

# Flint Currents

*Flint Currents is a biannual publication of Discovering PLACE (Place-based Learning And Community Experiences), a regional hub of the Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative facilitated by the University of Michigan-Flint*

## Inside This Issue:

Top 9 Grant Writing  
Tips.....Page 2

Upcoming  
Events.....Page 2

Community  
Corner.....Page 3

Teacher  
Feature.....Page 3

Dinner/Dialog...Page 3

Teacher  
Resources.....Page 4

*Our Cities, Our  
Classroom*  
Conference.....Page 5

Great Lakes  
Stewardship  
Initiative.....Page 5

## Place-based education project planning day a success!

Although Saturday, May 8, 2010 was a blustery day outside, *Discovering PLACE* teachers, community partners and parent liaison were calm and productive inside Ligon Outdoor Center during the Place-based Education Project Planning Day. The purpose of the day was to give structured time for networking between teachers and community partners, as well as allow time to plan for hands-on educational projects that will be implemented with students in the fall of 2010. Teachers from Beecher High School, Dailey Elementary, McMonagle Elementary, and Tucker Elementary were joined by community partners and representatives including Brian Willingham (author/photographer), For Mar Nature Center, Michigan Nature Association, Karate Ka Harvesting Earth Education Farm, Ruth Mott Foundation's Applewood Estate, Six Rivers Regional Land Conservancy, and the Stockton Center at Spring Grove.

*Discovering PLACE* provides resources and support to K-12 students, teachers, school administrators, and community partners to come together and create positive change in Flint and the surrounding area. To support this type of education, *Discovering PLACE* offers sustained K-12 teacher professional development, facilitates school-community partnerships, and provides resources and support for place-based education activities.

The day started with a presentation and discussion led by Brian Willingham, Flint author and photographer, regarding his work on community mapping, photography and literacy with Flint students. Larry Casler from the Genesee Intermediate School District and Director of Ligon Outdoor Center then gave an overview of the resources available through Ligon, and despite the poor weather took everyone on a walking tour of the facility. Edna Stephens from Edco Publishing, Inc. gave a short presentation on place-based education and Michigan curriculum standards that served as an introduction for further



*Brian Willingham, author and photographer, talks about his experiences community mapping with students.*

curriculum discussion to be held later this summer. Additional time was spent on a "Speed Dating for Place-based Education" activity where teachers and community partners were given a short amount of time to discuss their interests and expertise in hopes of finding a partner for an educational project. The rest of the time was given to work on creating project plans, as well as drafting concept maps and logic models that provided the basis for project plans.

Teachers, with the support of community partners, are now writing project plans to be submitted for funding through *Discovering PLACE's* mini-grant fund. Proposed projects include creating school yard vegetable gardens, building indoor grow labs, publishing community cookbooks, beautifying school yards, restoring habitats, putting interpretative signs along nature trails, and visiting urban farms and farmers markets. This is an exciting time for involved schools and community partners!



UNIVERSITY  
OUTREACH

**Discovering  
P.L.A.C.E**

### Contact us:

Discovering PLACE  
432 N. Saginaw St.,  
Ste 1001  
Flint, MI 48502

### Project Staff:

Danielle Gartner,  
Program Manager  
danyg@umflint.edu  
(810) 424-5456

M'Lis Bartlett,  
Advisor  
mlis@umich.edu

Edna Stephens,  
Curriculum Specialist  
edna@edcopublishing.com

Carol Clemons,  
Program Assistant  
caclemon@umflint.edu

### On the Web:

[blogs.umflint.edu/glsi](http://blogs.umflint.edu/glsi)

## Top 9 grant writing tips for teachers

**1. Have a BIG idea:** What's your dream? What's your passion? If you aren't excited about your project, no one else will be -- create a project that matters to you, your students, and your community.

