Our Mission

Founded by Robert and Joan Root Ericksen in 1972, the Sun Foundation of Washburn, Illinois is a 501 (C) 3 tax-exempt, not-for-profit organization dedicated to investing in educational opportunities for children and the general public by:

- Providing innovative environmental sciences & arts programs
- Engaging audiences and students with outstanding artists, engineers, architects, and scientists
- Promoting in-depth knowledge, creativity, first-hand learning, and stewardship

Mission Statement:

The Sun Foundation works to strengthen and advance the arts and environmental sciences in rural and urban communities by providing quality and innovative programs, services, publications, research, regranting financial support and cooperative efforts for the general public, under served groups, schools, Illinois artists and local arts organizations.

Sun Foundation programs are funded by public contributions and awarded grants.

Serving the Underserved since 1973

Thanks to our generous donors, 102 underserved students, ages 6 to 16, from area rural communities and Peoria youth agencies received financial need scholarships to attend the 2016 Art and Science in the Woods summer camp. The Clean Water Celebration and Community Arts Access program provided free programs in the arts and sciences for area schools and communities.

Staff

2016 Staff:

Robert C. Ericksen, Executive Director
Joan Root Ericksen, Development Director
Dominique Kreie, Executive Assistant & bookkeeper
Brett Root Ericksen, Naturalist- Program Director, Habitat & Facility manager

Sun Foundation Center is hosted by Blue Heron Farm

2016 Board of Directors Officers:

Kevin Day President
Angela Madison Vice President
Sally Jo Eastman Secretary
Doug Holmes Treasurer

2016 Board Directors:

Shae Birkey Preston Jackson
Stephanie Chaon Jo Lakota
Rebecca Cottrell Amy Lambert
Emily Jean Dawson Angela Madison
Kevin Day Kira Santiago
Sally Jo Eastman Lorraine Schwass
Stephanie Gehrig Jody Tockes
Amanda Gordon-Sandberg Jacki Wolfe
Doug Holmes Jonathan Wright

Board & Staff Advisors:

Rusty Dunn, Michael Lied, David Marshall, Eve Studnicka

Contracted Financial Services:

Terry Beintema, accountant
Ginoli & Co. LTD, auditor

Wild Crafted Art Materials students painting and drawing with hand made pens, bruches and paint they have made. Nick Neddo, ASIW instructor.

ASIW Fossil & Rock class student in Dry Run Creek. Dr. Merrill Foster instructor.
Educautional Programming

Clean Water Celebration Environmental Classroom

Sun Foundation 24th Annual Clean Water Celebration environmental classroom for 2,100 middle school students, 180 teachers and the general public. Our 2016 theme: “Be a Watershed Hero”

What is a watershed? How do our actions on the land impact the rivers? Knowledge is power. The more we know about our options the better choices we can make for the health of our rivers and the blood streams that flow through us. With a panel of three local field ecologists to guide and inspire us. We explored the most recent science and discover how we can make a difference in the health of our watershed! From the land to the wetland, from the creek to the river, we will trace our impact downstream.

The keynote team included: Katie Bradshaw - Outreach Coordinator at the Illinois River Biological Station T.D. Vanmiddlesworth - Emiquon Project Coordinator Ill River Biological Station, Krista Kirkham - The Nature Conservancy’s Assistant Aquatic Ecologist working on the Mackinaw River Project. Madeleine Vanmiddlesworth – Fisheries Biologist Ill Natural History Survey

There were 40 exhibitors, 21 break out sessions and 15 Stream workshops.

Clean Water Making Waves Award

Awards are given to schools, individuals and organizations for outstanding contributions in community water quality projects. Thank you to the Clean Water Navigating Committee, our program partner Illinois American Water Company, granting agencies, and sponsors. For the past 24 years, over 56,000 students and their teachers have learned how to become active community stewards through the Clean Water Celebration.

