



The Norman Bird Flyer

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Fall 1996

Preparing for the 21st Century

2,500 surveys to Sanctuary members and to random households on Aquidneck Island. Resulting in over 400 responses.

Before summarizing the results, I would like to say thank you to all who took the time to share their thoughts and ideas in an interview, focus group or by written survey. The

information gathered from your responses has been invaluable in assisting us with our planning for the coming years and is presented below.

Major Environmental Issues

The major environmental issues, trends and challenges mentioned most frequently by all of the respondents questioned were:

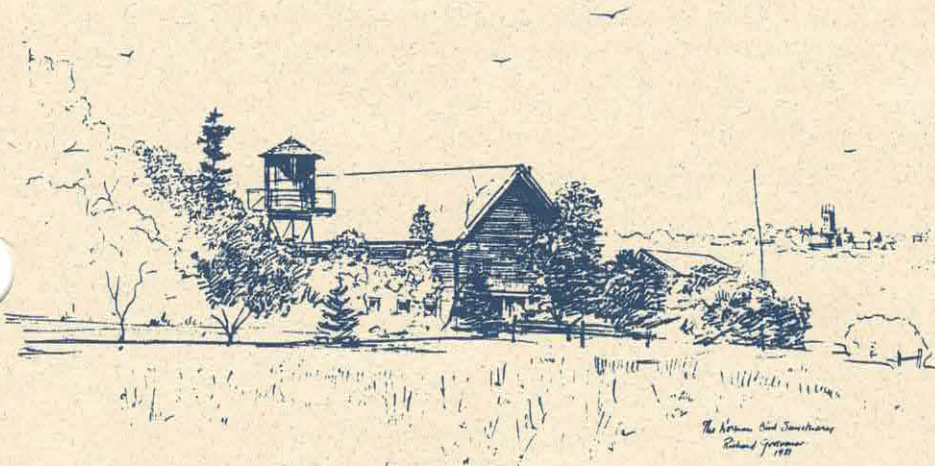
- Water quality
- Preservation of open space/habitat
- Environmental awareness and concern
- Waste management

Land preservation was considered to be the

(article continued on page 2)

In January of this year, the Friends of the Norman Bird Sanctuary launched a strategic planning process to prepare for the 21st Century. This article is intended to serve as a status report and to fill you in on some of the findings that we have uncovered to date.

The strategic planning process thus far has included a market research component to provide information for our decision making. Since January, that information was gathered by conducting 23 personal interviews with representatives from government, business and non-profit organization, and holding 2 focus groups - one with environmental groups and one with human service organizations. We also distributed



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most critical issue to key informant interviewees. Clean water ranked the highest in both member and community surveys.

Perceptions of NBS

From the responses to questions regarding overall perceptions of the Norman Bird Sanctuary, we (happily) concluded that the Sanctuary is generally well respected in the community by other environmental organizations and by the consumer. Below we share some of the responses we received:

"One of the best (nature centers) in Rhode Island"

"Gorgeous! One of the most beautiful places around. One of the most beautiful landscapes by the ocean up and down the East Coast."

"Fills an important niche that would other wise be a void in this area."

Member Satisfaction

Survey findings also indicate that member satisfaction with nine key aspects of NBS is extremely high. The rank order is presented here:

- Preservation of habitats
- Membership cost
- Accessibility
- Helpfulness and knowledge of staff
- Membership benefits
- Programs in general
- Environmental advocacy
- Program fees
- Activities and attractions compared to other groups

So, what's the bad news? Well, really none. From this process we have learned that we don't have to make major changes to survive. Though, with some fine-tuning the Sanctuary could thrive! Among concerns expressed included the cost of our programs. In fact, remarks regarding cost was the most frequently stated concern in all responses to open-ended survey questions.

Other suggested areas for improvement include diversifying our audience to include seniors and people of diverse economic means, improving our marketing and communications and improving our physical facility.

Program Ideas For NBS

Both member and community surveys indicated a higher interest in activities for adults rather than for children or families, although editorial comments indicate the opposite. It also appears that visits are of greater importance to our members than programs. This is reinforced by the findings that 82% of the responding members attend an NBS program only 1-3 times per year. Internal data further reinforces this, since there were 7,798 visitors and 5,793 program attendees in 1996 and 9,962 visitors and 5,972 program attendees in 1995.

