



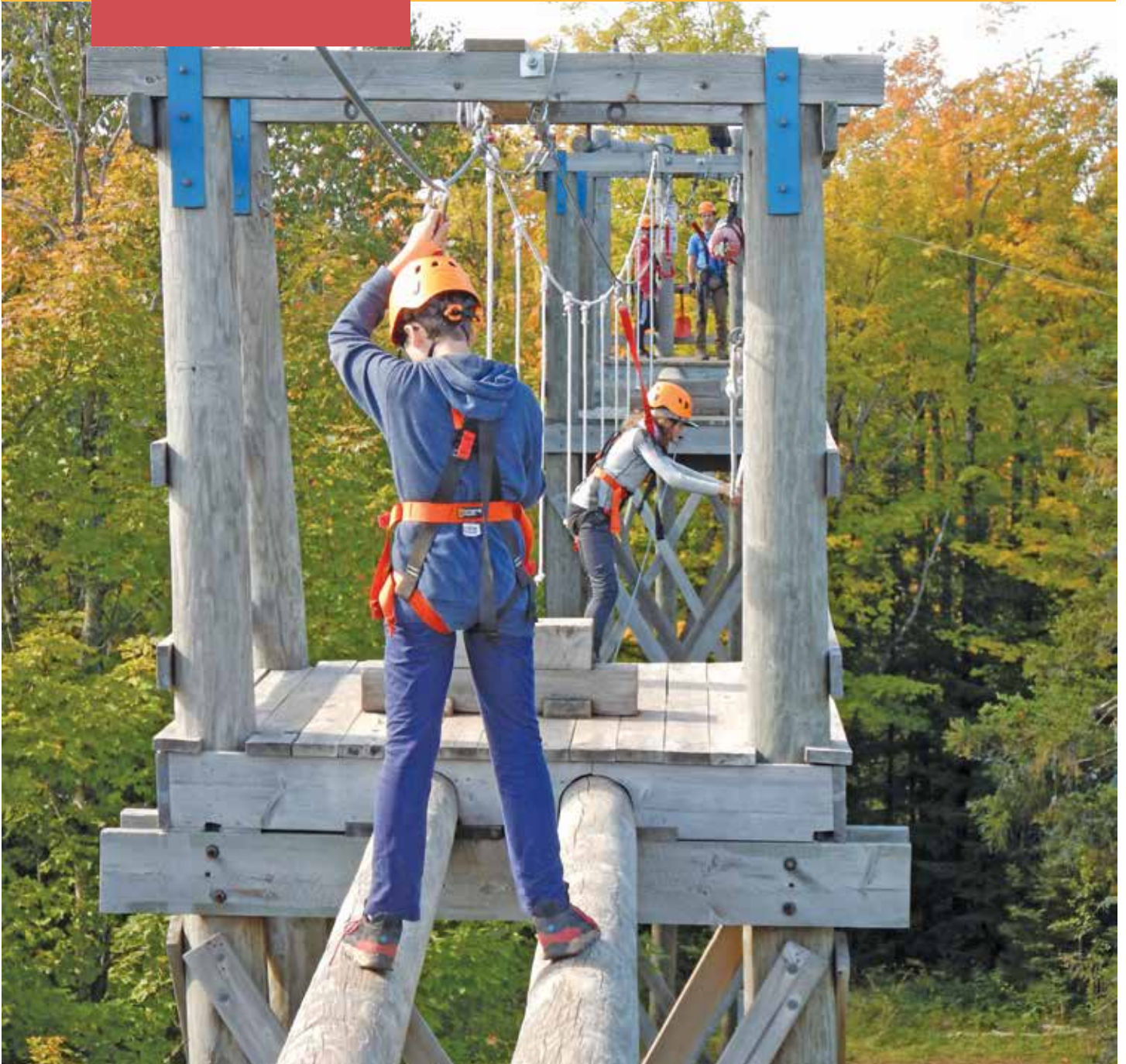
**WOLF
RIDGE**SM
ENVIRONMENTAL
LEARNING CENTER

ANNUAL REPORT

September 1, 2021 - August 31, 2022

AND

The **ALMANAC**
A newsletter of Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center



ANNUAL REPORT MEMORANDUM



Something commonly asked of me these days is, “how is Wolf Ridge doing?” I’m pleased to share with you that Wolf Ridge is strong as can be and doing well. We have a solid operation and we finished fiscal year 2022 in the best financial standing of our history. Because of loyal donors, Payroll Protection Plan funding and a large Shuttered Venue Operators Grant from the Small Business Administration received during the pandemic, we’re in great shape.

We continue to face reductions in school groups and summer camp programming. In the last fiscal year, we began to encounter the secondary and lingering impacts of COVID-19 including the social, emotional, and physical change of students and the challenges facing classroom teachers. We’ve learned that Wolf Ridge is needed now more than ever to help children rise above. We provide a deep and meaningful experience that builds students up in a holistic manner.

