



Directions

The digest of the Association of Nature Center Administrators

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

Directions Editor
Larry Brown
lbrown@audubon.org

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.

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Geocaching: Friend or Foe?

What is Geocaching?

(The following information was taken from the Geocaching web site at www.geocaching.com.)

Geocaching is a recreational activity involving the use of hand held Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers to locate specific places on the planet. Many of these locations have a hidden “cache.” The goal of the activity is to use your GPS to find the cache. The geocaches are not buried in the ground. In a traditional cache, people are discouraged from leaving food as animals will find it and break into the cache.

Geocaches are posted on the web site listed above. In addition to the GPS latitude and longitude coordinates, there are some basic instructions for finding the cache. Often the instructions give people the coordinates of where to park, along with the coordinates of the cache.

There are several types of geocaches. Here is how the web site defines them.

Traditional Cache

This is the most common cache, usually a “tupperware” container, ammo box, or bucket filled with goodies and a logbook. The general rule of thumb is, “take an item, leave an item, write in the logbook.” Some caches are themed, so make sure to read the description before going on a hunt.

Multi-Cache

A multiple cache has two or more

caches. There are many variations, but most multi-caches the first cache will have a hint to find the second cache, and the second cache has hints to the third, and so on. An offset cache (where you go to a location and get hints to the actual cache) is considered a multi-cache.

Virtual Cache

A virtual cache is a cache that exists in a form of a location. Depending on the cache “hider,” a virtual cache could be to answer a question about a location, an interesting spot, a task, etc. The reward for these caches is the location itself and sharing information about your visit. Because of the nature of these geocaches, you must actually visit the location and acquire the coordinates there before you can post. In addition, although many locations are interesting, a virtual cache should be out of the ordinary enough to warrant logging a visit.

Hybrid

A letterbox is another form of treasure hunting using clues instead of coordinates. In some cases, however, a letterbox has coordinates, and the owner has made it a letterbox and a geocache. To read more about letterboxing, visit the Letterboxing North America web site at www.letterboxing.org.

Event Cache

There have been many cases where geocachers want to meet at a

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Geocaching (continued from page 1)

location to share experiences and make new friends. Event geocaches are locations to meet, and after the meeting these caches are archived.

Webcam Cache

A webcam cache is a web camera positioned somewhere on the planet. With a partner's help, you position yourself in front of the camera and call your friend to have them take a picture of you. You can then upload your photo to the web site to log your find.

Unknown Cache

For whatever reason, this cache either does not have a designation or is a surprise to the hunter.

If you want to learn all the details visit the geocaching web site. The site distributes information on geocaches, and provides a detailed explanation of the game.

The Case For Geocaching - A Personal Reflection

I was intrigued by geocaching when I first heard about it. I wondered if it could be something positive we could do at our nature center. Then, like so many things, I put it off for several months before retuning to it. By the time I returned to investigate geocaching, it had exploded in popularity. It is a growing outdoor activity. During this time period, we had started using GPS and GIS at The Wilderness Center in our land stewardship and land trust work.

To investigate geocaching, I made telephone calls to Carly Martin of the Cleveland Metro Parks who had established geocaches on park land. I read about the National Park Service prohibiting geocaching and about an ongoing conflict between geocachers and the U.S. Forest Service in Missouri. I also read the writings of geocachers

and the high enthusiasm they had for their sport and the pleasure they received from finding caches in nice outdoor locations.

Geocaching begged a question. Was the cup half full? Was the cup half empty? Was the cup twice as big as it needed to be? Although geocachers are supposed to get permission to place a cache on land they do not own, it seems the practice falls far short of the ideal.

“Geocaching begged a question. Was the cup half full?”

I posted a question about geocaching on the EdGateway ANCA list serve and received a generally positive response toward the idea. However, when nature center directors visited the geocaching web site and discovered caches on their center's land—caches established without permission—the positive responses quickly turned negative.

There were no caches on The Wilderness Center. There was one cache within a few miles of our center. I concluded that one would eventually turn up here. I discussed it with a couple of staff people and decided that the cup was probably half full, and could be filled even more. We decided to put some geocaches on our nature center land. This was a key decision that we decided.

