

directions



The journal of the Association of Nature Center Administrators

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

2 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:
Turning the Corner

6 FROM the FIELD:
No Child Left Indoors

8 PROFILES:
Nature Center at Shaker Lakes - Energy Star Award

10 ANCA'S BUSINESS SPONSORS



Directions is a quarterly publication of the Association of Nature Center Administrators, distributed to members of ANCA as a membership benefit.

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GIVE IT TO A FRIEND**

GREEN & GOLD Summit XIII

Aug. 22-26 2007

Buffy Cheek
Executive Director
Schlitz Audubon Nature Center
Milwaukee, WI

share our Center and our part of the country with all of you, (and we are a bit nervous about it, since last year's Summit at LCRA is a really hard act to follow!)

Thirteen years ago, the first ANCA Summit was held in northern Wisconsin at Treehaven Environmental Learning Center and hosted by Corky McReynolds. It was attended by 30 creative and dedicated people. Since then, ANCA has grown and thrived, and now, 13 years later, we have come full circle back to southern Wisconsin at the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center. We are excited to



photo by Bob Baillie

What is a Summit? For those of you who may be first timers, the ANCA Summit connects nature center leaders from all parts of the country and all sizes of centers. The Summit is a peer conference with continual interchange between teaching and learning. The networking opportunities are phenomenal, since there is simply no

(continued on page 4)

"The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, but wiser people so full of doubt."
—Bertrand Russell

ANCA is a private, non-profit organization, dedicated to promoting and supporting best leadership and management practices for nature and environmental learning centers.

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President's Message

**Tim Sandsmark
Executive Director
Lookout Mountain Nature
Center, Golden, CO**

Are We Turning the Corner?

I believe as an organization and as a country we may be turning the corner. ANCA is certainly making a major step forward with the decision to hire our first Executive Director. As you may know, at the August Board meeting, the ANCA Board made the decision to hire an Executive Director by May, 2007. A Search and Screen Committee has been created and charged with carrying out this process. Corky McReynolds is chairing this committee with Pat Welch, Bo Glover, Saul Weisburg, and me assisting. Corky has recently completed ANCA's next monograph which is on organizational leadership change titled *The Search for Extraordinary Leadership: A Guide to Best Practices for searching for and securing your next Executive Director*. ANCA's Executive Director search process will follow much of what Corky writes about in this monograph.

Are we also turning the corner as a nation and even as a society? Perhaps the results of the midterm elections provide some indication that Americans are ready for some changes, but are people acknowledging environmental concerns, in particular global climate change and the extinction of experience/nature deficit disorder with our children (and many adults too)? There is some evidence that they are.

In the last month, I've heard two inspirational speakers that have given me reason to feel more optimism. The first was Richard Louv who I had met about a year and half-ago when his book *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder* had just been released. Since



then, the impact of his book has been snowballing and has brought national attention to an issue that most of us in

the nature center field are very familiar with. In fact, Ken Finch, Gordon Maupin, author Robert Michael Pyle, and other ANCA members had brought this issue to the forefront at previous ANCA Summits and in a special issue of *Directions* as the "Extinction of Experience." I heard Richard Louv speak again in Boulder recently ago and naturally much of what he said was based on his provocative book, but the story he related at the end of his speech about a more recent experience hit home with me. He told of a time when he spoke to a high school in his hometown of San Diego. He said he was expecting that this would be a tough crowd and that the interest level would be minimal. To his surprise, they were very attentive and thoughtful. He believed the reason why was due to the fact that he told the students that because of our global environmental situation, everything in their lifetime would and had to change. It was not a doom and gloom/the sky is falling message, but rather a message of hope for these young people that they were really going to be the agents of this change. They would need to be the ones to help solve the challenges of these changes.

I was also having a discussion with my 14 year old son (I know that sounds oxymoronic, but we really were talking) and I gave him essentially the same message and found that instead of giving me that typical teen age blank look as if I were from some other planet, he really thought about it. I think he realized that things are changing and that he may actually have a role in facilitating this change. I find this very hopeful!

