

# directions

The journal of the Association of Nature Center Administrators

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PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER  
RECYCLE THIS NEWSLETTER -  
GIVE IT TO A FRIEND

## Looking To The Future

LuAnn Craighton  
Executive Director  
The Preserve at Callaway

Recently, a team from ANCA assisted Callaway Gardens in Pine Mountain, Georgia with a consultation. Callaway is a 14,000-acre property with only 2,500 acres of the land currently open to visitors on a regular basis. Callaway was approaching its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the Board of Trustees felt it was time to take a more pro-active role in planning the future of the outlying natural areas in terms of both land management activities and educational programs.

During our consultation we requested ANCA help us explore how to use the property to maximize our visitor's enjoyment and knowledge of nature. We were also very interested in expanding our programming that interpreted native wildlife.

An ANCA team was carefully assembled with background and skills tailored to the needs of our consultation. The team was diverse and had specific experience with many of the issues facing our organization. Prior to their arrival on site the team received a comprehensive packet of background material describing Callaway.



# Callaway.

GARDENS RESORT PRESERVE COMMUNITY

When the team of Kathleen Brady, Wayne Clark, Ken Finch, Glenn Hoagland, David Imbrogno and Corky McReynolds arrived at Callaway, they quickly, efficiently, and creatively went to work to accomplish the task at hand. Interviewing board members and staff, touring land, coming to understand our diverse organization which also includes

(continued on page 4)

*Genius is the power of lighting one's own fire.*

- John Foster

Directions is a quarterly publication of the Association of Nature Center Administrators, distributed to members of ANCA as a membership benefit. ANCA is a private, non-profit organization, dedicated to promoting and supporting best leadership and management practices for nature and environmental learning centers.

For more information on ANCA call our toll-free number:  
1-800-490-ANCA (2622)  
[www.natctr.org](http://www.natctr.org)

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# Dr. Charles "Corky" McReynolds Receives 2004 ANCA Leadership Award

The annual ANCA Leadership Award is the highest honor bestowed upon an individual in the nature center profession. The purpose of the award is to recognize individuals who have made a major contribution to the success of a nature center or centers and who have made important contributions to the profession through professional organizations and through support and mentoring of other nature center leaders.

This year ANCA is pleased to announce the presentation of its highest award to Dr. Charles "Corky" McReynolds, Director of Treehaven Environmental Learning Center near Tomahawk, Wisconsin, a field station of the College of Natural Resources, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.



*Corky -- Looking toward the future*

## Corky McReynolds

has served the nature center community since 1975 and has been the first director of Treehaven since 1985. Under his direction Treehaven has become a year-round residential center with a programmatic framework that includes conservation, leadership, and outdoor recreation for students (4<sup>th</sup> grade through college level) and for teacher training. Treehaven now hosts 17,000 to 20,000 visitors per year. Corky has also led Treehaven through an expansion of its facilities and fundraising capabilities.

Corky is a key leader within ANCA, and has served on the Board and as past President. He started the annual Summit

conferences, the peer consult program, and the endowment fund, among other significant contributions. He is well known nationally as a mentor for nature center administrators and as a facilitator and strategic planning consultant.

## Past recipients have been:

Dr. Lewis Batts, who established three nature centers, including Kalamazoo Nature Center in Kalamazoo MI, was a nationally known ornithologist and was a founding trustee of the Environmental Defense Fund.

Dr. Robert Thomas who founded the Louisiana Audubon Nature Center and was on the founding Board of ANCA and who has provided assistance to multiple nature centers through ANCA and the MAPS process of the AAM.

Michael Riska, Executive Director of the Delaware Nature Society and past ANCA Board member.

Charity Krueger, Executive Director of Aullwood Audubon Center and Farm in Dayton, Ohio. and past ANCA Board member and ANCA treasurer.

The 2004 Leadership Award will be presented to Corky at the upcoming ANCA Summit (August 12-14) at Islandwood near Seattle, Washington. For information about ANCA, the Summit, or the Leadership Award contact Larry Brown at the ANCA office at 1(800) 490-2622.

# Digital Signage - What, Where and Why?

Christopher Meyer,  
CD Meyer, Inc.

