

CONCORDIA LANGUAGE VILLAGES’ “WALDSEE BIOHAUS” FIRST U.S. BUILDING TO RECEIVE GERMANY’S WORLD-CLASS ENERGY CERTIFICATION

**BUILDING SETS GLOBAL STANDARD AND EXCEEDS U.S.
GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL’S HIGHEST ENERGY CRITERIA**

BEMIDJI, MN. (JULY 20, 2006) — “Waldsee BioHaus,” a new environmental living center at Concordia Language Villages, is the first building in North America to be certified as a “Passive House,” one of the world’s toughest energy standards, by Germany’s Passivhaus Institute. Waldsee BioHaus significantly exceeds platinum LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) energy criteria – the U.S. Green Building Council’s highest building ranking.

“Waldsee BioHaus is a remarkable accomplishment, a singular learning opportunity, and a tangible example of the Passivhaus’ highly efficient use of energy,” said Franz-Georg Elpers, press secretary of the Passivhaus Institute in Germany. “Considering the environmental impact of our lifestyle choices, our generation has a responsibility for pushing the limits to achieve affordable sustainable building designs that assure a comfortable living environment.”

Germany’s *Passivhaus* standard is the world’s leading criteria in energy efficient construction. Waldsee BioHaus, designed by Stephan Tanner, INTEP, LLC, will use 85 percent less energy than comparable U.S. buildings by using innovative and broadly applicable, insulation, heat recovery, air exchange systems and high-quality windows and doors with low-e glazing.

As part of *Waldsee*, America’s German Language Village, Waldsee BioHaus serves as a living and learning facility where students and visitors are immersed in the German language, culture and the study of sciences through world-class sustainable design. Waldsee BioHaus was created to spark debate on environmental issues, offer young people a one-of-a-kind experience and to showcase German innovation and industry-leading environmental practices.

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“What is truly revolutionary about Waldsee BioHaus is its use as an innovative, natural extension of our experiential, community-based approach to language and cultural immersion,” said Dan Hamilton, Dean of the German language village. “Waldsee BioHaus fosters an exciting exchange regarding environmental education between the United States and the German-speaking world and offers a modern German perspective on the world. *Waldsee* villagers will cook, clean, play and learn in this amazing facility – there is nothing like it anywhere.”

Located on Turtle River Lake outside of Bemidji, MN, the two-story, 5,000 square feet building increases living comfort significantly in terms of air quality and lack of temperature fluctuations because of its energy efficient construction. Waldsee BioHaus allows visitors to measure its vital signs—all in German and all in metric, the world standard outside the United States—through the use of extensive sensors in the entire building and a mechanical room that showcases the building’s technology. Interactive features include a building management system that monitors the building’s vital signs in real time and online (www.waldseebiohaus.com), as well as small scale hands-on building components that illustrate how the building works.

Waldsee BioHaus was funded in part with a grant by the *Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt* (DBU), the world’s largest foundation dedicated to environmental practice, education and construction. It is the first time that the foundation has awarded such a grant in North America.

“Waldsee BioHaus is an innovative means to convey aspects of German and European environmental protection to young Americans. It will forge a transatlantic green bridge between the two continents,” said Dr. Fritz Brickwedde, DBU Secretary General. “Waldsee BioHaus is a world-class platform for environmental and cross-cultural education connecting new generations of Europeans and Americans about our common future.”

Additional funding for Waldsee BioHaus and its programs was supplied by the Cherne Foundation, Home Depot Foundation and the Kresge Foundation. Design and construction partners include Amvic, BASF, INTEP, LLC, Optiwin, REHAU AG & Co. (plus REHAU North America), Siemens AG, Sto AG and Emory Knoll Farms.

ABOUT WALDSEE AND CONCORDIA LANGUAGE VILLAGES

In 1961, *Waldsee*, Concordia’s German Language Village, was the first of 14 Language Villages sponsored by Concordia College of Moorhead, MN, a private, four-year liberal arts institution. Concordia Language Villages is accredited by the North Central Association on Accreditation and School Improvement and the American Camp Association. *Waldsee* offers programs in German language and culture for beginning through advanced levels. The German Village is devoted exclusively to the training of young people, and people of all ages, beginning through advanced levels, to become linguistically and culturally proficient in German. *Waldsee*’s innovative curriculum materials are distributed across North America.

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Concordia Language Villages, established in 1961, annually welcomes over 13,000 participants world-wide to its language and culture immersion programs for youth ages 7 to 18, adults and families. These programs include participants from all 50 states in the United States and 36 countries. The Villages offer one-, two-, and four-week living and learning experiences some which award high school and college credit, year-round week and weekend programs for school groups, adults and families. Special seminars are available to teachers to learn how to adapt immersion techniques to the classroom setting. The Villages also are available for private workshop, seminar and conference rentals.

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Opening Event: August 11 • More information available at www.waldseebiohaus.com.

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