

friends say
RAISE
the roof
by patricia hvidtson

Students, donors, community members and corporate leaders recently identified the strengths of North House Folk School while participating in an independent philanthropic marketing study. They cited location, staff and instructors, the founding vision, mission and unique offerings, and the gift of community that North House brings to Cook County.

Study participants said the school's unique site on Grand Marais Harbor inspires students and teachers to learn together as they explore traditional crafts. Their studies result in new self understanding and meaningful relationships. They stated that the staff and instructors demonstrate a "can do" spirit that permeates the school. Continuing belief in and commitment to the school's founding vision result in a highly welcoming community that learns in a non-competitive manner. Many participants praised North House for its commitment to community in Cook County. One person went so far as to say, "North House is integral to Grand Marais!"

Participants also readily pointed to obstacles North House faces as it moves into its second decade: managing growth, having balanced financial resources, keeping the campus "folksy" but safe and appropriate for its students and community use, and finding administrative space in which its staff can work efficiently were echoed by participant after participant. There was almost magical synergy among participants whose quantitative answers identified North House's greatest needs:

- † Create better learning space by building a milling shop & classroom
- † Enhance school signage to welcome the public
- † Fix the dock for safety and waterfront improvement
- † Build a "green" building to house school library, student commons area, school store, administrative offices and multiple use conference rooms
- † Convert the asphalt area to a more environmentally friendly outdoor gathering space
- † Design and build a teaching kitchen that can also serve as a focal point for community gatherings

Having identified strengths and challenges for the adolescent school, participants went on to identify ways they might help the school grow in its stature as an exemplary folk school. Realizing that the school would need significant resources, community members articulated ways in which they could help. They offered to participate in service projects to help with construction, to increase their annual gifts to the school, to make North House Folk School's endowment a beneficiary of their estate plans, to consider major contributions to a capital campaign, to ponder a gift of real estate to North House and, for those over age 70, to consider making an IRA transfer to North House in 2007.

These were generous, thoughtful participants. They assessed the need and offered ways to help. I am sure they would welcome you to join them in taking action to raise the roof.

Patricia Hvidtson is a philanthropic consultant who works with non-profit organizations across the country to shape, conduct and manage development activities. This past spring, she conducted interviews with more than 30 North House supporters, friends and former students to identify the organization's needs and development capacities. She is also a former Swedish Dalmalning student.



for the love of place

by joan gardner-goodno



In September 2007, the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation awarded a \$50,000 grant to North House Folk School for the planned “Red Phase” of the School’s capital funding project. The Board of Directors at the Foundation saw a unique opportunity to live our mission by supporting a project that would promote education through life-long learning, contribute to a healthy and vibrant arts community and support important community and economic development on the North Shore. Of particular interest was the fact that North House students attend classes throughout the year and frequent area businesses.

Lloyd K. Johnson was born and raised on the shores of Lake Superior in Grand Marais, not far from the North House Folk School campus. Throughout his long life, passing in 2006 at the age of 97, Lloyd held an intense love of the North Shore area and in particular, the community of Grand Marais. In 1975 when Mr. Johnson founded the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation, the area of Cook County was one of the key service areas eligible to receive grant funding.

The mission of the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation is to “enhance educational opportunities in Cook County and to significantly improve the quality of life in the North Shore communities of Cook, Lake and southern St. Louis County through competitive grant making in the areas of Arts and Culture, Community and Economic Development, Education, the Environment and Social Welfare programs to qualified nonprofit organizations.”

North House Folk School is an organization on the move with a bright future ahead and we are excited to be a part of supporting that growth for all future students and the community.

Joan Gardner-Goodno is the executive director of the Lloyd K. Johnson Foundation. Joan has taken a number of courses at North House including Exploring the Norwegian Overtone Flute and Sweetgrass Basketry.



raising a CAMPUS proper

by Peter Henrikson



I arrived in the fall of 1997 after hearing about this idea called North House and it seemed like a good thing to get involved with. I missed the initial summer of coursework taught in what had been the abandoned Forest Service garages. With big plans, grant money, donated and reduced-cost materials and a bunch of willing volunteers, we began renovating the east garage into the current Red Building classroom. The Blue Building classroom was completed similarly in the following years.

In 2004, a study of North House course growth was completed and used to extrapolate course demand and space needs into the future. Simply put, North House was outgrowing its space. How could we justify having 16 timber framing students running power saws in the same classroom as a group of concentrating woodcarvers? We began work on a preliminary site plan based on that study and literally, as those drawings were being written up, a runaway truck demolished the Eckel Fish House on campus. Our focus turned away from expansion toward rebuilding. Rebuilding the Fish House allowed us to create additional classroom space while still providing space for Tommy's fishing operation. Once again we gathered volunteers.

The timber frame for the new Eckel Fish House was completed in a three-week period by a number of past timber frame students, local high school students, as well as others who just wanted to lend a hand. This Service Learning Project was a great way to get the timber frame cut as well as give those interested an opportunity to learn as well as share their knowledge, skills and ideas.

With the completion of the new Eckel Fish House, the Facility Committee returned to our preliminary site plan and North House's space needs. To address this concern, the Facility Committee has planned three phases of expansion on the current campus.

The first phase (Red Phase) of building expansion focuses on safety. This first phase is to construct a milling shop connected to the Red Building that will concentrate all the stationary power tools housed in this new building. The second phase (Green Phase) of expansion will focus on new construction to house school store, student commons, library and administrative services. The third phase (Blue Phase) will include improvements to the Blue Building including the creation of a new commercial teaching kitchen.

In the coming months, the Facility Committee will be looking into how the different phases of construction can be LEED-(Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified. Becoming LEED-certified is a statement that North House is melding traditional techniques and modern technology with thoughts toward the future.

Peter Henrikson was hired as North House Folk School's first program director and has been a lead timber-frame instructor since 1997. Peter served as chair of North House's Facility Committee from 2005 until 2007.

