



family wellness

PHILADELPHIA NEEDS NATURE

By Elisa Sarantschin, NaturePHL Coordinator

THINK ABOUT THE PAST TWO WEEKS: How often have you been physically active? Were you active outdoors? We use these questions to screen children in our clinical wellness program, NaturePHL, which provides prescriptions that encourage children and families to access nature. If you answered “not at all” to either of these questions, you may also be suffering from nature deficit disorder. Today, many children—and adults—are suffering from “nature deficit disorder”, a term coined to explain the reduced amount of time being spent outdoors.

Our increasing use of technology through computers, tablets, and smartphones is pulling society away from nature. As some recent studies show, this is becoming detrimental to our health. Many adults spend their day in front of a screen indoors, doing work that sometimes causes them to feel stressed, fatigued, and depressed. Children also now spend more than seven hours a day with electronic media and have lost 25% of playtime and 50% of unstructured outdoor activity over the past few decades. This loss, paired with the increase of screen time, causes today’s children to be unfocused and restless. It also puts them at risk for such diseases as diabetes and hyperactivity disorders.

Research suggests that spending time in nature can do wonders for your physical and mental health. Taking a 20 minute walk outside can reduce restlessness and improve focus. Nature reduces cognitive fatigue and stress in adults while improving mood and communication skills. Outdoor activity and time in nature is especially important for physical development; children who spend more time outdoors have better coordination and are less likely to be overweight. Nature can also help children with attention deficit disorder to better concentrate.

Children and adults can improve their health through nature right here at the Schuylkill Center. On Saturday mornings, we offer guided trail hikes and unstructured nature play for families of all ages. We also host monthly Wellness Saturdays, where adults can practice yoga, tai chi, and mindfulness, while reaping the many health benefits of nature.

Last year, we launched NaturePHL in order to improve nature access, as well as health and wellness in Philadelphia.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



director's cut

OUR CLIMATE FUTURE: HOTTER, WETTER, WEIRDER



THIS PAST AUGUST, TORRENTIAL DOWNPOURS buffeted the region for three consecutive days. Whitewater rivers flowed down the steep streets of Roxborough and Manayunk, the Schuylkill Expressway resembled the river instead of a road, and the river itself roiled in an angry coffee-brown color. Storms of this intensity and frequency—three massive downpours in three days—are now more common than ever.

While Philadelphia's climate is hotter, wetter, and more extreme than ever, when you look at what has been happening globally this summer, the story deepens. Weather records have been set in Scandinavia, Japan, North and South Korea, and Algeria, where the highest African temperature ever recorded, 124 degrees, was measured in July. In Northern Siberia, temperatures were above 90, more than 40 degrees above normal, and Canadian temperatures rocketed into new territory in July, causing more than 70 heat-related deaths in Quebec.

For me, the kicker of this strange summer was this news flash: the highest mountain in Sweden no longer is. Kebnekaise, covered by a glacier, has melted so much that it has shrunk, and is now officially only the the second highest peak in the country. Because of melting ice. From climate change.

And we haven't even gotten to the wildfires out west, fueled by a 10-year drought, among other things.

So what's going on? Join me on Saturday, October 6 at 9:30 am for a town meeting, "Philadelphia's Climate Future: Hotter, Wetter, Weirder." To kick off our University of Nature, we're joined by three experts to interpret our climate future: What will rainfall be like here in Philadelphia? Temperature? How far are our rivers going to rise? How will this affect our quality of life? And what can we do now to make an impact?

University of Nature is a day dedicated to community-based adult learning, where we gather to understand the state of the local, national, and global environment.

I'd love to have you part of this key day. Check out the flyer on the next page and register online.

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university of nature

LIFELONG LEARNING ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6TH

PHILADELPHIA'S CLIMATE FUTURE: HOTTER, WETTER, WEIRDER

RICH FREEH, ZAKIA ELLIOT, ROBERT GRAFF | 9:30 AM–10:30 AM

HOW WILL CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT PHILADELPHIA? WHAT WILL RAINFALL BE LIKE? TEMPERATURE? HOW FAR IS THE DELAWARE PROJECTED TO RISE? HOW WILL THIS AFFECT OUR QUALITY OF LIFE? AND WHAT CAN YOU DO NOW TO IMPACT THIS? JOIN US FOR A TOWN MEETING ON PHILADELPHIA'S CLIMATE FUTURE. RICH FREEH, SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER WITH THE OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY, FIRST PRESENTS THE DATA. THEN HE, THE SIERRA CLUB'S ZAKIA ELLIOTT, AND ROBERT GRAFF, CLIMATE CHANGE PLANNER WITH THE DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION, ENGAGE YOU IN UNDERSTANDING OUR CLIMATE FUTURE.

