INSPIRING LEARNING

THROUGH IMMERSION
Dear Friends,

Wolf Ridge is a place where knowledge meets inspiration, and for more than 40 years we have been developing a citizenry that is more apt to care and take action. Our naturalists plant ideas that flourish and bear fruit for a lifetime. Naturalists who train and teach at Wolf Ridge share our mission with thousands of students each year. The Wolf Ridge impact grows exponentially as those naturalists leave to work all over the world. Just as children do in our Ropes Course class, Wolf Ridge continues to set new goals and push ourselves to create more meaningful learning experiences in the outdoors for children, adults, and families. These lifelong memories of learning are created daily in our absolutely magnificent classroom of 2000 acres overlooking Lake Superior.

From children’s hands in the soil of our new organic farm to the discovery of a wolf track in the snow or a youth and their mentor immersed in scientific research as they challenge their hypothesis alongside a stream, learning experiences this past year at Wolf Ridge remained focused on building people not systems. Wolf Ridge is an organization focused on leadership that requires courage, purpose and vision.

Enjoy the images and stories of this past year. Our achievements have been tremendous and as we look ahead, nearing the end of our 2012-15 Strategic Plan, more news and powerful plans are still to come. Thank you for the support you’ve provided. We consider you our partner in developing the environmental learners and leaders of the next generation.

Sincerely,

Peter Smerud,  
Executive Director

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Dear Friends of Wolf Ridge,

I want to use this occasion to give you a “heads up” on some of the big plans for Wolf Ridge’s future. Building on over 40 years of bringing innovative environmental education to hundreds of thousands of school children, Wolf Ridge is preparing for major improvements to our land, facilities, and curriculum.

Maps, sketches, and drawings of building changes to the West dormitory and related facilities now appear regularly at our board and staff meetings. Architects, engineers, and consultants are seen interviewing teachers, parents, chaperones, and students to determine the best possible methods for delivering environmental education in the next 40 plus years. The long term vision and hard work of many people over several years will result in significantly improved facilities for students and staff.

Included in this planning effort are a completely remodeled West dormitory, a new maintenance building, and a separate housing facility for our student naturalists. And since environmental concerns also change over time, modifications to our curriculum are also in active development. For example, in order to address the serious issues of fresh water on the planet, we are planning a new curriculum to make better use of our amazing neighbor, Lake Superior, as a vehicle to teach about the use and care of water.

Add all this to our existing campus facilities and you see why all are excited about the future of Wolf Ridge. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I thank all our donors for their continued generosity. Your help was critical to a successful year. I hope you will continue to be engaged and watch for more announcements as we move forward in 2015.

Sincerely,

Tom Berg,  
Chair, Board of Trustees
The days are hot and the daylight is long. Summer programs at Wolf Ridge aren’t just for kids. We have trips and camps for families, adventures for grandparents and their grandkids through Road Scholar, and classes for adults. New archery equipment obtained through the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources hit a bullseye.

FARM

With the support of many, we are transforming the dream of a sustainable organic farm at Wolf Ridge into reality. North House Folk School classes supplied the timber frame structure and built a brick pizza oven for our outdoor classroom. Teaching of the first on-farm classes took place. Native bees, important for pollination, flew over our shoulders and into the holes of a “bee hotel” we were constructing, proving that they already appreciated this new nesting habitat. Beds for annual pizza herbs and flowers to attract pollinators were built. Our dining hall served a variety of vegetables harvested from the farm. The season ended with erecting two additional high tunnel greenhouses.

ADULT EDUCATION

Both the beginning and advanced bird banding classes that Wolf Ridge hosted with the Institute of Bird Populations had waiting lists. Other adults enjoyed learning on phenology adventures with Minnesota naturalist and phenologist Jim Gilbert.
SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAMS

Wolf Ridge’s summer youth camp is designed to include all of the fun of a traditional summer camp along with meaningful science and environmental education. Trips and specialty camps are big attractions. The Grand Portage Expedition canoe trip retraced the original route of fur traders from Snowbank Lake to Lake Superior.

SCIENCE IMMERSION CREDIT PROGRAMS

Wolf Ridge has been working with schools in the Twin Cities and Duluth for the last five years to develop a variety of science immersion credit programs (aka SEAK). These programs are designed for middle and high school students who might not otherwise be able to participate in extended hands-on learning science programs. The goal is to get young people outside of urban environments, immersed in the natural world, and find out that learning science is fun!

