

# Litzsinger Road Ecology Center

## Community Newsletter

9711 Litzsinger Road • Ladue, MO 63124 • Phone (314)442-6717 • [www.litzsinger.org](http://www.litzsinger.org)

### Wrapping the Year Up

By Bob Coulter

All of us at the Litzsinger Road Ecology Center hope that your school year is wrapping up well, and that you have exciting plans for rest and recreation as well as professional growth this summer. We have enjoyed working with you this year, and look forward to continuing our relationship next year.

As we move into the summer, just a few things to be aware of:

Everyone will be receiving a request to participate in an online survey about your experiences this year. We work with PEER Associates, an outside evaluation firm, to collect this information and analyze it for us. We only see the compiled data, with nothing attributed to individuals, so please be as detailed and thoughtful as you can, especially in areas where we can do a better job for you.

By now you should have received an application for field study for next year. (If not, please drop a note to [martha@litzsinger.org](mailto:martha@litzsinger.org) as soon as possible). Being as complete as you can will make it easiest for us to work with you in planning your field study. In particular, be sure to highlight what you want to do that extends what you did this year. We're here to support your continuing professional growth.

Spaces are still available in all four of the professional development workshops we'll be holding here at LREC along with others offered by the Missouri Botanical Garden (see page 2).



Finally, check the announcement about our new School Partnership Coordinator in this issue on page 3. We're very excited to have her joining us in June.

Have a great summer. ☺

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#### Upcoming LREC Events:

##### Volunteer Educator Gathering

May 27 OR June 2, noon–2pm. Volunteer Educators are invited to participate in a discussion of this past school year and things to come at LREC, a nature walk, and lunch. RSVP to Martha (314) 442-6717 with your preferred date.

#### Upcoming Opportunities:

##### Native Plant School

Common Garden Weeds: Control & ID: May 8, 1–4pm. Rain Gardening and Storm Water Runoff: June 12, 1–4pm. Whitmire Wildflower Garden at Shaw Nature Reserve. \$12 (\$8 for Garden Members). Reserve your place by calling (636)451-3512.

##### Garden Greenhouse Plant Sale

May 8, 9am–4pm. MBG Greenhouse complex. Offering annuals grown for Garden grounds; large, unusual stock plants used in propagation; and many perennials, tropicals, ferns and interesting woody plants. Cash, check or MasterCard/Visa accepted. No discounts.

##### Spring Wildflower Sale

Public sale May 10, 9am–4pm. MBG member pre-sale May 9, 4–7:30pm. At Shaw Nature Reserve. Local nurseries will be selling many varieties of wildflowers, ferns, trees, and shrubs. There will also be other items and food for sale. For more information call (636) 451-3512.

# Summer 2008 Training for Teachers

## At Litzsinger Road Ecology Center

All four workshops run 9am–4pm and are held at LREC. Applications and registration forms can be downloaded from the professional development section of our web site: [www.litzsinger.org/profdev.html](http://www.litzsinger.org/profdev.html).

### Sustainable Schoolyards

*For Teachers Grades K–12*  
June 16–20, 2008

Turn a portion of your schoolyard into an outdoor classroom by engaging your students in the planning, development, and management of a native plant habitat. This workshop is based on the *Earth Partnership for Schools* program developed at the University of Wisconsin—Madison Arboretum, where teachers have successfully restored native plant habitats on their school grounds. The workshop is open to teams of at least two teachers from a school. For more information, contact Eddie Jones at [eddie@litzsinger.org](mailto:eddie@litzsinger.org).

### Introduction to St. Louis Ecology

*For Teachers Grades K–12*  
July 21–25, 2008

Learn more about the ecology of the St. Louis region by investigating the prairie, woodland, and stream habitats at Litzsinger Road Ecology Center, located right in the middle of St. Louis. Participants will increase their understanding of local ecosystems, relate them to basic ecological concepts and gain experience in outdoor environmental investigation. For more information, contact Eddie Jones at [eddie@litzsinger.org](mailto:eddie@litzsinger.org).

These two mapping courses, part of the **Mapping the Environment** series, involve geographic information systems software. In each workshop, significant time is dedicated to developing your own curriculum project to implement in your classroom.

There is no registration fee for either workshop. Participants are responsible for their own travel and lodging costs. Optional graduate credit is available at an additional fee.

For more information, contact Bob Coulter at [bob@litzsinger.org](mailto:bob@litzsinger.org).

### Mapping Your Community

*For Teachers Grades 4–12*  
June 23–27, 2008

Meet your curriculum goals while engaging your students in studies of their local community. Participants will develop a curriculum module to take back to school that uses a place-based approach to education and integrates use of geographic information system (GIS) software and other resources to support student inquiry. A school site license for the GIS software is provided to all participants.

### Mapping Environmental Issues

*For Teachers Grades 4–12*  
June 30–July 2, 2008

For teachers with some experience using a geographic information system (GIS), this advanced workshop covers how to identify local data sources and process the data for use in an environmental investigation. Participants will take home their data and an outline for a project. This workshop assumes comfort with basic computer skills, including navigating folders and downloading and unzipping files.

