

Greenburgh
Nature Center
ANNUAL REPORT
2008



Greenburgh Nature Center
Nunataks Ltd.
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A Message From The Executive Director



As 2009 begins, I am happy to report that much progress was made at the GNC this past year. Three exciting accomplishments were the restoration of our Wood Frog Pond habitat area, the development of a Green Roof Demonstration Exhibit, and the organization of the Greenburgh Environmental Forum. All three represent our commitment to generating greater awareness and understanding of today's environmental issues and to stimulating thought and action regarding possible solutions.

Getting children and adults interested in environmental issues on a personal level is the most important step toward meeting our challenges.

The Wood Frog Pond project was particularly encouraging to undertake. Accomplished with the help of many volunteers, the genuine interest and enthusiasm of participating volunteer groups, including cub scouts, teenage organizations and special interest adult groups, was rewarding to see. Most importantly, all expressed interest in returning to the GNC to volunteer on future environmental projects.

The Green Roof Demonstration Exhibit drew inquiries from visitors from day one, with passers-by wanting to know more about this up-and-coming environmental practice. It has also become an important element of our sustainability programming.

The Greenburgh Environmental Forum (GEF), initiated through the efforts of the GNC, brought together representatives from all six villages and unincorporated Greenburgh to form an ongoing working group to address shared environmental concerns. The GEF has been organizing dialogues and community forums on solid waste, idling, and storm water issues.

We are happy to report that the GNC experienced financial growth in 2008 despite the economic downturn in the last quarter of the year. However, in order to secure our future financial growth, it is crucial for us expand our support in the private sector. To address this challenge, we are pursuing new opportunities to open our doors to the general public, special interest organizations, and area businesses. I invite our membership to partner with us in this effort by considering the GNC as a venue for your next company gathering, family picnic or child's birthday party.

On behalf of the GNC staff and Board of Directors, I thank you for your continued interest and support of our organization.

Sincerely,
Kurt Hundgen
Kurt Hundgen
Executive Director

Letter from the President...



Growth and change in nature, and at the Greenburgh Nature Center.

The GNC's 33 acres bear witness to nature's constant change. In fall, butterflies and birds depart for warmer climates, leaves drop from trees and flowers die, making the winter landscape look barren and stark. Unseen, inside trees and underneath seemingly barren ground, change is taking place, preparing for growth ahead. In spring, flowers, plants and trees awaken. By summer, the beauty of nature is once again resplendent with blossoms, greenery, birds and butterflies. Each element working in concert to make the GNC grounds an extraordinary experience of majestic nature.

This natural metamorphosis comes with the cycle of seasons, but it does require our help. From raking leaves, pruning trees and planting flowers, to nurturing habitats for birds and butterflies, there's much work to be done. This same type of natural metamorphosis and stewardship must be promoted WITHIN the GNC organization to enable it to thrive and prosper in a changing economic environment.

Transformation is important to the long term health and vitality of the organization. Our new website shows our commitment to the connection between the GNC and the community it serves. And our new animal care wash stations demonstrate our commitment to quality treatment for the animals in our care. Both highlight the firm commitment to the GNC mission, "*to promote conservation, research, and appreciation of nature and the environment.*"

Our record of performance is excellent, but with the environmental challenges facing our planet and the economic downturn creating budgetary stress there is much more we should do. The Board of Directors is committed to exhibit the leadership and vision that will transform and expand the GNC's level of service to the public and the planet. With your help, we will succeed.

Naturally yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James E. Nottingham III".

James E. Nottingham III
President, Board of Directors

Greenburgh Nature Center Annual Report – 2008

Introduction

The primary theme the GNC pursued in 2008 was “Lets Open Our Doors More.” In addition to our 24% increase in public visitation, the United Nations Association of Westchester County, Wildlife Watch, Sierra Club of Lower Hudson Valley, Executive Director’s of Nature Centers Roundtable, Scarsdale Teen Center, and the Edgemont Environmental Club all made use of the Center’s facilities to hold meetings and public forums. Working with The Volunteer Center of United Way, four corporations participated in company volunteer days at the Center. In October, we held an open house event to introduce potential supporters to our facility and our programs. As we move forward, we hope that our continued outreach to a wider circle will provide additional opportunities for growth.



