

The Merry Leaflet

Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center of Goshen College | P.O. Box 263, Wolf Lake, IN 46796 | 260.799.5869 | merrylea@goshen.edu | goshen.edu/merrylea

Honoring the Headwaters

10 Years of Sustainability Leadership Semester

SINCE THE SUSTAINABILITY Leadership Semester (SLS) began in 2012, [this immersive program](#) has used the power of place and interdisciplinary learning to explore the holistic health of societies.

The program has gone on to graduate 45 individuals, and this fall we celebrate ten years of transformational learning and leadership by **Honoring the Headwaters: 10 Years of SLS**.

Headwaters are the source of a river; thus, they have profound impacts downstream as organisms, sediments and contaminants are dispersed throughout the entire body of water from the headwaters.

Merry Lea's lakes are a headwater area of the St. Joseph watershed: all water from Merry Lea flows into the Elkhart River, then into the St. Joseph River and finally into Lake Michigan.

What we do here at Merry Lea impacts everything downstream. Not only do we ecologically impact the waterways and habitats throughout the watershed, but the SLS is a headwater for impacting sustainability initiatives in our watershed and beyond.

A GATEWAY FOR SUSTAINABILITY

The SLS begins with an exploration of water as a gateway to broader discussions about sustainability and concrete action that students can take for positively impacting communities.

"Sustainability as a discipline is a huge, diverse, complex way of understanding



SLS students **Acadia** (left) and **Skylar** (right) canoe on the St. Joseph River.

and working within myriad systems that govern our lives. Setting our watershed as the context for observing and comprehending those systems makes it a bit more practical and less overwhelming," explained Tom Hartzell, coordinator of residential undergraduate programs and environmental educator at Merry Lea.

Everyone interacts with water. Daily we drink, cook and flush our toilets with water. Recreationally we fish, boat or photograph water. Economically, industries such as farming, manufacturing, water treatment facilities and others require water.

"Water is a universal uniter, both literally and figuratively," said Tom.

Much like other natural systems, water flows beyond political boundaries. "We enact policies for our towns and cities, but the air from one city doesn't stay in that city and the water flowing through a town doesn't stay in that town," said Lisa Zinn, director of the SLS from 2013 to 2016.

"In order to help students understand this challenge for sustainability, we wanted to think about the regional scale, not in terms of states or counties, but in terms of a watershed." When the Goldilocks of sustainability searches

for the right geographic scale, one city is too narrow, global is too broad, but a watershed is just right.

"Water stewardship...can bring a lot of diverse folks to the table. Helping our students understand water and its different forms of power feels like a critical lesson we can offer here," said Hartzell. Knowing the watershed's inhabitants – from professionals to migrating waterbirds – and hearing diverse perspectives helps ground students in the location.

TRANSCENDING BOUNDARIES AND FORMING COMMUNITY

Part of this place-based experience is getting to know and [experience a watershed](#) both ecologically and socially.

Each cohort becomes immersed in the watershed right away. At the start of their second week in early September, the students canoe about 100 river miles over eight days from Merry Lea to Lake Michigan.

They begin at the headwaters of the Elkhart River near Merry Lea and canoe downriver into the St. Joseph River and end at Lake Michigan.

see [Headwaters](#), page 3



VIEWS FROM THE CORNER OFFICE
DR. JASON MARTIN

Childlike Wonder

"If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement, and mystery of the world we live in." – Rachel Carson

RACHEL CARSON is someone I greatly admire. An accomplished zoologist and talented nature writer, she fundamentally changed how we viewed humankind's impact on the environment.

She was also a vocal advocate of connecting children with nature. In 1956 she wrote the essay "Help Your Child to Wonder," describing the power of creating opportunities for children to explore nature on their own terms. This could be listening to the songs of the wind, feeling the soft warmth of a baby chick in their hand or meandering down a woodland path on a rainy day.

At Merry Lea, we strive to create educational experiences where students gain profound understanding and appreciation of nature through exploration.