**Being able to easily provide** up-to-date visitor information in a compelling and efficient way is a tremendous challenge for many nature centers and museums. With the lack of staff, technology, and budget, to even consider digital signage might seem impractical. But is it?

Basically, digital signage is a system that utilizes computer software to display information using electronic display devices. As inexpensive as a standard television or as elaborate as a 60-inch plasma display, digital signage is definitely an up and coming technology.

On a simple, inexpensive scale, a digital signage system can consist of a basic computer system, a display monitor (a 15 inch CRT is fine), and a software package to display the information. This simple system can be used to share event scheduling information, greet visiting groups (Welcome F.N. Brown School!), display building/room closings, or even promote your web site or sale items in your gift shop. A program like Microsoft™ PowerPoint can easily be set up to display a repeating slide show with attractive backgrounds and animated text. Photos can also easily be included to promote an upcoming visitor or event. Many centers and museums have a staff member or volunteer who can handle this type of system set up and information management very easily. For those who do not have the expertise, system set up, template design and even training are all well worth the minimal expense.

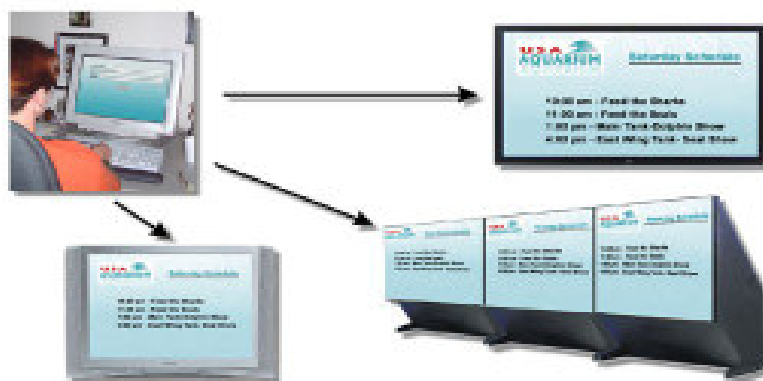
**On a grander scale,** multiple displays can be fed by a single computer source, computer systems can be networked, or data can be fed via satellite. Larger centers, or

centers with multiple buildings, can use this technology to efficiently provide up-to-date information to multiple locations. Instead of a half dozen white boards and a staff member with writer's cramp, a single computer system and a few display monitors can easily and quickly be updated by a staff member with minimal computer knowledge. Along with the above information examples, imagine having the ability to display the face of a lost child throughout your site. Imagine having the ability to direct your visitors in an emergency situation with arrows pointing to exits. All of these things are possible, and even practical, with digital signage.

**Centers and museums** that currently have, or expect to add, computer kiosk systems to their exhibits also have an opportunity to disseminate digital information. With a computer kiosk, you already have the hardware needed. Since these systems are running a software program (possibly a game or facility guide), why not add the ability to access event information or other signage information?

The use of a digital signage system can not only enhance the ability to communicate with visitors, but can also save many hours of staff members' time. In the time it takes for a staff member to print out flyers and post them on doors, or to field questions on the upcoming pre-K age group events, many visitors could easily have found the information for themselves.

So if you are ready to embark on the latest in signage technology, why not give it a try with a simple system. The beauty of these systems is that they are fully upgradeable. A small investment in a kiosk or a computer system will not be wasted once you decide to expand your reach.



*Networked displays in a digital signage system can be updated from a central location easily, quickly and cost effectively*



# Looking (Continued from page 1)

a botanical garden (not-for-profit entity) and resort (a for-profit entity) were all part of visioning our future.

## Staff interviews were comprehensive

including everyone from the Chairman of the Board and senior staff, to our frontline interpreters. The whole process was highly interactive, relaxed, and fun! Touring the property by hiking, driving and biking played a major role in the consultation as well. Our land resources are diverse from very pristine mountain longleaf ecosystems to highly cultivated garden landscapes. Understanding first hand the opportunities and challenges we faced because of the size and diversity of our lands was integral to evaluating future opportunities.



