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Interview with Inese Sharp

Todd Juengling

Inese Sharp

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Researcher's Name: Todd Juengling

Event: interview with Inese Sharp

Place: Mrs. Sharp's office, second floor of the Brown Family Environmental Center building

Todd Juengling: Well, basically I just kinda wanted to start by, you know, just have you describe what you do here, basically just what your job entails.

Inese Sharp: Okay. I'm the facilities and program director for the Brown Family Environmental Center [BFEC] at Kenyon College. We've just recently had our name changed and so it's a long one, but it's a wonderful change for us because it's brought more money into our endowment fund which will make our program last in perpetuity. And so, my job entails so many different aspects. I was one of the people that helped design and plant the butterfly garden, and so that's the most dear to my heart. And that's the first thing I always mention because that's the best part of my job I think is to continually look over and plant and renew the butterfly garden, which is a garden that's almost an acre in size, has 7 different beds that are made up of perennials, bushes, and annual plants that either feed or are host plants for butterflies. And I usually do that with volunteers, both student and community members. And that starts in May, and is almost a full-time job until July 4th, by the time we plant everything, weed everything, get mulch down and all of that. And then the rest of the year there are just so many other functions that I have. I guess the other most important aspect of my job is our community field trips for the area elementary schools. We have about a thousand children that come through the gardens, and that come through the preserve, a year. It's a very unique program, because we are one of the few places that do not have a paid naturalist on staff that provides tours for people. We, first of all it was an economic issue because we didn't have enough money to do that. And what we decided was that we had this wonderful resource, which are Kenyon students, and they would benefit so much from having that experience where they would be working with young children. The young children would benefit so much from learning from people that are closer to their age rather than older people. They would relate much better to them. As it worked out it's just been a wonderful wonderful program. Marcy Steen and myself wrote the curriculum and we have about 12 different tours that we give to the area schools, from insects in the butterfly garden to a river study to mammals. We, Donna Scott who is a community member here and also is now working for Kenyon, has donated a whole cow skeleton for us, so this was just wonderful, it was the impetus for our mammals and skeletons unit. And subsequently we've gotten more funding and have been able to buy all sorts of skulls so that the children can see the difference of teeth between carnivores and omnivores and herbivores, and look at the different other skeletal structures. And part of this is putting together the cow skeleton. We have part of the bones are labeled with numbers so the children can put them together easily, and then the other side of the body of the cow is unnumbered so that they can just see it. And so we can use these in both ways, depending upon age group, and so that's been a great hit. And we also have had a few community members that have helped us out in the past when students weren't able to lead the field trips. But the students have really been the cornerstone of this program and every year we just have this tremendous support from students, and a lot of them start with the field trips and then volunteer in many other ways to help us. Each year we seem to have 1 or 2 big celebrations, like this year we had our 5th year celebration, and we had a lot of students as well as

