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COEO

Formed in 1972, The Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario (COEO) is a non-profit, volunteer-based organization that promotes safe, quality outdoor education experiences for people of all ages. This is achieved through publishing the *Pathways* journal, running an annual conference and regional workshops, maintaining a website, and working with kindred organizations as well as government agencies.

Contributions Welcome

*Pathways* is always looking for contributions. If you are interested in making a submission, of either a written or illustrative nature, please refer to pages 35 and 36 for the submission guidelines.

If you are interested in being a guest editor, or if you have any questions regarding *Pathways*, please direct them to Kathy Haras, Chair of the *Pathways* Editorial Board.

If you’d like more information about COEO and joining the organization, please refer to the inside back cover of this issue or contact a Board of Directors member.

Our Advertising Policy

*Pathways* accepts advertisements for products and services that may be of interest to our readers. To receive an advertising information package, please contact Kathy Haras, Chair of the *Pathways* Editorial Board. We maintain the right to refuse any advertisement we feel is not in keeping with our mandate and our readers’ interests.

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As the greens of summer change to the vibrant colours of autumn, many of us also make a transition in our work as outdoor educators. Whether it’s a change of the topics we are presenting, a return to the classroom, or a switch from campers to students at our outdoor centre, the fall is often a special time in the annual cycle of change. It is simultaneously a time for new beginnings, getting down to business and grasping that one last opportunity for summer fun.

The columns in this issue of Pathways reflect the transitional nature of autumn. Under the category of new beginnings, Grayson Burke and Scott Tavener from Cedar Ridge Camp, Graham Thompson and Erin Horvath from New Vision Unlimited, and Anna-Marie Mills and Kevin O’Dwyer from ABLE describe their experiences starting new outdoor education programs. I review a risk management CD-ROM, while Charlotte Jacklein and Jerry Jordison share new-to-you activities.

While some programs are looking forward, others are celebrating their past successes. It seemed like this summer I went from one Jamboree celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Scouting to another. Rob Ridley reflects on the meaning and relevance of this venerable outdoor education organization in today’s world while Bryan Grimwood considers COEO’s annual conference. Bill Elgie, Ross MacLean and Rebecca Dykstra combined to share their perspectives on the successful restoration of a section of the Bruce Trail that happened last spring. Christy Norwood shares her experiences as a student on a remarkable field trip to the Northwest Territories.

Under the category of change, Mary Bruenig, Tim O’Connell and Garrett Hutson share the changes that have occurred in the outdoor recreation stream of the Recreation and Leisure Studies program at Brock University. Brian Lisson and Sarah Oosterhuis explain the new Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) practitioner certification standards and the potential changes this will create for outdoor educators and programs in Ontario. Change is not limited to Ontario, however. In “Beyond our Borders,” Peta White describes the changes that have occurred in outdoor education in Saskatchewan.

Regular readers of Pathways will notice some changes within these pages as well. Whether your strength is the written word or visual art, the Editorial Board invites you to share your work with other readers. To encourage submissions, the instructions to authors and artists will now appear in every issue and will be supplemented by additional information on the COEO website. The hope is to also have a current index posted before the new year to make searching for previous articles easier and more efficient. Can an online archive be far behind? As always, please share your ideas about how Pathways can better serve your needs.

As those of you who were at the COEO conference discovered, I have made a personal transition of my own this fall and returned to Lakehead University as an assistant professor in the School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism, the very department from which I graduated. I am excited to be back up north teaching future outdoor educators but miss the familiar rhythm of life at Adventureworks! and working in the field as an outdoor educator on a regular basis. This change will take some getting used to but as with the changing seasons, it will all be fine.

Kathy Haras

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Sketch Pad — Art for this issue of Pathways was generously provided by Chris Gyuk and Jennifer Owens. Chris lives in Hamilton and works at Adventureworks building high and low rope courses and climbing walls. Jennifer is a student living in the Hamilton area and has a passion for painting.
COEO has spent much of its time over the past couple of years promoting the values of outdoor environmental education (OEE). We've done a lot of work on the outreach front, working with those who can help us promote OEE to policymakers, the public and politicians. An impressive product of our efforts has been our well-received research summary, *Reconnecting Children Through Outdoor Education*. (Get your copy now if you haven't already!)

There is no question that our promotion and advocacy work must continue. However, in this my final year as president, I feel that it is time for the Board of Directors to turn its attention in another direction — to address the organizational health of COEO. This is the issue I will focus on during my last year of tenure.

We have an organization of over 200 members, yet we often struggle with the volunteerism that keeps the organization going. Sometimes the Board of Directors has been at fault for this. We haven’t always been prepared with meaningful opportunities for folks who have expressed an interest in volunteering. Other times when we call for volunteers, no one seems to answer, especially in some of our key leadership roles. This must change, and through the visioning sessions of last spring and subsequent board work we are forming a plan to deal with both issues.

By this time next year, at the 2008 AGM, we intend to propose to the membership a plan to reorganize the Board of Directors. We’ll eliminate some of the current positions and replace them with others. For example, the positions of “Director-at-large” and “Regional Reps,” which sound rather amorphous, will be replaced with “Directors with specific Areas of Responsibility” (DAOR). We hope this will attract more people to the board, as they will understand up front what they are volunteering for. Of course they will still have input into all that goes on with COEO, but they will also have a special area where they can focus their energies. For instance, a “Director of Communications” would spearhead a team who would look after communications coming into and going out of the organization. The team under this director could include other board members as well as folks from the general membership who, while perhaps not yet ready to commit to a board position, would be willing to spend time occasionally writing letters on behalf of COEO, making presentations to outside groups, and so on. Over time these volunteers might eventually wish to do more and be better prepared to be part of a future board.

The DAOR positions will also make the jobs of the board members somewhat easier by spreading the duties and responsibilities of the organization. The president’s job will be to coordinate the coordinators.

This plan will allow COEO to build its capacity to accomplish the goals of the organization and create a better sense of community amongst its members. It is also hoped that it will allow us to build our profile in the rest of the province with educators, governments and the public. The fine details of this will be worked out this year with the input of the current board, and we will keep you posted on our actions.

Finally, I’d like to take this time to thank everyone who attended the 2007 COEO Conference and helped make it a success. I confess there were times when I wasn’t sure how it would all come together, but the feedback has been wonderful. Thanks to all those who contributed to making it happen, and especially to Judy Kramer and Pam Miller. Thanks, too, to those who have already volunteered to organize Conference 2008 — we are already looking forward to it!

*Shane Kramer*
In Grade 9, Upper Canada College (UCC) students participate in a week-long outdoor education program in Halton Region, west of Toronto. This week is the culmination of over 60 days of total outdoor education programming between Senior Kindergarten and Grade 9. Activities during the expedition include moving water canoeing, mountain biking, hiking, orienteering, and rock climbing. To minimize disruption at the school, all 130 students participate at the same time. As a result, the program is too big for UCC to operate on its own, so it is run in partnership with Adventureworks! Associates. The entire grade is divided up into nine groups of 11 to 13 boys per group. Each group is led by a combination of Adventureworks! staff and UCC teachers. The schedule is structured in a circuit, with each group starting and ending at a different location. Every group completes every activity, just in a different order.

One of the main goals of the Grade 9 program is to help deepen students’ appreciation and understanding of the green spaces all around us. During this journey, the students are exposed to how much natural beauty there is so close to home. Students get to see Ontario’s greenbelt firsthand as they canoe the Credit River in spring flood, climb the sheer limestone cliffs of the Niagara Escarpment at Rattlesnake Point, and hike through the Carolinian forest of southern Ontario along the magnificent Bruce Trail. This trip is unique because it all happens in the shadow of the Greater Toronto Area. Although many of our boys will have gone camping in northern Ontario, very few of them have ever gone on a multi-day outdoor expedition within 30 minutes of Toronto.

Students at UCC are involved in a wide variety of community service projects starting in the primary grades right through to graduation. UCC wants its boys to turn into men of good character. The service program promotes a sense of responsibility, compassion, honour and integrity. We like to say that “UCC is a private school with a public purpose,” and our commitment to service is a reflection of that belief.

As part of this week-long outdoor education adventure, all Grade 9 students spend half a day doing environmental service work for some group or organization operating in the expedition area. These projects help protect and preserve the natural areas of north Halton Region, and the boys are able to give back something to the area they are travelling through. In past years we have partnered with Conservation Halton and Credit Valley Conservation.

An ideal service project for nearly 120 Grade 9 boys is both hands-on and significant. The students need to be actively engaged and feel that what they are doing is not a make-work project. A large-scale project that has all students working together on one task contributes to the students’ sense of community and has the potential of being “cool.”

Because the students hike on the Bruce Trail, we have wanted to work with the Bruce Trail Club for many years. Until last year, we had never been able to find an ideal project that coincided with the timing of our Grade 9 program, which is late April. That all changed last fall when Dr. Kathy Haras from Adventureworks! got in touch with Ross MacLean from the Caledon Hills Bruce Trail Club (BTC). The Caledon Hills BTC needed help to rehabilitate the section of the Bruce Trail that runs along the Cheltenham Badlands. We had help to give in the form of 140 eager students and staff. It was a match made in heaven!

The Bruce Trail is a public footpath along the Niagara Escarpment, running from Queenston to Tobermory at the tip of the Bruce Peninsula. It was conceived and is currently maintained and developed by volunteers, people who give of their time and energy simply because of their love of the land.

The Badlands area in southern Ontario is composed of soft Queenston shale, and as
such is subject to erosion. Within close proximity of a huge urban population, it was being “loved to death” and the trail was becoming badly impacted. For a volunteer group to undertake major trail rehabilitation would require a lot of resources, both human and financial.

The Caledon Hills BTC quickly accepted UCC’s offer of 120 students who would work in teams of 12 or 13 for a half day. The design and planning process began with some of the Caledon Hills BTC’s most experienced trail designers (all volunteers) spending days studying the land and pricing materials. Even with some in-kind donations, the cost of the project came close to $9,000 and all funds had to be raised by the club without any help from government sources.

The plan involved installing landscape fabric, pinning in cedar logs with angle irons, and carrying in sand and gravel by wheelbarrow along the entire route of about a kilometre. This involved 400 cedar logs, 700 angle irons and truckloads of aggregate. The goal of this project was to restore one of the most highly used sections of the Bruce Trail in order to allow it to remain open to the public.

In the week before the students arrived, volunteers from the club laid out the project and installed the cedar logs; for safety reasons we did not want the students using sledge hammers.

Before students could commence their part of restoring the trail, a number of obstacles needed to be addressed. Developing a sense of ownership in the students with regards to the magnitude of what they were undertaking, as well as the unusual combination of Bruce Trail volunteers, many of whom were retired, and 14-year-old boys created complexities that could not be overlooked. The volunteers had already invested much into this endeavour and had a strong desire to see the trail completed within the week. Most of the boys would not see the trail completed during their half day at the Badlands and were not initially motivated to undertake three hours of physical labour.

