



# News from the North Woods

Fall 2008

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A proud leader in environmental education and renewable energy

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## Winding Down

By Mike Link

In Minnesota's natural world there is a transition by seasons – a great sense of urgency in the spring with energy to match, a summer of growth and increase, and a fall to slow down, plant the seeds for the next year, and let conditions develop for the next growing season. I am now in that autumn of my career and awaiting the winter of retirement and refocus. After 37 years, I am ready to move on and take new challenges, perhaps spend a little more time with grandchildren, find exciting projects, do a little writing and work in the woodshop.



The Center is celebrating its 40th anniversary since the original bequest came from Marguarite Schwyzer. It began as a small farm house and a summer lodge; a beautiful place with lots of magnificent white pines along the lake shore and the challenge of finding a person to mix nature, business, education, and dreams. Luckily, I was chosen and given the job description – “see what you can do!”

I did. My children grew up here. College classes and naturalist training developed in the seventies. Great people like Dr. Breckenridge, Wally Dayton, Les Blacklock, Goodrich Lowry, Marv Borell, Tom Savage, Craig Prudhomme, and Betty Crosby helped nurture the seed of the organizations spring and helped me grow. We developed partnerships with

Hamline University, Northland College, and Inver Hills Community College.

In the summer of my career, the Center added new buildings and the challenge of filling beds with K-12 residential school programs, retreats, conferences, Elderhostel, dinners at the lake, charter schools, and numerous other audiences and ideas. There were summers of sailing trips, canoeing in the BWCA, and graduate courses. There were always financial challenges, but most importantly there were challenges in

education and the environment that we could help address. We could work in sustainable forestry, renewable energy, and continue to try to involve our youth in preserving the natural world.

Now it is time to replant, to let someone else see what they can do. I move into this autumn knowing the colors of the Center will change like the leaves in our forest. The Center has its base in place, but new decades bring new opportunities and new leadership can access and capitalize on the changes. When you read this I will have about six months left, most of which will be training my replacements and preparing to walk away.

Those replacements are now at the center and I hope you will take the time to get to know them and even more importantly to continue to support them. The Center will change, as it

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## Upcoming Events

Open House and Trail Run  
September 27, 2008

Dinner at the Lake  
September 27, 2008

Women's Wellness  
& Adventure Weekend  
October 3-5, 2008

Dinner at the Lake  
October 11, 2008

IMAGE Art Show  
December 6-9, 2008

Winter Family Escape  
December 27-30, 2008

Wolves & Other Large Predators:  
A Northwoods Experience  
January 4-24, 2009

## Adopt-A-Raptor

Help support the care of any of our resident education raptors through our "Adopt a Raptor" program.

Your donation goes towards housing, medical care, food and enrichment items, to help encourage natural behavior in the birds.

As part of the adoption process, you will receive a 5x7 framed photo of the bird, an "Adoption Certificate", a personal history of "your" bird, recognition in our newsletter, and a tour of the ACNW wildlife facility.

For more information, please contact Jeff Tyson, our Wildlife Coordinator or visit our website.

Participation in our Adopt-A-Raptor program is now available online (click the "DonateNow" button on our website).

## Wildlife Barn Wish List

We have compiled a list of the following items that would assist us in the care of our educational animals or enhance the visit of those who come to learn about Minnesota's wildlife. If you have or would like to purchase one of the following items, it would be greatly appreciated. Rope comes on 100' or 600' spools, donations should be in whole spools. Raptor food is special ordered; the cash donation will go towards food purchases.

- Pressure washer
- Autoclave
- 220V Electric Oven
- Clothes Drying Rack
- ¾" Manila Rope
- ½" Manila Rope
- ¼" Manila Rope
- Raptor Food For a Month \$150
- Bird/Wildlife Art Work

## Kestrel Rescue

By Jeff Tyson

So often when baby animals are encountered on the ground without a parent in sight, it is our first instinct to scoop up the baby and help raise it. While having good intentions, this is detrimental to the wildlife involved. The following story is about someone who took the correct actions when finding two "orphaned" birds of prey in her driveway.

On August 4th, Kayla found two young raptors, still covered in white down feathers. Concerned, she called her local DNR office who advised her to just leave them on the ground as it is common for birds to take their first flight before they are completely ready and their parents will care for them on the ground. However, that was not the case with these baby birds; they were nowhere near ready to attempt to fly.

Rather than scooping up the "orphans" and placing them in a box and driving them to the nearest wildlife rehab center, Kayla watched the birds. She checked on them every 20 minutes, and finally she saw one of the babies had something bloody in its talons. She now had evidence that the parents were still around and caring for their young.

Kayla then called me at the Audubon Center and emailed some photos of the baby American Kestrels. After determining that these birds were likely knocked out of their nest or cavity during recent strong storms, and that there were domestic animals around that might kill the young, we decided the best course of action was to protect them from predators and attempt to return them to their nest if it could be located.

Kayla erected a temporary fence around a tree for the baby kestrels. The following morning, there was another baby kestrel in the enclosure for a total of three. A couple of days later another baby kestrel



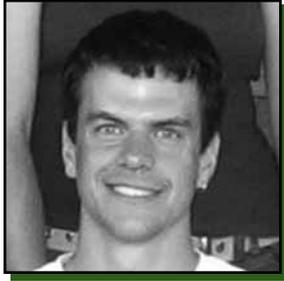
was found in the driveway, which brought the total to four kestrels! The parents continually brought food and the young birds were growing quickly and would soon be ready to take their first flight.