community members volunteer to help us with that. We had a day-long celebration, just being very happy to give back to the community fun kinds of activities and celebrating our five years in existence. We had hay rides and a petting zoo, and all sorts of children's games, and free food and all sorts of musical entertainment and it was just a great day of fun. We had Kenyon students and volunteers in the community help us plant trees along the Kokosing River. Our academic director, Ray Heithaus, was very instrumental in getting the Kokosing River designated as a scenic river. And there hadn't been a new designation of a river in Ohio as a scenic river for the last 10 years, and in fact I think the very first year this happened and we were able to have Governor George Voinovich who was Governor at the time come and celebrate that occasion with us and have a canoe trip on the Kokosing. We offer canoe trips to the community as a special service, and also to the students. And every time I drive over the river, of course not right now, it's very cold, the river's almost frozen, but in the spring time and the summer and the fall, there are people that are fishing the river, people that you see down by the bridge taking out their canoes or kayaks, so the river is being used and it's wonderful to see that. It's a very clean river too, that's one reason that they were able to get that designation. What else do I do? What haven't I mentioned? Well, we plan, oh I started mentioning the scenic river, we planted almost 4,000 trees along the river's edge as a buffer zone, so that animals feel more secure in going down to the river, to create a better habitat, and to lessen erosion. And we've built a prairie behind our center here, that's about a 7-acre prairie. We're working now very closely with professor Sean Fennessey and trying to get some funding to develop our lands across [SR] 229 up on the hillside there. We have wonderful prospects of wetlands there if we just did a little bit more to the land. Right now that land is being used as pasture land. But, we're hoping to develop that. I've worked in helping to develop the ponds along with professor Fennessey and our academic director, professor Ray Heithaus, and I've worked with Kenyon students in developing different areas of other gardens. We've done a medicinal garden that the students developed, at one point we had a native heritage seed garden that some community members started for us. This summer we're going to start an organic garden with students and some community members. We're going to augment the medicinal garden by adding herbs. One of our student managers had a dream of making this area, the visitors' center, more of an open space for students, and therefore cooking some meals down here like Snowden does with their international dinners. Not too long after that, she didn't start this, but there was a cooking club that was started here at Kenyon, and they have done meals for us down here, as both a fund raiser for their organization and a fund raiser for ours. And so we have another student that's been interested in raising a few more culinary herbs for the cooking club, and so we're going to add those to our medicinal gardens. In honor of Melissa Kravetz, who was our dear dear student manager that passed away from cancer, we're going to do a bird display. We're going to make a man-made stream, a very shallow stream for the birds so they can drink out of it, and there'll be a pool at the stream bottom, that the stream drops into down at the bottom. And the area will be planted with perennials and annuals that produce seeds for the birds. And then we'll have also shrubs that will produce berries for the birds in winter. And in that area, we have a wonderful glassed-in porch that our elementary school children, as well as classes from Kenyon when they come down and do look at the bird exhibit will be using. And we're just so fortunate in having the Rotary Club fund the glassed-in porch area for us. They're going to augment that, actually, and be building cupboards where we can house some of our materials such as binoculars and field guides, and build benches so that we can have two to three rows of children, be one behind

each other so they can look at the bird exhibit a little bit better, and that's going to happen this spring. So I try to get grants as well, like this grant that the Rotary club has done for us, encourage community people to either volunteer or come to our programs. Another part of my job is doing the programming, and we have a children's series. We do these series seasonally, so that each season we have either 3-4 programs, depending upon the busy calendar that we have to mesh with Kenyon as well as the community. So we try to provide children's programming as well as what we call community programming. So that, children's programming is just for young children, and community programming is for Kenyon students, community adults, as well as children. And we run about 3-4 programs in each one of those categories seasonally, I don't know what that come up to, maybe twenty-some programs a years, maybe more than that. Which are really well-attended. We have volunteers agin, either through professors or people in the community that have an expertise in one area or another, will run those programs. Last year, one of our most exciting projects that I got started was the bluebird trail. We had a girl scout troop from Danville, girl scout and brownie troop from Danville, write a grant to the ODNR, and they were able to get enough materials to build 20 bluebird houses. And we were able to find this wonderful gentleman in Fredericktown who is part of the Ohio bluebird society, and he volunteered and did a lot of the painting of the bluebird houses for us, and making these special baffles so that raccoons and snakes wouldn't get up into the bluebird houses, and helped us, actually brought the president of the Ohio bluebird society down and we actually spent a Saturday afternoon deciding where the best place to lay out the trail would be. And we're so excited, we had monitors that monitored these bluebird houses all summer long, and we fledged 44 tiny little bluebirds that have grown up, and we're hoping that they'll come back and build many more nests. One unique thing that Mr. Glass, our volunteer from Fredericktown, helped us with is, this area is a bit little too far south for tree swallows, and so they're more in Michigan and farther north. But he had experience with putting 2 bluebird houses fairly close together. Usually they're about a hundred yards or more apart, but if you put two together and if you observe them carefully so that sparrows and wrens and all those other birds that we don't want nesting in them nest in them, usually what will happen is the tree swallows will eventually come in. And we were able to raise two families of tree swallows. They're a little bit harder to monitor, so we don't know exactly how many birds we have because they tend to dive bomb you when you're looking into the boxes, whereas the bluebirds are much tamer, so it isn't a problem. So, we were a little hesitant to look in there too often. But we definitely know that two families were raised, and we're very very excited about that. Because of our bluebird monitoring program being such a tremendous success we're going to start a butterfly monitoring program this summer. We have a special gentleman from Columbus who is helping us with that, and doing two special programs to help get our monitors knowledgeable on the kind of technique they need to use as well as the butterflies that they need to identify. So, we're going to start that off this spring. And Lewis Hyde, who is a professor here at Kenyon, was very very generous to us and presented his butterfly collection of almost 300 butterflies, so that has been a wonderful asset for us and a real impetus for other studies. Unfortunately he's only here part of the year, and so he as well as this other gentleman form Columbus will help us out with the butterfly monitors, as whoever's here at whatever time can work that out. Gosh, I feel like I've been talking for so long. I think I've covered just about all of my duties, I'm not sure.

