KWEN’S 2016 YEAR IN REVIEW

This month marks the 4th anniversary of the Kansas Women’s Environmental Network! This group has initiated many friendships and collaborations since 2013, and has been a catalyst for action in many ways. First and foremost, members continue to share environmental related news with one another daily. Whether it be job/volunteer opportunities, local event and workshops to get involved in, or kudos to one another...we love seeing you all put KWEN’s mission into action!

We were thrilled to hear the positive comments from members after the 3rd Annual Forum on Environmental Issues in January - be sure to read the write-up here if you were unable to attend! We are excited to see the lasting success of the monthly Green Drinks Meet-ups, Walk-the-Talk hikes and our KWEN Book Club. These events exist because someone in the group had an idea, and was encouraged to run with it. It is our hope that we will see more organization and action from the group over the next year. We hear the Walk The Talk ladies are working on

Continued next page

Native Plants for Your Yard or Garden
Monday, April 24
7:00 - 8:30 pm
Lawrence Public Library

Join native plant experts Kelly Kindscher, Courtney Masterson and GHF Snyder Preserve Manager Frank Norman for a conversation about incorporating native plants into your yard, garden, or landscape design. RSVP to kawvalleynpc@gmail.com. Sponsored by the Kaw Valley Native Plant Coalition and the Lawrence Public Library.

5th Annual GHF Native Plant Sale
Saturday, May 20
9:00 am – 1:00 pm
Trinity Episcopal Church, 1101 Vermont

Native Plants and You: How to Use More Natives in Your Landscape – GHF is excited to host a series of workshops on gardening with native plants. All workshops will be held: 9:00 – 10:30 am
KU Native Medicinal Plant Garden
1865 E. 1600 Road, Lawrence

Email Kim Bellemere, GHF Education Coordinator, at grasslandheritage@gmail.com for complete workshop descriptions and to RSVP.

May 27th – “What Goes Where” Prairie Ecologist Courtney Masterson will talk about the basics of native plant gardening.

June 15th – “Landscape Design with Native Plants” Landscape designer Ann Simpson will talk about important design considerations for home landscapes.

August 19th – “Wildlife in the Garden” Angie Babbit with Monarch Watch will talk about pollinators and other wildlife that rely on native plants.

Sept. 23rd – “Divide and Multiply” Courtney Masterson will demonstrate how to divide plants, collect seeds and prepare the garden for winter.
planning another “Float The Talk” outing this summer, so be on the lookout for that announcement! We continue to take feedback from the annual member survey to combine with Leadership Team goals each year. For instance, the October quarterly meeting that doubled as a service project and the mini workshops led by KWEN women at the July quarterly meeting were initiated because of member feedback.

As KWEN continues to grow in engagement, activities, and outcomes, we initiated an optional annual membership structure to maintain this dynamic network. We continue to be overwhelmed with the amount of support we have received. Please know that all of the money you contribute is used to further KWEN’s mission to connect, inspire and empower environmentally minded women. On page 2 of the newsletter you will see a snapshot of the year-end budget. If you have specific questions about KWEN’s budget and finances, please reach out to the leadership team at kwenleadership@gmail.com.

The KWEN leadership team is a dynamic group, and we hope to stay that way by continuing to recruit new members. Check out the Kudos sections of this newsletter to see some of the leadership changes that are taking place this coming year. You have helped build this network and we hope that you will continue this engagement in the future! Join us at the Leadership Team spring orientation May 2nd from 5:30-7:30 at the Lawrence Public Library, Meeting Room C, to get your feet wet! We look forward to seeing you all at our Annual Anniversary Potluck celebration on April 18th, from 6:30 to 8:30 at the White School House (1510 N. 3rd St., Lawrence, KS 66044). As always, this will be a casual event with delicious food and company. Thank you all for yet another great year of shared learning and connections!

-The KWEN Leadership Team

Looking to flex your math muscles?

