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for Fall 2006



Environmental Education Council of Ohio

Volume XXV

Number 2

Summer/Fall 2006

Announcing Call for Presenters

40th Annual EECO Conference

"A Golden Guide to a Healthy Planet"

April 26, 27, 28, and 29, 2007

Aullwood Audubon Center, Dayton, Ohio



EECO is pleased to announce a Call for Presenters for the 2007 Annual Conference at the **Aullwood Audubon Center and Farm** near Dayton, April 26-29, 2007. A special professional development forum will be held on Thursday. The conference theme will be divided into four strands. Our stakeholders include teachers, naturalists, residential camp personnel, resource professionals, administrators, board members, parks personnel, and students, who participate in environmental education in both formal and non-formal settings, in both non-profit and for-profit organizations.



STRANDS

A Golden Guide to a Sustainable School, Home and Office

- ☞ Introduce us to any activity that will help us apply principles of sustainability to our daily life
- ☞ Possible topics include: recycling, eliminating use of chemicals, reducing waste, using habitats for learning, storm water management, native plants, school/community gardens, "green" building

A Golden Guide to the Diversity of Life

- ☞ Introduce us to activities that will show the diversity of environment around us
- ☞ Possible topics include: natural history, outdoor activities, and holistic /organic farming

A Golden Guide for a Diverse Audience

- ☞ Introduce us to the variety of applications of environmental education in different audiences
- ☞ Possible topics include: environmental education in underserved areas, "nature deficit disorder," agricultural education, and social marketing

A Golden Guide to a Just Environment

- ☞ Introduce us to examples of social justice applied to different environments
- ☞ Possible topics include: fair trade, service learning, land trusts, legal strategies to combat environmental pollution, and discrimination (e.g., landfill location)

See Insert for application.

For more information,

check the EECO website:
<http://www.eeco-online.org>



A word from the President..



David Wright

“Difficulties are meant to arouse, not discourage.”

William Ellery Channing.

In the neighborhood schools of our great state, one student’s successful day of learning may be another child’s day of

perplexity and disengagement. Education certainly is no exact science, and the realities of the class-

room can be pretty unkind. The results of our efforts to help kids learn aren’t always rewarded.

Those students who struggle seem to do so in many ways.

There is, when an entire school system is under “Academic Emergency,” a feeling that some of us just aren’t going to make it. Inequality in response to proficiency standards is often extreme; the challenges to academic literacy are formidable. Consequently diversion and entertainment in so many forms becomes a welcome respite. For some students, and some educators, respite can become retreat.

That’s unfortunate, but that’s all it is. Very few people are still concentrating on the problems. Many more are involved in the wide range of solutions being employed every day. Educators, parents and students are turning the corner on the proficiency gaps. There is a new culture of creativity and activism. Diverse learning styles in children, long ignored if they were recognized at all, are being met with equally diverse yet effective teaching strategies. Educators are becoming more adept at writing curricula that is experiential, wide-ranging and inclusive. Parents are recognizing that scholastic aptitude starts and ends with a household that is conducive to learning.

And kids...are still kids. They are full of life, so full of potential, so resilient.

Into this fray environmental educators are fiercely applying academic enrichment objectives to daily programming. Science, math, and language arts standards are incorporated into classes at Nature Centers, residential EE camps, and other environmental education venues in the region. Abstract locations such as rainforests, with their attendant issues of deforestation, land use, and human rights abuse are still extremely important topics, mostly because they illuminate the effects of humans on an environment, geo-politics, technology, and his-

tory. One can argue that working toward green schools and recycling paper are more tangible undertakings.

Environmental education as an overarching context for learning is unques-

tionably one of the best and least expensive paths to academic proficiency achievement, and not simply in terms of the sciences. Indeed, language arts fundamentals are regularly being achieved utilizing writing and reading that is inspired by, and based upon, the “natural” world around us. Mathematics and civics, and even career planning in medicine, are being taught at the high school level using EE. EECO is working to synthesize all of this, and we need your help. The cool trick is that environmental education is not only academically sound, but EE is fun.

We’ve added so much to EECO in the past few years. Our challenge now is to engage members and stakeholders in all of this good work. Think about how you can help us to help the rest of us. Please join one of our new sections, or share this newsletter with a few colleagues and certainly come to one of our dynamic conferences. Give us a call or send us an email. Let’s talk. Let’s have some fun.

EECO leads in facilitating environmental education that fosters global stewardship and a sustainable future for all Ohioans.

