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**Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights:
Wild Friends Comes on Board for 2012!**



This year, the Wild Friends program has chosen the passage of the 2012 Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights as the focus of their program. This memorial, which would provide support for state agencies to develop and advertise outdoor programs for children, was introduced in the legislature in prior years, but failed to pass. We're hopeful that working together with EEANM and others in the community, the Wild Friends can help to successfully pass this important piece of legislation, for the sake of our children and all future generations.

Wild Friends, an award-winning educational program at the University of New Mexico School of Law, Institute of Public Law, brings students and lawmakers together to help solve wildlife issues in our state. The program integrates civics, science and language arts for students across New Mexico in grades 4-12. We work with teachers and students who research a wildlife issue of concern, study the democratic process, draft legislation to address the issue, and then communicate directly with state legislators. Wild Friends staff provide curriculum materials, mentoring, speakers and wildlife presentations, and

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EEANM *PRESIDENT*

From the President:



As the school year swings back into session, many of us find elation in the recent rains! After a slow summer of barely there monsoons, closed forests and ashy skies... the cooler nights remind us that fall is coming. If the heat kept you inside this summer, you'll be happy to know about fabulous new indoor environmental education facility at the Rio Grande Nature Center State Park (see photos below). Highlighting green design and spacious learning areas, this building is a great addition to the State Park system and the community opportunities along the Rio Grande bosque.

EEANM has been busy indoors working to create outdoor delights as well! With a full day retreat in August board members worked with professionals to help capture the passion and engagement of our constituents and turn it into working capital. Providing teacher workshops, networking opportunities (like our annual conference – Oct. 20-21st in Farmington, NM) and newsletters are just a portion of what we do... pushing for environmental literacy and working to professionalize the career path of environmental education in the state keeps us busy. As always your support both in term of time and finances are helpful to reach these goals.

As the school year continues we'll be looking for NEW board members in the fall that are willing to share their energy and time to help push environmental education into the community limelight of New Mexico! Our board has worked hard to establish a job description that fits our goals and continues to diversify our partnerships.

Cheers,

Kimi Scheerer, EEANM Board President



(Continued from page 1)

field trips to the NM State Legislature during the legislative session. There the students get the chance to meet with lawmakers and other leaders, write letters, testify before legislative committees, and speak at press conferences and other events.

Since the program's founding in 1991, over 10,000 Wild Friends students have initiated almost twenty memorials and bills in the New Mexico State Legislature to help New Mexico's wildlife and environment. These bills and memorials have resulted in the designation of a state butterfly for New Mexico, increased penalties for poaching of wildlife, the prohibition of "cyber-hunting", recycling programs at the Roundhouse, and increased crossings and corridors for wildlife, among others.

Teachers in the Wild Friends program consistently rave about what the program offers: "Wild Friends is an amazing program that allows students to interact and engage in the processes of their own government... The students feel so involved and work hard to make a difference for animals and people... The program provides experiences critical to education that schools can no longer provide."

For more information about Wild Friends, contact Susan George, Director (sgeorge2@unm.edu; 277-5089) or visit <http://wildfriends.unm.edu>

EEANM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers

President

Kimi Scheerer
Albuquerque
(505) 898-6388
ksche@bosqueschool.org

Vice-President

Kristina Ortez de Jones
Taos
(505) 243-7767
kristina.ortez@sierraclub.org

Treasurer

Amy Landers
Albuquerque, NM 87102
(505) 764-6285
alanders@cabq.gov

Secretary

Stephanie Bestelmeyer, Ph.D.
Las Cruces
(575) 524-3334
stephanie@asombro.org

At Large Members

Steve Blake
Silver City
(505) 388-3268
steve.blake@aldoleopoldhs.org

Donna Grein
Santa Fe
(505) 827-6565
donna.grein@state.nm.us

Becky Kerr
Flora Vista
(505) 334-1702
bkerr@boep.org

Garth Smelser
Alamogordo
(575) 313-6714
gsmelser@fs.fed.us

Larry Winn
Gallup
(505) 879-3060
connections@qwestoffice.net

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Barbara Garrity

info@eeanm.org

505-715-7021

EEANM Board of Directors Call for Nominations

Please submit nominations to Elections and Nominations Committee Chair, Garth Smelser, at gsmelser@fed.fs.us.

