

## **2011 IAN/ICEC Conservation and Environmental Education Excellence Award Winners**

The Iowa Association of Naturalists (IAN) and the Iowa Conservation Education Coalition (ICEC) are proud to announce this year's recipients of their Conservation and Environmental Education Excellence Awards Program. The winners are as follows:

### **Aldo Leopold Environmental Education Award**

*Linda Zaletel-Story County Conservation Naturalist*

Since 1979, Linda Zaletel has worked for Story County Conservation. Throughout the past 32 years, she has been an outstanding example to conservation educators across the state for her innovation, creativity, enthusiasm, and dedication in the field of conservation. Linda's work is long and varied, she has helped design programs such as O.W.L.S, created EE curriculum for the state of Iowa and served on IAN, ICEC and REAP boards. For these achievements and the thousands of lives she has touched throughout her career, Linda is truly deserving of the Aldo Leopold Environmental Education Award for a lifetime of achievement. Thank you Linda.

*Larry Stone-Clayton County Conservation Board Member*

For over 20 years Larry Stone worked for the DesMoines Register documenting Iowa's land and people through the articles he wrote. Passionate about all things wild, Larry continues to preserve the land and it's stories through the books he has written and photographs he has captured. Thanks to Larry, leaders in Iowa's environmental movement such as; Sylvan Runkel and Gladys Black will not be forgotten. Along with his articles, books, photos and presentations, Larry volunteers for the Clayton County Conservation Board where he helps teach new generations about hunting, wildflowers and a historic mill that sits on the Turkey River. For these reasons and many more Larry is worthy of the Aldo Leopold Environmental Education Award: For a Lifetime Achievement in EE Excellence and Leadership. Thank you Larry.

### **Bohumil Shimek Environmental Educator Award**

*Ann Burns-Jackson County Conservation Environmental Education Coordinator*

Ann Burns has worked for Jackson County Conservation for 26 years. Ann's passion for environmental education is evident through her programming efforts at JCC, volunteer work, and willingness to support young environmental education professionals. She has found ways to partner with local conservation groups, state organizations, and federal agencies to expand her educational programming. Ann is always looking for new ideas, sharing her ideas with others, and working to ensure environmental education continues to thrive in the State of Iowa. In the 2011 fiscal year, Ann reached 5,562 through her programming efforts.

### **Outstanding County Conservation board EE Program (2 or less interpreters)**

*Bremer County Conservation*

Bremer County has two paid, full time naturalists dedicated to environmental education. In 2011, Bremer County Conservation naturalists presented an all-time high of 800+ programs and presented to over 14,200 participants. Unique programs include: Annual Sandhill Crane Count - Fifteen volunteers monitor 10 sites, Greenfest at Irving Elementary, Waverly - Shell Rock 6th grade, Annual 5th Grade Outdoor Field Day - 415 students attend, EWALU 3-5 day experience -

Denver, St. Paul's Lutheran in Waverly and Dunkerton schools visit, Carey Elementary 4th Grade Overnight at Backbone State Park, Recycling Education - Unique programs offered are; Green Shopping, Bottle Bill, Household Hazardous Waste & Composting with Worms. Bremer County is a great example of making a big impact without a large staff or budget.

### **Outstanding County Conservation Board EE Program (3 or more interpreters)**

#### *Story County Conservation*

Story County has been a leader in environmental education for many years. The county's dedication to education is not only reflected in their programming numbers, but also their staff's willingness to try new ideas, expanding programming opportunities for people of all ages, and incorporate conservation education into a variety of non-traditional topics. Last year, SCC was able to conduct 1,140 programs, resulting in over 31,931 contacts. The programs were conducted in all 15 elementary schools, four middle schools, and two high schools. Story County has been and remains a leader in environmental education in the State of Iowa.

### **Outstanding Interpretative Non-Print Media Award**

#### *Polk County Conservation*

The winner of Outstanding Interpretive Non-Print Media Award is Polk County Conservation Board's Guide By Cell – Cell Phone Audio Tour. PCCB is allowing visitors at two of their parks have on demand interpretation through their personal cell phone. A total of fifty signs have been placed around these parks. Visitors can call the phone number on the sign. They then punch in the sign number (1-50) to hear a prerecorded message about natural resources, a unique park feature, or about an upcoming event. All feedback that has been received shows very positive experiences for the users of Guide By Cell.

### **Outstanding Volunteer**

#### *Don Dunbar, Elkader, IA*

For over two decades Don Dunbar has been THE volunteer for Conservation in Clayton County. Don has donated his time by leading hikes during sunny day field trips and bringing in his Native American crafts on rainy days. Teachers always remark how students remember Don's stories, especially his story on how he helped save two baby wolves lives' by weaning them after their mother had died giving birth. Don has been an active member in Clayton County Pheasants Forever and twenty years ago helped start the Redhorse Fisheree that still takes place on the Turkey River today. Recently, Don helped several high school students catch their first fish by taking their P.E. class fishing down at the Turkey River. Don also has helped host dozens of bluebird box workshops and continues to help maintain local bluebird trails in the county.

### **Sylvan Runkel Environmental Education School Award**

#### *Oskaloosa Elementary School*

This award commends an outstanding whole school environmental education program. The staff at Oskaloosa Elementary has made it clear they want environmental education in their classrooms. The school partners with the Mahaska County Conservation Board Naturalist to find ways to incorporate environmental education throughout their curriculum. In fact, the naturalist works with every classroom each year. If the naturalist is not available to do a program, staff members borrow items and present the program by themselves. The staff also encourages all

students to attend public programs presented by Mahaska County Conservation. Oskaloosa Elementary is a great example to other schools in Iowa on how it is still possible to incorporate environmental education into curriculums.