In order to maximize our success and combat initial barriers, the groups of boys would have to be empowered with regards to what they were embarking on. At the beginning of each half day session Bruce Trail volunteers greeted the group of students and UCC and Adventurworks! staff and gave them a brief tour and lesson regarding the use of the trail. While this was logistically important, it played an even larger role in preparing the group to take ownership over their work. The groups learned that the Badlands are one of the most used sections of the Bruce Trail, and were given a geography lesson of the area explaining the susceptibility of the soil to erosion. The briefing also consisted of showing the group what they would be doing to prevent the trail from being closed, and informing them that they were a crucial part of a 50-year solution.

The knowledge that what they were doing was going to be leaving such a grand impression really helped to motivate the students. Another motivating factor was seeing the spectacular Badlands. During the week each of the groups hiked on numerous sections of the Bruce Trail. This, in combination with incredible sight of the Badlands, helped many of the students gain a sense of the importance of what they were doing.

An additional factor that led to the success of the week was stressing the importance of group work to the students. The majority of the work done on this section of the Bruce Trail involved strenuous activity for a number of hours. It was imperative for the students to work together to achieve their goals. Each group had their own ideas regarding how to maximize their group’s potential: some boys raced one another down the trails, some decided to move the wheelbarrows in teams,
and others switched roles often. Regardless of what method they chose, each group of boys soon discovered that when they worked as a team they could achieve so much more, and be much less tired at the end of a hard day, than working individually. Although the student groups obviously varied in quality, most responded with an enthusiasm that over the week was contagious.

The week on the Cheltenham Badlands was a grand success. The students learned that working together was imperative in accomplishing the project, and after taking ownership of this project, working together became nearly second nature. Without the sense of ownership instilled in each participant, attaining our goals would have been problematic. All those involved in the restoration of the trail got to be part of a wonderful project that will allow the trail to be enjoyed for many years to come.

In the end, the combination of Bruce Trail Club volunteers and UCC students proved highly effective. Bill Elgie, Director of the Outdoor School of UCC, e-mailed Caledon Hills BTC Trail Coordinator, Ross Maclean, with the following message: “I have had the pleasure of doing service work with many organizations over the years, and the project last year was one of the finest I have seen. You were well-organized, you brought out large numbers of volunteers and your enthusiasm was highly contagious. At the end of the week-long program, many students picked their half day of service work with you and your team of volunteers as their highlight of the trip. I hope we can work with you again soon.”

Almost immediately after completion, outside accolades began to pour in for the largest single trail rehabilitation project in the history of the Bruce Trail. Paula Terpstra is the Natural Heritage Coordinator for Ontario Heritage Trust (OHT), the group that holds title to the Badlands. She wrote: “I was very impressed by the excellent footpath that now exists. It clearly involved a substantial commitment of volunteer labour and materials. I’d like to extend congratulations for a job well done, both on behalf of the OHT and myself personally.”

The highest award for such work within the Bruce Trail Association is the Philip and Jean Gosling Award. More than 40 years ago, Philip was one of the founders of the trail and its first Trail Director. He was a naturalist and wanted the Escarpment celebrated for its natural beauty. About five years ago he donated an award to be given annually for the greatest contribution to the trail from an environmental perspective. The thinking was that we “must walk lightly on the land.” Trail improvements that helped to protect the ecology of the escarpment were thus to be recognized.

At this year’s BTA Annual General Meeting, the Caledon Hills Club was the unanimous choice of the judges to receive this award, in recognition of the major rehabilitation of the trail through the Badlands property. Chris Walker, the chair of the Awards Committee, wrote: “Congratulations . . . [on] the excellent work in treadway restoration at the Badlands. . . . A tremendous amount of planning, expertise and volunteer hours went into the completion of this major treadway upgrade.”

These congratulations were extended to everyone who had worked on the trail — adult volunteers and UCC students. It was hard work but we had created a footpath that will stand up well to the thousands who each year walk on this magnificent landscape. The students took pride in their achievement and grew in their knowledge of the landscape and the importance of contributing to their community.

Bill Elgie is the Director of Upper Canada College’s Norval Outdoor School. Ross MacLean is the Trail Coordinator for the Caledon Hills Bruce Trail Club. Rebecca Dykstra had the privilege of spending five days on the Bruce Trail working in combination with the Bruce Trail Association, Upper Canada College and Adventureworks! Associates as the service project coordinator.
In 2007 Cedar Ridge Camp opened for its first season as a traditional co-ed summer camp and year-round outdoor education and recreation centre. The first imperative for the fledging endeavour involved devising a camp doctrine and outdoor curriculum; it seemed a rudimentary task. The mission would centre on creating a program that would encourage personal development and growth through a shared outdoor experience. Our main goals were to promote the formation of close bonds, both amongst individuals and with the surrounding environment; teach the value of teamwork; instil the worth of hard work; and encourage skill acquisition through both work and play. The primary goal of our outdoor education centre was to design programs that would fuse our ethos with the specific aims of each group. Whether working with corporate groups, schools or outdoor enthusiasts we would concentrate on teambuilding, leadership and environmental education.

Though our initial statement of beliefs and objectives remained static throughout our inaugural season, we were met with a serendipitous variable that we had underestimated: our surrounding environment. As we continuously discovered more about our local region, our programming evolved to incorporate the staggeringly diverse landscape and its vast offerings.

In November of 2005 I received a phone call from Peter Ruys de Perez, whom I had known through our shared association with Kilcoo Camp. Growing up, Peter had spent his summers at the now-closed Camp Mazinaw, a boys’ camp on Mazinaw Lake. Those years had a formative effect that he retained throughout the intervening decades. Peter long held a desire to return to camping, ideally with his own venture. Following a welcome early retirement, he sought to make his dream into a proverbial reality.

With me on the line, Peter explained that he intended to buy a summer camp and was interested in obtaining my opinion regarding a prospective property. Knowing that Peter had spent much of the previous five years scouting possible sites without success, I expected little more than a rundown hunting cabin and a free lunch from our fact-finding sojourn. Still, flattered by his request, I agreed to go along.

On a November’s day, as we drove northward, Peter and his wife, Kelley, explained the general layout of the property, adding a cautionary and obligatory, “It needs a little work.” Located 30 km east of Bancroft, what would become Cedar Ridge sat on a private bay with 3,400 feet of waterfront and 150 acres of diverse terrain. As we pulled up to the first building, my albeit low expectations were amply exceeded.

Originally YMCA Camp Wangoma, since the 1980s the property had been a church-run Christian camp. Though slightly ragged, it had the perfect footprint for a summer camp. Peaceful, pastoral and serene, it boasted a plethora of open fields, a spectacular waterfront, a large-scale dining hall, and a secondary winterized lodge with beds for 80 and a fully functional kitchen of its own, furnishing the grounds with year-round activity capability. Following a rainy tour we drove home, feverishly discussing the site’s potential. A month later, Peter completed the purchase and Cedar Ridge’s inception was official.

By March of 2006, after a winter spent generating a camp philosophy and assembling an advisory board/think tank of former camp directors, doctors, lawyers, school board superintendents and outdoor professionals, we were ready to begin restoring the site. Due to the previous owners’ severe lack of funding and fading business, it had endured years of
neglect. Peter and I agreed that, before welcoming a single visitor, every building and system had not only to conform to codes, but exceed them. Thus, throughout the following year, we encountered a diverse array of surprises as we navigated a crash course in water and septic systems, plumbing, building foundations, and sundry other aspects of construction.

We quickly found ourselves ensconced in the day-to-day reconstruction, thus putting program design and area exploration temporarily on hold. Typically — and in direct opposition to our naïve optimism — we finally finished resuscitating the camp long past our self-imposed deadline and well over our projected budget.

Before arriving in the Lower Madawaska region, we had grossly undervalued the local environment’s attributes. Having spent the majority of my camping life in Haliburton, Bancroft had long been nothing more than a Tim Horton’s stop on the way to Ottawa. Aside from the closeness to both the Madawaska River and Algonquin Park, we had little understanding of the region; that would quickly change.

The abundance of wildlife in the area rapidly became apparent. Though the camp’s former incarnation, Natureland, boasted an obvious sylvan connotation, we had assumed it had been an arbitrary and generic title, akin to a suburban street name. However, as deer, elk, wild turkeys, blue herons, snapping turtles and an otter (aka “The Creature”) emerged from the surrounding woodlands and lake, we realized how apropos a designation Natureland had been. Never in my camping experience, whether on-site or on-trip, had I enjoyed such a close interaction with wildlife. While driving through or wandering about the grounds, deer sightings became commonplace. So numerous was the deer population that we had to caution visitors about the danger of navigating through fields of grazers.

Unique to the area, an extensive elk population had taken up residence nearby. Once native to Ontario, elk had vanished by the late 1800s, largely due to human settlement and unregulated harvesting. In 1999, a massive cooperative effort to
reintroduce the animal to the area began. Today, over 150 elk call the neighbourhood home. Commonly, grazing or ambling elk would upstage our staff during activities. At first, the wildlife acted merely as a curious bonus, but organically, over time, became a teaching tool. Campers had to learn how to exist harmoniously with the animals. It proved a beneficial happenstance.

As the site slowly evolved and structures began to return to respectable shape, our focus at last returned to programming. The environment had already begun to inspire a broad and innovative range of ideas, yet we still wanted to offer many of the standard camp activities, including climbing, archery, kayaking, sailing, canoeing and a wide variety of sports. Once the capacity for these activities was established, we began to explore the myriad off-site possibilities.

Throughout curriculum development, we continued to stress the importance of camper and environment interaction and the value of forming a close bond with nature. Co-opting Peter’s experience at Camp Mazinaw, each summer camper would take part in a mandatory canoe trip. Although in close proximity to Algonquin and Bon Echo parks, the propinquity to a stunning array of world-class rivers held a special allure; the Madawaska, Petawawa and Ottawa are all within a two-hour radius.

Upon hearing of our location, whitewater advisor and seasoned river instructor, Steve Reble, excitedly quipped: “What Whistler is to skiers and snowboarders, the Ottawa Valley and Lower Madawaska region is to whitewater paddlers.” This became immediately apparent as each weekend in the spring and early summer found the roads awash with kayak- and canoe-strapped cars. We were able to utilize the whitewater, sending day-trips to Palmer Rapids and the Ottawa. The Madawaska served as an ideal two-day sojourn, allowing beginners to develop their river skills in a challenging but safe environment.

While river possibilities influenced our water programming, the extensive trail systems nearby helped to fashion our on-land tripping. Commonly used by snowmobiles in the winter and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) in the fall, the gigantic system of paths provided a great opportunity for mountain biking and hiking. With onsite access to such a massive trail system, we had another unique feature that shaped our activity schedule.