We established two at our headquarters site. One was near an observation tower along one of our trails and another near the foundation of an old house near a spring. Neither location could be considered environmentally sensitive. They were however nice spots that we felt people would enjoy visiting. The caches were visited within 12 hours of being posted on the web and are visited nearly every weekend. We have attracted visitors

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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.

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

Send to:
ANCA
1000 Aullwood Road
Dayton, OH 45414
Or call 1-800-490-2622



from all over North America. It seems that some business travelers will go out and “log a cache” instead of just watching television in a motel room after working hours.

We wanted to meet the geocachers. So we placed a coupon for a free gift at our bookstore (a coffee mug) if they would bring the coupon into the office. Since we have a number of special interest clubs associated with The Wilderness Center, we wanted to ask folks about a geocaching club. People are interested. We may launch a club in the future.

Why do people participate? It certainly is not about getting a trinket from the cache. Basically, people use geocaching as an excuse to take a walk. A nature center is a great place to walk. If someone goes to the trouble of placing a geocache, they must feel the location is worth a visit. Geocaching is a means of recommending places to explore. The geocaching website permits people to share their experiences over the web.

The geocachers who have visited our Center have been fine folks. One family took out a membership. Another couple bought enough stuff in our store to easily offset the cost of the

coffee mug we gave them. Many of the geocachers visiting are new to our Center. Most of the folks who have posted info on the web site, have said wonderful things about their visit and about The Wilderness Center. I couldn’t write testimonials that good.

My conclusion is that geocaching is a positive thing for The Wilderness Center. However, I see two downsides: 1. Some expense involved in establishing the caches. (We copied the Cleveland Metro Parks style of a camouflage painted PVC pipe with end caps rather than a Tupperware container.) 2. Some ongoing maintenance of the geocaches seems to be necessary. When people log the cache, you will be notified of maintenance needs.

Since we selected the location of the caches, there has not been a concern about people trampling rare plants into oblivion. If maintenance proves to be a pain, I will remove the traditional caches and go to a virtual cache or perhaps a webcam cache (we have discussed establishing a webcam on our wildlife feeding station, perhaps we could do both at the same time.)

I view geocaching it a means to

an end. The end is to find means of bringing modern technology-driven society into contact with nature. We made a strategic decision in our education program to avoid going high-tech. We adopted an informal slogan “there is no substitute for reality.” Geocaching seems to neatly combine high technology with a good old-fashioned walk in the woods. Ultimately, I feel that is good.

To quote the Senegalese conservationist Baba Dioum:

“In the end, we will conserve only what we love,
We will love only what we understand,
We will understand only what we are taught.”

Geocaching is a means (like nature photography) to start people on Dioum’s pathway. My suggestion to nature center leaders: learn about geocaching and get ahead of the curve. If you establish the caches on your land, you will have the control. 🌿

Gordon Maupin
ANCA President
Executive Director of
The Wilderness Center
gordon@falcon.stark.k12.oh.us

Position Openings

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Wildcat Bluff Nature Center
Amarillo, TX

Contact:

Wildcat Bluff Nature Center
PO Box 52132
Amarillo, TX 79159
E-mail: wbnc@nts-online.net
Web: www.wildcatbluff.org

CENTERS & EDUCATION DIRECTOR

Audubon New York
Albany, NY

Compensation:

Commensurate with experience

Contact:

Centers & Education Director
Search
Audubon New York
200 Trillium Lane
Albany, NY 12203

No phone calls or email, please

EARLY CHILDHOOD NATURALIST

The Nature Center at Shaker
Lakes
Cleveland, OH

Compensation

Commensurate with experience

Contact:

Program Director
2600 South Park Blvd
Cleveland, OH 44120
Phone: (216) 321-5935
Fax: (216) 321-1869

Please send cover letter, resume, three references, and transcripts.

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“Show Me The Money”

A Financial Overview

Ruth Lundin & Greg Lee
ANCA Board of Directors

From the Editor:

At the Summit in August, members of the ANCA Board of Directors were approached on several occasions and asked about the financial condition of the organization. As a result the following two write-ups have been included in this issue.

