort to those left mourning and healing.

MEMORIAL GIFTS & BEQUESTS

We hope you will consider Sugar Grove Nature Center in your estate planning. Memorial gifts and bequests are an important way you can make a lasting contribution to the preservation and maintenance of this important natural area and environmental education center. If you wish to make a provision in your will, the following general form is suggested: "I give Sugar Grove Foundation, an Illinois not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization (37-1338932), which receives mail at 4532 N 725 East Road, McLean, Illinois 61754, the sum of \$_____ or _____ percent of the residue of my estate (or specifically described property) for Sugar Grove Nature Center." If you have already named Sugar Grove Nature Center in your plans, we would like to acknowledge your meaningful gift. Please contact Angela Funk, Director, at 309.874.2174.



Sugar Grove Nature Center Membership

Become a member of Sugar Grove Nature Center! Your membership supports quality environmental education programs, land stewardship, research opportunities, and so much more! Sugar Grove Foundation is a non-profit organization that receives no tax support. Memberships, program fees, private gifts, and corporate and foundation grant support are the lifeblood of our organization.

All Membership Levels, including **Student/Senior (\$15)**, **Sugar Maple (\$25)**, and **Paw Paw (\$50)**, receive:

- ✿ Discounts on classes, programs, and events
- ✿ Benefit of checking out books from the Nature Center Library
- ✿ Discount at Annual Spring Native Plant Sale
- ✿ Reciprocal membership at nature centers around the country

The Student/Senior level is for individuals. Family memberships begin at the Sugar Maple level.

Higher giving levels:

- ✿ **American Sycamore (\$100)**
All of the above benefits plus a 20% one-time discount at Wild Birds Unlimited in Normal, IL
- ✿ **Shagbark Hickory (\$250)**
All of the above benefits plus two Free Admissions to Annual Autumn Celebration
- ✿ **Black Walnut (\$500)**
All of the above benefits plus a nature photograph featuring the flora & fauna of Funks Grove
- ✿ **Blue Ash (\$1000)**
All of the above benefits plus a NatureScape Backyard Habitat Consultation
- ✿ **Bur Oak (\$5000)**
All of the above benefits plus a guided trail ride through Funks Grove



MEMBERSHIP FORM

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15Student/Senior (65+) | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250Shagbark Hickory |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25Sugar Maple | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500Black Walnut |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50Paw Paw | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1000Blue Ash |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100American Sycamore | <input type="checkbox"/> \$5000Bur Oak |

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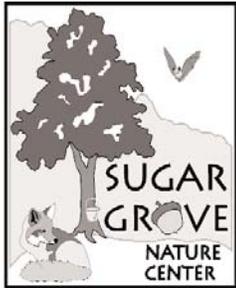
Memberships are valid for one year.

*Membership contributions are tax deductible. Please ask your employer about matching gift programs!
Sugar Grove Nature Center will neither sell nor trade personal information provided by donors.*

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Sugar Grove Foundation
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Nature Center Hours

November - March
Tuesday - Saturday
10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.



April - October
Tuesday - Friday, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Sunday, 1:00-4:00 p.m.



Grounds, trails, & Imagination Grove
open daily dawn to dusk.

Contact us at:

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4532 N 725 East Road
McLean, IL 61754
309.874.2174

info@sugargrovenaturecenter.org
www.sugargrovenaturecenter.org

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Longitude: W 089° 08.007'

IMPORTANT NOTICE

We are updating our mailing list! If you would like to continue receiving "The Nature of the Grove" you **MUST** mail this page (with address label) to us or subscribe to the electronic version by sending an email to info@sugargrovenaturecenter.org with "Start E-Newsletter" in the subject line. Taking no action will result in being removed from the mailing list. See page one for details!