While our educators caringly facilitate these experiences, they often become co-learners alongside the children they teach. A simple question from a student such as, "why is that bug doing that?" can trigger an unexpected adventure where students and educators become scientists and investigators searching the forest underbrush. It is often these types of impromptu educational experiences, or "teachable moments," that are most formative. And the influence of a trusted adult as an authentic participant in discovery in fueling a child's sense of wonder cannot be understated.

There are lots of opportunities at Merry Lea for you to become a scientist and adventurer alongside your child, grandchild, niece, nephew or any young person in your life. Explore the woodland trail just outside the Learning Center while reading the book featured in our StoryWalk®. Bring your family for our public programs, like Ice Investigation on January 8, to examine the properties of ice and how creatures cope with the cold of winter. And our 8 miles of hiking trails are available for you and your little ones to explore together on your own from dawn to dusk every day.

Whether it's at Merry Lea, a city park or your own backyard, never forget that any day is a great day for exploring nature with your child! 🌿



Looking for ways to make a difference?

Merry Lea relies on the generosity of people like you to provide accessible and quality environmental education programs for all ages.

Please consider becoming a Friend of Merry Lea. **Give a gift of \$100 or more before January 31 and receive a reusable Merry Lea tote bag.**

You may give online at goshen.edu/merrylea/donate. Or call our office at (260) 799-5869.

ABOUT MERRY LEA

Merry Lea was created with the assistance of The Nature Conservancy and through the generosity of Lee A. and Mary Jane Rieth. It is operated by Goshen College. The center provides a comprehensive program of environmental education and recreation.

The Merry Leaflet, published in spring, summer, fall and winter, provides news about programs and developments at Merry Lea. Elena Fischer is its editor and the author of articles without bylines. See the news tab at goshen.edu/merrylea for more updates.

TEAM MEMBERS

Rian Bylsma

Environmental Educator

Kaeli Evans

Farm Manager

Elena Fischer

Communications Specialist

Kerry Goodrich

Property Supervisor

Carol Good-Elliott

Environmental Educator

Tom Hartzell

Coordinator of Undergraduate Programs

Jason Martin

Executive Director

Bill Minter

Director of Land Management

John Mischler

Director of Agroecology

Ruth Mischler

Assistant Professor, SEED

Joel Pontius

Director of Sustainability Leadership Semester

Jonathon Schramm

Associate Professor, SEED

Jennifer Schrock

Leader of MCCN

Kaitlyn Sproles

Environmental Education Outreach Coordinator

Marcos Stoltzfus

Director of Environmental Education Outreach / Assistant Executive Director

Maria Tice

Administrative Assistant / Volunteer Coordinator

BOARD MEMBERS

Melissa Kinsey, *Chair*

Andy Rieth, *Vice Chair*

Reena Ramos

Ryan Sensenig

Jerry Sweeten

Ex Officio: Ann Vendrely

Ex Officio: Jason Martin

As students canoe downstream, they witness the consequences of human and non-human activities upon the environment up close by paddling. They feel the current slowing before a dam and dip their oars in algal blooms caused by agricultural runoff.

“The canoe trip gives a good foundation for the rest of the semester,” said Denver Beck, an SLS student from 2020. According to Denver, they gained tangible examples of how everyday actions can affect the water and landscape by traveling through the entire watershed.

Along the way, students get out of their canoes and talk with local leaders and experts working in the broad field of sustainability. Cohorts have interacted with stakeholders such as mayors, a pastor who baptizes members in the river, a gravel miner, a sustainability officer at a waste management company and others.

The results of using water as a lens into sustainability is itself a headwater for further transformational learning: experiences and learning in the SLS “all flow together, building and growing like a river,” described Zinn.

Concepts and strategies that students learn, apply not only to water management but also agriculture, energy, social justice, education and more. Classes, field trips and discussions move students beyond just learning about an issue to “wrestling with it and synthesizing it in a multi-disciplinary way,” according to Zinn.

