



CONNECTIONS

FEBRUARY 2005

Volume 8 * Number 3

www.northerngreatlakescenter.org

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For meeting rooms and reservations at the Center call the Center Reception Desk at 715-685-9983

CONNECTIONS Newsletter is published by the Friends of the Center Alliance Ltd.

Sleigh Bells Ring . . . at The Center

The Northwoods Harness Club will held its **19th Annual Sleigh and Cutter Rally** at the Visitor Center on January 8th. The Visitor Center grounds came alive with 1800's costumed drivers and passengers in antique sleighs, cutters and bobsleds drawn by some of the region's finest driving horses. Hook-up began at 11 a.m. with a 1 p.m. exhibition. Nearly 1,500 people gathered to watch the competitions. A panel of judges scored the drivers on their costumes, their vintage sleighs and the skill of their horses.

The crowd applauded as 32 teams trotted around the Center's field. Inside the Center visitors viewed a display of harnesses and sleigh bells by the Vollmer Harness Shop and a workshop by the Clearwater Folk School featuring sleigh bell decoration.



Friends of the Center Receive Top Honor Award

Congratulations are in order for the Friends of the Center, a partner in the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center, for receiving the National Forest Eastern Region Honor Award in the "Volunteer of the Year" category. This is a very competitive category for the entire region and the Friends took the top award – no small accomplishment!

The Friends received this award at an Honor Awards Ceremony held at the Pfister Hotel in Milwaukee, WI, on December 7, 2004. The Friends were honored for their volunteer commitment to the Visitor Center whose members contributed over 2,100 hours of volunteer labor. In addition, they own and operate the Spirit of the North Store, which generates revenue to support the Center's programs and exhibits.

The Friends also manage volunteer housing for the Center, employ a custodian to help clean and maintain the Center and help advertise the Center.



Friends of the Center executive director and board of directors were named the outstanding volunteer organization in the Forest Service Eastern Region. Members include: back from left, George Hansen, Sue Amman, Jon Hamilton, Gerald Eichman, Tom Kieweg, Gary LaPean. Front from left, Pat Thornton, Donna Kurrilla, Craig Haukaas, Mike Vogelsang and Mary McPhetridge. Not present are Kathleen Morgen, Pete Viater and Rose Haveri.

World of Wonder Pre-School Programs

The Visitor Center's preschool programs that run from November to May have been very popular with area children and adults. Each month a new topic helps children 0-5 discover the wonders of our natural world. Programs are the first Tuesday of each month, free and are open to the public. Children that are accompanied by an adult participate in an interactive program starting at 10 a.m. Programs and a follow-up craft are usually done by 11 a.m.

Children are welcome to keep exploring or working on their craft until noon. More information on programs through May can be found on the Visitor Center's Calendar page at www.northerngreatlakescenter.org.



Pre-school programs engage kids in hands-on learning activities.

Center K-12 Education Programs

A new spring education program schedule will be available soon. Program offerings have been expanded to include pre-school activities, nature discovery, cultural history, and middle school forest stewardship. To receive an education program brochure call 715-685-9983.

Invasive Free Zone

The Center property was recently designed as an Invasive Free Zone. The overall goal of this project is to control or eliminate non-native terrestrial and aquatic species. The Center recently received grant funding from the EPA, U.S. Forest Service, and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to begin the planning for this project.

Coming Soon . . . **Forests Through Time Exhibit**

A new exhibit tracing the ethnic myths and legends of forests in Wisconsin will open in May 2005. This exhibit will explore the human relationship with forests. As Europeans came to the Americas they brought with them stories, fairy tales, and values that typified forests as wild, dark woods filled with danger. They also viewed forests as an obstacle for farming. In contrast, native peoples viewed forests have a profoundly different cultural view of forests, water and animals. This exhibit will illustrate historical beliefs about forests and how they have changed through time. Visitors can also share how they value Wisconsin's forests today. Funding for this exhibit was provided by a grant from the Wisconsin Humanities Council and the U. S. Forest Service.