The city of Bancroft and surrounding region correctly bills itself as one of Canada’s best natural, year-round playgrounds, with each season drawing a different sub-culture of adventure seekers. Whether it is paddlers in the spring, mountain bikers in the summer, hunters in the fall, or snowmobile and sled dog drivers in the winter, each season provides the opportunity for different recreational pursuits. With the infrastructure to accommodate winter adventurers, we searched for potential curriculum opportunities. Aside from the aforementioned ATV and snowmobile prospects, we were ecstatic to find an active dog sledding and luge — yes, luge — community that we could utilize. In the coming months, we intend to make use of these disparate activities, using underutilized tools for a fuller learning experience.

During Cedar Ridge’s inaugural year, we employed many of the principals that we had discussed in the days following that first visit, yet the area’s surrounding wildlife and diverse natural environment had an unexpectedly profound effect on our dogma. As we continue to grow and evolve, we will rely on our teaching axioms while remaining fluid enough to adopt and incorporate the surfeit of natural resources.

Grayson Burke is currently the Director of Cedar Ridge Camp and has a degree in Recreation and Leisure Studies from Brock University. He can be reached at grayson@cedarridgecamp.ca. Scott Tavener is one of the founding staff members of Cedar Ridge Camp.
Those of us lucky enough to work in the outdoor education field know very well that outdoor experiential and environmental education goes beyond the teaching of science and principles of the physical world. While those outside the field think of these connections to the curriculum first and foremost (and there are indeed some opportunities here), we know that everything we teach can be done so from an environmental perspective.

No matter the subject — be it math, science, language, art, health, drama, music, the industrial arts, business, drafting or others — experiential and environmental connections can be made. By its very definition, experiential education can provide the perfect conduit for developing knowledge about such subjects.

As I have said, we in outdoor experiential and environmental education know this already, but do we know what company we keep in the field?

In Ontario, we have school boards that run outdoor education programs, conservation authorities, provincial and national parks and many competent private providers as well. But there are more — many more, in fact — that are not recognized as the great providers they are of outdoor experiential and environmental education. Ironically, they are in some cases amongst the first outdoor education providers in this province.

Take, for instance, the Girl Guides of Canada and Scouts Canada. In Girl Guides young women of every creed and colour, of every aspect of life, from urban and rural communities, and from young children as Sparks to young adults as Pathfinders and Rangers, learn to be confident and experienced leaders in our community through experiential and often outdoor education opportunities.

Scouts Canada as well, completely co-educational for the last decade, allows children and adults alike, from five-year-old Beavers to 26-year-old Rovers, to participate in programming tailored to their individual needs through membership in small groups.

Both these great organizations are trying to develop the youth of Ontario in four key ways: physically, socially, mentally and spiritually.

The founder of these movements, Robert Stephenson Smythe Baden-Powell (“that’s Powell as in toll, not Powell as in towel”), developed them based on previous programs, such as Ernest Thompson Seton’s Woodcraft Indians. Seton, a prolific writer and artist, was raised in the Lindsay and Toronto region, and a huge portion of the natural science and campfire connections in the current programs can be attributed to him. Seton’s “Laws of Woodcraft” were a model for Baden-Powell’s “Scout Promise” and “Scout Law.”

**Scout Promise:**

I promise to do my best,

To do my duty to God and the Queen

To help other people at all times

And to carry out the spirit of the Scout Law.

**Scout Law:**

A Scout is helpful and trustworthy

Kind and cheerful,

Considerate and clean

And wise in the use of all resources.

All Scouting programs are designed to promote these ethics. Men and women of all walks of life and of all cultures are welcome to be members. This inclusion goes a long, long way to supporting the social development of the youth involved. Tolerance, understanding and the true meaning of citizenship are key components of the programs offered.

Kurt Hahn, founder of Outward Bound and father of many other adventure-based educational opportunities, refers to the successes of Seton and Baden-Powell numerous times.
Scouts Canada is celebrating its 100th birthday this year, proof that scouting remains prevalent today. Not surprisingly, and perhaps necessarily, scouting has adapted with the times. There are Rover Crews that meet only online since their members are all at different universities. There are Venturer Companies that have taken on vocational education such as emergency medical services or fire fighting. And there are badge programs that Baden-Powell never would have thought of, such as computers and space exploration.

This past summer, I was honoured to be involved with the management team for program at the Canadian Jamboree north of Montreal. Youth — 7,000 of them — from every Canadian province and territory, as well as seven other countries, participated in one of the most enjoyable and exhilarating outdoor education opportunities ever.

There was no marking of tests and no rubrics . . . and yet every single person participating walked away from the event with a lifetime of memories and life skills well beyond the circle of their friends and neighbours who stayed at home this summer.

These youth spent over a week outdoors, cooking for themselves, sharing, challenging each other, building friendships, learning patience and getting more physical activity than some youth their own age get all summer long.

Programs were challenging and educational, and yet, if you ask any one of the youth participating, they would each tell you first and foremost that they were fun. High ropes, zip lines into the mountain lake, canoeing, fly fishing, canopy walks, biking and so much more. The program was active and popular. It is interesting that towards the end of the Jamboree the activity being sought after the most was 1907 Badgeworks — that is, traditional Scouting, Scouting from 100 years ago. This is indeed a compliment to the founders of the movement.

In his 1897 poem, “The Feet of the Young Men,” Rudyard Kipling wrote,

Who hath smelt wood-smoke at twilight? Who hath heard the birch-log burning?  
Who is quick to read the noises of the night?  
Let him follow with the others, for the Young Men’s feet are turning  
To the camps of proved desire and known delight!

The social and spiritual learning that occurs around a campfire or under canvas, in my mind, far outweigh any day trip.

As an educator, I must admit that seeing the youth demonstrate the development we are looking for is the most rewarding thing of all. To see them giving each other a hand on the high ropes, to see them unafraid to sing as loud as they can around a fire, to see them not only understanding but living environmental awareness at camp, to see them act not only as individuals but as a massive group is an incentive to continue to offer such programming.

Partway through the week, as I stood outside the program headquarters with another program team member from the national office, a young Scout came up to us and asked politely if either of us had lost a $20 bill. He had found it close to where we were standing. When neither of us claimed it, he asked what he should do with it. This in itself was Scouting at its best, but when we brought him to the lost and found and put it in an envelope with the location it was found and the finder’s name (in case it was not claimed) it was even more amazing to see that it was put into a pile of other envelopes that had found money in them as well.

Education in its finest hour . . . and available to all. Baden-Powell would be proud.

Rob Ridley has been teaching environmental education for almost 20 years and is currently the Field Centres Coordinator for the Peel District School Board. He has been involved at all levels in Scouting for the last 15 years as an adult.
Silvercreek Outdoor Education Centre has been operating since 1982 under the auspices of the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board through a lease agreement with the Credit Valley Conservation Authority. The 1400-acre property captures the Niagara Escarpment within the Credit Valley watershed and provides a multitude of outdoor experiences. Historically, the Silvercreek Outdoor Education Centre has delivered outdoor experiences that extend and augment curricular opportunities for over 30,000 students in Grades 4 to 12.

Recently, the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board has expanded these curriculum-based outdoor experiences by establishing a satellite classroom from Archbishop Oscar Romero Secondary School to deliver credit programming using the outdoor environment at Silvercreek Outdoor Education Centre. With a pre-existing low ropes course, a recently installed high ropes course, and access to the Bruce Trail and Niagara Escarpment less than 30 minutes from urban Brampton and Mississauga, Ontario, the location just north of Georgetown is ideal.

The Adventure Based Learning Experience (ABLE) program is designed for students who require a non-traditional approach to learning with varied program delivery options or need a flexible learning landscape. While these senior students have earned between 17 and 20 secondary school credits, the regular secondary setting has not led to continued academic or personal success. Entering its second year, this unique experiential learning program provides students from Mississauga and Brampton the opportunity to “learn from doing” in an outdoor education environment while earning high school credits towards an Ontario Secondary School Diploma. The primary focus is on preparing students to return to their community school, integrate into the world of work, or successfully transition to a post-secondary institution.

Most students in ABLE earn the following credits: Peer and Leadership Support (GPP 3O); Fitness and Recreation Leadership (PLF 4C); Church and Christ (HRE 4O); and Learning Strategies (GLS 4O). Some students will earn a credit in Entrepreneurial Studies (BDI 3C) through a blended mode of delivery; they combine the completion of an Independent Learning Course with practical experience in running the breakfast club, class store and other fundraisers. Above and beyond this credit package, students have access to other Independent Learning Courses.

As an experiential learning program, ABLE uses various vehicles of delivery (low ropes, high ropes, wilderness experiences, initiative tasks, breakfast club, food bank and soup kitchen experiences) to present students with deliberately designed learning experiences and challenges. Each student has an opportunity to develop a reservoir of skills through their experiences. Based on the work of Barry Bennett in Beyond Monet, students complete various assessment tools. The teachers use observation, assessment and facilitation to extract data and assist students in the process of self and group analysis, goal setting, language deconstruction, peer feedback and peer mentoring. From these experiences students recognize the skills that may contribute to credit attainment. Whether the experience is in Algonquin Park or in a science lab, students use these methodologies to acquire knowledge and apply it. They learn to use various assessment tools in the midst of experience, written assignments, video journals and verbal presentations.
The program also makes use of experiences that focus on leadership, communication, team building and co-operative learning. As a result, the ABLE program operates within a theory of group development that is based on Tuckman's (1965) familiar cycle of forming, storming, norming and transforming.

One approach to understanding how the ABLE program works is to recount a student’s journey through this experiential learning environment. All the names have been changed to protect students’ identities and some elements have been altered to provide a more composite example of a student experience.

**Kara’s Path**

Students are referred to the ABLE program by guidance counsellors or administrators. Assessing whether a student’s profile meshes with the program criteria occurs through a review of credit counsel summaries and his or her Ontario Student Record (OSR). After determining an initial match, the student is offered an interview. The principal receives a recommendation following the interview.

Kara’s first interview was abbreviated — she was unprepared to be self-reflective and was pre-occupied with the slow pace of her watch. Although positive and extroverted, it was clearly a veneer. Five months later, with a cast on her foot, Kara’s second interview revealed another semester mired by a behaviour pattern that left her frustrated and unable to achieve her academic potential. This interview exposed a more grounded candidate who self-identified a need for substantive change. Kara entered the program stalled at 23 credits, focused on graduating. She was a genuinely caring person and willing to extend herself to “help” others, however this help was often at a cost to herself.

In the forming stage of the class, the students bonded to the extent that peer pressure prevented them from moving into the storming phase. Kara relied on her pre-existing pattern of conflict avoidance to placate any and all perceived sources of disagreement. Each event designed to illicit and provide opportunities to resolve potential differences was quickly managed by Kara to placate the source of conflict with altruisms such as “Can’t we just get along?” or “I thought we were together on this.” Her pattern of managing conflict in her life was now evident in the classroom. Unrecognized by Kara was the fact that other students were generating pressure through verbal and non-verbal conflict that reinforced her willingness to avoid conflict to the extent that she would modify her own behaviour to provide relief from criticism.