*Land stewardship and environmental education are key elements in master planning for The Preserve at Callaway*

## The ANCA team brought a diverse set of skills

to the project and was very capable of looking at both “the forest and the trees.” They helped us examine both the generalities and details that were in place or needed to be in place to vision successfully what our future might hold. Specific, concrete suggestions as well as intriguing, overarching ideas and thoughts were part of the outcome of this intensive two-day consulting session.

They were able to validate issues and concepts that the staff felt were important but are sometimes more credible when presented by a neutral, third party messenger. Conversely, the ANCA team in a very positive, non-adversarial manner asked us to question some of the very basic, core platforms of our mission. They suggested we examine some “sacred cows” that we took for granted in the culture of our

organization that perhaps really needed clarification or re-valuation for our institution to evolve and grow.

The written report, which arrived soon after the team departed, captured concisely the rich palette of ideas the group generated and gave us a good platform to consider and refer back to as we planned our next steps. The consulting team provided immediate feedback as well as an abundance of resources for our staff to continue to research as our thinking evolved.

## Today, Callaway has launched

a new entity The Preserve at Callaway to shepherd the management of our large natural area. The Preserve has a separate advisory Board, and somewhat different mission and vision from our resort and botanic garden operations. Currently, we are in the process of developing new, exciting educational programs on The Preserve. The ANCA consult contributed greatly to this exciting step in crafting the future of our organization.

All in all, the ANCA consultation was a cost effective, extremely fruitful process that helped us vision the future possibilities for Callaway.

# M Monograph Update

**Bob Mercer**  
Director/Naturalist  
Silver Lake Nature Center

## The contracts have been signed

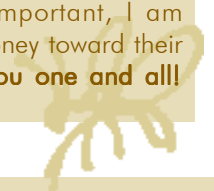
and Don Watson is busily working on producing the first 2 monographs. They will be “Exhibits Planning and Design” and “Buildings and Facilities”. Don a long time member of ANCA and also a registered architect has plenty of experience with both these topics as well as the process of writing.

As part of the ANCA process, volunteers will be reviewing the documents for content before the final drafts are written. This will help ensure that they provide the scope of best practices. With the current schedule, it is possible to have the final drafts just before the ANCA Summit.

## Authors are still needed

for the remaining topics identified by your peers as being important. They include: capital campaign, volunteer programs, marketing, land management, education, diversity, finance and accounting, and safety/risk management. Add to the knowledge base of the profession by offering to author one or more of these topics.

It must be noted that the success of this venture does not just rest upon the shoulders of Don Watson or the committee. It was through the generosity of all the members who responded to Charity Krueger’s challenge, people who said, “The monographs are so important, I am willing to contribute money toward their completion.” **Thank you one and all!**



# Reducing The Odds Of A Break In

**Rich Patterson**  
**Director**  
**Indian Creek Nature Center**

## Nature centers spend much energy

attracting people to their facility. But, there's one visitor no one needs or wants-burglars. One Sunday morning last August my maintenance staffer called to report that someone had attempted to pry open our front door. The burglar didn't gain entry, but he succeeded in ruining my morning, and it cost nearly \$1000 to replace the bruised and dented doors.

Many Nature Centers are in relatively low crime areas. It's easy to become complacent, making a burglary more likely. Some centers have taken few precautions and are highly vulnerable. Although we're in a low crime area from time to time someone takes advantage of our secluded location and pays us a visit with a crowbar in the wee hours.

In the late 1980's we were hit several times. A few succeeded in entering. They got little of value but made a mess. The Cedar Rapids Police Department coached us on simple and inexpensive steps we could take to make entry more difficult. We implemented their suggestions, and the incidence of break in attempts dropped off.

## Essentially, you play a game

with the burglar. They're lazy. Make the building difficult to enter and they'll go off and burglarize someplace easier. We took the following steps to make break-ins less likely and more difficult.

**Install security doors** on all exterior doors and most interior ones. All have double cylinder deadbolt locks. Interior security doors are essential. If someone gets inside a building the doors make it difficult to get from room to room. Double cylinder locks make it impossible to open the door from either inside or outside. If a burglar breaks a window and gets in he can't just walk out the front door with computers, televisions, or other heavy items. All doors, interior and exterior, are secured when we close the building.

