



La Vista Ecological Learning Center

A ministry of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate

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E-News

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June, 2019 Eco-Spirituality Calendar and Summer / Fall Issue of *La Vista Visions*

You are one click away from opening our new issue of *La Vista Visions*!

In this issue you'll learn about our newest networking venture, the *Confluence Climate Collaborative*. You will be invited to reflect on the dignity of animals, and you'll reap the benefits of our courage-producing Cultural Cooking Class.



Click here to read this issue: [Summer Fall 2019 Newsletter.pdf](#)

JUNE

Leaving Home



June is the month when many young animals leave their "homes" and move out into the broader Earth community. Fledgling birds leave their nests, American toad tadpoles turn into toadlets and leave their water home; catfish young leave their nests, and bobcat kittens are born and head out on their own. It's an exciting time with all this life burgeoning in June. Can you feel this energy of life as it instinctually leaves home to enter a bigger world?

This awareness of leaving home may lead us to consider our own lifelong process of leaving home. How many times have you left

behind some image of the Great Mystery, some spiritual consolation or practice that provided a home for a time but no longer holds the Spirit? It seems we regularly outgrow our grasp of deep truths. It also seems that when we do a broader context opens up, and we are ready to go with the flow, with our own instincts. Instead of fearing change and loss, what if we trusted the rhythm of our life with Mystery? What if we not only trusted it, but also welcomed it, embraced it, even sought it out?

Wednesday, June 5: World Environment Day and Sunday, June 9: Feast of Pentecost

Why combine these two events in this eco-spiritual calendar? This year's World Environment Day focuses on **Beating Air Pollution**. Ponder these sobering facts:

- Approximately 7 million people worldwide die prematurely each year from air pollution with about 4 million of these deaths occurring in Asia-Pacific.
- Ninety-two percent of people worldwide do not breathe clean air.
- Indoor air pollution kills 4.3 million people every year.
- More than 7,000 mayors in the U.S. have committed to reducing their cities' air pollution emissions.

On Pentecost we celebrate the Spirit, the breath of Life, poured out on all to renew the face of Earth. How can we pollute this element when we consider its sacredness and our absolute dependence on it? The feast of Pentecost is a good day to combine the two events and to reflect on the words of Gerard Manley Hopkins who invites us to consider this element poetically :

*Wild air, world-mothering air, nestling me everywhere ...
this needful, never-spent and nursing element...
my more than meat and drink, my meal at every wink;
this air, which by life's law, my lung must draw and draw,
Now but to breathe its praise.*

Tuesday, June 11:

Work Day in the Oblates' Woods Nature Preserve

9:30 - Noon

Registration: Call 618-466-5004

Wednesday, June 19th: World Sauntering Day

*I think that I cannot preserve my health
and spirits unless I spend four hours a
day at least - and it is commonly more
than that - sauntering through the woods
and over the hills and fields, absolutely
free from all worldly engagements."*

~ Henry David Thoreau

Thoreau is our guide for celebrating this alternative way of moving through our beautiful home. Go sauntering today and walk as if the weight of the world has been lifted from our shoulders. Relax, enjoy yourself as a human being who knows you are at home and takes delight in being in it. Use all your senses to really be present. Feel that you have arrived with every step. Let sauntering be a spiritual practice on a lovely day in June.



Solstice Celebration: Make your Garden Toad and Frog-Friendly

Sat., June 22, 2:00 - 4:00 pm

Vernon DePauw is back to help us become frog-friendly! Frogs and toads might call your backyard home if you make it welcome to them. Why bother? Amphibians are the most endangered group of vertebrate wildlife on the planet, with nearly one-third of species at risk of extinction. Vernon will show us how to maintain frog habitats in the backyard. You'll not only help them by providing a pocket of habitat, but you will also be rewarded with a frog symphony in the spring, summer and autumn months. How wonderful is that?

Presenter: Vernon DePauw

Cost: This is a donation-based event. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Registration: Email info@lavistaec.org or call 618-466- 5004.

Sketching and Nature Journaling Flowers

Sat., June 29 10:00 am-noon

Do you enjoy exploring the world of flowers and wish you could creatively record your discoveries somehow on paper? Please join us as we begin our investigation of flowers by covering a variety of techniques to creatively capture your observations on paper. This inside study will include taking a flower apart and observing all of the components of its make-up, as well as their functions. We will then go outside to observe wildflowers in nature and record our discoveries from the techniques presented inside.

Both beginners and those that want to broaden their sketching and recording skills are welcome. Artistic skills are not required.

Supplies: unlined drawing paper (in a binder or journal with space to sketch and write), pencil, eraser, coloring tools (colored pencils or watercolors), camp chair

Cost: \$20

Registration: Call (618) 466-5004

Presenter: Angie Jungbluth, expert nature journaler and teacher.