The National Medal

The Wild Center was named one of 15 museum finalists for the 2015 National Medal for Museum and Library Service. The National Medal is the nation’s highest honor given to museums and libraries for service to the community. There are approximately 35,000 museums in the United States eligible for nomination.

“From the beginning we wanted The Wild Center to be an integral part of the Adirondack community,” said Stephanie Ratcliffe, executive director of the Center. “From the Youth Climate Summit, where we work with partners all over the region to bring schools together to get their hands on the climate problem, to bringing the local community together around the maple sugaring program, our being part of the fabric of the Adirondacks is central to who we want to be.”

MEMBER PREVIEW WEEK

Wild Walk Opens Early

Member Previews of Wild Walk begin Saturday, June 27th, and continue through Friday, July 3rd. Wild Walk opens to the public on July 4th, 2015. Members are invited to special events all week, with guides on Wild Walk from 11:00 am until 3:00 pm each day. Members may also bring limited numbers of guests to the preview for $5 each, with the number of guests specified by your membership level. (Please note for your planning that Wild Walk will close at 1pm on July 3rd so we can prepare for a special event later that day.)

Those wishing to join in order to take advantage of Member Preview week, and get free admission for an entire year, may join online in advance and have membership materials and cards mailed to your home.

NCPR RADIO UNSILENCE!

We want to thank our friends at NCPR for being our media sponsor for two of our three special celebrations of Wild Walk this summer. Listen in, and join the neighborhood for Take Flight July 18th and Play Outside on August 2nd.
Wild Walkers All

What can we say?

We are indebted to all those who lent their imaginations and muscle and skill to creating a flying path into the forest.

One of the great joys of being part of The Wild Center is the chance to turn shared passion for the phenomenal world we share into inventions that spread the love.

Come this summer, gaze from the Twig Tree house and feel the power that created this trail up into the heart.
Wild for Shanghai, and Beijing too

The Wild Center was part of the first ever I Love New York tourism sales mission to China this year that included meetings in Guangzhou, Shanghai (shown above) and Beijing. The Center’s website now has a section in Mandarin. The first buses of Chinese visitors to the Center will arrive this summer. “The Adirondacks are not an island,” said the Center’s Hillarie Logan-Dechene, who represented the region on the trip. “Eight hundred thousand people travel from China to New York every year, and we’re really excited by the reception we got from people when we talked about the Adirondacks. We’re getting ready for mainland visitors who will come to the Center and learn the story of the Adirondacks and what makes this place globally important.”

Do you speak Mandarin? We’re planning to have interpreters on site, and would welcome a member of our community to be interpreter for the first groups. If you are interested call Hillarie at 518-359-7800 x 1103.

See us on the Little Screen

Switch on a digital device and check out wildcenter.org/wildwalk. You can learn about how high it is, how long, and its history.

Many people helped produce this online mini site that we hope is a fun exploration of what’s ahead, and above, this summer at Wild Walk.

We encourage all of you to share the site on social media and with friends, and invite the world to come see more of what makes the wild world something to cherish.

Number of feet of bridges on Wild Walk
(Not human feet, flying squirrel feet.)
A special day where you can mingle with and meet the makers of Wild Walk - from the exhibit team to the fabricators and architects who designed the structure.

We will also build a cool Wild Walk at ground level, (think natural tinker toys) that will run through the woods, made by you and your families and friends. Bring cameras and your imagination.

The day will include special tours, an informal presentation in the theater where you can ask questions about everything Wild Walk, from how the snag was cast to Chip Reay’s original vision and how it grew from a fire tower to the Walk.

Wild Walk is all about getting up in the air, and this will be a day where you will be able to experience flight.

There will be special handlers bringing us bird flight demonstrations and chances to meet birds that will come to the Center with their handlers for this day only. The Insect Zoo will be here too, and an amazing show featuring dragonflies and their aerobatics.

Wild Walk is about the experience, and today we will add a special version of tightrope walking that you can try. Called ‘slacklining’ it’s also been compared to a long skinny trampoline, and we will have them running through the woods with instructions for adults and children, and those of us who still manage to be both.

Come this day, and you will have a different view of the flying forest every time you walk in the woods.
**IT’S HIGH** - Get in the bald eagle’s nest that rises above the tallest tower and you’ll feel like you’re standing on the chimney on top of a four story roof.

**IT’S ACCESSIBLE** - The angle of incline is purposefully set so that anyone who wants to climb to the treetops, including those of us who do that with wheels, can experience this walk.

**IT CAN FEEL A LITTLE DANGEROUS** - Not as dangerous as the woods can be for our wilder neighbors, but we wanted it to feel a little risky so we could appreciate that a walk in the woods for our wild kin is not always a walk in the park, and because it should feel different to be off solid ground.

**YOU’LL HEAR STORIES** - There are more than 35 exhibit experiences built into Wild Walk, and there will be staff on hand who have stories to show and tell about the hidden life in the woods. Look for them, and feel very free to talk with them about the things they have found out about the phenomenal world we all share.

