



N O U R I S H   Y O U R   N E E D   F O R

# NATURE™

SPRING/SUMMER 2020



LEARN HOW  
YOU CONNECT

*DODGE AND  
YOUR  
COMMUNITY*



D O D G E   N A T U R E   C E N T E R

# Have Animals, Will Travel

The subject is amphibious. And it stirs up a sea of hands, a flood of comments, a river of questions and answers. Everyone present is eager to talk toads and frogs.



When Dodge visits sites across the Twin Cities, nature is within reach of all.

"Friends, we're going to learn about animals and meet some and touch some," naturalist Mary Dybvig tells the kids gathered in a kindergarten classroom for "Afterschool Animals." The community education program was designed by Dodge to

bring animals direct to school buildings—and up-close to kids' eyes, ears and hands.

This is the first day of a four-week class at Somerset Elementary in Mendota Heights. Each week, the kids will meet bigger, more complex animals. Amphibians first, then reptiles. Chickens will cap off their class.

"But we're going to start out small," Mary says. From travel coolers, out come an American Toad and a White's Tree Frog. Each child will get their own time to touch, compare, and contrast the two species.

Outreach programs, like this one at Somerset Elementary, connect kids (and adults) to the wonders of the natural world—without having to arrange any transportation.

"While we'd love for everyone to come to Dodge, it's just not possible," says Pete Cleary, Director of Environmental Education. Distance, accessibility, and rising busing costs are barriers for many who would want to take a field trip to Dodge.

"But we can bring them some of the best we have—our animal ambassadors," Pete says. "We can give them a unique experience that they wouldn't otherwise have."

Every year, Dodge naturalists and animals travel across seven metro-area counties. In 2019, they went to over 60 sites and engaged more than 5,000 people. Your donations make this outreach possible, giving even more people access to hands-on learning about nature.

"We try to push outward," Pete says. "We want to reach people in underserved areas and develop more relationships in an ever-widening circle."

Because of your support, Dodge animals have visited preschools, senior housing, assisted living facilities, faith communities, and public parks. They contributed to learning programs—free for children and families—at several St. Paul Public Libraries, including Riverview on the West Side, and Arlington Hills in Payne-Phalen.



Outreach programs put Dodge animals at kids' fingertips.

"Encounters like these aren't possible unless Dodge can travel to them," Pete says.

Back at Somerset, the amphibians travel to every child in the circle. Then the naturalists ask the big question: "What are the differences between frogs and toads?"

Hands shoot to the sky. Facts come tumbling out: Smooth skin or bumpy. Long legs or short. Live in water or on land. One leaps, the other hops.

When the frogs and toads go back to their traveling terrariums, there's an audible sigh from the kids. The naturalists reassure them they'll be back next week with more animals.

Thanks to you, Dodge will get children in touch with animals, plants and the world outdoors. With your support, we will clear the barriers that keep our communities from experiencing the joys of nature.



## LET YOUR EMPLOYER LEVEL UP YOUR GIFTS

Wouldn't it be nice if you could take your dollars for Dodge even further? Your employer could make that happen for you.

Amy Bloomquist knows all about the ease of employer matching gifts.

She's a member of Dodge's Board of Directors, and has made her career in the health insurance industry at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota for the last 18 years.



For Amy, volunteering for and giving to Dodge helps her make a difference for causes she cares deeply about—the environment, health and education. She's grateful that her employer gives her a way to amplify her charitable priorities through matching gifts.

**"Take your donation that much further. Employer matches help you achieve your giving goals."**

Amy Bloomquist  
Board of Directors, Dodge Nature Center

"It's always a good idea to match," Amy says. "Think of these dollars as part of your total benefits package—and don't leave them on the table."

### MINNESOTA EMPLOYERS THAT MAKE MATCHES:

- 3M
- Ameriprise Financial
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota
- Ecolab
- General Mills
- Merrill Lynch
- Thomson Reuters
- U.S. Bancorp
- Xcel Energy
- And many more!  
Ask your HR department

"For as long as I can remember, my employer has offered me matching gifts," Amy says. "And I take advantage of it." That means she makes regular, automatic donations to Dodge—and her employer does the same.

Many companies offer such programs. When their employees give to nonprofit organizations, the company financially matches that donation, often at a 1:1 ratio (sometimes at a 2:1 ratio or better!).

Matching gifts are simple to set up with your human resources department or through an employee portal. Sometimes retirees are offered the same benefit. A number of companies also support volunteer matches, offering funds to nonprofits where their employees and retirees give time and talent.



