



[www.springvalleynatureclub.org](http://www.springvalleynatureclub.org)

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**Editor: Al Larson**

**January/February 2019**

## **Letter from the President, Donna Johnson**

### **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

This is the time to reflect on the good work that the Nature Club has accomplished. We have volunteered at the Spring Valley events from the Pancake Breakfast in March through the Heirloom Vegetable & Herb Sale, Autumn Fest and sponsored the Holiday Bazaar at Spring Valley. Thanks to the volunteer efforts of the Nature Club members and Board we were able to raise funds to donate to the Bison's Bluff project, supply scholarships to local schools, fund special programs like Winterfest, host programs of special interest at our monthly Nature Club meetings and supply funding for the Spring Valley volunteer's meetings! Thanks to all of you who have made our progress possible!

Even though the winter's winds are blowing, and the snow is falling, spring is virtually around the corner! Once again, we have partnered with Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds from Mansfield Missouri whereupon Nature Club can take orders from our members and the community for unique heirloom seeds. Please take some time this winter to peruse their wonderful site [www.rareseeds.com](http://www.rareseeds.com) and choose the varieties you'd like to grow this year. There is no minimum order, just write out the variety, part number and price of each packet then send your check with order to... **Spring Valley Nature Club, 1111 E. Schaumburg Road, Schaumburg, IL 60194** and mark your envelope; **Seed Order Enclosed.**

Nature Club will send in a group order to get the shipment in ASAP for your early spring planting. We will continue taking orders through the May Heirloom Vegetable Sale cut off time, please, order early to be assured of getting the varieties you are interested in. Do plan on viewing our revised Heirloom Vegetable & Herb Sale offerings at our website; [www.springvalleynatureclub.org](http://www.springvalleynatureclub.org) to keep abreast of the great new additions to our vast array of sought after veggies and herbs!

**Annual, Spring Valley Nature Club Meeting and Election of Officers on January 16, 2019 at 7:00 pm.**

Slate of officers and directors:

Donna Johnson - President    Nancy Mamsen - Vice President    Phil Skultety - Treasurer  
Rich Wysocki - Secretary    Directors: Al Larson - Pete Justin - Jay Johnson

Please, show your support of Nature Club and attend the annual meeting and vote for your Club's leaders!

## Winter Happenings at Spring Valley

Winter is a quiet season at Spring Valley, but a beautiful one as well! See below for a list of upcoming events and family programs! Note that some programs require pre-registration due to limited space. Visit [www.parkfun.com](http://www.parkfun.com) for more information or call (847) 985-2100.

### **Popular Spring Valley Wall Calendars available NOW!!**

Each year, a full color, high quality wall calendar featuring stunning photos taken by Spring Valley's staff and volunteers is printed as a limited edition item and presented to those volunteers who have contributed 50 hours or more during the previous year. The calendars are also sold in the gift sale area at the Nature Center. It is a great way to show off Spring Valley's beauty in your home or office!

### ***Embrace Winter's Beauty – Snowshoe Rentals***

Snowshoes can be rented at Spring Valley anytime there is at least 4 inches of snow present. Rentals are available daily from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Cost is \$5 for a three hour rental. Snowshoes can also be taken offsite for \$10/day. Call the Nature Center for updates on snow conditions.

### ***Spring Valley Winter Fest – Saturday & Sunday, January 19 & 20, 12-3 p.m.***

Celebrate the beauty of winter at this event, which will feature demonstrations of dog sledding by the Windy City Musers! Also included are indoor games, crafts and activities as well as snowshoeing, horse-drawn wagon ride, and a bonfire. Admission is \$3/person or \$12/family; kids 3 and under are free. All activities take place in and around the Nature Center.

### **February Meeting of the Spring Valley Nature Club & Spring Valley Volunteers – Wednesday, February 6, 7-8:30 p.m.**

Join your friends and fellow Spring Valley supporters for our annual winter gathering. After a short meeting to update everyone on upcoming events and projects, we'll enjoy our annual movie night featuring an enlightening documentary film to be determined (popcorn included).

### ***Farm to Table Cooking Series – Saturday, February 2 & February 16, and March 2, 10am-12pm***

Learn ways to use simple farm fresh ingredients to create wholesome, delicious dishes at home. The 1<sup>st</sup> installment, **Hand-churned Ice Cream** will show you to make ice cream from scratch and provide you with some to take home. On February 16, **Cookin' with Iron** will show you how to with tips on properly seasoning and using these time-tested kitchen tools. Participants will prepare a simple recipe and take it AND the pan home with them! On March 2, **Smooth as Butter** will learn how to make their own fresh butter as well as how to enhance its flavor with extra ingredients. Pre-registration required for each.

### ***Family Winter Tree Hunt – Sunday, February 17, 10-11:30 a.m.***

Get the family outdoors and exploring while you follow clues on a map that will introduce you to several local types of tree and teach you some of the unique characteristics of each. Finish your hike by sampling some of the sweet surprises that come from trees. Pre-registration required.

