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For immediate release

Weekly Hike for Health at Wehr begins April 6

Milwaukee (March 31, 2016) – Emerging wildflowers, songs of migratory birds, and spring breezes will greet everyone eager to exercise in the great outdoors at Hike for Health, a free weekly program beginning Wednesday, April 6 at 10:30 a.m. at Wehr Nature Center. The Nature Center is located at 9701 W. College Ave., in Whitnall Park.

“Why walk the mall when you can enjoy nature!” said Deb McRae, Director of Wehr Nature Center. “We welcome everyone to come along with a friendly group of nature lovers who walk our trails each week for exercise and fun.”

Participants will walk for 30-90 minutes, depending on their schedules and the weather. Walkers can join a hike on any Wednesday through October.

Besides the camaraderie of the group walk, contact with nature itself can have positive effects. “Green Perspectives for Public Health,” a paper published in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, demonstrates that contact with natural outdoor environments has potential for health-promoting and disease-preventing effects, including lowered blood pressure, heart rate, blood-glucose levels, and cortisol levels, as well as positive effects on immune-function response.

“Connecting with nature has another great benefit: those who know and love nature work harder to protect it,” said McRae.

Time spent at Hike for Health can be counted toward the 30x30 Nature Challenge of the U.S. Green Building Council. The Challenge encourages people to get outside and enjoy nature on a regular basis. Residents joining the Challenge pledge to spend 30 minutes in nature for 30 days in June in an effort to unplug from daily stresses and reconnect with nature. Details are available at <http://www.usgbc.org/articles/nature-calling-will-you-answer-usgbc-wisconsin>.

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Hike for Health participants will meet at the Nature Center's reception desk. While the walk is free, parking in the adjacent lot is \$3 per car. Bicycle parking is available at no charge. Parking is free for Friends of Wehr members

For more information, contact Wehr Nature Center at (414) 425-8550.

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