

“Connections and Directions”

The Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario – Conference 2009

Friday September 25th to Sunday September 27th, 2009
RKY Camp, Parham Ontario

Conference Schedule

Friday September 25, 2009

5:00 pm - Registration opens at the RKY Dining Hall. Upon arrival to the camp, an RKY staff or volunteer will orient you to the site.

6:30 pm - Snack available in the dining hall

7:30 pm – Conference Opening, Welcome and Logistics – COEO Conference Committee Members

7:30 pm – **Evening Presentation: *The Night Sky*** Terence Dickinson
Terence Dickinson is a leading astronomer from the Eastern region. Hailing from a rural area near Yarker, Ontario, Terence is a popular presenter, who is known for his ability to make the night sky come alive for all ages. He has been involved in astronomy full-time since 1967 as a writer, an editor, a teacher and a broadcaster. He is Canada's leading author of astronomy books for both adults and children. Notable among his 14 books is *NightWatch*, one of the best-selling stargazing books in the world. Terence even has his own asteroid - 5272 Dickinson is named after him! This presentation is guaranteed to wow you with the wonder of the Night Sky and be an inspirational kick-off to the conference weekend!

9:00 pm – RKY Campfire Tradition
Followed by Campfire Jam and bannock toasting

Saturday September 26th, 2009

6:30 am – Waterfront open for swimming or an early morning paddle

7:00 am – 8:00 am – Early BIRD Session

A special session for early risers; join Chris Robinson for some early morning birding. Chris has a personal and professional interest in birds, with extensive international travel. As a passionate naturalist from the East, Chris is happy to answer your questions about the Eastern region's unique birds and ecosystem. Meet at the RKY Bell (Dining Hall) by 7:05 am.

Presenter: Chris Robinson, Professional Environmental Educator

7:30 am - 8:30 am – Hot breakfast served at RKY Dining Hall

8:30 am – Morning Reflection: *The Role of Environmental Education*
Bruce Parry, Environmental Lawyer

Workshop Sessions: “Block 1” 9:15 am-10:30 am

1a. The Paddling Puppeteers

The Paddling Puppeteers have been performing their musical puppet shows across Ontario and Quebec since 1999. A variety of colourful puppets bring to life several stories having to do with the environment. The shows present ideas of how we can take simple steps to preserve and restore Canada's natural heritage. Join Glen Caradus for a taste of how puppets can teach and bring environmental issues to life.

Presenter: Glen Caradus, Musician, Co-founder of the Paddling Puppeteers

1b. Up Close and Personal: Choosing and Using Local Outdoor Experiences to Educate for the Environment

If environmental education, by definition, includes rich and active experiences in the natural environment, then these opportunities must occur repeatedly, at every grade level and within walking distance of school. While trips to day and residential outdoor centres remain an integral part of an Ontario student's education, educators must also provide local outdoor experiences to illustrate that the planet's life support systems are all around us. This session will focus on: choosing a suitable site; ensuring a safe trip; utilizing community resources; a sampling of outdoor activities for all age groups; maximizing learning from outdoor experiences; and developing expertise within your school and/or board. The role of outdoor education centre staff will also be considered.

Presenter: Grant Linney, Career Outdoor Educator, Former COEO President

1c. Species at Risk Curriculum

Steve has coordinated curriculum development based on Species At Risk and Habitat. He is a coordinator for his region with the Stewardship Councils helping local landowners understand what they can do for species at risk on their property. Steve facilitated classroom teacher writing groups based on the Grade 4 Habitat and Grade 6 Biodiversity Life Systems Strand of the Science curriculum. This session will focus on how educators can use this curriculum and will include hands on student activities. Steve will also discuss his work with landowners, with the curriculum writing groups and will illustrate a connection between the Ministry of Natural Resources and environmental educators.

Presenter: Steve Pitt, Ministry of Natural Resources

Workshop Sessions: “Block 2” 10:45 am -12:00 pm

2a. Naturalist Ramble

Anne is a botanist who conducts rambles for the Kingston Field Naturalists, leads an active program for Junior as well as Teen Naturalists, and organizes the Bio-Blitz among other endeavours. A recognized naturalist from the Kingston area, Anne is able to provide expert information on what makes this part of Ontario unique. Join her for an informative ramble to notice nature.