Because of Kayla's willingness to go the extra mile, the kestrels were kept safe for predators, the parents were still allowed to raise them, and she will be rewarded with future generations of kestrels nesting near her home. Frequently these "orphaned" animals are abducted and brought into wildlife rehabilitators. While we do our best to raise them and teach them what they need to know to live in the wild, we cannot do as good of job as their real parents.

Next time you find a baby animal, do your research on the natural history of the animal, and call your local wildlife rehabber before you try to capture it.

## Excited for the Road Ahead

By Bryan Wood



In the fall of 2005, I needed to finish my undergraduate degree with a semester-long internship. After some looking, I chose the Audubon Center of the North Woods for the opportunity it would give me to work with professional staff, a well-known program, and be in the state in which I grew up and love so much.

During those five months, I developed as an educator, learned other skills and made lasting friendships. Leaving after that autumn, I wasn't thinking about a future with the Audubon Center. But after working on music, and a stint as an Interpretive Ranger at Voyageurs National Park, I got a call from Mike Link in Dec 2006, saying he could use some help with his J-Term Wolf class. I had a wonderful time helping and learning during those 3 weeks. That following spring I taught with the K-12 staff when needed, and in May accepted the position of Adventure Coordinator. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with the community college programs, training staff on adventure courses, and teaching in the K-12 division. As the year progressed, I found myself working more with Mike on administrative aspects of center operations, and becoming more aware of all that goes into running a non-profit, residential environmental learning center. Along the way, I began to realize that there was a real opportunity for me here at the Audubon Center.

I am thrilled at the chance to be a co-director of the Audubon Center of the North Woods. Katie Kleese and I were at the Center together during our internships and I am so happy to be working with her again. My areas of focus as co-director will be on the post-secondary education, adult groups and conferences, land management and energy. I know that there will be unforeseen challenges ahead in the years to come, and I know there will be times of tight finances and difficult decisions. As co-director I will do my best to foresee problems, plan for the future, and maintain the standard of excellence that the Audubon Center of the North Woods has become known for. I also know that there will be great rewards in being able to share and teach others about the environment, to provide a setting where groups can come to get away and get back to the pace of natural rhythms, and to manage our lands so future generations may enjoy this very special place.

I am very excited for the future of the Audubon Center of the North Woods. We have the wonderful chance to continue to build on our strengths, but also seek out opportunities, establish new programs, and continue to matter in the lives of Minnesotans, young and old. The ability we have to positively impact lives and in turn the environment is limited only by the reach of our dreams. Our desire and follow-through make these dreams realities. It is with profound gratitude, humbleness and enthusiasm that I step into the position of co-director of the Audubon Center of the North Woods. I look forward to leading the Audubon Center forward with Katie, and I hope you will join us on the journey ahead.

## Hello Audubon Family

By Katie Kleese



I am excited to introduce myself to all of you and I look forward to many conversations, adventures, and years of success at the Audubon Center. I'll be writing more about my hopes and vision for the Center in newsletters to come, but I would first like to give you some of my background.

I grew up just outside of Northfield, MN on a small hobby farm. One of my favorite things to do growing up was to explore the woods behind my house. I spent hours there every day discovering new places to build forts, sit in trees, and watch the wildlife. This was the beginning of the love of nature that I have carried that through my life. Through my education as a biology major at Grinnell College and my work at as a camp naturalist, I found that I had a passion for teaching as well as for the environment.

After graduating from Grinnell, I came to work at ACNW as an intern. I was impressed with the programs, the setting, the people, and the mission of the Center. During my internship, I worked with the K-12 RELC and community colleges, developed our renewable energy curriculum, trained our red-tailed hawk to fly in programs, and shadowed Mike, learning some of what he did as the Executive Director. That year reinforced my belief in how important the work is that we do at the ACNW.

After a year in that internship, I decided to move on and took a job with the Public Interest Research Groups, first as a campus organizer in Hartford, CT and then as Organizing Director of OSPIRG in Portland, OR. In my positions with the PIRGs, I played a different part in my work for the environment focusing on advocacy, politics, and policy. I worked with college students, experienced organizers, and policy experts on a range of issues, predominantly environmental. During my time with the PIRGs, I gained experience with many angles of environmental policy and organizational management- something I will always value.

Throughout that time, however, I kept up with ACNW happenings and returned periodically- mostly with my mom and sister for the Women's Wellness Weekends. And every time I came back I felt like I had returned home. I knew that I would come back to work here again in some capacity and I am honored and thrilled to be given the great opportunity to return as a Co-Director. My areas of focus as Co-Director will be our K-12 programming including our work with sponsoring charter schools, and our youth and family programs. I am also grateful that I will be working with a Bryan Wood. Bryan and I worked together as interns, have kept in touch over the years, and am excited to be working with him closely once again.

I have completed one journey of my life- exploring different parts of our country and different avenues of positive environmental change, and now I have come full circle, back to Minnesota and back to environmental education. I am now ready to start the next journey of my life and I am excited to embark on that journey with my Co-Director, Bryan, with all of the staff at the Center, and with all of you.