The KWEN Leadership Team is currently seeking applicants interested in filling the role of Treasurer. If you might be interested, or would like to learn more, please contact the leadership team at kwenleadership@gmail.com

As a member of the KWEN leadership team, I have learned so much about what it means to build and manage a thriving network. This has been a low stakes opportunity for me to try new things, like participating in the KWEN Shoulder-to-Shoulder program, and as a member of leadership, I get a “behind-the-scenes” view into what it takes to initiate these experiences. The other members of the team have diverse skill sets and experiences. I have learned so much from them.....while having a great time!”

-Chavis Lickvar-Armstrong, KWEN Co-chair
The City of Lawrence Solid Waste Division invites community members to the 17th Annual Earth Day Parade and Celebration on Saturday, April 22. Free admission and no raud date. Ride the T for free on April 22!

The Parade starts at 11:00 am from Watson Park (7th & Kentucky) down Massachusetts St. to South Park. The Celebration in South Park follows from 11:30 am-4:00 pm and features live music, yoga, local food vendors, environmental exhibits and children's activities. Ride your bike to the event and drop it off at the Health Department’s Bike Valet!

The purpose of the Earth Day Celebration is to gather community members to connect, discover, and celebrate local organizations and businesses who support a healthy, sustainable environment. At the same time, the Celebration engages event exhibitions. Attendees are invited to learn from exhibits about waste reduction, recycling, composting, alternative fuels and vehicles, energy conservation, land preservation, wildlife and habitat preservation, and more.

More event details will be posted on the Facebook event page @LawrenceRecycles and at https://lawrenceks.org/swm/earthday/.

UPCOMING EVENT: SPRING ELECTRONIC RECYCLING EVENT

Hosted by: City of Lawrence Solid Waste Division

When: Saturday, May 20

Time: 9:00AM – 1:00PM

Where: KU Park and Ride East Lot (Crestline Dr & Clinton Pkwy)

For more: Lawrenceks.org/swm/electronicrecyclingevent/

Green Drinks Lawrence is approaching its third year this coming fall! The monthly meet-ups at Merchants Pub & Plate have been drawing crowds of 10-25, and we see new and familiar faces at each meet-up! Open to men and women Always held the third Wednesday of each month from 5-7 pm. Follow Green Drinks Lawrence on Facebook!
Jayhawk Audubon Society — new programs, a new website, and a busy calendar of spring events

Plants for Birds is a new program to encourage people to plant native plants to replace dwindling habitat for birds. Our program puts a local spin on an initiative by the National Audubon Society, providing information for gardeners about the best native plants for our area. We have created a downloadable list of desirable native plants that people can take along when buying plants at garden centers and plant sales. We also have made a list of common backyard birds and what they eat. In a nutshell, birds need insects — nearly all terrestrial species feed insects to their young and many adult birds require insects for a healthy diet.

We have also given our website, www.jayhawkaudubon.org, a new look and several new features. In addition to our Plants for Birds materials, you will find a calendar of our upcoming events, the locations of our favorite birding spots, information about the May Birdathon, and a new feature on bird activity each month. Please visit and, while you’re there, sign up for our email newsletters.

Vanessa Carlos, our newest board member, is working with fellow Audubon volunteers Monica Goss and Heather Cook to revive Breakfast and Birds, field trips cosponsored with Audubon of Kansas. People meet at Decade coffee shop at 7:30 a.m. on the first and third Sundays of every month, carpool to a local birding site, and later go to breakfast. Check our calendar on the website for dates.