Legislator Thomas J. Abinanti Addressing A Meeting
On Anti-Idling In Westchester County At The Center

Progress at the Nature Center was made in many other areas as well. The habitat restoration of Wood Frog Pond and expansion of our butterfly garden further beautified our grounds. These projects, as well as the construction of a Green Roof Demonstration Exhibit, expanded our ability to offer new education programs. Development of a new website began in the fall and will be launched in the spring of 2009. And, the groundwork was laid to further develop our commitment to serving as a Westchester County facilitator of environmental awareness with the hiring of Environmental Coordinator Anne Jaffe Holmes to full time status.

Programs For Schools and Groups

Our popular environmental education programming for families, school groups, and adults, continues to be the mainstay of our operation. In 2008, we led more than 1,500 educational programs that reached a total of 40,613 participants.



Learning How To Tap A Maple Tree
With GNC Director of Education John Mancuso

In particular, the Center's programs for school groups is the cornerstone of our educational programs, with exciting new programs on recycling and sustainable living, as well as the ever-popular programs on animal adaptations, pond ecology, maple sugaring and apple cidering. Our staff carried out a total of 1,331 programs for 258 schools and children's organizations in Westchester County and the New York metropolitan area. Of these, 640 were held at the Center and 691 were held "off site."



Assistant Managing Director Sara Cashen (center) Working With High School Students At This Years Land Use Symposium

The Center offered a variety of weekday and seasonal camp programs throughout the year. These included "Nature Bugs" and "Critters, Crafts and Kids" for pre-school children and their caregivers, along with winter, spring and end of summer camps, as well as special adventure and eco-travel camps during July and August. One hundred and thirty programs were presented.

Weekends were quite busy again this past year, with 57 different programs being presented. They ranged from informal natural history

walks and nature crafts to large scale, seasonal special events – the March Maple Sugaring Party, Spring Egg Hunt, Earth Day Celebration, Growing Green Family Festival, Grape-Picking and Honey-Harvesting Party, Fall Festival, Scarecrows and Pumpkins Parades and Turkey Scavenger Hunt.

This year's three-day project with Edgemont Junior High School's science students was a "To Build Or Not To Build" activity focusing on a hypothetical Edgemont Village Hall building on land owned by the Edgemont School District. Students conducted field research to prepare an environmental impact report, and then selected roles to play for or against the proposal. Town Supervisor Paul Feiner, Executive Director Kurt Hundgen, and other community specialists served as panelists for students to present their proposals.

Our staff also worked with 100 students from around the county, who learned about land use planning as part of a project coordinated by the Hudson Basin River Watch and sponsored by the GNC. In a day-long event, students learned about the proposal to develop the old General Motors site in Sleepy Hollow, then carried out a role-playing activity wherein they developed their own land use proposal.

Educational and Cultural Exhibits

Our six-month natural history exhibit, "Biomimicry: Growing Green with Nature," examined the role of nature as a model for clues that may lead to advances in science, economics, and sustainability. The exhibit ran through June and was seen by thousands of visitors, including visiting schools, other groups and the general public.

Short-term exhibits included a mixed media show by the Mamaroneck Artists Guild, photography exhibits by Fran Macomber and Stan Rubin, and a display of ceramic works by Leigh Taylor Mickelson, which was part of the county-wide "All Fired Up!" clay celebration.

The Center organized a bigger and better “Green Expo” as part of its Family Festival in June. This year’s event featured 24 different organizations providing a wide range of “green” products and services – everything from hybrid vehicles to exhibits on solar and wind energy.

