



EarthBeat

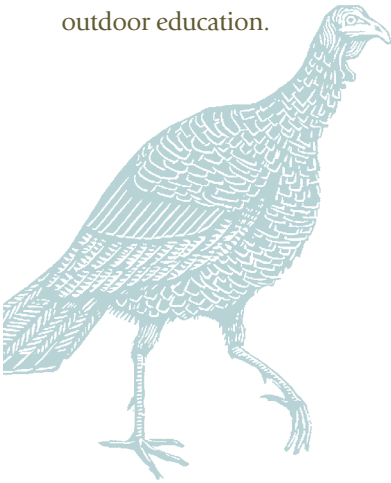
EMBRACING NATURE • ENGAGING MINDS



The End of an Era

Based on the financial status of the district, declining enrollment and reduced funding by the State, the Lansing School District Board of Education voted on April 27, 2011 to make the Ebersole Center a **SEASONAL OPERATION**.

The vote passed 8 to 1, and as of November 1, 2011, 4 of the remaining 5 District staff will be laid-off until March and April 2012. Although this is a major blow to the Center and to operations, we are grateful that the Center will still be open and be available to continue to give students incredibly unique experiences in environmental and outdoor education.



Join Us on Facebook!

Ebersole Center has it's own Facebook page. "Like" us at <http://www.facebook.com/EbersoleCenter>. There is also a **Save the Ebersole Center** page on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=106594872716586>.



A Parent's Perspective

—Contributed by *Dave Muylle, father of two LSD students*

I'm fifty six years old and I'm riding in a big yellow school bus on my way to band camp...

Each summer for over twenty years the Eastern Quaker High School Marching Band has spent a week at the Vernon D. Ebersole Environmental Education and Conference Center located just over an hour west of Lansing. The camp, surrounded by pristine forest and beautiful wetland habitat, is an idyllic setting for the students to focus on honing their music and marching skills. I have no musical ability to contribute but since our son is in the band, and because my drivers license proves that I am an adult, I'm one of the nine parent volunteers.

As early as 1961 Lansing teachers recognizing the value of environmental education started a volunteer camping program for their students. The interest and importance of environmental education grew in Lansing and across the country. The first Earth Day celebration was in 1970. In 1972 the Lansing School District, using \$65,000 that had been donated specifically to help educate Lansing kids, bought a unique 158 acre site near Wayland Michigan. In 1974 Lansing voters passed a bond which provided funds for the construction of the \$825,000 facility. The Lansing School District Environmental Education Center opened in July of 1977.

Vernon D. Ebersole, a school board member for over 30 years stood by the center through difficult economic times (sound familiar?), insisting that environmental education programs were too important to lose. In 1984 the center was officially named after him in honor of his vision and support. Is environmental education any less important today?

Band camp is a classic "you must see it to believe it" experience. Leading the students to band camp as he has for the last ten years is Mauricio DeRosso. Mr. "D" and his crew of six instructors transform this teenage chaos into an amazing group of marching musicians and flag handlers capable of forming complicated patterns on the field while displaying impressive musical ability. This year's show for the fall marching season "Radio Hits" will be fantastic!