In the last fiscal year Wolf Ridge continued to be a leader in residential environmental education. In October of 2021, the MAC Lodge received full Living Building Challenge certification from the International Living Futures Institute, truly a first in the world achievement for renovation of a building to the highest international standard of sustainability. In August of 2022, we constructed a new Adventure Ropes course and upgraded an existing course to a state-of-the-art continuous belay systems meeting the highest safety standards in the nation.

Most importantly we celebrated 50 years of environmental education. We gathered virtually to learn in community as part of the 50th Speaker Series, in person in St. Paul and Prior Lake and on-campus for a reunion. At the conclusion of the reunion a Jack Pine tree was planted in front of the MAC Lodge. The tree is a visual reminder of the 50 years of opening minds, sparking discovery, creating connections, and growing knowledge. It will also mark on the landscape the love of the community of people who gathered in August 2022 to celebrate this milestone.

Thank you to the loyal supporters of Wolf Ridge that continue to make learning experiences occur for current and future generations. With gratitude and pride for the collective work we do,

Peter Smerud
Executive Director

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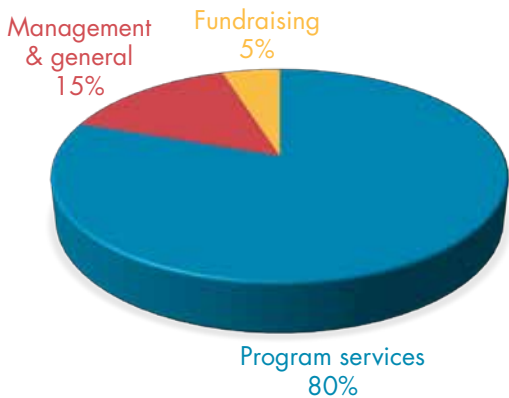
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FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Fiscal year: September 1, 2021 - August 31, 2022

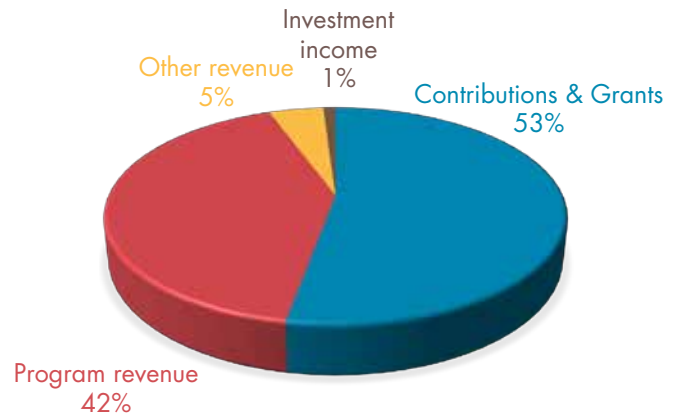
Expenses

Program services.....	\$2,119,518
Management & general.....	390,975
Fundraising.....	128,855
Total expenses before depreciation*	<u><u>\$2,639,348</u></u>



Revenue and Other Support

Contributions and Grants.....	\$2,127,510
Program revenue.....	1,671,812
Other revenue.....	183,314
Investment income.....	42,145
Total Revenue.....	<u><u>\$4,024,781</u></u>



Statement of Financial Position

Current assets.....	\$1,531,326
Fixed assets.....	12,742,202
Investments & supporting funds	
Endowment.....	442,030
Board restricted reserve.....	546,699
Total Assets.....	<u><u>\$15,262,257</u></u>

Current liabilities.....	\$990,291
Restricted net assets.....	667,317
Unrestricted net assets.....	13,604,649
Total liabilities & equity.....	<u><u>\$15,262,257</u></u>

*Depreciation expense = \$606,607

Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center is a nonprofit, tax exempt organization under 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code. This financial information is drawn from the audited financial statements by the accounting firm Esterbrooks, Scott, Signorelli, Peterson, Smithson, Ltd.

DONORS

Fiscal year: September 1, 2021 - August 31, 2022

\$5,000+

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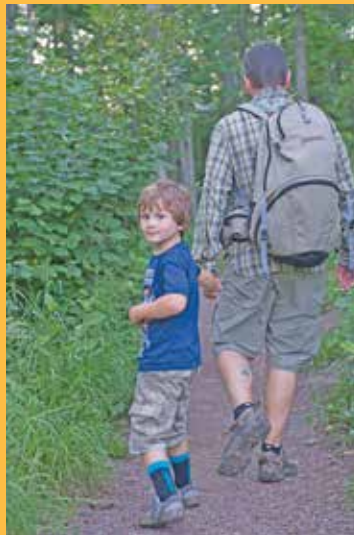
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 Diane and Gary Zak

* In-kind Donors

THE LEADERS OF THE PACK

Wolf Ridge recently received estate gifts from John Crosby and Jacqueline Mithun. This was Jacqueline's first gift to our organization. We're honored that she and John included Wolf Ridge in the list of great organizations doing the work they want to see perpetuated. If, like them, you've included Wolf Ridge in your estate plans, let us know, so we can say thank you and recognize you as a member of the Leaders of the Pack.

