



# Cathance River Education Alliance

Volume I, Issue I

March 2006

## Teacher/Student Workshops Support Environmental Education

With field guides and scientific equipment in hand, Mt. Ararat biology students explored the Cathance Preserve last fall under supervision of teacher Glenn Evans. An in-depth article in *The Times Record*, published in November 2005, develops the story of sophomore students who performed wildlife field-studies in the Preserve.

(CREA) influence on his herbivore mammal study.

“At first I was kind of looking at [the study] as a

science project, but it would be submitted to the Cathance River Education Alliance and it kind of

*Please see Student, Page 3*

Student Alden Blease commented on Cathance River Education Alliance’s



Highland Green resident, Hale Tongren, studies a student exhibit.

### Board of Directors

*President*  
Ann Pierson

*Vice President*  
Lynda Bernier

*Secretary*  
Jane Littlefield

*Treasurer*  
Janvier Smith

*Executive Director*  
Rick Wilson

*Directors*  
Dana Cary  
Dr. Edward Couch  
Cory Favreau  
Jon Leahy  
Judy McCollum  
Marty Meacham  
Carla Rensenbrink  
John Rensenbrink

*School Liaisons*  
Jeff Davison  
Hannah Weddle

## Documentary Film Highlights CREA Partnership

For Hannah Weddle, writing, filming and producing her short-version independent film documentary about CREA was educational in a variety of ways. Not only did she learn the technical and artistic challenges of film making, Weddle also learned that sometimes timing is everything.

“I think we captured something special,” said Weddle, a senior at

“I think we captured something special.”  
- Hannah Weddle

Brunswick High School who will attend Tisch School of the Arts at New York University next year. “I was performing interviews and filming during a time when CREA was growing by leaps and bounds. The interviews reflect the excitement and optimism about CREA’s accomplishments and their plans for the future.”

The film explores the details of the compromise between Highland Green developer John Wasileski and a citizens’ group called Topsham’s Future. That compromise led to CREA’s for-

mation as well as the establishment of the 230-acre nature preserve. Weddle said she hopes that businesses will view the video and see it as a model for how development and the environment can co-exist.

“I hope that corporate decision-makers can learn from the film,” said Weddle. “By compromising and working together a developer and citizens group achieved far more than they ever could by opposing each other. I think that’s a lesson from which we can all learn.”

## Donations Spur Ecology Center Construction

Over \$100,000 was raised last year with CREA's grant writing initiative, a resounding success toward funding mission critical projects in the Cathance Preserve. The money given will help complete the Ecology Center, a 24'x36' post-and-beam structure erected in the heart of the Preserve. To date, CREA has received \$20,500 from the Senter Fund, \$74,925 from the Merrymeeting Bay Trust, and over \$11,000 from State Farm Insurance as a result of grant writing efforts for Phase II of the Ecology Center.

When complete, the Center will be an example of "green-building technology" with its alternative fuel sources for heating and electricity, reclaimed lumber, and passive-solar architectural design. The local school systems will benefit by having access to a state-of-the-art laboratory *in the field*, an invaluable asset for environmental learning. The next chapter in the grant strategy is to finance a network of low-impact boardwalks and bridges in the 230-acre preserve to gain access to natural test sites and protect sensitive areas.

CREA sincerely appreciates the Senter Fund, Merrymeeting Bay Trust and State Farm Insurance for their pledges, as these kinds of projects would not be possible without their support. CREA is also grateful to Hancock

Lumber for its contribution of all building materials, which follow the "green" philosophy of the Center.

The Ecology Center will be semi-operational for the 2006 school year.



The Ecology Center is located on the Cathance River Preserve in Topsham.



## Workshops

### CREA Ecology Exchange Center Workshop

The workshop aims to give local teachers a chance to tell CREA what they dream about regarding environmental education materials and programming. This is a day devoted to learning about what teachers teach, look at what other teachers and students have done with CREA, and discuss where teachers would like to go. Everything is sponsored by CREA and is free of charge.

