



Lake Erie Nature & Science Center

28728 Wolf Road, Bay Village, Ohio 44140 (440)-871-2900 www.lensc.org

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FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

SHAWN SMITH SALAMONE 440-871-2900 x207

BAY KIWANIS CLUB GIVES FACELIFT TO POPULAR PLAY & LEARN SPACE DONATION BENEFITS "CRITTER CORNER" AT LAKE ERIE NATURE & SCIENCE CENTER

Bay Village, Ohio --- Lake Erie Nature & Science Center's popular "Critter Corner" play area is sporting a whole new look thanks to the 2008-09 Bay Village Kiwanis Club. A generous donation from the club is funding the ongoing purchase of new, nature and wildlife themed toys for the area including a "tree house" and a colorful puppet theatre stocked with animal puppets that mimic the Center's collection of live animals including a fox, bald eagle and raccoon.

"As a donor-funded non-profit, we depend on support from individuals and organizations like the Kiwanis to support our day-to-day operations. In a tight budget year, we're thrilled to be able to enhance this area through this generous donation," said Director of Development & Community Relations Renee Burslem. "We're already getting great feedback from families who are enjoying the initial investment in new activities."

Bay Village Kiwanis President Gerald Stavlas says club members were enthusiastic about contributing to a valuable community resource. "Here's an organization that opens its doors seven days a week, free to the public, without tax support. We were more than happy to help."

Lake Erie Nature & Science Center's Critter Corner is situated next to a cozy fireplace in the main Exhibit Hall and is a favorite spot for families who want to unwind and connect with friends after touring the indoor and outdoor live animal exhibits or attending a planetarium show. It's also a no-cost escape in the cold of winter or the heat of summer.

Burslem said the Center is proud to offer access to every family, no matter what their economic circumstance. "I will never forget the feedback from a visitor survey a few years back from a woman who said we were a real lifeline during a period of unemployment. She said she was so grateful she didn't have to tell the kids "no" if they asked to come visit the turtles."

The Kiwanis Club of Bay Village is part of Kiwanis International, "a global organization of volunteers dedicated to changing the world, one community and one child at a time." Bay Kiwanis Club members volunteer for service projects that support the community throughout the year, including their annual Pancake Breakfast and Christmas Tree Sale. Stavlas says the group welcomes new members interested in performing community service and helping children in Bay Village. You can learn more about the club on their website at www.baykiwanis.org.

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Lake Erie Nature & Science Center provides wildlife exhibits and rehabilitation, planetarium and nature education programming to more than 180,000 visitors every year. Although the Center is located in Huntington Reservation, it is a separate, non-profit organization and is not supported by tax dollars. You can find more information on the Center online at www.lensc.org.