TJ: You covered a lot. Well, what do you kind of see as I guess some of the major goals of doing community programs and programs for children through the Environmental Center?

IS: Oh, Knox County children have to travel at least an hour in any direction to find an equivalent center, and so I really feel that we're offering a wonderful children. We have a lot of children just come down on the bike trail using their bikes and then having a almost day-long excursion. And it's very inexpensive that way, they don't have to use the busses and pay for those. Wiggin St. [school] comes down almost constantly, we sort of have to limit them because so many other groups want to get in. But they can just walk down the hill, and even with the little children like the kindergartners, we're a little leery of having them cross the road. The sheriff's department has been wonderful, and they'll just come down and stop traffic while they cross the road and we call them again when they have to go back up the hill. So, I think the children's program has been just a wonderful wonderful outdoor classroom for the area schools. And actually has been a real driving force I think in some of the schools. We've had some of the teachers from Pleasant St. as well as the middle school want to start their own butterfly gardens behind their schools so that they can observe these insects, and tend to the flowers and all that on a regular basis so that it won't be just a one-year trip, I mean one day out of the year trip. Kenyon has also, just because of all sorts of circumstances, not been able to attract as many community people into their lecture series or whatever other kinds of wonderful things that we do offer the community. And this is a wonderful wonderful way for the community to see what Kenyon can offer. It's a place where Kenyon students and community people can meet, where Kenyon students can meet older members and work side by side with them, whether in the butterfly garden, planting trees, or performing some other service. And I think that been just a really wonderful wonderful added attraction to Kenyon that we haven't been able to offer before. And I think by having community members feel at home here at the Environmental Center, hopefully they will begin to attend some of our wonderful concerts and lectures and take part in those other wonderful activities that we offer. Also, I think what's so, what makes my job so exciting is that we're just beginning to build a program. We're beginning to build a wonderful resource for not only Kenyon but the community. I'm amazed, I don't usually teach the children, the Kenyon students do, but you know, things happen, so whenever someone, when other students can't come I do the teaching, and I'm constantly amazed when I take the kids up into the woods or into the river, that you know it's such a resource, and I Guess living where I live in the country it's always been part of my life, but I'm always amazed that children say to me "I've never been in the woods. Oh my god, it's dark in here!" Look at the difference between, you know, the woods here, and where we were out in the field in just a minute. And just the opportunity of being able to wade in the river. I thought that we would have, or a stream, I thought that many children would have that opportunity and I'm always amazed it's such a delight for them, it's the first time that they've done that. And I even hear it from Kenyon students who feel that we're in the middle of nowhere, and we're living in the middle of the country and everything is so rural, yet they, there isn't, I think what we forget is when you do take those country walks you're walking on a street. You're not walking in the woods, you're not walking in fields and if you do, because it is private property, often you get chased off or people ask you what you're doing there. And I know a number of students have said to me what a respite it is and a wonderful experience it is just to be able to walk in the woods, and not have anyone else around you or just be able to lay down and look at the sky when you're up on the hillside. I think the butterfly garden has been very important to some of our freshmen, especially when I work there in the fall. Often I hear that students really, there's so many new things

happening to them, first-year students and you know it's so nice to be able to come down here and study, or just watch the fish in the pond or the birds coming for the seeds on the plants that it's kind of a nice time for them to gather their thoughts and renew themselves before they go back and have all these new experiences. So I'm really pleased that I've been able to help create this kind of environment. Did I answer your question?

TJ: Well, you mentioned that this is, you know, what's going on now is just kind of just the beginning of what the environmental center's doing. It's only been around 5 years. What do you see happening in the future, like how do you see the role changing?

