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February is Black History Month

<https://www.fitchburgwi.gov/documentcenter/view/22856>

Every February, the United States celebrates Black history, contributions, and culture in America. While we’re nearing the end of the month now, this observance need not stop when February is over! See the list below for some ideas of how to observe Black History Month on your own or with family and friends, both in February and throughout the year.



5 Ways to Celebrate Black History Month

1. **Read a book (or five):** From books for various reading levels featuring [Black girls](#) as protagonists, to a list of [must-read books](#) for adults, there are plenty of resources to help you find great reading material covering the Black experience in America.
2. **Support Black-owned businesses:** The [Madison Black Chamber website](#) maintains an extensive directory of Black-owned businesses in the area, which should be on any area resident’s regular list.
3. **Make a donation to support the Black community:** Many groups in Fitchburg and the surrounding area are working to lift up Black voices and champion families and human rights, with a great summary [compiled in 2020](#) by Channel 3000.
4. **Learn about local Black history:** The Wisconsin Historical Society maintains an [online collection](#) of media on African American history in Wisconsin. Here in Fitchburg, Frances Huntley-Cooper made history back in 1991 by becoming the first—and only—African American mayor elected to office in the entire state.
5. **Don’t stop when the month ends!** Don’t wait until next February to read more and engage yourself on Black history; read a book, attend online events, watch documentaries, and keep on learning year-round.

Help Madison feel more like home – for everyone

https://madison.com/opinion/editorial/help-madison-feel-more-like-home-for-everyone/article_2a621a6b-8c7b-58e0-b277-812503939ef3.html

In addition to the aforementioned list of local groups working to lift up and celebrate the Black community in Fitchburg, Madison, and the surrounding area, you can help support the Black community by donating to the Center for Black Excellence and Culture. This multipurpose center and gathering space, being planned for construction on West Badger Rd. just across the Beltline from Fitchburg, will be a unique landmark in Dane County and the entire state. This new facility will offer educational, entrepreneurial, community, arts, business, leadership, and other opportunities to the region and its residents.



The Center, as it's referred to in shorthand, is scheduled for groundbreaking later in 2022 and opening in 2023, and project leaders have raised \$10 million of its \$38 million projected cost. Often touted for its high quality of life, Dane County—like the rest of Wisconsin—is also known to feature stark racial disparities, and The Center seeks to break down those disparities, working with local organizations to identify and eliminate their own barriers and looking to attract and retain Black leadership and talent. See the linked Madison.com article above for more information, and go to www.theblackcenter.org/donate to donate to The Center and help bring this important project to life!

Unique Funding Opportunities for Fitchburg

<http://www.fitchburgwi.gov/1998/Financial-Records-Reports>

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA), passed last March as part of the federal government's response to the COVID-19's economic impacts, provided nearly \$2 trillion dollars of stimulus through various channels. Included in that package was \$350 billion for American states and cities to invest in programs and projects hampered by the recession. The City of Fitchburg received over \$3 million from the State of Wisconsin as part of that ARPA funding, and another \$2 million is expected to be made available following the closure of Tax Incremental District (TID) #6. These two pools of onetime funding provide Fitchburg with a unique opportunity to pursue projects in the coming years, and Mayor Richardson has released [his investment plan](#) for this funding, with Fitchburg's Common Council having released [their amendments](#) to the plan, with several sustainability-related elements in each.

One public hearing was held at the Common Council meeting on February 8, and a second and final public hearing will take place at the Common Council meeting on Tuesday, March 22

at 7:30pm. After reviewing the Mayor's plan and Alder amendments, as well as hearing from members of the Fitchburg community, Council will vote on the amendments and investment plan that evening. If you would like to provide feedback on these funding plans, look to the City of Fitchburg website for more information on attending the March 22 public meeting, or contact your alder.

UW Arboretum Native Plant Sale

Text from <https://arboretum.wisc.edu/get-involved/friends/native-plant-sale/>

Since 1990, the Friends of the Arboretum (FOA) Native Plant Sale in early May has provided local gardeners with a reliable source for native plants and expert guidance. All species offered at the sale are native to Wisconsin and, once established, require minimal care. No plants are dug from the wild. All are grown in commercial nurseries that follow best practices for preventing spread of disease and pests such as the jumping worm.