The programs meet during the school day or after school and include several weekends during the school year and 2 – 3 weeks in the summer at Wolf Ridge. All students who successfully complete the program earn elective science credits for their work and some go on in future years to become mentors or interns.

The US Forest Service has helped fund all these programs and is a partner with Wolf Ridge in providing hands-on education in the field and opening up career opportunities to the students.

“\textit{I was not sure what to expect when I first joined SEAK during my sophomore year of high school. Now, as I slip into the next school year as a senior, I can’t begin to think of where I would be without SEAK or Wolf Ridge. I’ve discovered my love for the outdoors and science. I especially love the teaching style here; ...thank you for the chance to discover the world and all its beauty. The more I learn, the more I realize how much I do not know – encouraging my interest in knowledge and growth.}”

~ SEAK student 2014
**SCHOOL YEAR**

Authentic learning happens in those moments when you get to experience things for yourself. Wolf Ridge makes those moments happen for the students that participate in our programs.

**SCHOOL PROGRAM**

Serving over 12,000 students, parents, and teachers annually, Wolf Ridge’s K-12 programs provide an immersive educational experience in a magnificent outdoor classroom. Teachers bring their students to Wolf Ridge for three or five days to support and enhance the learning that happens in their classrooms. Students have the opportunity to discover the wonders of the natural world, step back in time and experience Minnesota cultural history and explore their own independence as both learners and individuals.

With the help of the Weesner Foundation, Wolf Ridge added a second Frozen Lake Study class this last year. In this class, students explore the vibrant landscape locked under the ice of Wolf Lake. They study the ecology of a frozen lake, analyze water samples, learn the history and importance of ice cutting, and even get to try their hand at some ice fishing.

**NATURALIST TRAINING PROGRAM**

Since 1974, this program has served more than 800 adult students with diverse backgrounds who come to this learning community to sharpen their skills in environmental education. Each year 16 new students partake in this life shaping experience. Our Naturalist Training Program is a total immersion residential learning program designed so that they will learn from practice - teaching, exploring, and living in community.

Wolf Ridge student naturalists explore both theory and practice combining a rich understanding of the psychological needs of students with real-life experience. While participating in graduate level coursework covering theoretical aspects of pedagogy (earning 12 graduate credits and a Certificate of Environmental Education), they also teach an average of six 3-hour classes per week.
Our mission is to develop a citizenry that has the knowledge, skills, motivation, and commitment to act together for a quality environment.
LEAVE A LEGACY. Include Wolf Ridge as a beneficiary of your will, trust, retirement account plan, or life insurance policy. Your planned gift sustains Wolf Ridge’s excellence by supporting our endowment and ensures we can educate future generations about the importance of the natural world. Become part of the Wolf Ridge Heritage Circle.
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In Memory of Michael Plautz
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Gloria Plautz

2013-2014 Program Attendance

SCHOOLS & GROUPS

Youth     8,842
Adults    2,471

NATURALIST TRAINING 20

COLLEGES/CONFERENCES/OTHER 490

ROAD SCHOLAR & FAMILIES 193

OUTREACH 1024

SUMMER YOUTH 695
**Statement of Activities**

**Expenses**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program services</td>
<td>$2,308,248</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management &amp; general</td>
<td>346,235</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>63,419</td>
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**Total Expenses before Depreciation** $2,717,902

**Revenue and Other Support**

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<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program revenue</td>
<td>$2,223,017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investment income &amp; one time gains</td>
<td>101,149</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sales (net of expenses)</td>
<td>83,625</td>
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<tr>
<td>Free &amp; reduced lunch program</td>
<td>58,270</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants &amp; donations</td>
<td>406,799</td>
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**Total Revenue** $2,872,860

**Statement of Financial Position**

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<th>Asset</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<td>Current assets</td>
<td>$404,531</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fixed assets</td>
<td>7,414,507</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investments &amp; supporting funds</td>
<td>$418,535</td>
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<tr>
<td>Endowment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Board restricted reserve</td>
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**Total Assets** $8,980,764

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Liability</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Current liabilities</td>
<td>$166,868</td>
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<td>Temporarily restricted net assets</td>
<td>273,743</td>
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<td>Permanently restricted net assets</td>
<td>344,037</td>
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<td>Unrestricted net assets</td>
<td>8,196,115</td>
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**Total liabilities & net assets** $8,980,764

*Depreciation expense = $410,996*
How can I support adventures in learning?

Make a Donation.

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