Please consider gifting part of your estate to Wolf Ridge. For more info visit wolf-ridge.org/support or contact: Meredith St. Pierre at 218-353-7414 or meredith.stpierre@wolf-ridge.org.



With tremendous gratitude Wolf Ridge ELC gratefully acknowledges:

Anonymous - 3x
 Sandy & Tom Ahlstrom
 Tom & Margit Berg
 Russ & Becky Bierbaum
 Laura Crosby
 Andy Datko & Lisa Hesse
 Marty & Kathy Duchscher
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 Harpreet Kaur
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HIGHLIGHTS



LIVING BUILDING CHALLENGE

In October of 2021, Wolf Ridge received full certification for Living Building Challenge for the Margaret A Cargill Lodge renovation from the International Living Future Institute (ILFI).

The International Living Future Institute defines living buildings as:

- Regenerative buildings that connect occupants to light, air, food, nature, and community.
- Self-sufficient and remain within the resource limits of their site.
- Create a positive impact on the human and natural systems that interact with them.

To achieve this rigorous standard, the 22,000 square-foot dormitory proved its ability to achieve Net Positive Energy and Net Positive Water over a 12-month period, generating more energy than it consumes. The MAC Lodge is the first renovation project, the 30th Living Building worldwide, first in the upper Midwest region, and located in the coldest design climate.

This accomplishment was made possible by donors to the Making Waves Capital Campaign.



Surrounded by his family, Wolf Ridge founder, Jack Pichotta, speaks at the 50th reunion weekend event.

50TH EVENTS RECAP

Delayed by COVID, the 50th anniversary celebration continued this year with the 50th Speaker Series, Twin Cities Gathering, and a reunion weekend. Wolf Ridge was able to connect with 100's of our community members through these events and celebrate 50 years of hands-on environmental education. The culmination of the weekend celebration was the planting of a jack pine tree in front of the MAC lodge. Jim Manolis, intern '87, David Butcher grad nat '09-'10 and current program naturalist, were joined by naturalist alumna Aki Yada's daughters to plant the tree. Together they represented what was, what is, and what could be for Wolf Ridge. The tree was planted in recognition of 50 years of opening minds, sparking discovery, creating connections, and growing knowledge. It will also mark on the landscape the love of the community who gathered in August 2022 to celebrate this milestone.



HIGHLIGHTS

NEW ROPES COURSE

As long as there isn't thunder or lightning, you'll find Wolf Ridge students up on the Adventure Ropes Courses. The courses at Wolf Ridge are some of the most intensely used courses in the nation, experiencing more than 35,000 trips each year. Wolf Ridge has conducted high ropes course programming since 1981. Subsequently, advancing technology has developed better ways to simplify and keep people safe on high ropes courses. Installing the highest and newest of contemporary standards was key to the upgrades made this summer. Assuring Wolf Ridge maintains the highest level of safety for thousands of children and adults is the highest of priorities.



The Ridgetop course was completely rebuilt and now Ridgetop and Skyview have the same order of challenge elements. The most significant change was the addition of a continuous belay system. Participants attach their safety lanyard directly onto the overhead cable using a state-of-the-art metal clip, and can travel the entire course without unclipping. The new system stands at the cutting edge of safety and user friendliness.

The Adventure Ropes course projects were funded by the Fred C. and Katherine B. Andersen Foundation, The Cleveland Cliffs Foundation, Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board, and the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation. We are grateful their support of Wolf Ridge and the opportunities for participants to experience personal growth while 30 feet in the air.

TEACHER INSTITUTE



An excited cohort of teachers gathered on campus for a week this summer as one of several programs conducted by the Wolf Ridge Teacher Training Institute. The teachers learned about environment education techniques through journaling, looking closely at maps of Minnesota, visiting the Wolf Ridge Lake Superior Field Station, and hiking up Marshall Mountain and along the Superior Hiking Trail. While on campus they explored wild pedagogy through geology, botany, ornithology, animal tracking, lichenology, ecology, humans, and more.

The Wolf Ridge Teacher Institute is multi-week to multi-month program customized to fit the needs of educators with busy schedules. Teachers work in small groups as part of a cohort that builds skills in science education, teaching outdoors, and experiential learning into any school curriculum.

The 2022 Institute was funded in part by a grant from the J.W. Couch Foundation.

NEW STAFF

Last year brought an influx of new staff to Wolf Ridge. In total 18 new staff joined our ranks. While all are in new roles, a few are returning in a new capacity. Examples include: Charlie Pavlisich, a graduate naturalist and mentor, who now serves as the STEM Coordinator on the program team. Program Director Steph Carpenter who returned to Wolf Ridge more than 30 years after her first visit assisting Jim Gilbert on a Hopkins school trip. Development Director Meredith St Pierre returning after 23 years. She **attended** Wolf Ridge with the Hopkins Summer Field Biology program for 7 years. All together our new staff bring years of experience to campus and we're excited to have them as part of our team.