Of the choices provided in the surveys, the program topics of most interest to members were:

- Natural Science
- Outdoor Recreation
- Global Issues: How they relate to daily life

Interest for other programs offered dropped off sharply. They included: human element, nature arts & crafts, agricultural history, land stewardship, environmental advocacy and eco-tourism.

All of this information (and much more) was distributed to our Board, staff and volunteer committees in preparation for a retreat which was held in July. During the retreat the participants articulated a vision, goals and priorities for the next 5 years.

During the coming months we will be drafting the actual strategic plan. The new plan should be ready to be implemented at the beginning of the new fiscal year which begins in April of 1997. This will be the beginning of the "New Trail" into the 21st century.

Larry Taft
Executive Director



A SPECIAL THANK YOU!

Our old way of making sales in the Barn Owl Shop entailed writing up a sales slip for each and every sale, no matter how small. Imagine a whole bus load of kids who each want to buy a bug box or an earth marble and they had 10 minutes to do it!

Thanks to the generous donation by Flynn Seafood, Co. of a brand new cash register those days are gone. Now we make sales in seconds rather than minutes and keep track of our inventory at the same time! Thank you to Flynn Seafood, Co. for improving our efficiency 1,000%!!!

New at the Harvest Fair!

A new test of skill will be added to the Harvest Fair this year. Grab a partner and get ready to enter the two-person sawing contest. Sawing against the clock, the team will pay an entry fee (yet to be determined) and the fastest sawing team wins the cash prize! The more entries the bigger the prize, so get all your friends to enter! Call the Sanctuary office at 846-2577 to register for the competition or for more details.

There are many other new things planned for this year's fair, including a Monkey Bridge made just for the younger kids and lots more. We are always in need of volunteers, baked goods for our Country Store and entries for our Home & Garden competitions.

So, start your fall off right and come be a part of the Norman Bird Sanctuary's Harvest Fair!

A Brief Explanation...

In our survey responses several people expressed confusion about the Bird Sanctuary's relation to the Third Beach Club and Paradise Farm House. We hope this summary will help explain things better.

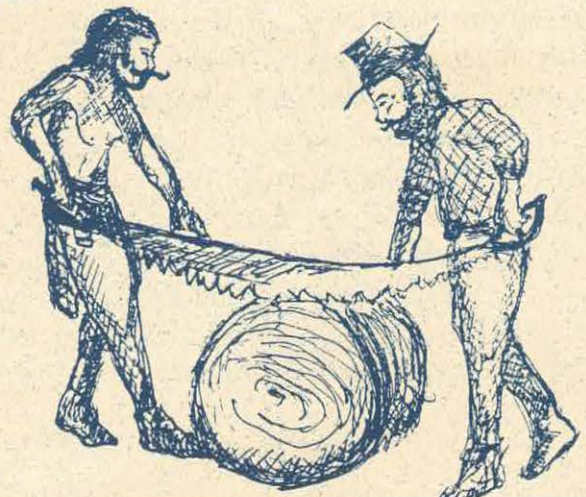
Upon her death on November 11, 1949, Mable Norman Cerio created several trusts, among them were:

- **The Norman Bird Sanctuary Trust** as a 235 acre preserve "for the propagation, preservation and protection of birds...and for the enjoyment of the public." The Sanctuary Trust has since grown to a thriving 450 acre wildlife refuge.

- **The Paradise Farm House Trust** which consists of 6 acres "for (Mabel's) daughter to occupy...during her life and thereafter to allow her (descendants) to occupy...until a period of twenty one years after Mabel's death when said trust shall cease and...the property will be conveyed to the Norman Bird Sanctuary Trust." The barn and other out-buildings that the Sanctuary uses as a visitor center are actually part of the Paradise Farm House Trust.

- **The Beach Property Trust** is a 23 acre property "to operate for bathing and parking purposes." This property includes the Third Beach Club and the small cottages right on the beach. Twenty one years after her daughter's death, this property will be transferred to her descendants free and clear of any trust. The Sanctuary does not own or manage the Third Beach property. The Sanctuary's only relationship to this property is that it subleases a quarter acre upon which is located a small cape house that the Sanctuary owns and uses as the director's residence.

