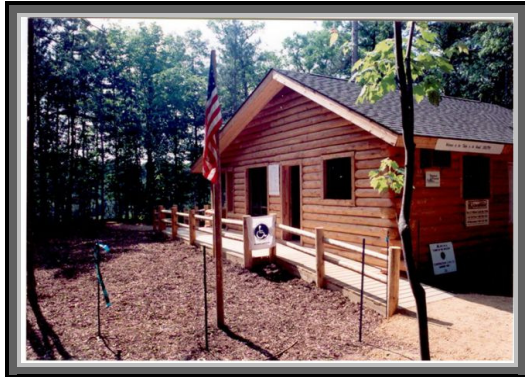


# New Horizons Un-Limited

Serving Our Community Members with Disabilities Since 1994

## Accessible Cabins Openings and Dedications Wisconsin State Parks

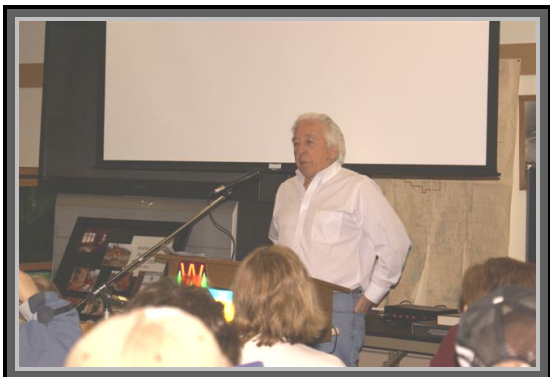


Mirror Lake State Park Accessible Cabin - 1991

In 1990, Arthur Miller, founder of New Horizons Un-Limited, became involved with the design of the first accessible cabin for people with disabilities for the Wisconsin State Parks at Mirror Lake State Park campground in the Wisconsin Dells area. Looking back to this time, he remembers, "We believed this was only the beginning and that five more should be built throughout the state." Constructed by the Telephone Pioneers of America, volunteers for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, this first project became the road map for future cabins. The cabin was built through the contributions of design, materials, furnishings, and volunteer labor provided by the Pioneers, the local Friends of State parks group and other community volunteers.

It was while involved on this first cabin Art Miller formed the idea for New Horizons Un-Limited, a non-profit organization for people with disabilities. He believed if people with disabilities were to be included in access to life opportunities, they needed to form a group that acting together, they could impact their collective futures. Three more cabins followed built by the Telephone Pioneers using the original design. Then in 2001, the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Accessibility Coordinator, Dotti Krieger, approached Art Miller to assist in standardizing the accessibility concept of the plans for the DNR's new "Cabin in the Woods" initiative. Through collaboration with the DNR, New Horizons Un-Limited, Miller Engineering Information Technologies Group and Strass-Maguire & Associates architects, they set forth a design directive for future Wisconsin state park accessible cabins. In 2004, the 5th accessible cabin, developed from these concept plans, was built at High Cliff State Park near Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. "The history of the Cabin in the Woods program is a tribute to the people of Wisconsin," Krieger said.

These initial cabins inspired the Friends Group of the J.M. Kohler-Terry Andrae State Parks near Sheboygan and the Kiwanis Club of Westosha-Salem for the Richard Bong State Recreation Area near Burlington, Wisconsin. In 2006, the groups approached the design collaboration team for assistance on their respective 6th and 7th cabins for the Wisconsin State Parks. In April 2008, New Horizons Un-Limited was very excited to announce and celebrate the completion and dedications of not one, but these two, new accessible cabins at their respective state parks.



At the cabin openings, Art Miller said, "What had started as a seed of an idea has grown now to include the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> cabins for the Wisconsin State Parks. The original cabins have become the "Tom Sawyer's fence" that others have come to continue and expand upon. It has been particularly rewarding to see each group, led by people who had knowledge of disability, dream of expanding the vision of including people with disabilities in the outdoor experience." These last two cabins were led by individuals with construction experience and achieved their dreams in a way similar to the first cabin in the state parks, through perseverance and tremendous community support and effort for which we are very grateful.

## As We Look to the Future. . .

Through these two new cabins, the Cabin-in-the-Woods project has been indeed as Dottie Krieger said, “a tribute to the people of Wisconsin” and community effort. The project, from the beginning, set forth to use quality materials, products and craftsmanship to build cabins that would endure far into the future.

Each team reviewed prior cabins for trouble spots in construction, methods and materials, accessibility issues, and the needs and concerns of those who have used the cabins. Improvements in the underlying design and integration of the sleeping porch were made to accommodate more people through the camping season. Consideration was made for materials that would offer the cleanest safest environment to reduce allergens. The most recent cabins have the benefit of new products, levers, and controls designed for universal use and camper tested materials for flooring, shower walls and decking materials. From the beginning continued the directive to use the most energy efficient equipment, quality materials, products and craftsmanship possible, while maintaining cost efficiency with so much dependent on donations.

New Horizons Un-Limited will continue to assist where needed to outreach to people with disabilities about accessibility in the state parks to ensure that all people will be able to access the Wisconsin State Parks without barriers. New Horizons Un-Limited remains committed to assisting in the Cabin-in-the-Woods project throughout the State of Wisconsin. We are also committed to encouraging other states to learn of the Wisconsin Cabin-in-the-Woods example and expand the program across the nation.

As we look to the future, we will encourage continued development of accessibility solutions, finding green building products, creating environmentally friendly, sustainable buildings and integrating the use of renewable energy sources while managing cost and continuing to encourage the building of quality enduring cabins.

For more information, contact us at: New Horizons Un-Limited Inc

Post Office Box 510034 • Milwaukee, WI 53203

Questions? E-mail: [horizons@new-horizons.org](mailto:horizons@new-horizons.org)

Visit us on the web: [www.new-horizons.org](http://www.new-horizons.org)