**Being walked all over is a major problem in my life. It started in high school. I was made fun of in Grade 9 because I wasn’t totally skinny like the other girls. A guy name Akeem use to call me all sorts of names, my (student) agenda got ripped up in the smoker’s area at school — it was so embarrassing. Those incidents have created bottled feelings like was there something wrong with me. Why do they have it out for me?**

— Kara

Her self-esteem was fed by her genuine caring but was also her trap. She would accommodate individuals’ conflict to the point and frequency that she could not recognize what she personally stood for and was willing to engage in high risk ventures in order to “help” someone.

**Then a boy named Ron came into my life. He didn’t compliment me, he didn’t have a job and he lived at his friend’s house. What a man, hey, well maybe I can fix him. Maybe those were signs to say goodbye but, no, I wanted to help and that is what I tried to do. Wrong again and again.**

. . . [W]e argued, he pushed me, I punched him and he turned around and
pushed me down the stairs. . . . I had to be different and look what different got me — six weeks in a cast and a foot that still hurts today.

– Kara

She was being manipulated by people in her life and now in the class. Kara’s desire to be liked resulted in appeasement. A further issue existed because the class as an entity did not want to “storm.” This behaviour stifled further development and kept Kara in the cycle of appeasing others. Both Kara and another student in the class were offered the opportunity to alter the behaviour of creating obstacles to interference. Kara accepted the challenge.

Kara’s breakthrough moment was realized deep in Algonquin Park. With no place to hide, run to, or avoid others, she was forced to deal with issues stemming from class. Later, the class would identify the significant value of Kara’s contribution. At that same time she did not give in to the pattern of lowering her own standards to accommodate and be accepted. She earned respect.

For me to succeed I need to set boundaries and limits to what will make me happy and not what I will tolerate. It is the only way I will grow into dealing with problems and actions I have made, whether right or wrong. People know now that I have set some boundaries and so do my friends, but I will have to re-evaluate my personal contract every once in a while.

– Kara

I believe that the goal of this trip (Algonquin) was to embed in our minds that not only can we accomplish over difficult situations but also a strategy on how to do so, especially with other individuals different from ourselves. . . . This trip put me in the most difficult, negative mindset and through the most physical torture I have ever been in, and even though my mind was expressing negative thoughts and feelings, my mouth was so trained it filtered and edited my negative thoughts into positive and well expressed communicated issues. This made cold hard facts sound like warm soft criticism and that has helped me as a person.

– ABLE student, 2007

The depth of these experiences goes well beyond credit attainment and initiates a process of lifelong learning.

Reference


Anna-Marie Mills is a 14-year teacher with extensive trekking experience in Nepal, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and India. After teaching in Japan for three years, Anna-Marie became involved in adventure-based education while pursuing her interests of canoeing and backpacking.

Kevin O’Dwyer is a 26-year veteran in the teaching field, all within the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board with qualifications in Phys-Ed and Geography and an emphasis on World Issues. Kevin brings to the classroom extensive counselling experience he developed during his 11-year commitment to union work.

Kara achieved six credits in the span of a semester in ABLE and is currently in her first year of college, living in residence.

Beyond the government’s focus on accountability, assessment and standardized testing, some of the more significant student success has yet to find a “strand.” Fortunately, both ABLE students and teachers value the human face in education.
At first glance, Sioux Lookout is a typical northern Ontario town, situated within an intricate lake and river system, socially focused on year-round outdoor activities, and enveloped by kilometres and more kilometres of undomesticated Canadian Shield landscape. You might think this would be an ideal spot for outdoor education, just as we did when we moved here only a couple of years ago. In fact, we specifically envisioned building a not-for-profit business that would fill the need for alternative professional training and youth programming through the use of outdoor experiences. However, as young people ready to bring atypical forms of outdoor education to the culture of Sioux Lookout, we were unaware of how the atypical culture of Sioux Lookout would instead expose the need for change in our outdoor education programming.

Before you Google “Sioux Lookout,” or plan a quick weekend visit to the town known for its Blueberry Festival and Bearskin Airlines, there are a couple things you should be prepared for. Although the first word in the town’s name is pronounced the same as the first word in the city of Sault St. Marie, they are as different from each other as the spelling of their names. And despite the fact that places such as Perry Sound, Timmins, and even the city of Thunder Bay are considered by most of the Ontario population to be located in “northern” Ontario, you would still need to drive many hours north on the Trans-Canada highway (or fly many nautical miles in a plane too small to have a toilet) to reach the northern town of Sioux Lookout.

Besides being located a great distance from most of urban Ontario, you should also be prepared for the fact that approximately half of its residents are Aboriginal. Bush planes dot the shoreline ready to transport First Nations visitors and their cargo to fly-in communities north of the town. Self-proclaimed as the “Hub of the North,” Sioux Lookout is one of the major towns that services over 40 First Nations communities, and therefore has naturally become home to Aboriginal people wanting to live in a town that offers year-round road access and is merely a one-hour drive to the closest Wal-Mart. Riding on a cultural history proven to survive everything from the harsh Canadian climate to the assimilation tactics of political and religious groups, the First Nations culture in town has challenged us to continue developing the learning process within outdoor education.

The remainder of this article is a collection of observations and anecdotes about lessons we have learned in becoming more culturally fluent facilitators. It should not be viewed as a complete analysis of either Aboriginal or mainstream cultures but rather as a collection of incidents that have influenced us and helped inform our practice as facilitators. Furthermore, we should point out that neither of us is of Aboriginal ancestry; we have, however, spent a considerable amount of time in the North, which has allowed us to develop close cross-cultural friendships wherein real dialogue about cultural differences has taken place.

We are very grateful to those Aboriginal friends who have in a sense taken us under their wings and with great patience helped us, first, to realize when we have been culturally inappropriate and, second, to learn other ways of doing things. Lastly, we would like to point out that the terms “Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal participants” and “Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal cultures” are used here to refer to the two main cultural groups in this area. We acknowledge that there is diversity within the membership of the mainstream cultures, as
well as between the various Aboriginal Nations within Canada. These terms are used here simply to help highlight some general similarities and differences that exist within these cultures.

“In our efforts to become more experienced outdoor educators we have learned that many Aboriginal people in northern Ontario consider excessive eye contact and dramatic body language to be intrusive. As students of mainstream society in southern Ontario, we were taught and often required to use a very “in your face” and upfront form of communication. It appears to me now that leadership in mainstream society has correlated animated body language with confidence. Aboriginal leadership style is often far more subtle, yet reflects a confidence rarely seen in non-Aboriginal people. Both of us have learned that, when facilitating a cross-cultural group, it is important for the facilitator to be able to include and role model other ways of leading. If not, Aboriginal participants may come to the conclusion that they can never be leaders because they do not naturally lead the way that is most common within mainstream Canadian society.

Appropriate eye contact and leadership style are just two things that a facilitator of outdoor education must be conscious of in order to facilitate effectively when working with a cross-cultural audience. However, besides appropriate facilitation, we have learned that it is just as important to develop a program that allows room for new forms of problem solving and observation.

Recently we constructed a low ropes course in a quiet location just outside of town called Cedar Bay Recreation Complex, a place that has an elaborate network of trails for horseback riding in the summer and cross-country skiing in the winter, as well acting as a summer day camp for the local youth (and trillions of local bugs). With limited access and just the most basic forms of infrastructure, Cedar Bay is a natural haven for groups to focus on their own challenges and successes, and a comfortable place for many First Nations people who even today continue to utilize the natural resources surrounding their communities.

While we for many years have understood that ecological literacy is highly valued and practiced by most Aboriginal communities, we still made the mistake of approaching land-based experiences as challenges to be conquered. We failed to realize many participants on such outings are quite relaxed and see the experience as a natural and everyday experience. On one particular occasion while on a canoe trip with some of our friends, we were relying heavily on a map to guide our direction, and inevitably the decisions that faced our group. However, with their familiarity of the land and keen eye for seeing changes in landscape, our Aboriginal comrades thought it was hilarious that we relied so much on an overvalued resource, and threw the map into the wind, which eventually carried it to its destiny at the bottom of the lake. It was us who ventured into much of the learning that day, including trusting them to get us home.
During a region-wide leadership training camp for youth, we were privileged to have participants from a number of northern First Nations communities as well as non-Aboriginal youth from local towns including Sioux Lookout. Even though all the non-Aboriginal participants had some experiences living alongside Aboriginal peoples within mainstream society, the majority were not familiar with the ways that Aboriginal culture is different from the mainstream. This led to some interesting group dynamics. In one instance, several participants voiced that they thought the Aboriginal youth were just shy because they were out of their element. When asked by the facilitator, “Are you shy?” the Aboriginal youth replied, “No, we’re just listening”! The Aboriginal youth explained that some of the non-Aboriginal participants talked more than they were used to, leaving few chances for them to share their own ideas.

Since utilizing our new low ropes course to teach various life skills, we have become even more aware of the need to develop programs that provide time and physical space for observation. When comparing the problem solving and group work styles of our Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants, we have noticed that there is an important difference: Instead of adopting the “brush yourself off and try again” strategy, many Aboriginal participants would rather wait, watch and try once they feel they know how to
successfully complete the task. When working in a culturally diverse group they will often stand back and silently strategize rather than lead a conversation regarding strategy. Unfortunately many facilitators have interpreted this type of behaviour as “timid” or even “uninterested.”

One incident comes to mind where some participants prematurely concluded that some Aboriginal group members were not interested in participating. Part of the group was huddled together brainstorming possible solutions while randomly trying things to see what would work. The Aboriginal participants were standing to the side observing and thinking about what might work. When we paused the group for a “teachable moment” we asked the group to observe the group’s physical formation. The non-Aboriginal participants realized that they had put their backs to the Aboriginal group members, excluding them entirely from their conversation. In an effort to include the Aboriginal members, one of the participants asked the others if they had any ideas to share. The Aboriginal participants shared their observations and suggested a solution (as it turned out, the proposed solution was the missing component of the puzzle!). During the debriefing component one Aboriginal participant explained that she did not want to seem rude and interrupt the group but had in fact seen the solution early on in the group task. An interesting conversation followed that gave members from both cultural groups a chance to inquire and understand more about norms within each society. The Aboriginal participants explained that many of them have been taught that it is impolite to tell someone that their idea is wrong because it robs that person of their learning experience. As facilitators we have observed that it is not uncommon for Aboriginal participants to wait to share their ideas until asked. This creates an interesting group dynamic when doing a problem solving challenge. We have learned that it is vital to acknowledge and talk about different cultural approaches before beginning an initiative, first, to avoid misunderstandings and, second, to give participants the chance to try approaching the problem in a way that allows all forms of expression.

