

Okoboji Dredgings

News for Lakeside Lab Alumni and Friends



Enrollment up in 2011

Lakeside Lab experienced a jump in enrollment this summer, with 66 students enrolled in science courses and another 37 participating in the Okoboji Entrepreneurial Institute (OEI) and Summer Writing Festival. This was up from a total of 81 students in 2010.

Lakeside currently offers two summer terms of four weeks each, beginning in late May and in late June. The week-long OEI is held in August. Students attend class all day, Monday through Friday.

Ecology drew enough students for two sections, taught this year by Neil Bernstein and Tom Rosburg. Aquatic Ecology, another first-term course, was instructed by Jessica Veenstra from Flagler College in Florida. Although new to our faculty, Jessica was no newcomer to Lakeside, having been a student here previously. She substituted for veteran Lakeside professor Ken Lang, who was not able to join us this summer.

The Ecology and Systematics of Diatoms was offered during the first term and was fully enrolled with ten students. Sarah Spaulding and Mark Edlund shared the teaching duties, with assistance from Steve Main and Kingston Fellow Sylvia Lee. Several visiting diatomists lectured or joined the course for a time. Students came from the United States, Canada, China, and Sweden.

Second-term courses included Plant Taxonomy (Bill Norris), Prairie Ecology (Daryl Smith), Conservation Biology

(Mike Lannoo), and the Summer Writing Festival (Jim Heynen). Second-term enrollment usually lags behind the first but this summer was nearly equal, as more students decided to enroll for both sessions.

One course overlapped the two sessions. Watershed Hydrology and Surficial Processes was offered half-time for eight weeks, giving students an opportunity to both work and take a class at Lakeside. Lee Burras returned as the instructor.

The Entrepreneurial Institute serves students from the University of Iowa, Iowa State University, the University of Northern Iowa, Buena Vista University, and Iowa Lakes Community College. Watch future issues of this newsletter for more information on this innovative program.



Lakeside's 2011 Aquatic Ecology class in action. Photo by Jessica Veenstra.

Spring 2011

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From the Director's Desk *What Drives Enrollments at Lakeside?*

By Peter J. van der Linden

We are running behind schedule with this year's spring newsletter, but as the saying goes, we feel it is better late than never. An advantage of this tardy communication is that we can give you news of our summer session, one of the best in years.

Enrollments in our credit courses are driven in part by requirements at the universities, in part by what appeals to students, and in part by how well we "get out the word." Demand for specific courses can vary greatly from one year to the next, in ways we cannot always predict. Ecology is always popular, but this year it attracted more students than usual, and it filled early. We do not like to turn students away, so we created another section.

Finances are another concern for many students. As the cost of a college education continues to rise, it becomes increasingly difficult to afford a Lakeside experience. Students must sacrifice summer jobs, pay tuition and fees at Lakeside, and if they have an apartment at their home university, continue to pay rent there.

This is where the Friends of Lakeside Lab make a real difference. Through their room and board scholarships, they make a Lake-

side experience affordable to many students. This year they supported 17 applicants, or about a fourth of our student body, with scholarships totaling \$15,895. The students—and Lakeside—are grateful for this generous assistance.



The Friends scholarships are competitive and go to the best students. Other students may have only average grades at the university, but thrive in the much different atmosphere at Lakeside. Coming here can be a life-changing experience for them, as many of our alums can attest.

If you would like to help a student experience Lakeside, please contact me. We can arrange for you to endow a scholarship, or if you prefer, support students with a one-time or periodic contribution. You can reach me at 712-337-3669 ext. 5, or peter-vanderlinden@uiowa.edu.

Writers Spend Time At Lakeside

Lakeside Lab is known primarily for its summer science courses and environmental education programs. Since 2006, when the Lab was designated a Regents Resource Center, other programs have been offered as well.

Writing programs have developed a special niche at Lakeside. An annual Summer Writing Festival offers guidance and practice to aspiring writers, under the direction of author and retired professor Jim Heynen. The Agrestal Environmental Writing Scholarship allows a university student to spend two weeks at Lakeside, pursuing his or her writing while exploring the connections between people and the natural environment. This

year's Agrestal Scholar was Fred MacVaugh from Iowa State University.

The Writers in Residence program is a collaboration involving Lakeside Lab, the Friends of Lakeside Lab, and the Regents universities. As funds are available, a student writer is invited to spend a semester at Lakeside, pursuing his or her work in the relaxing setting the Lab provides. In return for their lodging and stipend, recipients provide community service in the field of writing. The Friends will be sponsoring Erika Jo Brown from the University of Iowa's Writers Workshop this fall.



Friends Cruise Generates Critical Support

The Friends of Lakeside Lab held their annual summer fund-raiser on June 26. This year's event was a cruise on West Lake Okoboji on the Queen II excursion boat. The 116 passengers included Friends members and supporters, Lakeside faculty and staff, and several scholarship students.

Final figures were not available at press time, but a preliminary estimate of the proceeds exceeded \$20,000. These funds will support the Cooperative Lakes Area Monitoring Project, which monitors water quality on Dickinson County lakes, and public educational programs at Lakeside.

Lakeside extends a big "thank you" to all the people who made the cruise a success, including Friends volunteers, event sponsors, and all who purchased tickets for the event.



More than 100 people attended the Friends 2011 fund-raiser on the Queen II.

Welcome Ann!

Ann Ditsworth was recently hired as Lakeside's part-time clerk. Her responsibilities include bookkeeping, hospitality, and student services.

Ann is well qualified for her duties at Lakeside, having worked previously for the Okoboji Foundation, Bank Midwest, the Iowa Lakes Corridor Development Corporation, and the Presbyterian Camp. You may contact her at 712-337-3669 ext. 1 or ann-ditsworth@uiowa.edu.



Lakeside Receives Bequest

Lakeside Lab has received a gift of \$100,000 from the estate of LaVonne Foote. Mrs. Foote lived on Spirit Lake and was known locally as "The Bird Lady" for her love of and expertise in birds. When she died at age 94, she left more than \$4 million to various local, state, and national charities, including the Dickinson County Nature Center, the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, and The Nature Conservancy.

Mrs. Foote's gift to Lakeside will be used for infrastructure improvements that will improve the accessibility and usefulness of the Lab for visitors. Trail improvements will be started this summer, and an outdoor classroom is being planned.



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New But Not So New

If you are a regular reader of this newsletter, you will notice that this issue has a new name...but it's not really new. The name "Okoboji Dredgings" was coined by former director Richard Bovbjerg and used for a time in the late 80s and early 90s. Dr. Bovbjerg explained the name as follows:

"Surely the best known tale about Lakeside Lab concerns the ooze from the lake bottom....Many years ago, a student of Martin Ulmer's took some of this ooze to the kitchen, put it in a dessert dish, covered it with whipped cream and a cherry. It was put out as an extra dessert and Ulmer was told....He was up in a flash and had a mouthful down before you could say 'faulschlamm.' He flushed, put his napkin to his mouth, and told his wife: 'It tastes like mud.' She replied: 'Martin, you'll hurt the cook's feelings.'"

The new name is the result of a contest to "name this newsletter." Several alums sent their ideas. Thanks to everyone who participated!

Join the Friends

Dues collected by the Friends of Lakeside Lab provide scholarships for Lakeside students. Several membership categories are available:

Friend \$30
Friendly Family \$50
Good Friend \$100
Best Friend \$250
Great Friend \$500 and above
Sponsorship Friend \$1,000

To join, please send your tax-deductible contribution to Friends of Lakeside Lab, 1838 Hwy 86, Milford, IA 51351. Thank you!