As we reported in previous newsletters, the Friends of the Norman Bird Sanctuary is still trying to resolve this issue of how the buildings at Paradise Farm might be saved and to assure that we continue to have space for our office and educational functions in the years to come.



Environmental Programs

Preschoolers with Parents

Ages: 3-5 years

Day: Wednesday

Dates: Session 1 - Oct. 9, 16, 23 & 30

Session 2 - Nov. 6, 13, 20 & Dec. 4

Time: 1:00 - 2:00 pm

Fee: \$30 Non-members per session

\$25 Members per session

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

This one-hour program is a gentle and fun way to introduce your preschool age child to the wonders of our natural world. We'll explore nature through our five senses with songs, crafts, hikes and also by studying the plants and animals of the many habitats here at the Sanctuary. An enjoyable time for all. Please be sure to dress for the weather.

Fledglings (No parent required)

Ages: 4 - 5 years

Day: Wednesdays

Dates: Session 1 - Oct. 9, 16, 23 & 30

Session 2 - Nov. 6, 13, 20, & 30

Time: 10:00 - 11:30 am

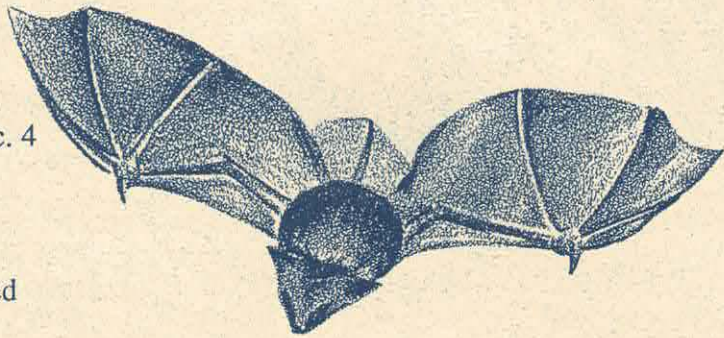
Fee: \$32 Non-member per Session

\$27 Member per Session

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

It's time for the older preschool age child to spread their wings and join our teacher/naturalist for an hour and a half of nature study without a parent. This class helps build confidence and social skills while spending some quality time learning about nature. If your child has already participated in our preschool with parent program or if this is your 4 or 5 year old's first time at the Sanctuary, it's a great way for your child to learn about nature in a safe and caring environment. Please be sure to dress for the weather.



Batty About Bats

Ages: Grade K - 4

Date: Saturday, November 9

Time: 1:00 - 3:00 pm

Fee: \$6 Non-member \$4 Member

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

Did you know that bats are one of man's best friends? They help control populations of insects that bug us! Each bat can eat over 1,000 insects every night! Learn about the fascinating world of bats and how we can help them. Come prepared with appropriate clothes for hiking. Juice or hot cocoa will be provided.

Natural Holiday Crafts

Ages: Grades K - 4

Date: Saturday, December 14 or 21

Time: 1:00 - 3:00 pm

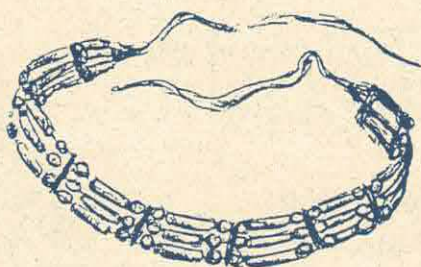
Fee: \$10 Non-member, \$8 Member

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

'Tis the season! Some of the most treasured gifts of the holiday season are those that are handmade by a child. What could be more natural and fun than to make this year's giving the gifts from nature. Using natural materials, children will be instructed step-by-step toward creating three beautiful gifts or ornaments

(Programs Continued)



Native American Crafts Indian Choker & Corn Husk Wreath

Ages: K - 4th Grade

Date: Sunday, October 20

Time: 2:00 - 3:00 pm *or* 3:00 - 4:00 pm

Fee: \$12 Non-member, \$10 Member

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

Adding to the success of our Native American week of Summer Camp, Julie Jennings (Strong Woman) will be teaching this creative children's class. The choker the braves will be making is made with colorful pony and bone beads. When finished it will look like an authentic choker worn by many Native American braves. For the squaws, Strong Woman will teach them how to make a cornhusk wreath. Using corn husks with the colors of Indian corn, children will construct a simple, yet very attractive wreath appropriate for Fall!