Presenter: Anne Robertson, Kingston Field Naturalists

2b. SWITCH – Sustainable Energy

SWITCH is a non-profit, incorporated, grassroots organization; a network of businesses, research and educational institutions, public sector participants, and community-minded volunteers working together with a common mission: to position the Kingston region as a leading centre for sustainable energy. SWITCH is creating a local concentration of industrial, commercial, investment, applied research and educational activities in the sustainable energy sector by providing networking, technical advisory, project facilitation, and informational services. The Kingston region has some of Ontario's best wind, solar, and agricultural renewable energy resources.

Presenter: Ted Hsu, SWITCH

2c. Kingston Area Secondary School Integrated Programs

The Kingston area has a number of innovative and exciting programs that use experiential education techniques to challenge, inspire and engage students. This session will focus on these programs. Exact program details TBD.

Presenter: Program teacher, TBD

Workshop Sessions: “Block 3” 9:15 am -11:30 am (full morning)

3a. “Sit Down and Shut Up:” A Positive Spin

Integrating the sit spot/magic spot into curriculum as a pillar of local environmental education. The sit spot is a time tested tool used by various cultures to help people connect with, and learn about their environment. This workshop will provide tools to motivate sit spot time, and will focus on how the sit spot can be used in various settings to help integrate subject curricula into the local environment, and vice versa.

Presenter: Andrew McMartin, The P.I.N.E. Project

3b. Climb Higher – High & Low Ropes Course Session

This session will be skills based including initiative games and high ropes course facilitation. There will be opportunities to try out the climbing wall, vertical playground, and low and high ropes.

Presenters: RKY Camp Leadership Staff

12:00 - 12:45 pm – Lunch served in the RKY Dining Hall

12:45 – 1 pm – Afternoon Reflection: *Thinking Critically about Environmental Education* *Bruce Parady, Environmental Lawyer*

Workshop Sessions: “Block 4” 1:15 pm - 2:30 pm

4a. PLACE: Typologies of place and their implications for teaching and learning in the out-of-doors

This workshop will share findings from a study which delineates three different place meaning types and have participants interact with these views to consider their implications for outdoor learning. Through a roundtable discussion, brainstorming session, and reflection on person perceptions and biases, participants will examine the teaching and learning strategies specific to different perspectives of place. Participants will gain greater insight into the possible ways that people find meaning in the out-of-doors that may enhance and/or refine outdoor experiential program design and facilitation.

Presenter: Garrett Hutson, Brock University

4b. Food Down the Road

Food Down the Road refers to food that is grown close to home. We are looking down the road toward a sustainable Kingston and countryside where all citizens can enjoy healthy food. The “Food Down the Road” initiative was started by the farmers and eaters of the National Farmers Union, Local 316. NFU Local 316 has a long history of successful advocacy work in Frontenac, Lennox & Addington counties and the City of Kingston. Join Diane Dowling, a local organic Dairy Farmer to learn how initiatives such as Food Down the Road help build connections between farmers and educators.

Presenter: Diane Dowling, DoubleJay Farms, Howe Island

4c. To Be Determined

2:30 pm - 2:45 pm Break & Travel Time

Workshop Sessions: “Block 5” 2:45 pm - 4:00 pm

5a. Student Environmental Leadership in Secondary Schools

Fostering an effective environmental program in your school requires student leadership. This workshop looks at the implementation of a secondary-level environmental leadership course where students explore current environmental issues through a series of experiential learning opportunities. Using their knowledge, these same students are charged with the task of leading the schools environmental program. We will explore the development of a student-led environmental program, one in which the students promote awareness of environmental issues, seek to create partnerships with community organizations and strive to incorporate a sense of environmental awareness into the culture of the school. We will also look at the development of *Best Foot Forward*, a system-wide eco-conference for students that teaches schools about the implementation of the Ontario Eco-Schools program. The student-led *Best Foot Forward* brought together over 100 students and teachers from nearly 40 schools for a day of workshops on energy conservation, waste minimization and ecological literacy.