Cohorts conduct semester-long projects to evaluate a real local problem and suggest an implementable solution. This year’s students are conducting three separate projects: one group is conducting an energy efficiency audit of Merry Lea’s buildings, another group is creating introductory lessons on sustainability for all first-year Goshen College students, and one seminary student is creating a learning module for bringing faith and ecology together.

LEADING WITH HOPE

The students in SLS develop [personal leadership skills](#) that they strengthen through everyday community living and

hands-on projects with stakeholders outside of the SLS program.

“Living in a community shows what leadership looks like, as I’ve learned that leaders need to consider outcomes for the whole of a group. Everyone has a chance to lead and show their strengths,” said Hannah Guthrie ‘23, a sustainability studies major and current student in the SLS.

When this year’s SLS cohort canoed through South Bend, Ind., they gathered with students and faculty from IUSB, Saint Mary’s College and Goshen College over a pizza dinner for networking and knowledge-sharing.

Alexa Kennel ‘23, an SLS student majoring in sustainability studies at Goshen College, led a discussion about sustainability initiatives for students and faculty to share points of pride and areas for improvement at their respective campuses.

Across the different schools, students identified the need for better waste management and organic food choices in dining halls, and better organization around campus gardening. After hearing these shared outcomes, Alexa organized smaller groups based on the identified interests.

Undergrads, graduate students and faculty informally workshopped specific issues, like student-led composting, or how to combat pushback from converting lawns into native prairies.

“I like bringing people together and talk about things we’re interested in,” said Alexa. Being “with my people” is a source of renewal as well as a network to learn how others are dealing with similar issues. Alexa described how talking about success is a great way



Students and faculty from Goshen College, IUSB and Saint Mary’s College discuss sustainability.

to combat the “doom and gloom” of climate change and the challenges of sustainability projects.

And yet despite our individual shortcomings in sustainability – or maybe because of them – hope and resiliency continue to be instilled in the SLS program as students explore and enact change efforts around them.

Lee Bergey ‘23 is a current SLS student studying sustainability studies and art at Goshen College. They said, “Being taught practical solutions on both individual and global scales, combined with the focus on gratitude and hope, moves the conversation about climate change from a place of fear to a place of creativity and possibility when I’m looking at the future.” 

To read more about *Honoring the Headwaters: 10 Years of SLS*, visit goshen.edu/merrylea/news

Thank you for your support

Thank you for donating to Merry Lea this quarter. Your support has contributed to environmental programming, maintaining facilities and upkeeping hiking trails.

ACRES Land Trust

Carl Bauer

Shirley Friesen

Barbara & Larry Herr

Doug Kaufman

David & Lou Ann Kanagy

Melissa Kinsey

Mark Kreider

Doug & Joy Landis

Carl & Doris Metzler

Jocele Meyer

Jan & Sam Schwartz

Edith Shantz

Joann & John Smith

Nisha & Ryan Springer

Kaitlyn & Michael Sproles

Ellen & Randy Stoesz

Jerry & Melinda Sweeten

Doug & Jane Vendrely

Evelyn & Roger zumFelde

Merry Lea Team Updates



Rian Bylsma

NEW ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATOR

B.S. Biochemistry, Calvin University, 2015

M.S. Evolutionary and Wildlife Genomics, Purdue University, 2020

As an environmental educator, Rian teaches and develops curriculum for Merry Lea's PreK-12 and public programs, including the nature preschool. Rian enjoys cultivating moments when curiosity, investigation, and wonder take over and leave an irresistible connection to the world.

Before coming to Merry Lea fall 2021, Rian worked and volunteered in a variety of

formal and informal science communication efforts, including science-based legislation, genetics research in wildlife, grade school curricula, public museum events and local community discussions, among others.

This experience in public science programming, curriculum development and community learning complement Rian's degrees in biochemistry and wildlife genomics.