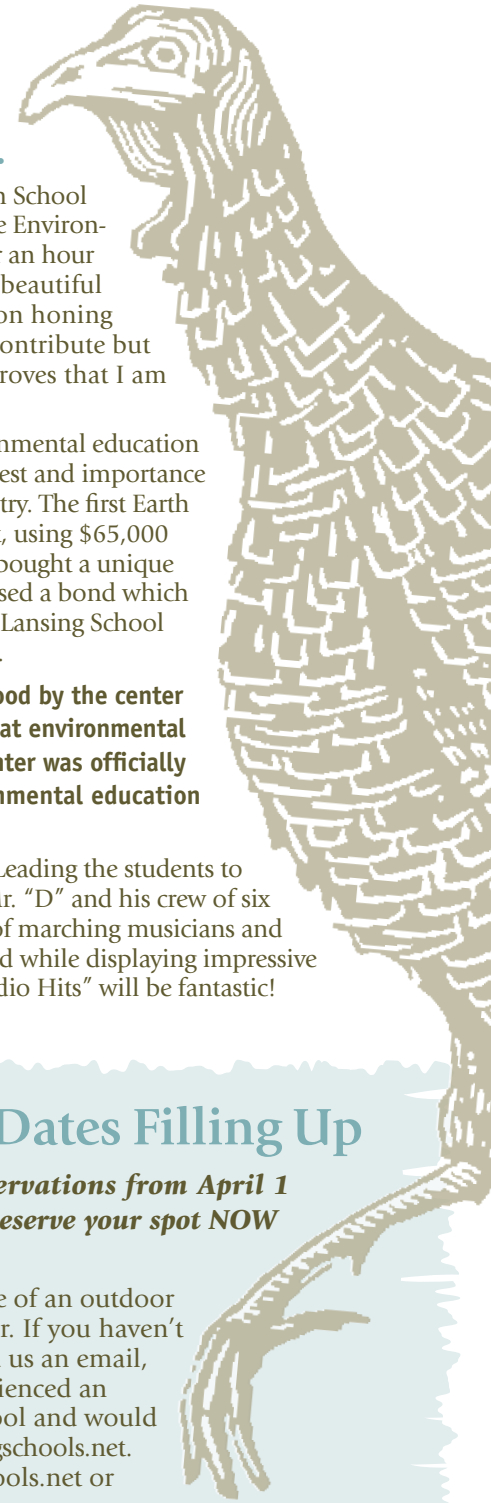
("PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE" CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)

Ebersole 2011-2012 Program Dates Filling Up

The Ebersole Center will only be available for reservations from April 1 through October 31, 2012 so dates will fill up fast. Reserve your spot NOW to ensure an incredible program here at the Center.

Join the elite group of educators that have found the value of an outdoor environmental education program at the Ebersole Center. If you haven't made your reservation for next year, give us a call or send us an email, we still have a few dates available. If you have never experienced an environmental education program with your class or school and would like to learn more, visit our website at <http://ebersole.lansingschools.net>. You may also contact us by e-mail at ebersole@lansingschools.net or call (517) 755-5000 or (269) 792-6294.

Ebersole Center is for everyone and every school district. It is a great program at a great value. Don't be left inside, get outdoors at the Ebersole Center.



Farewell to a Friend

It is with a very heavy heart that we say farewell to one of Ebersole Center's longest serving employees, Secretary Jo Ann Robinson.



Jo Ann Robinson has been a fixture at Ebersole for more than 28 years and has been an asset and a treasure to the Center and participants. Jo Ann joined the Lansing School

District's Ebersole Environmental Education Center on June 1, 1983 and has helped to make it the wonderful, warm and welcoming place it is today. Jo Ann's contributions are many and the relationships that have been built will endure, but it won't be the same without her here.

Due to the Center becoming a seasonal operation, Jo Ann decided to move on to a position as a Financial Transaction Clerk in the Lansing School District's Accounts Payable Department. Although this was not an easy decision for Jo Ann, we wish her all the best in her new position with the District and the Accounts Payable department, they are very lucky to have her joining them in Lansing.



Combining Forces

—Contributed by Marc Briggs, 4th grade teacher at Fairview Elementary

Last year, I was planning my Ebersole trip when I figured out that I was going to have a very small group of students attending. I thought about how much more fun the students have when we take a larger group. To no avail, I tried to convince other teachers in my building to join us on our trip. It was then that it occurred to me that it did not have to be another class from my building; I could invite anyone I wanted to join us!

For years, I have been trying to get my colleague and friend, Sandy Atherton, from Lewton to go to Ebersole. We talked about how much fun it would be if her class went the same week we did. So, I decided to give Sandy a call and see what she thought about joining forces and going to Ebersole as one large group. She thought it was a great idea, and we started planning our combined trip. I had the experience of going the last six years, and she had fresh ideas from her trips that she took to Ebersole years ago.

