



DODGE
NATURE CENTER

Thomas Irvine **DODGE NATURE CENTER**

Annual Report Fiscal Year | 2016





What does it mean to **host a conference?**

IN AUGUST OF 2016 Dodge Nature Center and Preschool hosted the 2016 Nature Based Preschool National Conference. This may beg the question, what does it mean to host a conference?

Upgrading a number of buildings with paint, new shelving, siding, and redecorating was essential. Thanks to our Dodge Friends, we were able to upgrade a number of our buildings for years to come. Many students coming to Dodge will benefit from the upgrades to facilities that were connected to this conference.

As registration opened, the original estimate of 100 participants grew beyond what we anticipated. We called our partners for help. Garlough Environmental Magnet School opened their doors

to accommodate our larger crowd. This made the conference attendance record setting: 210 attendees representing 28 states and Canada. Our facilities looked fresh and new kiosks were installed for wayfinding. Most importantly, our staff and volunteers were prepared to showcase our knowledge and creativity in the field.

I learn from this that any large undertaking can be met by the Dodge Nature Center Community. We are ready for anything and can deliver quality. Thank you all for supporting Dodge Nature Center and make sure to come out and *Nourish your Need for Nature™*.

—Jason Sanders, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DODGE NATURE CENTER

2016 Nature-Based Preschool National Conference

The weather cooperated and attendees were welcomed by staff and volunteers with a BIG SMILE, and everyone was a buzz about the environmental learning that was taking place.

Attendees had great things to say:

- “It was one of THE best conferences I’ve attended. I loved being **surrounded by others who are passionate** about early childhood nature-based programming.”
- “Hats off to the organizers at all levels. It was a **well-planned, welcoming event**—one of the best I’ve attended.”
- “So impressed. The host staff were **so gracious**, and everyone who organized it was so great.”
- “The entire conference was **beyond my wildest dreams**. I look forward to sharing ideas with students & staff.”



MISSION

Providing exceptional experiences in nature through environmental education.

VISION

Inspiring commitment to the thoughtful care of the environment.

VALUES

Environmental Stewardship
Experiential Education
Teacher Education
Community Inclusiveness
Collaboration



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Volunteers Judy and Alan Johnston, help care for the horses on the Dodge Farm.

Nourish Your Need FOR NATURE™

“**D**ODGE NATURE CENTER is a special place right in our backyard where city, country, and nature merge to provide a diversity of environments supporting a diversity of life. There is something new to see, learn, and appreciate every day – from very evident seasonal changes with their assortment of sights, sounds, and colors to more subtle incremental changes resulting from the continuous cycle of life visible in farm animals, wildlife, and the surrounding natural environment. You can enjoy nature by finding your own special spots for quiet reflection and solitude, or you can enjoy the many smiles of discovery on the faces of the future stewards of our environment who visit daily.”

—ALAN JOHNSTON, BOARD MEMBER



Nature Nourishment:

Dandelion Fritters

3/4 cup milk
(or more depending on flour used)

1 egg

1 cup soft white whole wheat flour
(or flour of choice)

water and salt for soaking flowers

oil for frying

about 80 dandelion blossoms
(a little less than two cups)

INSTRUCTIONS:

REMOVE THE ENTIRE STEM and as much of the green part as desired from each flower. (The green part is somewhat bitter, but if you remove all of it your flowers will tend to fall apart. It may be simplest to remove the stem.) **SOAK FLOWERS IN SALT WATER** for five to ten minutes to remove any bugs that might be hiding in them.

HEAT COCONUT OIL or oil of choice over a medium (or slightly lower than medium) heat in a skillet.

BEAT EGG INTO MILK, then add to flour. Mix just until combined. Mixture should be about the consistency of a thick pancake batter—add more milk or flour if needed to get the right consistency.

DIP FLOWERS INTO BATTER, using a fork or tongs to make sure each flower is well coated with batter. (Or, mix all your flowers into the batter, and make small pancakes instead of individual fritters.) Drop each flower into the hot oil. (If you're not sure whether your oil is hot enough, you can drip a small amount of batter into the oil. When the batter floats and begins bubbling briskly, your oil is hot enough.)

