

## WAAE Events

### 2012 Fall Conference

Theme: Education, Conservation and Recreation on the Peninsula

Dates: October 25-27, 2012

Location: Landmark Resort, Egg Harbor, Door County, WI

Over 165 educators had the opportunity to attend 10 different workshops and field trips during the day on Thursday. The member meeting was held on Thursday evening followed by the night's entertainment Ben There Dan That, a local duo who kept WAAE members dancing into the night. Friday morning's Keynote Presentation by Dr. Stanley Temple, Aldo Leopold Foundation, gave us glimpses of the writings and teachings of Aldo Leopold by his own hand and spoke about the importance of keeping phenological records. There were 35 concurrent sessions offered Friday and Saturday in topics ranging from citizen monitoring to restoration, and from dragonflies to energy in the classroom. After the morning of sessions, educators flocked together for the Birds of a Feather lunch, a meal dedicated to networking with others who occupy a similar niche in EE. Friday afternoon field trips and sessions were followed up by a traditional Door County fish boil presentation and buffet dinner. WAAE was proud to recognize 7 individuals with an award for excellence in environmental education. The Department of Public Instruction, Department of Natural Resources, K-12 Energy Education Program, and the Environmental Protection Agency also recognized Wisconsin educators with awards. Dennis Yockers auctioneered the fundraising event to raise money for student scholarships. Together with raffle tickets, silent and live auction, WAAE raised over \$3,200. Saturday morning's Featured Speaker Jeff Rennicke, Conserve School, had many laughing and crying at his stories, photography, and philosophy on growing up wild. The 2012 WAAE Fall Conference was certainly a dream come true. Thank you to the planning committee, Board of Directors, sponsors, Landmark staff, volunteers, exhibitors, presenters and attendees that made the Conference such a success!



### 2013 Winter Workshop

Theme: Exploring Our Connections To People, To the Land, To our Resources

Dates: January 25<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>, 2013

Location: Treehaven Field Station, Tomahawk, WI

Winter Workshop 2013 was a weekend of non-stop adventure in the spirit of exploration. From the wild, wintry weather to the vivid images of ecological community connections woven together by Dr. Alan Haney the weekend had everyone holding on to the very end. Over 90 environmental education minded hearts traveled to join in to explore their connections to people, to land, and to resources. This year's winter workshop was set apart from others largely in part to our amazing array of presenters. Over 25 passionate presenters came to share their knowledge, including international students from Fox Valley Technical College and Graduate Fellows from UWSP, formal educators from Shorewood School District, and informal educators from all over Wisconsin.



## WAAE Networking

WAAE is always striving to strengthen networking opportunities throughout the state. A few years ago, WAAE embarked on social media platforms hoping to engage even more members and non-members in the EE conversation. The interest in social media continues to grow and provide an excellent way of communicating with the public. Facebook, and the WAAE Blog, have been invaluable tools in sharing resources and promoting events. As the WAAE audience continues to grow, we hope to strengthen our social networking capabilities to serve the unique needs of all our members. Feedback from the membership will be crucial to shaping the resources and connections shared through these outlets.



Energized by a strategic planning meeting, the WAAE Board is excited to enter the organization's 40<sup>th</sup> year with a focus on collaboration, which will be the theme of the 2014 Annual Conference. Collaboration is a fantastic focus for WAAE, because it helps highlight Wisconsin's strong history of EE partnerships and connect all of the amazing individuals, organizations, resources and potential partnerships throughout the state. WAAE will increase efforts to facilitate networking opportunities at WAAE and partner events as well as host year-round connections through social media. Once again, feedback from the membership will be essential in developing new networking opportunities throughout the state.

The WAAE Board will be working to improve communication, recognize meaningful connections, and seek out partnerships that are creative, innovative and dynamic. We are asking the membership to do the same, and help both share successes and inspire greatness in EE throughout the state.



