



Lake Erie Nature & Science Center

SPRING 2021

# Naturally CONNECTED

includes  
2020 Annual  
Report



## Welcome and Thank You!

Your children and your family are the reason for Lake Erie Nature & Science Center's mission: to encourage a child's curiosity, to further a young adult's growth, and to give you lasting memories while learning together. We welcome everyone with free general admission, engage families with child-focused programs, encourage discovery in our planetarium, and provide wildlife services that educate the public and treat injured animals. These offerings are possible because of the community's involvement and our shared love of learning together.

*a child's curiosity  
is a precious thing*

Last year marked 75 years since our founder Elberta Fleming began offering nature programs at her home for children in the community. Her vision, brought to life with volunteers and families in the community, has endured over seven decades because "a child's curiosity is a precious thing."

Because of the pandemic in 2020, the endurance of our mission was tested and it proved to be needed more than ever before. Serving the community's need to learn about the natural world and providing value in our offerings shows that the mission is

timeless and important. Instead of 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration events, we recognized this milestone by rededicating ourselves to the mission with virtual learning, take home kits, and modified offerings. The Center continued programs and services throughout the year because of the involvement of families, and the support of donors near and far. Thank you!

We welcome you to visit! Explore exhibits about natural history, space science, and native animals at no charge. Bring your wildlife inquiries to our team of specialists by phone or email. Discover the realms of space in the planetarium dome. Take part in a program or class with your children and grandchildren. Most importantly be curious, and enjoy learning together.



WHAT IS YOUR WINGSPAN?

Schedule your visit or register for a program at [www.lensc.org](http://www.lensc.org).

# Helping Wildlife through Education and Service

The pandemic has changed the way we interact with the natural world with many people spending more time in their backyards and enjoying the outdoors. Upward trends in wildlife observation are leading more people to contact Lake Erie Nature & Science Center about their curiosity and concern for animals. Fortunately, our wildlife specialists respond to inquiries 7 days a week, and continued to do so even during the temporary shutdown last spring.



Wildlife Rehabilitation Specialist Tim Jasinski examining an American Coot.

A caller asks, “How can I help a stunned bird laying on the ground after hitting my window?” This common question, and countless others, are the reason why our wildlife specialists educate the public as a primary service. Advancing public understanding of native wildlife and human impacts on wildlife will help species to a greater degree than rehabilitation alone. In a typical year, the Center responds to more than 5,000 inquiries from the public. Our hope is that education changes behaviors and that information is spread to family, friends, and coworkers.

People who are moved with compassion to help an injured animal turn to our specialists for advice and assistance for wildlife in need. “I found a mallard duck with fishing line wrapped around its legs, and it can’t move!” a caller describes. After assessing the situation and providing information by phone, our specialists schedule an appointment for the caller to bring the injured animal to the Center for care. Wildlife rehabilitation is defined as human assistance for injured, ill, or orphaned wildlife with the ultimate goal of releasing the animal back into the wild.

Lake Erie Nature & Science Center is the largest provider of wildlife rehabilitation in Cuyahoga County. Our wildlife rehabilitation and educational services are provided by expertly trained professional staff under rules and standards of federal, state and local permits. Wildlife rehabilitation and animal educational ambassadors are supported and permitted by U.S. Fish and Wildlife, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the Ohio Division of Wildlife, Ohio Department of Agriculture and the Cuyahoga County Board of Health. These entities also serve as critical partners in helping the Center maintain and elevate high standards of animal care and practices.

Wildlife that cannot be released after treatment due to the severity of injuries often become animal educational ambassadors. Our live collection and exhibits,



Many fish and amphibian species, such as the Largemouth Bass, can be found at the Center in exhibits focused on Ohio's aquatic habitats.

including raptors, fish, reptiles, and mammals, are enjoyed with free general admission. Exhibits help children and families learn about native wildlife and the importance of sharing a common landscape. Getting up close to animals is a special opportunity, especially for families with young children whose exploration of the outdoors begins with small steps.

During the Center’s temporary closure last spring due to health guidelines, our wildlife specialists provided daily care for resident animals without interruption. In August, the Center resumed free general admission so that people can continue to enjoy learning about native animals. Our enduring mission goals are to educate and inspire people of all ages about our Earth, our relationship to it, and how that relationship is shaping our quality of life and future.

To help an ill or injured animal, call the Center’s wildlife staff at **440-871-2900 x204** or email **wildlife@lensc.org** before intervening.

# Discovery for All Ages in Schuele Planetarium

With eyes skyward, four children and their parents settle into their seats in the planetarium. Their adventure begins with seeing the dome change all the colors of the rainbow as eyesight adjusts to the dimming lights. As night comes, the darkness reveals the beauty of the Moon and stars in their special dance across the sky which changes with the seasons. Singing memorable tunes, they say farewell to the Moon and welcome the rise of the Sun for a new day. The family's next space adventure launches from the surface of Earth to Mars where they explore the

landscape of the red planet on a rover with full projection filling the dome. When Miss Katy asks "What would people need to survive on Mars?" hands rise as quickly as the children's answers. Next comes a tour of the rest of the solar system, with each planet in full view. To complete the space science adventure, another projection system shows thousands of stars in the sky as seen on a clear night as each child takes turns choosing their favorite constellation. Their curiosity and eagerness to learn fill the room with energy and excitement about the next adventure.