The compiled financial statements from the fiscal year ending June 30th, 2002 have not yet been prepared by ANCA's accounting firm. When completed, these will be posted on the ANCA website “members only” section. The IRS Form 990, prepared annually, can be found by following the link from the ANCA homepage.

ANCA has established some financial practices that help to keep expenses low. Reimbursement maximums have been set-up for Board members attending Board related functions. At the Summit we look for vendors willing to donate all or a portion of their product or service.

Probably the biggest reason for the financial success of ANCA is the generosity of it's members. This was illustrated best at this year's Summit. Mike Riska, who was the recipient of this year's Leadership Award, challenged Summit goers to match the monetary portion of his award. We did that in true ANCA style. Thanks Mike!

And thanks to you for your faith in us and your dedication to the profession.



Budget for 2002-2003 Ruth Lundin Treasurer

The fiscal year of the Association of Nature Center Administrators is from July 1st to June 30th. The final account for 2001-2002 is not yet complete. When it is, it will be posted on the web site including the IRS 990 form. In the mean time, we wanted to provide our members with the budget for the current fiscal year.

ANCA is in a transition year, moving from cash basis to accrual accounting. For this reason, Membership Income, Summit Income and Summit Expenses have been divided to show a separate line for cash that is actually received or expended this fiscal year, but will be recognized either in 2001-2002 or 2003-2004. We appreciate the support of our members and work to increase the level of member services we provide.

INCOME

Membership Income—Current Year	12,500.00
Membership Income 2003-2004	12,500.00
Contributions-Endowment-Permanently Restricted	0.00
Contributions-Temporarily restricted (Scholarships & Leadership Award)	9,500.00
Endowment Distribution	4,300.00
Technical Assistance-Consults	20,000.00
Sales-Handbooks & Other	7,650.00
Summit - 2002	29,500.00
Summit -2002 - Income Recognized in Previous Year	2,500.00
Summit - 2003 - Future Year Income	2,500.00
Grant-Handbook—Second Volume	0.00
Interest Income	600.00

TOTAL INCOME 101,550.00

EXPENSE

Summit 2002 Expense	\$ 20,000.00
Summit 2002 Expense Recognized in Previous Year	2,000.00
Endowment Investment	0.00
Leadership Award	4,000.00
Technical Assistance - Consults	11,000.00
Professional Fees	4,250.00
ANCA Bulletin	1,700.00
Scholarship-ANCA Summit	5,500.00
Administration	35,000.00
Professional Development	500.00
Printing	2,500.00
Postage	3,000.00
Office Supplies	500.00
Board Meeting Expense	6,000.00
Depreciation	1,000.00
Telephone-Monthly	1,500.00
Telephone-Conference	2,500.00
Miscellaneous	600.00

TOTAL EXPENSE 101,550.00

**Endowment Report
Greg Lee
Endowment Committee**

At its meeting on March 1st and 2nd, 2002, ANCA's Board of Directors reviewed the investment strategy and performance of the organization's endowment. The endowment fund had been created five years earlier with a founding gift from David Junkin. In 1997, the Board of Directors engaged the Dayton Foundation, a community foundation in Dayton, Ohio to invest and manage the endowment. As of the March 2002 Board meeting, the value of the endowment had increased to \$68,017 through a combination of investment activity and new donations.

The Dayton Foundation, which charges an annual management fee of 0.70% (70 basis points), invested the corpus of the endowment in the Solomon Smith Barney Social Conscience Fund in accordance with instructions it was provided when the fund was set up. The Smith Barney fund charges an additional 1.35% annual management fee. Upon reviewing these two fees and the investment performance of the Smith Barney fund, the ANCA Board determined that the Dayton Foundation was not actively managing the investment of the endowment and sent a letter asking Dayton to review and lower its fees (since Smith Barney was effectively doing the investment management). The Dayton Foundation's response indicated that they would not be able to lower the fees.

After reviewing the situation, the Board decided to reexamine how it wanted the endowment funds to be invested and whether or not it wished to keep the endowment with the Dayton Foundation. An ad hoc Endowment Committee met and returned the following general recommendations to the Board:

1. The endowment should be

invested in a diverse set of funds so that performance is not tied to the success or lack thereof of one fund.