[Click here](#) for the Board Member Job Description.

[Click here](#) for the Board Member Nomination Form.

Nominations are due by September 30, 2011. An online election will take place from Oct. 1—Oct. 21. Results will be announced at the Annual Meeting at the EEANM/NMSTA conference in Farmington.



The National Leopold Education Conference comes to Albuquerque

by Jean Szymanski

The end of July brought 50 people from across the country to Albuquerque for the national Leopold Education Project (LEP) conference. The theme for this year's conference was "Aldo Leopold's Land Ethic - Then and Now."

LEP is an environmental education curriculum based on the classic writings of conservationist, Aldo Leopold. The Leopold Education Project teaches the public about our ties to the natural environment and the effort to conserve and protect our natural resources. LEP curriculum materials and workshops are supported by Pheasants Forever out of St. Paul, MN.

For the past 17 years the conference has been held in Baraboo, WI at the Aldo Leopold Foundation near the "Shack," (a re-built chicken coop). The Shack and the worn-out farm along the Wisconsin River is where he and his family initiated their *own ecological restoration experiment*. They planted thousands of pine trees, restored prairies, and documented the changes in the flora and fauna which further informed and inspired Leopold. This year, however, Janine Kohn, national LEP coordinator said, "We wanted to visit a new place and trace Leopold's early career in the Southwest."

The conference began with a pre-conference field trip to "Mia Casita" in Tres Piedras, on the Carson NF. Mia Casita is the home Leopold built for his new bride, Estella Bergere of Santa Fe, while he worked on the Carson NF. The group was graciously welcomed by Kendall Clark, the Carson NF Supervisor, and members of her staff: Kathy DeLucas and Bill Westbury, and Tres Piedras District Ranger Chris Furr and his staff: Yancey Ranspot and Ron Trujillo. There were also two guest appearances: one from Ben Romero retired District Ranger at TP, who spoke about the restoration of the house and one from Palemon Martinez, a local landowner and rancher who provided some perspective on how the land in northern New Mexico was back in Leopold's time and how it is today.

That evening, Regional Forester Corbin Newman gave remarks to officially open the conference in Albuquerque. Following that, Dana Vackar-Strang, the NM LEP coordinator presented the first annual Dr. Richard Becker Award. Richard Becker passionately participated in conservation efforts across NM. He shared his knowledge about conservation, service learning, environmental education and the importance of Aldo Leopold's land ethic while emphasizing partnerships and collaboration. (see page 5 for more on this award).

The following two days participants attended concurrent sessions and listened to keynote speakers Bill deBuys (writer and conservationist) and David Parsons (wildlife biologist and ecologist). Bill deBuys spoke about the things that most inspired Leopold. He mentioned three significant things: the Shack, seeing the forests in Germany in such bad condition, and the Rio Gavilan in Mexico, which he saw as an example of the perfect ecosystem.



David Parsons spoke about the reintroduction of the Mexican gray wolf and how it has affected ecosystems. The last evening took place at Posada Ranch in Edgewood, NM, where two of Leopold's great-grand nieces (of Santa Fe), spoke about the land ethic in their family through the years. The evening ended with songs written and played by two of the participants of the conference.

"The problem, then, is how to bring about a striving for harmony with land among a people many of whom have forgotten there is any such thing as land, among whom education and culture have become almost synonymous with landlessness. This is the problem of conservation education." —Aldo Leopold



Dr. Richard W. Becker Award of Excellence in Environmental Education by Dana Vackar Strang



Donald Becker (Richard's Brother), Eileen Wood, Dana Vackar Strang, and Tish Morris (photo by Cheryl Riley)

The Dr. Richard W. Becker Award of Excellence in Environmental Education honored outstanding teachers and the award's namesake at the national Leopold Education Project's Annual Conference in Albuquerque in July 2011. Two distinguished members of the environmental education community, Tish Morris and Eileen Wood, were awarded the first annual Dr. Richard W. Becker Award of Excellence in Environmental Education. Dr. Becker was a champion of conservation, environmental education and service learning across the state of New Mexico and beyond.