## North Woods Wilderness School 2008 summer camp memories



## Being Voyageurs...

by Jaime Souza, former Summer Camp Director

"Is that the Spanish Armada?" one man asked. "We thought we were under attack!" This was just one example of comments and questions we received by curious onlookers and boaters in Voyageurs National Park. We were quite the fleet! It was breathtaking to witness six canoes of teenagers paddling in rhythm and uniformity across the vast lakes within this beautiful National Park as part of the North Woods Wilderness School, July 13-19.

"I got to" (there's a good story behind that quote - thanks Tyler) lead 13 high school students on this expedition along with my co-leaders; Bryan Wood - Adventure Coordinator, canoe camping extraordinaire, and long-time Voyageurs National Park veteran, and Carol Brewton - friend, mentor, and River Way Charter School Guidance Counselor. Each day of the trip I became increasingly grateful for "getting" to lead these young people on a memorable adventure. I know this experience impacted them in an amazing way, but I am not sure if they know how meaningful this journey was for me.

The field of Outdoor Education is not always easy; it means long hours, little pay, seasonal lay-offs, and physical work. It's easy to get caught up in the "negative" aspects of Outdoor Education. And then, I "got to" hang out with a bunch of silly, song-singin', hard workin' teens for a week in Minnesota's canoe country, and I am reminded of how truly blessed I am to have such a cool job...

...That doesn't mean the trip went perfectly (it nearly did because of the incredible weather, wildlife and good company). There were long days in a canoe, sore muscles, a grand search for open campsites in the rain, the growing pains of becoming a solid team, and thoughts of disbelief on how the real Voyageurs did it.

What did the authentic Voyageurs do? They worked long hours (16/day), received little compensation for their work and usually ended up in debt, waited out bitter northern winters for the rivers and lakes to thaw, and performed incredibly physical tasks (such as portaging two 90 lb. packs on their backs).

Hey! This sounds kind of familiar... Okay, okay... it's not quite the same; I have it a lot easier, but during this expedition my respect for their work-ethic and physical strength increased dramatically.

No, our young Voyageurs would be put to shame in a canoe race against the legends of old, but I think they would give them a run for their money in a sing-off! And it would be interesting to see which group would win a s'more eating contest...

In my job, you get used to dealing with insects, lifting heavy Duluth packs, and helping out with camp chores. For my crew, this was far from easy. Some of them had never camped or paddled before. They didn't have the creature comforts they are used to. They haven't invested all their earnings in sweet gear like I have. Plus, it is easy for someone like me to go without TV, make-up, and my cell phone. It took me awhile to realize why it was so hard for these young people to be away from these things. It's easy for someone like me to say, "Why do you need your i-Pod? Listen to the music of the loons and the silence." But, I reminded myself, "You grew up in a different way. Nature has always been part of your life. You didn't have e-mail until your senior year of high school."

As the week went on, there was a wind of change amongst the group. There were no complaints, there was self-initiated journaling, there were quiet moments sitting on 2 billion year-old granite watching the sun go down, and LOTS of laughter and singing. Most of all, there was camaraderie and trust developing amongst the group. I heard more than one camper wonder out loud, "Just think if we had more time."

Time... Life's buzz kill. There's never enough of it. Moments come and moments go. All good things must come to an end. During our last night in Voyageurs, the students reflected on their time in VNP and many of them said they wished this experience could last just a little longer. Bryan, Carol, and I felt the same way.

## FEED THE EAGLE

There is a new eagle at the Center, only this one permanently resides in the Blandin Dining Hall. It was drawn by former intern Kat Mueller, cut out and put together by our good neighbor Lee Dybvig, and painted by Wildlife Assistant Julia Avison. Rather than fish, this eagle eats coins - yes, coins. We hope you will feed it often when you visit the Center (and help to feed our other raptors).



## RAIN GARDEN WORKSHOP UPDATE

On June 21st, 13 volunteers helped us plant our new rain garden on the south side of the Dining Hall. This garden was funded through a grant from the Initiative Foundation, and its purpose was to both help the Center better distribute rainfall off of the massive Dining Hall roof, and educate the general public about this beautiful and fairly simple way of catching and slowing rain events. With so many wetlands drained and so many surfaces now paved or otherwise impermeable, rainfall rather than slowly sinking back into the ground, rushes over the surface into gutters and sewer systems or streams, carrying lots of pollutants and other unwanted detritus with it.

A rain garden is not a pond. The water that flows into it will gradually seep downward, and the various plants will help stabilize the soil and also soak up the water. Betsy Danielson of Dazzle Gardens Design planned the shape and composition of the garden. We chose native flowers. In the years ahead visitors will be able to see how this garden flourishes, beautifying the property and helping keep large amounts of water from falling directly to the ground at the edge of the roofline. The volunteers who helped with the planting all went away enthused by the experience and knowledge gained.

## What's on the Web:

[www.wolfquest.org](http://www.wolfquest.org)

This is a site that is designed to engage anyone, but especially young people who are interested in wolves, and like interactive games. There's lots of good information on the site and ways to connect to the online with others who are fascinated by this top of the food chain predator.