Environmental Programs

During the winter and spring of 2008, meetings with Westchester County residents were convened at the Greenburgh Nature Center to discuss regional environmental issues. Recycling was the first issue on which the meetings focused, with the group learning about the economics of recycling in Westchester County, as well as about the many recycling programs and initiatives run by the County. The County Executive recognized the Greenburgh Nature Center for its role in creating these forums by presenting the GNC with a Certificate of Achievement for Recycling Education.



The GNC Arranged For Local Government Officials To Visit Westchester County's Materials Recovery Facility In Yonkers

Taking it to the next step, in the summer of 2008 the GNC invited Greenburgh village mayors and the Town Supervisor to appoint citizen volunteers with appropriate environmental involvement to represent their municipality in the Greenburgh Environmental Forum (GEF). Facilitated by GNC staff, the GEF meets monthly, promoting regular discussion, resource sharing, and cooperation between the villages, the Town of Greenburgh, and Westchester County government. Some environmental issues currently under study by the GEF include storm water management/flood risk reduction, reducing carbon-emissions through transportation alternatives, and solid waste reduction, recycling, and composting.

GNC staff and several Board members also participated in research and discussions with the Town of Greenburgh’s Climate Action Task Force, which resulted in a 72-page report detailing how the Town of Greenburgh can effectively reduce carbon-emissions in all aspects of municipal operations.

“Think Globally, Act Locally” was the unifying theme of a monthly series of evening programs on environmental issues. Co-produced with the Lower Hudson Valley Group of the Sierra Club, the meeting topics included an open discussion with Westchester County Legislator John Nonna about Westchester County’s Environmental Initiatives, socially responsible investing, sustainability in agriculture and food production, and the history of consumer culture.

In November, Westchester Community Foundation awarded the Greenburgh Nature Center a \$10,000 grant to facilitate an inter-municipal storm water management project for the Town and villages of Greenburgh. In fulfilling the objectives of the grant, the GNC has forged a dynamic partnership with Groundwork Hudson Valley/Saw Mill River Coalition and the Federated Conservationists of Westchester County. This grant work has initiated an exciting inter-municipal dialogue aimed at creating a “watershed framework” for cooperation in storm water management.

Animal Collection

There were several additions to our live animal collection during 2008. Among our more prominent acquisitions were two bald eagles, which were acquired from the Wildlife Center of Virginia. These majestic birds, which anchor the birds of prey aviary, continue to be a consistent draw for members and first time visitors alike. Two Argentine Tegus and two Green Iguanas were acquired in an attempt to exhibit larger animals in our museum area. The addition of Cuban tree frogs was a step toward the development and diversification of our amphibian and invertebrate collections, which will allow us to better serve our educational programs as well as public visitors. And this year, we added six Eastern Turkeys to our outdoor barnyard exhibit. By years end, our animal collection consisted of 145 specimens representing 58 species.



Manny, The Green Tree Iguana

In addition to modifying our collection, the GNC also actively participated in the treatment and rehabilitation of animals brought in

by the Greenburgh Animal Control and local veterinarian hospitals. These animals included song birds, rabbits, squirrels, turtles, and birds of prey. One highlight of note includes the successful rehabilitation and subsequent release of two birds of prey, a Saw-whet Owl and a Red tailed Hawk.

Capital Projects

The Woodfrog Pond Restoration capital project was undertaken last summer, with the goal of enhancing the biodiversity of this wetland habitat. Thanks to funding from the Hudson River Foundation, in-kind services from Sprainbrook Nursery, and many hours of hard labor by GNC staff, Town of Greenburgh Parks Department employees and many volunteers, we were able to dredge the pond, improve bank support with rock outcroppings and plant over 200 native non-invasive shrubs and herbaceous plants. The restored habitat will continue to serve as an “outdoor classroom” for our popular pond ecology and biodiversity programs.



Putting The Final Touches On Woodfrog Pond Restoration

Our second capital project completed in 2008 was Phase One of a Green Roof Demonstration Exhibit. Constructed by Greener By Design with generous funding from Con Edison, this exhibit demonstrates the benefits of a vegetative roofing surface to conserve energy. This Green Roof Exhibit provides a visual example of new approaches toward sustainability and will be used as a teaching tool with our school groups and visitors.