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The second speaker that I had the privilege of hearing recently was L. Hunter Lovins who spoke at the Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education's annual banquet. Hunter is the president and founder of Natural Capitalism Solutions a nonprofit organization whose mission is to educate senior decision-makers in business, government, and civil society about the principles of sustainability. She is also the co-creator with her ex-husband, Amory Lovins, of the Rocky Mountain Institute in Aspen, Colorado, which has grown into an internationally recognized research center, widely celebrated for its innovative thinking in energy and resource issues. Hunter is doing some great work with many governmental agencies and corporations to raise awareness and develop implementation strategies for sustainability.

She related several success stories including the fact that many individuals, state, local, and private organizations are taking action to operate more sustainably and reduce greenhouse gases. For example, more than 284 Mayors have signed the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement, a compact initiated by Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels. By signing, cities are agreeing to meet or beat the Kyoto Protocol targets in their communities, and urge state and federal governments to do the same. Many states have already stepped up the challenge.

The corporate world has started stepping up to the plate too and seeing that going green not only has environmental and societal benefits, but also has business and economic advantages that help their bottom line. One of the more dramatic examples is the world's largest retailer, Wal-Mart, who is talking "green" these days. In the words of CEO, Lee Scott: "To me, there can't be anything good about putting all these chemicals in the air. There can't be anything good about the smog you see in cities. There can't be anything good about putting chemicals in these rivers in Third World countries so that somebody can buy an item for less money in a developed country. Those things are just inherently wrong, whether you are an environmentalist or not." Whether Wal-Mart and other corporations can really operate more sustainability is yet to be seen, but there is a desire to do so and this is reason for hope.

So despite the lack of leadership on the federal level, it is encouraging to see many individuals, state, local, and private organizations taking sustainability seriously. This bodes well for the nature center profession as we continue to connect people to nature and to walk the sustainable talk by educating and demonstrating to people the merits of living green. We can truly continue to be leaders in this effort and that is indeed optimistic and hopeful.

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Green & Gold

(continued from page 1)

substitute for sharing and brainstorming with folks who face the same challenges and issues that you do. You'll learn new ways to manage your organization, keep up with national trends, and gain a whole new perspective on what's possible. You'll be inspired and challenged. More important, you'll become a part of a network of nature center leaders that will help you do a better job. The usual format is a Wednesday evening get-together, then in-depth workshops of half- or whole-day length on Thursday, and numerous shorter facilitated discussions on Friday and Saturday. Of course, there is always plenty of great food (plan on dieting when you get home) and fun entertainment.

ABOUT US:

Visitors to our Center often ask "Why Schlitz?" Our 185 acres was originally owned by the Schlitz Brewery and was used as pasture for the horses that pulled the beer wagons. At that time, our land was called the Nine-Mile Farm because it was nine miles from the brewery. Since then, in the 35 years of our Center's existence, we've been slowly restoring the pasture to native plants. Also in that time, the land around us has been built up, and we are now a suburban center. Our land contains woodlands, wetlands, prairie, bluffs, and ravines, and we are right on the shore of our very own inland ocean, Lake Michigan. Because of our lake location, we are a migratory corridor for 250 species of birds who visit during the year.

GREEN & GOLD:

Our new "green" building, which opened in 2003, was awarded a Gold LEED rating. Inside it, in addition to an auditorium and classrooms, we have our popular nature preschool, which has been filled since we opened. Because of ANCA members' interest in our nature preschool, we are planning to offer a whole day preschool session as one of our Thursday choices at the Summit. We are busy planning the other Thursday whole- and half-day sessions, as well as

guided discussion groups for Friday and Saturday. We have received many ideas from attendees at last year's Summit. However, if you have a particular subject you'd like to hear about or would like to help present, please let us know by e-mailing either Tom Finley at tfinley@sanc.org or Shelly Brown at sbrown@sanc.org. We are also still taking suggestions for our keynote speaker.

EXTRA FIELD TRIPS:

We're planning exciting pre- and post-Summit trips for you as well. Pre-trip offerings will include a trip to Aldo Leopold's