2. The amount of money now in the endowment fund is not sufficient to justify the expense of hiring an individual money manager.
3. If the endowment is to be invested in mutual funds, the Board could do that directly without incurring the cost of engaging the Dayton Foundation.
4. The Board should maintain a long-term investment strategy and not try to time the market.
5. In selecting mutual funds, past performance compared to benchmark funds should be considered and attention should be paid to management fees.

The Board then adopted specific investment recommendations derived from these general recommendations:

1. Separate from the Dayton Foundation and directly invest the endowment in mutual funds.
2. Initially, 80% of the endowment should be invested in equity-based mutual funds and 20% in bond funds, with the percentages annually evaluated and renormalized to meet agreed upon distributions.
3. In year one, the endowment is to be specifically invested in the following funds:
 - A. Vanguard Intermediate Bond Fund (20%)
 - B. Vanguard Small/Midcap Equity Index Fund (20%)
 - C. Vanguard S&P 500 Equity Index Fund (40%)
 - D. A to-be-determined socially responsible equity fund,

preferably an index fund with low management fees and a superior performance history (20%)

4. ANCA headquarters will directly invest and manage the endowment.
5. Removal of funds will require two signatures from among the following three signers: (1) ANCA Board President; (2) ANCA Board Finance Committee Chair; (3) ANCA Board Secretary.
6. Current year endowment donations should be kept in a money market fund or other "cash" investment and preferentially used as the authorized current year draw from the endowment. Current year donations in excess of the amount needed to meet the current year draw to be invested in mutual funds as part of the renormalization process described above.

On August 19, 2002, the Vanguard account was established with an initial investment of \$18,688 divided equally between the four funds. The Calvert Social Index Fund was selected as the socially responsible alternative. Subsequently, a letter was sent to The Dayton Foundation requesting that the balance in our account be transferred to Vanguard. We hope to have this transaction completed within 90 days.



The Board of Directors has always been, and will continue to be, prudent stewards of the funds entrusted to them by the membership. If you have any questions please feel free to contact Ruth Lundin, Treasurer. She can be reached at the Jamestown Audubon Nature Center (716) 569-2345, or, email at rlundin@netsync.net.



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EdGateway Discussion Group

Here is the procedure for signing up to the ANCA listserv on EdGateway.

- In your browser, go to www.edgateway.net
- Click on “enter here>>”
- In the My EdGateway box select “My Profile”
- Select bullet #2 – registration form
- Complete the form and submit
- When the screen returns, select “My Profile”
- Update your profile
- When the screen returns, select “My Discussions”
- Choose “list discussions”
- Select “ANCA Association of Nature Center Administrators”
- Choose “subscribe”

You should begin to receive “posts” in your email as soon as one is made.

Calling All Authors!!

If you have a desire to share your ideas and experiences with the ANCA membership. We Need You!!

The best articles come from you - the members. Articles need to be 1 - 2 pages (700 - 1,400 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:

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

The Summit With Altitude! A Summit of Firsts

There were many firsts associated with 8th annual ANCA Summit. For example, The Summit With Altitude! was the first Summit held in Colorado. Hosted at Lookout Mountain Nature Center (LMNC), part of Jefferson County’s Open Space Program, in Golden, Colorado, this was the first Summit at 7,500 feet (and higher) above sea level in the semi-arid ponderosa pine forest.

LMNC has only 8 staff members, including part-timers, and had 2 full-time staff positions vacant this summer. My understanding is this was the first time a Summit was held at a center with a staff that small.



Since LMNC is a small center, the Summit With Altitude! was the first to require the efforts of professionals and volunteers from almost 20 Colorado environmental education organizations to plan and host the events.

This year’s Summit was the first to involve a conference center that was not part of the hosting nature center. While this increased the complexity of planning along with Summit costs, LMNC staff and the Summit Planning Team found ways to keep both manageable.

Underlying the planning and operation of the Summit were a set of “guiding principles”. Using organic, locally grown food was one way in which we modeled these principles. Other strategies were also employed to apply sustainability principles

during the Summit. For example, everyone received a hot/cold mug to use and reuse during the Summit and beyond. Also, food was purchased in bulk rather than in individual serving packets. Nothing Earth-shaking here, but it did require additional time, effort and cost to arrange.