FRY FOR ABOUT TWO MINUTES ON EACH SIDE, or until each side is golden brown and slightly crispy.

REMOVE TO PLATE lined with paper towel or a clean rag to absorb the extra grease. Immediately sprinkle with powdered sugar, if desired.

Continue until all dandelion blossoms are fried.

THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS

MUCHAS GRACIAS UA TSAUG VIELEN DANK MAHADSANID OBRIGADO MIIGWECH TAKK

| AREA OF SUPPORT | HOURS | VOLUNTEERS |
|--|---------------|--------------|
| Animal Care | 520 | 7 |
| Development | 779 | 66 |
| Farm | 1501 | 13 |
| Buildings & Grounds, Land Restoration & Gardens | 3975 | 298 |
| Preschool | 711 | 292 |
| Programs | 1120 | 32 |
| Community Events | 2542 | 667 |
| Advisory Committees & Board Meetings | 530 | 41 |
| TOTALS | 11,678 | 1,416 |

SOCIAL RETURN

\$275,098

VOLUNTEER VALUE

\$23.56 PER HOUR
U.S. NON-FARM WAGE

SOURCES: *Independent Sector, 2015; Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration*



2016 Shan Knox Volunteer Award

PRESENTED TO

Tavaras Villagomez

“ People at Dodge help me by providing an excellent experience of getting to be outside and participate in nature activities. It also helps when the lead staff has vast knowledge of nature information for me to better understand the nature world around us.”

Despite being a busy young adult, Tavaras finds a way to be here to help Dodge. From summer camp to events to bailing hay, he will do whatever it takes. He volunteers due to his loyalty to the organization, the people, and his belief in lifelong learning and giving back.

Tavaras Villagomez receives the Shan Knox Award from Executive Director, Jason Sanders.



Nourish Your Need FOR NATURE™

“I am so fortunate to be able to go out hiking into the woods, over creeks, around ponds and through a beautiful prairie with young children who are in awe of the natural world. My senses are heightened when out in nature listening to the chirping of birds, the buzzing of bees and the wind through the trees. I love the feel of the sticky mud and the crunch of the frosty snow.

My favorite experiences in nature are the taste of sweet, juicy berries in summer, the color of the sugar maples in the fall, the silence of the woods in winter, and the new life sprouting in the springtime.

How lucky we are at Dodge Nature Center and Preschool to have the opportunity for this time to nourish our need for nature.

—**JENNIFER ELSEN**, DODGE NATURE PRESCHOOL TEACHER



Teacher Jennifer enjoys 'Lunch Bunch' with preschool students. Lunch Bunch requests that students bring healthy food and reusable containers to encourage nutrition and reducing waste stewardship at an early age.



Come One, **COME ALL**

Environmental Education and Preschool

GRAND NUMBER SERVED = 53,178

SEPT. 1, 2015 THROUGH AUGUST 31, 2016

** Included in Other Public Programs are: Nature After Dinner, Signature Speakers, Scout Programs, seasonal programs such as maple syruping, fall orchard, etc. **For the first time, in 2012-2013, all Garlough classes at the schools and inquiry studies at DNC were included in the total.*

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| OWLS..... | 350 |
| Other Public Programs* | 1,076 |
| Nature Playdate..... | 208 |
| Woolly Bears..... | 102 |
| Homeschool Program | 57 |
| TOTAL | 1,793 |

CAMPS

| | |
|--------------------|------------|
| Fall Camp | 92 |
| Spring Camp | 137 |
| Summer Camp | 643 |
| TOTAL | 872 |

CLASSES

| | |
|--|---------------|
| On-site Classes..... | 25,853 |
| Naturalist at Garlough | 14,910 |
| Naturalist at Heritage (5th & 7th grade)..... | 4,671 |
| Outreach programs..... | 4,672 |
| TOTAL** | 50,106 |

PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| 2015-16 School Year | 201 |
| Preschool Summer camp | 206 |
| TOTAL..... | 407 |

PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUE

| | UNRESTRICTED | TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED | PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED | TOTAL |
|--|------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Public Support | | | | |
| Contributions | 188,135 | 356,715 | 500 | 545,350 |
| Memberships | 1,820 | | | 1,820 |
| Fundraiser Revenue (Net) | 98,783 | | | 98,783 |
| TOTAL PUBLIC SUPPORT | 288,738 | 356,715 | 500 | 645,953 |
| Revenue | | | | |
| Visitor Fees and Tuition | 405,124 | | | 405,124 |
| Preschool Tuition | 745,015 | | | 745,015 |
| Rental Revenue | 63,211 | | | 63,211 |
| Interest and Dividends Income | 263,254 | 383,529 | 57,146 | 703,929 |
| Miscellaneous | 126,600 | | | 126,600 |
| TOTAL REVENUE | 1,603,204 | 383,529 | 57,146 | 2,043,879 |
| Net Assets Released from Restrictions | — | | | |
| Endowment Release from Restrictions | 256,268 | (211,268) | (45,000) | — |
| Satisfaction of Program Restrictions | 262,402 | (262,402) | | — |
| TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE | 2,410,612 | 477,842 | 57,646 | 2,689,832 |

EXPENSES

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------|------------------|
| Program Services | | | | |
| Nature and Environmental Education | 1,990,792 | | | 1,990,792 |
| Supporting Service | | | | |
| Management and General | 288,396 | | | 288,396 |
| Fund Raising | 127,918 | | | 127,918 |
| Total Supporting Service | 416,314 | | | 416,314 |
| TOTAL EXPENSE | 2,407,106 | — | — | 2,407,106 |
| INCREASE IN NET ASSETS | 3,506 | 477,842 | 57,646 | 538,994 |

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS

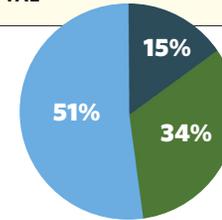
| | UNRESTRICTED | TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED | PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED | TOTAL |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Net Assets, Beginning of Year | 7,429,467 | 2,041,477 | 9,708,944 | 19,179,888 |
| Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets | 3,506 | 477,842 | 57,646 | 538,994 |
| NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR | 7,432,973 | 2,519,319 | 9,766,590 | 19,718,882 |

Financials

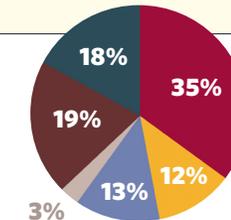
September 1, 2015 - August 31, 2016

REVENUE AND EXPENSES

| | | |
|----------------------------|----------------|-----|
| Corporations & Foundations | 44,445 | 15% |
| Fundraiser Revenue | 98,783 | 34% |
| Individuals | 145,510 | 51% |
| TOTAL | 288,738 | |



| | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|-----|
| Preschool Tuition | 745,015 | 35% |
| Released from Restrictions | 262,402 | 12% |
| Interest and Dividends | 263,254 | 13% |
| Rental Income | 63,211 | 3% |
| Program Fees | 405,124 | 19% |
| Other | 382,868 | 18% |
| TOTAL | 2,121,874 | |



Nourish Your Need FOR NATURE™

“I love working here at Dodge Nature Center. It’s the perfect place. Such a natural setting yet just four miles from downtown. My favorite way to nourish my need for nature is to take a nice quiet hike in a beautiful, serene setting. As a close second though I can usually be found hiking with thirty fifth graders following noisily behind me! The best of both worlds!”

—**PAM WELISEVICH**,
NATURALIST AND ANIMAL CARE COORDINATOR

Naturalist Pam cares for wildlife ambassadors at Dodge.



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Zenon Dance Company and School
Ms. Debbie Zuckerman

Thank you.



Thomas Irvine Dodge Nature Center
365 Marie Avenue W. West St Paul, MN 55118

PHONE (651) 455-4531

DodgeNatureCenter.org