SCHOOLS & GROUPS

FISCAL YEAR SEPTEMBER 1, 2021 TO AUGUST 31, 2022



Assumption School
Atheneum Elementary School
Badger School
Barnum Elementary
Bay View Elementary
Beacon Academy
Beacon Academy Chicago
Bethlehem Academy
Birch Grove Community School
Blue Earth Area Middle School
Breck Middle School
Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools
Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School
Carleton College
Cathedral School
Central Cass Middle School
Central Middle School
Chisago Lakes Middle School
Church of Jesus Christ of LDS
Community of Saints
Coon Rapids Middle School
Cown Elementary
Duluth Edison Charter Schools
Elgin Academy
Ely Memorial MS
Emanuel Lutheran
Epiphany
First Lutheran School
Fox West Academy
Friends School of MN
Girl Scout Troop (Prior Lake)
Girl Scout Troop 1

Girl Scout Troop 20065
Girl Scout Troops 4054 & 4055
Grand Portage Trust Lands
Great Expectations School
Hammel, Green & Abrahamson, Inc.
Heilicher Mpls Jewish Day School
Hilltop Primary
Hinckley-Finlayson Elementary
Holy Name of Jesus School
Homecroft Elementary
Hopkins Env Adventures Camp
Intl Spanish Language Academy
John Ireland Catholic School
Jordan Middle School
Kaleidoscope Charter School
Kelliher Public School
King Of Grace Lutheran
Lakewood Elementary
Laura MacArthur Elementary
Lester Park School
Lighthouse Learning Homeschool
Group
Lowell Elementary School
Loyola Catholic School
Manvel Public School
Maple Lake Elementary
Marshall County Central HS
Mary Queen of Peace
Midway School
Miltona Science Magnet Elem School
Minnehaha Elementary
Minnesota New Country School

Mobilize Green YCC
Nerstrand Elementary School
New Discoveries Montessori Academy
New Millennium Academy
North Shore Area Partners
North Shore Community School
North Shore Mental Health Group
Northern Lights Community School
Northland College
NW Suburban District
Nyquist School
Oak Crest Elementary
Onamia Junior High
Osprey Wilds ELC
Our Lady of Grace Catholic School
Our Lady Of The Lake
Parent Group Prior Lake
Park River Area School
Pequot Lakes Middle School
Prairie Creek
Prairie Lutheran School
Prairie Woods Elementary
Presentation Of Mary
Prior Lake-Savage School District
Providence Academy
Sacred Heart-East Grand Forks
Saint Jude of the Lake
Sawtooth Mountain Elementary
School of St Philip
Schoolcraft Learning Community
Shell Lake School District
Shirley Hills Elementary

Sierra Club
Solon Springs School
South Ridge Elementary
St Charles Borromeo
St Croix Catholic
St Croix Preparatory Academy
St John School of Little Canada
St John the Baptist
St Marys School-Breckenridge
St Mary's School-Morris
St Peter's School
St Rose of Lima
St Stephen's School
St Thomas More Catholic School
Stella Maris Academy
Stowe Elementary
Tanaka Elem STEM School
Trinity Lutheran/
Our Lady of the Prairie
Triton High School
Two Harbors High School
Urban Ecology Center - Milwaukee
UW-Superior Upward Bound
Valley Middle School
Watershed High School
Watertown-Mayer MS
Wayzata High School
West Central Area Schools
William Kelley Elementary
Willow River Elementary
Winterquist Elementary
Woodbury Leadership Academy

ADVENTURES IN LEARNING



The ALMANAC

A newsletter of Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center

February 2023 Volume 62 Number 1

WOLF RIDGE SALUTES

by Lori Walewski, Wolf Ridge Naturalist



Peter Harris retired after contributing 40 years of service to Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center as the Science Project Coordinator. Peter may have left, but his mark is forever here. We honor and salute his four decades of dedication and creativity.

Peter arrived at the Environmental Learning Center (ELC) (Wolf Ridge's prior name) in Isabella in January of 1984. After an epic two-year bike trip around the United States he began an internship at Deep Portage. While there, he saw Dennis Olson (an ELC staff) do one of his character-based presentations. This piqued his interest in the ELC, so he applied to be a naturalist-in-training. Thus, began the 40-year odyssey.

Ideas and creativity flowed from Peter like spring melt water in a North Shore river. More than 25 activities/classes/institutional standards now are mainstay experiences of Wolf Ridge participants. Hundreds more were attempted.

Early on, Peter recognized the importance of animals in connecting people to nature. Muninn, an injured raven, ushered in our keystone animal ambassador program at Wolf Ridge. Cree, a 7/8 wolf, 1/8 German Shepard may be the most notable ambassador. Peter served as the main handler for 6 years until Cree's passing. Thousands of students joined Peter as he and Cree led them in a communal howl.

Chickadee Landing is a purely magical experience in winter bird classes. The site has evolved over the years. Now benches backed with painted plywood "people" cutouts clad in unclaimed lost and found items acclimatize Black-

capped Chickadees to the 'presence' of humans. Within seconds of sitting, students with birdseed on their hats and in their raised hands become human bird feeders.

