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**Beacon Institute invites community to “Picnic in the Park” on May 30**

*Institute announces summer calendar of events*

BEACON, NY — Beacon Institute’s new Center for Environmental Innovation and Education (CEIE) has emerged from the rubble of a dilapidated former brick works structure to bring new life to Denning’s Point State Park. On Saturday, May 30, 2009, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., the Institute welcomes the community to bring their blankets and picnics for a “Picnic in the Park” on the grounds of the new building on Denning’s Point.

“Picnic in the Park” will feature live music from noted Hudson Valley musicians Kathleen Pemble, Jen Clapp, as well as a new band, Wicker Pinch – Patti Pelican, Terry Platz and Al Hemberger (of Motherlode fame) with *New York Times* science writer and mandolinist Andy Revkin.

Other activities will include a walking tour of Denning’s Point with Beacon historian Jim Heron and burial of a time capsule. Gensler architect and Cold Spring resident Oliver Schaper will offer a presentation on the “green” features of the new facility. Kids ages 6 and older can enjoy fish-printing activities with Beacon Institute’s Chief Education Officer, Liesl Hotaling.

Those planning to attend the event are asked to register online for this free event at [www.bire.org](http://www.bire.org). Attendees should bring their own picnics and non-alcoholic beverages, as well as blankets and/or lawn chairs to enjoy the day. The event will be held rain or shine. For the safety of other guests, please no pets (only service animals). Those who require special accommodations should register online and contact Institute staff in advance.

General public parking is at the foot of Denning’s Avenue, near the waste-water treatment station. Overflow parking is at the Metro-North train station.

Please be aware that due to NYS Parks regulations, guest vehicles are not allowed to drive onto park grounds. Be sure to wear comfortable footwear to enjoy the 10 minute walk into Denning’s Point from the public parking area or from the Metro-North train station via the Riverside Trail.

The new CEIE, formally opened in December 2008, is Beacon Institute’s primary education and outreach facility and home to SENSE IT, the Institute’s National Science Foundation-funded education and teacher professional development program. It is also the first home to REON (River and Estuary Observatory Network), a joint effort between the Institute, IBM and Clarkson University to create an integrated network of environmental sensors throughout the 315-mile length of the Hudson River. REON will monitor physical, chemical and biological changes in the river in real time.

“Beacon Institute has emerged as an institution that is changing the field of environmental science with REON, its education programs and the strength of its collaborative partnerships,” said John Cronin, Beacon Institute Director and Chief Executive Officer. “We are honored to play a lead role in advancing New York State’s environmental agenda while we work to understand and protect the mighty Hudson for current and future generations. The new Center for Environmental Innovation and Education is a key to meeting these goals.”

“The City of Beacon is proud of the role the Beacon Institute is playing in shaping our world both abroad and right here in the Hudson River Valley. The Institute is leading the way in environmental studies and green building design at a critical time for our planet,” said Beacon Mayor Steve Gold. “At the local community level, the Institute has partnered with us in everything from community building to waterfront development. The opening of the new center will mean greater opportunities for collaboration between the City and the Institute that shares our name.”

Designed by Gensler, a leading global design firm, the CEIE is an adaptive reuse of a late-nineteenth century 4,000 square foot masonry structure at Denning’s Point. Gensler’s design connects the Institute to the surrounding historical landscape, incorporating a host of sustainable strategies that have set the Institute on track for a high LEED certification.

“Green” technologies and strategies include:

- Redevelopment of a former abandoned industrial site
- Adaptive reuse of an existing building to create a new Park Visitor Center
- Natural ventilation towers
- Solar domestic hot water
- Geothermal energy source for all heating and cooling
- Composting toilets (the building has no sewage connection)
- “Green roof” of indigenous plants to reuse water and reduce heat absorption
- Permeable parking lot to allow rainwater to filter into ground below
- Bio-retention pond to filter additional run-off water before it returns to the watershed
- Electricity purchased through a program that supports clean and sustainable energy
- Research and planning aligned with LEED standards

“Gensler engaged in a ‘whole building’ design approach to integrate the green technologies, which was particularly important given the challenge of the building’s modest size and the intricacy of the technologies within,” added John Cronin. “We are thrilled with the new CEIE, which has been made possible by the tremendous support of Governor Paterson, the State of New York, Dyson Foundation, Dutchess County Executive William Steinhaus and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Of course, we remain grateful to Governor Pataki for his inspiration in creating the Institute.”

