

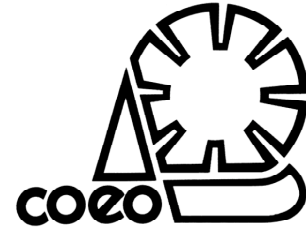
# **COEO NEWSLETTER**

The Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario

[www.coeo.org](http://www.coeo.org)

Editor: Grant Linney

May 22, 2006



## **OEE CONFERENCES AND COURSES**

- 1) **COEO ANNUAL CONFERENCE** September 29 – October 1, 2006  
*With the Community, In the Community, For the Community: Outdoor & Environmental Education in Culturally Diverse Urban Communities*  
If we are serious about value of outdoor and environmental education, then we must promote this to both our new and well-established culturally diverse communities that are an integral part of Canada's multicultural identity. If we are serious about providing educator-led outdoor experiences for all Ontario children, then we must adapt it to the ever-growing urban realities (be it Lindsay, Thunder Bay, Kingston, or the entire Golden Horseshoe) of the vast majority of Ontarians. This conference represents a watershed moment in Ontario outdoor education: reserve these dates, stay tuned for more details, and plan to come!
  
- 2) **EECOM ANNUAL CONFERENCE** October 19-22, 2006  
*Salt of the Earth: Creating a Culture of Environmental Respect and Sustainability*  
Join the Nova Scotia Environmental Network (NSEN), Interpretation Canada (IC) and the Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication (EECOMM) at White Point Beach Lodge on the Nova Scotia seacoast for this annual national gathering. Go to [www.saltoftheearth.ca](http://www.saltoftheearth.ca) for full details.
  
- 3) **ADVENTUREWORKS COURSES**  
Adventureworks announces the following training courses this spring:

Ropes Course Instructor	Ancaster	May 25-28
Assistant Ropes Course Instructor	Ancaster	June 8-11
Introduction to Rock Climbing	Milton	June 10
Games & Initiatives	Peterborough	June 13

For more details, go to [www.adventureworks.org](http://www.adventureworks.org)
  
- 4) **Wafa COURSE**  
The COEO-sponsored Wilderness Advanced First Aid Course (run by Wilderness Medical Associates) that was to run at the Norval Outdoor School next month (June 10-11 and 23-24) has now been cancelled due to insufficient registration.
  
- 5) **HAZARD TREE MANAGEMENT COURSES**  
On April 7<sup>th</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup>, COEO sponsored two highly successful and introductory introductions to hazard tree management for outdoor educators and outdoor centre support staff. This one-day course will likely be repeated next November.

## **COEO MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS GROW SIGNIFICANTLY**

Great news!! COEO active memberships currently stand at 251, compared to 196 at the same time last year. That's an improvement of 30% in one year, the first time our membership has exceeded 250 in the last 10 years, and the first time our numbers have risen significantly since the Eco-Ed Conference of 1992. Last fall's joint conference and this past year's three regional events (1 Wilderness First Aid Course + 2 Hazard Tree Management Workshops) have all helped to boost our numbers. Let's keep it up!

## **OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE NEWS**

### **1) Bark Lake Leadership Centre**

The current owners of the Bark Lake Leadership Centre are moving forward with an application to the Municipality of Highlands East to develop this property into cottage lots. The Ontario government (then NDP) ceased operation of this legendary facility more than 10 years. The subsequent government (PC) sold it "for a song." And, now, as time passes and memories fade, a once key part of outdoor education in Ontario (for both its staff and clients) is about to completely disappear forever.

### **2) Leslie M. Frost Natural Resources Centre**

The Ontario Realty Corporation is delaying its response to initial proposals re the future of this facility (including one made by The Friends of the Leslie Frost Centre). Apparently, all four proposals call for additional capital funding from the landlord (the current Government of Ontario). It's almost two years since this operation was shut down by the current government (the Liberals). Once again, the passage of time dilutes passions and fades memories ... is this unique resource going the same way as the Bark Lake Leadership Centre?