**2. Take the time to research grant opportunities:** You can find grants for teachers online. You may want to apply to several different funders for different parts of your project. For instance one may fund buses, another might fund garden supplies. And don't forget to check *Discovering PLACE's* partner website ([discoveringplace.weebly.com](http://discoveringplace.weebly.com)) for resources we have already compiled for you!



*Discovering PLACE teachers and community partners take time to discuss interests and expertise for their place-based education projects.*

**3. Follow directions, follow directions, follow directions:** Writing more - or less - than asked for can mean the difference between getting funded and not. Follow directions!

**4. Every journey begins with a first step:** Describe the need to make a big change in your

community, but create a program that takes a first or second step towards that project. Small steps and successes build into big accomplishments.

**5. Create a logic model:** Logic models can help you work backwards from your BIG idea to a project that you and your students can accomplish.



*Discovering PLACE teachers and community partners work on their mini-grant applications at the Stockton Center at Spring Grove.*

**6. Make a time line:** This will help you realistically plan your project. Include benchmarks - small goals along the way to the final product that will help you succeed with your plan.

**7. Create a realistic budget:** If you need it, ask for it. Be sure that your budget is clearly explained, that estimates are reasonable, and that the math is correct. Be sure that the grant program will pay for what you are requesting. If they don't provide money for transportation, don't include it in your request.

**8. Remember the resources you already have:** Think about your classroom, your school yard, your copier, even your students as special resources that can help you with your grants. They are the foundation for your project - places to create your project, supplies you don't need to buy and people who can help you build your project.

**9. If at first you don't succeed, try, try again:** As a rule of thumb only 3 out of 10 of the grants you write will be accepted. But the more grants you write, the easier the process becomes. Don't get discouraged!

## Upcoming Events

Event	Date/Time	Location	Audience
"Our Cities, Our Classroom" Conference	August 19, 2010; 8:30am - 4pm	WS White Building, UM-Flint Campus	General Public
<i>Discovering PLACE</i> Summer Institute	August 20, 2010; 8:30am - 5pm	Meet at WS White Building, UM-Flint Campus	<i>Discovering PLACE</i> member teachers and partners
Tips for Taking Students Outside/First Aid: Workshop	September 22, 2010; 4 - 7pm	Michigan Nature Association, Nature Sanctuary	K-12 Teachers



### Community corner

*For each edition of Flint Currents, Discovering PLACE features one of our community partners.*

"If we all become excited about learning, then anything is possible." Dora King

Youth Karate-Ka Association is teaching young people to defend themselves, their health, and their right to fresh and healthy food! Karate-Ka owners, Dora and Jacky King, are long-time advocates of helping youth learn about health and discipline through karate practice and community service. A few years ago, the Kings saw an opportunity in an abandoned lot across from their studio. With the help of volunteers from MSU and the surrounding neighborhood, the Kings cleared the land and constructed a greenhouse. Older students from Youth Karate-Ka work in the greenhouse and surrounding land completing community service hours needed to earn their second degree black belts.

These young people learn to grow vegetables throughout the year and then sell their harvest at the farmer's market, where they practice entrepreneurial skills. The Kings want Harvesting Earth Educational Farm to reinforce academic and life skills as students work in teams to make the farm productive. Thrilled to be part of *Discovering PLACE*, the Kings are working with Beecher Schools to develop a school yard garden at Dailey Elementary.

### Locally-grown dinner provides for lively learning and discussion

*Discovering PLACE* held the first dinner/dialog event on Wednesday, April 14, at King's Karate on Saginaw Street in Flint. The event focused on urban agriculture and began with a tour of Harvesting Earth Educational Farm - a perfect example of urban agriculture in action with its passive solar hoop house, laying chickens, and bee hives.



*Teachers, parents, school administrators, community partners, and students receive a tour of Harvesting Earth Educational Farm owned by Jacky and Dora King (pictured here).*

### Teacher feature

*For each edition of Flint Currents, Discovering PLACE features one of our teachers.*

Shelly Roberts is a 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Tucker Elementary in the Beecher School District, a Master Gardener and has taught science for over 10 years. She has been active in *Discovering PLACE* since the planning stage in spring 2009.

