Chairman's Message

On behalf of the Environmental Learning Center (ELC) Board of Trustees, I extend our sincere thanks to you, our friends and supporters. This has been an exciting year for us – one of growth and transition! I’m delighted that our new executive director, Molly Stirnwald, has fit in so well with our organization and the community. She is a compassionate person who brings more than 15 years of leadership experience in environmental research, education and fund development. Her many talents have already helped us broaden the ELC’s reach into the community, and have reinforced the strong linkages between environmental education and personal well-being. Molly is a great addition to our team of outstanding staff and volunteers, and I’m enthusiastic about the many opportunities that lie ahead.

This is my third and last year serving this wonderful organization, and I turn the reins over to William R. (Bill) Clements, Jr. Having spent most of his career as a managing partner for world-class executive search firms, Bill was extensively involved in the search for our new director. He has also been very supportive and effective during our period of transition. I have been honored to have worked with him as he served as vice chair this past year and look forward to continuing to work for the ELC under his leadership.

Thank you for your support. You have been a big component to the ELC's success!

Bill Freckell

Executive Director Message

My first year as ELC’s second executive director has come and gone! And, I am delighted to say how much we’ve accomplished in such a short time.

As a not-for-profit organization, our reason for existence is to serve the community. And, we have a responsibility to do that to the best of our abilities. Because of this, we’ve embarked on a national organizational assessment program through the American Alliance of Museums, focusing on increasing community engagement, strengthening operations, and strategically planning for long-term fiscal sustainability. We have also updated our mission, highlighting our growing role as a center for improving both environmental and human health – which are deeply connected – and serving people in all walks of life.

We are excited to report that over this past year we have made definite steps forward on the road to becoming known not only locally, but regionally and nationally as a transformational leader in overcoming today’s epidemic human-nature divide. And without you, we would accomplish only a fraction of what we have and will do. We are endlessly grateful.

We look forward to sharing you what is on the horizon as we educate, inspire and empower all people to make changes in their daily lives that ultimately heal the environment and humanity.

Molly Stirnwald
Collaborative Partnerships

Through collaboration, the ELC works closely with community organizations and agencies providing people with inspirational opportunities to connect with and understand nature. We actively engaged and worked with people from the following organizations:

- Boys and Girls Club of Indian River County
- Bridges Early Learning Center
- Florida Aquatic Preserves
- Gifford Youth Achievement Center
- U.S. Department of Health - Head Start
- Healthy Families IRC
- Hibiscus Children’s Center
- Homeless Family Center
- Indian River County 5210 "Let’s Go!"
- Indian River Land Trust
- The Learning Alliance
- Laura Riding Jackson Foundation
- Operation Hope of Fellsmere
- Youth Guidance
- Students in Kindergarten - 12th grades in the School District of Indian River County
- Students in Pre-schools and Home-schools
- Vero Beach Power Squadron

"Building stronger, cross-disciplinary partnerships at the local, regional and national level is at the core of our evolution and growth.”
_—Molly Stronewald_

Annual Accomplishments

1. Welcomed Molly Stronewald as the ELC’s new Executive Director after Holly Dill, our first ever director, retired. Molly joined us from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania where she was the Director of Science Education and Research at the prestigious Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. To learn more about Molly, go to www.MollyStronewald.org.

2. Implemented "Lagoon: The Lagoon," a hands-on, comprehensive education campaign designed to show people how small changes in behaviors can have large effects on the Indian River Lagoon. We involved 143 residents from communities who made changes to their policies and practices reducing nutrient runoff and other procedures that benefited the lagoon. We also trained 13 water quality monitoring volunteers from these communities to track the health of their stormwater ponds.

3. Staff members committed to reducing poverty in Indian River County by attending the Bridges out of Poverty Workshop, a comprehensive training workshop addressing the root causes of poverty at the individual and systemic level.

