



WEIS ECOLOGY CENTER

"DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS BY INCREASING AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF ECOLOGICAL RELATIONSHIPS." FOUNDER -- MAY WEIS

This is the first of what will become a regularly issued newsletter for the Weis Ecology Center. Our intention is to make this a forum for keeping our friends and colleagues apprised of our progress as an environmental education center. We invite your comments and criticisms.

LOOKING BACK

1980 was a busy year for the Weis Ecology Center, reflecting our continued growth. Our Summer constituency, including renters, lodgers and day visitors were welcomed with our renewed commitment to help stimulate their environmental awareness. To that end, renters cooperated by volunteering their time to the Center. Projects included the development of a community organic garden and of various interpretive successional sites.

Our Summer/Fall weekend programs were well attended with the final two offerings having over 30 participants each. All programs were led by professionals, many from area universities.

Several local and non-local school and scouting groups contacted the Center for specially designed day programs. Center staff also spoke at a local high school to students regarding environmental careers. Additionally, we custom-tailored a series of interpretive hikes for the Montclair Adult School. On one occasion we provided special bilingual programming for a Hispanic group from New York City.

The custom programming potential for resident groups, those interested in staying for more than a day, was buoyed by the Fieldston School from New York. Their extended stay, which included a nightwalk and iron mine explorations, was very favorably critiqued.

Our visibility as an organization committed to environmental education was enhanced by considerable free radio and newspaper announcements of our programs. Additionally, we were featured in articles and radio programs about the Center or on ecologically related subjects.

During 1980 we started a long-range renovation plan to better accommodate groups and conferences. The top floor of the main building was upgraded to lodge school and other groups in dormitory fashion. Wood stoves were added, both to decrease our dependency on fossil fuel and to stimulate the public's awareness of wood as an alternative fuel.

STAFF

With the reorganization and redefinition of its staff, the center welcomes three new people to its ranks.

Charlene Blackmon is the Operations Manager, responsible for overall operation of the office and lodging aspects of the center. She received an Associate degree from Harford Community College in Maryland and will graduate from Ramapo College this month with a B.S. in Human Ecology. Charlie has also been instrumental in planning the establishment of a recycling center in Ringwood. She most recently worked as our summer assistant manager.

Marc Breslav is our new Program Coordinator. He is responsible for the educational and environmental aspects of the center, including the newsletter. Marc is a graduate of Cornell University and has done graduate work at George Williams College. For the past ten years he has been involved extensively in environmental education, communication, and research work, most recently with the Massachusetts Audubon Society.

Dan Hogan is the Facilities Manager, responsible for maintenance and security of center buildings and grounds. He grew up locally in West Milford and has worked in similar capacities previously, most recently as Assistant Maintenance Manager of a Vermont ski resort.

Stephen Tarnell continues as Executive Director.

ISSUES

The Weis Ecology Center has begun to involve itself in the educational aspects of certain local environmental issues. Charlene Blackmon, our Operations Manager has been involved in a Ramapo College internship to establish a recycling center here. In her research, Charlie discovered that the state was proposing an incentive plan to initiate recycling operations in each municipality. She then shifted her focus toward encouraging the borough of Ringwood to make use of this pending funding opportunity.

Several meetings were held among representatives of the state, the borough, the Ringwood Environmental Commission, the established Montclair recycling program, and our Center. Through these meetings, borough officials were convinced of the need to take advantage of the potential funds. Presently, the Weis Ecology Center and the Ringwood Environmental Commission are working on educational publicity and are scouting possible sites.

We will also be sponsoring an issues internship in conjunction with PIRG, ANJEC, and the Highlands Association. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is an alternative to aerial spraying for Gypsy Moth control, a critical issue in this major watershed area. In order for IPM seminars to be held for local government officials and for the public, preliminary research on past local control strategies must be done. Our intern will be conducting this research and will then work towards convincing area towns of the validity of the IPM approach.



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