Finally, Jayhawk Audubon is seeking a volunteer to launch and promote Instagram and Twitter accounts. We hope to use the power of social media to help Lawrence people share rare bird sightings, photos of birds, and other nature news. If you are interested in this volunteer position, please contact me at lynn.fairplain@gmail.com. — Lynn Byczynski, Conservation Chair, Jayhawk Audubon

KUDOS

Congrats to KWEN member Emily Reno for being named a TRIO McNair Scholar. Selected from a large pool of applicants, the TRIO McNair Scholars Program’s 2017 research cohort assembles 18 high-achieving KU undergraduate students who aspire to join America’s next generation of university professors, researchers and professionals. Emily has also been nominated for a Truman Scholarship, which can provide up to $30,000 for graduate studies. Congratulations, Emily!

Table for KWEN:
The Leadership Team is in the process of building our outreach materials to begin tabling at events. If you’re interested in tabling at an event and promoting KWEN, we are happy to provide the materials for members to borrow and distribute – for example, laminated display photos and KWEN business cards. Email KWENleadership@gmail to coordinate!

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Time Sensitive Call-To-Action on Energy Efficiency Programs in KS
By The Climate + Energy Project

Last week the Kansas Corporation Commission held the hearing for the Kansas City Power & Light (KCP&L) energy efficiency case, Docket 16-KCPE-446-TAR. The case is now largely in the Commission's hands, however there is an important role YOU can play in this case.

You may be thinking, but I'm not a KCP&L customer, why should I care?

Here's why you as a Westar customer could consider sharing your comments with the commissioners. Kansas is sorely lacking in energy efficiency at the policy level. With the introduction of these energy efficiency programs, Kansas will begin to join other states in making energy efficiency a priority. The second thing of note is that KCP&L and Westar could be merging. If the merger goes through, there are plans for Westar customers to also gain access to similar efficiency programs.

The Kansas Corporation Commission will accept comments until 5 pm on May 5th.

If you value energy efficiency and want to help move Kansas out of 48th ranking (out of 51) on the ACEEE Scorecard, make your voice heard and submit a public comment here.

The Climate + Energy Project would like to reference your comments in our final Brief, so please send an email to Jamie sharing your comments with her as well.

Want to know more before submitting your comments? Visit our webpage or contact Jamie. For the latest news on the docket hearing, click here.

KUDOS

Congratulations to Kitty Steffens for accepting an internship at the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) working with their environmental programs. MARC is a nonprofit association of city and county governments and the metropolitan planning organization for the bi-state Kansas City region that provides a forum for the region to work together to advance social, economic and environmental progress.

CO-CHAIR JENICA NELSON COMPLETES TERM

After 3.5 years on the Leadership Team, Co-Chair Jenica Nelson is finishing up her term this May. Jenica jumped on board with the LT shortly after the first KWEN gathering in April 2013 and worked on both the Events and Communications committees before taking over Co-Chair responsibilities from Rachel Myslivy and Kim Bellemere. The friendships, leaderships and professional experiences gained through joining the LT have truly invaluable. She will remain as a member and on the LT’s Advisory Committee and is excited to see what future LT members accomplish.
Activists, organizers, leaders, artists, and all those working for the Great Turning towards a life-sustaining society!

You're invited to join Work That Reconnects LFK the last Saturday afternoon of every month for a workshop of guided exercises, dialogue, and ritual incorporating deep ecology, living systems theory, intersectionality, and non-dual spirituality to support our collective process and experience of gratitude, grief, perspective, and empowerment in this unprecedented planetary time.

1-4pm, Last Saturdays (Exception: May 20th) at the ECM (1204 Oread, Lawrence)

The central purpose of the Work That Reconnects is to bring us back into relationship with each other and with the self-healing powers in the web of life — motivating, empowering, and supporting us in reclaiming our lives, our communities, and our planet from imperialist white supremacist capitalist hetero-patriarchy.

Every month we will focus on a theme, so every workshop is different. Using techniques and processes from Drama Therapy, Expressive Arts Therapy, mindfulness meditation, and more, we'll explore, consider, and embody:

♥ How do we keep engaging/resisting/creating when our hearts, minds, and bodies are overwhelmed?
♥ How do we sustain/expand/deepen our hope and courage in the face of such epic obstacles?
♥ How do we bring/trust/develop our greatest gifts to the world in such trying times?
♥ How do we find/cultivate/share nourishing connection when so much is falling apart?
♥ How do we transform our pain into power?