Rian comes from New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Michigan, and enjoys the unique outdoor gifts that each region offers. On weekends and evenings, Rian enjoys backpacking, kayaking and cooking with friends while exploring northern Indiana.



Kaitlyn Sproles

NEW ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION OUTREACH COORDINATOR

B.S. Fisheries & Wildlife Sciences and Forestry Management, University of Missouri, 2013

M.A. Environmental Education, Goshen College, 2017

Upon graduating from the University of Missouri, Kaitlyn served in the Peace Corps in rural Paraguay as an environmental educator. She worked with youth leading environmental activities and built local partnerships for two years there before arriving at Merry Lea as a graduate student

in 2016. After obtaining her master's degree, Kaitlyn stayed at Merry Lea for a few months as an environmental educator until she became the Interpretive Naturalist at Chain O'Lakes State Park. At the park, she oversaw programming, natural resource management, volunteer coordination, communications and more.

She returned to Merry Lea in spring 2021 as Environmental Education Outreach Coordinator, teaching and providing logistical support for Merry Lea's school and public programs. Originally from Missouri, Kaitlyn now lives in Albion, Ind. with her husband. In her spare time she enjoys hiking, gardening and reading.



David Ostergren

RETIRED DIRECTOR OF THE MASTER OF ARTS IN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (MAEE)

B.S. Biology, University of Minnesota, 1982

M.Ed. Outdoor Education, University of Minnesota, 1992

M.A. Political Science & Policy Analysis, West Virginia University, 1997

Ph.D. Forest Resources Science & Recreation, Parks and Tourism Resources, West Virginia University, 1997

David Ostergren, Ph.D., director of the MAEE program and professor of sustainability and environmental education, has retired from Goshen College. Dave began his service to

the college and Merry Lea in 2008, building the first master's degree program offered by Goshen College. Under his leadership, 76 students have graduated from this program to become successful environmental educators and stewards across the nation. Additionally, Dave taught courses in environmental policy and sustainability to Goshen College undergraduates and earned tenure in 2016. He also served as Merry Lea Interim Executive Director during the 2019-20 academic year.

The programmatic foundations that Dave built will support the success of the MAEE program for years to come. We are grateful for this legacy and the support he provided students and the Merry Lea team. We wish him well in the next phase of his life.

Carol Good-Elliott

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATOR

B.A. Biology, Goshen College, 1990
M.A. Environmental Education,
Goshen College, 2013

This past summer, **Carol Good-Elliott celebrated 20 years of service** as an environmental educator at Merry Lea.

Since her first day of work in July 2001, she has contributed to programs that served over 36,400 children and over 8,600 adults. She has worked with 91 teaching volunteers and mentored 221 undergraduate students in an environmental education course, dozens of interns and 76 graduate students.



Carol (center) and young students crowd around a pile of leaves on a field trip.

Q: Why did you choose to go into environmental education?

A: After my fifth year at Goshen College, I was trying to decide what to do next. I was considering a few options. I didn't know what direction to go with grad school and didn't feel ready [for one job offered to me], so I did a yearlong education internship at Au Sable. The person in charge of that internship program was a fabulous educator and mentor in teaching me how to teach effectivity. After that year, I thought, "Oh this is something I do enjoy."

Q: What does 20 years of environmental education mean to you?

A: A lot has changed in 20 years in terms of how programming has shifted at Merry Lea. There's a bit more intentionality now to what audiences we're cultivating and what material we're presenting. Not that there wasn't intention put into it before, but I think environmental education as a field has shifted to be more intentional and less freeform than it had been.

There are times that I feel disappointed that I don't see broader societal shifts after doing this work for 20 years. We're still teaching the importance of caring for the places that we live and not seeing the plants and animals around us not purely as resources to be used up. But playing with preschoolers [keeps me going]! And hearing peoples' "aha" moments, watching them notice and be excited about noticing something for the first time, seeing it fresh through other people's eyes for the first time.

Q: What do you hope people take away from programs that you teach?