Regional Highlights

Get to know Region 1

EECO has a regional structure that aids in educating citizens throughout Ohio. Currently, we follow the same 12-region structure as the Ohio Department of Education. Each region has at least one Regional Director who works on behalf of EECO to coordinate EE in that Region. As a regular feature of the EECO Newsletter we will be highlighting the regions and learning what exciting things each has to offer!

Region 1 consists of Delaware, Franklin, Licking, Pickaway, Madison, and Union counties. Linda Pettit is EECO's Region 1 Director. Linda has been with EECO as a Regional Director for the past five years. Linda is the Environmental Education Specialist for Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), and has been for the past 12 years. Linda is a certified teacher in Biology and Spanish and has a Masters in Science Education degree from the University of Buffalo, NY. She has also been an adjunct faculty member with Ashland University since June, 1996.



Under Linda's leadership Region 1 has accomplished a number of great things. One of the region's strengths is its many partnerships. One is UELC, the Urban Environmental Learning Collaborative. Agencies and organizations such as After School Counts, Columbus Public Schools, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, Environmental Education Council of Ohio, Franklin SWCD, Metro Parks, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency Office of Environmental Education, Project Learning Tree, and independent consultants comprise UELC. Partnerships have enabled Region 1 to create activity kits and conduct workshops for Columbus Latch Key Teachers. They have completed over 7 educator workshops, with over 130 teachers attending.

Region 1 would next like to tackle the job of training high school students to bring environmental activities to younger students. This mentoring program of older students teaching younger students is a win-win scenario. The high school students not only learn the environmental material they will be teaching, but they get the opportunity to be the teacher. The younger students are also impacted greatly, not only by the environmental information they will learn, but also the chance to learn from an older student that they admire. We wish Linda and Region 1 good luck on this new project, as well as with other projects they'll tackle in the future!

Columbus Zoo "mussels up" for Freshwater Exploration Programs

The Columbus Zoo and Aquarium is offering a number of freshwater exploration programs at its Mussel Research & Conservation Facility on the Scioto River near the zoo. Programs include Water Chemistry, Zooplankton's Role in the Food Chain, and Mussel Life Histories/ID. Sessions are available for grades 5-8, with independent study, job shadowing, and internship opportunities for older students. These programs begin in the fall of 2006 and will be available from 10 am – 3 pm Monday-Friday until May. Contact the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium Mussel Research & Conservation Facility at 614-724-3611 for scheduling or additional information.



Excellence in EE

EECO honors educators at 39th Annual Meeting

Each year the Environmental Education Council of Ohio honors people who are making outstanding contributions in the field of environmental education. The following were honored during EECO's Annual Conference in Beachwood.



Finlay-Johnson Award – presented to an EECO member for making a significant or outstanding contribution to EECO. Dave Irvine, CVEEC (right) received the award from nominator Herb Broda.



President's Award – was presented to Leanne Jablonski by Laura Busby.



Christy Dixon Award – awarded to a young professional who has contributed significantly to environmental education in Ohio. Jen Dennison, ODNR Division of Wildlife (right) accepted the award from Linda Pettit (nomination submitted by Bonnie Dailey).



Outstanding Environmental Educator in the field of Formal Education – Piketon High School teacher Matt Minter received the award from nominator by Phoebe Atkinson.



Ohio Alliance for the Environment Award – is given to a business or industry that is dedicated to fostering a climate of cooperation for resolving environmental problems. Presented by Carolyn Watkins to Mike Parkes.



Outstanding Environmental Educator in the field of Nonformal Education – Tim Harrison, Outreach for Animals, accepted the award from EECO Executive Director Brenda Metcalf and nominator Phoebe Atkinson.



Organization Award - Arrye Rosser and Jennie Vasarhelyi, Education, Interpretation and Visitor Services for Cuyahoga Valley National Park, accepted the award from nominator Deb Yandala (right).



Publication Award - for A Forest Returns - presented to author Jean Andrews (right) by Brenda Metcalf (nominated by Chris Stepp and Ellen Tait).



Outstanding Volunteer – John Podojil, Geauga Parks volunteer (left) received his award from nominator by John Kolar.



Wilds educator studied carnivore conservation, education programs EECO past president travels to Africa

Laura Busby, Director of Conservation

Education at the Wilds and EECO's immediate past president, was in Africa this August to study conservation programs for cheetahs, African wild dogs and other African wildlife. She plans to use lessons learned on the trip as the Wilds develops a new facility for conservation of mid-sized carnivores.

"My goals were to learn about the conservation of the carnivores in their home ranges and make educational connections to those locations," says Busby. "This will help us to build more holistic programming at the Wilds that connects our research and conservation work here with activities in the field."