"The Pheasants Forever LEP Conference was a great opportunity to honor Dr. Becker's memory and celebrate the many contributions he made across New Mexico. He was the State Coordinator for LEP in New Mexico and a board member with many other organizations including past president of the Environmental Education Association of New Mexico. Through his experience, he was excellent at networking people from various conservation organizations," stated Dana Vackar Strang, Director of Education for Audubon New Mexico and the current NM State Coordinator for LEP. "Both awardees reflect qualities that Richard exhibited and held in high regard," she added.

Tish Morris has worked for the NM Museum of Natural History and Science since 1984, running summer science camps, teaching volunteer museum docents, planning exhibits, writing curriculum, training teachers in environmental education, leading field trips and working with students and families. Like Dr. Becker, Tish has shared much of her time and knowledge by participating in organizations such as the National Science Teachers Association, the National Association of Interpretation, and EEANM.

Eileen Wood has impacted her community during her 27 years as a teacher in the New Mexico public school system. At Mountainview Elementary School, Eileen has introduced her students to Aldo Leopold and the Land Ethic by rallying her students around conservation issues impacting their community and school. She and her students have designed and built a nature area that includes study plots, wildlife observation and a place to journal. They've also designed a natural drainage system allowing them to learn about water harvesting. Eileen's life and work are committed to stewardship and conservation at school and her ranch.

Both Tish and Eileen received a cash award for their programs and an engraved turkey call, as a special tribute to Dr. Becker. The sponsors this year included: Audubon New Mexico, the Environmental Education Association of New Mexico, the family of Dr. Richard W. Becker, the Friends of the Whitfield Wildlife Conservation Area, the Middle Rio Grande Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, Pheasants Forever and the Leopold Education Project, the Quivira Coalition, the Valencia Soil and Water Conservation District and other anonymous donors. This award will recognize outstanding educators or conservation projects at future annual conferences for the Environmental Education Association of New Mexico.

Rio Grande Nature Center Education Building Opens its Doors



On August 27 the New Mexico State Parks Division opened the doors to the new education building at the Rio Grande Nature Center. The new building will be used for teacher workshops, school field trip orientations, summer camps, volunteer training and public programs. The Rio Grande Nature Center opened in 1982 and visitation has increased to over 130,000 a year. "It is exciting to have a great new facility to meet the demand for outdoor education programs about the Bosque ecosystem," said Tommy Mutz, New Mexico State Parks Director. "The Nature Center has always been at the education forefront through its innovative programs and passionate staff and volunteers—inspiring the State Park Outdoor Classroom Program for the entire park system."

The Rio Grande Nature Center is a key component in the State Park Outdoor Classroom Program, which has reached over 100,000 school kids since 2007, providing exciting, hands-on programs that support outdoor classroom teaching. The program provides transportation grants, teacher trainings, hands-on resources, and stewardship programs. It is partially funded through a personal income tax check-off for Kids to Parks. The 2011-2012 grant cycle will open to teachers in late August/early September.

"The Rio Grande Nature Center is the gold standard for the State Park Outdoor Classroom Program," said Christy Tafuya, Education and Resource Manager for New Mexico State Parks Division. "Now, with the new education building, we can serve students, teachers, and the community even more effectively." One-third of all school kids who visited State parks last year came to the Rio Grande Nature Center. Park staff and volunteers use the curriculum-based Bosque Education Guide as the basis for many of their programs, teaching students about the importance of the Rio Grande and the Bosque. The Rio Grande Nature Center provides field trips, junior ranger programs, and summer nature discovery programs for kids, bird walks, nature walks, night sky programs, and special events like the Herb Fest and Summer Wings Festival. "We are very grateful to have this new education space," stated Beth Dillingham, Park Superintendent. "It will help us do a better job in our education programs and in serving all of our visitors to the park."