Fall Bird Migration Hike

Date: Saturday, October 19th

Time: 2:00 - 3:00 pm *or* 3:00 - 4:00 pm

Fee: \$6 Non-member, \$4 Member

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

FAMILY PROGRAM

Bird migration is one of the most mysterious and fascinating things in nature. How do they do it? Birds as small as hummingbirds fly great distances. Join education specialist, Dana Chrostowski, to learn more about the exciting lifestyles of our feathered friends. The lecture will be followed by an autumn hike. Please be sure to dress for the weather.

Winter Woodland Walk

Date: Sunday, December 15

Time: 1:00 pm

Fee: \$10 Non-Member Family

\$ 8 Member Family

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

FAMILY PROGRAM

Join us for a scenic, peaceful walk in the midst of the busy holiday season. Learn about the winter habits of animal friends and how to identify trees and plants in this time of rest. Hot cocoa & tea will be provided. Dress for the weather.

Fall Foliage Walk

Date: Sunday, October 13th

Time: 1:00 pm

Fee: \$6 Non-Member, \$4 Member

Pre-registration and pre-payment required

FAMILY PROGRAM

Red Maples, Black Gums, Cherries, Beeches and Oaks are ablaze with vibrant colors of autumn. Join a Dede Forker, Education specialist for a fall foliage hike and learn about some of the subtle changes occurring this time of year.

Astronomical Society Viewing Dates at NBS

September 27th at 7:00 pm

October 8th at 6:00 pm

November 15th at 6:00 pm

December 20th at 6:00 pm

You don't need a telescope to join Astronomical Society members as they explore the fall and winter skies!

**SPECIAL FAMILY
PROGRAMS**

**Pohqitaqunk Keeswush Nikommo
"The Harvest Moon Festival"**

**Saturday, November 2nd
12:00 - 4:00 pm**



"For Algonquian Indians of New England every full moon was the occasion of a ceremony or festival of thanks. The Harvest Moon Festival, which is just one of five Thanksgiving ceremonies held throughout the year for our people, was the largest of all the festivals giving thanks for the bounty that Mother Earth provided."



History says, that when the Indians sat down with the Pilgrims to celebrate their 'first American Thanksgiving', to my ancestors, it was just another day of thanks, honoring the harvest the gardens, the fields and the meadows."

Strong Woman



Come and celebrate the Harvest Moon Festival with the descendants of the Indians of the "First Thanksgiving." The feast features Strong Woman from the Aquidneck Indian Council and her friends. Come hear traditional singing and drumming provided by Red Wing, sample Indian foods and games for the children. The fee for the program for adults is \$10.00 (non-member), \$6.00 (member), children are \$8.00 (non-member), \$4.00 (member) and under 3 is free.

**AUTUMN NIGHT HIKE WITH
NEWPORT CHILDRENS THEATRE**

**October 18th & 19th
and
October 25th & 26th**

7:00 - 8:30 pm



Bats and owls fly through the darkness. Foxes and skunks skulk through the night covered forests and fields. The nighttime is for dining and these animals have the instincts and the nocturnal senses for finding a necessary meal to help them survive. Come join the Sanctuary staff and the wonderfully talented actors of the Newport Children's Theatre for a hike through the forest on an October night. The NCT will cleverly interpret the animals and their adaptations bring alive the nature of the night. Please dress warmly, wear comfortable shoes and if you bring a flashlight please have a red filter covering. See you there! For grades K-5.

*The fee is \$8.00 for non-members and \$6.00 members.
Pre-registration and pre-payment are required.*

**Priorities for the Friends of the NBS
1997 - 2002**

Habitats

- * Preserve lands of the NBS Trust and other habitats owned and/or managed by Friends.
- * Develop collaborative opportunities to protect contiguous open space, specifically Third Beach should it become available.
- * Balance visitation and educational programming at the NBS Trust. Do not allow recreational activities on NBS Trust lands.
- * Encourage other organizations to conduct appropriate research on NBS Trust lands and explore research options by Friends of NBS.