The 2016 Making Waves Award winners are: East Peoria High School, Keller Primary School, Katie Bradshaw, T.D. Vanmiddlesworth, Krista Kirkham, and Madeleine Vanmiddlesworth.

Art and Science in the Woods

In nature’s classroom, 462 students ages 6 to 18 attended ASIW this summer in studies with 51 instructors; professional artists, scientists, engineers, archeologists, and survival skills instructors. 100 volunteers served as teaching assistants, medical staff, maintenance & administrative assistants. Sharon Obery, ASIW coordinator & dedicated Art & Science in the Woods staff gave amazing support for the 43rd year of the camp. Families, friends & the general public attended the Friday evening student performances, exhibits, and presentations. The program now serves our third generation of students. 102 financial need scholarships were awarded students coming from central Illinois towns, counties and 3 states.

Family Learning,
Fossil & Rock & Amphibian Programs

25 families participated in the Spring & Fall Reptile and Fossil & Rock field science expeditions. Crow Creek & Crow Creek Marsh, and Dry Run Creek outdoor classrooms. Geologist Dr. Merrill Foster led the fossil and rock program and herpetologist Doug Holmes led the reptile expedition.
Community Arts Access

The Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, awarded the Sun Foundation a $9,870 grant for community & public arts programs for re-granting in Bureau, Marshall, Stark and Woodford Counties. With this grant and matching community funds, the Sun Foundation awarded $11,500 to the following schools, arts organizations, and community groups throughout Woodford, Bureau, Marshall, and Stark counties:

The Sun Foundation is pleased to announce the Community Arts Access Re-granting Program’s Awardees for 2016.

Association for the Developmentally Disabled of Woodford Co, (ADDWC). $1,000. Association for the Developmentally Disabled of Woodford Co. (ADDWC). $1,000 – to supply art materials during “Canvas Creations” for local Life Skills program and group homes.

Future of Henry Events Committee. $1,000 For employing about 15 musicians to perform for free at the “Brown Bag It” in Central Park in Henry, Illinois for senior citizens and nursing home residents.

Henry Community CHARACTER COUNTS. $1,000 to bring a free motivational program, Tim Hannig’s Pro-Kids Show, to Henry Grade School and 650 members of the Henry community.

Ladd Community, CCSD #94. $1,000 to employ the artist from Princeton Art Academy, Liana Hall, to instruct students 6 full day sessions about various skills, mediums, and theory of art.

Learning Stage Camp. $500 to support a 2-week summer theatre arts camp, implemented by Lisa Gadomski, for 40 youth ages 8-18.

Malden Grade School, CCSD #84. $1,000 for artist, Mary Jane Thornton, to teach 85 students how to fully engage in art culture, literature, and ways to recycle created art.


Marshall Putnam Stark Show Choir 2. $1,000 for a dance choreographer to teach 10-15 students ages 14-22 at Henry-Senachwine High School.

Midland Grade School, CUSD #7. $500. to give the students an experience with ceramics through the skills of a professional artist.

Priceton Theater Group Festival. $500. for ‘Shakespeare in the Park’ to present the 20 staff & 8-person act, The Winter’s Tale, at Soldier Sailors’ Park.

River Valley Players Youth Community Theater. $1,000 for a musical director and choreographer to add their experience to summer camp & workshop production of Shrek Jr. for individuals ages 5-15.

St Mary’s Grade School. $1,000. for students to learn from artist, Rebecca Kraut, about Woodford County’s animal habitats through art appreciation across diverse STEM curriculums and disciplines.

St Toulon Public Library. $1,000. for musician and historian, Barry Cloyd, to perform and engage with 100-200 kids & their families during the Summer Reading Program “Read for the Win.”