A: My overall goal is for the participants to leave knowing it can be okay to be outside, be comfortable outside and know that interesting things can always be found. And to know that there's someone who cares about what they're interested in and pays attention to what they're noticing. That's the lowest common denominator: what I want from every single program. I want people to go away from the program not feeling afraid of the outdoors and not feeling ashamed [of that fear or a lack of knowledge].

Q: How have you observed or experienced Merry Lea's programs helping connect people to nature?

A: [In Merry Lea's programs] people spend time outside and observe things with interest. People reach a point of recognizing that they can be comfortable outside and enjoy time outdoors in places other than a lawn or sports field. There's still the "aha" moments and tangible experiences they'll take with them, and a lot of it depends on the educator: how well the participants interact with and form a connection with the educator, which is true for any educational setting. How we remember and experience something has a lot to do with the feelings we get from the interactions we have with the people around us. For me as an educator, I try to set up a situation where I can make a personal connection with each person in the group and create an experience where each person can feel comfortable in some aspect, but I'm also not taking on everyone's burdens with me.

Q: What are you currently working on, or recently completed, that has been most meaningful to you?

A: I'm really excited that we got to bird band this summer. And I'm excited to get to work with preschoolers again this year, continuing that program. In particular, I'm excited to work with the same preschoolers I had last year...and seeing their growth and progression. They have a lot more confidence in jumping in, doing things out in the woods. Both an emotional comfort and physical strength, balance, coordination of jumping up and running along a log.

[I enjoy the preschoolers because] they're very curious. They have a lot of energy for life, zest, enthusiasm. They're very honest, which can be great and awful at the same time. Challenging, but also really refreshing. They'll let you know if they don't understand or if they're not sure they're interested in something or if they don't want to try something. And we'll figure it out together.

Q: As you reflect on 20 years of service, what is a favorite memory?

A: I don't have a favorite memory, so much as a sense of the many people I've gotten to work with here over the 20 years. The connections I've had with them, what I've learned from them and ways I've been able to work with them; friendships that have been built and having that sense of camaraderie. That ongoing life cycle. There are so many adventures I have had in random programming, making things up on the spot when school buses broke down and so forth. 🌱

SLS Alumni Reflections



Mikhail Fernandes

2014 SLS STUDENT

Communications & Eco-DRR Knowledge Network Consultant at United Nations Environment Programme

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

How did SLS help shape your understanding of sustainability?

Being immersed in a shared environment certainly contributed to the way I perceive certain things in this world. There are a multitude of challenges that exist once you step out of Merry Lea. Some of these challenges include limited public transportation/infrastructure, politically/socially fragmented communities, and the growing mindset of the 'not in my backyard' sentiment. I hope that more people can proactively take a course or programme at Merry Lea and use the lessons learned to help implement some of Merry Lea's positive environmental ideals into a larger societal framework.

What's something from SLS that you incorporate in your life today?

During my time at Merry Lea, I had participated in a 1-month food challenge where I only consumed locally sourced food within a 100km range. I picked kilometers (km) instead of miles... to use a measurement which most of the world follows. The challenge was tough considering the monetization and prioritization of certain crops in the region. Regardless, I survived the local food challenge and am still striving to buy and support locally sourced produce and goods whenever possible. Given the rise of automation and e-commerce giants, it's vital to adapt and support local mom-and-pop shops as much as possible.

To read more about these alumni, visit goshen.edu/merrylea/news



Benjamin Isaak-Krauß

2018 SLS STUDENT

Co-Pastor at Mennonite Congregation of Frankfurt

FRANKFURT, GERMANY

How did SLS help shape your understanding of sustainability?

My wife and I went to SLS through Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary. I had read a bunch about sustainability, but not in a systematic way. SLS integrated many different sectors – natural sciences, social sciences, humanities – and the teachers were helpful at putting all these puzzle pieces together in a single framework.