Aerial Imagery: Mapping Using Balloon and Kite Leslie Birch, LandLab Artist and Drew Brown, Philadelphia Water Department | 10:45 am–11:30 am

Discover how aerial imagery techniques, such as balloon and kite mapping, are making a real impact in our city and around the world. Environmental artist Leslie Birch and Philadelphia Water Department expert Drew Brown will lead a workshop on this easy citizen science activity. Leslie will share how this DIY technology has been applied in her own artwork at the Center while Drew will share aerial images pertaining to water use. Then we'll do a field test with a balloon and kite rig!

The Story in Rocks: Geology of the Wissahickon Watershed Sarah West | 10:45 am–11:30 am

Rocks record the history of a landscape—from the path of water flow, to the sediments it carried, to the plants that grew there long ago. Discover the history of the Wissahickon watershed as told by the rocks. We'll learn how to identify the area's five most common rocks, and learn how the famous Wissahickon schist was formed.

Foraging and Feasting: Edible Plant Walk Eduardo Duenas, Schuylkill Center | 10:45 am–11:30 am

Hike our trails with Lead Environmental Educator Eduardo Duenas to learn more about the abundance of edible and medicinal plants on our property. Discover the autumn treasures of our forest as we find, harvest, and taste a variety of plants and understand more about their many uses.

Fall Wildflowers: the Last Chance Cafe Mike Weilbacher, Schuylkill Center | 11:45 am–12:30 pm

Goldenrod, asters, and other fall wildflowers provide critical food for insects needing to mate and lay eggs before winter sets in. For migrating monarchs, fall meadows are last chance cafes for food and fuel. On an outdoor walk, learn the names and life histories of these extraordinary flowers.

The Hidden Life of Ponds Aaliyah Green-Ross, Schuylkill Center | 11:45 am–12:30 pm

Our ponds are teeming with biodiversity—from tadpoles and dragonflies, to diving beetles and water scorpions. Take a dip in Cattail Pond to discover how this biodiversity supports a healthy ecosystem. We'll learn the life histories of the aquatic creatures we find, as well as what these tiny animals can tell us about the health of ponds and streams.

The Schuylkill Navigation: a Photographic History Tour Sandy Sorlien, Fairmount Water Works | 11:45 am–12:30 pm

Fairmount Water Works photographer/educator Sandy Sorlien will present highlights of her recent documentary project, *Inland: The Abandoned Canals of the Schuylkill Navigation*, as well as some historic images of the locks, dams, and canals. Sandy has researched and photographed the entirety of this astounding 108-mile Navigation system. We'll learn how Philadelphia's locks and Manayunk Canal fit into this heritage, and learn the mysteries behind many of the historic artifacts left behind on our landscape. Sandy also offers a free walking tour on October 7, which participants are welcome to join.

bodies of water

DANCE EXCHANGE AT THE SCHUYLKILL CENTER

By Christina Catanese, Director of Environmental Art

WHO GETS TO DANCE? Where is the dance happening? What is the dancing about? Why does it matter?

These four questions drive the work of Dance Exchange, a DC-area arts organization that has been one of the Schuylkill Center's LandLab artists in residence over the past year. When Dance Exchange was selected for this residency, I was excited to discover what the answers to these questions might be in the context of our work connecting people with nature.

The culmination of Dance Exchange's research and artmaking will take place on October 13th and 14th with animated hikes through our grounds that follow the story of water. Exploring our ponds, streams, erosion-prevention efforts, and impacts from recent storm events, these hour-long experiences will weave together performance, installation, science engagements, and more. Think guided nature walk punctuated by performed dance in the landscape, with led opportunities to interpret information (both scientific and sensory) into your own body and in collaboration with others. There will even be ways that the performers will contribute to our land restoration work through the process of the performance.