**Install window quilts** on all exterior windows and doors. When locking up each evening staff lower the

**"Although we're in a low crime area, from time to time someone takes advantage of our secluded location and pays us a visit with a crowbar in the wee hours."**

quilts, making it impossible to see into the building from outdoors. This lessens the burglar's temptation to peer in, see something of value, and then attempt to break in and steal it.

## Install sensor activated lights.

The standard police department line is to flood the building with security lights, but lights in a secluded location may make it easier for a burglar to see. They realize that no one is around to spot them. Sensor lights have the advantage of not burning much electricity and creating light pollution. They tend to startle burglars. Sensor lights offer a safety advantage. Check the building at midnight, and if it is dark one knows there is no one lurking around the building.

**Install a simple alarm.** The police in our town don't monitor burglar alarms, and alarm systems are expensive. Indian Creek had one door that burglars seemed to favor. We acquired a tiny electronic alarm that plugs into an outlet and is activated by a light sensor above the outside door. If someone approaches the door the light comes on and the alarm goes off. It's not connected to anything, but the noise scares off intruders.

## Handle cash and valuable items carefully.

We never keep much cash in the building and make night deposits following any event that brings in significant money. Cash register drawers are left open and empty at night. Small amounts of cash are hidden in a spot an intruder is unlikely to look. All tools, computers, and other items of value are engraved with the Nature Center's name and identification number issued us by the police department.

**Keep insurance up to date.** Every year we do a thorough insurance needs analysis and make sure that we're adequately covered.

## Keep track of keys.

Building keys are of a type that cannot be duplicated. Only staff members have them. Extra keys are kept in a secure location offsite.

**Keep important** documents in a safety deposit box at the bank.

Nearly every police department offers free crime prevention consulting to any business, homeowner, or nonprofit. The time and money it takes to develop and implement a burglar resistant strategy is well worth it.

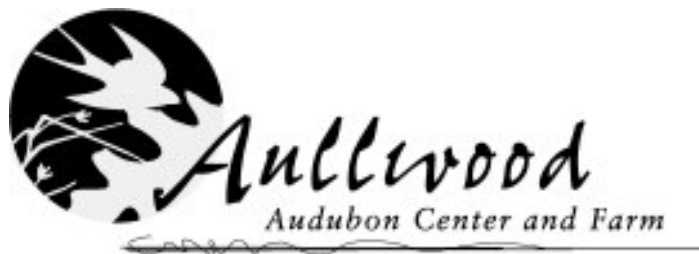
# Long Time ANCA Institution Takes Top Honor

**Charity Krueger**  
**Executive Director**  
**Aullwood Audubon Center and Farm**

## Aullwood Audubon Center and Farm

has been awarded a Sol Feinstone Environmental Award honoring the facility as an outstanding nature center. The award was presented after a nationwide competition. More than sixty nature centers were nominated for the award sponsored by the SUNY (State University of New York) College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF).

The Feinstone committee gave Aullwood high marks as a "top notch" conservation nature center, particularly in the areas of community relations, funding and publications. Its programs were also highly rated. Aullwood received \$1,000 as part of this first place award. Reedy Creek Nature Center in Charlotte, N.C. tied for this first place award. The two runners-up were Prospect Park Audubon Center in New York and Wehr Nature Center in Franesler, N.J.



Sol Feinstone, a widely known historian and author who was a graduate of ESF, established the Feinstone awards program in 1976. His goal was to reward people and organizations that exemplified his belief that the best insurance for a free society lay in people's desire and ability to do voluntarily the things that need to be done for the good of all.

The Feinstone program has made more than 100 awards, honoring individuals and organizations from across the United States for their significant contributions to protecting the environment. This is the first year the Feinstone program recognized nature centers. In 1993, Aullwood's founder, Marie Aull, received the Feinstone Award for her outstanding achievements as a volunteer.

In presenting the award to Aullwood Executive Director, Charity Krueger, during a dinner in Syracuse, ESF President Cornelius B. Murphy, Jr. noted that many endorsed Aullwood's nomination. Supporters praised the facility as "the top nature



*Aullwood Executive Director Charity Krueger and S.U.N.Y President Cornelius B. Murphy Jr. center in the U.S.A.", an "outstanding organization", and a "flagship" among the more than 80 Audubon centers in operation or development around the country.*

Murphy noted that each year, 20,000 students from 30 school systems participate in 19 different field trips linked to state science and social studies standards. In addition, 14 - 18 college or graduate students participate in Aullwood's internship program annually.

