The Story of Arbor Day (in Elkhart)

Arbor Day is coming up! The event has been at the EEC since 2013 - distributing free trees and telling the story of Elkhart’s trees. The story started with the opening of Reflection Grove on Arbor Day 2013. The Grove is designed for reflection with a large-scale, artistic visual of the impact of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) on ash trees. EAB is an invasive pest that is destroying ash trees across the country. The message of Reflection Grove is one of both loss and opportunity. The Grove incorporates a platform and bench made from wood that came from an ash tree that grew up in Island Park. The tree was one of many lost due to EAB. Local sawyers and woodworkers milled that tree for Reflection Grove and inscribed it with a short poem. These individuals are part of a network that worked with the City Forester and the EEC to develop the ElkhartWood program. ElkhartWood is full-circle urban forestry - going beyond the trees currently growing on streets, right-of-ways, and parks to include finding uses for wood from city trees after they are removed and using that to fuel community tree planting projects and enhance our community.

At Arbor Day this story is told through woodworking and milling demonstrations using logs from city trees, through Reflection Grove showing the struggle with pests and diseases and what we can do about it, and through the adopt-a-tree giveaway where you can take home a tree to plant. The city forest is made up of all the trees in the city and you can help bring it full-circle by valuing wood products from local trees and planting new trees to grow our city forest greener and healthier than ever before!

Featured Spring Project - Reflection Grove

Help get Reflection Grove ready for spring by pulling weeds and trimming back overgrowth. The Grove is a beautiful spot to reflect on our environment, but it needs TLC. Great for both individuals and groups looking to give back to the community and have a lasting impact on outdoor education! If you or your group are looking for volunteer projects for spring and summer contact Ericka to schedule a time to come out and help!
Volunteer for Arbor Day!

Be a part of our Arbor Day story by volunteering! There will be refreshments, lunch from Olive Garden, and volunteers get first pick of a free tree! Below is the event schedule (subject to change) and activity descriptions. Sign up online at http://vols.pt/vWk4ZD or contact Ericka at the EEC at (574) 293-5070 or ericka.popovich@coei.org. If you can’t stay for the whole event (10am – 2pm) that’s okay – just let us know when you sign up!

**Scheduled Activities**
- 10:00am — Spring Plant Exchange
- 11:00am — Arbor Day Ceremony with Mayor and special guests
- 12:00pm — Tree Planting Demonstration
- 1:00pm — Pruning Demonstration
- 2:00pm — Event Ends

**On-Going Activities (10:00am – 2:00pm)**
- Adopt a Tree
- Woodworking Demonstrations
- ElkhartWood Products Showcase
- Adopt-an-Ash Tree at the EEC

**Arbor Day Ceremony**
Award-winning forestry, special guests and a Proclamation! Learn about the awards Elkhart received for the city forestry program and ElkhartWood. Meet the citizens involved in the success of ElkhartWood.

**Tree Care Demonstrations**
The City Forester will lead planting and pruning demonstrations. Learn how to keep your trees healthy for decades of benefits!

**Take Home a Tree**
Get a free tree and a kit with everything you need to start your tree off right! A variety of trees will be available while supplies last. Tree planting kits include compost, wood chips and a watering bucket.

**ElkhartWood Showcase & Woodworking Demonstrations**
Watch as woodworkers from the ElkhartWood Products Network demonstrate techniques for turning reclaimed lumber into beautifully handcrafted items. Check out the ElkhartWood Showcase to see finished pieces on display.

**Spring Plant Exchange**
Bring your perennials, shrubs, trees, and bulbs to the EEC and exchange them with other gardeners. Plants must be healthy, potted in soil and properly watered. Bring your plants to exchange and take home a free tree too!

---

Skills & Professional Development Opportunities

**Becoming an Outdoors-Woman**
**May 1-3 at Ross Camp, West Lafayette, IN**
Women can choose their own adventure at an outdoor sports workshop with courses ranging from shotgun shooting to canoeing. Open to women 18 and older. Registration begins March 1 at IndianaBOW.com. The program is designed for women to learn outdoor skills in a relaxed, low-pressure environment.

**IDNR Go FishIN Crew Captain Training**
**May 7 at Bonneyville Mill County Park, Bristol, IN**
Go FishIN Crew Captain workshops are for adults (e.g. educators and youth leaders) to learn about fish biology, Indiana’s aquatic ecosystems, fish management, basic angling skills, and angler ethics. Crew Captains can use Go FishIN equipment to teach in their classrooms and community. The EEC has equipment available for trained Crew Captains to borrow. No fishing experience is needed. Workshop is free but pre-registration is required.

