



## CELEBRATING 15 YEARS

November 10, 2008

Dear Lime Hollow Supporter,

No matter what lens you use to view the world today -- economic, political, social, or environmental -- we are clearly in tumultuous times.

We make this obvious observation in order to make a point that may be less obvious: Despite the unrest in the world at large and the tough economic climate at the state and local levels, your nature center spent 2008 quietly, diligently, and -- we are proud to say -- successfully delivering on the mission you've entrusted to us. Providing a figurative and a literal oasis amid today's turmoil, Lime Hollow:

- reached more children (camp attendance up 47%, visiting field trips up 20%),
- partnered with more community organizations to meet community needs (28 in total),
- secured more financial support (total of \$68,400) through grants and other financing,
- and made more trail improvements than ever before.

And, best of all, we closed the Fiscal year of 2008 in the black -- making Lime Hollow a sound, community-minded investment at a time when (as we well know and fully appreciate!) your ability to support organizations like ours is limited.

How have we managed this? And how will we remain diligent during what experts predict will be continuing tough times ahead? Our approach boils down to three concepts: Collaboration, Creativity, and Diligence.

### COLLABORATION:

Lime Hollow knows that community needs are frequently met most efficiently and effectively when community-based organizations join forces, share resources, reduce redundancies, and leverage their combined team spirit and good will. The year 2008 saw ample evidence of this philosophy in action, oftentimes demonstrating that 1 + 1 = 3. Here are but few examples:

■ **With the Dryden Rotary Club on the Gracie Pond Overlook Deck** – A stunning, 'state-park-quality' observation deck overlooking beautiful Gracie Pond has been added to the end of our *Trail for All*. Designed free-of-charge by our friend and visitor center architect, Brian Buttner, this feature enables Lime Hollow's visitors -- including those with physical disabilities -- to enjoy Gracie Pond's lovely vistas, flora, and fauna as never before. And it comes to us through a monumental donation of labor from the Dryden Rotary Club and composite decking donated by Cortland's own BestDeck, Inc.

■ **With the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and Cayuga New Visions students on educational displays** – Last fall, a design team from the local field office of the USF & WS created an interactive

display featuring the endangered Indiana Bat. Just in time for Creatures of the Night 2007, the “bat cave” was an instant sensation for our smaller naturalists. In February, the NY Field Office partnered with the Cayuga BOCES New Visions program and delivered an exhibit -- entitled “Bald Eagles on the Road to Recovery” -- which celebrated not only the federal delisting of the bald eagle, but the exemplary work by New York State biologists (Mike Allen and Peter Nye) who have spent many years working to increase bald eagle populations in New York from one breeding pair in 1979 to approximately 110 in 2007! Lime Hollow is delighted to dedicate one of our tri-sided modular displays for our friends at the USF&WS and their ultra-creative staff.

■ **With SUNY Cortland on the new Beaver Tail Trail** – If you haven’t been on our newest interpretative trail, you are missing a real treat. Designed by SUNY Cortland student, Liz Hensel, this trail spotlights our mounted “Bob the Beaver” (who has become quite the Lime Hollow rock-star!) and includes six interpretative stations highlighting actual beaver activity along our aptly named Beaver Brook. (Yes, it was named that long before we introduced the trail!) Liz’s fine work has been featured in SUNY Cortland press releases and *The Cortland Standard*. (Incidentally, as if on cue, just prior to the premier of the Beaver Tail Trail in late September, our neighborhood beavers graced the Visitor Center landscape with five dams and raised the water level of Gracie Pond by 18 inches!)

■ **With RPM Ecosystems on our visitor center landscaping/restoration project** – Our good friends from RPM are partnering with Lime Hollow on Phase II of our Visitor Center wetland restoration project. You’ll hear more about this exciting, multi-year initiative at the end of this letter.

■ **Camp Gracie cleanup with scout troops, board members, Trail Sentinels and SUNY Cortland students** – As part of our Earth Day celebration in late April, our Trail Sentinels, board, and staff partnered with scout groups, SUNY Cortland students, and active camper parents to spruce up Camp Gracie in preparation for our 2008 Fishing Festival and Summer Camp. In a single day, these 50+ volunteers raked, painted, and cleaned debris, expanding our camp footprint and tying together both of our properties on Gracie Road for a more open and safer camper campus. Next year, a new and exciting children’s garden will be added to the Camp Gracie landscape.

#### **CREATIVITY:**

Whether it’s stretching our limited resources -- or lighting upon new ways to leverage existing assets -- Lime Hollow’s leadership, staff, board, and team of committed volunteers showed lots of creativity this year. A handful of examples:

■ **Supporting our staff with SUNY Cortland Interns & an AmeriCorps volunteer**– During this past summer, SUNY Cortland intern Jason Richer joined our Buildings and Grounds team. During his 15-week internship, Jason lead trail crews, assisted in the restoration of our 1890s barn, built a series of footbridges on a new trail system, and kept our trails and grounds in first-class shape. In October, Adam Davison joined our staff as Lime Hollow’s first AmeriCorps Volunteer (Adam impressed us so much during summer camp, that we offered him our full time AmeriCorps slot!). Adam will serve as our Camp McLean Summer Camp Director, breathe new life into our Public Programs, and will assist our Associate Director, Peter Harrity with school field trips.