In 1990, Peter received his master bird banding permit enabling students to see wild birds up close opening their horizons to citizen science research projects. Wolf Ridge joined the Institute for Bird Populations' (IBP) North American Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS) program. For 30 years, Wolf Ridge has participated in this important research, sharing it with students and public guests. In conjunction with IBP, Wolf Ridge offers training courses for bird banders, hobbyists and youth camps for bird enthusiasts. Fall banding of Saw-whet Owls most recently joined Wolf Ridge programming.

Early on Peter connected with the National Weather Service. Wolf Ridge became an official weather data collecting station and our Weather Forecasting class benefited. In the 70's and 80's when acid rain became a leading environmental concern, Peter forged partnerships with the National Atmospheric Deposition Program (NADP), the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), and the Ontario Ministry of the Envi-



Peter, Cree, and Oak Crest Elementary students howling together in 1992.

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VIEW FROM THE RIDGE



by Pete Smerud, Executive Director

I love this time of year. Days are getting longer and the future is brighter at Wolf Ridge literally and figuratively.

In this issue, anyone that has attended Wolf Ridge through the years, will see a theme of reflection and change. We recently celebrated the career of our longest serving naturalist, Peter Harris.

Wolf Ridge is a science-based organization. As you read reflections on Peter's career you'll learn of the tremendous history and evolution of one of Wolf Ridge's most ardent commitments, the integration of authentic science research and methodologies into learning experiences for children. We don't teach about science, rather we immerse students in science. They don't learn facts as much as learn to DO science. We believe that some of the most effective learning is when it's combined with affective components that touch one's heart, as well as their brain. The photo of a child's face lighting up as they listen to the heartbeat of a chickadee, a quintessential example of the work Wolf Ridge, and Peter, have been doing to "turn kids on" to science through affective learning.

With our acid rain programs of the 80's and the solid waste and landfill diversion lessons of the early 90's, and re-

newable energy or energy conservation that led to our first Climate Change class in 2000, Wolf Ridge's, and Peter's work has proven this to be true, time and time again. Scientific understanding enables and promotes action when it occurs through experiences with personalization and connection.



Feeling the wonder at Chickadee Landing.

While evolution is apparent at Wolf Ridge with the departure of veterans and arrivals of many new staff, our work continues without pause. Weather monitoring, climate change education, and wildlife population research educational programs are being handed off to the next generation.

As I reflect, Wolf Ridge has been able to achieve these 'big vision' outcomes, typically because of people who deeply care about the learning experience of a child at Wolf Ridge. Decades of ser-

vice such as Peter's is incredibly rare, yet not for Wolf Ridge. Many years ago, Wolf Ridge committed to compensation and support structures for staff that have allowed them to endure, and in turn empowered them to achieve "big vision". We know that society has changed and people won't likely serve for 40 years in a career. Continually reinforced at Wolf Ridge is the condition that by empowering individuals, letting them "take the reins and run", great vision can and will be achieved. Now, we are focusing energy and effort on transferring the knowledge of 50+ years to the next generation of environmental leaders at Wolf Ridge and creating systems so that knowledge and vision is carried for years by a team that can keep it going.

As we look to the brighter future ahead, I am so excited for the evolution. This organization is in a very strong financial position, with many new staff who are investing deeply, all of this occurring with slowly increasing school and camp program attendances that are building back to pre-COVID levels of success. Please continue to share our story and programs with those in your networks. You, our supporters and donors are our best advocates who in turn will create the brightest future for Wolf Ridge. Thank you for joining us. ♦

Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center and the USDA are equal opportunity providers and employers.

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Peter and his wife, Carrie Anderson, receiving canoe paddles for their retirement. Carrie retired during COVID after 23 years at Wolf Ridge.

ronment (OME). Wolf Ridge became and still is an official monitoring station. Of course, students dove into this topic in Acid Rain class, gathering data from the collecting devices at a student station which mirrored the same equipment at the official station. Snow is a dominant condition at our campus - involvement with the U of MN Climatology snow study research was an obvious connection. Snow Study Class incorporates this research. You see the pattern.

Phenology is the study of the timing of cyclical biological events like emerging flowers, nesting birds, and hatching insects. Peter co-founded the Minnesota Phenology Network with the mission to encourage Minnesotans to monitor phenology sharing their observations and using phenology to increase environmental awareness. A Peter-designed bulletin board puts phenology and weather data together so classes can interpret connections. He trained Wolf Ridge graduate naturalists weekly in weather and phenological data collection and interpretation.

Energy is the third focal area of Peter's legacy. Current classes like Energy Conservation, Climate Change, and Renewable Energy along with past classes such as Living Lightly, Shopping for the Environment, and Acid Rain have explored energy sources, usage, and their effects on our planet. A plethora of learning tools/experiments like solar panels, wind generators, reflector ovens,

an energy bike, CO2 balloon, recycling, energy meters, and much more help our naturalists to make the challenging topic come alive and understandable for students.

Peter's passions are woven together. The type of energy we use creates more or less pollution depending on its source. Pollution creates climate and environmental change effecting plants and animals. Perhaps Peter's quote found in the Beginning Orienteering Class - "the world is like

a rubber band, stretch it too far and it breaks" - sums it up.

