



habitats

Nature Center Hosts Open House

On April 29, the Fair Hill Nature and Environmental Center held an open house for Cecil County school principals, science coordinators, and PTA presidents. The purpose of this informal gathering was to describe our educational programs, update our financial situation, and offer our support to schools wishing to offset the program fees instituted this spring.

The Nature Center was founded mainly to provide an outdoor educational experience for the students in Cecil County schools, as well as students in the tri-state area. We tell the children, "this is *your* school." The curricula taught by Center staff was written by Cecil County teachers and is designed to coordinate with what is taught in the classroom based on objectives in the county science curriculum guide. Environmental education is also mandated by Maryland state law, and our programs assist the teachers in meeting these requirements.

In the beginning, funding from the Cecil County Government helped with expenses. Students from the county attended our programs at no cost for two and a half years. Out-of-state students were charged a nominal fee. This year the county government eliminated its financial support to the Center, along with other non-profit organizations. This made it necessary to institute a program fee of \$4.00 per student effective this spring. The fee covers teacher salaries, transportation, and materials.

--Open House, pg. 4



Critters, Critters, Critters!

This year the education staff decided to teach the Critters program for second graders in March rather than December, when the weather would be better. BIG MISTAKE! We were hit with the Blizzard of '93 and had to do some quick rescheduling. Holly did a great job and everyone was given an alternate date. In the weeks that followed, we still had some very slushy hikes, but with the presence of snow we had the added advantage of finding some wonderful animal tracks.

The Critters program covers six animal groups which the second graders study in their science unit at school. Most students had already studied fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, insects, and mammals, and came to the Nature Center prepared to encounter our special "house guests." On loan from the Department of Natural Resources, they were introduced to a LARGE black rat snake which they could feel "first-hand" that reptiles are not slimy; a wide-eyed screech owl, and a barred owl (who thought he was a bat and hung upside down half the time!) Other live animals included fish, salamanders, a bull frog and turtles, all collected from the Nature Center grounds.

--Critters, pg. 2



Critters, cont.

Rooms in the Nature Center displayed skins, furs, stuffed mounts, shells and other biofacts that illustrated the characteristics of each animal group.

Of course, the best part of the program was outside the nature center! We hiked along marked (and sometimes "secret!") trails hunting for signs of animal life in the fields, forest and at our marsh. Each group made a list of the animals or animal signs that they found. One special study site had lots of animal clues, and the excitement of the students was catching as they exclaimed over finding a snake skin, deer skull, turtle shell, owl pellet, deer and muskrat tracks etc.

Comments from students are one of the best indicators of the success of this program. Here's just a sampling!

—*I like when we saw deer scat on the ground. I want to know how many deers you got?* Sarah Poist

—*I like all the neat things we found.* Rachel Smyth

—*I liked the trip because we walked in mud.* Heather Paxton

—*I had the best time in my life.* Kim Smyth

--Janet Hokuf, teacher naturalist

habitats community

We would like to thank the following people and companies for their financial support and generous donations of time, and services!



Welcome to New Members!

Sandy and Bill Betley
Michele Culley
Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Diamonte
Sam and Judy Fletcher
1st National Bank of Rising Sun
David and Maureen Frey
Robert and Susan Gell
Mr. and Mrs. Steven Groff
Wayne and Ann Hill
Charles and Mimi Link
J.W. McCarley, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Roy Rector
Gretchen Schlitz
Scott and Scott Attorneys
Jean T. Smith
Peggy Swyka
Terry and Diane Wasko

Grants and Donations

Reid Cameron
Chesapeake City VFW
Conowingo Power Company
County Bank
Caroline DuPont
Patsy DuPont
The DuPont Co.—*sponsors of the 7th grade Chesnet program*
Patsy DuPont
North East Builders Club
Philadelphia Electric Co.—*sponsors of the 1st grade Habitat Hunt program*



In-kind Services

Cecil County Public Schools—*rain suits*
The DuPont Co.—*lab equipment*
Entomological Society of Delaware—*insect books*
Rising Sun Library—*books*
Soil Conservation Service—*VCR*

Our Volunteers

Brad and Jason,
--*community service students from Rising Sun High Sch.*
Bernadine and Les Coleman,
--*volunteer activities*
Suzanne Delano Dunn,
--*membership activities*
Steve Lucas and his Boy Scout troop,
--*repairing the rolling bridge damaged in winter storms*
Dr. Pop Pop,
--*teaching consultant for aquatics programs*

Quote of the Quarter

While observing scores of American toads laying eggs in our marsh, one student commented,

"You know, it's kind of a private thing, but they don't seem to care."