■ **Securing furniture from Catholic Charities** – In early 2008, Lime Hollow reached out to the community and sought donations to furnish our Education Center and two of our staff/intern quarters.

Catholic Charities answered the call and provided quality bedroom, dining room, and living room furniture at no cost. Thanks to Catholic Charities, we are now able to provide respectable living space for our AmeriCorps volunteers, summer camp counselors, college interns, and permanent staff.

■ **BOCES New Visions** -- Our dear friend, Tim Sandstrom, and his students from the BOCES New Visions program this year continued to supply strong backs and strong minds in support of Lime Hollow at a moment's notice. Whether it was dragging a "recycled" footbridge over a stream on a snowy and cold day in February, planting trees and shrubs near the Visitor Center, volunteering at our Christmas Tree Sale, clearing our trails of fallen timbers, or co-sponsoring our Maple and Fishing Festivals...these wonderful young men and women are learning about environmental stewardship from a great mentor in a real world setting.

■ **Renting our new Visitor Center for meetings** – It's a beautiful meeting space, so we thought we'd begin offering it to outside organizations on a rental basis. Those who leveraged our new meeting space opportunity in 2008 included the Groton Superintendent of Schools and her planning staff, the Tompkins Trust Company, and the Cortland County Teacher Center for numerous seminars. (Interested? Contact LH to learn more!)

■ **Trail Sentinels** – Our volunteer Trail Sentinels not only kept watch over our expansive trail system in 2008, they marked, cut, and blazed a new 1.3 mile trail system near our western boundary. This new trail, which we will debut in 2009, will be our longest and will boast the longest wooden footbridge on Lime Hollow at nearly 80' in length with a 60' stepping stone approach! Stay tuned for more details about this exciting addition to our trail network.

■ **Beaver Brook Covered Bridge** – After nearly 18 months, Tom Reese, our Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds, is seeing his dream of building a covered bridge at Lime Hollow come alive. You may have caught *The Cortland Standard* article (October 23, 2008) featuring Tom's bridge and its importance to our Visitor Center area. Thanks to a generous donation from the Great Cortland Pumpkinfest Committee, this wonderful addition to our McLean Road complex is sure to become a Cortland County landmark.

■ **Gutchess Lumber underwriting of RPM Mother's Day Tree Sale** – In the spring, we partnered with the Gutchess Lumber Company in raising money for Lime Hollow. Gutchess Lumber stepped forward and agreed to purchase up to 300 trees from RPM Ecosystems with 100% of all proceeds benefitting Lime Hollow. The final tally was an astounding 371 trees...making us not only tree huggers, but Gutchess Lumber huggers as well!

■ **The YMCA and Homer Junior-Senior High School on 5K runs** – In June, the YMCA partnered with Lime Hollow to host the Father's Day 5KM race as part of the YMCA's 6-pack series of races. This part-road/part-trail course was a huge success and we look forward to sponsoring the Y's only off-road race in the years ahead. Lime Hollow also became the proud sponsor for the Homer Junior and Senior High School Cross Country teams; throughout this fall season, dozens of young men and women from Homer can be seen jogging our trails and remaining physically fit.

#### **DILIGENCE:**

Running a non-profit at any time, let alone these times, requires a management team that is diligent – even dogged – in finding funding to support our cause. Fortunately, Lime Hollow and our region as a

whole is blessed with foundations and government agencies who recognize our value, support our mission, and are responsive to our appeals for financial assistance.

■ **Triad Foundation Field Trip Assistance grant** – Thanks to our friends at the Triad Foundation, Lime Hollow was able to reach out to those school districts in the CNY area that have not been able to participate in our field trip programs due to inadequate financial support. Groton Schools, Syracuse Public Schools, St. Mary's Schools, and Moravia Schools took advantage of this terrific opportunity to get their students outside, where they can actively explore the wonders of Lime Hollow. The Syracuse Schools were so "fired up" about our "Hatchet" Wilderness Survival Program that they have already booked a session in the spring of 2009.

■ **Phillips Memorial Trail upgrade** – Just in time for our Spring 5<sup>th</sup> grade "Getting Boggled in the Bog" field trip, the Lime Hollow staff assisted with the installation of a new 60' all weather floating boardwalk in the vicinity of Chicago Bog. Thanks to the generous support from the Phillips Family and the Cortland Community Foundation, Chicago Bog is undergoing a major upgrade. In addition to the floating, low-impact boardwalk to the bog mat, one our Eagle Scouts rebuilt all the benches for our outdoor classroom. The staff erected a temporary shelter to protect our children during foul weather conditions. And new state-of-the-art, highly durable and professional interpretative signs are in the final stages of development. We are striving for a Phillips Memorial Trail rededication in time for our field trip season this coming Spring. The Phillips Trail, our most popular trail system, will shine in '09!