State Park Architect Rob Vadurro designed the new education building with energy savings, functionality and beauty in mind. Several green building techniques were utilized in this facility. The building is extensively insulated, with a minimum of R-45 roof and R-35 walls. Windows are insulated and double low-e glazed. Foundations and floor slabs also have a high degree of insulation. The building has very effective solar day-lighting features, especially the roof-ridge skylights. The building also employs modest passive solar space heating techniques. Together with the high insulation values, these energy efficient measures bring the building envelope losses or gains to an extremely low level, minimizing the need for additional cooling, heating or daytime lighting. There are solar photovoltaic power panels to generate what little additional electrical power it will need. It is grid-connected, and models show that it will be a "net

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zero energy” building; that is, it will generate with solar cells at least as much power as it consumes. The building includes a storm water capture system that collects nearly all the rainwater from the roofs and stores it in cisterns for irrigation. The project uses only low-water-using restroom fixtures, including dual-flush water closets. The building features a trellis system for vines on the west façade to shield against the hot summer afternoon sun. “The flexibility and durability of the building will allow for a great many uses far into the future,” stated Rob Vadurro, State Park Architect.

“It is our hope that this educational building will inspire our visitors to understand, love, and defend the natural world.” The Rio Grande Nature Center would not be able to provide many of the education programs, festivals and bird walks without its very talented Friends of the Rio Grande Nature Center Volunteers. These volunteers help provide classes for over 5,000 school children each year, manage the Nature Shop, and support a number of ecological research projects. The park offers naturalist-led hikes, Bosque exploration, exhibits, hands-on activities, teacher workshops, seasonal classes and special events for visitors of all ages. For more information please call 877-NMPARKS or visit www.nmparks.com

Registration is Open! Call for Proposals!

Soar to Greater Heights:

Connecting to Earth and Education

Environmental Education
Association of New Mexico



New Mexico Science
Teachers Association



October 20-22, 2011

Piedra Vista High School, Farmington, NM

Register and/or submit your proposal at www.nmsta.org

2011 American Tree Farm Convention



Mary Stuever, Chama District Forester, leads an activity about the Rio Grande from the Bosque Education Guide..

The American Tree Farm System 2011 National Tree Farmer Convention was a HUGE success. New Mexico tree farmers, foresters, and the New Mexico Tree Farm Committee hosted the annual National American Tree Farm System Convention at the Tamaya Resort on the Santa Ana Pueblo 9 - 11 August, 2011. Charlie Wicklund, our Treasurer, chaired the convention committee and did a terrific job herding all the cats. The convention was attended by approximately 310 tree farmers and their families from 38 states. The convention began with a superb heavy hors d'oeuvre "Meet and greet" reception where tree farmers were able to get to know each other and discuss common issues. Each evening, the Outdoor Underwriters insurance company sponsored a hospitality suite where attendees could further their discussions over a complimentary beer or two. Several of our committee members (names withheld to protect the guilty) held a LOT of discussions in the hospitality suite.

The second day consisted of several concurrent sessions such as "Cameras and Critters" – how to set up wildlife cameras for the best photos (this was my favorite); "Certification System for Family Forest Owners"; "Spreading the Seeds about the Benefits of Becoming a



The youth model their tree vests that they made.

Certified Tree Farmer”; “Chain Saw Safety and Maintenance;” “What Women Want in Working the Land”; “Benefits of the Farm Bill for Tree Farmers;” plus several other interesting presentations. In an effort to engage the younger generation and foster a family legacy, a youth program was included again this year with the help of AFF’s environmental education program-Project Learning Tree (PLT). About 15 youth (ages 5-18) registered to attend. While parents and grandparents attended various convention events, their children and grandchildren joined Mary Stuever, Barbara Garrity, Jean Szymanski and Dan Ware, (all of New Mexico PLT) for a day of PLT activities, a short hike in the Bosque and time to cool off in the pool. The day ended by engaging the youth in an activity from the Bosque Education Guide, where they learned about the Rio Grande ecosystem, through time. The following evening began with a youth banquet, followed by a traditional Native American pottery class with Jemez Pueblo potter, Roberta Shendo, and fireside constellation storytelling by Donna Thatcher, complete with s’ mores.