IS: Oh, just right now I am the only, well that's not true, we have 2 paid staff people. I have a full-time job, and then we have a volunteer coordinator that we can only afford part of the fall and part of the spring when we have our majority of our field trips. And we desperately need more staff in order to do a lot of other things that we would like to do. I would love to extend our programming into more sessions. We just, there's just so many things that need to be done, you know we try to limit to 3 or 4 that are kind of manageable. And sometimes they aren't, like this weekend we have 3 different events going on, 2 at the same time, that's why we need our new building, too. We have little children coming to talk about groundhogs because of groundhog day, and shadows, and do all sorts of experiments and enjoy that, and we have at the same time, because of time constraints of instructors, a program for Kenyon students to decorate pots and then bring plants into their rooms to enjoy. And so we could do more of this kind of stuff, that, you know, I know everyone would enjoy we just don't have enough time to do this and help. There are still so many things that we would like to develop on the preserve. Everything needs planning time if you want to do it right, and you know, as I say, we're not finished with this area right around the visitors' center, but we're beginning to be comfortable with it so that we can look to our other lands across 229 and we're beginning to hopefully develop that area as well with the grant that I am hoping we'll receive. So we have lots and lots of plans, but just everything takes time, and careful thought, and preparation, and we want to do it right the first time. We just started a summer camp this summer. Again, because we don't have all the staff that we would love to have, it's run all by volunteers. We're working with the Knox County Litter Prevention Office, they've helped us with funding for that, Pam Seer (sp?) is the director there. And we've been able to offer, last year was the first time we offered a camp. A 3-day camp for children, and it was a tremendous success. We have families calling to find out when they can sign up for this summer's camp. We have the high school students that helped us be camp counselors last year are calling and trying to find out when the date of the camp is because they want to help again, and they've helped in some of the other projects that we've done throughout the year. So I would love to see that camp, right now the county just has the boy scout/girl scout, and special church camps, but nothing a little ore scientifically oriented, and so this would be a wonderful wonderful opportunity. The children's program, it would be wonderful to have it for multiple ages so that we could have programs for preschoolers, programs for 6-8 year olds, and then the older children, and right now we just try to do 1 or 2 each season for each group, or sometimes just open it for all, and sometimes that's difficult when you have such a variety of age groups. It would be wonderful to have a little more staff added on so that we could offer a little more variety. [phone rings] Could I interrupt you a minute? Sorry about that. [Inese goes to answer the phone. I stop the tape and decide to flip it over now, since

there is only another 1-2 minutes of tape left on side A.] [end of side A]

IS: What were we talking about?

TJ: We were talking about children's different age groups.

IS: That's right. Yeah, we would love to have, I think the next thing we need to do is to begin to hire a little bit more staff, and hopefully at some point we will be able to do that, so that we could have a naturalist that would help us with creating more field trips for the program, the elementary school program, and also with our children's programming, with our summer camp, that would be just wonderful. Some office staff. And I think that would allow us to do more variety in our programming and enlarge that. What other, what else were you asking me?

TJ: Well, something else is, since we're doing this project on the river as kind of our main focus, and the Environmental Center as a point along the river, I kinda wanted to know what you thought the river contributes to the Environmental Center, and vice versa, like what the Environmental Center contributes to the river?

IS: Well, the Environmental Center, along with our scenic river association that was started by our academic director Ray Heithaus, I think would never have been a scenic river without those people who really really cared about it. And there were a few from Kenyon, but a large number of them are from the surrounding community, are community people. And they still continue, while the scenic river designation allows us to have a river monitor. He of course can't monitor the whole river, and so we have high school students who are monitoring certain parts of the river, and we have a river study group that I forgot to tell you about as we were talking about our elementary program. At the same time that we are working on an elementary program, Ray Heithaus is working with high school teachers in developing a curriculum that would teach students about the river. And we have four different high schools, I think: Danville, Fredericktown, Mt. Vernon, maybe it's just 3. I'm not sure, I'd have to look it up. Anyway, we have those schools very interested, and a number of different classes go into the river each fall and spring and do all sorts of experiments in the river, seeing what kind of life is in the river to see, you can tell by the kinds of small organisms in the river if the river is healthy or not, you can do all sorts of water quality testing that they do. And so it's been a wonderful program, and Mt. Vernon high school teachers wrote this whole curriculum guide, it was like 250 pages, it was like a book, it's just wonderful. And they taught the other area school how to do this. And with the Environmental Center and the Scenic River Association, we've been able to buy some equipment that the high schools use and we house here and get out, so that the schools can share them. And then in the spring we have a session where those high school students that had done wonderful projects come and present them to some of the professors here and to each other. So that's a very very special day for them. In gathering information for the scenic river I think we've gone and talked to many many people who live adjacent to the river, and have tried to educate them in maybe some of their practices that have been harmful to the river, as well as they educating us as to the wildlife that's in the river. You know, there's beavers up near Glen Rd. where the river is there. As I said earlier, also, just the tremendous use the river is getting now, I think, because people are aware that it is clean. And even in Mt. Vernon I often drive by the high school there