Friday - February 17<sup>th</sup> - 2006 9:00am – 3:00pm

Workshop to commence at the Topsham Public Library, followed by lunch at Highland Green and a hike on the Cathance Preserve

- Meet local teachers dedicated to environmental education
- See student presentations created from field trips to the Cathance Preserve
- Learn about CREA and our latest happenings
- Visit the Ecology Center and take a **GPS Geocache walk** to the river with Jeff Davison
- Learn about the 300 acre **Holt Research Forest** located in nearby Arrowsic, Maine
- Learn about **Project Learning Tree's Forest Inventory Growth Program**
- Pick up **free posters and other materials**
- **LUNCH!** Enjoy lunch on CREA at the Wild Duck Pub at Highland Green

#### GUEST SPEAKERS:



**Jack W. Witham**—Associate Scientist at the University of Maine and the Holt Research Woodland Foundation

**Pat Maloney**—PLT State Coordinator



Student

*continued from Page*

pushed us to do better things and be more professional,” said Blease in an interview with Darcie Moore of *The Times Record*.

“CREA is finding information about what’s out there [in the Preserve] by our experiments, which is invaluable to them...This benefits more than just them, it’s also benefiting the residents of Topsham,” Blease continued.

“There’s a lot of value, because not only does it get you outside, it also prepares you for higher level learning,” said another student, Kelsey Karkos.

Evans’ students publicized findings to students, teachers, and residents of Highland Green resort community in oral presentations last November. The residents, who live near the Pre-

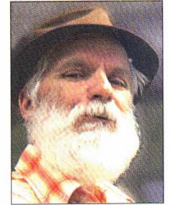
serve, also enjoyed working one-on-one with the students on the project.

From the trials and tribulations of “deer-cams,” data loggers and other professional technology made available through CREA, the article made clear that the experience enlightened students to real-world situations as scientists.

“Glenn [Evans] is the first to pilot a sustained long-range project. I can’t say enough about his commitment,” said CREA Executive Director, Rick Wilson.

CREA’s presence maintains an integral link between nature, students and the greater community by promoting educational programs and teacher curriculum. For details on how you can support programs like those in the article, please contact Executive Director, Rick Wilson at [cathanced@gwi.net](mailto:cathanced@gwi.net).

## In Remembrance & Recognition



**Bryce Leigh Muir (1946-2005)**

Bryce Muir passed away after falling through the ice while skating on the Cathance River early in December. He was a prolific artist and an avid outdoorsman who held deep affection for the Cathance River. CREA will proudly display Bryce’s artwork in the Ecology Center. Our heartfelt condolences go to his wife, Peggy, and son, Seth, for their loss. To learn more about Bryce and his work, please visit his website, [www.brycemuir.com](http://www.brycemuir.com).

## Cathance River Education Alliance

### Membership Information

- Contributor (\$25)
- Friend (\$50)
- Mentor (\$100)
- Steward (\$250)
- Corporate Membership Level (\$500)

#### Refer a Friend!

Please send my friend CREA membership information:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail (optional) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to “CREA.”

Please detach and return to CREA, P.O. Box 187 Topsham, ME 04086. Post Office will not deliver without postage.

**Thank you!**

CREA is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit. All donations are entirely tax deductible.

Cathance River Education Alliance  
P.O. Box 187  
Topsham, ME 04086

## About CREA

CREA's goal is to encourage and sponsor environmental, historical, and cultural appreciation and enjoyment of the Cathance River watershed, a natural gem in the midst of on-going development in Midcoast Maine. This effort includes trail construction and maintenance, recreational and interpretive programs, providing educational resources for area students and teachers, and advocacy of good stewardship practices.



## 2006 Event Schedule

Winter Carnival— Saturday, February 25th, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

You're invited to one of the most exciting events of the year. Co-hosted with Highland Green, the day's activities include dog sled rides, snowshoe and cross country ski demonstrations, ice skating and sledding, guided hikes on the nature preserve, wildlife presentations, hot cocoa and warming stations. To RSVP call 1-866-854-1200.

Riverview Foundation Bridge Building  
March (exact date TBA)

Big Brothers-Big Sisters Hike on the Cathance Preserve  
April (exact date TBA)

Birding on the Cathance River Nature Preserve  
Saturday, May 6th, 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

National Trails Day  
Saturday, June 3rd, All Day

Governor's Golf and Hike Day  
Friday, July 21st

Ecology Center Grand Opening  
August (exact date TBA)

Fall Festival and Foliage Hike  
Saturday, September 30th

\*Visit [www.creamaine.org](http://www.creamaine.org) for more information on upcoming events.