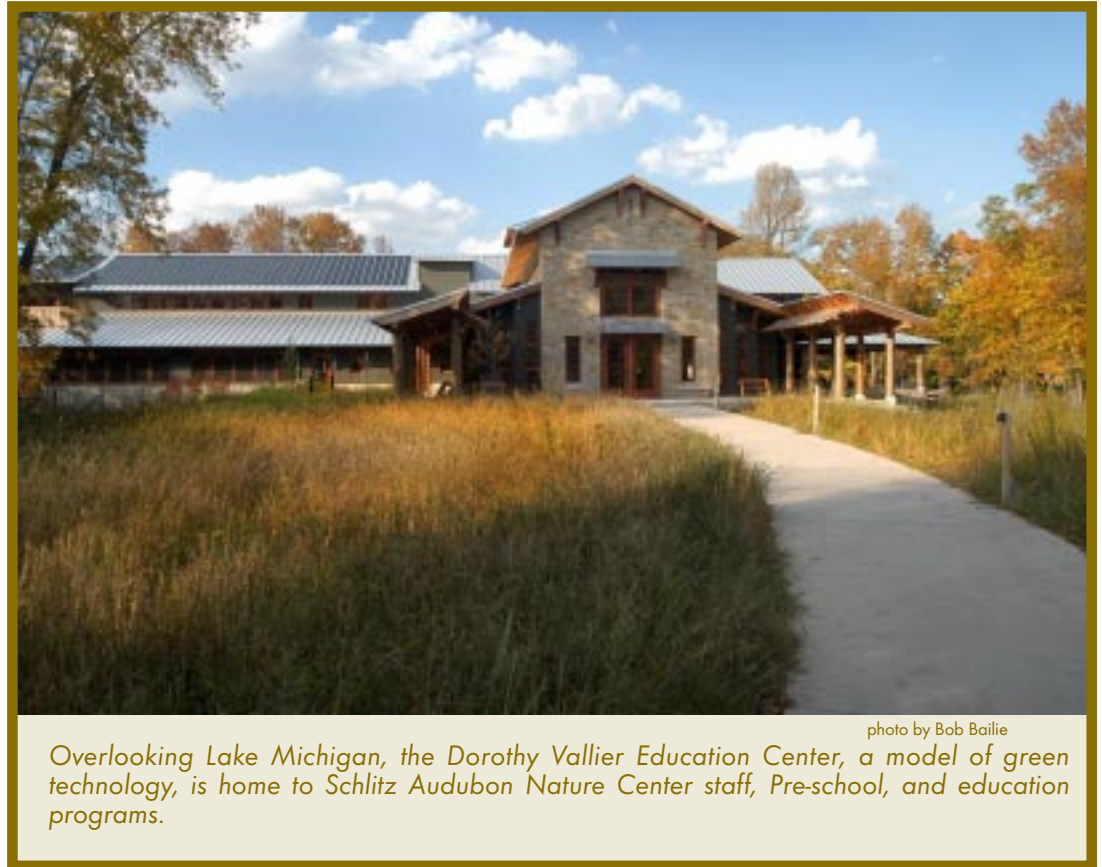


photo by Bob Bailie

Overlooking Lake Michigan, the Dorothy Vallier Education Center, a model of green technology, is home to Schlitz Audubon Nature Center staff, Pre-school, and education programs.

famous "shack" combined with a visit to the International Crane Foundation for a behind the scene's tour. Our second offering will showcase two very different nature centers: an urban one, Urban Ecology Center, on land owned by several different government entities, and a rural one, Retzer Nature Center, which is county owned and has a new building and planetarium to show off. A trip to Discovery World, a new science center right on Lake Michigan, is on that tour as well. Our post-trip offering is a visit to Horicon Marsh for some very special birding. Horicon is the largest cattail marsh in the U.S. and is on many top ten lists of significant wildlife refuges in the country. It provides 30,000

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acres of critical habitat for threatened and endangered species.

In addition to pre- and post-trips, plan on arriving early or extending your stay to explore our surrounding area. Chicago is just 1.5 hours south, Madison is 1.5 hours west, and Door County, a noted scenic vacation area, is a few hours north.