and I see people picnicking, you know, right on the river there, young children playing in the river over there. So, I think we've allowed people to enjoy it recreationally, as well as realizing what an important resource it is for us. Delaware County wanted to come and take water out of the river because they're so desperately needed water, and I think because of the Scenic River Association, and the Environmental Center's connection, and just the general awareness we've been able to manage that. I guess I won't say, I think everybody would rather that they didn't at all, but, they are yeah, so I guess manage is the proper word, and oversee it a little bit more than, and maybe if the awareness wasn't there at first it might have just been able to sneak through like some things do.

TJ: So, what about the river contributing to the Environmental Center?

IS: Oh yes. Oh goodness, well it is both a recreational vehicle for us, we have canoe trips that we offer Kenyon students, Kenyon students will come just down and use it as, for tubing and fishing. There are local people around from this area will fish there, as well as I guess people from all over. And, it's a very important educational tool for our elementary school program. It's one of our most popular field trips that we offer. It was the most popular day, we had a whole water day at camp this summer that we spent in the river, and that was just so much fun. We were very fortunate in getting a model of a watershed from the Soil and Water people here in Mt. Vernon, and so were able to show through this model what happens to drain water, and it goes, all goes into the groundwater and your river source. In fact, one of the walks along the river you can see across the river from where you're walking that there's a sewer drain that drains right into the river, and it creates a wonderful little waterfall for us. And we were fortunate in just acquiring five acres that go up to Porter Rd., and there's a lovely little seasonal stream that also runs right into the river, and so that's a wonderful wonderful resource. Along our walk, we can show not only the river, but more of the watershed; the kids can really see it up live, in person, rather than in just the model. And I know there are a number of courses at Kenyon that use the river as well, professors will bring the students down there. So, I Guess mainly it's educational and recreational, how we make use of the river.

TJ: Well, to just kind of change gears a little, what do you think about, how do you see the role of the wildlife at the Environmental Center and the wildlife along the river, what's the importance of that, not just for the Environmental Center, but for Knox County as a whole?

IS: Well, we, there is a plan that Knox County did not too long ago, and they have identified a whole river corridor that they would like to eventually be able to buy, or hopefully people will donate some of their land to a land trust. And this would provide a larger access for wildlife to use the river and not, I guess I'm mainly thinking of the larger animals like the deer, that they're very very beautiful, but they also create many many accidents, and what we're seeing is that so much of their land is being gobbled up with housing that they're coming now into people's back yards, and eating bushes and flowers, just because there isn't enough food. And if you would create this corridor which we've sort of started here at the Environmental Center, it would give them much more land to travel in and move from area to area to find food, and hopefully cut down on accidents in the road and destroying people's property. We are just teeming with wildlife, I mean it's just wonderful. I know that just working here I see wild turkeys, deer,