The CEIE is also a Visitor Center for Denning’s Point, which is part of New York’s Hudson Highlands State Park. From April 1 to November 30, the Park is open to visitors, who can visit the new CEIE as they walk the hiking trails from the Metro-North Beacon station and around Denning’s Point.

### Calendar of Events

*Please note: Some events require advance registration. Events held at CEIE involve a 10 minute walk into the park from the parking area or the Metro-North train station. Please wear comfortable footwear and be sure to allow additional time to enjoy the walk.*

#### **GALLERY at 199 Main St.: [Up River: Man-Made Sites of Interest on the Hudson for the Battery to Troy](#)**

**May-October 2009**

A portrait of the Hudson’s shores, Up River focuses on man-made sites rarely seen by those who travel along the river’s banks. Exhibit courtesy of The Center for Land Use Interpretation. Free. [Gallery hours](#).

#### **CEIE: [Picnic in the Park](#)**

**May 30, 2009, 11 a.m.- 3 p.m.**

Bring your own picnic to Denning’s Point and enjoy live music, walking tours of Denning’s Point talks about the CEIE’s green features and fish-printing activities for kids six and older. Free. [REGISTER ONLINE HERE](#).

#### **CEIE Film Series: Screening of [A Sea Change](#) in honor of World Ocean Day 2009**

**June 6, 2009, 1:00 p.m. screening; 3:00 p.m. live webcast panel discussion**

Join Beacon Institute for a screening of *A Sea Change*, the acclaimed documentary about ocean acidification by Hudson Valley filmmakers Barbara Ettinger and Sven Huseby. Plan to arrive at 12:30 p.m. to enjoy the 10 minute walk into the park for the 1 p.m. screening, followed by a 3 p.m. live webcast of panel discussion with the filmmakers and Beacon Institute's John Cronin. Free, however capacity is limited. **Seats available on a pre-registered basis only.** [REGISTER ONLINE HERE](#).

#### **CEIE Walk & Talk Series: Archeological and Historical Walk & Talk at Denning’s Point June 26, 2009, 12:00 p.m.**

Join Lucille Lewis Johnson, Ph.D., Professor of Anthropology at Vassar College, and Jim Heron, Project Historian at Beacon Institute, for a tour and discussion of Denning’s Point’s rich and historic landscape. Bring a bag lunch. Free. Online registration coming soon.

**CEIE Film Series: Screening of *The Power of Song***

July 16, 2009, 6:30 p.m.

Join Beacon Institute for a screening of Jim Brown’s documentary film, *The Power of Song*, about Pete Seeger. Free, however capacity is limited. **Seats available on a pre-registered basis only.** Online registration coming soon.

**GALLERY at 199 Main St.: Fishkill Watershed Day**

**July 25, 2009, time TBD**

Talk by Beacon Institute Project Historian Jim Heron at the gallery at 199 Main St. Free.

**GALLERY at 199 Main St.: A Day in the Life of ... Beacon**

**July 31, 2009, time TBD**

Walking tour of Denning’s Point with Jim Heron. Free.

**Dennings Point 5K Run**

**August 8, 2009, 9:00 a.m.**

More info to be posted as it becomes available.

**CEIE Film Series: Screening of *Flow***

August 20, 2009, 6:30 p.m.

Join Beacon Institute for a screening of Irena Salina’s documentary film, *Flow*, about the world water crisis – what many experts believe is the most important political and environmental issue of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Online registration coming soon.

**CEIE Walk & Talk Series: Habitats at Denning’s Point**

**August 28, 2009 at 12:00 p.m.**

Join Tanessa Hartwig, Assistant Director of the Conservation Ecology Program at Hudsonia, for a Walk and Talk of the vast and fascinating habitats of Denning’s Point. Bring a bag lunch. Free. Online registration coming soon.

For more information about CEIE programming and availability, please visit [www.bire.org/events](http://www.bire.org/events) or call (845) 838-1600.

***About Beacon Institute:***

Beacon Institute for Rivers and Estuaries, with offices in Beacon and Troy, New York, is a not-for-profit environmental research organization engaging scientists, engineers, educators and policy experts in collaborative work focusing on real-time monitoring of river ecosystems. It aims to make the Hudson Valley a global center for scientific and technological innovation that advances research, education and public policy regarding rivers and estuaries. [www.bire.org](http://www.bire.org)

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