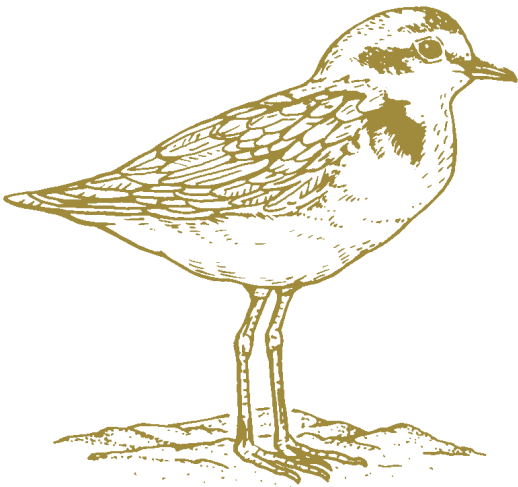
SCHOLARSHIP

OPPORTUNITIES:

ANCA provides limited scholarship funding based on financial need, budget size, and first-time applicants. If you are interested in finding your own funding for the Summit, ANCA has developed a grant template for you to complete and send to the foundation or corporation in your neighborhood. E-mail Bobbi Jo Geise at bobbijo@imt.net for a copy or for questions regarding ANCA Summit scholarships.

SEE YOU IN AUGUST!

Watch for our brochure in early April. We hope you'll be joining us and other nature center professionals in Milwaukee for our Green and Gold Getaway at Summit XIII. The scenery will be green, the prairie flowers will be gold, the Packers - well, we'll see. We are looking forward to being your hosts in the land of cheeseheads and the city of beer and brats. See you in August! 🍂



ANCA Summit XIII Green & Gold Getaway August 22 - 25, 2007 Schlitz Audubon Nature Center Milwaukee, Wisconsin www.sanc.org



photo by Mark Heffron

Located on the bluff of Lake Michigan, the pavilion plays home to special events and is a stop over for hikers to take a break and enjoy the natural wonders surrounding them.



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Ed Pembleton
Director
Leopold Education Project (LEP)
Saint Paul, MN

Teaching Lessons in a Land Ethic - No Child Left Indoors *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder*

Part 3 of a 4 part series

If future generations are to carry on our conservation mission, they need to know, become attached to and care about the natural world. Unfortunately, this three-step learning process is not being completed by many of our children.

Youth, and adults too, may know **about** nature, but lacking direct experience they do not **know** nature on an intimate and personal basis, in a way that causes them to become connected to the natural world. In his book, *Last Child in the Woods*, Richard Louv points out that many children do not link with nature because, "No child can truly know or value the outdoors if the natural world remains under glass, seen only through lenses, screens or computer monitors."

Electronic media provide access to a world of information, but our dependence on computers and television is consuming so much of our time that we neglect opportunities to engage with our friends and family and to experience the natural world. A recent study by the Kaiser Family Foundation reported that youth spend 390 minutes (that's 6.5 hours!) per day on electronic equipment during their free time. According to a study from the University of California, American adults, who have far less free time than adults in many countries, spend 170 minutes a day watching TV & movies. Disconnected and lacking natural experiences, young people will idealize or develop fear rather than joy, wonder, caring and respect for nature.

As individuals we can change this pattern and give our youth a healthier, more satisfying life in the process. If we want to link our children to the natural world, we can make sure they are enjoying experiences in the outdoors. As responsible adults we can provide our youth with repeated opportunities to experience nature first hand in a safe environment, with minimal guidance to allow them the opportunity to explore and enjoy what they discover. Leaders in conservation usually say that it is repeated, pleasurable experiences in the outdoors with an adult mentor that got them started on the road to caring enough to help conserve our resources. When researchers asked these leaders to identify significant life experiences that fostered their attitudes, they often identified hunting and fishing as key to molding their attitudes.



photo by Ed Pembleton

Something as simple as looking for frogs can be a pleasurable way to spend time outdoors with youth and connect them to the natural world.

Aldo Leopold, put it this way, "The objective is to teach the student to see the land, to understand what he sees, and enjoy what he understands."

As individuals we can make a difference. We do not need to organize big events, and we do not need to be experts, we just need to be willing facilitators who make it possible to learn in a pleasant way. We and our youth can start a revolution by converting some of our schedule for watching TV to nature watching in nature. Here is one prescription you can take toward curing nature deficit disorder: Turn off the TV, unplug from all the electronic media and go outdoors with young people to explore the natural world. It's that simple—take your children, your grandchildren, your neighbors children hiking, birding, hunting or fishing. Be a mentor and you will all feel better!

Richard Louv points out that some organizations [like Pheasants Forever] "recognize that while knowledge about nature is vital, passion is the long-distance fuel for the struggle to save what is left of our natural heritage...Passion does not arrive on videotape or on a CD; passion is personal. Passion is lifted from the earth itself by the muddy hands of the young; it travels along grass-stained sleeves to the heart."

