



Lake Erie Nature & Science Center

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GOVERNOR STRICKLAND TOURS LAKE ERIE NATURE & SCIENCE CENTER

Red-tailed Hawk, Great Horned Owl & Kids Part of the Welcome For Ohio's Chief Executive

Bay Village, Ohio --- Governor Ted Strickland held a Red-tailed Hawk and a classroom toad as he got a first-hand look at how Lake Erie Nature & Science Center educates and inspires kids and adults to appreciate the natural world. The Bay Village non-profit organization offered the condensed version of its 6-decade success story during a special 45-minute tour.

"It's hugely impressive," the Governor said of Lake Erie Nature & Science Center when the tour was over. "It is obviously valued." The Center was buzzing with activity when Ohio's Chief Executive arrived.

One of the first stops on the tour was the Center's "Nature Nuts" preschool classroom, where students had a proclamation welcoming the Governor to "one of the only 'green classrooms' in Northeast Ohio." Young Joseph West also offered Governor Strickland an up-close inspection of the classroom toad, which the Governor gamely asked to hold.

Later, Governor Strickland also agreed when Director of Wildlife Education & Rehabilitation Dave Wolf offered to let him hold a Red-tailed Hawk, a former rehab patient that is not releasable. The bird rested on the Governor's gloved arm while he quizzed Wolf and the assembled children about the fascinating predator.

The Governor praised the Center's interactive style of teaching science and nature. "The tools are here to provide that kind of education, using hands-on approaches, which I think are the most effective way to teach."

The Capital Appropriations Bill, signed by the Governor in June, earmarked \$200,000 for future improvements at Lake Erie Nature & Science Center. A planned expansion will accommodate the rising number of walk-in visitors and meet the growing demand for hands-on programs that include early childhood education, after-school enrichment, scout programs, summer camps and school field trips. Governor Strickland said the state worked to include worthy projects of all sizes, "not just the mega projects in the state."

“We have a variety of programs that run waiting lists,” said Larry D. Richardson, Executive Director of Lake Erie Nature & Science Center. “In addition to expanding our facility to meet that need, we want to expand our mission to motivate families in our community to go beyond simple appreciation for nature. We plan to show them how they can take action to care for the natural world.”

Richardson led Wednesday’s tour, which also included State Representative Jennifer Brady, Bay Village Mayor Deborah Sutherland, Architect William Doty and Dr. Jeffrey Reuter of Ohio Sea Grant.

With more than 100 live animals on display, Lake Erie Nature & Science Center offers free admission, seven days a week. The Center’s free Wildlife Education & Rehabilitation program annually takes in 1,400 injured or ill wild animals and fields thousands of phone calls from people who seek advice about their wild animal neighbors.

The Center is located in the Metroparks Huntington Reservation at 28728 Wolf Road in Bay Village. For more information, call (440) 871-2900 or log on to www.lensc.org.