Sandy and I made a decision to integrate our students in all events so that they would get to know each other. The students quickly started feeling comfortable with each other and made new friends. Due to one rainy evening, we had an impromptu talent show. The students created groups that were a mix of both Fairview and Lewton students. They had so much fun!

On the bus ride home, the students were talking about their new friends. Many of them even got together with or talked to the Lewton students after we returned from Ebersole. Because of this trip, my students were able to meet new people that they would never have had the chance of meeting if we had attended Ebersole with just our school community. I always talk about how students get experiences at Ebersole that many of them never experience before. They get to go fishing, canoeing, do archery and visit a Great Lake, not to mention the chance to go on an overnight trip with friends. Now, I can add meeting and creating new lifelong friendships to that list of experiences.

We felt that this was such a success that we are currently planning the 2011-12 "Fairton" and "Lewview" trip to Ebersole!

Generous Donor

The Center would like to send a big thank you to **Doris Marie Sutherland** for her donation of \$500.00 to Ebersole. Mrs. Sutherland's donation will go a long way in supporting programs, materials and students here at Ebersole and her generosity is greatly appreciated!

Spring Open House Volunteers

Thanks to all of the volunteers and staff that helped with the Center's Spring Open House.

Volunteers included:

- Dave Brigham
- Cayden Byington
- Lisa Gallinari
- Ken Jones
- Pam and Brian McLenithen
- Caitlin & Brianna Pardee
- David Sutherland, Jr.
- U.S. Naval Sea Cadets

Ebersole Center staff included:

- Torey Byington
- Jason Byler
- Rosemary Pardee
- Jo Ann Robinson
- Ervin Sadler
- Tom Stone
- David Sutherland, Sr.

With the help of everyone involved the Spring Open House was a huge success! We could not host this event without all of the help from the volunteers and dedicated staff here at the Ebersole Center.

Thank You!

("PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE" CONTINUED)

There is much more to the student's band camp experience at Ebersole than just learning the show. There is no phone app or algorithm that can match the value of the life skills these students gain during the week. Teamwork, respect, perfecting of skills, problem solving, all of these skills are practiced here in real time.

Studies show that both musical education and being exposed to the natural environment have huge benefits to all human brains, and especially developing ones. Both things are happening at Ebersole.

Author Richard Louv in his recent book "Last Child In The Woods" coins the phrase "Nature deficit disorder" to describe the very real problems that result from a lack of contact with the natural world. Think about our Lansing School District kids. For many of them being at Ebersole is a rare and valuable experience that they don't often have.

Jason, a naturalist at Ebersole, told me that he was conducting a survival workshop for the kids from one of our elementary schools. After a couple of hours one of the 6th graders said to him "I have never been outside for this long". Jason asked "you mean you have never been in the woods for this long?" "No" she said "I have never been outside this long."

Ebersole is visited by schools and groups from all over the state, not just from Lansing. Only a few other schools in the state have such a facility. It is a unique and valuable place for education. Closing it or selling it to patch a budget hole without considering other options would be like eating our seed corn. We might save ourselves today but we'll have nothing for the future.

If we find Ebersole is not sustainable in its current configuration lets make sure as a community we have an open discussion about its fate. Perhaps we partner with other schools or institutions with similar educational missions. A facility like this is more important today than when it was created in 1972. Keeping Ebersole operating so students have a place to learn shouldn't be that much harder than getting 83 teenagers to play musical instruments while marching in straight lines.

I didn't really want to come to band camp with a bunch of kids. Now I don't want to leave.

News and Notes

EBERSOLE FOUNDATION



Be An Advocate for Nature!

The Ebersole Center is struggling, but still alive and well.