Presenter: Mike Faught, Regiopolis-Notre Dame Catholic High School

5b. Traditional Archery

The invention of the bow and arrow helped mankind overcome his physical limitations and was a significant achievement in his quest to survive". Explore traditional archery through the eyes of a passionate bowyer; see the bow as a survival tool rather than a weapon of war. Learn how a hunting bow and arrows are made, and if time and weather allows, take a few shots with a hand made bow and arrow. This is a hands on presentation, which includes a video and lots of opportunity for touching and asking questions.

Presenter: Mike Proctor, Eastern Region Bowyer

5c. Environmental Poetry: Get lost in the words

Join COEO's own Kyle Clarke for a session on using poetry to engage students and connect with the environment. Kyle's experience as an outdoor educator and classroom teacher and his dynamic presentation style will inspire you to make the arts a regular part or your teaching. This presentation will leave you with new tricks to try on Monday morning and the confidence to use more poetry in your facilitation or teaching.

Presenter: Kyle Clarke, COEO Vice-President

Workshop Sessions: “Block 6” 1:15 pm -3:30 pm (full afternoon)

6a. The Science and Art of Canoeing

Do you really understand how canoes travel in the water and how to paddle most effectively? Does your canoeing lesson need something new? This session will provide a new perspective on understanding canoeing technique and demonstrate unique ideas for teaching the science and art of paddling a canoe. This session will be good for beginners or advanced instructors and everyone in between! The first 90 minutes of the session will be on land, and the last 45 minutes spent on the water in solo canoes.

Presenter: Jim Gear, Career Outdoor Educator and longtime COEO member

6b. Facilitating Debriefing & Initiative Activities

Participants will learn and share ways to introduce, modify and debrief games and initiatives through play and laughter. Brianna Sharpe, Educational Contracts Manager for Outward Bound Canada, will facilitate a session that will inform, inspire and ignite participants' confidence to lead activities and adapt them to their specific population. Emphasis will be placed on group games and tone-sets that are part of Outward Bound Canada's repertoire, and help to connect students with one another and direct group focus towards desired outcomes. The workshop will be a mix of experiential activities (actually playing some of the games described), reflection (debriefing the activities) and discussion (introducing models for tone-setting and debriefing in group settings). There will be time to interact, space to share and discuss ideas, and the opportunity to dissect 'best practices' in the Industry. Participants in this workshop will come away with tried-and-true back-pocket activities, and will receive a handout of group games, debriefs and initiatives.

Presenter: Brianna Sharpe, Educational Contracts Manager, Outward Bound Canada

Workshop Sessions: “Block 7” 4:15 pm -5:15 pm

7a. Overcoming fear: Helping decision-makers understand risk management in outdoor education

Helping classroom teachers, principals, parents, and other decision-makers overcome their fear of outdoor education activities can be the major aspect of receiving approval for an experience. This workshop will introduce a number of frameworks that make it easier to understand and communicate how risk is managed in outdoor experiential education. Come with questions and stories to share.

Presenter: Kathy Haras, Ph.D., Vice President Adventureworks! Associates, Inc.

7b. Fire, Food and Human Progress: The use of primitive skills to explore ancestry, connections within nature and the nature deficit facing today’s youth.

As a conservationist, naturalist and the head instructor of Eastern Ontario Primitive School, Brian has a passion for teaching the skills necessary to help his students gain a new respect and understanding of nature. His session will explore the need to connect with our past to survive our future through an overview of the possibilities presented by incorporating primitive skills in education. The workshop will include the history of fire, bow drill fire starting, and will explore the atlatl, including construction and target practice. Curriculum links, and take home materials will be provided, including an activity outline that can be used for all age groups K to adult. Come and experience this universal lesson guaranteed to bring you closer to nature.