Peter added more than science to the Wolf Ridge team. His wicked sense of humor and convincing tall tales keep us all on alert. We've all been duped at least once by his 'stories.' He's served as a salesman of programs, a recruiter of donors, and a match-maker of student naturalists. Perhaps this last is a result of meeting his wife-to-be when, as a teacher, she brought her science club students to the ELC.

Most of all, Peter inspired us by sharing his love of and wonder for animals, weather, phenology, energy, and the natural world with everyone. Peter says, "science gains strength not just from data



Peter teaching his last Energy Conservation class.



Peter sharing a chickadee's heartbeat with a student.

but from people understanding how sciences works, and you understand by participating". Eyes light up when learners of any age see a bird's ear and hear the bird's heartbeat. You know they've connected with nature. Peter has worked to do that with everyone he's met.

Dave Grosshuesch, USFS wildlife biologist shared the following about Peter, "as a biologist and friend, I have been working with Peter for over 10 years on various partnership projects between the Forest Service and Wolf Ridge, such as the North Shore Bioblitz, fall owl banding, MAPS, and the youth ornithology classes to name but a few. His enthusiasm, energy, knowledge, desire to generate awareness about our natural world, especially of northeastern Minnesota, and inspiring kids and adults of Minnesota and from many other States is unmatched! He has been an amazing advocate to maintain and grow the partnership between the Forest Service and Wolf Ridge during his tenure - a partnership that will hopefully last generations! I would expect that in retirement he will surely try to catch up on the hundreds of hours of lost sleep to better our world, but then again, we all know Peter!"

Wolf Ridge salutes Peter Harris in his retirement. We will miss him. We will continue to carry forward the great programs he created. Knowing his future adventures involve a sailboat named Raven and the 71% of the earth covered by water, our wish to Peter is this: "May you have fair winds and following seas." ♦

DARK SKY INITIATIVE

by David Stieler, Wolf Ridge Naturalist

What is the darkest dark you have experienced?

I remember visiting a number of caves where at some point during the tour, they turn off the lights and have you look around in true blackness where there is absolutely no light. That kind of darkness is quite overwhelming and one that we very rarely see during our day to day lives. What we often experience on a more daily (nightly) basis is being outdoors with the night sky above us. Now, we can change the original question a bit, but it is still an interesting question.

What is the darkest night sky you have experienced?

As people have placed more and more artificial light around the globe, our night skies have been getting brighter. It isn't always obvious on a clear night, but if you look into the sky on a cloudy night, you can often see the lights from towns or other bright areas reflecting off of those clouds. Growing up in southern Minnesota, I could look across the corn and soybean fields to see the reflected light from two or three towns all at once. This leads to yet another question.

How dark is your night sky?

That is a question that *Globe at Night* has been asking for 14 years. This is a citizen science campaign dedicated to estimating the darkness of skies around the world. To put it another way, it measures how much human-made light pollution there is around the world and seeing how that affects what people see at night. It uses a brilliant method of giving people around the world similar constellations to observe with a dot chart of how many stars they would be expected to see at a given amount of light pollution. The reason this works is because some stars are brighter than others. Some can shine through the light pollution while others can't.

This is one organization that is helping to lead the Dark Sky Movement. This movement started with the idea that we need to actively work to preserve dark skies, otherwise they will go away as towns, cities, and roadways get larger and lights get brighter and brighter.

Dark skies aren't only important for people and astronomers to enjoy and see into the night sky, it also impacts other organisms near our lights. The easy example is seeing bugs swarm to a light in the middle of summer. Some animals are attracted to lights like this, which in extreme cases traps the animal till they exhaust themselves, but could also simply make them easier pickings for predators. Other animals are repelled by lights, and therefore, our lights limit the areas that these animals can live in. If there is too much light and it is on for too long, it can also affect the day/night cycle for an organism which can have all sorts of consequences.

Up in northern Minnesota, we are lucky to live near one of the largest Dark Sky Sanctuaries in the world, the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. Not only is the

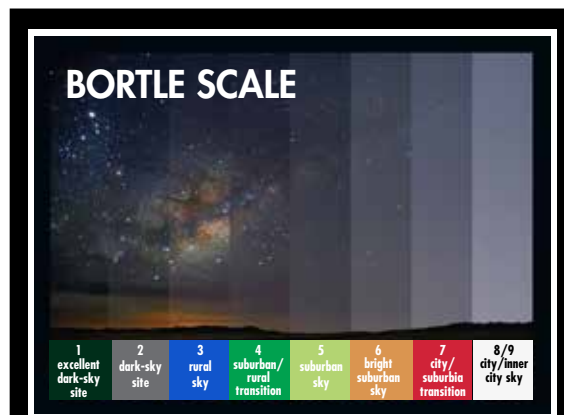


Wolf Lake has an excellent dark sky rating of 2 in this photo by Sam Brueggeman.

Boundary Waters a fun place to visit for activity during the day, but you will also see some of the darkest skies in the country there. However, if you have ever been outside in an area with very little light pollution you already know that a dark sky is not dark. Whether or not you can see the Milky Way is often a basic measure of how dark your skies are. As more and more artificial light disappears, more and more stars appear in the sky leading to that blanket of stars that people talk about covering the night sky.

