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For Immediate Release

“Bat Night” Returns to Wehr Nature Center

Franklin, WI (May 27, 2014) – “Bat Night,” an evening that brings together the fiction folklore, and facts about bats, is returning to Wehr Nature Center, Friday, June 13, from 8-10 p.m. The Nature Center is located in Whitnall Park, at 9701 W. College Ave.

Fear of and misconceptions about bats and rabies underscore the importance of learning more about these often misunderstood creatures.

The first part of the program is an indoor, interactive presentation by Wehr naturalist Emily Brown. Topics include identifying common neighborhood bats, their value in controlling insect populations, and their work as pollinators. Also to be discussed is the race to save North American Bats from potential extinction from the disease, White Nose Syndrome.

After the indoor introduction, participants will join Brown in search of bats in Whitnall Park. Whitnall Park is home to more than three species of bats. Brown will demonstrate the latest technology to “hear” the ultrasonic echolocations produced by bats. Specialized detectors combine a system for recording the bat calls and a global positioning system (GPS). The recordings show different sound-wave patterns for different species of bats, and the GPS pinpoints a bat’s location.

Participants will also learn how they can protect bats by getting involved in citizen-science monitoring.

The program is designed for adults and for families with children age 12 and up.

White Nose Syndrome is now affecting bats in Wisconsin. In April 2014, the U.S. Geological Survey lab in Madison confirmed that at least two bats from a mine in Grant County were infected.

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A 2011 Southern Illinois University study calculated that bats save the agricultural economy \$22.9 billion a year by eating crop-damaging insects and reducing the need for pesticides.

Admission for Milwaukee County Residents, age 13 and up, is \$7 per person; Non-Milwaukee County Residents, age 13 and up, is \$10; Members of Friends of Wehr and children age 12 and under is \$5 per person. Parking is \$3 per car.

Registration for the program is required by Wed., June 11.

For more information call Wehr at (414) 425-8550 or go to countyparks.com.

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