



Spring 3-30-2012

Illinois Sustainable Living and Wellness Expo

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Recommended Citation

Keenan '12, Courtney, "Illinois Sustainable Living and Wellness Expo" (2012). *News and Events*. 1956.

<https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/news/1956>

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Illinois Sustainable Living and Wellness Expo

March 30, 2012

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – On Saturday, April 14, approximately 100 exhibitors and 12 presenters promoting health, healing, and sustainability will gather at the Illinois Wesleyan Shirk Center for Athletics and Recreation (302 E. Emerson St., Bloomington) for the Illinois Sustainable Living and Wellness Expo.

The event, which is free and open to the public, will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., offering exhibits, workshops and demonstrations that concentrate on living in a more sustainable manner, as well as affording life enhancement.

“This year we would like to have a stronger focus than we have had in the past on issues related to environmental health – synthetic chemicals in our environment creating involuntary exposures to toxins that impact our health,” said Missy Smock, director of the IWU Wellness Program.

Co-sponsored by Illinois Wesleyan University Wellness and the Ecology Action Center, the Expo is central Illinois’ first major zero waste event, with the help of Midwest Fiber. All food waste at the event will be composted in a plan to avoid any generation of waste that cannot be reused, recycled, or composted. Premium parking and a valet service will be provided, reserved for people who bike to the event as a reward for choosing a sustainable option of transportation.



Exhibitors fill the Shirk Center.



Audrey Gesiakowski, 8, tries some of the musical instruments in the Synergy Rhythm and Dance booth.

Renowned speaker and storyteller Brian “Fox” Ellis will be featured at 11 a.m. in the Kids Zone. He will present “Adventures in the Wild World,” an interactive program through songs and stories that explores relationships to the world and how to live green. Ellis has been traveling the world collecting and telling stories for more than 30 years. He has been a keynote speaker at dozens of conferences and is the author of 15 books, including the award-winning children’s picture book, *The Web at Dragonfly Pond*.

Also highlighted at the Expo will be “Think Before You Pink,” a presentation on rethinking ways to support breast cancer research by Breast Cancer Action member Robyn Stoetzel, a registered nurse. She will speak about where all the money goes when you buy something with that little “pink” ribbon on it, and address the differences between cure and prevention.

The final event of the day will be a screening of *Living Downstream* in the Shirk North Classroom at 3 p.m. Students of Visiting Associate Professor of Environmental Studies and Health Laurine Brown’s class, *War on Cancer*, will present an introduction to the film. The feature-length documentary is based on the acclaimed book by locally-educated ecologist and cancer survivor Sandra Steingraber, Illinois Wesleyan class of 1981. Documenting her private struggle with cancer caused by her surrounding environment, the film is a way to bring attention to the urgent human rights issue of cancer prevention.

The following is a schedule including some of the additional sessions and attractions available that day:

- Members of West Bloomington Vitalization Project will offer free bike maintenance, repair, and tune-up from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Old bikes may be brought to be refurbished and donated.
- Three electric cars will be on display, including the Mitsubishi "i" MiEV, the Nissan Leaf and the Chevy Volt, courtesy of local car dealerships and the town of Normal, as well as a wind-powered Harley Davidson motorcycle, courtesy of the Center for Renewable Energy at Illinois State University.
- Guitarist David Berchtold will perform at 11 a.m. Berchtold's original tunes and expressive interpretations of familiar standards are pleasing for audience members of all ages.
- At 11 a.m., a presentation on reducing home energy consumption will take place.
- At 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., a cooking class with Illinois State Chef Shamon Bell, will take place. He will demonstrate how to use fresh, local ingredients in home cooking.
- A presentation on the impact of concentrated animal feeding operation on health and the environment will take place at 1 p.m.
- The Renewable Fashion Challenge will return to the Expo, challenging people's creativity to transform and repurpose used materials into a new and stylish clothing or home décor item.
- Also returning is the FREE-4-ALL household item giveaway. Bring small household items, clothing, and toys to the IWU Wellness Office by April 6. Attendees at the Expo are free to take what they like.
- At 2:15 p.m., there will be a performance by The Old Men Boys, who have been performing together around Illinois for the past 15 years. Their music is an eclectic mix of fiddle tunes, cowboy songs, contemporary folk, acoustic blues and novelty numbers.
- All day long "nontraditional" recyclables will be accepted outside at the Mega Recycling event. Residents can bring for proper recycling and disposal items such as Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs), household batteries, plastic garden pots, old clothing and textiles, shoes, bicycles, and household electronics.



A Mitsubishi electric car will be among three electric cars on display.

For additional information and a complete schedule on the Expo, contact Smock at (309) 556-3334, Michael Brown, executive director of the Ecology Action Center at (309) 454-3169 or visit the Expo website, www.islwe.org

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