**IT HAS PLACES TO SIT AND WATCH** - We know how nice it can be to sit in a tree and watch the world fly by, or the clouds reshape the sky, so Wild Walk includes wild seats too.

**IT’S OPEN FROM 10-6** - Once we open on July 4th, Wild Walk hours and Wild Center hours will be the same.

**A WILD CENTER TICKET OR MEMBERSHIP GETS YOU IN** - One price and you’re in, one membership and you’re in free as many times as you want with as many $5 friends as your membership level allows.

**THERE’S A 60-FOOT LONG QUIET ZONE TO START** - The rising part of Wild Walk starts with a 60-foot long covered space surrounded by bird habitat and feeding stations, the quieter you are here the more the birds will stick to their feeding and be there to see.

**YOU ENTER FROM THE LEFT END OF THE PARKING LOT** - You’ll see flags and can follow the wooden raised boardwalk between the first two sections of our parking lot to start down Wild Walk.

**MEMBER ALERT**

We are expecting big crowds on the 4th of July for the official skybreaking event. Please be advised that we are suggesting that members who want to explore Wild Walk take advantage of Member Preview Week.
WORKER’S PARADISE

Summer, The Wild Center, friends, and Wild Walk, what more could you ask for?

Know someone over the age of 14 who would like a job this summer? There are all manner of jobs at the Center, and each comes with the chance to join a great team, and to meet tons of new people.

Please share our list of openings below with someone you know who would enjoy adding their voice and knowledge to The Wild Center’s community of volunteers. (Yes, these are jobs where the pay is in other than cash, but, the other can be pretty incredible).

- Horticulturalist
- Naturalist
- Office Helper
- Tour Guide
- Wild Walk Guide!
- Photographer
- Art Studiologist
- Program Leader
- Videographer

People

- Social Media Friend
- Landscaper
- Special Event Staff
- Mandarin Interpreter

THE REWARDS OF TURNING OVER CONTROL TO OTHERS

Jen Kretser may be the most traveled person at The Wild Center. Before she got here the Adirondack native had traveled to study parks from Australia to Nepal, and across Central America. Since she landed at The Wild Center to run our programs in 2008, she’s been called to the White House, to San Francisco, to Finland and to plenty of ponds, rivers and trails closer to home.

Jen has also been invited to go places to collect awards, including her most recent from the Environmental Protection Agency, where she shared the dais with organizations like the The Nature Conservancy of the US Virgin Islands and the Peconic Land Trust. It’s odd to see Jen getting a prize, not because she isn’t prize-worthy, but because most of her energy seems to go into pushing other people up on stage, and out front. “To me Jen is proof that there is a lot more power in handing over control to others than there is in keeping it for yourself,” said Wild Center executive director Stephanie Ratcliffe. “Her whole thesis on the Youth Climate Summits, which are drawing so much attention, is to put the students fully in control. There’s a lot more to giving people real control than just turning over authority. You need to make sure they are in control, and can steer the process, and to watch Jen turn over that kind of control to kids as young as 8th grade is something to see.”

“I’m from the Adirondacks. They have profound meaning to me,” said Kretser. “When I get a call to go somewhere I know it’s because people are interested in the bigger story of the Adirondacks, what the region can mean, and I am a way to put a face to that idea. I am happy to do it, because I think our future will be better when more people feel like I do about this place, and what it does, and what it can mean.”
Dedicated by Nature

There are many stories told at The Wild Center; some are told quietly, and this is one of those. Someday, when you come to the spider’s web, we hope some of the love behind this quieter story is passed along.

The spider’s web experience is dedicated to the memory of Laurie Henneman by her family. Laurie passed away last July from complications of cancer. She was 46, and had lived a life infused with a love of the natural world.

An entomologist by training, Laurie’s highest expression of endearment for creatures she encountered in her travels was “angels straight from heaven” – and her nine-year-old daughter, Eleanor, suggested this phrase for the plaque in her memory at the Wild Center. Laurie wrote and recorded a cycle of songs inspired by six genera of ants she studied during her graduate studies in Arizona. She also created folk quilts infused with images of native insects of Hawaii, where she did her early research.

Laurie was lucky to spend time each summer during her childhood in the Adirondacks, and returned here throughout her life. So many of us are fortunate to share this love for this special place, and forever feel that closeness whatever distance we are from its geography.

We are surrounded by a phenomenal world. There is amazing beauty in the silk spinners, the ants, and even the black fly. We are honored that Laurie’s family made the web on Wild Walk a place we can stand, and think about these creatures, and remember a remarkable woman, who found so much beauty in the small parts of nature that she could find in them art to stitch.

summer events are online at wildcenter.org/events.
MEMBER PREVIEWS 3
SPECIAL CELEBRATION EVENTS 8
NATIONAL MEDAL NOMINEE 2