Whether you are working for liberation by resisting the dominant culture of violence and exploitation, creating alternative cultures and systems of cooperation and sustainability, shifting consciousness towards the realization of interconnection and interdependence, immersing yourself in discerning contemplation, and/or practicing stillness, you are invited to live into these questions with us.

Participation in this workshop is $20-$0, sliding scale. Those earning a living wage should consider paying the full amount. No one turned away for lack of funds.

A big thank you to the ECM for partnering with and sponsoring the Work That Reconnects LFK!

*** Please bring any flyers/handouts/etc you’d like to share with the group. A table will be setup for the sharing of such resources at every monthly meetup, as well as a time for announcements of local events/actions/etc.

ABOUT THE FACILITATOR
Teri Lynn Grunthaner is a white, cis-woman from the coast of California, currently living rurally in Lawrence, Kansas. She has been studying and practicing dramatic enactment, ritual, and therapy as a means to re-embody our cooperative nature for nearly a decade. She has worked with troupes and groups in Theatre of the Oppressed, Playback Theatre, Psychodrama, and more for personal and collective resistance, resilience, and regeneration. Teri has also worked on many organic farms, organized with environmental sustainability and social justice groups, and is a leader of the Dances of Universal Peace with the Sufi Ruhaniat International. She first fell in love with the Work in 2006, and just in the past year has had the privilege to attend a 10-day and 7-day intensive with Joanna Macy.
ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY ON THE KONZA

Seeking teachers who would like to learn about the prairie and have their students participate in experiential science activities on the tallgrass prairie! Registrations are now being accepted for the 2017 Summer Teachers’ Workshop at Konza Prairie. This week-long adventure allows teachers to directly participate in ALL of the different science activities offered at Konza and then tailor an experience that best suits their class. Once teachers have gone through this training they qualify for free visits to Konza and a $125 bus allowance for the duration of their career. You may stay on site and college credits are available.

When: June 12 - 16
Where: Konza Prairie Biological Station - Manhattan, KS
Price: $25 registration fee
Contact: Jill Haukos, (785) 587-0381, konzaed@ksu.edu
Website: keep.konza.ksu.edu

WE NEED YOU ON THE KWEN LEADERSHIP TEAM!

In May, we are losing three of our valuable team members: Jenica Nelson, Dawn Buehler, and Julie Coleman. Jenica will be stepping down as co-chair at the end of her two-year chair period, but will continue to serve on the advisory committee. We are thrilled that Sue Kidd will be taking her place as the new co-chair alongside Chavis Lickvar-Armstrong. Sue was one of the creators of the KWEN Shoulder-to-Shoulder mentor program and has been on the leadership team since the organization’s start. Julie currently acts as the secretary for the group, but you probably know her best as our phenomenal moderator for the KWEN Forum for Environmental Issues hosted in January. For two years, Julie has helped write engaging questions for our panelists and guide the discussion. Julie will continue to plan and attend the monthly KWEN Walk-the-Talk Hikes. As our treasurer, Dawn has played a pivotal role in developing a realistic budget for the events that we host. With her organization and thoughtfulness, we have been able to keep this network growing in new and exciting ways! Dawn has also shared her resources as a Riverkeeper to give KWEN members greater access to Kansas Rivers through group paddle events and service projects.

While we hate to see them go, we are always excited to welcome new women with fresh ideas. We are hosting a leadership team orientation on May 2nd from 6:30 to 8:30 PM at the Lawrence Public Library (meeting room TBD). We are looking for women interested in helping out with the events committee. We are also looking for women to take over the Secretary position and the Treasury position. The leadership team meets roughly six times a year. Please email Chavis Lickvar-Armstrong at clickvar@ku.edu, or attending the orientation if you are interested in joining our team!