Presenter: Brian Stengele, Eastern Ontario Primitive School

7c. Independent Outdoor Recreation

Find a friend or COEO colleague and spend some time enjoying the beautiful landscape at RKY Camp. Head to the docks for a relaxing paddle on Eagle Lake, or head out to the forest. Camp staff will be available to provide casual canoe instruction if needed.

Presenter: You & Mother Nature (with a little help from our friends at RKY)

5:30 pm – 6:30 pm – Dinner served in the RKY Dining Hall

6:00 pm-7:00 pm – Student Poster Presentations

Graduate students presenting posters at the COEO Conference will be at their posters to answer questions during this time. At the time of publication, the following posters had been submitted. Interested students may still submit – see www.coeo.org

The Importance of Place: Re-conceptualizing Experiential and Place-Based Learning in Ontario Schools. The primary objective of this research was to design and implement learning activities that were structured around experiential, place-based, and popular education principles. The instructional activities presented resituated teaching and learning within the context of communities and focused on using the natural environment as the foundation for curriculum design and instruction. My graduate work closely examined the use of nature journaling and the use of outdoor-related activities that fulfilled science and art curriculum mandates.

Presenter: Krystina Faria: MEd York University, BEd OISE

6:30 - 6:45 pm – Sunday Kingston Tour attendees meet Walt Sepic (Location: TBA)

7:00 - 8:00 pm – **COEO Annual Awards Ceremony and Auction**

8:00 - 9:00 pm – **Special Evening Session:**

Terence Dickinson, Outdoor Stargazing Activity

Weather dependent, join Terence for an in depth look at the stars in the darkest part of the camp property. *Note: This session requires sign-up (at conference venue) and has space for a maximum number of participants.*

9:00 pm – 10:30 pm – **Evening Entertainment: Glen Caradus & Friends**

Contra Dancing: with live fiddle, guitar and calling. More fun than you’d believe!

9:00 pm – pm/am? – Campfire

Snacks available in the RKY Dining Hall from 10 pm to 11 pm

Sunday September 27th, 2009

6:30 am – Waterfront open for swimming or an early morning paddle

7:30 am - 8:30 am – Hot breakfast served at RKY Dining Hall

8:30 am – **COEO Annual General Meeting**

10:00 am - 11:00 am – **Keynote: *Ontario's Environmental Education Framework***
Brue Parady, Environmental Lawyer

Bruce Parady is a Professor in the Faculty of Law at Queen's University. He has taught environmental law at law schools in Canada, the United States and New Zealand, and written extensively on environmental governance, climate change, ecosystem management, and environmental liability. Before becoming an academic, Professor Parady was a litigation lawyer in Toronto. He presently sits on the Ontario Environmental Review Tribunal as an adjudicator and mediator. Bruce will present a critical look at environmental education in our current times.

11:00 am – 11:30 am – **Breakout Sessions: “Discovering Directions”**

Conference participants will break out into roundtable groups to discuss and apply the material relevance and consider new connections for Outdoor, Experiential and Environmental education, for COEO and in their own work and life.

11:30 am – **Final Wrap Up** – Conference Committee & all participants

**Please bring your Conference T-shirt!*

11:45 am -1:00 pm – Lunch Served in the RKY Dining Hall

12:30 pm SHARP – Carpool / Convoy leaves for **Kingston & Area Tour**

This Sunday Afternoon Field Trip offers an opportunity to visit the City of Kingston, Wolfe Island and the local environment, including Lake Ontario. The tour takes the ferry to Wolfe Island to visit the Ryan Outdoor Center and see the new Wind Turbines. As well, opportunities exist to tour a Gold Certified Eco-School (Elementary level) and visit the St. Lawrence College Energy House. A stop at Kingston's best ice cream “White Mountain Ice Cream” is also encouraged!

This tour will provide a glance into the beauty and diversity of the Kingston & Frontenac area. This tour will end in downtown Kingston (near the 401 highway) at 5:30 pm.

Please pre-register for this tour on your registration form, or indicate your interest ASAP upon arrival and registration. Those attending the tour will meet briefly on Saturday evening after dinner with Walt Sepic.

Coordinator: Walt Sepic, Outdoor Education Teacher, Ryan Center, Wolfe Island