Fair Hill Nature and Environmental Center Summer Events Calendar

June

- 19 * Entomology Day (all ages)
20 Fair Hill Nature and Environmental
Center Annual Meeting

28-

- July 2 **Nature Craft Camp** (7 to 12 years)
Create nature crafts, hike and play games.

For a description
and registration information
for programs appearing after a symbol,
contact the Nature Center
at 398-4909.

July

- 5-9 **Summer Critters Camp #1**
(5 to 7 years)
*Explore the diverse habitats surrounding
the nature center on hikes and through
environmental games and activities.*

Junior Ranger/Hiking Camp (8 to 10 years)
*Complete the requirements for a Junior Ranger
badge while investigating the great outdoors at
Fairhill.*

- 10 * Blue Crabs and Crawdads (all ages)

- 12-16 **Summer Critters Camp #2**
(5 to 7 years)
Same as session #1

Hiking Camp (10 to 12 years)
*Hike through the fields and woods of Fair Hill,
all the way to Pennsylvania and Little Egypt!*

- 19-23 **Young Naturalist Camp**
(8 to 12 years)
*Become a scientist and investigate some of
the wonders of nature.*



- 24 * Living in Water (8-12 years)

Summer Camp Information

All Camps take place from 9:00 a.m.
to 11:30 a.m.

Fees

Members \$40.00
Nonmembers \$45.00

Full payment is due at time of
registration.

Withdrawals: A full refund is
available up to two weeks before the
scheduled program.

Programs are limited to 15 camp-
ers. Others will be placed on a waiting
list and new classes will be opened
when enough children are on the list. A
full refund will be mailed to you if there
is insufficient enrollment, and you will
be notified at least one week in ad-
vance.

1993 Summer Camp Application Form

Fair Hill Nature and Environmental Center
630 Tawes Drive, Elkton, MD 21921. Phone: (410) 398-4909

Enclosed is \$_____ for Program fees

Camper name(s) _____

Birthdate _____ Home Telephone _____

Parent's name _____

Address (incl. zip) _____

Program Title _____ Program date _____

*MEDICAL: Please indicate any important information about medications,
allergies, physical disabilities, etc. that the instructors may need to know.*

Make checks payable to Fair Hill Environmental Foundation, Inc.

Nominations for Board of Directors Sought

The election for positions on the Nature Center's Board of Directors will be held during the membership's annual meeting on June 20. If you are interested in serving a three-year term on the Board and would like your name placed in nomination, pick up an application at the Nature Center or send the appropriate information to:



Jerry Hendricks
50 Lewisville Road
Elkton, MD 21921

Please include a short description of yourself; e.g., activities, experience, or interests. This information will be shared at the annual meeting so that the general membership will know the candidates.

Nature Center Wish List

household tools
children's boots, sizes 13 to 4
one or two stereoscopic microscopes
microwave oven



Open House, cont.

The Nature Center wishes to continue to serve all schools by providing high quality education programs as a direct extension of classroom curricula. Currently we are seeking ways to help teachers offset the cost of a field trip to the Center. One excellent possibility is for teachers to apply for grants from the Chesapeake Bay Trust. Grants are now available to assist with field trips and the Trust is encouraging teachers to apply. The application forms are simple to fill out and the staff at the Trust is happy to help teachers with questions they may have regarding the application procedure. The Nature Center is also offering assistance by holding an informal grant-writing workshop later this spring, during which teachers can complete the form. Anyone interested in attending please call the Nature Center at 398-4909 for more information. Contact Richard Leader, Project Coordinator of the Chesapeake Bay Trust, for information on their grant program. You may reach him at 60 West Street, Suite 200-A Annapolis, MD 21401.

We enjoy working with all of our students in the special environment of an outdoor school. Let's continue to involve our children in hands-on experiences designed to enrich and improve our world.

—Holly Hannum, Outdoor School Director

Fair Hill Environmental Foundation, Inc.

630 Tawes Drive, Elkton, MD 21921

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