Our learning is definitely ongoing as we strive to become more culturally sensitive and relevant as facilitators in a culturally segregated community. Although we have been living and working in northwestern Ontario for over ten years, we still feel we are at the beginning of an awkward yet important journey of trying to see the world through different cultural lenses. This process has made us more aware of our own biases, processing preferences and leadership styles. Furthermore it has made us painfully aware of the many ways that other cultural expressions (in this case Aboriginal culture) are muted and suppressed inadvertently by the way many facilitators unknowingly promote mainstream cultures’ ways of communication, problem solving and leadership. While oversight may seem slight to those of us who see the world through the lens of the dominant culture, we have been told and have observed that it communicates volumes to members of different cultures about how their ways are viewed and accepted. We hope this article is viewed not as an anthropological case study, but rather as a small collection of observations that highlight an area in need of some attention, especially for facilitators who interact with Aboriginal participants. More importantly, we hope it is viewed as an invitation for all facilitators to become more culturally fluent facilitators within the culturally diverse country of Canada.

Graham Thompson and Erin Horvath live in a log home in the northern Ontario community of Sioux Lookout, where they are raising two young boys, Braeden and Tyler. Although both have years of experience providing outdoor education and each carry Master of Education degrees, it has only been in the last year that they have made facilitating experiential learning a fulltime job. Their not-for-profit business is called New Vision Unlimited (www.newvisionunlimited.9k.com).
Bananas on Trail: Inspiring Global Connections

by Charlotte Jacklein

Flecks of sunlight gleam on the windy lake, the autumn hills are a haze of gold and red, my group of students are navigating their canoes through the rocky islets of the Canadian shield — and I’m thinking about bananas. Banana chips, to be precise.

As an outdoor educator, I love the immediacy of my work and the sense of living fully in every moment. I value seeing the change in students as they step out of the complex framework of their home lives and experience themselves and their surroundings from a new perspective. Much of the power of this experience often comes from the sense of isolation and purity when travelling and working together in a wilderness or outdoor context. Yet in reality, even if we are travelling weeks away from visible signs of the “outside world,” we remain closely connected to a multitude of other people and places.

Enter the banana chips. Here we are, paddling thousands of kilometres from the nearest plantation, yet our next trail snack is banana chips. Tasty stuff, but loaded with complexities rarely addressed on an average day.

An ongoing challenge for me as an outdoor educator is to connect students’ outdoor experience to the greater global world around us — in a positive way that empowers and encourages discussion, and doesn’t shatter their outdoor experience or leave them feeling hopeless in the face of the world’s problems. Given the potential of outdoor education to have a powerful impact on students, it follows that we use it to explore social justice and global issues.

The following activities can be adapted to age group, time limitations and resources. Framed in a non-judgmental and open manner, these activities, in addition to being fun and lively, can lead to powerful discussions and realizations among the students.

Race Around the World

This activity can be a lightning-fast energizer with little discussion, or it can be turned into a lengthier activity with an extended debrief.

While outdoors, present the students with the challenge of, as quickly as possible, finding things made in as many different countries as possible (or specific countries, or three items from the same country, etc). Depending on group size, students can work individually, in pairs or in teams. Give students five minutes to fan out around the campsite and go through their bags. Clothing in particular is usually conveniently well labelled.

Once the students return, have them
• sort the items by continent (or dress someone up entirely in clothes from that continent or country)
• lay out the items by distance (closest country to furthest away).

Possible debrief questions:
1. Do you notice any patterns of where things are made?
2. What do you know about these countries?
3. Why do you think things are made there?

The World on our Table

Before a meal on trail, have each student or pair of students pick up an item of food that’s about to be served (e.g., trail mix, crackers, bag of cookies, and so on). Give the students a few minutes to read any labels, figure out what’s in the food and where the food came from, and to think about what resources and people were likely involved in producing the food item.

Form a circle, then go around and have each student or pair present their food item from beginning to end. Depending on the age group, the response might look something like this:
The label on these crackers says they were made in Canada. The wheat was probably grown on the Prairies. The wheat needed soil, sun and water to grow. Pesticides and fertilizer were probably applied to the wheat. A farmer used machines like tractors, which needed gas that might have come from Alberta. The wheat was likely transported by train and then perhaps ship from Thunder Bay. The grain was turned into flour and then baked into crackers in a factory. The wrappers are made of plastic, which uses petroleum products that might have come from Alberta, and cardboard, made from trees, perhaps from northern Ontario. The crackers were then shipped to a grocery store where we bought them and brought them here by bus and then canoe.

Even a simple trail meal will inevitably involve a large number of resources and people. Increased awareness of this use of resources will give students a new perspective on their food, even if it’s a meal they’ve eaten many times before. During the debrief it’s important that the facilitator be conscious not to create a sense of guilt, but rather foster a sense of thankfulness and awareness of the privilege to be eating good food.

The Great Banana Chain

This activity can take about 15 minutes, or with discussion and debrief can be expanded to take much longer. The banana is only an example, and could be changed to any number of products that we consume. Younger students in particular enjoy the role-playing and movements in this activity, while older students are able to go into more detail and also touch on related topics like fair trade.

1. Brainstorm what things we use or consume on a regular basis. The facilitator then says, “Wow, it’s only 11 o’clock and we’ve already used a lot of things today. Often the things we use have travelled from far away and many different people and resources were involved in making them. We’re going to look at something simple like a banana, and try to find out how many different people and things were involved in getting the banana to our bellies.”

2. Ask a volunteer to think of a motion and sound to represent eating a banana. Let them act this out, and then ask the class where this person got the banana from. The next volunteer can be a store clerk, making a sound and a motion. Ask how the banana got to the store. You’ll have lots of volunteers to be truck drivers, airplane pilots, ship captains. You can go through the sound/motion sequence from beginning to end each time (if the setup is fast/concise), or simply let each new person do their sound and motion, and then do them all together at the end.


Additional questions to consider: What does the machinery run on? – Where does the water come from for irrigation? – What are the impacts of clearcutting land? – Who lived on the land before it was logged?

Get everyone to act out the banana chain from beginning to end, complete with wild monkeys, falling trees, coughing pesticide sprayers, speeding trucks, and so on, and ending with the person taking a bite from the banana.

Possible debrief questions:
1. Do you have the power to change anything in the chain?
2. Do you think this system is fair?
3. How can we make systems like these more fair (or live more simply)?

Charlotte Jacklein has worked as an outdoor educator and guide in Canada and abroad. She is currently working at Outward Bound Canada.
Outdoor Recreation at Brock University
by Mary Breunig, Tim O’Connell and Garrett Hutson

Brock University offers both undergraduate and graduate programs and is host to approximately 17,000 students. It is the only Canadian university located in a World Biosphere Reserve — the Niagara Escarpment. The Bruce Trail passes through campus, and offers ample opportunities for hiking, mountain biking, nature interpretation and outdoor education. Brock is nestled in the heart of the Niagara wine region in St. Catharines, Ontario with Niagara Falls in close proximity.

The purpose of this paper is to introduce the readers of Pathways to some of the recent changes and exciting outdoor recreation educational opportunities within the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies at Brock University.

The Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies at Brock University has a long and distinguished history. The department opened its doors to students in 1981, and currently serves over 400 undergraduate and 15 graduate students. Undergraduate students elect to study in one of three concentrations — Inclusive and Therapeutic Recreation, Community Recreation or Outdoor Recreation — and may choose a general recreation degree. The department also offers a three-year pass program, and has articulation agreements with several colleges. Graduate students may choose the Leisure Studies field in the Master of Applied Health Sciences program, and focus their studies in any of the three concentration areas, including Outdoor Recreation.

Early coursework focused on outdoor leadership and challenge course facilitation. As new faculty joined the department, outdoor recreation courses centered on outdoor recreation resource management, ecotourism and recreation in nature-based environments.

Recently, three new faculty members — Dr. Mary Breunig, Dr. Garrett Hutson and Dr. Tim O’Connell — have refocused the concentration on outdoor leadership in the natural environment.

A new concentration mission was articulated and reads as follows:

The Brock University, Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, Outdoor Recreation concentration provides students with the skills, knowledge and dispositions necessary to serve as wilderness trip leaders, to facilitate groups in outdoor recreation settings, to work in a variety of outdoor and experiential education environments, and to serve as agents of social and environmental change in the world. All classroom and field-based activities include lectures, outdoor and experiential activities, and small group work.

An exciting new outdoor recreation curriculum was implemented in the fall of 2007. All courses include theoretical knowledge related to leisure, play, recreation, outdoor leadership, group dynamics, outdoor education in the K–12 context and experiential education. Technical outdoor skills such as rock climbing, canoeing, winter camping, orienteering, backpacking and minimum impact camping are the centre of a sequence of field courses beginning in second year. The development of interpersonal, critical thinking and writing, and research and evaluation skills is also emphasized in the concentration. The Outdoor Recreation faculty emphasize the need for inclusive, professional and ethical dispositions through their deliberate use of an anti-oppressive teaching and learning framework, both in the classroom and in field activities.
In addition to Recreation and Leisure Studies core courses, some Outdoor Recreation and general elective courses include the following:

**RECL 2F16 — Outdoor Recreation Theory and Practices**
Examination of outdoor recreation theories and engagement in a variety of introductory outdoor field experiences that may include backpacking, winter camping, rock climbing, canoeing, snowshoeing and cross country skiing.

**RECL 3P06 — Outdoor Recreation Resource Management**
Social and ecological principles in the management of people in outdoor settings. Theoretical and applied perspectives on decision-making systems (governance), management frameworks and site considerations.

**RECL 3P26 — Outdoor and Environmental Education**
Theoretical and practical investigation of the outdoors as a setting to develop environmental awareness and connection to place.

**RECL 3P30 — Risk Management in Recreation**
Issues and concerns with the identification and management of recreation and leisure programs on individual, organizational and industry-wide levels. Legal and industry standards for risk management.

**RECL 3P76 — Outdoor Program Management**
Examination and analysis of the organization and operation of outdoor recreation programs, challenge courses, residential and day camps, and/or environmental education programs.

**RECL 4P16 — Advanced Wilderness Program Planning**
An in-depth analysis and application of the planning and execution of an extended outdoor wilderness trip.

**RECL 4P55 — Group Dynamics in Recreation**
An in-depth analysis and application of group dynamics theory, techniques and research to successful group facilitation in a recreation context.

The Brock University Outdoor Recreation program is currently accepting applications for the Master in Applied Health Sciences program. Please visit http://fahs.brocku.ca/gradstudies for more information about this program.

Additional information about the undergraduate program is available on the Recreation and Leisure Studies homepage at http://fahs.brocku.ca/recl/.