4. Certified 14 new National Association for Interpretation (NAI) Certified Interpretive Guides (CIGs) at the first ever NAI CIG Workshop at the ELC. All guides completed a 33-hour workshop, interpretive presentation and exam. These guides will be making an impact all throughout the state working for the Grassy Water Preserve in West Palm Beach, Florida Public Archaeology Network, University of Florida, Florida International University, volunteering for Brevard County Parks and the Environmental Learning Center.

5. Certified 5 Florida Master Naturalists (FMN) through the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. These students completed 140 hours of classroom presentations, field trips, videos and interpretive presentations.

6. Engaged 11 additional FMN students in the 40 h Coastal Module. Many of these students will volunteer as nature guides at local parks and preserves.

7. Mentored 16 Junior Interpreters and 15 Environmental Ambassadors who volunteered 443 hours to participate in stewardship activities such as making habitat for oysters, planting grasses to be used for shoreline restoration and cleaning up lagoon shorelines.
Annual Accomplishments

771 Held early childhood learning classes for a record 771 students, ages 4-5, from 17 schools who participated in the Young Explorers program with five different nature-related topics.

13 Engaged 13 students to participate in the Indian River County Science Fair – 4 went on to participate in state competitions.

3,245 Actively engaged and taught 3,245 elementary school students in 1st, 3rd and 4th grades with SPASH 1, SPASH 3 and Lagoon Days classes.

450 Hosted 450 people through Water Ventures Learning Lab, a traveling science center that encourages positive stewardship of Florida's diverse waterways.

1,300 Challenged close to 1,300 elementary school students to create artistic entries in the Making a Difference in My World contest and received 1,300 entries that featured life on the lagoon.

563 Provided 653 stimulating, hands-on EcoVenture programs including hiking, boating, touring, geocaching and beachcombing.

516 Hosted 516 people at the third WaterGreen Nightlights including guided canoe trips through Lagoon mangrove forests lit up with sparkling holiday lights.

180 Awarded 180 students scholarships to attend summer ecology programs and held outdoor summer classes to 180 participants.

200 Hosted National Estuaries Day for 200 people to show unity and concern for the Indian River Lagoon.

5,700 Naturalist published a feature article entitled, “The Local Muse,” in Legacy, the magazine of the National Association for Interpretation. 5,700 circulation.

60 Naturalist presented “Making a Case for Mobile Tours” to 60 people at the National Association for Interpretation National Workshop in Denver, Colorado in partnership with 5 organizations: Osolci Tealshires, Ocracoke & Wolf Discovery Center, UI Forest Service, Center for Design and Interpretation, and Orange County Parks, California.

500 Executive Director was invited speaker for the University of Washington 2015 Sustaining our World Lecture: “Human[ ]Nature: Care for Our World is Care for Ourselves.” To over 500 people.

10 Staff members were invited to the Fairchild Challenge Summit at Fairchild Botanical Garden in Coral Gables, Fla. The Summit brought together 10 national and international partners to discuss how to successfully implement this award winning interdisciplinary environmental science competition, designed to engage students in STEAM education from ProK through 12th grade.

College Interns

For the first time ever, we hosted two college interns at the ERC for six weeks in the summer of 2015. The students were mentored by our ERC educators, Sarah Rhodes-Crishi, who guided them through multiple projects including teaching children education programs; conducting biological field studies in collaboration with the Indian River Land Trust scientists; engaging in land stewardship activities and maintaining educational aquaria and exhibits.

One student was a senior from Centenary College in New Jersey with a double major in biology and secondary education while the other was a sophomore majoring in behavioral marine biology at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. Our pilot college intern program was a huge success! Both interns describe their experience as “life changing.” One said, “I think this has shown me that getting involved with field work is not as huge a challenge as I thought, and it gives me hope that I’ll be able to get involved with projects I would have previously not considered in my league.” The other said, “I know that I would be learning a lot...but I was still surprised with the diversity of experiences provided nearly every day.”

As a result of this positive experience for the interns as well as the children in our summer programs, we will be continuing our college intern program. We also plan to continue growing our relationship with the Indian River Land Trust to enrich the content and participatory nature of our offerings for youth.