**Great Lakes Literacy – Environmental Education Association of Indiana (EEAI)**
**September 25-27, Dunes Learning Center, Chesterton Indiana**
Come learn techniques and best practices for teaching to develop Great Lakes Literate citizens. Presentations will focus on understanding ecology, fostering stewardship, and environmental justice issues all within the ecologically diverse and awe-inspiring landscapes of NW Indiana. It’s time to do the Dunes with EEAI!

Current Volunteer Opportunities

Specialized Skills

The EEC is seeking the following specialized skills. Please contact Ericka at (574) 293-5070 to find out how you can help!

- Communications/graphic design
- Landscaping/horticulture
- Event planning/management
- Edible/small space gardening

Garlic Mustard Challenge
April-May 2015
Volunteers are needed to help remove invasive garlic mustard from the EEC. As part of a regional challenge, the EEC will be trying to bag as much of this invasive weed as possible this spring. This is a great group volunteer activity and a fun competition! Please contact the EEC for more information.

Gardens & Trails

Adopt-a-Trail (year-round)
Nature lovers are needed to help care for trails at Boot Lake Nature Preserve and the EEC. Volunteers keep trails clear of trash and debris. Plenty of trails still available!

Adopt-a-Spot at the EEC (year-round)
Adopt educational and/or natural areas at the EEC! Remove weeds, invasive plants, litter and other maintenance tasks as needed to keep it looking good!

Trail Improvement (year-round)
Help maintain the hiking trails at the EEC. Spread wood chips, trim overgrowth and ensure trails are in good condition. Equipment and training provided.

Garden Projects (March through November)
Spend time weeding and enhancing gardens at the EEC. There are several gardens to choose from and we have everything you need to get started!

Education, Outreach, & Events

Arbor Day
April 25, 2015  10:00am-2:00pm
Sign up for event setup (8:00-10:00am), the event (10:00am-2:00pm) or cleanup (2:00-3:00pm). Orientation for event volunteers is at 9:00am. Volunteers give out trees and help with event activities. Sign-up online at http://vols.pt/vWk4ZD or call 574-293-5070.

EnviroFest Planning Committee
January – July 2015
If you enjoy event planning and promoting environmental stewardship, join the EnviroFest Committee. We need motivated individuals to help with fundraising, exhibitor recruitment, volunteer coordination and more.

Spring Projects

Reflection Grove
Help get the Reflection Grove ready for spring by pulling weeds and trimming back overgrowth. Great for individuals and groups!

Food Garden Spring/Summer Planting
April 13-24, May 18 – June 5
Plant seeds and starts in the food education garden to teach kids about plants and healthy food! Help is also needed to weed and care for the plants as they grow. This is a popular spot for field trips!

Group Volunteer Opportunities

Is your company, organization or club interested in volunteering as a group and giving back to the community? Call the EEC to set up a project at (574) 293-5070 or send an email to ericka.popovich@coei.org.
ElkhartWood Ordinance Passed!

Ordinance 15-0-17: The proposed ordinance to establish ElkhartWood, the urban wood utilization, education and community tree planting program, was unanimously approved by the City Council on April 6, 2015. This establishes ElkhartWood as a city-sanctioned program.

Summer Interns

The EEC is in the process of hiring for our summer internships. Intern interviews are underway and we hope to bring them on board by the end of May! The summer interns are crucial in expanding the EEC's capacity for programming and outreach. Be sure to say ‘hi’ when you see them!

EEC Availability & Open Staff Position

The EEC is currently down to one staff person. Though we try to remain open Monday through Friday from 8am-5pm, the center is occasionally closed when the Supervisor is in meetings or conducting interviews. If you plan to visit, you are encouraged to call to ensure the visitor cabin will be open. We appreciate your patience with us during this hectic time.

The Education Coordinator position has been posted to the city website and Human Resources is accepting applications. To download the job description and the city application form go to the Human Resources page at www.elkhartindiana.org. Deadline is April 27 or until filled.

Site Improvements at the EEC

There are a few site improvement projects happening at the EEC this spring. The potholes along the main drive have been filled to make driving here a little easier!

The rain gardens out front and in the parking lot are scheduled for some maintenance work and re-seeding this spring and summer. You should start seeing some bright colors and new species popping up!

The food education garden is getting a new fence put in this month. The old fence was getting pulled down and wasn’t keeping out the groundhogs so we’re putting in something a little sturdier! New compost and wood chips will also be added. Help us fill the garden with seeds and veggies once it’s done by volunteering for the spring garden planting!