Dr. Mary Breunig (mary.breunig@brocku.ca), Dr. Tim O’Connell (tim.oconnell@brocku.ca), and Dr. Garrett Hutson (garrett.hutson@brocku.ca) are all faculty members in the Outdoor Recreation Concentration within the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario.
A shot gun goes off mere metres from my head. My eyes pop open in sheer surprise and fright. The sun is just barely making light through the thin tent walls and the hoods of my sleeping bags have done nothing to muffle the sound. It is 4:45 am. Sarah groans, “That better be a bear.” Michelle says, “I think he wants us to get up.” And I shakily say, “He can’t be serious.”

Our Dene friend Ron is chuckling to himself, and yelling at us to get up. There is reason to squish the temptation of remaining snuggled in to sleep; the snow has lightly dusted the mossy ground and wild cranberries beneath the weathered and gnarled jack pines, immense pieces of blue ice are crashing down the Snowdrift River below where we lay, the fire is already crackling promises of breakfast, and the rolling hills of the Northwest Territories are challenging us to more adventures. I can do nothing but laugh at this peculiar alarm clock as I unzip my sleeping bag and briefly reflect on my previous few weeks.

Three weeks ago I boarded a Greyhound bus with six of my fellow fourth year buddies to wrap up our final Recreation credit. Four provinces, seven silly prairie mesh-back hats, one territory, one ridiculous British book, two sleepless nights, thousands of kilometres, and a snazzy chartered flight later, I found myself in a small isolated community of under 300 people tucked in a gorgeous bay on the east arm of Great Slave Lake.

Three weeks have seemed like a whirlwind, and although it has gone by in a blink, it feels like I have had a lifetime of learning. Being up here has given me a whole new perspective on what it is to be Canadian. To begin, the wildlife and the scenery are absolutely breathtaking in a really raw and barren way with harsh cliffs, stunted spruce, icy rivers, miles of frozen lake and, besides the very small community of Lutsel K’e, not a single other settlement in sight. Being within this ruthless landscape for only minutes gives you this unbelievable appreciation for the people who have survived here for so long.

Every day is filled with challenges, but also with awe. The northern lights come out in the short-lived spring nights like they were on a timer. And though the trees and plants grow small, the winds rip, and the snow still lays thick and deep in early May, the animals grow big, healthy and hearty.

Within the first week, we had all had our turn ripping across the still frozen lake on snowmobiles to catch dinner for ourselves and the community. We had pulled out gigantic lake trout (which our Lutsel K’e friends claim are nothing above average), and learned to clean and cook them on an open fire alongside big chunks of caribou meat, fresh (and the most delicious) bannock and big pots of tea. The community welcomed us, with many offers of meat, fishing trips, lessons in shooting a rifle, a beautiful cabin to stay in, games, and above all their stories.

The people of Lutsel K’e were by far the most interesting and beautiful part of this adventure. They have and are continuing to endure hardships of living in isolation and are dealing with the aftermath of terrible decisions made by outsiders. Their knuckles are white from grasping onto what is left of their rich culture and way of life, but their hearts are overflowing with the pride of who they are, and how they have come to be. They are rising to the challenge of putting their feet down, and holding on to the land that is a crucial element of ensuring the integrity of their lifestyle, and the life of the land around them. The elders have the history, the middle-aged have modern knowledge and the young,
well, they have the hope. I think that together, they make a fine team. It was a phenomenal pleasure to have learned from all of them.

The second and third weeks were filled with time spent with the kids in the school (Kindergarten to Grade 10), hikes, meetings, and much more. We did two days of rock climbing with the high school kids, and, let me tell you, field trips are very different in the Northwest Territories. There is no such thing as a permission form or waivers, or even a seat belt. It was relaxed, fun and refreshing to think that maybe safety can take a vacation.

We witnessed the frustration of being in meetings that address serious issues where languages are a barrier, where goals and needs do not match, where people talk in circles, and where nobody leaves entirely happy. These meetings are only slight pebbles of the mountains that this community will have to climb to make their land the park they want it to be.

The trip began to wind down with a hiking trip along the Snowdrift River. The whitewater crashed, the snow fell, and we ate more hotdogs than you can shake a stick at. We spent our last few days hanging out with the kids, buying artwork, saying goodbyes and thank yous, and doing what all good Recreationers do: standing in a circle and reflecting.

On our last night, as the remaining daylight faded to deep blue in the midnight hour, the seven of us ran yelling and laughing into a small, open, freezing cold lead of the Great Slave Lake. Though the water was more than cold, it was exhilarating, and it felt absolutely amazing to be truly immersed in the north. Although we may never again use a rifle as an alarm clock, pay $13 for a jar of salsa, eat a fish eyeball, hold a fresh 20-pound lake trout, tan a hide, or sit by a river sipping tea with six Dene Elders, these unique experiences are burned deep into our beings. It was one fantastic adventure.

I would like to thank everyone who supported us to make this excursion possible. Thanks to all of you who bought our baked goods, crafts, kilometres, and old clothes; thank you to ORPT, the Northern Research, personal donors, and LUSU for all the funding; thank you to our friends and family for your moral support and ideas; and thank you so much Leslie and Harvey for sticking with us, trusting us, mentoring us, and believing in us. Finally, I want to thank Michelle, James, Sarah, Jen, Meredith, and Jess for all of your hard work, your perseverance and your dedication. It was a truly fabulous northern adventure, and I am so glad to have done it with you.

Christy Norwood completed a Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism degree as well as a Natural Science degree at Lakehead University last spring. She is currently studying to be a teacher in Lakehead’s Outdoor Experiential and Environmental Education Program.
After many long years of debate, consultation, and preparation, certification for challenge/ropes course practitioners is finally here. In February 2007 the Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) approved new standards for the certification of Challenge Course Practitioners. These standards will be used by accredited professional vendor members of ACCT in the training and certification of practitioners and may also be used as a reference by others. These new standards represent the first common approach to certification in our industry. Certification provides an opportunity for organizations to know what they are getting when they hire staff members. It is intended to raise the bar by promoting higher standards of competence among challenge course practitioners and to create some uniformity in the industry.

Certification vs. Accreditation — What’s the Difference?

Outdoor education and experiential educators have long debated the merits of certification and accreditation. Accreditation places emphasis on the whole organization and the systems that help it manage risk. Accreditation communicates to the public that an organization has been judged by its peers to meet a particular set of agreed upon industry practices (Martin, Cashel, Wagstaff, & Breunig, 2006). Certification on the other hand places the emphasis on the individual’s ability to meet a set of pre-requisites, achieve a minimum level of training, and demonstrate competency in a pre-determined set of skills (Ford & Blanchard, 1993). Certification is often more valuable in communicating to organizations that provide outdoor and experiential education programs that a staff member holds a predictable set of competencies.

There are merits to both accreditation and certification. Often accredited organizations will employ certified staff — essentially using both mechanisms to enhance the effectiveness of their services and manage risks effectively. In Ontario, there are many examples of both accreditation and certification programs that have served the outdoor education community well.

Challenge Course Practitioner Certification

In choosing to create certification standards, ACCT has responded to the industry’s demand for a common standard for the training and assessment of challenge course practitioners. In the past, organizations offering training programs developed their own course formats and assessment systems. Many of these training programs provided some kind of “certification” following course participation. Across North America there were significant
Watching Our Step

differences among training courses regarding total course hours, content covered and candidate assessment criteria. To be “certified” meant entirely different things depending on the organization providing the certification. The words training and certification were often used interchangeably, making it difficult to know how or if an instructor’s skills were being evaluated. The lack of uniformity in training provided by different organizations meant that certifications were often not portable.

The new ACCT standards create a common approach to describing the set minimum competencies required by practitioners offering challenge course programming while still allowing individual training organizations to make decisions about the specific practices to be covered. Certification will require that candidates meet necessary pre-requisites, participate in training that includes particular knowledge and skills, and successfully complete an evaluation process including a written test and practical assessment. Certification will continue to be delivered by independent training organizations, not by ACCT. ACCT has simply set the standards and reviewed the operating practices of organizations that have chosen to participate in its Professional Vendor Member Accreditation Program.

The new challenge course practitioner certification standards (ACCT, 2007) include three levels: Level One is intended for entry level practitioners; Level Two for practised facilitators; and Challenge Course Manager for experienced managers. Each level provides for different tracks (options or operating systems) for certification: Low or Spotted Activities Only; High Activities Only; or Full Certification, which includes both Low and High Activities. There is also a provision for site/system specific training to receive official recognition, but this track of certification is not designed to be portable. At each level, the standards outline particular pre-requisites including hours of experience and specify a particular number of training hours. Additionally, the new standards have an age requirement.

Whenever a new certification system is implemented a mechanism must be created to ensure that experienced practitioners do not need to start at the beginning. The ACCT standards do this through “challenging-in” provisions. Requirements for challenging-in at each level are outlined in the chart on the following pages.

What Does Certification Mean for Me and My Program?

There is no requirement for all people working on ropes courses to be certified to these standards. In some cases customized or in-house trainings may be appropriate. Summer camps in particular may find it difficult to attract staff members who meet the age and/or experience requirements. In such cases a mixed approach may be necessary, where some certified staff supervise other staff who have received a custom training appropriate to their responsibilities and facility.

ACCT practitioner certification is intended to raise the quality of programming on challenge/ropes courses. In Ontario organizations have long used the installation and inspection standards to improve the quality of the physical structure of their ropes courses. They have used the operations standards to improve the delivery of their programs. Practitioner certification now creates a new opportunity in Ontario to ensure that staff members who are delivering and supervising programs meet a common minimum standard of training and experience.

For more information about the ACCT practitioner certification standards please visit www.acctinfo.org.
## Summary of ACCT Challenge Course Practitioner Certification Requirements

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<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Challenge Course Manager</th>
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</table>
| Track | Full certification  
Spotted activities only  
High activities only  
Site/System specific | Full certification  
Spotted activities only  
High activities only  
Site/System specific | Full certification  
Spotted activities only  
High activities only  
Site/System specific |
| Age | Minimum age 18 | Minimum age 18 | Minimum age 21 |
| Hours of Training | Full certification — 40 hours; Spotted activities only — 20 hours; High activities only — 20 hours; Site/System specific — 8 hours | Full certification — 80 hours total*; Spotted activities only — 44 hours total*; High activities only — 44 hours total*; Site/System specific — 24 hours total* | 30 hours of management training, 16 must be specific to challenge course management. Level 2 certification required. Total of 110 hours for full certification** |
| Prior Experience | None | 200 documented hours as Level 1 | 500 documented hours experience, including facilitation and management |
| Work Independently | Within the limits of training or under the supervision of Level 2 or a CCM | Within the limits of training and experience or under the supervision of a more experienced Level 2 or a CCM | Will be able to supervise all aspects of the Challenge Course including developing policies and procedures. |
| Ability to Train Others | Not designed to prepare someone to train | Not designed to prepare someone to train | Capable of developing a plan for mentoring and in service training in LOPs and some skills |
| Staff Competencies from Operations Standards | Meets all staff competencies, can apply to routine, familiar program delivery situations with supervision and support | Fully meets all staff competencies, can apply to solving most non-routine situations, can provide leadership to other staff | Fully meets all staff competencies, can manage others, can implement the operations management of a facility |
| Rescues | Not expected to execute rescues | Able to rescue and direct other staff. Spotted Only not expected to rescue. | Able to rescue and direct other staff. Spotted Only not expected to rescue. |
| Leading Edge Climbing | Will be able to climb except for spotted only activities level and those systems that do not require leading edge climbing | Will be able to climb except for spotted only activities level and those systems that do not require leading edge climbing | Will be able to climb except for spotted only activities level and those systems that do not require leading edge climbing |
| Duration | 1 year | 3 years | 5 years |
### References


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Brian Lisson is the President of Adventureworks! Associates, Inc., a Professional Vendor Member (Level 3) of ACCT. He has been working on ropes courses in Ontario for the past 24 years. Sarah Oosterhuis is Director of Training at Challenges Unlimited Inc., a Professional Vendor Member (Level 4) of ACCT.