Planetarium and Program Specialist Katy Downing presents the Fleming Family Projection System inside Schuele Planetarium.

*Planetarium programs including Twinkle Tots, Stellar Stars, and Mini Missions are customized for children's ages and interest. Learn more and register at [www.lensc.org/planetarium](http://www.lensc.org/planetarium).*

*Michelle Manzo preparing meals for wildlife*

*Nature To-Go Kits assembled by Chris Hansen*

*Mike & Sue Clark at the Welcome Desk*

## Thank You to Our Volunteers

The Center is grateful for the many volunteers who continue to support our mission by assisting in the areas of wildlife rehabilitation, animal care, visitor experience, and educational programming.

Volunteers are an essential part of our nonprofit organization. Thank you for helping Lake Erie Nature & Science Center provide meaningful experiences now and in the future.

## Our Mission

Lake Erie Nature & Science Center educates and inspires each of us to understand, appreciate and take responsibility for our natural world.



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# ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Lake Erie Nature & Science Center Statement of Activities  
for the year ended June 30, 2020



Lake Erie Nature &  
Science Center

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	TOTAL
<b>SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>			
Program and class fees	\$ 322,732	\$ -	\$ 322,732
Government grants	116,587	-	116,587
Contributions and grants	445,813	359,747	805,560
Special events	80,884	-	80,884
Membership	15,668	-	15,668
Donated services and supplies	16,492	-	16,492
Facility rent in-kind	324,000	-	324,000
Miscellaneous income	8,037	-	8,037
Investment income for operations	159,047	28,557	187,604
	1,489,260	388,304	1,877,564
Net assets released from restrictions	73,982	(73,982)	-
Total support and revenue	1,563,242	314,322	1,877,564
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Salaries, payroll taxes and benefits	784,819	-	784,819
Other employee costs	16,385	-	16,385
Fundraising	40,174	-	40,174
Educational programs and services	54,626	-	54,626
Capital renovations	24,076	-	24,076
Wildlife rehabilitation and animal care	45,106	-	45,106
Building maintenance and utilities	122,391	-	122,391
Depreciation	1,375	-	1,375
Insurance	14,392	-	14,392
Technology	79,033	-	79,033
Marketing	21,395	-	21,395
Professional fees	15,242	-	15,242
Facility rent in-kind	324,000	-	324,000
Total expenses	1,543,014	-	1,543,014
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS FROM OPERATIONS	20,228	314,322	334,550
<b>OTHER CHANGES</b>			
Paycheck Protection Program grant	96,124	-	96,124
Unrealized loss on split-interest trusts	-	(155,365)	(155,365)
Investment return (loss) in excess of amounts designated for operations	(72,548)	12,467	(60,081)
Total other changes	23,576	(142,898)	(119,322)
CHANGES IN NET ASSETS	43,804	171,424	215,228
NET ASSETS, JULY 1, 2019	1,053,009	3,941,566	4,994,575
NET ASSETS, JUNE 30, 2020	\$ 1,096,813	\$ 4,112,990	\$ 5,209,803

# Serving the Community in 2020

We could have never imagined that our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020 would occur without celebrations. At this milestone, we remain truly grateful for our ability to serve the community despite this year's challenges:



**March:** During the Center's temporary closure, our wildlife staff continued to care for resident animals and respond to wildlife questions from the public.



**May:** Nature To-Go Kits were offered to give children and families ways to enjoy learning at home with activities and supplies about animals, space, and the natural world.



**July:** The Center resumed wildlife rehabilitation services for the public, at no charge, following all safety protocols.

**Throughout 2020,** the Center connected with thousands of children and families virtually through resident animal features, science experiment demonstrations, preschool parenting tips, and wildlife rehabilitation stories on our website and through social media.



**August:** The Center resumed general admission for the public at no charge, which has been appreciated by families near and far.

**Also in August:** The Center resumed children's programs, following all safety protocols, such as planetarium shows, guided tours of the exhibits, and preschool activities.



## Center Meets Endowment Challenge

To keep educational programs, exhibits, free admission, and wildlife rehabilitation going strong this year and for future generations, the Center relies on donations, grants, class fees, and our Endowment Fund. To celebrate our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020, a challenge was made to help us raise \$75,000 in new donations to the Endowment Fund. Thanks to donors near and far we exceeded that goal by 44%! Thank you to all who made contributions to the Endowment Fund.

The Endowment Fund is a way for the Center to become more financially self-sufficient. Donations may be made to the Endowment Fund with a check, a credit card, stock, grant from a donor advised fund, qualified charitable donation from an IRA, or by naming the Center as a beneficiary in a will or insurance policy.





# Lake Erie Nature & Science Center

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Bay Village, OH 44140

440-871-2900 | www.lensc.org

501(c)(3) nonprofit organization  
Tax ID #34-0845030

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Lake Erie Nature & Science Center is a nonprofit organization funded by donations, class fees and grants including Cuyahoga Arts & Culture through county residents.

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