Volunteers Extraordinaire

9582 That’s how many hours our team of 190+ volunteers contributed to the community – we owe deep gratitude to those who donate their time, talents and treasures to improve our quality of life!

70 Volunteers contributed 1,190 hours at Lagoon Days – our program which all 4th grade students attend.

386 That’s the number of plants and mats full of oyster shells that our volunteers nurtured and planted to help revitalize the lagoon.

I knew that I would be learning a lot but I was still surprised with the diversity of experiences provided nearly every day.”
MOLLY STEINWALD
ABOUT OUR NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Molly is an accomplished environmental and science education professional, photographer, and writer. She earned her degree in Environmental Education from the University of Maine and is a certified teacher. She has taught in the Boston area and has been the executive director of the Environmental Learning Center (ELC) for the past 15 years. She has also been a volunteer at the ELC for over 20 years.

ELC 2014-15 HIGHLIGHTS

1309: Engaged 1309 elementary school students in creating art focused on legon conservation.

Trained 35 residents in 16 Homes, 422: Trained residents and volunteers in environmental practices through our Living for the Lagoon program.

771: 771 Students attended camp and trained residents and volunteers in environmental practices through our Living for the Lagoon program.

#discoverelc.org

2014-15 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER

- Literacy on the Lagoon Program
- Partnerships with the ELC
- BEG has been asked to double this year

GROWTH OVER THE PAST 3 YEARS

- 5,179
- 5,300
- 6,000
- 5,600
- 6,200
- 6,800
ELC, Inc. Financial Summary

July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

Unaudited Financials

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<th>Support and Revenue</th>
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<td>Contributions</td>
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<td>Program Revenue</td>
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<td>Special Event Revenue (net of cost)</td>
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<td>Management &amp; General Support</td>
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<td>Total Expense</td>
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*Summary of unaudited financial statement. A copy of the audited financial statement is available by written request to the Environmental Learning Center.

ELC Foundation

The Environmental Learning Center Foundation, Inc. is a separate not-for-profit corporation which manages funds designated by the board for long-term investment and funds permanently restricted by donors for investment in perpetuity.

Board of Directors
Chairperson: Todd Pfeiffer
Vice Chairperson: (vacant)
Secretary: Chuck Pollard
Treasurer: Robert McNeely
Alice Cole
William Prissell
Andrew Hartline
John D. Lawrentz, Jr.
Thomas Spalding, M.D.
David Van Pelt

Investment Committee
Chairperson: John D. Lawrentz, Jr.
Alice Cole
Todd Pfeiffer
Robert Prindiville
Robert Puff

Environmental Learning Center Foundation

The ELC Foundation utilizes an internal committee of financial stewards who manage the Foundation’s assets. Through prudent oversight, the investment committee has ensured rates of return that have performed solidly over a ten-year period.

The ELC’s dedicated staff are committed to improving the quality of life in our community.

Molly Stennert – Executive Director
Heather Stapleton – Education Director
Camille S. Yates – Development Director
Nance Hatch – Marketing/Communication Director
Rosemary Hedger – Naturalist
Sarah Rhodes-Crand – Naturalist
Sara Foster – Naturalist

Nancy Puglia – Volunteer Coordinator
Dan Pekin – Co-Manager
Mark Butterworth – Bat Captain
Jenny Schuette – Office Manager
Ross Gah – Bookkeeper
Linda Weimer – Administrative Assistant

*Indicates part-time

Rate of Return as of June 30, 2015

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<th>5yr</th>
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<td>ELC Foundation Assets</td>
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<td>Benchmark 65/35 Mixed*</td>
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*51% All Country World Index MSCI, 35% Barclays US Aggregate Bond Index AGG

14 | ELC 14/15 ANNUAL REPORT | Celebrating 26 Years of Inspiring Stewardship and Enriching Peoples’ Lives | Celebrating 26 Years of Inspiring Stewardship and Enriching Peoples’ Lives | ELC 14/15 ANNUAL REPORT | 15
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