The plant sale is open to all. Proceeds from the Native Plant Sale help FOA support the Arboretum's work and mission. Friends of the Arboretum receive a discount on all plant purchases.

Online Sale: January 1 – March 15, 2022

A selection of trees, shrubs, garden mixes, and half and full flats of select species can be ordered at foamadison.org from January 1 through March 15, 2022, with curbside pickup in May. The online sale is open to anyone. By ordering online, you can get popular plants in larger quantities, garden mixes, and your choice of trees and shrubs. Trees and shrubs will only be available this year during the online sale, not at the tent sale.

2022 Native Plant Sale: May 14, 2022, 10am-2pm

In the large tents on the lawn near the Visitor Center, more than 200 species of native grasses, woodland, prairie, and savanna plants to purchase, while supplies last. Trees and shrubs will only be available this year during the online sale.

Fitchburg Launches New “Adopt A Storm Drain” Program

<https://ripple-effects.com/Adopt-A-Storm-Drain>

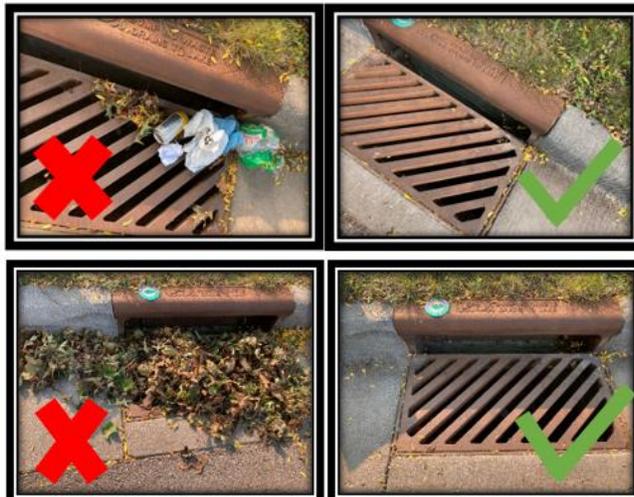
Storm drains play an important role in flood prevention and protection of our lakes, rivers, and streams. They help move stormwater runoff from roofs, driveways, streets and other hard surfaces to underground pipes or storm sewers that eventually make their way to our local water bodies. Unfortunately, that runoff also carries pollutants, trash, leaves, and other debris to our waters. Keeping storm drains and the area around them clean can help protect our waters.

The City of Fitchburg has been working on a leaf-free streets initiative and other stormwater-improving initiatives, but we can't do it alone. Fitchburg is one of five communities partnering with Dane County on a new Adopt-A-Storm Drain program and we're looking for volunteers!

1. Adopt a nearby storm drain using the Dane County Adopt-A-Storm Drain App.
2. Commit to safely cleaning the area on and around the adopted storm drain at least once a month, but preferably before every large rain event.
3. Report the amount and type of debris after each cleaning using the Adopt- A-Storm Drain App.
4. Report any spills/discharges washing down the storm drain.
5. Agree to share feedback that will be used to improve the program and expand it to other Dane County communities.

All volunteers will be provided a Storm Drain Cleaning Kit that includes: a safety vest, storm drain decal to place on their adopted storm drain, dustpan and broom, collection bucket, and an Adopt-A-Storm Drain sticker to proudly display. Volunteers will also be included on the Ripple Effects Adopt-A-Storm Drain e-Newsletter, which comes out 3-4 times/year. Adopt a local storm drain and have a Ripple Effect on area waters!