Busby traveled to Namibia with a group of U.S. educators and instructors from Miami University and the Cincinnati Zoo to conduct field research projects at the Cheetah Conservation Fund's headquarters, investigating, among other things, the design of school and community programs in Namibia. She also joined Namibian educators to begin long-term collaborative projects linking classrooms in both countries. Busby and the Namibian educators will continue their work on Dragonfly's web platform, created specifically for educator collaboration.

Following the trip to Namibia, Busby traveled to Zimbabwe to visit the Community Conservation Education Complex (CCEC) of the Painted Dog Conservation Project. The project works to conserve and increase the range and numbers of the painted dog (also known as the African wild dog) both in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in Africa by providing conservation tools and education material that can be used to protect this highly endangered carnivore.



Three Days in the Woods... Language of Nature 2006 and LEP

The 5th annual Language of Nature summer retreat and writing institute was held June 15-17 at the Cuyahoga Valley Environmental Education Center in the heart of beautiful Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

In addition to the traditional nature exploration and writing exercises, this year's workshop provided an integrated 6-hour Leopold Education Project workshop and materials. This collective experience gave participants not only a chance to explore their own nature writing talents but also afforded a deeper understanding of Leopold's influential work.

EECO sponsored this only-one-of-its-kind-in-Ohio workshop, in partnership with the Cuyahoga Valley National Park Association, Ohio Arts Council, and the Ohio Environmental Education Fund.

Look for information about upcoming EECO workshops in this newsletter and on-line at www.eeco-online.org/.



Go Green Initiative Encourages school recycling

The Go Green Initiative (GGI) is a new program designed to help schools reduce waste. This simple, comprehensive program is designed to create a culture of environmental responsibility on school campuses across the nation. Founded in 2002, the GGI unites parents, students, teachers and school administrators in an effort to make real and lasting changes in their campus communities that will protect children and the environment for years to come. The GGI Association provides training and resources for Go Green schools and serves as a clearinghouse for information on environmental education programs throughout the country.

The GGI encompasses five principles that provide the framework for teaching environmentally responsible behaviors on campus. These principles serve as a guide for schools to evaluate every aspect of their environmental impact. Schools may implement as few as three principles in creating their own unique programs designed to address local concerns.

The five principals are:

1. Generate compost;
2. Recycle everything that cannot be reused and purchase items that can be recycled;
3. Educate students, teachers, and parents on environmentally responsible behavior;
4. Evaluate the environmental impact of every activity; and,
5. Nationalize the principles of responsible paper consumption.

In order to access all the tools, training and funding opportunities, register your school by visiting www.GoGreenInitiative.org. Once registered, you will be eligible for any funding opportunities, and informed of other Go Green schools in your area. As resources, grants and special events are available, you will be notified so that your Go Green school can choose from an ever-increasing menu of options through the Go Green network.

The first step is to build a Go Green Team that includes at least one representative of every sector in the campus community (e.g. parents, teachers, custodian, administrators, and where age appropriate, students).

The Hamilton County Solid Waste Management District encourages every school in Ohio interested in starting or improving your recycling program to register with the GGI and review the Planning Guide for School-Site Go Green Teams at www.gogreeninitiative.org/PlanningGuide.pdf.

Meet

Tale of Two Turtles

The Turtle

By Ogden Nash

The turtle lives 'twixt plated decks

Which practically conceal its sex.

I think it clever of the turtle

In such a fix to be so fertile



It's always a dilemma to decide what plant or animal to choose for this column...something obscure? Bizarre? Common? Decisions, decisions.....

Not long ago I stepped outside my office here at the ODNR complex on Morse Road and saw a couple of painted turtles lounging on the edge of our storm water retention pond. Voila! The **midland painted turtle** (*Chrysemys picta marginata*) would be our "Meet _____" candidate for this issue of the EECO newsletter.....

But then my coworker, Jeanne Russell, told me about meeting a spotted turtle at an SWCD educators' meeting so I figured, "let's go for a two-fer" because at this rate I'll be older than Methuselah before we get very deep into Ohio's native flora and fauna. So we are also meeting *Clemmys guttata*, the **spotted turtle**.

Both the painted and spotted turtle are water turtles, preferring standing or slowly moving bodies of water with mud bottoms and plenty of vegetation. The spotted is especially fond of shallower waters, such as marshes, bogs, fens, and swamps.

Both are primarily dark colored, the spotted sporting yellow spots, the painted displaying red and yellow markings on its neck and limbs and along the edge of its carapace. One is among the most commonly encountered in our state (the painted); the other, one of the rarest. Painteds can grow up to nine inches long; spotted average 3.5-5 inches in length.