## Nature Activities

### MARCH 2020 - AUGUST 2020

#### MARCH

7	Pancake Breakfast	Families
10	Backyard Safari (O.W.L.S.)	Seniors
13	Nature Playdate: Syrup Season	Pre-K
14	Maple Syruping	Families
19	Nature After Dinner: Animal Tracking	Families
21	Maple Syruping	Families
28	Maple Syruping	Families
Mar. 30 - April 2	Spring Break Camp	K-8th grade

#### APRIL

14	Drip, Drip, Grow (O.W.L.S.)	Seniors
16	Nature After Dinner: Slithering Snakes	Families
17	Nature Playdate: Farmyard Friends	Pre-K
23	Nature Trivia	Adults 21+
25	Hike and Sketch	Adults
28	Women in the Woods: Eat Your Way Through the Woods	Women 21+
29	Women in the Woods: Eat Your Way Through the Woods	Women 21+

#### MAY

8	Nature Playdate: Sounds of Spring	Pre-K
9	Spring Phenology Hike	Families
12	Urban Farming (O.W.L.S.)	Seniors
16	Rock the Barn	Families
21	Nature After Dinner: Meet the Milk Makers	Families

#### JUNE

9	Of Hawks and Men (O.W.L.S.)	Seniors
12	Nature Playdate: Something's Fishy	Pre-K
19	Night Creatures	Families
20	Morning on the Farm	Families
June 22 - Aug. 13	Summer Camp	1st-8th grade
22	Nature Around a Campfire: Campfire Classics	Families
25	Nature After Dinner: Creatures of the Pond	Families

#### JULY

10	Nature Playdate: Frog and Toad	Pre-K
16	Nature After Dinner: Volcanoes Rock!	Families
18	Farm Tour	Families
20	Nature Around a Campfire: Skits by the Fire	Families
25	Hike and Sketch	Adults

#### AUGUST

7	Nature Playdate: Nature Hide and Seek	Pre-K
11	Women in the Woods: Pretty Prairie	Women 21+
13	Nature After Dinner: Insect Safari	Families
22	Migratory Monarchs	Families

For activity details and registration, visit [DodgeNatureCenter.org](http://DodgeNatureCenter.org) or call 651-455-4531

# COMING EVENTS

## Pancake Breakfast

**Saturday, March 7**

**8:00 - 10:30 a.m.**

**Location: Garlough  
Environmental Magnet School,  
1740 Charlton Street  
West St. Paul, MN**

Bring your family and friends for a feast of pancakes and Dodge's pure maple syrup.

On a naturalist-led hike to the Dodge sugar bush, learn about the North American tradition of tapping maple trees. This free, walk-in event is open to all in the community. Donations welcomed.

## Rock the Barn

**Saturday, May 16**

**3:00 - 7:00 p.m.**

**Location: Main Property,  
Farm Entrance 3,  
1701 Charlton Street  
West St. Paul, MN**

Put on your dancing shoes and come on out to Dodge's annual farm and music festival. Enjoy live bands as spring blooms at the nature center. Bring a blanket to picnic with family and friends. Get up close to farm animals, milk a cow, make butter and dandelion fritters, and ride the hay wagon. Event proceeds support Dodge Nature Preschool scholarships.

Advance tickets: \$6 per person  
At the gate: \$8 per person  
*No charge for children 2 and under*  
*Additional fee for some activities*

Preregister at [DodgeNatureCenter.org](http://DodgeNatureCenter.org).



## WEST ST. PAUL WINTER FUN FEST FINDS NEW HOME AT DODGE

**Saturday, February 22**

**3:00 - 6:00 p.m.**

**Location: Main Property,  
Farm Entrance 3,  
1701 Charlton Street  
West St. Paul, MN**

This year, the city of West St. Paul's annual winter festival will come to the grounds of Dodge Nature Center for the first time. The event melds Dodge's long-running Frosty Fun Festival into a broader community gathering. Winter Fun Fest is free to attend and open to all.

"This combines the best of both events," says John Ramsay, vice president of the South Robert Street Business Association. "And we are going to be able to offer many more activities."

West St. Paul's business community is building on the success of the last four years of Winter Fun Fest. "We are excited for all that Dodge will add to the event," John says.

Food trucks, a beer tent, and a live DJ will assure a festive atmosphere. Worried about keeping warm on a winter's day? You're sure to stay toasty around the outdoor heaters and bonfires.

Dodge will provide nature activities, and all you need for snow sports like kicksledding, snowshoeing, and otter sliding. Plus many more arctic activities! Hunt for a hidden medallion, or test out what it's like to winter camp in a quinzhee, a Canadian-style snow shelter. Step out on the frozen pond for games like boot hockey, ice bowling and mini golf. And don't miss your chance to cozy up for a sleigh ride behind Dodge's horses.

At the gate, pick up your collectible button, and enter the drawing for a 60" television. You must be present to win, so hang out until 6 p.m. to hear the prizewinner announced.

Humans don't have hibernation as an option, so come out to Winter Fun Fest to celebrate the season—and the best of West St. Paul.