## At the Garden

Additional professional development opportunities are available at the Missouri Botanical Garden. Visit [www.mobot.org/education/workshops.asp](http://www.mobot.org/education/workshops.asp) for more complete descriptions, course details, and a downloadable registration form.

### Inquiry Around the Garden

*For Teachers Grades K–8*  
June 16–19, 2008 / 9am–3pm

Visit four sites operated by the Missouri Botanical Garden: the Butterfly House, Shaw Nature Reserve, EarthWays Center, and the Garden. Learn how best to use each location for a field trip for students and discover the unique resources available at each place.

### Classroom Inquiry

*For Teachers Grades K–8*  
June 23–27, 2008 / 9am–4pm

Dive into inquiry, increasing both your understanding and use of inquiry-based learning. Compare different approaches to hands-on science. Learn how to guide your students in developing the thinking and reasoning skills needed to make sense of the world around them.

### GEMS Leadership Workshop

*For Teachers Grades K–8*  
July 22–24, 2008 / 9am–3 pm

Learn to involve students in hands-on experimentation using easily-obtained, inexpensive materials. Units covered include *Schoolyard Ecology*, *Environmental Detectives*, and *Ladybugs*. Assessment strategies and literacy connections will be discussed.



## Ecological Restoration Corps

We are now recruiting for the Ecological Restoration Corps (ERC). The ERC program is a high school youth experience consisting of engaging activities and experiential learning in two parts: an intensive two-week summer program focused on building basic ecological knowledge and restoration skills; and bi-monthly classroom sessions as well as weekend work days during the school year that build on and improve those skills. The program is open to prior ERC participants. If you know of someone who would be interested in the ERC, please contact Sean at (314) 442-6812 or [sean@litzsinger.org](mailto:sean@litzsinger.org); additionally, applications and more information can be found on our web site at [www.litzsinger.org/erc.html](http://www.litzsinger.org/erc.html).

## Volunteer Opportunities at LREC

If your friends are looking for a reason to be outdoors and enjoy working with schoolchildren, tell them to consider volunteering at the Litzsinger Road Ecology Center.

Volunteer Educator training will begin on Monday, September 8, 2008 and runs consecutive Mondays through November 10 from 9am to 3pm. During training, volunteers will become familiar with the site, learn inquiry-based teaching strategies, and gain an understanding of basic ecology. Trainees will have many opportunities to observe school groups and practice teaching.

Other opportunities to volunteer at LREC include assisting with native plant propagation, site preservation, or scientific investigations.

Those interested should contact Jackie Juras at (314) 577-5187. ☎



### Calling All Volunteers...

Hey, all you Volunteer Educators. Don't go away! School's out at the beginning of June, but the students just keep on coming!

You are invited to facilitate student teams who are enrolled in one-week summer programs at LREC throughout the month of June.

Call Martha at (314) 442-6717 to sign up. Thank you!

Program dates:

**Grades K-2:**

June 9-13 and June 16-20, 8:30-10:45am and 12:30-2:45pm

**Grades 1-3:**

June 23-27, 9am-2pm

**Grades 4-5:**

June 30-July 3, 9am-2pm



## Introducing Leslie Memula, our New School Partnership Coordinator

**A**s you know, we have been working short-staffed all spring as we searched for a replacement for Heather Wells-Sweeney, who relocated with her husband to New Haven, Connecticut. We're delighted to announce that Leslie Memula, currently the middle school department chair at Mary Institute and Country Day School (MICDS) will be joining the LREC team as a school partnership coordinator. Throughout the interview process, she impressed the staff as being particularly thoughtful about student learning and promoting teachers' reflective practice. We're sure she will be a great addition to the team. ☞



Spring photos by Eddie Jones  
Clockwise from top: spicebush, paw paw, bluebells, and trillium.

## Summer at the Garden

**Doris I. Schnuck Children's  
Garden: A Missouri Adventure**  
*Through October 31*

**niki Sculpture Exhibit**  
*Through October 31*

**Plastic Pot Recycling**  
*May 1–October 31*

**Chinese Culture Days**  
*May 17 & 18*

**Seasons of the Heartland  
Photography Exhibition**  
*May 23–August 17*

**Exploring Trees Inside and Out  
Traveling Exhibit**  
*May 24–September 1*

**Illinois Appreciation Week**  
*May 25–31*

**Free Wednesday Evenings**  
*Memorial Day through Labor Day*

**Whitaker Music Festival**  
*Wednesdays, June 4–August 13*

**Independence Day–Free Admission**  
*July 4*

**Garden Founder Henry Shaw's  
208th Birthday Celebration**  
*July 24*

**Petal Pedal Bicycle Ride**  
*July 24*

**Best Homegrown Tomato Challenge**  
*August 16*

**Japanese Festival**  
*August 30, 31 & September 1*

Visit [www.mobot.org](http://www.mobot.org) for details.