*ACNW is Hosting  
the 22nd Annual  
IMAGE Art Show!!  
December 6-9, 2008*



We are very excited to be hosting the 22nd Annual IMAGE Art Show this year at the Audubon Center of the North Woods - the first time it will be in northern Pine County! The IMAGE Art Show is a regional annual judged art show sponsored by the East Central Art Council (ECAC) and supported by the McKnight Foundation.

IMAGE is a celebration of art in Region 7E, which is comprised of Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mill Lacs, and Pine Counties. Visual artists from any of these counties are encouraged to enter the show.

This year, we expect between 100-200 entries. Categories of visual art in IMAGE 2008 are:

- oil/acrylic/mixed media
- drawing/pastels
- watercolor/gouache/casein/tempera
- photography/digital photography
- sculpture
- ceramics/glass
- other art forms
- 13-17 year old artists

Each category will have 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners. In addition, all works will be eligible for both Best of Show and People's Choice.

We embrace the arts at ACNW and have made a concerted effort to make sure that art is well-represented in our buildings and exhibits. We recognize the need for an appreciation of the environment on many levels and for education to be interdisciplinary. Just as science and math provide the research, inquiry and facts, art provides a sense of aesthetics - a meaning beyond initial contact. Through art we develop feelings, sensitivity, appreciation, and depth.

If you or someone you know would like to enter artwork in the IMAGE 2008 show, visit our website, [www.audubon-center.org](http://www.audubon-center.org), or give us a call to get an entry form. Entry registration deadline is November 14, 2008. Limit one piece per artist due to space limitations.

Please join us on this special day as we celebrate 40 years!

# 2008 Open House & Renewable Trail Run Saturday, September 27, 2008

## Celebrating our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!!

*Join us for a free, fun day filled with activities and programs for all ages!*

Tour our grounds and facilities, find out about our renewable energy systems, learn how the Audubon Center got its start, visit our educational raptors, and more. A variety of exhibits and demonstrations will be available throughout the day to provide you with a wealth of information on sustainable living. For the young and young at heart, there will be adventure opportunities like our climbing wall and zip line, as well as our nature scavenger hunt, face painting and other fun learning activities such as making recycled art. Lunch will be available for purchase.

**New at our open house this year –**

## **1st Annual Renewable 5k or 10k Trail Run or Walk**

**8:00 A.M Race Time**

**10:00 A.M. Awards Ceremony**

Call us to register or download form on our website

*Registered racers receive long-sleeve T-shirt, goodie bag, post-race refreshments*

**RACE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED – Volunteers receive free lunch**

*All proceeds go towards the development and improvement of energy education curriculum at the Audubon Center of the North Woods*

## **Back this Year – Art & Craft Fair**

A number of skilled artisans and craftspeople will be on hand throughout the day to demonstrate their skills as well as sell their products.



### Tentative schedule of events *(subject to change)*

- All day long      Face painting
- Nature scavenger hunt
- 9-11:30 am
- Exhibits and demonstrations
- 9:30-noon              Recycled art
- 9:30-noon Wildlife classroom open
- 9:30-noon              Climbing wall
- 10-11:30              Walking tours
- Noon-1PM
- Optional Chili Feed
- lunch (\$7 adults,
- \$5 kids)
- 1:30-3:30
- Exhibits and demonstrations
- 2-3:30              Walking tours
- 2-4:00              Wildlife classroom open
- 2-4:00 Zipline & high ropes course
- 2-4:00              Recycled art
- 9am-4pm **Art & Craft Fair**



## **\$40-for-40**

This year we celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!! Although our open house activities are free, as part of this celebration, we invite you to commemorate this milestone and support our important environmental education work by making a \$40 donation this year! Your contribution is, of course, tax deductible.

# Dinners at the Lake

*Schedule for 2008-2009 season:*

- ◆ **Saturday, September 27, 2008** *(after our Open House)-*  
**"Using Permaculture to Create Productive and Abundant Landscapes"** (see below)  
*presented by Paula Westmoreland of Ecological Gardens*
- ◆ **Saturday, October 11, 2008**  
**Craig Blacklock**, *renowned photographer, speaks about the North Shore of Lake Superior*
- ◆ **Wednesday, December 31, 2008** - tba
- ◆ **Saturday, January 17, 2009** - tba
- ◆ **Saturday, February 14, 2009** - tba
- ◆ **Saturday, March 14, 2009** - tba
- ◆ **Saturday, April 18, 2009** - tba
- ◆ **Sunday, May 10, 2009** -  
**Mother's Day Brunch, 11:30 am.**



**Reservations are required for all Dinners at the Lake.**

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**Appetizers start at 6:00 p.m., dinner at 6:30, presentation follows**

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**Cost for Dinners are \$20/adult (12 and over) \$10 children under 12**

## Saturday, September 27, 2008

*the evening of our Open House*

### ***"Using Permaculture to Create Productive and Abundant Landscapes"***

by Paula Westmoreland



**Ecological Gardens**

*-Designing sustainable plant communities*

How do we design landscapes to mitigate the impacts of climate change? How can we create beautiful, productive and abundant landscapes in these challenging conditions? Permaculture offers a set of design principles and tools to do just that. Paula Westmoreland will discuss these design principles and ways you can apply them to build natural wealth in your own backyard.