Green Roof Demonstration Exhibit

Support

Support for the Center's operations continued to be broad based – a combination of government funding from the Town of Greenburgh, Westchester County and New York State, along with tuition fees, membership dues, corporate and foundation grants, business sponsorships and individual contributions.

Special thanks go to the Town of Greenburgh for providing important support services, including grounds and building maintenance, as well

as new landscaping projects to improve the appearance of the Nature Center. Westchester County provided funding to help support our environmental programs for schools, as well as our weekend family events, which attracted over 5,730 people.

The Center received an award of \$32,325 from New York State as part of the Zoological and Botanical Gardens and Aquarium (ZBGA) program in support of "Living Museums." And, we received a \$10,000 member-item grant through Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins for the development of educational programs related to our Green Roof Demonstration Exhibit.



Managing Director Penny Berman (left) Receives A Ceremonial \$10,000 Check From Con Edison Representatives Sandra Miller (center) and Patricia Mulqueen (right)

Major corporate and foundation grants and matching funds came from Alexander Host Foundation, Ambac, Con Edison, Pitney Bowes, Pfizer, New York Environmental Fund, the Hudson River Foundation, Klein Foundation, and Whole Foods.

Event sponsorships provided much needed financial assistance to underwrite the costs of planning and carrying out our major weekend activities. Sponsors included Commerce Bank, Cablevision, Central Animal Hospital, Bond Animal Hospital, Apple Bank, and People's Union Bank.

Our spring brunch benefit held at the Scarsdale Golf Club honored Bill Lawyer for his 30 years of service to the Nature Center. Through tickets sales and journal ads, \$8,750.00 was raised. The event featured testimonials from several Town officials and past Board members. We thank Tony Barron for his chairmanship of this event.

Our membership remains broad and loyal. Nearly 41 percent of our 1,100 memberships come from unincorporated Greenburgh and its six villages, with the rest distributed throughout Westchester County, New York City, and even a few from Connecticut and beyond. Over 13% of our memberships in 2008 were seniors or senior families. Forty-nine percent of people who joined or renewed in 2007 renewed their memberships this year.

We worked with local media to help bring our message to the public. Cablevision and the Town of Greenburgh produced three public service announcements, which were aired on commercial cable channels to promote our events and create an awareness of our organization. We also received extensive coverage in the Journal News, Scarsdale Inquirer and Westchester Parent magazine.

In December, thanks to the generous support of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Burson and the Marsteller Group, development of new website commenced. In the months to come, this new website will serve as an important conduit for communication with our many stakeholders – visitors, teachers, supporters and volunteers.

Volunteerism continued to provide a very important source of support for all activities – particularly the work of our volunteers in assisting with husbandry of our animal collection, office work, grounds

maintenance and reception/gift shop operations. We recruited and trained over 50 high school student volunteers. Our volunteer program produced 8,300 support hours. In addition, Dannon, Timberland, Nokia, and IBM participated in volunteer group days and assisted on environmentally friendly projects.



Volunteer Erica Duncan Applies "A Bit Of Fun" Make-up To A Young Lady At Our Ever-Popular Fall Festival

Internships with local high schools also provided many hours of valuable support. Students from the Greenburgh Community Center's Crossroads Program, Northern Westchester BOCES Walkabout Program and Edgemont Alternative School Program interned throughout the year.

Goals for 2009

As the year ended, the Center's staff was already starting work on its 2009 natural history exhibit, entitled "Meeting Environmental Challenges in Westchester County." The goal of this exhibit is to

educate our visitors about Westchester County's environmental challenges, to let them know about programs in place to address these and future needs, and to inspire them to be an active part of the solution.

We have four exciting projects planned for 2009 that reflect our commitment to environmental and nature education and guest visitation. They include completion of Phase Two of our Green Roof Demonstration Exhibit. This phase will include educational signage, installation of a temperature monitoring station and solar panel, and development of a rain garden.