Carla Rapp, PLT Coordinator from Georgia, led an activity in the bosque.

Upcoming Teacher/Educator Workshops

For more information contact Barbara Garrity at info@eeanm.org or (505) 715-7021.

October 6	Project Learning Tree <i>early childhood educators</i>	Rio Rancho
October 20	Project WET/Climate Change <i>middle and high school educators</i>	Farmington
November 4	Project WET/Climate Change <i>middle and high school educators</i>	Silver City
November 5	Project Learning Tree <i>elementary educators</i>	Silver City
November 11	Project Learning Tree <i>elementary educators</i>	El Paso
December 3	Project Learning Tree <i>elementary educators</i>	Taos
Date TBD	Project Learning Tree <i>elementary educators</i>	Carlsbad
February 15	Project WET <i>elementary educators</i>	Gallup

To **R**egister, **E**xhibit, **P**resent *and/or* **L**earn more... visit:



www.nmsta.org



www.eeanm.org

NMSTA/EEANM Annual Conference

Soar to Greater Heights

Connecting Earth and Education

Farmington, NM

LOCATION: Piedra Vista High School, 5700 College Blvd, 87402

DATES: October 21st & 22nd

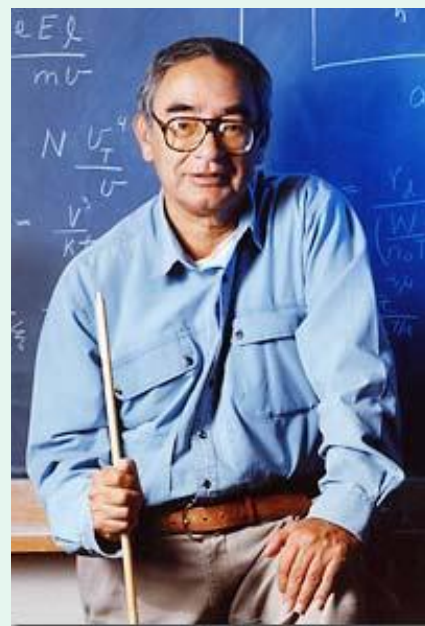
Extended Learning: October 20th

Featuring Navajo physicist

Fred Begay

8:30 am ~ Friday, October 21st

As a child, Fred Young hunted birds and wild animals with primitive weapons, spoke only the Indian languages Ute and Navajo, went to a medicine man when he was sick, and slept under the stars. Dr. Begay is now a nuclear physicist working on the laser fusion project at the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory .



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name:		
Affiliation:		
Year-round Mailing Address:		
City/:	State:	Zip Code:
Phones:		
Work ()	Home ()	Cell ()
Email Address:		Web Address:

CHOOSE ONE OF THE MEMBERSHIP TYPES

- Limited Income/Student Membership.....\$20.00
- Individual Membership.....\$30.00
- Organizational Membership.....\$60.00

ECO-ED

The Listserve for New Mexico Environmental Educators

If you haven't signed on to the eco-ed listserv, you are missing out on a great form of communication regarding environmental education in New Mexico. To sign up, go to our website at www.eeanm.org and follow the instructions. And don't forget to join EEANM to support this great service! Problems? contact Barbara Garrity, (505) 715-7021 or info@eeanm.org



NAAEE 40TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina • October 12-15, 2011

The annual conference of the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) is offering it's annual conference next month. Attend and learn what people are doing in other states and provinces throughout the US, Canada and Mexico! Become inspired and informed by the many sessions on everything from environmental issues, climate change, and environmental justice to network and leadership.