To adopt a storm drain or learn more, visit <https://ripple-effects.com/adopt-a-storm-drain>



Become A Citizen Scientist Using Your Phone

<https://ssec.si.edu/stemvisions-blog/mobile-apps-citizen-science>

February is National Bird-Feeding Month and features [World Wetlands Day](#) (February 2) and the national [Great Backyard Bird Count](#) (February 18-21); March includes World Wildlife Day ([March 3](#)), the [International Day of Action for Rivers](#) (March 14), [World Water Day](#) (March 22), and the [International Day of Forests](#) (March 21); and April is Earth Month as well as Global Astronomy Month, and it includes [National Wildlife Week](#) (expected to be April 4-8), [National Park Week](#) (April 16-24), [Earth Day](#) (April 22), and [Arbor Day](#) (April 29). The rest of the year is similarly filled with opportunities for you to explore the world around you, learn more about it, and find ways to share that knowledge with others and contribute to efforts to protect and restore our natural resources.



With the rise of smartphones, has come a wealth of “citizen science” apps that put tools for research, observation, and documentation in the palm of your hand. Now you can connect with scientists and other citizens both locally and around the world, learning from vast knowledge bases and contributing to a better understanding of our world.

Check out some of these and other citizen science apps today!

- [eBird](#) and [Project Feederwatch](#) – Share your bird sightings and grow your own list, identify birds you don't recognize, and discover nearby bird-watching hotspots
- [Globe Observer](#) – Track everything from cloud cover to mosquito activity to tree growth, contributing to global understandings of how climate change is impacting our world
- [iNaturalist](#) – Record plant and animal observations, share them with the community, and learn from others' (or add your own) knowledge through identification sharing
- [Insight](#) – Contribute to knowledge of pollinator diversity and numbers, and learn to identify the pollinators you encounter
- [Nature's Notebook](#) – Use this app to track and record seasonal behaviors and changes in animal and plant life around you (“phenology”)
- [PlantNet](#) – Use a cloud database to identify your photos of plants, helping to contribute to knowledge about plant biodiversity and geographic spread
- [Zooniverse](#) – Engage with professional researchers, helping to drive their work forward through your volunteer research-assistant efforts

Upcoming Events

Be on the lookout for more information about these two upcoming City of Fitchburg events!

[Spring Electronics Recycling and Confidential Paper Shredding Event](#)

Saturday, April 9, 2022, 8:00am – 12:00pm

[Spring Waterway Cleanups](#)

Saturday, April 23, 2022, 9:00am – 12:00pm

[Back to the Earth: Why Green Burials Matter](#)

UW Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies: Center for Culture, History, and Environment

Join a virtual discussion with Shedd Farley, director of the Linda and Gene Farley Center for Peace, Justice & Sustainability and Tajai Turner, a CEO, licensed funeral director, and a member of the Green Burial Council Speakers Bureau.

Also called natural burial or eco-friendly burial, green burial emphasizes simplicity and sustainability. Join us as Farley and Turner showcase the ways these sites and green burials aid in the conservation of natural resources, reduction of carbon emissions, protection of worker health, and the restoration and preservation of habitat.

Wednesday, March 9, 12:00pm – 1:15pm

<https://nelson.wisc.edu/events/back-to-the-earth-why-green-burials-matter>

[Sustain Dane Master Recycler Courses](#)

Sustain Dane's Master Recycler course is back, in partnership with the City of Madison and the Carton Council! Take part by attending two 90-minute online sessions and then conducting an educational/outreach project that applies what you learned. Registration is free for Sustain Dane members or \$15 for members of the public (full and partial scholarships are available).

Thursdays April 7 and 14, 12:00-1:30pm

<https://sustaindane.org/eventbrite-event/master-recycler-3/>

Share the News

Tell your friends to subscribe to Green Fitchburg on the city website
<http://www.fitchburgwi.gov/list.aspx> > Green Fitchburg

- a. Visit Fitchburg's "Notify Me®" web page:
<http://www.fitchburgwi.gov/list.aspx>
- b. Type your email address in the box and select "Sign In"
- c. To receive text messages enter your phone number and select "Save"
- d. Click  (to subscribe/unsubscribe to emails) and/or  (to subscribe/unsubscribe) next to the lists to which you wish to subscribe / unsubscribe (e.g. "Green Fitchburg" is the mailing list for environmentally friendly suggestions or events)

Please contact Phil Grupe, Sustainability Specialist, at phil.grupe@fitchburgwi.gov or (608) 270-4259, if you have any questions, comments, and/or suggestions for future Green E-News topics.