Spotted and painted turtles have similar diets, consisting of small animals (e.g., insects, worms, snails, slugs, crayfish, etc.), as well as plants and fruit. They also fall victim to similar enemies – raccoons, cars, and human collectors. With the exception of softshell turtles, the sex of all species of Ohio turtles is dependent on the temperature at which the eggs develop.

The spotted turtle has experienced population declines across its entire range due to fragmentation and loss of wetland habitats: it has also been collected in high numbers for the pet trade industry. Spotted turtles should never be collected in the wild. With sexual maturity coming at 7 to 10 years, and a clutch of only 3-6 eggs, it is not, as Nash suggests, one of the most fertile...

Information for this article was gleaned from the Web sites of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources – Division of Wildlife; Center for Reptile and Amphibian Conservation and Management – Indiana-Purdue University; Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries; and The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

Pssst - wanna know a Dirty Little Secret?



Soil is the humblest of natural resources...certainly no superstar compared to critters or redwoods or oceans. To most people (if they ever think about it at all) it's just sitting there, ready to get us dirty or muddy given half a chance. And yet, virtually not other life on Earth would be possible without it, and scientist are even looking to soil for solutions in the battle against global warming.

The Scoop on Dirt – Why We Should all Worship the Ground We Walk On is the feature story in the September/October edition of **E/the Environmental Magazine**. The article also carries several sidebars that touch on related topics. Written by Tamsyn Jones, a recent graduate of the University of Missouri at Columbia, the 13-page spread covers everything from soil formation to soil erosion, and from primitive agriculture to modern mega-farms.

If you don't have access to the magazine, you can find the article online at www.emagazine.com/view/?3345

HEAR YE!

EE Enrichment Opportunities for Autumn 2006



September 29 to October 1 – “101 Alternatives to the Chalkboard” 2006 Educators’ Conference presents: Achievements in the Outdoors, Connecting children (and their teachers) with nature. YMCA Camp Kern (32 miles northeast of Cincinnati).

The “101” Conference is THE weekend outdoor education workshop experience designed to inspire teachers and outdoor educators with creative and fun ways to provide exciting learning experiences. Cost: \$71. Includes all sessions, food and lodging. \$40 for those wishing to

attend on Saturday only. For more information or to register, contact Dave Moran at YMCA Camp Kern. 1-800-255-5376 x1527, Local Phone: 513-932-3756 x1527 email: dmoran@daytonymca.org Address: 5291 St Rt 350 Oregonia, OH 45045. Web Site: www.campkern.org.

October 10-14 – North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) 35th Annual Conference, Radisson Riverfront Hotel St. Paul, Minnesota. Gathering at the Headwaters: Building EE in Society. Full Conference Early Registration price for members is \$400; for non-members, \$455. There is special pricing for students, retirees, and K-12 teachers. For more information, visit <http://www.naaee.org/conference>

October 12 – Project Learning Tree Workshop - Cincinnati Museum Center, 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Cost: \$15. In addition to learning PLT background information and lesson plans, participants will tour the museum, visit Nature's Trading Post and receive a copy of PLT's new 2006 PreK-8 Activity Guide. A light breakfast and box lunch will be provided. Registration required, deadline is September 28. For more information or to register, contact Regina Hall at 513-287-7000, ext. 2394.

October 13 – WOE Day – Mission Possible: A Healthy Environment. Location: Boonshoft Museum of Discovery, 2600 DeWeese Parkway, Dayton. Time: 8:00 – 5:00
Attention all teachers! Join us for WOE Day (Western Ohio Educators’ Association Day) at the Boonshoft Museum of Discovery. Come and learn new things you can use in your classroom. This workshop is free and all are invited to attend. There will be various presentations covering topics like wildlife conservation, environmental education, geology, and much more that will help you in your teaching. Free continental breakfast, free lunch, and lots of free goodies for you to take home with you. Join us for this great workshop! Please register by October 2. Contact Donna Lewis, (937) 275-7431 ext. 114 (Starting in September – Amanda Bishop, Earth and Life Sciences Coordinator x124).

October 25-27 – Ohio River Consortium – Murray State University, Kentucky. Conference includes a special workshop for teachers focused on Ohio River issues and education (sponsored by the USEPA). For more information check out <http://www.ent.ohiou.edu/~orbcre/>

Have an event you’d like to promote
to the EECO membership?
Send information on date, time, title and topic,
along with a brief summary and contact information to:

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For information about EECO's programs and services, please contact Brenda Metcalf, Executive Director.

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