

Students learn about Manitowoc River

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(Photo: Yi-Chin Lee/HTR Media)

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MANITOWOC – At the Wisconsin Maritime Museum, promoting the area’s water history is important, and preserving its future is essential.

Thirteen students participated in this year’s Watershed Ambassadors Summer Camp led by Titus Seilheimer, University of Wisconsin Sea Grant fisheries specialist and Wendy Lutzke, Maritime Museum education curator.

The camp focused on the Manitowoc River watershed and featured activities such as kayaking, fishing and the study of river plant and animal species, but also offered students between 12 and 15 the chance to aid in service projects to help protect the waterway.

“It’s really cool,” Lutzke said. “One of our main goals with this camp is getting kids actually on the river and spending time at the water. So many Manitowoc kids don’t necessarily even pay much attention to the river.”

Camp goers helped paint the message “Dump no waste: Drains to river or lake” on storm drains and placing informational door hangers in parts of Manitowoc.



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Andrew Welch, 15, of Manitowoc, changes back to his regular walking shoes after kayaking for about 90 minutes with the Watershed Ambassadors Summer Camp on Wednesday, July 29, in Manitowoc. The camp kayaked down the Manitowoc River from Manitou Park to Manitowoc Marina as part of the five-day camp. (Photo: Yi-Chin Lee/HTR Media)

“Stormwater is not cleaned before it empties into our waterways,” according to a city of Manitowoc news release. “This means that grass clippings, pet waste, automobile products, such as oil and antifreeze, other chemicals or materials left in the street enter the lake and river through the storm sewer.

“These materials are detrimental to our waterways. They can cause algae blooms, close beaches and harm fish and aquatic life. Only clean rain water should enter the storm sewer.”

Lutzke said the camp helps extend information about the river beyond its participants.

“It’s a way of making them aware,” she said. “We call it Ambassadors because if somebody is like ‘Oh that river,’ they can say, ‘I know about that river,’ and speak intelligently about it.”



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Watershed Ambassadors Summer Camp campers start kayaking down the Manitowoc River from Manitou Park on Wednesday, July 29, in Manitowoc. Thirteen campers from 12 to 15 years old are participating in the five-day program this year. (Photo: Yi-Chin Lee/HTR Media)