# 2012-2013 Annual Report

### Susan Schuller, Chair

2011-2013

WI Center for Environmental Education  
Stevens Point, WI

### Stefan Anderson, Chair Elect

2013-2015

Conserve School  
Land O' Lakes, WI

### Sandy Benton

2011-2013

Fox River Academy  
Appleton, WI

### Katie Boseo

2013

WI Center for Environmental Education  
Stevens Point, WI

### Emily Brown

2013-2015

Wehr Nature Center  
Franklin, WI

### Eli Fyksen

2002-2014

YMCA Camp Minikani  
Hubertus, WI

### Nathan Kilps, Student

2012-2013

Concordia University  
Mequon, WI

### Molly McKay

2013-2014

Wausau School District  
Antigo, WI

### Brittany Roberts

2012-2014

Northern Waters Environmental School  
Hayward, WI

### Scott Reilly

2013-2015

Pacelli High School  
Stevens Point, WI

### Jodi Hermsen,

WAAE Administrator

## From the Chair...

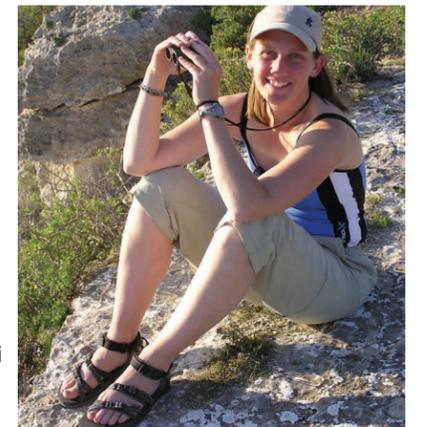
I feel privileged and honored to serve as WAAE's Chair this year and as a board member since 2011. WAAE is an organization with a committed board and membership dedicated to the advancement of environmental education in Wisconsin. This annual report outlines the accomplishments and achievements over the past year. These achievements are made possible by the passion and energy put into the organization that continues to evolve and grow. Partnerships continue to be a key to the success of WAAE. Building a stronger relationship between the Wisconsin Environmental Education Board and Wisconsin Environmental Education Foundation has been a priority. All three boards continue to work towards the goals and objectives outlined in *Wisconsin's Plan for Environmentally Literate and Sustainable Communities (ELSC Plan)*. In May the WAAE board did some strategic planning to set priorities to accomplish some of the goals outlined in this plan. It was determined the Objective 3.3 of the state ELSC Plan (*Facilitate innovative collaborations between diverse individuals, organizations, businesses, and governments*) will be the driver for WAAE programming in the next 3-5 years. The key word here is "collaborations." WAAE will build stronger partnerships and increase their collaboration strategies to guide them through changes and help implement innovative strategies that move EE forward in the state.

And so, there is nothing as certain as change; and WAAE is certainly no exception. With the end of the fiscal year came the shifting of WAAE administrators. Jodi Hermsen, after 4 years, is leaving the administrative role in WAAE. We cannot underestimate the passion, dedication, energy, and commitment Jodi has made to keep this organization so strong. On behalf of the WAAE Family, THANK YOU! Please help me welcome Katie Perryman-Gebhardt to the team to fill Jodi's "boots."

In continuing our collaborative efforts, WAAE has partnered with statewide agencies and organizations to organize the prestigious *Statewide Excellence in Environmental Education Awards Ceremony*. Save the date for November 9<sup>th</sup> at the Aldo Leopold Nature Center in Madison. I hope to see you all there.

And WAAE has committed to moving their annual conference to the summer vs. the fall for at least two years. This relieves pressure on the WAAE Board of organizing back-to-back events between Fall Conference and Winter Workshop. It also provides an opportunity for us to increase our membership outreach efforts specifically in the PK-12 education sector. We look forward to WAAE's Annual Conference in La Crosse, August 7-9, 2013 and in Stevens Point, August 2014. See you there!!

"The times they are a changin'" and WAAE is in a great position to continue to lead in Wisconsin. Thank you to all the WAAE supporters, members, donors, sponsors, board members (past and present), and, of course, Jodi Hermsen for your hard work and dedication to this wonderful organization.



## 2013-2014 WAAE Events

August 6-8, 2013  
WAAE Annual Conference  
*Making EE Relevant at Home, Work,  
School & Play*  
LaCrosse, WI

November 9, 2013  
WAAE Annual Member Meeting &  
Awards Banquet  
*Celebrating Excellence in Environmental  
Education*  
Monona, WI

January 24-26, 2014  
WAAE Winter Workshop  
*Survival or Revival*  
Tomahawk, WI



### WAAE Awards

Each year WAAE has the honor of awarding outstanding efforts in environmental education through our awards program. WAAE encourages all members of the EE community to reach for new heights by recognizing individuals and groups for their contributions to the field.

The **Aldo Leopold Award**, WAAE's most prestigious award, is presented to a WAAE member for exemplary service to WAAE in the field of environmental education. In 2012 **Betsy Parker** was awarded the Aldo Leopold Award. Betsy is Co-chair of the WEEB Education Committee and drafted Wisconsin's Plan for Environmental Literacy and Sustainable Communities amongst many other accomplishments for EE throughout the state.