PARTICIPANTS COLLABORATING WITH DANCE EXCHANGE

My answers to the Dance Exchange questions so far are 1) everyone; 2) anywhere; 3) information from many realms outside of dance; and 4) because it helps bring us closer to that content, and to each other. But you may have your own answers (and more questions) after experiencing the first commissioned dance work at the Schuylkill Center in a decade.



FAMILY WELLNESS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



CONGREGATING IN A PUBLIC PARK

Through NaturePHL, pediatricians at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia can prescribe up to 60 minutes a day of physically active play. Patients are also referred to NaturePHL's mapping platform, naturephl.org, which is searchable by zip code and amenity. While there are many places to get outside in Philadelphia, some of those locations are hard to find. This platform allows anyone to find the parks, trails, and green spaces close to them. We are excited about the impact of this program in helping Philadelphia children and families achieve better health.

So if you haven't spent time outdoors in the past two weeks, you may be in need of an outdoor activity prescription and some serious nature time. Come out and enjoy the upcoming fall season—at our Schuylkill Saturdays or Wellness Saturdays, or use www.naturephl.org to find a green space near you. It's good for your health!



art as leadership

STACY LEVY TO RECEIVE THE HENRY MEIGS AWARD

By Christina Catanese, Director of Environmental Art

Every year, the Schuylkill Center gives the Henry Meigs Environmental Leadership Award to a deserving environmental professional for leaving a meaningful and lasting impact on their community and our region, and embodying a spirit of leadership, integrity, and vision.

We've never given this honor to an environmental artist—but that changes this year. This November, Stacy Levy will be presented with the Meigs award for her pioneering work joining the worlds of art and science throughout her career of creating compelling artwork, both site-specific and gallery-based.

In Levy's words, she "use[s] art as a vehicle for translating the patterns and processes of the natural world." Today, creating novel modes of revealing natural systems and solving ecological challenges have become critical, and artists have an important role to play in connecting people with nature. Levy is among the preeminent environmental artists working today, and is unmatched in the elegance with which her work reveals

ecological processes that otherwise may go unnoticed.

She has broken new ground, working not just *in*, but *with* the environment. Along with showing how nature works, Levy has created many projects that solve place-based environmental issues. For an example of this, we need look no further than out the back door of our Visitor Center, where we can experience *Rain Yard*, Levy's 2013 artwork that manages stormwater runoff from our roof. Operating in this intersection, Levy has a spirit of collaboration and an uncanny ability to galvanize community members and specialists across disciplines.

After being presented the award, Levy will be joined by a panel for a discussion on the intersection of art, science, and the environment, particularly through the lens of water. Then, we'll celebrate the opening of a new installation by Levy in our gallery with a reception.

We recognize that environmental leadership can take many forms. In this year's Meigs award, we look forward to celebrating how artists can shine as environmental leaders. ✂



CLOCKWISE LEFT TO RIGHT: STACY LEVY; A CHILD EXPLORING LEVY'S RAIN RAVINE AT THE FRICK ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER IN PITTSBURG PENNSYLVANIA; *RIVER RETURN* IN SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS; THE *STRAW GARDEN* INSTALLATION IN SEATTLE, WASHINGTON; LEVY'S *RAIN YARD* AT THE SCHUYLKILL CENTER IN TWO DIFFERENT VIEWS.

wildlife clinic director

INTRODUCING REBECCA MICHELIN

By Mike Weilbacher, Executive Director

On the first Friday in July, Rebecca Michelin, a native Nova Scotian, was at the Canadian border with a letter from the Schuylkill Center, asking to cross the border into America to work for us. After a 90-minute conversation—and a phone call to me from a Customs official—they allowed her into America...

And her adventure as the Wildlife Clinic's new director began. Now in the job for over a month, Rebecca has been a whirlwind of activity: reorganizing the building, recruiting volunteers, hiring staff, observing our programs, and arranging for her state and federal permits to rehabilitate wild animals.

Rebecca brings a decade of experience from three different wildlife clinics in Nova Scotia, British Columbia, and Texas. "I had wanted to be a marine biologist since I was a little girl," Rebecca says. Armed with a degree in marine biology, she first worked as a fisheries observer on a crab boat "and realized it was not what I thought." Searching for Plan B, Rebecca came across a notice for an internship at Hope for Wildlife, a rehab center not far from her home, and thought it could be interesting. She started her internship, and was "hooked from the very first day. I worked for 60 hours straight for four weeks and knew that's what I wanted to do. I always wanted to work with animals, I just thought it would be fish and sharks, not terrestrial wildlife."