We are thrilled to welcome Ann Root and Renée Whaley to our Leadership Team! To learn more about all of the Leadership Team members, check out their bios on the KWEN website!
A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS

I want to take this time to thank you all for supporting our unique network. To my knowledge, there is no other group in the state that strives to connect women who value the environment in person and online. Over the past three years, many have benefitted from being a part of this network through job opportunities and mentorships, by learning new skills and forging new friendships.

As you know, KWEN is not an official 501(c)(3), but we operate in a similar way. All of the money you contribute through your annual membership dues sustain the network by facilitating our quarterly meetings and website. Because you renew your membership each year, we are able to host meetings at different venues across Lawrence, and recruit speakers on diverse topics to participate in the meetings and panel discussions. We were excited to host a service-learning activity for the first time this year. Thanks to your membership contributions, we were able to provide snacks and beverages to the members who were working hard doing seasonal clean up and collecting native seeds at the Lawrence Hidden Valley Camp.

The leadership team works hard to translate your dollars into meaningful experiences for all. With 255 members listed in our directory, and 422 women following our Facebook group, we see a monumental opportunity to support women in Kansas who demonstrate their passion for the environment through their work, recreation or both. To do this we need your help. Please consider renewing your membership each year if you are financially able. If not, we hope you give some of your time by joining the leadership team!

- Chavis Lickvar-Armstrong, Co-Chair

Contributing members:

Rachel Myslivy
Jenica Nelson
Willa Myslivy
Jenny O’Brien
Kathy Richardson
Courtney Masterson
Dawn Buehler
Susan Stover
Emily Reno
Kay Johnson
Wendy Griswold
Katie Hobson
Chavis Lickvar-Armstrong
Sofia Galarza Liu
Cynthia Annett
Ginna Kellogg
Lynn Byczynski
Teresa Rasmussen
Lynne Renick
Nancy Hubble
Patty Roberts
Susan Jones
Angie Babbit
Joyce Wolf
Jennifer Kongs
Sue Kidd
Julie Coleman
Tresa Carter
Durand Reiber
Joanna Voigt
Helen Schnoes
Olga Khakova
Sharon Ashworth
Jean Finch
Betty Sterling
Louie Galloway
Kim Bellemere
Raven Naramore
Elizabeth Schultz
Megan Withiam
Kelley Hurst
Michelle Gundy
Erin Chacey
Uma Outka
Debra Baker
Cynthia Annett
Ginna Kellogg
Lyne Renick
Nancy Hubble
Susan Jones
Debra Baker
Brandi Nelson
Debora Stewart
Eileen Horn
Cindy Higgins
Tanya Spacek
Sue Ann Funk
Jamie Hofling
Corena Pendry
Jessica Mounts
Lisa Gotto
Sandy Sanders
Robin Byer
Lindsey Constance
Kimberly Williams

MARCH FOR SCIENCE AT THE TOPEKA STATEHOUSE

Rachel Myslivy, KWEN Co-Founder, Masters in Religious Studies and Environmental Studies, and Assistant Director of the Climate + Energy Project, will speak on “Building Community with Story and Common Ground Solutions” at the April 22 March for Science at the Kansas Statehouse in Topeka.

Learn more about the event: http://bit.ly/2o6mXVN
Visit the National Event Page: https://www.marchforscience.com/
The Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education (KACEE) is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2017 Excellence in Conservation and Environmental Education Awards. Nominated by their peers, these awardees exhibit outstanding innovation, leadership and achievement, as well as collaboration and cooperation within and beyond the environmental education field.