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<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Challenge Course Manager</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recertification</td>
<td>50 hours experience plus retest or 8 additional hours of training plus retest</td>
<td>150 hours experience plus 24 hours training plus retest or 40 hours training (24 hours for spotted activities only or high only, 16 for site/system specific) plus retest</td>
<td>300 hours experience (may include 30 hours additional training) plus retest, or retake 30 hours CCM training and retest. A CCM whose Level 2 certification is expired is required to provide a plan for rescue and leading edge climbs, except for spotted only activities level and systems that do not require leading edge climbing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging In</td>
<td>Portfolio of at least 100 hours of program experience and training, plus test</td>
<td>Portfolio of at least 400 hours of program experience plus 80 hours of training (44 hours for spotted activities only or high activities only, 24 hours for site/system specific), plus test</td>
<td>Level 2 certification plus portfolio of at least 600 hours experience, 30 hours managerial training, plus test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing</td>
<td>Score of at least 80% on a written knowledge test that includes content that meets the Level 1 standards, and a practical skills test. Some specific basic skills must be passed in order to qualify.</td>
<td>Score of at least 80% on a written knowledge test that includes content that meets the Level 2 Standards, and a practical skills test. Some specific basic skills must be passed in order to qualify.</td>
<td>Score of at least 80% on a written knowledge test and a practical skills test based on Chapter 3 section A of the ACCT operations standards.</td>
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*Level 2 training hours — total includes the hours required for Level 1 plus additional hours of Level 2 curriculum.*

**CCM training hours — total includes the hours required for Level 2 plus additional hours for CCM curriculum.**

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Reflections on the 2007 COEO Conference

by Bryan Grimwood

For the 2007 conference COEO aimed to harness enthusiasm for the recent research summary publication by using the report’s title, *Reconnecting Children Through Outdoor Education*, as the conference theme. Hosted by YMCA Wanakita in Haliburton on September 28–30, the event was situated in a camp-like setting, familiar to many long-serving members and a new retreat for others.

The conference kicked off with a Friday evening slideshow and social, as members united with good friends, colleagues and enthusiasts of the beloved out-of-doors!

Saturday’s program began with early morning optional activities, with some folks out in a canoe, tranquil among the morning mist, while others awakened their rested limbs with a morning jog or yoga sequence. Others rambled weary to the kitchen for that essential first cup of morning black gold. Following a delicious and bountiful breaky (a BIG thanks to the Wanakita kitchen staff for their great efforts in wonderful food preparation throughout the weekend) conference attendees ventured off to a variety of presentation options.

I sat in on Bob Henderson’s discussion of his newly released book, *Nature First: Outdoor Life the Friluftsliv Way*, a compilation of essays focused on the Norwegian cultural characteristic of *meeting* nature in daily life. I spent my afternoon with five other fire-building enthusiasts, sharing ideas about how the friction fire can be used for creating connectedness among children during outdoor education programs. We got our hands dirty, scavenged for firewood, and practiced our bow-and-drill fire starting technique. One of the most memorable moments for me followed this session when four of us seemingly had nowhere to be and no desire to go anywhere, and were intent on enjoying the warming sunshine, the breeze coming off the lake, and continuing our practice of the ancient fire-building skill. Wonderful.

Saturday night’s festivities began with Jessica Lax, founder of the Otesha Project, engaging the COEO audience with an inspirational account of how their cycling, awareness and consciousness raising expeditions were fertilized in magical moments and by compassionate people. Next, the hillbilly punk musical trio, *The Stables* ([www.myspace.com/herecomethestables](http://www.myspace.com/herecomethestables)), played a foot stomping 90-minute session that got lively COEO members up on the dance floor. The social continued out at the beachfront campfire with more guitars, voices and camaraderie.

On Sunday morning, Grant Linney guided us through a plenary session, highlighting key findings of the research summary publication. Shane Kramer then called the Annual General Meeting to order. Good news and good business for the COEO crowd.

Reflecting on the theme of the event, I realized that “reconnecting children” does not necessarily equate to reconnecting those under a prescribed age. Reconnecting children refers to engaging the *child* that lives within us all with meaning, experience, community and the forces that sustain us.

With that in mind, I applaud the 2007 conference planning committee and attending COEO delegates for their hard work, enthusiasm and devotion to making this year’s conference a success. The 2008 conference planning committee is already at work, aiming to build the momentum and energy of the reconnected 2007 conference crew.

Bryan Grimwood is in the early stages of PhD studies in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at Carleton University in Ottawa.
Beyond Our Borders

Saskatchewan Outdoor and Environmental Education Association

by Peta White

Officially founded in 1972 (but existing in another form before that), the Saskatchewan Outdoor and Environmental Education Association (SOEEA) is steadily approaching its 40th birthday and still going strong. A year ago, however, this was not the case.

At that time both the past-president and administrative assistant (a married couple) left southern Saskatchewan for the Northwest Territories; at the same time the then-president decided that he could not continue either. SOEEA was left somewhat rudderless.

Fortunately, with a strong board of directors in position, and with much dedication and hard work over the past year, the association has returned to fine form. We spent time getting our house in order: checking our books, revamping our website, filing, archiving and creating protocols for record keeping and backing up. We now have a wonderful administrative assistant, an overflowing board membership, increasing general membership and many activities in the planning/action stage.

SOEEA has managed its resources well over the past 30-something years and has accumulated quite a nest egg. Our year-to-year expenses are covered via a grant from the Saskatchewan Lotteries in partnership with Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation (SPRA). This funding covers our many areas of action and projects and provides our administrative assistant’s wages.

Recently we held a strategic planning retreat weekend where we invited many of SOEEA’s colleagues to look at where we have been, who we are, and our current and future agenda given our position in the field of environmental and outdoor education.

A number of key phrases were gathered at the retreat weekend: learning to contribute from your strength, engaging people, ways to sustain us include working with others, and contacts are as important as people. We are keeping these in mind as we activate our action plans over the next three years.

SOEEA has identified four target audience groups: formal and non-formal educators (including school administrators), decision makers, partner organizations, and families (general public). Each target group defines a working area for our association and is managed by a board member. We have also identified a number of other areas that have become the responsibility of individual board members. These include communications, archiving and the 40th year celebrations, eco-activities and the usual executive roles.

SOEEA continues to manage three small granting opportunities for our members: the professional development grant, an environmental and outdoor education experience grant and an environmental action project grant. These small grants enable our members to engage in learning actions and activities in the outdoors, often encouraging others to join in.

One of our most successful programs over the past few years has been the SOEEA Ecotour. For this event SOEEA plans an activity that gets its members outdoors into a special environmental area in Saskatchewan, learning and experiencing different aspects of our province. This year our fall Ecotour took us to the Great Sandhills of southern Saskatchewan.

To learn more about SOEEA, please visit www.soeea.sk.ca.

Peta White is a PhD student in the field of environmental education at the University of Regina, Saskatchewan. Originally from Western Australia, she came to Canada two years ago. She finds it very rewarding and inspiring to volunteer with SOEEA.
Designed for primary and junior students, the Drama Hike is a real walk into the woods: smelling, feeling and seeing Nature. It is also an imaginative search for ancient civilizations, in this case the “Hully Gullies.” Since we know little about the Hully Gullies, the purpose of the trip is to discover what these people might have looked like, their social habits, religion, sports and so on. We will use Nature and all of her formations as clues in our search.

Preparations

The hike leader should scout out the area beforehand, although I have led children on such a hike without knowing in advance where we were going. The benefit of exploring the area is increased familiarity. Are there fallen trees? Are there large rocks, a hill, an earth mound or grassy area? It is best to organize the hike in a circular fashion so that you end up near to where you started.

After you are familiar with the lay of the land, take a few minutes to prepare your script; for example, a group of three birch trees could be called “The Three Sisters;” a slope with places to sit might be called “The Sea of Tranquility,” or an open area could be the “Olympic Stadium.” If you have a few of these identified beforehand you will feel more confident and relaxed.

Before the Actual Hike

Gather the students together and tell them that they are going on a Drama Hike, and then tell them what you discovered last night. Make up a story about cleaning up the attic and discovering an old, dog-eared book with pages missing. You tell them that this book was handwritten and therefore very rare and at the same time very hard to read, because of the faded writing. You have discovered, though, that the author was an archeologist or a paleontologist (discuss the meaning of these terms) and seemed to have written notes about his (or her) discovery of an ancient people he called the Hully Gullies. Tell students there was a map in the front of the book and you were surprised to discover that this was the very area he was searching in. You are very excited and suggest that all of you go on a hike to see if you can discover something about these ancient people. You didn’t bring the book along because it was so old that it is falling apart and you want to get it repaired. You did, however, spend some time skimming the book and found out a few facts. Much information was missing or illegible and will need to be filled in as you go on this hike.

The Actual Hike

Make your way to the entrance of the forest and stop. Tell the students that the book mentioned that this was a very sacred area and protected by the tree spirits. To enter with any expectation of discovering anything, permission must be obtained. Have groups brainstorm a song that they could sing to ask permission. They can use popular tunes and change the words, or make up their own song. After a few minutes, have them sing their songs of permission. Listen for an acceptance and enter (acting is need here).

As the facilitator, it is a good idea for everyone to follow behind you. When you come upon an interesting formation in Nature, stop the group, give it a name (as you try to remember what you read in the book — acting again) and ask students to tell you how the area was used and what happened there. Students will delight in expressing their bit of creativity. Accept all answers and remember them for later add-ons. When the discussion is exhausted, move on to the next site and repeat with a similar story and questions.
Depending on the time and length of the hike, from six to ten sites can be chosen and each one presented with a different slant so that different information can be presented. One site could be a living area, another could be used for recreation, religion, work, hunting, meditation, battles or ceremonies. Students will even want to identify some sites themselves and brainstorm their use. When you reach the last site and before you exit the forest, have students review their research and come up with a comprehensive profile of the Hully Gullies. How big were they? What did they eat? I often stop at a patch of wintergreen berries and pick a few (or just the leaves) to give everyone a taste.