### **COMING IN MARCH!**

#### ***Winter Campfire in the Cabin – Friday, March 8, 6:30-8 p.m.***

Enjoy a short evening hike down to Merkle Log Cabin, where you'll gather around the fireplace and enjoy stories, songs, hot cocoa, and learn a few pioneer skills. Pre-registration is required.

#### ***Family Woodworking – Sunday, March 10, 1-2:30 p.m.***

Enjoy a family project by constructing and decorating a wren house to place in your yard this spring. All materials, tools, and instructions are provided. Pre-registration is required.

#### ***Sugar Bush Fair – Saturday & Sunday, March 16 & 17, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.***

Celebrate winter's end at this annual event which features a delicious pancake breakfast with real maple syrup, demonstrations of maple sugaring, and more.

## NATURE

So now the shift has begun. For half the year the light from earth's star has ebbed. Dusks have pushed into late afternoons and dawns have retreated into December. The sun has wheeled low, slit towards the southern horizon, stretching shadows and losing heat filtering through layers of winter air.

Now the sun begins its long climb towards summer. Days grow longer even as winter deepens. The ancients, in their year-end celebrations, cheered the triumph of light and life over death and darkness. And the change in light has more to do with life than early man suspected.

Light, as a trigger mechanism affects wildlife and plant life alike. As every gardener knows, asters and mums need a lessening of daylight to come to bloom. Autumn's blaze of color, seen when leaves are sealed off to shut down chlorophyll factories for the winter, is the response of trees and shrubs to longer nights and shorter days. Dwindling daylight trips internal switches and birds begin fall migrations.

Now, as light increases in duration and intensity, biological clocks are rewound, set to ticking towards the vernal equinox. Higher animal classes have a gland at the base of the brain called the pituitary. In some species increasing amounts of light at the retina stimulates the pituitary to produce a hormone that profoundly affects breeding behavior. As a result, raccoons seek mating partners in January. Some non-migrating birds stake out territories in January, pair off in February, mate in March and nest in April.

There is a brightness to counterweight the shortness of December days --- December nights. Orion the Hunter dominates the winter sky. Blue white Rigel blazes brilliant from his heel and Betelgeuse sits as a ruby at his shoulder. At sword-center, disguised as a hazy star, is the Great Nebula of Orion, sixteen light years in diameter. Trailing Orion is Sirius, heaven's brightest star. And Venus shines splendidly.

Starlight and Venus-light shimmer through the clear night air. The light filters through the branches of our backyard spruces and the boughs bask and dazzle in the night glow. The same skies shown on shepherds more than 2,000 years ago when in the east there was seen a star. From a distance comes the sound of caroling.

Al Larson

## Planning Your Heirloom Vegetable & Herb Garden!

The snow has been falling and the winter winds are blowing but, in no time at all it will be spring! Now is the ideal time, while you are shut up in the house and those catalogues are coming in the mail, to plan ahead for your veggie and herb garden.

Planning ahead can make all the difference in getting the right start on your garden. Ah those organic radishes, fennel, beets and chard, what an incomparable delight! Remind yourself about those luscious tomatoes and the crisp cukes and delish veggies of all types. For the cost of a few dollars' worth of seeds and plants you can reap hundreds of dollars' worth of fabulous organic vegetable and herb treats!

Reflect on the varieties of veggies and tomatoes you have grown, were they what you expected, do you want to grow them again? Looking for something new? Now is the time to check Baker Creek Heirloom Seed Catalogue or online at [www.rareseeds.com](http://www.rareseeds.com) and see what items interest you; we will place a group order and have your seeds for you at the proper planting time this spring.

We have a unique arrangement with Baker Creek Seeds of Mansfield Missouri whereupon our members and friends can submit their seed order and check made payable to Spring Valley Nature Club! Mail to Spring Valley Nature Center 1111 E Schaumburg Rd Schaumburg IL 60194 and mark the envelope "Seed Order Enclosed". Nature Club will place a group order when we have a qualifying amount. Please note you do not need to be a member of Nature Club to place an order with us. You will be notified as to when you can come to pick-up your seeds. As a courtesy from Baker Seeds we do not pay a shipping charge and Nature Club gets a special rate allowing the club to derive a profit from all the seeds that we purchase.

Please continue your loyalty to our cause, it is with support from our members and friends of Spring Valley, that we can assist the Spring Valley Nature Center in its educational and environmental efforts to provide programs for the community. Thank you.



## **1974 And Beyond**

**Spring Valley began as a dream by one of the founders of the Village of Schaumburg, Ellsworth Meineke.** Early on he referred to it as “The Spring Valley Dream.” It was he who convinced the Schaumburg Park District and the Village of Schaumburg to work together to acquire and preserve land for Spring Valley. Ellsworth founded the Spring Valley Nature Club in 1974 as a not-for-profit service organization which provides volunteer and financial support for Spring Valley and promotes conservation, nature, and environmental education. The Club sponsors nature programs and teacher field trips, and members volunteer at festivals and fund raisers. We have been working hard since 1974. Won’t you join us?