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“The real classroom is outside. Get into it!”

The title of this story comes from a poster that hung in my classroom for many years and now hangs on the wall at my wife’s science center. The message is more urgent now than ever. Our youth are increasingly connected to an electronic virtual world and ever more disconnected from the real, outdoor world. If Pheasants Forever’s habitat work is to survive for generations to come, we must create tomorrow’s land stewards in today’s youth. They will have the challenge of saving whatever remaining habitat we have and restoring some of what we have lost.

The challenge of creating tomorrow’s land stewards involves a basic question: How do we get more people to care about conservation of natural resources? There are many specific and varied answers and methods. We know some of the ways and will have to invent lots of new answers in a changing world. One thing we know for sure is that the way to get young people to care about nature is to use every opportunity to get them outdoors for pleasurable experiences and give them opportunities to learn about their real world environment. Recent research shows that providing family, school and community outdoor experiences pays dividends now and in the future.

At home is a great place to start connecting your children and grandchildren to nature. A new study by Cornell researcher Nancy Wells found that if you want your children to grow up to actively care about the environment, give them plenty of time to play in the “wild” before they’re 11 years old. Providing repeated pleasurable experiences in the outdoors is a great way for a child to build an attachment to nature and to you. It is also a prescription to counteract the “nature deficit disorders” describe in parts two and three of this series. The National Wildlife Federation’s “green hour” campaign is encouraging parents and teachers to take young people outdoors for an hour every day. For details see <http://greenhour.blogspot.com/>.

Getting students outdoors provides many benefits including improving their academic performance. When educators use natural, cultural and social environments as the framework for their classes and teach through hands-on active lessons in an outdoor setting students learn more and their test scores improve. In addition, student thinking and problem-solving skills improve, attendance increases, basic reading writing and math skills improve and students better understand and appreciate their community!

PF chapters are contributing to growing the next generation of habitat heroes by increasing emphasis, support and involvement in youth programs. Members are helping with chapter Youth and Education Committee efforts to start, continue and increase youth involvement in events and programs such as mentor hunts, conservation days, field trials, hunter safety programs and schoolyard habitat projects.

Pheasants Forever chapters are also reaching out to help students learn outdoors in “real world conditions” by sponsoring Leopold Education Project workshops that train teachers, informal educators, naturalists, natural resource managers, PF members and others to teach lessons based on Aldo Leopold’s conservation classic, ***A Sand County ALMANAC***. With support from local chapters, LEP holds workshops that emphasize hands-on teaching, outdoors, using our innovative, interdisciplinary curriculum, *Lessons in a Land Ethic*.

For more LEP information click on the education link on the PF website or go directly to www.lep.org <<http://www.lep.org/>>. To learn about sponsoring LEP workshops, please contact LEP Director Ed Pembleton at 866-557-8245 or efp@quailforever.org. 🌿



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Profiles: Energy Star Award: Nature Center at Shaker Lakes

Jan Zorman
Facilities Director
Nature Center at Shaker Lakes
Cleveland, OH

In late 2004, the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes was named one of nine organizations in the country to win an Energy Star Award for Small Businesses, sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The award for excellence in energy efficiency came shortly on the heels of a \$2.5 million capital renovation and expansion project that culminated in 2003. The award capped a deliberate process that consumed staff, board, and volunteers for the better part of 18 months.

In May of 2002, the Nature Center began a major renovation and expansion of its building to add an exhibit area and improve our classroom spaces. The shovels hit the dirt after a two-year, mostly quiet capital campaign to raise the needed funds. The plan called for nearly doubling the square footage of the building and adding a two-story exhibit space for visitors, in recognition of one of the main priorities of the then Strategic Plan. The first question on the agenda was how to build as green as possible and at what cost. There was immediately a learning curve on the green building issues, both on the technical side of materials, products and systems and on the information/education side. One board member's interpretation of the issue was not atypical: "Who cares what color the building is?"

According to the EPA, green or sustainable building is the practice of creating healthier and more resource-efficient models of construction, renovation, operation, maintenance, and demolition. Elements of green building include energy efficiency and renewable energy, water-stewardship, environmentally preferable building

materials, and waste reduction. Once the green concept became more widely understood we looked at the spectrum of building methods and technologies available. The range was from doing nothing beyond following building codes to complete investment in the furthest edges of green building experimental technology. The Center opted to use proven methods and technologies that would improve energy consumption and sustainability of operations as well as provide models of green practices that could be incorporated by the community home owner.