Paula has a master's degree from the University of Minnesota in ecology and sustainable agriculture. She was certified as a permaculture designer in 2001 and applies these design principles in her company, Ecological Gardens, [www.ecologicalgardens.com](http://www.ecologicalgardens.com). Paula is executive director of the Permaculture Research Institute for Cold Climate, [www.pricoldclimate.org](http://www.pricoldclimate.org) and has developed a plant database for designing polycultures and guilds for the Upper Midwest.



**Reservations are required for all Dinners at the Lake.**  
**Appetizers start at 6:00 p.m., dinner at 6:30, presentation follows**  
 Cost for Dinners are \$20/adult (12 and over) \$10 children under 12



## **NOTICE:**

Due to low attendance last year, we won't be hosting our normal Sunday Brunches this year. However, we may occasionally have a special Sunday brunch - if you are on our mailing list, you will get a notice in the mail, or check our website at [www.audubon-center.org](http://www.audubon-center.org) for updates.

### ***Square by Square flooring campaign correction***

In our last newsletter, we announced our campaign to generate support for reflooring our large dining hall with modular carpeting from InterfaceFLOR, an environmentally-responsible manufacturer. However, in that article, there was a mistake made regarding the cost of a single tile and for a carton of tiles. The correct cost is \$6 per tile (or 'square') and \$120 per carton.

Please consider contributing to our 'Dining Room Floor' campaign by buying just a single 'square' (\$6) or an entire carton (\$120). To find out more about how you can contribute, simply go to our website, give us a call or visit the campaign display in our dining hall. In future issues, we will keep you updated on our progress.

# Top 10 Bird Feeding Myths

Adapted from Birdwire - eNewsletter from BirdWatchers Digest, by Bill Thompson, III

**10 Feeders Keep Birds From Migrating.** If this were true, we'd have hummingbirds and orioles clinging to our feeders all winter long. Migration is driven by instinct and external factors such as sunlight and weather, not by the availability of sunflower seed or food at feeders. One thing to note is that birds need extra food during migration, so keep your feeders stocked in case a hungry migrant plops down in your yard looking for food.

**9 Bird Feeding Is Really Bad/Good for Birds.** Let's face it, birds did just fine before we decided, a few hundred years ago, to feed them. Birds do not need the food we provide for them. It's a nice compromise between our desire to see birds in our backyards and the birds' willingness to take advantage of our largesse. Birds do not rely solely on our feeders for their survival, so it's wrong to say that feeding is "good" for birds. By the same token, when bird feeding is done in a conscientious manner, it is also not bad for birds. Yes, messy feeding stations can harbor disease, and food can sometimes spoil, but if these scenarios are avoided, bird feeding is enjoyable for us and attractive to the birds.

**8 Birds Will Starve if You Stop Feeding in Winter.** Birds have evolved over the eons as incredibly adaptive, mobile creatures. Unless a bird is sick or debilitated, it can use its wings (or legs) to range far and wide in search of food. Birds that cannot move in search of food are likely doomed to perish anyway, which is part of the natural scheme of things. So when you're going away on vacation for two weeks in the middle of a cold, snowy winter spell, it's nice if you can arrange for a neighbor to keep your feeders filled. Most serious feeder operators wouldn't think of letting their feeders go empty. But if it happens while you're gone, realize that your birds did not all starve, they just went somewhere else to find food.

**7 The Mixed Seed at the Grocery Store Is Bad.** I believed this with all my heart until recently when I saw some decent mixed birdseed for sale at a fancy grocery store. Granted, the stuff at my local chain grocery store is still absolute junk. But some seed producers seem to be getting the message that quality seed is worth selling. The trick to telling the junk seed from the better stuff is to read the ingredients. Junk seed has almost none of the following: black-oil sunflower, peanut bits, safflower, millet, or sunflower hearts. It will have lots of milo, wheat, barley, cracked corn, and perhaps some empty hulls, sticks, and other inedibles. The best mixes feature a hearty helping of sunflower seed.

**6 Birds Won't Eat Milo.** Years ago in an early issue of Bird Watcher's Digest, one of our editorial cartoons stated emphatically that "Real Birds Don't Eat Milo." Readers in the eastern half of North America nodded in agreement, but those folks in the Southwest howled their ridicule and protested loudly. Red milo is a staple of western bird feeding, especially in the Southwest where a variety of quail, doves, towhees, and sparrows readily eat it. In the East and upper Midwest, birds don't seem to eat milo much at all, so any mixed seed with a large percentage of milo will probably go mostly uneaten.

**5 Blackbirds/Squirrels Won't Eat Safflower Seed.** Safflower was once considered by many feeder operators to be the anti-blackbird and anti-squirrel food. Cardinals seemed to love it, but blackbirds and squirrels did not. That's not really true anymore, but nobody knows why. Many folks who feed safflower report that any bird or mammal that eats sunflower will also eat safflower. Safflower seed is still a nice alternative - it works in any feeder suitable for sunflower seed and it can be bought in bulk at feed stores. A blackbird and squirrel deterrent it is not, but then again, what is?