Before the final exit, break students into their groups again to have them come up with a “rap” to say thank you for the privilege of entering the Land of the Hully Gullies.

**Follow Up**

As a follow up activity, stories can be written about the Hully Gullies: describe the trip you have taken, summarize what you think the Hully Gullies looked like and why they behaved as they did. Pictures of the Hully Gullies are always fun to draw.

Don’t underestimate the value of this hike. The students will love it, and may want to play Hully Gullies the next day. They are all enthusiastic to express their creativity.

**Suggestions for Creative Sites**

A flat plateau could be an area for games, or battle or a garden area.

Groups of trees can be called “The Three Buddies,” “The Four Grandmothers,” or “A Power Center.”

A hole in the ground may be referred to as a cave: “The Mysterious Cave,” “The Forbidden Cave” or “The Entrance.” Use your imagination and the students will use theirs.

Rocks and rock formations can be given names such as “The Fallen Grandfathers,” “Thor’s Supply Area,” “Building Quarry,” “A Communication Center” or “Resting Area.” A particular name will initiate discussions in a certain direction.

Language: From an old worm eaten tree, a “pudding rock,” or a massive bunch of fallen branches, have the students “translate” the message that the Hully Gullies left for us.

Numbers: Use twigs in a fun game to discover the math of the Hully Gullies.

You don’t have to search for the “Hully Gullies.” You can look for the “Fern Dwellers,” “Earth People,” “Windy Wanderers,” “Glomming Duskies” or any other creative name you can think of.

**Other Tips and Suggestions**

Make sure the children are protected from black flies, mosquitoes, and so on. Make sure they have proper clothes for hiking, including appropriate footwear.

Depending on the length of the hike, it might be a good idea to have water bottles or a snack for them.

Safety is important. Don’t run in the bush. Be careful on hills and rocks.

Make sure every child gets a chance to contribute to the hike.

The hike could even be done in a suburban location with a few changes in stories and landmarks. With imagination, any location will be successful for the Drama Hike.

Jerry Jordison is a long-time COEO member. He presented the Drama Hike during the recent COEO conference held at Camp Wanakita.
Risk management is a necessary component of effective outdoor education programs but not necessarily anyone’s idea of a good time. For voluntary youth serving organizations in Alberta, Quest Research and Consulting has just made the job easier.

Their CD, completed in July 2007, is packed with resources and information. More than just another set of standards, author Glenna Hanna provides a truly unique and comprehensive package of resources for managing risk during outdoor pursuits, aquatics, excursions and remote area travel. Although written for programs in Alberta, the information in *YouthSafe Outdoors* is also relevant for programs in Ontario.

Hanna has recognised risk management is a collective responsibility by providing separate sets of tailored information for program managers, boards of directors, front-line leaders, parents and youth participants. Along with pages of written text, there are PowerPoint presentations, lesson plans, customizable documents, and every form that might conceivably be required. Because the information is presented on CD-ROM, it is easy to share with stakeholders only what is relevant to them. The section on parents’ rights and responsibilities is just what every leader has been looking for.

Attention to detail and organization is evident throughout the package. Activities are divided into three types: regular, higher risk (termed higher care) and travel (both out-of-province and international). Checklists reflect the activity when it occurs as a daytrip, overnight or extended experience. As a result, program managers and front-line leaders can easily differentiate the level of care that applies to their specific outing.

As an outdoor leader and program manager, my favourite part of *YouthSafe Outdoors* is its comprehensive treatment of the role of telecommunication devices in outdoor programs. Hanna describes why the use of phones has increased over the last 15 years and the expectations this has created in parents and the general public. From the warning that cell, satellite or radio phones are not substitutes for adequate trip planning, decision making, or emergency preparedness to reminders that phones may not work in cold temperatures and certain locations, the author presents both the positive and negative aspects associated with this topic. She reminds leaders that use of cell phones, including text messaging and picture taking, may need to be managed during crisis situations to balance accurate flow of information with the timely notification of parents, directors and media.

As an instructor of future outdoor leaders, I appreciate the 21st century approach to risk management. Many of the hundreds of references include links to websites or online articles. The coverage of topics such as early exit plans for misbehaviour, allergy and medication management, obtaining verbal consent when a participant arrives with an incomplete form, custody disputes, privacy concerns and working alone to name a just a few, recognises that society has changed. *YouthSafe Outdoors* helps outdoor programs develop risk management plans that acknowledge these changes.

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*Kathy Haras recently became an Assistant Professor in the School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism at Lakehead University.*
Call for Submissions to the 2008 Lakehead University Outdoor Film Festival

The Lakehead University Outdoor Recreation Student Society is pleased to announce that it is currently accepting submissions in all categories for the 2008 Lakehead University Outdoor Film Festival. The festival is slated to take place on two evenings in late March with the theme “A Celebration of the Outdoors: Discovery of Self, Group, and Nature.”

The festival takes place in Thunder Bay, home of some spectacular outdoor venues and adventures. The festival maintains a local focus, but has been growing with each successive year. Previous years have featured films from as far afield as Antarctica and Nunavut. This year should be no different as the festival remains an excellent opportunity to showcase filmmaking talent with all submissions welcome, amateur or professional.

In the spirit of the outdoors we love and adore, the festival is a charitable event that donates all generated revenue to local organizations dedicated to protecting nature. The 2007 recipient was the Thunder Bay Field Naturalists.

Films may be formatted in VHS, DVD or CD and must be respectful, innovative and relevant. Submit films by mail to LU Outdoor Film Festival c/o Lakehead University School of ORPT 955 Oliver Road Thunder Bay ON P7B 5E1

Submission deadline for the 2008 Festival is February 15, 2008. The late submission deadline is March 1, 2008. For more information about submissions and the 2008 Lakehead University Outdoor Film Festival please contact festival coordinator, Ken Brunton (kgbrunto@lakeheadu.ca).
Submission Guidelines

Information for Authors and Artists

Purpose
Pathways is the voice of outdoor experiential education in Ontario. Reflecting the interests of outdoor educators, classroom teachers, students and academics, the journal focuses on the practice of outdoor experiential education from elementary to post-secondary levels and from wilderness to urban settings. Pathways highlights the value of outdoor experiential education in educating for curriculum, character, well-being and the environment.

Submitting Material
The Pathways editorial board gladly considers a full range of materials related to outdoor experiential education. We welcome lesson outlines, drawings, articles, book reviews, poetry, fiction, student work and more. We will take your contribution in any form and will work with you to publish it. If you have an idea about a written submission, piece of artwork or topic for a theme issue, please send an e-mail outlining your potential contribution to the chair of the editorial board, kathy.haras@lakeheadu.ca.

In general, written submissions should be tailored to fit into the framework of one of Pathways 20 established columns (see descriptions of these columns on page 36).

Whenever possible, artwork should compliment either specific articles or specific themes outlined in a particular journal issue. Please contact the chair of the editorial board if you are interested in providing some or all of the artwork for an issue.

Formatting
Use 12 point, Times New Roman font with 1.25 inch (3.125 cm) margins all around. Text should be left justified and single spaced. Place a blank line between paragraphs but do not indent. Use APA referencing style.

Include the title (in bold) and the names of all authors (in italics) at the beginning of the article. Close the article with a brief 1–2 sentence biography of each author (in italics).

Do not include any extraneous information such as page numbers, word counts, headers and footers or running heads.

Pathways contains approximately 550 words per page. Article length should reflect full page multiples to avoid partially blank pages.

Articles should be submitted to the Chair of the Editorial Board or issue Guest Editor, preferably as a Microsoft Word e-mail attachment.

Each piece of artwork should consist of a single black and white drawing (cross-hatching but no shading) on an 8½ by 11 inch sheet of paper.

Artwork should be submitted to the Chair of the Editorial Board or issue Guest Editor either as a digital file (jpg is preferred) or as a hard copy.

Submission Deadlines
Volume 1 Fall September 15
Volume 2 Winter December 15
Volume 3 Spring February 15
Volume 4 Summer April 15

Complimentary Copies
The lead author of each article receives one copy of the issue in which the article appears as well as one copy for each coauthor. Lead authors are responsible for distributing copies to their coauthors.
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<tr>
<td>Prospect Point</td>
<td>An opinion piece concerning education in the out-of-doors; philosophy, commentary, and personal musings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading the Trail</td>
<td>Review of books, music, websites, curriculum guides and other educational resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sketchpad</td>
<td>About a featured artist, his or her artwork, creative process and more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gathering</td>
<td>Information about past and future COEO conferences and regional events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tous Nos Voyageurs</td>
<td>Recognising the diversity of participants, providers and places connected with outdoor experiential education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracking</td>
<td>Information about outdoor experiential education conferences, news, events, recent resources and job postings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching Our Step</td>
<td>Managing risk during all phases of an experience, legal issues and crisis response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild Words</td>
<td>A look at how language enhances the practice of outdoor education; may explore the meanings of words in languages other than English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario

Membership Application Form
(Please Print)

Name (Mr./Mrs./Ms./Miss) ________________________________
Street Address________________________________________
City/Town____________________________________________ Province _________ Postal Code __________
Telephone ( )_________________________________________ Business ( )_____________________________
E-mail________________________________________________

Type of Membership

☐ Regular $50.00  ☐ Student $35.00  ☐ Family $60.00
☐ Library $60.00 (Subscription to Pathways only)  ☐ Organizational $100.00

Organizational memberships are for businesses, conservation authorities, outdoor education centres, etc. This rate will include one copy of Pathways, a Web link (if requested in writing), a maximum of three people at a member’s rate for conferences and workshops, reduced cost of ad space in Pathways, and display space at conferences.

United States orders please add $4.00. International orders please add $12.00.
COEO membership is from September 1–August 31 of any given year.

Please send this form with a cheque or money order payable to
Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario
1185 Eglinton Ave. East, Toronto, ON M3C 3C6

Each member of COEO will be assigned to a region of the province according to the county in which he or she lives.

Central (CE) Welland, Lincoln, Hamilton-Wentworth, Halton, Peel, York, Simcoe, Metro Toronto
Northern (NO) Kenora, Rainy River, Thunder Bay, Cochrane, Algoma, Sudbury, Nipissing, Manitoulin, Timiskaming, Parry Sound, Muskoka, Haliburton
Western (WE) Essex, Kent, Elgin, Lambton, Middlesex, Huron, Bruce, Grey, Dufferin, Wellington, Waterloo, Perth, Oxford, Brant, Haldimand-Norfolk