The **David Engelson Award** is for individuals, agencies, and organizations making significant contributions to the field of environmental education as exemplified by David Engelson. **Tia Nelson**, Executive Secretary for Wisconsin's Board of Commissioners on Public Lands, was instrumental in reinstating the environmental education consultant position for the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, David Engelson's former position.

The **Earthguard Award** was presented to **Conserve School**, a semester school focused on the theme of environmental stewardship. The curriculum immerses students in environmental history, nature literature, and the science of conservation. The Earthguard Award recognizes student leadership in developing and conducting outstanding environmental action projects.

The **Formal Educator of the Year Award** is presented for outstanding, ongoing effort in infusing environmental education into their teaching. 2012's Formal Education of the Year is **Gary Bergstrom**. Gary is a 4th grade teacher and leader of the Bloomer Elementary School's Outdoor Learning Center. Gary expanded the Center's garden project to involve students of all ages in the district. Change Dinner. Change the World.

**Non-formal Educator of the Year** was awarded to **Cindy Damrow**, D.C. Everest's School Forest Director. She has led the district in the development of an exciting and engaging environmental education program for the thousands of children in our district. The Non-formal Educator Award is presented for exhibiting innovative and exemplary effort in providing environmental education opportunities for general audiences.

**Administrator of the Year** is presented for providing ongoing support and active involvement in EE in his/her facility. This award was presented to **Dirk Hunter**. Dirk is the Principal of Summit Environmental Elementary School in Onalaska and has mobilized stakeholders, invigorated and trained his teachers and support staff, and ignited a passion in students and families around environmental education.

The **Student of the Year Award** is awarded for outstanding student involvement in the field of environmental education and academic excellence. **Emily Weaver**, former student of Fox River Academy, was presented with the Student of the Year Award. Emily lives by the motto, "Good conservation takes your head, your



### WAAE Membership

<b>Current Membership: 335</b>	
Individuals: 154	Individual Life: 52
Students: 35	Non-profit Organizations: 39
Retired: 9	Corporate Annual: 1
Family: 7	Organizational Life: 5
	Additional Staff: 82



Membership is the foundation of the WAAE organization. Each individual, family, organization, and business brings their unique experiences and background to enrich our organization. Through all of you, WAAE is able to achieve its mission of supporting environmental education through advocacy, networking, and recognition. If you have any ideas or want to become more involved with a WAAE committee, do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you for your continued support of this great organization.

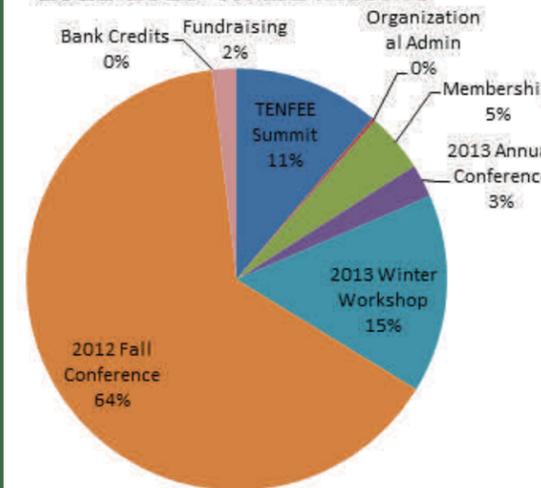
### WAAE Finances

WAAE continues to strive towards financial sustainability. We were able to achieve this goal for yet another year through the careful management of the Board of Directors. WAAE had an Annual Audit done by an outside firm which has, once again, come back with everything in order. The support of WAAE through conference and workshop attendance has been strong; both the Annual Conference and Winter Workshop had great turn-out. WAAE events are one of the primary components of our financial sustainability and continued support by our membership is vital. The Board of Directors has been working hard fundraising through sponsorship solicitations and the writing of grants. As always with grants some of them are awarded while others are not. We continue to take part in the State Employee Combined Campaign (SECC), a program that allows state employees to make donations to non-profit organizations. Goodsearch.com is another program that is used to make contributions to WAAE when a user selects Wisconsin Association for Environmental Education as their charity of choice. All of these sources of contributions make a difference and help to keep our organization in a financially healthy state.

The Board continues to work towards a positive financial future. WAAE is working towards developing an Operating Reserves Policy to assure that our organization remains financially viable in the future. The Board Treasurer will continue to meet with the Administrator on a regular basis to work on oversight of accounts and management of funds



#### 2012-2013 WAAE Income



#### 2012-2013 WAAE Expenses