She has steadily climbed the leadership ladder in her profession and now serves as an instructor in basic rehabilitation for the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council, flying around the country to help train her peers.

One of the reasons Rebecca loves wildlife rehabilitation is "there



is so much variety, there are so many different animals, and there is always something to learn." Which is why her favorite animal tends to be "whichever one I am holding in my hand at that time."

Rebecca was initially nervous about adjusting to city life in Philadelphia, but is "happily pleased and surprised with how much green there is, especially at the Schuylkill Center."

Rebecca hosted her first volunteer session at the Clinic in August, with a small group cleaning out several rooms to get them ready for reopening. Additional events are coming up in the future; if you would like to volunteer at the Wildlife Clinic, please visit our website to sign up or contact Volunteer Coordinator Claire Morgan at claire@schuylkillcenter.org.

She's also taking inventory of supplies, performing a much-needed deep cleaning, and beginning the long-term project of reworking the building's layout to better care for the animals. Rebecca is bringing the clinic into the 21st century, allowing for visitors to make electronic donations after dropping off animals, something we've not been able to do until now.

You'll see all of these changes when the clinic reopens and we'll continue to be in touch as the Wildlife Clinic moves forward.

STACY VERNICK AND JOAN BROWN CLEANING THE WILDLIFE CLINIC DURING A RECENT VOLUNTEER EVENT



the season in brief

HIGHLIGHTS FROM SUMMER 2018

1 August 17th was our last day of summer camp. Many thanks to all the children who explored the natural world with us and to the counselors and CITs who made it all possible.

2 Adventure Treks, our group of 10-12 year-old summer campers, went whitewater rafting down the Lehigh River, took a 13-mile bike ride, saw dolphins off the coast of New Jersey, and hiked some of the best trails in the Mid-Atlantic.

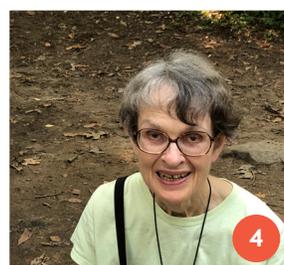
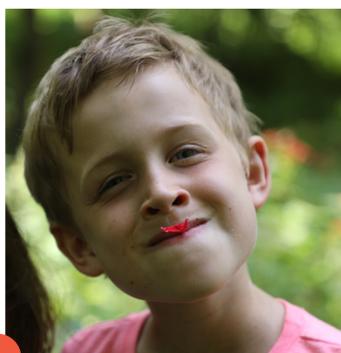
3 Dylan Lewis (left) and Ben Vlam (right) served as our summer fellows through the Alliance for Watershed Education, conducting surveys and completing capstone projects in theater and interpretive signage.

4 Barbara Baumgartner retired from the Schuylkill Center after 11 years of service. We wish her all the best and hope she will come back to visit Monkey Tail Gang.

5 Emily Harkness accepted a new position as Assistant Director of Early Childhood Education and is here for all of your preschool and kindergarten questions.

6 Our annual star-gazing event, Shooting Stars & S'mores, sold out early! Thanks to Damien Ruffner and Jakob Gelleri for their hard work and to all the members and friends who came out to look at the night sky with us.

7 Thank you to the Horace P. Goldsmith Foundation for supporting the Center's land restoration efforts through a multi-year grant. In our 15-year partnership, the Goldsmith Foundation has helped us tackle many important projects, including the woodland restoration of the former Chestnut Grove. After clearing out invasive species, adding stormwater controls, and repopulating the area with native trees like tulip poplars and sycamores, we renamed this restored area Fox Glen.



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FALL 2018

in this issue:

FAMILY WELLNESS, PAGE 1

UNIVERSITY OF NATURE, PAGE 3

MEIGS AWARD, PAGE 5

WILDLIFE CLINIC, PAGE 6

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THE SCHUYLKILL CENTER

Make a gift today to help us connect people and nature, restore the land, and foster future environmental stewards.



this fall

TALES AND TREATS OCTOBER 26 & 27