#### 1. Why did you become involved in place-based education and what does it offer your students?

I believe that is the way that children learn the best. It's a learning process that also helps the community. Place-based education involves students in real life learning that can never be taken away. They don't forget when they actually do something. It gives them an opportunity to make an impact on their community and empowers them to know they can make a difference.

#### 2. Can you tell us a little about your current project and why you chose it?

We're developing a community garden. Students can learn about food production – from soil science to food processing to healthy eating. They'll grow vegetables and beautify their community at the same time.

#### 3. What worries you most about your students?

I'm worried that they don't know how to make a positive community impact. I'm concerned about their health and that they won't be able to sustain themselves in the changing economy.

#### 4. What gives you the most hope for your students?

All their talents and their concern for each other and their community. They have a lot enthusiasm for growing – they've been involved in a grow lab this year and really love it.

Jacky and Dora King graciously offered to supply a fresh organic salad made with greens from their hoop house and hard-boiled eggs from their hens for dinner. The rest of our locally-supplied, organic dinner came from Hoffman's Deco Deli in downtown Flint.

While attendees enjoyed the delicious dinner, Erin Caudell, horticulturist at Applewood, spoke about urban agriculture in the Flint area. Our second speaker, Stephen Arellano, Program Officer from the Ruth Mott Foundation, mentioned the zoning challenges that urban farmers face and efforts at the state and local level to accommodate the new reality of vacant land and reduced population in Michigan cities. Discussion focused on the poor eating habits teachers observe in schools and how it affects student health and performance. We discussed ways to use place-based education to influence a number of factors that contribute to this problem, including the availability of healthy food, lifestyle choices, family education, economics, community-wide issues, and environmental justice.

## Teacher resources and tips for the classroom...

# MAKE A GARDEN JOURNAL

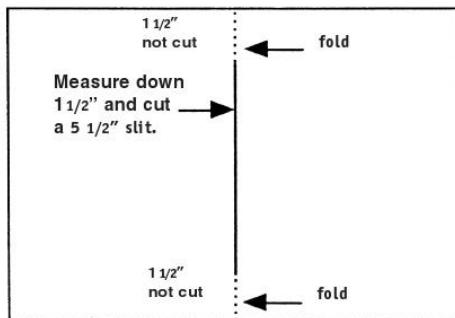
*Created by Edna C. Stephens - EDCO Publishing, for GLSI Discovering P.L.A.C.E.*

Make a **Blank Book** to use as a **Garden or Plant Journal**. Write about your garden or about each plant. Be sure to include colorful **illustrations** or pictures cut out of old magazines.

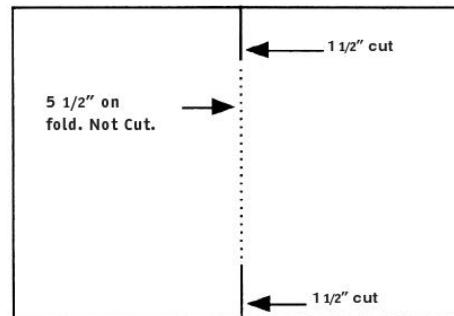
For fun information about planting a garden visit: [www.kraftbrands.com/homefarming/pages/default.aspx](http://www.kraftbrands.com/homefarming/pages/default.aspx)

**DIRECTIONS:** (You will need two pieces of 8 1/2" x 11" paper.)

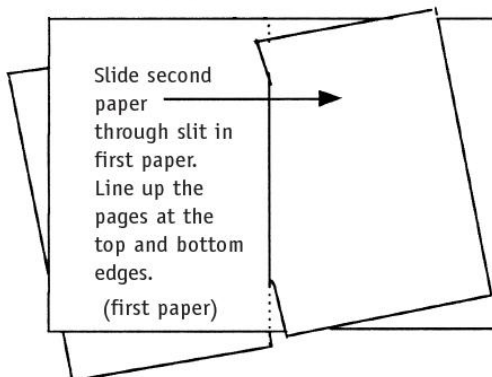
1. first paper - Fold in half to crease and re-open.