The Summit With Altitude! was the first to exceed maximum registration capacity and set a record for number of participants. Almost 170 registered and guests participated in The Summit With Altitude! Since capacity was 120, some venues and events were very crowded, but the Planning Team was committed to finding creative ways to accommodate everyone who registered by the deadline.

We were NOT the first Summit cancelled by wildland fire danger although we escaped it narrowly. Colorado and other western states experienced an extraordinary fire season. The fire ban demanded our Saturday evening BBQ be flameless which took some creativity!

We hope there were other firsts, too, like participants meeting other directors for the first time at the Summit; directors expanding and sharing experiences in new ways and creating other first time opportunities.

Lastly, this was the first time I had been involved in organizing an event of this magnitude. It was a great experience.

Planning and hosting a Summit takes a lot of work and dedication. The Summit With Altitude! was the result of a huge team effort by folks from many organizations. THANKS to EVERYONE who had a hand in making it all happen! *Author’s Note: Please forgive omissions, which are due only to limited brain space.*

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Summit Planning Team Co-Chairs

Christine Leahy, former Director of LMNC
 Tim Sandsmark, Director of LMNC

The Summit Planning Team

LMNC: Tabbi Kinion, Chris Barth, Carol English, Susanne Kirley, John Remenar, Chuck Bowman, Francesca Giongo, Pat Walsh & many volunteers.

Auction: Karin Hostetter, Interpret This!

Facilitated Discussions & Keynote: Kim Langmaid, Gore Range Natural Science School; Phil Walz, Carson Nature Center; Susan Kirkpatrick, Colorado Audubon

Field Trips: Skot Latona & Phil Walz, Carson Nature Center; Jane Hunter & Paula Megorden, El Paso County Parks; Jill Dreeves, Wild Bear Center for Nature Discovery

Food & Beverages: Margaret Paget, City of Wheat Ridge; Tudi Arneill, Plains Conservation Center; Christine Leahy, Advanced Resource Management; Kathryn Grohusky, Keystone Science School; Ann Rilling, Durango Nature Studies; Ernie Stone, Ken Caryl, Metro District

Entertainment: Karin Hostetter, coordinator, Interpret This!; Mike Way, CO Alliance for Environmental Education

Marketing Packet Design & Production: Ann Rilling, Durango Nature Studies.

Registration & Online Marketing: Larry Brown, ANCA

Volunteer Coordination: Susan Smith, Audubon Society of Greater Denver

Workshops: Tudi Arneill, Plains Conservation Center

Other volunteers from: LMNC, Denver Audubon, Majestic View Nature Center, CAEE, Bluff Lake Nature Center

Christine Leahy
 Advanced Resource Management
 christine@armglobal.com

Resident Environmental Learning Center Conference

On January 29 - February 2, 2003, Bradford Woods - Indiana University's Outdoor Center, and ANCA, will host a conference for directors and administrators to explore issues and trends related to running residential programs and facilities.

This will be a great opportunity to share information and discuss issues and trends related to running residential programs and facilities. Wednesday will be a travel day with check-in, introductions, and conference logistics.

On Thursday, we are very fortunate to have the National Center on Accessibility provide a day of training focusing on the Principles of Universal Design as the primary method of inclusion of all visitors to environmental education programs and facilities. At Bradford Woods we constantly strive to be global leaders of inclusive action learning environments. A tour of the Bradford Woods facilities will highlight session topics and our efforts toward accessibility.

Friday and Saturday will be sessions built on the Open Space concept. The conference group as a whole will create the agenda by identifying topics that are important to the individual regarding residential environmental education. Participants attend sessions most applicable to their interests and concerns. Sunday we will wrap up the conference, plan for the next, and travel home.

There will be free time set aside in the afternoons for participants to relax and explore Bradford Woods. Evenings will be a chance to come together on a more social note to conclude the day's events.