If you want to help, there are some things you can do around your house or advocate for in your community. The simplest of these are turn off unnecessary outdoor lights, shield them or aim them downward instead of up, and use dimmer lights when possible. If you have an iOS devices you can get the Dark Sky Meter app and help measure light pollution by taking a photo. A grander approach might have you inquiring about local ordinances, joining or starting a dark sky group, or working to get your neighborhood/town/area dark sky certified.

Our night skies are often a forgotten wild space that is right over our heads. I encourage you to go outside and explore the quality of the wild night sky from your home. ♦



In 2001, John Bortle introduced a scale to measure the quality of night sky viewing in *Sky and Telescope* magazine. We now know this as the Bortle Scale. Night sky viewers and photographers use this visual estimate of night to sky brightness to plan viewing adventures and nighttime photography foray. Visit lightpollutionmap.info and click on any spot in the world to discover its Bortle score.

NEWS BRIEFS

Wolf Ridge hosted the **Minnesota Association for Environmental Education (MAEE) Annual Conference** September 30 to October 2, 2022. After a covid-required cancellation last year, everyone was thrilled to gather in person and to enjoy each other's company. Though that would have been enough, we also learned and shared with each other for an exciting future of EE in Minnesota and beyond.

- In October, members of the Wolf Ridge community gathered at **The Minikahda Club in Minneapolis to celebrate 50 years of environmental education** from Isabella to Finland. The program reflected on the strength and stability of Wolf Ridge to train the next generation of environmental leaders. Funds raised as part of the event will be used to support Wolf Ridge in perpetuity through the endowment fund.

- For every group that attends Wolf Ridge, there are some students who are simply unable to join the trip. It happens all the time. The teachers with Prior Lake Savage Area Schools weren't satisfied with simply shrugging their



Past, present, and maybe a future staff pose for a photo for the Partner of the Year Award.



MAEE conference keynote.

shoulders and asked that we explore ways to reach those students back at home (250 miles south). Inspired by our Adventures in Learning distance programming, **Wolf Ridge Naturalists met via video** each day of the week with students and a teacher. While we were outdoors on campus at Wolf Ridge observing birds, for example, they were in one of the PLSAS classrooms reflecting on morning explorations in their school forest and making plans for an afternoon of more adventures in learning.

- **Wolf Ridge received the 2022 Partner of the Year Award** from the Minnesota Association for Environmental Education. The award is presented to "a partner organization that has made significant contributions in advancing environmental education efforts in Minnesota." A key activity that helped garner this recognition was hosting the MAEE conference. Our role in nurturing and supporting people in environmental education was also noted. Rebecca (Crosbie) Meyer (97) past Wolf Ridge student naturalist received the Nonformal Environmental Educator of the Year Award.♦

NEW WOLF RIDGE STAFF



Mike Nowotczynski

A native of Finland MN, Mike Nowotczynski joins the Wolf Ridge team as a member of our custodial staff. He is a laid-back, open-book person. Mike has been a member of the work force since he was 14 and has experience in a variety of jobs from construction to assistant store manager. In his free time, you might find Mike reading fantasy or science fiction. He recommends the *Sword of Truth* series by Terry Goodkind. Playing video games is another hobby. If Mike had a super power he would create an infinite energy portal. He serves the larger community by being a member of the Finland Volunteer Fire department.

Kiaryn Rose, married to Swae and parent of 3 children, is a recent transplant from Louisiana. She is a member of our kitchen team. One aspect of her job that gives her joy is working with the students when they are on KP duty. Halloween is her favorite holiday with dressing up in costumes and celebrating with her kids. Doing painting projects/artwork with her children is a popular free time activity. When asked what fictional family she might like to be a member of, Kiaryn choose Disney's Proud Family.



Kiaryn Rose

Originally from Houston TX, Swae Rose is another new member of our custodial team. She became acquainted with Wolf Ridge when her AmeriCorp NCCC team served 7 weeks at Wolf Ridge during COVID. Swae and Rose have 2 boys and a girl. Playing Xbox and basketball are her de-stressers. If Swae was a piece of furniture, she would be a chandelier because she could see everything and be shining and bright, providing light for all. Swae's advice - work smarter, not harder.♦



Swae Rose

PROGRAMS 2023

Register for programs at wolf-ridge.org

ALL AGES

Open House: (all ages) July 1 10:00-4:00 **Free**

Bird Banding Drop-in days: (all ages) June 7, 14, 28, July 5, 12, 26, Aug 2 7:00-11:00am **Free**

Family Camps Half-week: (all ages) July 5-9 Aug 13-17 starting at \$424/person

Family Camps Full-week: (all ages) July 23-28, Aug 6-11 starting at \$635/person

Family Wilderness Trips: (all ages) June-August, see our website for details

YOUTH

Our youth camp programs offer unparalleled opportunities to explore clear lakes and streams, develop life-long connections to the natural world, make friends, create memories, and grow in self-confidence. With a wonderfully diverse campus and variety of activities, campers can return year after year for new experiences.