Winter Warming Program Support Event

Guests attended the 11th annual Winter Warming children’s program benefit wine tasting event. $13,000 was raised to fund the Sun Foundation’s major children’s programs; Art and Science in the Woods and the Clean Water Celebration. We thank the dedicated Winter Warming Committee, Leo Wine, Super Liquors, distributors, volunteers, students, artists, caterer Connie Randall & A Matter of Taste, event sponsor Hasselberg, Grebe, Snodgrass, Urban & Wentworth, and local business and individual in-kind contributors for making this year’s fundraising event a great success.

Sun Foundation Summer Sundown Benefit

$5,000 was raised by the Summer Sundown fundraising event for the Sun Foundation’s programs. The event was hosted and brews provided by the Peoria Brewing Company, and food service was provided by Nacho Mama’s Grilled Cheese and Mike’s Knot Just Ribs.

Thank you to the Summer Sun Down Committee, Sun Down guests, and our event host and food providers for their support.

Hasselberg Grebe Snodgrass Urban & Wentworth
Howard & Howard
Peoria Brewing Company
Walter F. Jacob Foundation
Nacho Mama’s Grilled Cheese
Mike’s Knot Just ribs
Muir Omnigraphics, Inc.
Media Partner: 99.9 WWCT FM
Media Outreach and Professional Development

Website

The Sun Foundation’s website is a key resource for comprehensive programs. From September 1, 2015 to August 31, 2016, the Sun Foundation website had 50,443 visits, averaging 4,203 visitors per month. There was a total of 802,541 hits, with an average of 66,878 hits per month. The website had a total of 35,761 unique visitors, for an average of 2,980 per month. There were a total of 210,694 page views, with a monthly average of 17,557 page views. The heaviest month was February, 2016 with 129,116 page views. This is the month that registration opens for Art & Science in the Woods program. We thank Shari Tripp the volunteer webmaster for her endless hours of technical support and creative talents.

Promotional Material for programs

The Sun Foundation designed and produced hard copy and electronic promotional brochures, posters, and flyers. Program materials were distributed to area community festivals, local businesses, local libraries, local schools, and internet links.

Publication - Sun Journal

We thank our Sun Journal advertisers and Havana Printing for their very important support. An electronic copy of the Sun Journal was posted to the Sun Foundation’s website. The Journal contained Sun Foundation program information, news, and other area arts organization’s calendars and program information. This outreach is supported by advertising. The Sun Foundation’s Sun Journal is published annually and has a distribution of 30,000 printed copies. This year there were 9,180 sent by postal mail to the Sun Foundation’s mailing database, 17,000 Journals were distributed to our 9 county regional elementary and secondary schools, and 2,000 were distributed to local businesses, libraries, and community centers.

Social Media

Facebook averages: 1,200 likes a week. Facebook continues to provide another menu for reaching out to our community. Programs, fundraising events, and related news have reached new audiences and support. We thank the managers of the facebook team.

Sun Foundation FY 2016 Impact

September 1, 2015 to August 31, 2016, the Sun Foundation engaged 107,965 people through educational programs, services, publications, broadcasts, performances, exhibits, presentations, classes, and workshops.

Television, Print, and Radio

Throughout FY 2016 the Sun Foundation received support from television, newspaper, and radio media. Our media partners include:

- WCBU 89.9 and Art & Society magazine promoted the Sun Foundation’s Winter Warming children’s program benefit.
- The Peoria Journal Star promoted and covered Sun Foundation programs and events throughout the year in feature articles.
- Lacon Home Journal, program and service announcements.
- Henry News program and service announcements.
- Pekin News public announcements.
- WEEK TV 25 special events promotion.

Arts Advocacy

The Sun Foundation is a member of the Art’s Alliance of Illinois and Arts Partners of Peoria. Our development director serves on the Illinois State Local Arts Network Council. Book local and Illinois artists for programs supported by the Sun Foundation, providing information about artists and art groups in the Sun Journal, on the Sun Foundation website, Facebook page, and through other media outlets.
Sun Foundation gratefully acknowledges our supporters

Corporate Partnerships

Businesses, corporations, and foundations that have partnered with the Sun Foundation and given support of $1,000 or more in fiscal year 2016.