### **3) Eastern Ontario School Board Pending Closures**

The Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board is proposing to remove its outdoor education teachers from its two outdoor centres, the Monsignor J.S. Ryan Centre on Wolfe Island and a portable at the Frink Centre in Belleville. Classroom teachers would be responsible for any outdoor experiences their students would have at these locations. COEO President Shane Kramer has written a letter to the board expressing concern about the provision of safe, meaningful and enjoyable experiences without the properly trained staff. To see this letter, go to [www.coeo.org/news.htm](http://www.coeo.org/news.htm)

## **LIVING GREEN**

### 1) **Earth Portal**

Earth Portal is a web-based information hub that combines the trustworthiness and authority of scientific review and governance with the power of web-based collaboration. For more information, including their call for contributions to the new *Encyclopedia of Earth*, go to: [www.earthportal.net](http://www.earthportal.net)

### 2) **News from the Ontario Clean Air Alliance**

If you have a central air conditioner and live in Toronto, you can help reduce the need for dirty coal-fired electricity imports this summer by enrolling in Toronto Hydro's *PeakSAVER* program.

Here's how it works: A *PeakSAVER* switch will be installed on your central air conditioner. During peak electricity demand periods, like hot summer days, a signal will be sent to cycle your system off for a short period to reduce the amount of electricity needed by the province. You're unlikely to notice any difference in home comfort as you do your part to reduce the need to import dirty coal power.

As an added bonus, Toronto Hydro will give you \$25 for joining and will also pay for the installation costs. And, if you join before July 8, 2006, you will be entered into a draw for a \$2000 Future Shop gift certificate of a Nikon D50 digital camera. For more info, go to:

<http://www.torontohydro.com/electricsystem/powerwise/peaksaver/index.cfm>

Toronto Hydro is Ontario's most aggressive electricity conservation champion. If you live outside Toronto, contact your local utility and ask when it will have a similar *PeakSAVER* program in place.

### 3) **Al Gore's Documentary Film**

Al Gore's documentary film, *An Inconvenient Truth*, will be released in Toronto this Friday June 2<sup>nd</sup>. In the words of Elizabeth May, well known environmental activist and executive director of the Sierra Club of Canada, "*It is entertaining, hopeful and profoundly moving. It is both a very personal story and a hard core science briefing. It is often very funny. As a result, it is likely the best public education tool we have ever had on the threat posed by climate change/global warming.*"

## **NEWS FROM COEO's FULL TIME PROJECT COORDINATOR**

Thanks to a one-year grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Andrea Foster has been working as COEO's first full time Project Coordinator since February 2006. She has been making all sorts of contacts both within and beyond COEO, and she looks forward to meeting more members at our fast-approaching annual conference. For details about the work plan she is following, go to: [www.coeo.org/news.htm](http://www.coeo.org/news.htm)  
What follows is her first report to the membership as whole.

### **Trailblazing: COEO's Project Coordinator Update May 15, 2006**

Greetings from a cozy Toronto home office with lots of exciting projects brewing! My first few months in the role of Project Coordinator have been rich and stimulating and I'm thrilled to report that there is much to look forward to from COEO!

Outdoor Educators have long sung the praises of OE – but now COEO has the opportunity to locate the most current and relevant research to back our claims. Over the past couple of months I've been scouring studies and COEO will soon be able to provide its members with a research brief on the proven benefits of Outdoor Education. This will be a convincing, concise document that you can pass on to other teachers, principles, trustees, and policy makers with conviction.

I've also been busy connecting with a wide variety of outdoor educators associated with day and residential centers, conservation authorities, integrated high school programs, university programs, naturalist clubs, camps, adventure programs and ecotourism. As the mobile COEO representative, I'm in a unique position to act as a bridge between diverse pockets of outdoor educators and our organization. The feedback has been a tremendous asset, and as I continue to reach out to new, established and potential COEO members the information I acquire will feed our long-term strategic plan.

In the upcoming months, look out for some major additions to COEO's website, including a new tab offering a range of useful resources.

I'm incredibly excited to be in this role and look forward to meeting more of you hard-working and passionate outdoor educators in the months ahead!

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