These words reflect the dedication that the founders felt for the purpose of the Club and the love of the natural world around us. Since the Schaumburg Park District assumed the responsibility of recruiting volunteers, Nature Club’s purpose has evolved to share its love of Spring Valley by offering timely programs that reinforce a more wholesome lifestyle. We have initiated monthly educational programs that instill a comprehension of our ability to lessen our carbon footprint by reducing waste, recycling and reusing our valuable resources. Our monthly programs enlighten us to appreciate our environment and respect its fragile beauty.

We have lessened our impact on landfill waste by eliminating the mailing of our bimonthly News Leaf. We are encouraging members to attend educational programs which teach us the importance of the wildlife around us, the art of using our natural resources wisely and being more self-reliant by advising how to live a more wholesome lifestyle, grow and live more organically and become more self-sufficient.

With the kind donations and assistance from local merchants and organizations, we can exist more ecologically by shopping locally. Some of the wonderful supporters and contributors to the club have been, Roselle Ace Hardware for their support in offering a discount coupon for purchases at their location; Schaumburg Park District for the 1-day Fitness Pass; Platt Hill Nursery for their support and discount coupon at their garden centers; Holistic Art Studio for their discount coupon; Bon Ton Stores for their coupon book for discounts throughout the store. The Bon Ton coupon books are valid for their other stores that are located throughout the US. A listing of their stores is on the membership dues page.

Our wonderful supporters have given us a way to lessen our footsteps by offering valued products and services at discounted prices while saving our energy dollars by reducing the number of miles we travel. Please support our supporters. With their help, we have been successful in raising additional funds to sponsor educational programming for our Club members, Spring Valley Volunteers, and school children and teachers from our community. We have supplied funds for books for Spring Valley’s Library and have sponsored various free to the public programs and events that the Center has offered.

Thanks to you all, and especially our valued Members and Supporters of Spring Valley Nature Club!

Please take time to review all the wonderful benefits we are offering to our members with their Nature Club membership. Won’t you join us?

Spring Valley Nature Club is a 501(c)3 organization and contributions may be tax deductible. Check with your tax advisor.

## Spring Valley Nature Club 2019 Membership Rates

To show our appreciation for our members' loyalty, we have come up with special benefits for all members.

**“Discount Coupon Packet”** This packet will include certificates and coupons for various merchants, i.e. Holistic Health Studio (massage discount), Schaumburg Park District (1-day Fitness Pass), Roselle Ace Hardware (discount on purchase), Platt Hill Nursery (discount on purchase), Chick-Fil-A (Free Sandwich - Schaumburg Stores only), Skincare by Carmela (Discount on Services)

**Special Benefit;** An invitation to the Spring Valley Volunteer/Meineke Award Picnic on the first Friday in August. A postcard will be sent to current members in good standing by mid-July asking for an RSVP.

**Free Entry to the Nature Club Programs:** Allows you to attend any or all ten Spring Valley Nature Club monthly meetings and educational programs from February through November where you can enjoy some refreshments and camaraderie with fellow supporters of the Nature Club and the Spring Valley Volunteers.

**Membership Card & Bi-monthly News Leaf:** Identifies you as a supporter of the Nature Club's efforts.

**Life Membership:** In addition to the above items, this membership includes a Nature Club Commemorative Fleece Throw (\$35.00 value); this fleece throw is for **New Life Memberships Only**.

**Current Life Members** are eligible for the Discount Coupon Packet. Donations appreciated and help our cause.

**Family Fun Membership:** In addition to all the standard items above, this membership category includes a Spring Valley Annual Family Pass (\$120.00 value) to be used for a 15% discount on most Spring Valley Programs; 10% Discount on Summer Camps and Birthday Parties; 15% discount on Honey & Gift Shop purchases at Spring Valley and free admission to all Spring Valley events. **Including the Pancake Breakfast!** (The discounts do not apply to the Solstice Hop & Vine or the Haunting in the Valley.)

Your Membership Packet needs to be picked up in person at the Spring Valley Nature Center 9:00 – 5:00 daily. Any member may have the membership package mailed to them for a handling fee of \$2.00

### Yearly Memberships Begin February 1<sup>st</sup> through January 31<sup>st</sup>

Senior 55 Plus	\$10.00
Individual	\$15.00
Family	\$25.00
Supporting	\$35.00
Family Fun Membership	\$120.00
Life	\$150.00
Sponsor	\$1000.00

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**Senior - Individual – Family – Supporting -- Family Fun -- Life -- Sponsor**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ St \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Checks should be made payable and mailed to:  
Spring Valley Nature Club - 1111 East Schaumburg Road, Schaumburg, IL 60194