KACEE MEMBER HONORED WITH THIS YEAR’S RISING STAR AWARD BY KACEE

KACEE is pleased to recognize Ms. Courtney Masterson (pictured below) with this year’s Rising Star Award. Courtney was nominated by three different people for this award and her list of accomplishments in the few short years she’s been working professionally are already too numerous to mention. Courtney’s passion for environmental education and native plants began early. While attending Johnson County Community College, Courtney served on the first Student Sustainability Committee and utilized her passion for native plants and green solutions to help with a key stormwater project.

Courtney went on to the University of Missouri – Kansas City, earning a degree in Biological Sciences, and later studied at the University of Kansas, where she earned her Master’s degree in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. It was at KU that her passion for native plants truly blossomed and that is evident in her numerous volunteer efforts including co-founding and leading The Kaw Valley Native Plant Coalition, serving on the planning committee for the Kaw Valley Seed Fair, serving as a field guide and student mentor for the Blue Valley and Lawrence Public School Districts for student research to name just a few.

Ms. Masterson is now working at the Kansas Biological Survey where she assists with research on native plant/soil fungi relationships. She also teaches Environmental Science at Johnson County Community College and Field Botany at KU. Courtney continues to be an active volunteer and leader for native plants and education in the Lawrence area. What is perhaps most impressive about Courtney is what her colleague Kim Bellemere noted might sometimes go unnoticed, “the small, informal things she does like mentoring fellow volunteers at the community orchard while they’re weeding or mulching; spending her evenings filling envelopes for a local seed swap; or taking an afternoon to create a garden for the city with leftover and donated plants. Even just simple conversations with Courtney are opportunities to learn and share her enthusiasm for our native habitat and the environment.”
SUNRISE GARDEN CENTER REVISITED

Many Lawrence people fondly recall plant-buying expeditions to the Sunrise Garden Center at 15th and Learnard. The retail operation is long gone, but there's plenty happening at the site, which is now owned by sustainability-minded Sunrise Green LLC, and is becoming home to several food-related businesses.

The historic greenhouses have been rehabilitated and are being used by the farmers at Moon on the Meadow Farm and Mellowfields Farm. They have begun converting the former cut-flower benches into raised beds where they are growing organic vegetables. The farmers held their CSA distribution at Sunrise over the winter. And they are growing transplants for two retail plant sales: April 22 and May 6 from 1-4 p.m. Profits benefit Sunrise Project, the nonprofit organization whose mission is to connect people to good food, community, and the environment. The plant sales will feature both organic vegetable plants and native plants grown from locally collected seed.

Sunrise Project will have its offices and classrooms in the former retail store at the site. Rehabilitating the building turned out to be a lot more complicated and costly than anyone expected. But work is continuing and the end is in sight.

The former garage behind the greenhouses is being converted into office and warehouse space for Seeds from Italy, a business that imports Italian vegetable, herb, and flower seeds and sells them online at www.GrowItalian.com. The remodel is expected to be completed this summer.

Other groups and businesses have expressed interest in locating at Sunrise, so stay tuned for future developments. If you have any questions, contact any of the people involved: Dave and Susan Millstein for Sunrise Green LLC, Jill Elmers, Kevin Prather and Jessi Asmussen for the vegetable operation, Emily Hampton for Sunrise Project, or me. — Lynn Byczynski, Seeds from Italy

HELP US GROW!

Sunrise Project has begun renovations at the former Sunrise Garden Center location at 15th and Learnard in Lawrence, Kansas. We are excited to share our vision for the future with you! If you, or someone you know, would like to learn more about the space, and our programs, please contact Chavis Lickvar-Armstrong at clickvar@ku.edu for more information about our open house events and to RSVP.

KUDOS

Congratulations to KWEN Co-founder, Rachel Myslivy, for her new position as Assistant Director of the Climate + Energy Project (CEP). Rachel was also featured in an interview on Fly Over Media, a cultural education non-profit which produces, supports and publishes interactive, multimedia journalism pieces about rural and underrepresented communities. Check out her interview to learn more about her academic work and the way she has represented rural Kansans in her work with CEP.