Murphy also praised Aullwood for two of its innovative programs. READS (Resources of Earth and Agriculture Discovered and Shared), is an after-school reading program for second- and third-graders that integrates reading and writing skills with hands-on activities in nature and agriculture. The Birds, Flights and the Wrights program challenged gifted students from a nearby elementary school to discover relationships between natural history and the Wright brothers' first flight.

## Announcement

The next scheduled meeting of the ANCA Board of Directors will be on Wednesday, August 11th, at IslandWood, Bainbridge Island WA. Any current member is invited to attend. Please notify Larry Brown at the ANCA office at 1-800-490-2622 in advance.



# ANCA Summit X - Seattle

"Being EverGreen"



ISLANDWOOD

August 12-14, 2004  
at IslandWood, Banbridge Island, WA  
(register by July 11 to avoid the late fee)

Don't miss this great opportunity to share with colleagues, celebrate our successes, learn from our failures, recognize and prepare for challenges, network, mentor, and renew our vision.

Thursday workshops feature these opportunities to grow professionally.

- ❖ Building and Nurturing Your Volunteer Base
- ❖ Developing a Science-Based Approach to Land Stewardship
- ❖ Art-Based Perceptual Ecology as a Way of Knowing the Language of Place
- ❖ Green Building Design
- ❖ Creating a Successful Capital Campaign
- ❖ Accounting 101: Non-Profit Accounting for Non-Financial Managers
- ❖ Planning and Running an Effective Website
- ❖ Designing for Nature Play

Friday and Saturday facilitated discussions will expand your horizons and give fresh perspectives on old problems.

- ❖ Publications 101
- ❖ Innovative / New Programs
- ❖ Donor Recognition
- ❖ Vandalism
- ❖ Boards
- ❖ Small Nature Centers
- ❖ If I Had To Do It All Over Again
- ❖ Environmental Advocacy
- ❖ Personnel - Hiring the Right Person
- ❖ Special Interest Clubs
- ❖ Walk the Talk
- ❖ Gift Shop / Retail
- ❖ Invasive Species & Public perception
- ❖ Growing in a Small Community
- ❖ Special Events
- ❖ Grants
- ❖ Exhibits
- ❖ Being Small and Loving It - The Tao of Small Nature Centers
- ❖ Diversity in Environmental Education
- ❖ Marketing
- ❖ Constructing a 5 Year Financial Plan
- ❖ Create Your Museum Future with IMLS Funds
- ❖ Creating a Fundraising Plan
- ❖ Live Animal Exhibits
- ❖ Nature Pre-schools
- ❖ Insurance
- ❖ And many more....

This year's Summit combines innovation with some of the best ideas from previous Summits.

- IslandWood is surrounded by the beautiful Puget Sound. This year's Summit will include meals from IslandWood's kitchen and organic garden, celebrating the region's freshest foods!
- On Wednesday evening, come for a reception at IslandWood's Friendship Circle, with finger food and beverages, so you can begin to catch up with your ANCA friends. The entertainment is the conversation you have with new and old friends around our campfire, as well as story telling from one of our local Native American storytellers.
- The Summit Keynote Address will be Thursday evening. Robert Michael Pyle will speak about "The Extinction of Experience."
- Friday evening will feature the ANCA Leadership Award, and the ANCA auction fund raiser.
- Sunday we encourage all to explore the many "Diversions" of the Pacific Northwest.

**Open Space Sessions** provide an opportunity for participants to create their own workshop, continue a session that was going well but needed more time, or find a group to address an issue that was not addressed elsewhere in the Summit. You will have the chance to offer a session, request a session, or just join one that interests you.

For more information call the ANCA Office at 1-800 490-2622, or email Larry Brown at [lbrown@audubon.org](mailto:lbrown@audubon.org), or visit the ANCA website at [www.natctr.org](http://www.natctr.org)

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Check out our games and learn about our custom development services at [www.point2nature.com](http://www.point2nature.com)!