For more information and registration materials contact Jim Rogers at (765) 342-2915 or email at jarogers@indiana.edu

Endowment Update

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

- Pat Welch
- Bob Mercer
- Ruth Lundin
- Michelle Skedgell
- Betsy Deleiris
- Donald Watson
- Mary Anna Russo
- Ann Rilling
- Tim Williams
- Jimmy Paz
- Trevor Polley
- Sonya Berg
- Wayne Clark

If you would like to make a pledge please contact the ANCA office at 1-800-490-2622 or email at lbrown@audubon.org.

"It is a wholesome and necessary thing for us to turn again to the earth and in the contemplation of her beauties to know the sense of wonder and humility." Rachel Carson

Delaware Nature Society's Environmental Institution Courses

On January 14-19, 2003, the Association of Nature Center Administrators and the Delaware Nature Society are offering an excellent course for directors and administrators to gain insight and expertise in the key components of operating an environmental institution. Network and share successes, and lessons learned, with colleagues. Participants will acquire techniques in recognizing and preparing for challenges.



Presented by professionals from environmental institutions, schools and businesses, the Professional Leadership Institute addresses management skills, science and environmental education, conservation and preservation issues, membership development, fund raising, facility planning, personnel and office management. The course takes place at the Nature Society's Ashland Nature Center, Hockessin, DE., north of Wilmington. Registrants may select their choice of days at \$75/day, lunch included, or for the week. (\$300 for ANCA members; lodging in the nature center's dorms and meals \$350 extra). Registration is required by December 6.

The Delaware Nature Society also offers a six-credit, University of Delaware graduate course, Environmental Institution Management, January 6-29, 2003, at the Ashland Nature Center.

In seminar sessions with Delaware Nature Society staff and 35 guest lecturers, the course covers goal

definition and long-range planning, conservation and preservation roles, programming, fundraising, financial management and budgeting staffing and personnel policies, coordinating volunteers, publicity and marketing, publications, and legal considerations. Field trips are also provided to renowned environmental institutions such as the New Jersey Aquarium at Camden, the Brandywine Conservancy and the Tyler Arboretum to gain insights into operations by in-depth, on-site interviews with administrators. University tuition for Delaware residents \$950, non-residents \$2,736; full and partial scholarships are available. Registration is required by November 15.

For more information about the Professional Leadership Institute and Environmental Institution Management courses, visit:

web: delawarenaturesociety.org

e-mail: webpage@dnsashland.org

You may also contact Helen Fischel, Associate Director, Delaware Nature Society, 302-239-2334, ext. 14. 🌿



Educational Farm Symposium

On January 30-February 1, 2003, the National Audubon Society, with support from ANCA, will hold a symposium for directors, educators, or farmers who operate educational farms, at Aullwood Audubon Center and Farm located in Dayton, Ohio.

Join us to discuss current topics and trends in this fast changing field. Workshops will be offered in green architecture, holistic management, and "Food, Land, & People". Field trips

will visit Cincinnati Nature Center's Gorman and Long Branch Farms, Stratford Ecological Farm, Carriage Hill Farm, or Aullwood's own organic working farm.

We will have a variety of facilitated discussions with subject matter experts from around the country on hand. Topics such as:

- Starting an educational farm
- Community supported agriculture (CSA)
- Organic farming techniques
- Volunteers
- Farm profitability & accounting procedures
- Special events, and many more

Our keynote speaker will be John Ikerd from the University of Missouri. He will enlighten us on the subject of sustainable agriculture and agricultural education. With "Open Space" sessions you will have the opportunity to create you own group to discuss a topic near and dear to your heart.

Each evening there will be some light entertainment to help you to unwind, relax, and have some fun. And as always, opportunities to meet new colleagues and renew old friendships will abound.

Registration materials will be mailed soon. They will also be available on the ANCA website, News & Notes page, or, Aullwood's website homepage (audubon.org/local/sanctuary/aullwood). 🌿

"For unnumbered centuries of human history the wilderness has given way. The priority of industry has become dogma. Are we as yet sufficiently enlightened to realize that we must now challenge that dogma, or do without our wilderness?"

