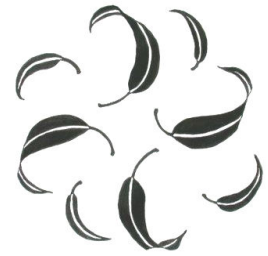


July 4, 2007



Dear Friend of Four Winds,

We just celebrated our first birthday! Now that the party hats are put away, the Four Winds staff wanted to catch you up on what we've done and what we are working on this summer.

We incorporated last June, spent the summer gathering materials, and by September, 89 schools were enrolled in the *Nature Program*. We had over 1,400 volunteers and 10,000 school children spending time together each month learning about the natural world. Our numbers are growing, and we expect nearly 100 schools will be participating in 2007-08!

Now we're adding new programs designed to increase the amount of time children spend outside learning. In addition to the *Nature Program*, we've developed a series of workshops – Drawing in Nature, Nature Journaling, Nature Puppetry, and Nature Games – for teachers, camp counselors, after-school program providers, recreation department staff, and others interested in incorporating more outdoor study in their work with children.

We'll also be offering seasonal workshops for early childhood educators and childcare providers. Called *Knee High Nature*, this program provides information and activities for engaging very young children in exploring the natural world.

And Four Winds will be awarding a limited number of small grants (up to \$500) to help schools enrolled in our programs improve their school grounds or surrounding areas for nature education. The funding for this program came not from program fees but from donations to Four Winds. Folks seem quite excited about this opportunity. Project ideas so far range from a bird-feeding station to a butterfly garden, from a nature trail to weather equipment. We're eager to see those proposals.

In addition to these natural science programs, we've been invited to teach a course this coming January at Middlebury College. In this course, students will investigate a range of natural science topics through outdoor exploration on or near campus. As a culminating project, students will design and present a hands-on lesson on a topic of their choice. We're hoping these young adults will help carry the seeds of community-based environmental education far and wide.

So, you can see we've done a lot of growing in our first year. And absolutely every day has been a learning opportunity – filling out the incorporation paperwork, recruiting board members, filing IRS form 1023 to gain tax-exempt status (got it in April!), talking with teachers and principals, and getting great creative ideas from our Four Winds volunteers. Truly, we couldn't have done all this without the volunteers, donors, and friends who helped us put our first candle on the cake.

What a wonderful year this has been. Thank you for your support and encouragement!

*Rob Anderegg, Elizabeth Cooper, Kris Kristensen, Karen Murphy, Deb Parrella,
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