**4 There's Only One Hummingbird Species Found East of the Rockies.** Gone are the days when this statement could be considered true. There are even breeding records for other hummingbird species (mainly the buff-bellied hummingbird) in southern Texas. In winter this statement is even less accurate because there can be as many as 10 different hummingbird species visiting feeders throughout the southeastern states. In addition to our regular eastern breeder, the ruby-throated hummingbird, eastern states now regularly play host to rufous hummingbirds, a hardy species that can breed as far north as Alaska. It's unclear if this is a new phenomenon or if the growth of hummingbird feeding has made these birds more noticeable.

**3 Red Dye in Hummer Food Is Bad.** We'd like to think we know what is best for the birds we feed, but in a lot of cases, we don't. It certainly seems logical that adding food coloring to hummingbird nectar solution might not be good for the birds drinking it, but the fact is, we don't have any scientific proof to that effect. So it's one of those innocent-until-proven-guilty things. And until some scientist does the testing, there will continue to be millions of packages of red-dyed hummingbird nectar being sold and used. As Jerry Seinfeld used to say: "Not that there's anything wrong with that." This is what I'm saying: Any ornithology graduate students reading this? I've got an idea for your dissertation!



**2 Perches on Hummer Feeders Are Bad.** It started out as anecdotal evidence that grew into a wave of mild hysteria. Hummingbird feeders with perches were killing hummingbirds! How? Well, the hypothesis was that hummers would land on a feeder perch in the early morning and drink a deep slurp of very cold nectar, and this jolt of coldness would cause them to go into torpor, a trancelike state in which body functions slow drastically to conserve energy. Some hummers were found hanging upside down from their perches, while others fell to the ground and were at the mercy of predators. Witnesses reasoned that the hummers did not generate enough body heat while sitting and thus succumbed to the cold.

Removing the perches would force the hummers to hover while feeding, thus generating body heat. Now, before you go out and rip the perches off your feeders, consider that there are lots of reasons why a hummer might behave in this way. The bird could be in a natural state of torpor, which is how hummingbirds survive in extremely cold weather. A hummer that has been stung by a bee or wasp will behave strangely, as will one that is sick or perhaps injured from the fighting that occurs near a busy feeder. In my experience a feeder with perches allows many hummers to feed at once peacefully. Hummingbirds forced to hover at feeders seem to fight more readily, and are more active in defending a feeder. We don't have scientific evidence to prove that feeders with perches are bad for hummingbirds, so until we do, use your own good judgment.

**1 This Feeder Is 100% Squirrel Proof!** I am sorry, but there's just no way! Oh, you can make a feeder squirrel proof by placing it in the middle of a treeless lawn with a pole-baffle that would do the Pentagon proud. But nail that same feeder to your deck railing and watch the squirrels remove the confident smile from your face, along with all the seed in your feeder. Squirrels have the luxury of being way more resourceful than any bird feeder designer. Why? Because a squirrel is working to feed itself and its offspring, and it will throw itself into the task every single day. The squirrel thinks of nothing else but the seed inside that feeder, and how to get at it.

## Meet Our Educational Interns and Staff



### Ben Johnson - Adventure Coordinator



I grew up and went to school in Texas getting degrees in Environmental Studies and Spanish. While in school I became interested in outdoor recreation and guided rock climbing trips in Texas, North Carolina and Utah. Once I got a bit tired of living the transient lifestyle of a guide, I became the Sustainability Coordinator at Southwestern University. In June, I started as a Naturalist Intern at the Audubon Center and now serve as the Assistant Adventure Coordinator. I am very excited about the fall season to come

and am eagerly awaiting the kiddos. Of course I have begun to realize that it gets cold up here and am starting to quickly get warm clothes. Thanks for supporting the Audubon Center and I hope to see you around soon.

### Emily Mehr - intern



I am from Eagan, MN and have spent all of my life in one area of Minnesota or another, with the exception of a 3 month stint studying sustainable development in Costa Rica. I started working at the Audubon Center in June but took the second half of the summer to work on an organic CSA vegetable farm. Now that I am back at the Center, I will be working as a naturalist, also focusing on land management. I love canoeing, snowshoeing, camping and biking and am looking forward to experiencing all seasons here at the Audubon Center.

### Jenna Ingersoll - intern



I'm originally from Platteville, Wisconsin. I graduated from St. Olaf College in May with a double-major in Biology and Spanish. At the Audubon Center, I will be teaching as well as training Cica, the Eastern Screech Owl. My hobbies include camping, canoeing, hiking, dancing, and reading, and I look forward to snowshoeing for the first time this winter!

### Julia Avison - Wildlife Assistant



I'm Julia. AKA Miss Julia, The Great Ortini, or "Hey Miss Instructor Person Lady." I'm half English by ancestry, Californian by birth, and a wildlife biologist by training. I'm pretty quiet but very friendly. I spend most of my time at the barn hanging out with the birds, especially the Great Horned Owl. In my free time - what there is of it - I read, juggle, and paint badly. Want to learn to juggle? It's an exciting way to pick up random objects and hit yourself with them.



### Poppy Frater - intern

I am from the north of England. I just started as a naturalist intern at the Audubon Center and my focus is on wildlife rehabilitation and training. In my free time I enjoy horse-riding, hiking and reading. I am excited about developing my environmental education skills and training the American kestrel we have here!