Education

- * Evaluate children's programming. Try to meet needs of adults.
- * Expand off-site educational programming.
- * Foster environmental awareness more.
- * Enhance animal displays, in a limited fashion, to support educational programming.

Advocacy

- * Be a more proactive advocate for issues which relate to the missions of the NBS Trust and the Friends of the NBS.

Infrastructure

- * Manage NBS Trust lands under contract with the Trust. Develop and carry out all other activities, e.g. education programs, advocacy, land acquisition as Friends of the NBS.
- * Assure adequate physical facilities and equipment to carry out our vision.
- * Be a better employer and volunteer organization through training, compensation and reward systems, support and enabling.
- * Strengthen fund development activities and build an endowment to finance vision.
- * Collaborate more with diverse organizations to achieve vision.
- * Strengthen Board, committee and staff performance.
- * Ensure that our image and level of visibility reflects our desired identity as a local organization.

Goals to Accomplish our Vision: 1997-2002

PROGRAM GOALS

- Goal #1: Preserve and protect habitats.
- Goal #2: Enhance our educational programming.
- Goal #3: Strengthen our role in advocacy and public policy.

INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS

- Goal #4: Strengthen board, volunteer and staff operations.
- Goal #5: Assure adequate facilities to carry out our vision.
- Goal #6: Secure sufficient dollars to finance our vision.
- Goal #7: Enhance our image and visibility.

Based upon the market research and the retreat in July, the following vision, priorities and goals were adopted by the Friends of the Norman Bird Sanctuary Board of Directors at its regular meeting on September 10, 1996.

**Friends of the Norman Bird Sanctuary
Vision for the Future: 1997 - 2002**

Preserving and protecting habitats

We preserve and manage the habitats owned by the Mabel Norman Cerio Trust and manage other habitats as deemed appropriate by the Friends of the NBS Board of Directors. We preserve and manage these habitats both for the benefit of the environment and for the enjoyment of people.

We focus on protecting contiguous open space. To this end, the Friends of the NBS might purchase or otherwise acquire open space through independent and/or collaborative efforts. We believe that preserving Third Beach as open space, with access for NBS programs, is a priority for Aquidneck Island.

Providing educational programs

We provide educational programs, independently and through collaborations, both on-site and off-site, and as part of the curriculum of public and private schools. We develop educational programs specifically for children, families, adults and seniors.

Our on-site educational programs are designed with the preservation of the NBS in mind. We provide limited animal displays (rehabilitation, wildlife and domestic) to support and complement our educational programs, provide alternatives to visitors who do not wish to hike extensively, and better manage traffic on the land.

We encourage other organizations to use NBS as a site for their research. The Friends may also devise research programs which are in keeping with the NBS Trust and other lands that the Friends might acquire or manage.

Encouraging environmental awareness

Through our programs, communications, and advocacy, we encourage environmental awareness on the part of our members, users, and other community members.

We advocate for appropriate public policy as it relates to the mission of the NBS and the Sanctuary's ability to carry out its mission. We approach advocacy proactively not just reactively. We participate in the development of a statewide environmental agenda.

Operating effectively

Through our actions, programs and operations, we are viewed as a professional and accomplished grassroots organization which is user friendly, inclusive, community oriented, and innovative.

We are a local organization, targeting Aquidneck Island, Newport County and nearby Massachusetts. We are highly visible and respected within this local area and we are well respected regionally by those who know us.

We operate in a fiscally sound manner. Our membership and fund development programs reflect our values and are conducted in a professional and friendly manner. An endowment fund helps assure adequate funds to achieve our vision.

We recruit, train, support and reward our staff and volunteers well. Our compensation program is competitive within the local not-for-profit marketplace and we attract and retain sufficient highly qualified staff to carry out the organization's mission and vision. Our board and committees provide appropriate leadership and support for mission and vision.

Our physical plant, designed with our historical link in mind, is user friendly, professional, and serves our staff and users well. We have sufficient and appropriate equipment to do our work.