■ **Cortland County Legislature** -- thanks to the diligent efforts of our former Legislative Representative, Kay Breed, Lime Hollow received a line item amount of \$10,000 in the county's 2008 budget. This financial support from Cortland County represents our legislatures' belief that Lime Hollow provides the many of the same quality-of-life opportunities to the citizens of Cortland County as a NY State Park.

As proud as we are, and as proud as YOU can be, of our progress during the year just passed, much work remains to be done in 2009. Three key initiatives will be:

**With your help, we will deploy a SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEM** at our visitor center on McLean Road. Doing so will serve three important purposes: (1) The system will continue to build on our new center's list of 'green' features – enhancing our ability to demonstrate and educate our visitors about green technologies. (2) One day, we believe the system will also help us secure a prestigious LEED certification from the U.S. Green Building Counsel. And (3) the system will also all-but-eliminate our electric bill at the new center (\$3,640 in 2007), which, incidentally, is our largest expense after staff salaries and various insurance policies we must retain.

**With your help, we will commence a LANDSCAPE RESTORATION PROGRAM** at our visitor center. Not only will this project improve the aesthetics of our McLean Road complex, it will provide yet another powerful teaching opportunity. Assisted by a Landscaping Committee of volunteers, we are beginning work on an interpretive plan for this portion of Lime Hollow that will instruct visitors and the community at large about these and other timely concepts:

- the use of native species to attract diverse wildlife (and, conversely, the threats of invasive species)
- the use of greenscaping in the abatement of erosion, runoff, dust, noise, and other threats
- the use of greenspace to reduce heating/cooling demands

**And, with your help, we will continue to establish Lime Hollow as the premiere, year-round outdoor recreation facility in Central New York.** In 2009, we will expend more time and energy on:

- developing the Lehigh Valley Railway Right of Way into a multi-purpose, multi-use trail network that supports hiking, running, XC skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, and bicycles;
- partnering with SUNY Cortland athletics, Tompkins Cortland Community College, local schools, and other non-profit agencies to develop regular fitness events and health-based uses for our trail system;
- developing and improving the Tamarack Art Meadow and fostering strong relationships to the the art community;
- researching, building, and promoting a Low Ropes Challenge Course that encourages personal development, teamwork, and leadership development;
- expanding our "Access to All" trail system to encompass the Tamarack Art Trail and connecting to Lehigh Valley Trail.

We know these are challenging times. Yet given the worthy goals we have for next year, given our success over the last year, and given how much Lime Hollow has accomplished with your support over the last 15 years -- we hope you will see this as an especially important time to renew your financial support for Lime Hollow.

Glenn Reisweber  
Executive Director

John Hoeschele  
Board President

PS: Not sure what to give or how your donation will be put to use at Lime Hollow? See the enclosed Donor Gift-Designation Form for ideas and a better sense of how your gift can make a difference!

## DONOR GIFT-DESIGNATION FORM

Yes! \_\_\_\_ I recognize a successful and worthy local investment when I see one. Please accept my gift to Lime Hollow in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_ and apply to one of the following budgets:

1) \_\_\_\_ ***General operations budget:***

This budget funds all aspects of our operation, including – but not limited to – educational staff salaries, supplies for camps and field trips, and mundane (but hugely critical!) operating costs like heating, maintenance, insurance, and communications. Consider how these gifts impact our daily operation:

- Your gift of \$160 enables a camper to attend Summer Adventure Day Camp for one week.
- Your gift of \$350 underwrites one month's maintenance costs for our Visitor Center, Gracie Road Education Center, and trail system.
- Your gift of \$400 funds an entire field trip for 60 school children.

2) \_\_\_\_ ***Solar Project:***

The photovoltaic system Lime Hollow will install in FY 2009 will be a powerful educational tool – even as it reduces our utility costs by more than \$3,000 a year. *Importantly: Every gift we receive toward the cost of this system (excluding rebates we will apply for from NYSEERDA) will be matched by a generous fellow-supporter and solar enthusiast!*

3) \_\_\_\_ ***Landscaping Restoration Project:***

Lime Hollow has embarked on an effort to restore the landscape surrounding our McLean Road Visitor Center using sound, naturescaping principles and practices; in the process, we'll also be educating the public about the benefits of this natural approach! *Remember: In supporting this project, you will be in good company – as we have been fortunate enough to have secured design assistance from a professional landscaping expert and we are partnering with our friends at RPM Ecosystems, LLC in securing native plantings for this project.*

***Want to discuss leaving a lasting legacy at Lime Hollow? Contact Glenn Reisweber, in strict confidence, at 607.745.1331 to discuss your philanthropic goals or receive a free copy of Lime Hollow's new, legacy gift brochure.***