The process was guided by the then Executive director, Nancy King Smith, in consultation with a building task force selected from the Center's staff and board - the "Green Team." The first, largest, and most dramatic commitment was the decision to scrap the existing natural gas heating system and replace it with a geothermal system. The initial investment was large - about \$150,000 over a conventional system - with a relatively long estimated payback period. These factors were outweighed by the extraordinary sustainability and efficiency of the system as well as the opportunity it provided to demonstrate an alternative to continued reliance on fossil fuels. The payback period is



photo by Nature Center at Shaker Lakes

Reopening of the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes on Earth Day 2003 showing the green roof of the Energy Star facility.

proving to be considerably shorter than anticipated, thanks to the extreme rise in the price of natural gas since 2003.

The Green Team looked at all aspects of the construction process as well as the design outcomes for the building. The team strived to use a footprint as small as possible for the expansion to conserve the surrounding habitats and natural resources, or "outdoor classroom." Motivated by a book published in the U.K., "One Tree," staff inaugurated a "One Tree Project" to harvest the sole mature tree that needed to be sacrificed for the expansion and use all parts of the 30-inch diameter red oak to make furniture and a variety of crafts and artwork either in use or on display at the Center. Fifty volunteer woodworkers and hobbyists were enlisted to collect the wood after it was milled and kiln dried and return a wide variety of benches, stools, podiums, a large conference table and a smaller

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round table, veneers, and art pieces including handcrafted walking sticks, beautiful bowls, an African tongue drum, and many others.

Staff worked closely with the Cleveland Green Building Coalition, a nonprofit dedicated to providing resources for green construction, and county agencies to develop plans for separating construction and demolition debris into categories that could be recycled: wood, glass, and metal. While the construction company initially resisted this extra effort, staff and company personnel created a workable routine that resulted in not only acceptance but enthusiasm on their part for becoming a bona fide green company! More than eight tons of material was recycled. Staff worked with representatives from Habitat for Humanity to recycle all fixtures and useable parts of the old building. Any building materials that could be reused in the new building were kept, including existing cedar shingles, track lighting, windows, and doors. A local green building expert, Jim La Rue, helped to discern numerous options for materials and methods. Jim has an excellent web site devoted to the subject: www.greenbuildingcookbook.com

For the expanded portion of the building builders used recycled or partly recycled materials such as TJI joists, cement board siding, plastic wood decking, and strawboard shelving. The Center selected materials and products with high efficiency such as R25 rated walls, high-rated windows, waterless urinals, low-water-usage toilets, motion-sensitive lights, and a wood floor-ceiling combination. Staff chose many sustainable options that could be demonstrated as available to the local homeowner, such as a green roof, sun-tubes for lighting of hallways, carpet squares, compact-fluorescent lights, and of course Energy Star rated appliances.

The decision to “go green” provided energy savings and evidence that staff, board, and members of the organization walk the talk and are firmly rooted in sustainable practices. Not surprisingly and partially due to the top-of-mind awareness fostered by the project, more green opportunities have arisen since the building was erected. The Center staff ramped up its recycling efforts, produced and uses rain barrels and offers classes on “how-to” make and use them, selected environmentally friendly cleaning and office products, created a rental policy that rewards those who opt to use alternatives to paper and plastic containers, landscapes with local native plants, and composting. The Center contracted with the Abitibi Company’s paper recycling program and hosts two paper dumpsters in the parking lot, available to all in the community. Abitibi pays the Center an average of nearly \$150 a month as bounty for the paper it harvests at the Center - more than 100 tons, which saved more than 300 cubic yards of landfill.

