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The Schuylkill Center Appoints New Executive Director!

Philadelphia, PA – January 13, 2006 – Yes, Dennis Burton has just been appointed Executive Director of The Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education (SCEE). But you're not likely to find him in his office much. Not if the past six months, while he served as Acting Executive Director, are any indication.

"Dennis is a real no-nonsense person who gets right down to business," said Harry Weiss, Chair of SCEE's Board of Trustees. "We've been very impressed with what Dennis and the staff have accomplished in the last six months. We are confident in his ability to lead this organization."

As a nonprofit organization specializing in environmental education, SCEE focuses primarily on educating urban youth and instilling a love for the environment in residents throughout the Philadelphia area. Its grounds are utilized for the conservation, demonstration, and scientific study of native plants and wildlife. In addition, visitors are drawn by four miles of interpretive trails and 340 acres that allow them to experience every kind of natural habitat indigenous to Southeastern Pennsylvania.

The Board of Trustees asked Mr. Burton to step into the role of Acting Executive Director this past May when Tracy R. Kay ended his eight-year tenure at the head of the organization.

"My charge from the Board involved two key points," said Mr. Burton. "First, get the Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic opened again. Second, improve relations with our immediate neighbors." He has wasted no time.

Over the summer, Mr. Burton led efforts to spearhead a new, cooperative effort of local civic associations and concerned citizens that led to the creation of the Schuylkill Center Community Council. The group is dedicated to improving the ecological vitality of the Schuylkill River watershed, and hopes to leverage its strength as a coalition to make headway on key community issues that have been stalled over the past decades.

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SCEE's Executive Director

For example, on behalf of SCEE, Mr. Burton has coordinated with a group of community representatives and PECO Energy, an Exelon Corporation, to discuss the creation of a native meadow on a portion of the right-of-way under local power lines.

“PECO has never had a group approach them about native meadows before,” said Mr. Burton. “It’s because The Schuylkill Center has taken the lead that we are at the table.”

No less exciting has been the reopening of The Schuylkill Center’s Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic.

“Over 100 people came out to celebrate our Grand Reopening!” exclaimed Rick Schubert, SCEE’s new Director of Wildlife Rehabilitation. Schubert was hired in mid-September, and will report directly to Mr. Burton.

“A few years ago, you would not have seen this,” said former Board of Trustees member William Mifflin, enthusiastically describing the large crowd at the Clinic’s grand reopening party. The Pennsylvania Game Commission, which regulates all rehabilitation efforts in the Commonwealth, is also very pleased with the Clinic’s reopening, as the rehabilitation and wildlife information service the Clinic provides is invaluable and unique in this area.

Next on the agenda for Mr. Burton will be a focused effort to implement changes to the education program so that SCEE may reassert its leadership in the environmental education field. Do not miss out on SCEE’s many Winter Programs. The Schuylkill Center is located at 8480 Hagy’s Mill Road, Philadelphia, PA 19128. Visit www.schuylkillcenter.org or call (215) 482-7300, ext. 110 for more information!

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