groundhogs, all varieties of birds, voles, chipmunks, I mean, you know, it's just wonderful. Wild turkeys are becoming maybe as plentiful, well not as plentiful as deer, but we are beginning to see really great numbers of them. I talked to people, it's really funny, they're just astounded that they've had to stop in the middle of the road because 30 turkeys are crossing the road. People even in Gambier have seen them, you know, in their back yards. And so, of course it's wonderful to be able to walk and, you know, you're walking in the woods and all of a sudden you hear movement, you know rustling, and you can identify either chipmunks, or birds, or see a deer running across your path. There are a few, we're hoping that the pheasant population will come back a little bit more, and through the prairie I know that the turkeys have definitely enjoyed our prairie grasses and seeds, but we're hoping that maybe some other animals will begin to come back. I know that, when was it, I think it was two summers ago, it was so exciting. We were, you know working out in the garden and one of our student gardeners was mowing and we had a immature red-tailed hawk that had been living here. You notice the little, the gate that we have in front of the medicinal garden, I would come in to work in the morning and he would be sitting up there. So when our student was mowing I saw that the hawk had dove into the prairie and obviously had captured his meal for the day. And I ran out to Ryan, and I said "Ryan, stop, you've got to let him have his meal first. You can't run over him, you might damage him or whatever." And so we both enjoyed watching this wonderful magnificent bird grow up, and now he's left us and occasionally we'll see him flying around. The river, as you said that's your concentration, all of the wonderful birds that we see along there, the herons and the kingfishers, and just the warblers that come in the spring along the bike trail and up along our woods. Michael Evans is doing a wonderful project, too that we've been monitoring his progress, and Ray Heithaus and his wife Pat especially have been going on outings with him. He's writing a book about the birds along the Kokosing Gap Trail and our center here. So they've been monitoring the seasonal birds, and going out quite often to see who's arrived and who's left. So, what else would you like to ask me?

TJ: Well, I just kinda wanted to know some of like, I don't know, what are your like, kind of like the highlights, like your favorite things about the Environmental Center and about the river?

IS: Oh gosh. As I mentioned before, it's the butterfly garden I think that is so dear to my heart. Well, I guess I'm just a gardener, so every time we do another garden it's just wonderful. We did this little box turtle garden replicating a woodland environment to try to bring to people's attention that even the box turtle that are so plentiful around here are beginning to lose their habitat and we're beginning to have a diminish, they are diminishing in population. And, so every time we get to plan a new garden, or the favorite time of year for me is spring and the worst time of year for me is fall, when I see that those things are dying and I'm going to have to be in here doing reports and stuff, rather than working outside. So, that has been such a joy for me. Teaching also has been a real joy. On the occasions that I do get to do that, and especially during the summer camp I teach a lot there, and being able to just watch the pleasure I children's eyes and hear their wonderful shouts of excitement as they see new things is a real joy for me. And just being able to, I guess the most lasting joy for me is building the program here, building the gardens and seeing everything flourish, being part of that.

TJ: Well what do you think, I mean since this is for a driving tour, and hopefully lots of people

will be coming here as a result, and I know you've been talking about this kind of stuff the whole time basically, but what do you think are I guess some of the main points of attraction for people who would just come here for an hour or a couple of hours?

IS: Well, we do, we have people here, especially because I'm so often in the garden, we built this wonderful bridge with the help of the Kokosing Gap Trail that comes right off of the trail and to our gardens, and I'm just amazed at how far away people come to use the trail which is a wonderful wonderful facility and also to come and enjoy our gardens. We have regular people that not only use the trail for bicycling, but you know for walking, and will make a rest stop in our gardens. And you know, I see them often and learn about their children and whatever. So I think our butterfly garden, as well as I know when we finish the bird exhibit will be just incredible and people will really really enjoy both those. For the more adventuresome, because it is a bit of a climb to go up that hillside, it's just a spectacular view, just a spectacular view of the countryside. At different seasons even, it's, even now with the snow on the ground it's just so beautiful. And to walk through the woods, and now especially you can see all the wildlife. Maybe not see them, but at least see that they were there by looking at their tracks. And walking along the Gap Trail along the river. I love this time of year because the river is frozen, and depending upon the different levels of the river you have ice sometimes hanging along on the limbs higher than the river really is, and because of the cold it'll still stay there. Or that wonderful frost in the morning where everything is just this beautiful wonderful glistening silver color, and especially if the sun shines it's almost too brilliant to, your eyes just almost can't take it in. And then in the spring time the incredible wildflowers that we have, and we've tried to bring them into the box turtle garden so that people, maybe some of the elderly people and maybe the very young who won't be able to walk into the woods and see them. We've been fortunate enough and feel very good about reclaiming some of the plants that were being destroyed when the Easton Complex was being built, they were able to, Pat Heithaus was just so wonderful in gathering plants for us. And so we have a wonderful array of wildflowers for people to see within a minute, you know, well, more than that, but you know they don't have to do the walking. And then in the summertime and in the fall it's just a breathtaking view from the top of the hill. We have a wonderful little area that we've made here that is a, like a picnic campfire area. We say we rent it out but we don't charge any money for it, but we like to have people and groups let us know that they're coming to use it. And we've had many girl scout groups, people who want to have birthday parties from student groups that will come and have a campfire, and be able to cook over the fire, or roast marshmallows or whatever. And then of course the river, is, while some of our land abuts the river it is of course an access, right on Laymon Rd. is a parking lot with access for people to put in their canoes or kayaks or go fishing there, or just to stroll on our trails along the river. So I think we have a lot to offer, and people that want to come here either for a short amount of time, or picnic, we have lots of picnic tables here that our elementary children use, and of course we allow people to use at any time. And we do have in fact even secretaries from Mt. Vernon, as well as from Kenyon will come and have lunch out here and just be able to enjoy quiet for a little bit, listen to the birds. So we do hope that a lot of people will come and enjoy it.