SLS legitimized the questions, concerns and bits of information I had, pointing me to reputable people. SLS really set me free to incorporate ecological concerns into my ministry by introducing me to concepts and ways to bridge ecology and theology, but also simply by giving me time and permission to explore these concepts myself. After SLS, we were able to continue the conversation around ecology at AMBS and promote climate consciousness in the Mennonite church.

What's something from SLS that you incorporate in your life today?

I make space for regular time outside in wild spaces or those reclaimed by creation, and worship in wild church style with creation. We have been trying to promote watershed-framing as a locus of action here [in Germany]. I like that a watershed is an ecological scale where meaningful action is possible, but larger than individual action. In our congregation, lots of people feel overwhelmed with having another thing to do [regarding climate action]. Part of my job is to make them see what they are already doing and then seeing what we can do together; to help people see what the scales of action are and what the scale of appropriate action is.



Cecilia Lapp Soltzfus

2016 SLS STUDENT

New Roots Farm & Garden Specialist at International Rescue Committee

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA

How did SLS help shape your understanding of sustainability?

I appreciate the applied community engagement projects [of] SLS. These experiences reinforced the idea that sustainability is not an ideology per se, but a methodology. Throughout the semester I surveyed residents of Bear Lake and Goshen to learn about community members' experiences of their local waterways. These investigations assessed human-environment interactions spanning social, ecological, and economic analyses. The experience challenged me to adapt my language/narrative to better connect across difference and to expand my understandings of both "community" and "sustainability."

What's something from SLS that you incorporate in your life today?

Soon after SLS, I became connected to a piece of land in Virginia that has been stewarded by my extended family for 3 generations. The experiences I had with Merry Lea's land restoration efforts inspired me to join in my family's vision of protecting the hardwood forests, streams, and pastureland of Hebron Hill Farm and making them available for personal retreat and healing. Since the pandemic, I have lived at the farm, supporting efforts in rotational grazing, organic gardening, riparian buffer restoration, and navigating the community partnerships that give these projects life.

Also, the first time I delved into canning was at Merry Lea (thanks to Fun Fridays with Tom Hartzell!). I'm slowly expanding my repertoire of food preservation techniques.

New Mixed with the Old at Enchanted Forest

UNDER THE BLANKET OF NIGHT, Merry Lea's Farmstead transformed the darkness into an inviting, festive space with string lights, campfires and kerosene lamps the evenings of October 22 and 23. Families filled the lawn with excited chatter and live music poured from the porch of one of the outbuildings for Merry Lea's annual Enchanted Forest.

This family-friendly program attracted a total of 201 individuals, not including those staffing the event. After a heavily modified event last year to protect against COVID-19, it was encouraging for the Merry Lea team to have this number of participants again safely.

Guided by lantern light, trail guides led family groups around Merry Lea's trails where they encountered various animals that became "enchanted" to grow in size and talk to humans. Volunteers, graduate students and staff costumed as native Indiana animals shared about their lives in the wild. The animals discussed favorite foods, fears, habitats and other aspects of their lifestyles.

Participants who encountered the American woodcock (*Scolopax minor*) – a plump, short-legged bird with a long beak – learned how to dance like one searching for food. Those who talked to the opossum had to keep its location a secret from the owl not far away. And the bullfrog invited families to hibernate underwater with it for the winter.

This type of environmental education for the graduate students is quite different from the field trip programs they lead during practicum. Aside from not wearing a costume, "usually, I'm telling people about things that they might not be able to see [during the field trip], especially when talking about animals," said Matthew Davidson, a current graduate student in Merry Lea's master of arts in environmental education program. The students' chatter and stomping feet on the trails lessen the chance of observing wild animals on field trips.

Dressing up as an animal was "much more experience-based," said Matt. "Giving [families] that direct experience is really impactful. Anytime we...get to show people an animal or eat from the garden, it's guaranteed going to be an impactful and educational experience." Similarly, the Enchanted Forest was a way of providing a direct experience to families who might not get to encounter these animals in the wild, according to Matt.

