

M. ROBERT MARKS
HORNADAY REMARKS
APRIL 11, 2010

At this time, I would like to present a token of appreciation to my project advisors, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Miller and Dr. Lloyd.

I would also like to present something to my advisor and mentor Mr. Patrick Adams. Thank you for guiding and supporting me through these projects.

And thank you to my Mom who has been my biggest supporter and my inspiration since birth. She taught me more about recycling, reusing and green energy than anyone. From an early age I can remember zip lock bags being washed out after use and drying on the kitchen sink! And I enjoyed every time she would take me into the field to install a met tower or to see the wind turbines where she played a major role in their sighting and installation.

Gandhi said:

“You must be the change you wish to see in the world.”

The Hornaday Award is more about “you” and “us” than “me”. I hope this ceremony –and my projects– have inspired you to help this planet we share. It was with your help that I am standing here today – and it will take all of us to change the world. I ask you to help others like you’ve helped me.

We have maybe 100 years in this life to learn, to have fun, to do something meaningful. As I’m going through life, having these experiences, I'm realizing how quickly 100 years pass by. About 21% of my life has already passed! My plan is to utilize the remaining 89% making a positive difference this world.

Kermit the Frog said: “it’s not easy being Green”.

This is so true! It takes thought and effort to consider the environment before acting. It can be quite confusing to figure out what is truly green and what is just a marketing ploy. And it can cost a little more money to buy environmentally friendly products or choose “sustainable” over “disposable”. One question everyone needs to ask is: “does the production and advancement of our one time use, disposable products and oil, justify the destruction of our planet?” Do the ends justify the means? Everyone knows the answer is no. Few stand up to say this is wrong and take action.

Believe me, I understand how very difficult it is to change the old way of doing things. It was ironic the Hornaday paperwork consisted of 23 pounds of paper and plastic when we have the technology to allow for electronic submission...

But we can –and- we should try!

For instance today, thanks to our caterer John Smith, we are using plates that will disintegrate in 60 days, cups that are made from plants and dinner ware is made from corn starch. While they are slightly more expensive than Styrofoam and plastic, they are so much better for the environment. And if we all start using them, the costs are bound to come down.

As you probably know by now, Raccoon Creek State Park is one of my favorite outdoor places in Southwestern Pennsylvania. It's a great place to visit if you want to reconnect with nature and enjoy the beauty of God's earth.

The 7,572-acre park features the beautiful 101-acre Raccoon Lake for fishing, boating and swimming. There's 17 miles of biking trails, 171 campsites, modern, rustic and group cabins, 44 miles of hiking trails 19.5 miles of backpacking trails (including a few Adirondacks), 400 picnic tables, 16 miles of equestrian trails and cross country skiing. And of course there's the 314-acre Wildflower Reserve which contains one of the most diverse stands of wildflowers in western Pennsylvania where over 700 species of plants have been identified.

Pick up one of the small brochures over by the Raccoon (he won't bite) and also learn about some of the awesome environmental education programs put on by Mr. Adams and his staff.

Baden-Powell said "for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear, the forest is at once a laboratory, a club and a temple."

You heard a bit about the deforestation of the Amazon in the opening. Sometimes we feel powerless when faced with problems that are so huge.

But we can make a difference in our own small way. We can plant a tree! Here are some benefits of a tree:

- Trees manufacture 5 pounds of pure oxygen per day.
- They consume CO₂ and collect pollutants from the air.
- They provide the cooling equivalent of 10 room-sized air conditioning units.
- They reduce fossil fuels used for heating & cooling.
- They Reduce noise pollution, create homes for birds and small animals, Enrich surrounding soil and prevent soil erosion.

Everyone today will be given a white pine sapling to take home and plant with your family. This is both for Arbor Day which is April 23 and for the Boy Scout 100th Anniversary Generation Connections program.

There are more details about Generations Connections in the green program supplement you received. In short, I am asking that you plant this tree with your family... knowing that this family tree will have a lifespan across generations, and will be there to provide for your children, long after you are gone. If you send me a picture of your family planting your tree, I will send you a Generation Connections patch! (*hold up patch*)

There's also a few interesting tidbits about the white pine in the green program supplement (thanks to Wikipedia). Like... did you know that one white pine needle has more vitamin C than a whole orange even with the peel on?

Lastly I am going to ask you to help me again. The work of conservation never ends and the projects started need to continue!

On Saturday, May 8 we will again be pulling garlic mustard – that pesky weed just keeps spreading! It will be from 9 AM to Noon at the Wildflower Reserve. More details are in the green program supplement.

THANK YOU for all that you've done to help me earn this award.

Thank you for all that you will do in the future to help our planet by conserving more and wasting less – and for helping me encourage other Scouts and Venturers to earn a Hornaday Award.