TJ: Well, is there anything else you want to add?

IS: Gosh, I'm probably forgetting lots of things. I guess the newsletter, too, I should probably mention that. That we have a, I think over 250 people on our newsletter list, and then just keep them out on our bulletin boards out here that give programming, give our calendar programs and stories that are of interest, of things that have happened here on the center. I don't think I can think of anything else.

TJ: Well, I just wanted to ask if you know other people I should specifically talk to about.

IS: Well Ray Heithaus especially.

TJ: I talked to him yesterday.

IS: Oh good. And Pat Heithaus has also been wonderful, and has helped us in so many way, from working in the gardens to helping us with our skeleton collections to insect collections to, so she might be a good resource. If you wanted to talk to some volunteers who have worked with the garden I could give you some of those, either community volunteers or students volunteers. I don't know if that would be of interest. Or even just people who've used the, you know like maybe school groups, I don't know. What did you have in mind?

TJ: Well, actually a couple separate things. A few people have told me to talk to Mike Dailey, but I can't find his phone number.

IS: Oh, let me give it to you. Mike, yes I didn't even mention Mike, my god he's done everything for us. From helping with the prairie, to helping with the soil, he was just here this morning helping with the soil workshop that he's giving. Mike Dailey, 427-4054. And he also has an e-mail if you want his e-mail address, too. It's [mx%'bab@ecr.net'](mailto:mx%27bab@ecr.net). Mr. Glass might be fun too with our bluebirds.

TJ: He's the other one who worked with the bluebird trail right?

IS: Yeah, he's from the Ohio Bluebird Society. I don't know if I can find his phone number here. Here we go, 397-5573.

TJ: Oh, also you mentioned that the girl scout group from Danville came to the bluebird trail, do you know the name of the troop leader.

IS: Yeah, actually yes, she's also been an incredible volunteer for us, from helping to teach when students can't teach on a field trip to working in the gardens, to so many things. And she's moving to Arizona in 2 weeks, so if you want to talk to her you better talk to her fast. Her name is Lou Ann Foor. F-O-O-R. Let's see, okay it's 599-, she lives right outside of Danville, 599-7453.

TJ: Do you know if she's still doing girl scout troop stuff?

IS: Well she was until she moved, I mean, you know she's in the process of moving now, so but she was very active with the girl scouts before.

TJ: I'm also trying to find some actual, like a group of girl scouts or brownies or boy scouts who've been down here.

IS: Oh, well then you need to call Ann Laudeman. Let me give you her phone number. Ann's phone number is 397-8946, and she's with the boy scouts. And they've done wonderful things from using the camp fires to doing night hikes down here, and all sorts of things. So she would be a great,

TJ: Can you spell it?

IS: L-A-U-D-E-M-A-N

TJ: Also, I remember you sent me that e-mail about the people who came, the kids who registered for this past Sunday. And Wanda Shepard's [troop was supposed to come, but didn't]. . . [end of tape] [Inese told me that Wanda's troop really hadn't done anything at the BFEC yet, and they ended up not coming that Sunday, either].