Our second project includes development of an organic sustainable garden. Once completed, this area will serve as an outdoor classroom to complement our sustainable living education programs and provide hands-on experiences for program participants.

Our third project involves the addition of a new indoor 200-gallon aquarium exhibit highlighting the Bronx River watershed. The aquarium will exhibit fish species native to the Bronx River, and educational signage will highlight ecological relationships of this important local watershed area.

Lastly, we intend to relocate and expand our domestic animal barnyard exhibit to a nearby location. The expanded barnyard and ancillary facilities will enable us to properly house an increased number and variety of domestic animals, giving our visitors a richer experience and providing us with the ability to conduct more dynamic educational programming.

Board of Directors as of May 2009

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Andrew Schriever – 2nd Vice President
David Cautin – Secretary
Alexandria Stroud – Treasurer
Margaret Tjimos-Goldberg – At Large

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Gerard Byrne, Commissioner,
Town of Greenburgh Parks & Recreation – Ex Officio
Kevin Morgan, Councilman,
Town of Greenburgh – Ex Officio



State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins (center) Planting A Tree
With Help From Participants At Our Earth Day Celebration

Greenburgh Nature Center Professional Staff as of May 2009

Kurt Hundgen, Executive Director
Penny Berman, Managing Director
Travis Brady, Animal Curator
Sara Cashen, Assistant Managing Director
Dean Fausel, Senior Naturalist and Facilities Manager
Anne Jaffe Holmes, Coordinator of Programs/Environ. Projects
Allison Kueck, Assistant Animal Curator
Juliana Leshi, Receptionist
Jocelyn Lim, Data Manager
John Mancuso, Director of Education and Graphics
Jennifer Sloan, Naturalist Educator

William Lawyer, Director Emeritus
Miriam Widmann, Board Liaison

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Cablevision
Hudson River Foundation
New York City Environmental Fund
Whole Foods

Con Edison
Klein Foundation
St. Faith House

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Corporate Community Jobs Project
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Creative Habitat Corporation
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Jujamcyn Theaters
Nathan's Printing
SavATree
Scarsdale Golf Club
Mr. Stan Rubin
Timberland
Treasure Hunt Adventures
Whispering Pines of Chappaqua

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Marc Weinberg and Victoria Lasseter
Shari Wels
Monique Winsten

Coffee Labs
Dr. Patrick Gannon
John Jay Landscape Development
Mr. Martin Byrne
Park Ridge Marriott
Scarsdale Gallery
Sky Hunters in Flight
Teatown Lake Reservation
Tim's Birdscaping Service
Westchester Jazz Orchestra

Global Impact
ING Direct
Mellon Bank
NY Life Insurance
Soros Foundation
United Way

Audited Financial Report Fiscal Year 2008
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OPERATING INCOME		OPERATING EXPENSES	
Center Generated		Personnel	\$581,154
Membership Dues	\$67,891	Fringe Benefits	67,276
Tuitions	235,516	Payroll Taxes	41,240
Admissions	67,151	Administration	37,900
Contributions	30,587	Professional fees	14,482
Annual Giving	23,380	Website	8,000
Fund Raising Events	22,294	Utilities & maintenance	27,766
Grants-Foundation	155,828	Insurance	14,355
Gov. & Corporate		Members/Fund Rsng	23,999
Gift Shop/Refreshments	26,336	Musm/Clinc/Natl Hst	31,461
Investments	6,483	Education & Travel	37,582
Miscellaneous Income	18,127	Building Equip. Expenditures	2,281
Town of Greenburgh	339,100	Gift Shop Expenses	9,988
		Depreciation	13,086
Total Operating Income	\$992,693	Total Operating Expenses	907,934
		Net Income	\$84,759

Net Assets Jan 1, 2008	340,753
Net Assets Dec 31, 2008	425,512
Temporarily Restricted Assets	50,355
Permanently Restricted Assets	13,200

Note: This is a summary of our complete audited financial statement,
prepared by the firm of Victor J. Cannistra, CPA P.C.