



What's found in the woods, is **brown** on the outside and “green” on the inside?

By Kristen Rosenberg
Photos by Neil Satterly

It's the new environmental education center at the Dr. Victor Reinstein Woods Nature Preserve!

Located just east of Buffalo, Reinstein Woods is a 292-acre nature preserve, donated to DEC by the Reinstein family in 1986. Construction of the 4,900 square-foot environmentally friendly "green" building began in March 2006, and staff moved in last winter. The facility is the first new education center built by DEC since Rogers Environmental Education Center was built in Sherburne (Chenango County) in 1966.

The new center at Reinstein Woods was designed to achieve a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating. The LEED Green Building Rating System is a voluntary program that represents the U.S. Green Building Council's effort to set national standards for what constitutes a "green" building.

While the Preserve's focus of encouraging visitors to get outdoors hasn't changed, the new building

will support a wider variety of events and make it easier to offer programs in inclement weather. Guest speakers will give presentations in the meeting room. Workshops for teachers, such as Project WILD and Project WET, will be held in the classroom. Teachers will then be able to incorporate nature-related activities in their own schools. The nature-viewing area, complete with a variety of field guides, allows visitors to identify birds at the bird feeders and out on the trails. The kids' area has discovery bins full of hands-on activities to spark children's interest before they head into the woods. The whole building is a teaching tool, with green building information signs throughout and a green building self-guided tour booklet.

So make a trip out to western New York, and come see the new environmental education center and the rest of what Reinstein Woods Nature Preserve has to offer!

Kristen Rosenberg has worked as an environmental educator at Reinstein Woods Nature Preserve since 2000.

The “green” features of the new environmental education center at Reinstein Woods Nature Preserve follow the three “Rs:”

REDUCE, REUSE & RECYCLE!

Reduce

- Heating and cooling ducts were left exposed to reduce the need for building materials.
- Low-flow faucets were installed in restrooms and the kitchen to reduce water use.

Reuse

- Leftover wood trim from building construction was used to make frames for building signs.

Recycle

- The carpet and rubber floor tiles in several rooms are made from recycled materials.
- Furniture in the building contains recycled materials (steel, aluminum and polyester).

Visit www.dec.ny.gov/education/1956.html to learn more about the green features of the education center.



Participants at Reinstein’s 2007 Earth Day festival enjoyed trails, watched wildlife, and learned about recycling, energy conservation, hybrid cars and the environment.