Leading the one-hour hikes were a mix of volunteers, graduate students and Merry Lea staff. Breanna Winfrey is a current graduate student who was a trail guide on Friday night, facilitating questions from the families to each animal.

"I enjoyed seeing my peers and everyone else dress up and get into character to

create the illusion of enchantment," she said. "Watching everyone's creativity with their animals was pretty funny. I got to dance with a woodcock, talk to a frog, and watch O'Peter the Opossum pass out twice!"

Both children and adults got to ask questions during the hike, requiring a bit of improvisation by the costumed animals. "Interacting with families is the best of both worlds!" said Breanna. "You get the enthusiasm and knowledge of the kids and whatever the kids miss or don't understand, the parents [can pick up]."

While families waited outside before and after their hikes, they enjoyed live music and snacks. Participants swapped stories by the campfire while sipping hot cocoa, and the musical stylings of Les Gustafson-Zook got the children dancing and playing instruments.

As Les played guitar, mandolin, harmonica or other percussive instruments, he invited the families to sing along and children volunteered to honk some horns, jingle some bells or scrape the washboard.

With the new element of being outside for the duration of the entire program, there was a familiar bustle as families enjoyed an autumn evening outdoors with nighttime views and sounds of Merry Lea's wetlands, forests and prairies.

This theatrical night was enjoyable "because everyone was comfortable with being silly and going along with the enchantment of the night," said Breanna, but it was still educational. Children learned how bullfrogs go dormant for winter, the short lifespan of a cecropia moth, that not all mosquitos bite humans and more.

For the graduate students, it was also an educational teaching experience.

"Seeing how well the drama worked, I want to find ways to use that more," said Matt, who also has a background in theatre. He sees this as a potential tool for drumming enthusiasm on field trips and getting students out of their own heads to fully experience something new. "Drama is really powerful and affectual in any field, so I want to try to use it more and normalize it." 



(left) Merry Lea intern Alex Miller dressed as a cecropia moth. (right) Families enjoyed live music while a participant helped Les Gustafson-Zook play instruments.



Merry Lea

Environmental Learning Center
of Goshen College

1700 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN 46526

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 71
GOSHEN, IN 46526

Events

Learn more at: goshen.edu/merrylea/events

TALES & TRAILS

WHERE: Various Sites
WHEN: Tuesday, **Dec. 21** | 9 – 10:30 a.m.

Hear a tale and hike a trail with your preschooler to discover the natural wonders around you together! This is a 1.5-hour monthly program designed for children ages 3-5 and their caregiver(s), led by a Merry Lea educator.

Cost is free. Registration not required.
See our [website](#) for more details.

ICE INVESTIGATION

WHERE: Farmstead
WHEN: Saturday, **Jan. 8** | 10 – 11:30 a.m.

Ice isn't just for cooling our drinks or for skating. Come explore with your family how it affects other living things in northern Indiana. We'll search for creatures coping with the cold and make use of ice in many ways including experimenting, playing and building. Hot drinks will be provided.

Cost is \$3.50 per child & \$5 per adult.
Registration required on our [website](#).

MICHIANA REGIONAL SEED SWAP

WHERE: Goshen College Church-Chapel
WHEN: Saturday, **Jan. 15** | 10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

This is an educational event for gardeners in the Michiana region to exchange or acquire seeds, and learn about seed saving techniques and gardening practices. There will be a community seed table with free seeds, resource tables by regional organizations and experts, and educational sessions on various topics.

Cost is free with opportunities to buy seeds.
Registration not required. See our [website](#) for more details.

NATURE PREK OBSERVATION & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

WHERE: Farmstead
WHEN: Monday, **Jan. 17** or Thursday, **Jan. 20** | 11:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Ever wonder what a Nature Preschool looks like in action? See for yourself with this guided observation and professional development opportunity. Leave inspired, with tangible steps for your own classroom or learning setting!

Cost is \$45 per person. Registration required on our [website](#).