Still alive and determined to survive the ongoing cuts to education at every level, and the ongoing financial struggles of the Lansing School District. It is no secret that almost every district in the state of Michigan has to cut its budget to survive. Obviously a facility such as the Ebersole Environmental Education Center is always a target. And this year has been no exception. But the district's budget for the upcoming year has kept the Center alive, even though it has been cut to a seasonal operation. This is very unfortunate and the Foundation will continue to search for ways to make the Center year round again. The Center needs to maintain high quality staff to be viable, and that can't be done by making them part time employees. So the Foundation will be very busy trying to get the funding back on track. Of course we need your help.

Here are some ways you can help:

First, we need you to make sure that everyone knows how great the Center is. So...help us find new ways to get the message out to the community, the teachers who support us and those who haven't been able to, the media, and most importantly your school board.

Second, if you are a teacher or a parent, please encourage the use of the facilities. Get your class or other classes you may know scheduled for a trip to the Center.

And third (I'm sure you saw this coming), help us support funding for the Center and those who attend it by making your donation to the Foundation to provide scholarships for students to attend an Ebersole Center program.

And here is a small incentive:

It's that sweet time of year again when we have farm fresh apples, cider, pumpkins, squash and other fall fruits and vegetables. It is also the time of year when we have Ebersole honey available. The honey is from hives maintained by Ebersole Naturalist Jason Byler on our Foundation property; the proceeds we earn from it are used to support projects at the Center. This year we have about 40 pounds to share with those of you who are willing to help us by donating to the Foundation. We are suggesting a donation of \$25 for one pound. (The honey is only packaged in one pound containers this year.) You get the donation to us, and we will get the honey to you. It is that simple. Now don't feel limited to \$25. We would be very happy to take lots more if you can spare it. It is a great cause and is tax deductible. So please dig deep and help us out.



Please send your checks to our treasurer, Marty Mecher, at 4721 Woodlyn Drive, Lansing, MI 48910. Be sure to let us know your address and a way to reach you so we can deliver the honey.

As always, THANK YOU for your ongoing support of this great resource.

Bob Harris, President of the Ebersole Foundation



EBERSOLE CENTER

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Printed on recycled paper.

EarthBeat is continuing to make the transition from paper to pixels. To ease the strain on the Center's budget and the environment, we are encouraging you to request your issue of *EarthBeat* be sent to you online rather than in hard copy format. To be sure that you don't miss a "Beat" please send your e-mail address to: ebersole@lansingschools.net. We look forward to continuing to produce Earth Beat in this earth friendly format!

EarthBeat is Going Digital!

Due to ever increasing operating, fuel and food costs, Ebersole Center will be increasing prices for the 2011-2012 school year. This necessary step was taken in order for Center staff to continue to offer quality programming. As of July 1, 2011 new prices are in effect. This increase reflects a 5% increase over previous years fees. Prices are still a great value and the increase only amounts to a few dollars. Please contact the Center for new rate information. Thank you in advance for your continuing and ongoing support of Ebersole Center programs!

New Prices for the 2011-2012 School Year:

Mason & Cadillac Soccer Conditioning Camp, G.L.O.B.E. Bi-Lingual Program, Hackett Catholic Central Band Camp, Hastings Band Camp, Everett Band Camp, Eastern Band Camp, Beekman Center, Lowell-Cherry Creek, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Holt High School, DeWitt Junior High School, Lyons Elementary, Wainwright Elementary, Lowell-Murray Lake, Gardner Middle School, Resurrection, Cumberland Elementary, Woodcreek Science Magnet School/STEM Academy, Pattenhill Middle School, Wexford Elementary, St. Gerard, Bath, Elmhurst Elementary, Fairview Elementary, Attwood Elementary, Mr. Hope Elementary, Sheridan Road Elementary, Post Oak Elementary, Riddle Elementary, North Elementary.

*Advice from
an Eagle*
Let your spirit soar
See the big picture
Cherish freedom
Honor the earth and sky
Keep your goals in sight
Bald is beautiful
Fly high!



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