A photographic collection "Secret Places, Hidden Treasures" featuring forest images from Dr. Stephen Kreuser, is now on display in the visitor center gallery. This collection of images will inspire visitors to discover and explore their natural heritage – Wisconsin's forests.



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Contributors for this issue are:

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Mike Mlynarek, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Katie Goodwin, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Nori Newago, Northern Wisconsin Heritage Connection

Editor: Susan Nelson, U.S. Forest Service

Be a Friend

If you enjoy the Center's programs, services and events, consider becoming a "Friend of the Center". Our Friends group is actively involved in sponsoring and supporting programs, service and events at the Center. Your support of the Friends helps increase their effectiveness. In addition to supporting Center programming, a Friends membership entitles you to a 10% discount on all merchandise at the Center store. Become a Friend today!

Annual Membership Packages

- \$15 Student Membership
- \$25 Individual Membership
- \$50 Family Membership (Immediate family members will receive benefits)

Benefits Include:

- 10% store discount
- Invitation to member events
- Voting privileges at Friends Annual Meeting

****Thank you for your donation!**

All donations are tax-deductible.

Please complete and mail to:

Friends of the Center, 29270 County Highway G, Ashland, WI 54806

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Membership Category:

- _____ Student - \$15
- _____ Individual - \$25
- _____ Family - \$50

Bill my credit card: _____ Visa _____ Mastercard
_____ Discover _____ American Express

Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Signature: _____

Native Plants Donated by Northern Native Plants Project

In an effort to expand use of native plants on NGLVC lands, flats of various plants were donated by the Northern Native Plants Project of the Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute at Northland College. Several plant species adapted to moist sites such as wetlands and shorelines were planted in June 2004, along the trail east of the Center. Species include swamp milkweed, blue flag (wild iris), boneset, and several types of sedges and rushes. The plantings have botanical markers, which identify the species' common and scientific names, and include comments about suitability for wildlife food and cover, as well as preferred site conditions for the individual species.

Plantings will be expanded in the future and can be viewed near the NGLVC wetlands that were constructed in 2002. Such plantings serve as useful demonstrations for anyone interested in native plant identification and using native plants for wetland and shoreline restoration projects.

Thanks to Pam Troxell of the Northern Native Plants Project for the generous donation to the NGLVC partners. Plantings were completed by Susan Nelson, U.S. Forest Service-NGLVC, Mike Mlynarek, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-NGLVC, and Gary Czypinski, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service-Ashland Fishery Resources.



Mulched native plants near the NGLVC wetland.

Center Staff Member Honored

U.S. Forest Service employee Susan Nelson recently received a "Rise to the Future" Award at the Forest Service Eastern Region Honor Awards. Nelson was recognized for her efforts for establishing a Kid's Fishing Day event at the Center. This award was presented to Nelson for raising public awareness about natural resources. This event has grown dramatically in the five years since its inception and last year served 178 children and 119 adults. Each child goes through a series of learning stations that include knot tying, catch and release techniques, practice casting, and finally, the opportunity to fish in the stocked trout pond at the Center. Last year, the event was supported by a number of natural resource agencies, volunteer organizations, area business, and fishing tackle/gear manufacturers.

Spirit of the North Store

Welcome to the Spirit of the North Store. The store is the regions best place to shop for the nature enthusiast. We carry a wide variety of books to connect people to their natural environment and regional history. New items will be arriving soon offering a great selection of clothing and gifts.

The store is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. All profits support programs and projects and the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center.

Check us out On-line!

Check out the Visitor Center's website for a complete listing of upcoming programs and events at www.northerngreatlakescenter.org.

Tune to 1610 AM

The Center's 1610 AM radio station is updated weekly to provide you with information about Center programs and events. If you live in the Ashland or Washburn area or passing through, tune into 1610 AM to find out what is happening at the Center for the coming week.