The Energy Star Award provided an affirmation to the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes and anyone studying the process that with careful planning at every stage of design and construction and even modest commitments to green technologies and products significant strides can be made towards sustainability. 🌿

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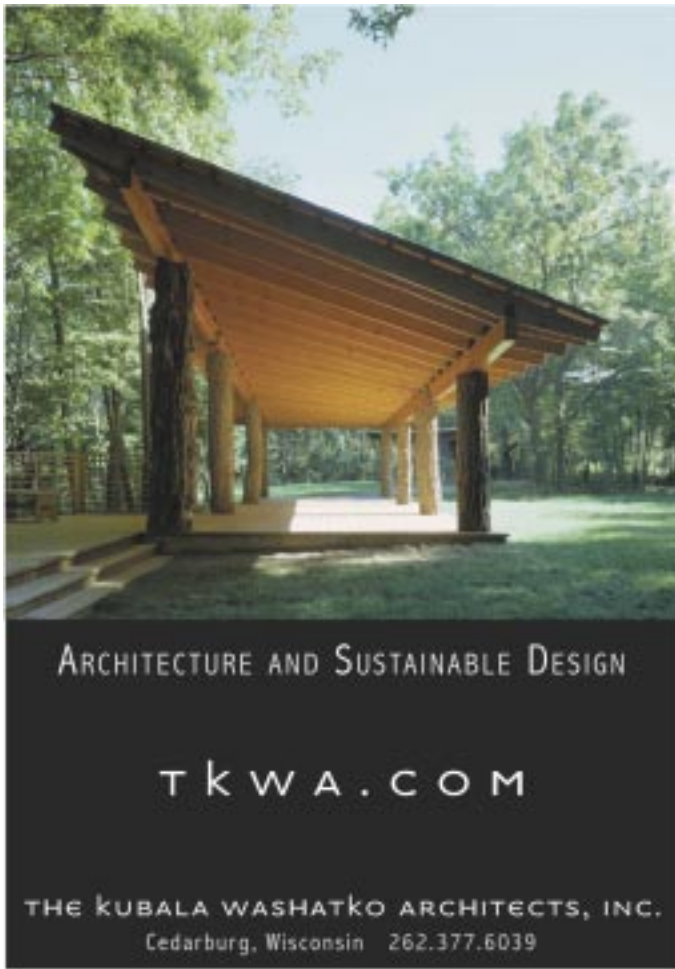
Wanted: Nature Centers for Flying WILD Partnerships

The Council for Environmental Education, the national office for Flying WILD, is seeking organizations interested in expanding their education programming to join the growing network of Flying WILD City Partners. As the coordinating group for Flying WILD, each City Partner will oversee Flying WILD training and material distribution for their region and serve as the liaison between the national office and the community (schools, community organizations, bird education professionals, businesses and conservation professionals).

To learn more about Flying WILD and Flying WILD partnerships, please contact us or visit our website at www.flyingwild.org.

Marc LeFebre
Senior Coordinator, Flying WILD
Council for Environmental Education
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marcLcee@aol.com





ANCA Business Membership

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- ANCA offers a reciprocal admissions program for our members. Please check the reciprocal benefits your institution will provide: _____ Free Admission _____ Store Discount of _____% _____ Not Interested _____ N/A
- If you would like to participate in ANCA's reciprocal website link program please note your web address below. ANCA's website is www.natctr.org. (Inclusion is subject to review.) _____
- ANCA provides our members with an annual membership guide. Please list my institution in the brochure as follows:

Name: _____ Web Site: _____

City & State: _____ Phone: _____

- ANCA is funded entirely by the generosity of members like you through membership dues, Summit registrations, grants, and donations. If you would like to make a donation at this time to support the operation of the organization, please note the amount here and add to your membership fees. \$ _____

Total Membership Dues & Donation: \$ _____

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

ANCA
1000 Aullwood Road
Dayton, OH 45414



ANCA Technical Consults: YOUR FRIEND IN THE BUSINESS!

ANCA offers consulting assistance to nature centers and other environmental education organizations at very reasonable rates. The fee 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.

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- 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

We know the business, we're in it too!

JOIN THE TEAM!

ANCA's Consult Services are a success because of it's members' participation on Consult Teams. Please consider sharing your experiences and lessons learned.

Consult Team members donate their time but all expenses are paid. Participating in a Consult is a great way to see other parts of the country, learn about other nature and environmental learning centers, and take home valuable knowledge for your own center.

So don't delay!!! PLEASE fill out the skills survey in the Member's Section on ANCA's web site at natctr.org.

Do it ASAP so we can tap into your experiences and skills!

To find out more about

ANCA's Peer Consults, contact any ANCA board member or Bo Glover at 949-645-8489
boglo@aol.com

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c/o Aullwood Audubon Center
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