Aldo Leopold



ANCA's Discussion Group on EdGateway - Your "Virtual" Consultant

For several years ANCA has hosted a discussion group on the EdGateway listserv. Many individuals have posted questions or problems and have received advice from across the country. Topics as different as nature center development, and outreach to ethnic neighborhoods to baseball fields and smoking policies. People share ideas, opinions, and information.

Recently, a post was submitted that spoke of a consultant recommending against the establishment of a "residential component" at a state park on the basis of incomplete data. Below is one response that was added by a listserv member.

Randy,

We have been offering residential programs since 1969. I run into 30-40 year olds all the time who tell me about their memories from their visit to Tremont years ago. I wonder what else they remember from 5th grade? The value of having students live in residence for several days and be able to walk out into this park as their classroom is immeasurable. Schools, teachers, parents, and students DO value this opportunity and are willing to jump through the hoops to make it happen. Concerns over liabilities, reduced budgets, lack of enthusiasm by some parents, travel etc. etc. exist but do not keep schools from coming. Most of the schools we work with consider their residential experience with us as a vital part of their overall curriculum that is not to be compromised.

After last September 11th we were concerned that we might see a drop in attendance. We witnessed a

couple blips as a few school systems reacted to a climate of concern but will end up this year on the rise in terms of overall participants. There seems now to be an even greater awareness of the need to get out into parks and wild places to learn and I believe that trend will continue to increase.

Like many other endeavors, running a residential program has many challenges in today's world. All of the concerns mentioned above and many others face us but there is a history of success amongst residential programs and a solid network of people who are willing to share their experience and ideas with others in the field to develop the best and safest practices. The rewards and benefits for our future our again, beyond measure.

In my experience (over 25 years of working with residential E.E. programs), residential programs play a more vital part in today's mix of environmental education opportunities for young people than ever before. People need to experience wild places in ways that give them more than a quick glimpse. They need one that leaves them with a sense of ownership and connection to those places.

Residential is a big commitment and still might not be the right thing for your park. The reasons listed by your consultant however are not enough to stop you if it is something your staff and community are committed to doing.

Best of luck,
Ken Voorhis, Executive Director
Great Smoky Mountains Institute
at Tremont

We recommend that you get signed up to the listserv. It costs nothing and will return enormous benefits. See the instructions on page 6 to get signed up today. 🍁

ANCA Board of Directors

PRESIDENT
Gordon Maupin
Wilderness Center
gordon@falcon.stark.k12.oh.us

V. P. - DEVELOPMENT
Elizabeth (Buffy) Cheek
Schlitz Audubon Center
echeek@schlitzauduboncenter.com

V. P. - PROF. SERVICES
Richard Haley
Goodwin Conservation Center
haleyfielding@earthlink.net

TREASURER
Ruth Lundin
Jamestown Audubon Nature Center
jaudubon@netsync.net

SECRETARY
Bo Glover
Environmental Nature Center
boglo@aol.com

Kathleen Brady
Birdsong Nature Center
birdsongkat@aol.com

L. Wayne Clark
Ft. Worth Nature Center & Refuge
clarkw@ci.fort-worth.tx.us

Saul Weisberg
North Cascades Institute
saul_weisberg@ncascades.org

Annie Guion
Connecticut Audubon
aguion@ctaudubon.org

Tracy Kay
The Schuylkill Center for
Environmental Education
tkay@schuylkillcenter.org

Bill Rose
Kalamazoo Nature Center
brose@naturecenter.org

Tim Sandsmark
Lookout Mountain Nature Center
tsandsma@jeffco.us

Ken Voorhis
Great Smoky Mountains Institute
ken@gsmit.org

ANCA Headquarters
Charity Krueger, Coordinator
Larry Brown, Publications and
Communications Manager
lbrown@audubon.org

ANCA Membership Form

If you would like to become a member of ANCA, please fill out this form and mail it to the address given. Members receive 4 quarterly issues of *Directions*, special publications, and admission to ANCA Summits and workshops. Institutional memberships allow for two staff members to receive benefits. Questions? Call 1-800-490-2622.



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Make checks payable to ANCA and
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ANCA

Aullwood Audubon Center

1000 Aullwood Road

Dayton, OH 45414

Directions

c/o Aullwood Audubon Center

1000 Aullwood Road

Dayton, OH 45414