TRADITIONAL CAMPS

Summer Sampler: (2nd-5thgr) August 13-17: \$472

Discoverers: (4th-5thgr) July 9-14, July 23-28, July 30-August 4, August 6-11: \$688

Voyageurs: (6th-7thgr) July 9-14, July 16-21, July 30-August 4, August 6-11: \$688

Adventurers: (8th-9thgr) July 9-14, July 16-21, August 6-11: \$702

SPECIALTY CAMPS

Day Camp: (K-5thgr) July 3-7: \$300

Eco Artists: (4th-5thgr) July 9-14: \$688

Voyageur Life Camp: (4th-5thgr) July 16-21: \$702 **NEW**

Girls Rock the Ridge Leadership: (6th-7thgr) July 16-21: \$702

Adventuring for Animals: (6th-7thgr) July 23-28: \$688

Survival Camp: (8th-9thgr) July 23-28: \$688 **NEW**

Farm, Feast, & Fire Camp: (8th-9thgr) July 30-August 4: \$688

Rock Climbing Camp: (8th-9thgr) August 6-11: \$768

Ornithology Field Camp: (10th-12thgr) July 9-14: \$960

Counselors-in-Training: (10th-12thgr) July 30-August 11: \$1,152

Credit Academy Wilderness Ethics: (10th-12thgr) July 30-August 11: \$1882



WILDERNESS TRIPS

BWCAW Canoe 5-day: (7th-8thgr) August 13-18: \$751

Isle Royale Backpack 2-wk: (8th-9thgr) July 9-21: \$1,754

BWCAW Canoe 2-wk: (8th-9thgr) July 16-28: \$1,640

Quetico Canoe-2 wk: (10th-12thgr) July 23-August 4: \$1,761

Voyageurs NP Kayak 2-wk: (10th-12thgr) July 30-Aug 11: \$1,735

Camp Shuttle:

Ride from the Twin Cities or Duluth to camp and back.

Twin Cities, one way \$120, round trip \$225.

Duluth, one way \$60, round trip \$120.

Reservations required.

LEAVE NO TRACE MASTER EDUCATOR COURSE

May 17-21 (adults): \$535
 This is the highest level of education training in NOLS/LNT training. One of the only courses offered in the mid-west, coursework focuses on how to teach others about ethical camping and outdoor recreation practices. Graduates are certified to offer and teach LNT Awareness Workshops and Trainer Courses. A great opportunity for outdoor professionals, scout leaders and anyone interested in teaching outdoor ethics. Register at <https://www.nols.edu/en/coursefinder/courses/leave-no-trace-master-educator-base-camp-LNTF/>

BIRD BANDING COURSES

Bird Banding IBP Beginning: (adults) June 23-30: \$2,835

Bird Banding IBP Advanced: (adults) July 1-5: \$1,785

Wolf Ridge hosts the Institute for Bird Population's beginning and advanced workshops for new and seasoned banders. The seven-day introductory class provides both amateur birders and professional biologists with the skills necessary to participate in monitoring and research programs. The four-day advanced class is designed for experienced banders who wish to improve their sexing and ageing skills.



BOB BERLUTE

PHOTO © Bob Berlute
 2024

Bob Berlute is the photographer for the 2024 Wolf Ridge calendar. He has always been an avid outdoorsman. Bob grew up in Colorado, and then moved to Minnesota as a young adult so had plenty of opportunities to explore the outdoors. Photography seemed like the perfect opportunity to explore the outdoors, and to record and relive those memories later for Bob. Things came together for him when he retired and Bob and his wife Margy purchased a cabin on the Northshore. Bob does his photography primarily in Minnesota and the western states, but always carries his camera with him when he travels. You can view more of his photos online at bberlute.myportfolio.com. Wolf Ridge calendars are available individually and in lots of 25 for school fundraising. Email mail@wolf-ridge.org or call Wolf Ridge at (218)353-7414 for more information and to order. ♦

Support Wolf Ridge and Stay in Touch

Your gift enables Wolf Ridge programs to occur.

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- Contribute an annual donation.
- Become a planned giver with our *Leaders of the Pack*.
- Make an in-kind donation.

Call to set-up your gift.



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Complimentary Issue

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Graduate Naturalist Bri Joi and students examine red squirrel tracks during Northwoods Mammals class.



Wolf Ridge is an accredited residential environmental school for persons of all ages. We offer immersion programs which involve direct observation and participation in outdoor experiences. Wolf Ridge programs focus on environmental sciences, human culture and history, personal growth, team building, and outdoor recreation.

Our mission is to develop a citizenry that has the knowledge, skills, motivation, and commitment to act together for a quality environment.

We meet our mission by:

- Fostering awareness, curiosity, and sensitivity to the natural world.
- Providing lifelong learning experiences in nature.
- Developing social understanding, respect, and cooperation.
- Modeling values, behaviors, and technologies which lead to a sustainable lifestyle.
- Promoting the concepts of conservation and stewardship.