2. second paper (also additional pages)



3. Combine the papers.



4. Make the Blank Book.

Fold together to form a book. For additional pages, cut them the same way as you cut the second paper. Then slide all the papers through the first paper at the same time.



## USES FOR THE GARDEN OR PLANT JOURNAL:

1. Write about and illustrate different kinds of plants.
2. Write about and illustrate the steps for planting a garden.
3. Write and illustrate a story about a garden.
4. Make a vocabulary book with words about plants. Write a sentence using the word and include an illustration.
5. Make a recipe book using things grown in your garden.
6. Add pages to make an **ABC Book of Plants**.
7. Make and illustrate a book about **Good and Bad Bugs** that live in the garden.
8. Create story problems and pictures about your garden.
9. Make a **Food Journal**. Keep track of the fruits and vegetables eaten each day for a week.

## OTHER IDEAS FOR A BLANK BOOK

- Daily journal
- Report book
- Daily assignment book
- Use each page for weekly spelling lists.
- Make a vocabulary book.
- Make a math facts book. (Example: **My 20 Book** - Each page has an illustrated story problem with the answer of 20.)





### Mark your calendar for the “Our Cities, Our Classroom” regional conference on August 19, 2010!

We are pleased to invite you to **Our Cities, Our Classroom**, a regional conference to explore place-based education as it relates to urban settings. This conference will be held on August 19, 2010, on the University of Michigan-Flint campus.

Place-based education aims to immerse students in what is local – the environment, culture, heritage, art of a specific place – and use those unique characteristics of a community as the basis for the study of language arts, social studies, science, mathematics, and art. Turning our schoolyards, communities, and cities into classrooms provides students with hands-on, real-world experiences for learning while also allowing them to make a positive impact on the places they call home.

The **Our Cities, Our Classroom** conference seeks to bring together educators from this region’s urban centers to discuss and discover more about place-based education. Keynote and plenary speakers include **Malik Yakini** (Nsoroma Institute) and **Domiana Carter** (Detroitans Working for Environmental Justice).

Breakout Sessions include: What is Place-based Education?; Building Successful School/Community Partnerships; and Urban Agriculture, Food Systems, and Students.

**Date:** August 19, 2010, 8:30am-4pm

**Location:** William S. White Building, University of Michigan-Flint

**More information:** [www.umflint.edu/outreach](http://www.umflint.edu/outreach)

**Registration:** Registration is already open! This is a free conference, but pre-registration is required.

Please **register online** at:

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/our\\_cities\\_conference](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/our_cities_conference)



The **Our Cities, Our Classroom** conference is brought to you by University Outreach at the University of Michigan-Flint and is made possible through generous support from the Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative ([www.GLStewardship.org](http://www.GLStewardship.org)) and the Great Lakes Fishery Trust ([www.glft.org](http://www.glft.org)).

Do you have a story about place-based education? A tip for how to get students engaged in their community? A success story you want to share? Consider contributing an article to Flint Currents, the newsletter of *Discovering PLACE*. Please contact Danielle Gartner at [danyg@umflint.edu](mailto:danyg@umflint.edu) for further information.



### Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative (GLSI)

The GLSI was established and is funded by the Great Lakes Fishery Trust, with additional support from the Wege Foundation. Other funders include Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Community Foundation for Muskegon County, Fremont Area Community Foundation, and Frey Foundation.

The goal of the GLSI is to develop knowledgeable and active stewards of the Great Lakes. The GLSI funds eight regional hubs that provide leadership, expertise, materials, and financial resources to support the collaborative, community-based work of K–12 teachers, their students, and local organizations.



Expanding classrooms. Strengthening communities.

[www.glstewardship.org](http://www.glstewardship.org)