- Alvar, Inc
- Ameren Illinois
- American Water
- Blick Art Materials, LLC
- Blue Heron Farm
- Bushwhacker Ltd.
- Cargill Inc.
- Caterpillar Foundation
- CF Industries
- Community Foundation of Central Illinois
- Exxon Mobil
- Fletcher Landscaping Services
- Miles C. Hauter Foundation
- Hallmark Corporate Foundation
- Hasselberg, Grebe, Snodgrass, Urban & Went
- Heart of Illinois United Way
- Howard & Howard
- Illinois American Water Company
- KOHL’S
- Living Lands and Water
- Morton Dental Clinic
- Muir Omni Graphics
- Nichols Veterinary
- PNC Foundation
- Peoria Academy of Science
- Peoria Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Root Brothers Manufacturing & Supply Co.

Individual Partnerships

Individuals who have partnered with the Sun Foundation and given support of $1,000 or more in fiscal year 2016.

- Maury Brucker
- Michael F. Coffman
- Norman Crook Memorial
- Bob & Joan Ericksen
- John Jacob
- Janet H. Kally
- Doug & Eileen Leunig
- Dina Lunken, DDC, P.C.
- Laurel Ann Maze
- Rose Parisi & Donald Meckley
- Michael Rucker
- Kimberley Solman
- Joyce Blumenshine & David Trachtenbarg
- Michael Want
- James & Katherine Weber
- Dr. Robert Williams
- Emiko Yang
- Karen & Richard Zuckerman

Legacy and Memorial Gifts

We thank our dear friends for insuring that the Sun Foundation’s mission continues on even beyond their lifetimes. They will be missed.

- Norman Crook Memorial
- Eugene Holmes Memorial

2016 In-kind Donations: $127,951

In-kind donations came from local businesses, service groups, and individuals to make the FY 2016 Sun Foundation programming and events possible.

Special Thanks to Sharon Obery, Art & Science in the Woods volunteer coordinator and Karen Zuckerman, Clean Water Celebration volunteer coordinator

Volunteers:

Over 350 people volunteered to support programs in 2016.

Community members gave their talents and time to serve on the Sun Foundation Board of Directors, serve on program committees, help at fundraising events, facility maintenance, assist with teaching, and provide medical care for students. These amazing people and groups are essential to the work of the organization.

Generosity:

We thank our community for showing such significant and long standing support for the mission of the Sun Foundation.

Illinois Arts Council:

The Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, awarded the Sun Foundation $8,200 for operations & program support, and a $9,500 grant for Community Art Access Regranting to Marshall, Woodford, Stark and Bureau counties.

Thank You to all who made the Sun Foundation’s 43rd year possible for the Children of our communities

Jo and Jimmy Lakota at Clean Water environmental classroom
Income & Expense Figures

2015 - 2016 Income Sources: $350,020

- Program participant fees: $121,458 (35%)
- Grant Income for Operations: $60,250 (17%)
- Interest & Other Income: $2,996 (2%)
- Program Event Fundraising: $26,273 (8%)
- Contributions: $139,043 (39%)

2015 - 2016 Expenditures: $350,020

- Programs: $328,209 (90%)
- Program Fundraising: $15,012 (4%)
- General Administration: $19,980 (6%)

* Throughout 2015-2016, In-kind donations exceeded $127,951 and are not reflected in the above charts.
Note: This financial information reflects 2016 fiscal year: September 1, 2015 through August 31, 2016.
2016 Sun Foundation Programs
Photographs courtesy of Leonid Kosintsev and Bob Ericksen.

ASIW Coyoe Games friday fun run

Clean Water Celebration, Water Quality Exhibit booth

Clean Water Celebration, opening keynote audience

Clean Water Celebration, “Earth Baloon” exhibit

ASIW Wild Crafted Art pens from Nick Neddo

ASIW Wild Crafted/Hand made paint

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