### Renee Therriault - intern

My curiosity with the natural world began in my childhood on the Flathead Indian Reservation in western Montana. I graduated from the University of California-Davis with a degree in 'Nature and Culture' with a minor in English. In the last few years I have focused my interests on working with birds of prey. I enjoy peering at the world around us through the overlapping lenses of science and art. I also enjoy nature writings, aimless walks, coffee and owls. As a naturalist

intern here at the Audubon Center I hope to share my curiosity with the students that come here and utilize my focus in wildlife to pursue a career in captive raptor management and rehabilitation



### Sayaka Iwanaga - intern

I have been moving back and forth between Japan and United States throughout my life, although I consider Sasebo, Japan to be my hometown. I lived in Virginia as a child and moved back to Japan where I finished my primary education. I then moved to Ohio where I recently graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University with a zoology degree. I have always dreamed of working with wildlife, and I'm excited to work with Potter, our beautiful black raven.



### Todd Starling - intern

I grew up in Delisle in Saskatchewan, Canada. After high school, I went to college in Northwest Territories and Alberta, where I studied Natural Resource Technologies and Environmental Science. While in the NWT, I worked for Parks Canada as an interpreter. I started my internship here at ACNW in January. In my free time, I enjoy hiking, camping, fishing, biking, and sports.

## Alumni News

**Congratulations** to former interns Eliane Thaines ('06-'07) and Brian Bodah's ('05-'06) for the publication of their new book, *Environmental Education From Brazil to the U.S.* Both are living in Brasilia, Brazil - Eliane works for UNESCO and Brian is helping a French NGO organize a large international environmental conference in 2010.

## Women's Wellness & Adventure Weekend October 3-5, 2008

There is still room at our Fall Women's Wellness & Adventure Weekend. Make plans to join us for three days of renewal and relaxation, where the beauty of nature is a balm for the soul and the setting for a complete, holistic adventure. This special event will let you greet the changing seasons with restored creativity, confidence and energy.

Our Crosby Lodge offers comfortable, quiet rooms with private bathroom facilities. Our Chef will provide wholesome, creative meals. A mix of professionals in the fields of health, exercise, crafts and nutrition will provide a variety of physical, mental, and spiritual activities to choose from.

There will be a variety of classes and speakers to choose from, some of which include massage, reiki, hypnosis, canoeing, guided hikes, felting, beading, meditation, climbing wall, yoga, etc.. You can also choose to use the time to relax and reflect on all that is good in your life. A 10 minute seated massage/reiki is included in the weekend - additional massage/reiki minutes, as well as hypnosis session, are available for an additional cost. Interesting keynote speakers on Friday and Saturday evening provide much food for thought and inspiration for our daily lives.

Bring a friend or come on your own, but celebrate the changing seasons with a renewed feeling of energy and creativity. Cost for the Weekend: 2 people per room /\$240 each; 3 or more in a room/\$220 each. To learn more about the weekend or to get a brochure with registration form, call us at 888/404-7743 or visit our website, [www.audubon-center.org](http://www.audubon-center.org).



### Consider the Audubon Center when planning your holiday party or banquet

Give us a call at 320-245-2628 to reserve our beautiful lakeside dining hall with gorgeous stone fireplace for your next big event! With seating up to 200 and fantastic meals customized to your menu, it is sure to be a very enjoyable event that your guests will long remember!

Our wonderful chef, Tom Stelter, has an extensive background in the restaurant business, most recently at the Grand Casino in Hinckley. He will work with you to select a customized banquet menu, prepared fresh to satisfy every palate. Meals include a variety of exceptional cuisine with a focus on locally grown or organic items.



—“Winding Down” continued from page 1—

always has, and I am pleased to introduce you to the center's new co-directors.

Bryan Wood is an energetic and talented young man from Sartell and UMD. He has been an intern with us and he has been our adventure coordinator. Bryan will be in charge of the college, adult, retreat and conference aspects of the operations.

Joining Bryan as co-director will be Katie Kleese, another young and vibrant person with great work ethics and enthusiasm. She has been working in Portland, Oregon with the Public Interest Research Group and previously had worked for them in Connecticut following her internship with us. She has experience working with people, organization, and directing a non-profit operation. She will be in charge of K-12, charter schools, youth and family programs and promises to lead the Center into a new era of success in these key areas.

Supporting Katie and Bryan will be Char Husom, who will be the Center CFO. Over the years Char has been a key to our success and has done a marvelous job both in growing her skills and overseeing the front desk, registration, and finance. Now she will be the person who provides the financial oversight to support Bryan and Katie in their work and growth.

In this newsletter you hear from these two individuals about their hopes and dreams for the Center. In the next issue, look for an article from former Board President Tony Murphy about the decision to establish a co-directorship for the Center.

For me, the fall will be a mix of training and “last” events. I am gradually handing off parts of the responsibility so that all leadership is transferred by December and I will be gone March 21, 2009. With the coming of next spring, the leadership will be trained and in place and the new era will begin. I wish them great success and “Open Horizons” and Kate and I will move forward with our own adventures. Thanks to all of you who have been part of my life and career.

# Thank You!

## Donations, Memberships & Memorials

We would like to acknowledge and thank all those individuals and companies who have contributed to the Audubon Center of the North Woods. Through your support, we are able to provide the best environmental education opportunities for people of all ages.