## Monograph Fund Contributions

Thanks to the following members for supporting the development of the monographs

Ken Voorhis  
Meredith Donaldson  
Friends of Aullwood  
(Aullwood Audubon Center and Farm)  
Charity Krueger  
Tom Hissong

## Endowment Update

Through your generous support the ANCA endowment fund continues to grow. Recent contributors to the fund include:

Pat Welch

If you would like to make a pledge please contact the ANCA Office at 1-800-490-2622 or email at [lbrown@audubon.org](mailto:lbrown@audubon.org).

# Director's Guide to Best Practices

The Director's Guide includes chapters on five essential areas: leadership, strategic planning, boards, staff, and fund raising.

ANCA developed this book for busy directors and staff people with many roles and responsibilities. It is a handbook for those new to the profession and will also challenge and inspire the most experienced directors and their staffs. ANCA members have also found it valuable to give to board members, and volunteers. Directors from 23 states and 40 different facilities reviewed and commented on the chapter drafts and evaluated the book's effectiveness.

### Order Your Copy Today!

Price of the book is \$60.00 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling.

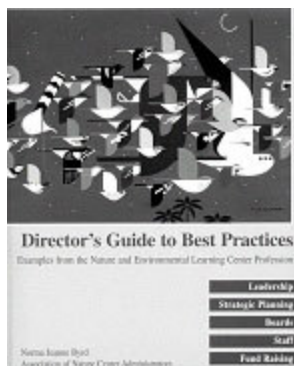
Send to:

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Or call 1-800-490-2622



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1 (800) 460-2622

# ANCA Technical Consults: YOUR FRIEND IN THE BUSINESS!

## ANCA offers consulting assistance

to nature centers and other environmental education organizations at very reasonable fees. The charge includes the cost of transportation, lodging and meals for the team, plus a \$2,750 fee that goes toward supporting ANCA's professional services and planning. Our Board of Directors, and members, provide these services with no personal financial gain, while you gain the advantage of advice and guidance from some of the profession's most respected and experienced leaders.

What can be covered? Well, just about anything involved with planning, funding, and operations. Some topics include:

- Assistance with long range and strategic planning
- Review education programs, exhibits, or trails
- Mission focus
- Fundraising and fiscal management
- Facility planning
- Starting a center
- Management strategies and use planning

## To find out more about

ANCA's Peer Consults, contact any ANCA board member or Wayne Clark at  
817-237-6940  
Wayne.Clark@fortworthgov.org.

Jeff Brown from the Yellowstone Association had this to say about ANCA consults:

**"We contacted the folks at ANCA and they pulled together some of the best people in this business on very short notice. The consulting team spent two full days in the park and provided a detailed written report within one month. The process was fun, the cost was reasonable, and the results are tangible - we are moving forward with a revised proposal based on the excellent advice we received from these experts."**

# ANCA Membership Form

## Please Join Us!

If you would like to become a member of ANCA, fill out this form and mail to the ANCA office (address below).  
Members benefits - 4 Quarterly Issues of Directions • Special Publications • Invitation to ANCA Summits and Workshops

Institutional Memberships allow for two staff members to receive benefits. Questions? Call 1-800-490-2622.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please check the desired membership level:  \$60 Individual or  \$90 Institutional

Make checks payable to ANCA and mail with this form to:

ANCA  
Aullwood Audubon Center  
1000 Aullwood Road  
Dayton, OH 45414



# Calling all Authors!

Your literary contributions are needed for **Directions**.

■ **Profiles:** Highlights people who put their efforts toward improving the profession. Send a paragraph or two about their background and accomplishments and a picture.

■ **From the Field:** Features news, notes, and natural history from your nature center or beyond.

■ **Articles:** The best articles come from you - the members. Articles need to be 1-2 pages (500 - 1,200 words). Technical language can be used as needed, but, remember your audience may not have your level of expertise in the subject. Fun, light-hearted, and inspirational articles are always welcome as well.

Submit your  
articles to:

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1000 Aullwood Rd.  
Dayton, OH 45414  
lbrown@audubon.org

directions

c/o Aullwood Audubon Center  
1000 Aullwood Road  
Dayton, OH 45414

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