(Programs continued)

Birding at Trustom Pond

Date: Saturday, October 19

Time: Meet at Trustom Pond lot at 8:00 am
(optional car-a-van leaves NBS at 7:15 am)

Fee: \$ 8 Non-member
\$ 12 Member

Pre-registration and pre-payment required
ADULT PROGRAM

Join NBS Director, Larry Taft for a morning of birdwatching at one of Rhode Island's best birding hot-spots and at a time when the greatest diversity of waterfowl are present. On this trip you can expect to see dabbling and diving ducks including: teal, pintails, wigeons, canvasbacks, scaup, buffleheads and much, much, more. Rain date will be October 20th.

Wild Mushroom Walk

Date: Saturday, October 12

Time: 1:15 pm

Fee: \$6 Non-Member, \$4 Member

Pre-registration and pre-payment required
ADULT PROGRAM

Mushroom identification can be fun, but often very confusing. Join Dr. Roger Goos, URI mycologist and long-time mushroom walk guide to learn about and how to identify the many different types of mushrooms and fungi found locally and the important role they have in our ecosystem. Please dress for the weather and wear comfortable shoes.

Dream Catcher

Date: Saturday, November 10

Time: 1:00 - 3:00 pm

Fee: \$18 Non-Member, \$15 Member

Pre-registration and pre-payment required
ADULT PROGRAM

Native Americans believe that the spirits are always sending messages. These messages come to us in the form of dreams. Dream catchers are designed to catch and hold the bad dreams and let only the good dreams come through. Traditionally it was to protect the newborn from bad dreams. Today, it has evolved into gift for all. Join Healing Woman in constructing a dream catcher using grape vine hoops and will be adorned with feathers, turquoise beads, bone and silver to create a natural work of art. (Thank you to Strong Woman for this and other illustrations in this newsletter).



**Join Us Each Sunday Morning
at 8:00 am for a
Free Guided Birdwalk
(through mid December)**

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Unless stated otherwise, pre-registration is required for programs. Fees for programs requiring registration must be paid in advance by cash, check or Mastercard/Visa. Registration can be made by mail or by phone (with credit card payments). **Fees will be refunded in full up to five days before the program. With less than five days notice, fees will be refunded only if you can be replaced with a person from the waiting list.** Please use the registration form if registering by mail.

HARVEST FAIR



OCTOBER 5 & 6

10 AM - 5 PM, RAIN OR SHINE
\$4/ADULT, \$1/CHILD

Hay & Pony Rides • Face Painting
Crafts • Food • Contests
Home & Garden Growers Competition
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY
583 THIRD BEACH ROAD MIDDLETOWN, RI 846-2577



Home & Garden Competition

AT THE

Harvest Fair

October 5 & 6

Norman Bird Sanctuary

The Spirit of Competition

The Home & Garden Competition is open to amateur gardeners, bakers, canners, cooks, and crafters of all ages.

- Each entry must be grown or cooked solely by the contestant.
- Each contestant may enter a category only once.
- Entries must be registered at the Home & Garden booth by 10am on the day of judging, and must be removed between 5 and 5:30pm on Sunday, October 6.
- All entries should be labelled discreetly with the contestant's name, address, phone number and competition category.
- Young grower or young baker contestants must be 14 years old or younger.
- For judging, all food entries will be sold at the Country Store. Proceeds benefit the Sanctuary.

Produce

registration: Saturday, 9-10 am

judging: Saturday, 10:30 am

- Best Single Fruit
- Best Single Vegetable
- Best Collection
- Biggest Pumpkin
- Most Unusual Vegetable
- Young Grower—Best Produce

Flowers

registration: Saturday, 9-10 am

judging: Saturday, 10:30 am

- Best Single Rose
- Best Single Dahlia
- Best Fresh Arrangement
- Best Dried Arrangement
- Young Grower—Best Arrangement

Food

registration: Saturday, 9-10 am

judging: Saturday, 10:30 am

- Best Apple Pie
- Best Preserves
- Best Quick Bread and Muffins
- Best Cookies & Dessert Bars
- Young Baker—Baked Goods

NOW ON
SUNDAY!

Scarecrow Contest

registration: Saturday, 9-10 am &

Sunday 9-10 am

judging: Sunday, 10:30 am

Spook the crows with your original creation. Straw for stuffing will be available at the fair. A great group or family activity!