### Owls

- Balcome, Helen
- Ebert, Christine
- Gulovsen, Ernie & Laura
- Latendresse, Connie
- Littell, Janice
- Schroeder, Cheryl
- Spong, Ronald & Kathleen
- Steensen, Lydia
- Sterner, Albin & Louise
- Van Natta, Eleanor

### Cranes

- Eggler, Melissa
- Hammerschmidt, Dale & Mary
- Hart, Michael & Connie
- Johnson, Cliff & Betty
- Schroedl, Russell
- Steensen, Lydia

### Otters

- Berg, Harold & Teresa
- Blechinger, Barbara
- Fisher, Susan
- Isaacson, Lauri & Judy
- Marshall School/Class of 2014
- Rath, Raymond & Celia
- Schoonover, Betty

### Loons

- Hanley, Anne & George Skinner
- Minneapolis Audubon Society
- Norfolk Southern Foundation

### Moose

- Mistretta, Roberta & Bud Turner

### Osprey

- Greystone Foundation/Walter McCarthy & Clara Ueland
- Janes, Donald
- Ruth Roberts Estate
- Steele, Gene

### Memorial

- In memory of David Fuller*
- Fuller, Robert & Elaine

### Honorary Gift

- In Honor of Linda Krach & Bob Kriel*
- Kriel, Helena

### Scholarship Fund

- Ryan Companies US, Inc.

### Adopt a Raptor

- Clarke, Alison
- Gausman, Bill

### Square x Square

- Anderson, Richard & Patricia
- Gauthier, William & Margaret
- Horton, Johanna
- Steensen, Lydia

### Grants

- Donald Weesner Foundation

### In-Kind Donations

- Inmann, Suzanne
- Seidmeyer, Judy
- Truer, Katharine
- Yazbeck, Helen

*Your support of the Audubon Center of the North Woods comes in a variety of different forms including seven different levels of membership, contributions to our Adopt-A-Raptor program, In-Kind donations, Memorial donations, Scholarship donations, and Planned Giving. To become a member, see the next page.*

*For more on how you can help support the Audubon Center of the North Woods, visit our website at [www.audubon-center.org](http://www.audubon-center.org) or give us a call at 320-245-2648.*

## \$40-for-40

### ***This year we celebrate our 40th Anniversary!!***

What better way to commemorate this milestone and acknowledge our work than to make an extra \$40 donation this year! Your contribution is, of course, tax deductible. You can easily make a special "40-for-40" contribution - click the 'Donate Now' button on our website ([www.audubon-center.org](http://www.audubon-center.org)) to make a quick and easy online donation, send in a check to ACNW, PO Box 530, Sandstone, MN 55072 or simply give us a call at 888-404-7743.

## ACNW Wish List

*We are in need of the items below. Remember, your 'in-kind' donations are tax-deductible.*

- 3/4 ton diesel engine pick-up truck for plowing snow
- reliable, fuel-efficient used car for intern use
- utility trailer
- scaffolding
- pressure sprayer
- small portable generator
- industrial-size washer & dryer
- roto tiller
- large glazed planting pots
- snowmobile for trail grooming
- pontoon boat
- bobcat/skidster
- electric golf cart (we plan to put solar panel on the roof)
- twin size mattresses in excellent condition
- trees, shrubs, garden plants
- new or excellent condition used matching couches and loveseats for Schwyzer and Lowry Lodge
- binoculars
- HDD camcorder
- LCD computer monitors (thin, flat energy-efficient kind)
- later model television
- tree corer
- cross country skis for very small children
- backpacking expedition packs
- sleeping bags in excellent condition



# Audubon Center of the North Woods

A proud leader in environmental education and renewable energy

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 Fax: 320-245-5272  
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Visit our website!  
[www.audubon-center.org](http://www.audubon-center.org)

## News from the North Woods

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Mike Link, Director  
 Kate Crowley, Editor  
 Laurie Fenner, layout

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# Join Us...Become a Friend to the Audubon Center

If you received this newsletter in the mail, you are already a member, or you are someone who has attended one of our programs recently.

With a membership in the Audubon Center of the North Woods, you receive this publication, a 10% discount off merchandise in our store, our regular e-newsletter (optional), invitations to special events, and the knowledge that your support lets us continue to provide quality environmental educations to thousands of people every year.

<i>Friendship Categories</i>			
OWLS	\$25-49	MOOSE	\$500-\$749
CRANES	\$50-99	EAGLES	\$750-\$999
OTTERS	\$100-249	OSPREY	\$1000+
LOONS	\$250-\$499	PLANNED GIVING	\$2,500+

**Memberships make terrific gifts for any occasion!**

**A Special Gift for Our Supporters!**  
 Donate \$100 or more and receive our unbleached cotton canvas, gusseted tote/grocery bag as a way of sending a special 'Thank You'. These great bags hold up to 40 pounds!

**ACNW MISSION STATEMENT**  
 To protect, improve and promote the enjoyment of the natural environment through formal and informal education programs and research; to assist and encourage environmental education programs, centers and careers.

Mail or fax to:  
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 PO Box 530, Sandstone, MN 55072  
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