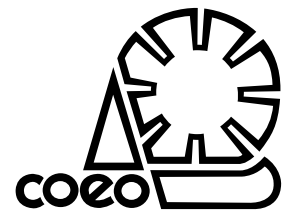


Pathways

THE ONTARIO JOURNAL OF
Winter 2013, 25(2)

OUTDOOR EDUCATION



Pathways

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. We achieve this by publishing the *Pathways* journal, running an annual conference and regional workshops, maintaining a website, and working with kindred organizations as well as government agencies. Members of COEO receive a subscription to *Pathways*, as well as admittance to workshops, courses and conferences. A membership application form is included on the inside back cover of this issue of *Pathways*.

The Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario
c/o Sport Alliance Ontario
3 Concorde Gate
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Pathways

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The Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario Board of Directors

President: Kyle Clarke
55 Patrick Street, Kingston, ON K7K 3N9
(H) 613-545-5343
kyle.clarke@queensu.ca

Past President: Zabe MacEachren
Faculty of Education, Duncan McArthur Hall
511 Union Street, Kingston, ON K7M 5R7
(H) 613-541-1756 (B) 613-533-6209
maceache@queensu.ca

Vice President: Allyson Brown
10444 Winston Churchill Boulevard, PO Box 226,
Norval, ON L0P1K0
(H) 647-234-1270
abrown@ucc.on.ca

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King City Secondary School
2001 King Road, King City L7B 1K2
(B) 905-833-5332 x468
william.schoenhardt@yrdsb.edu.on.ca

Secretary: Justyna Szarek
401-5 Hill Heights Road, Etobicoke M8Y 1Y9
justyna.szarek@gmail.com

Volunteer Coordinator: Ruthie Annis
r.m.annis@gmail.com

Director At Large: Debbie Ray
P.O. Box 320, Lion's Head N0H 1W0
(H) 519-793-6838 (C) 519-372-7199
debbie.ray@bwdsb.on.ca

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sam-allard@hotmail.com

Director At Large: Tobin Day
Peninsula Shores District School, 115 George Street
Warton, ON N0H 2T0
(W) 519-534-2205 x 660
tobin_day@bwdsb.on.ca

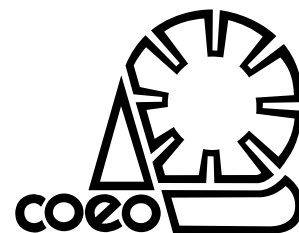
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karenokrafka@yahoo.ca

Director At Large: Stephen Nash
Stephen Nash, 6 Dianna Street
Kingston, ON K7L 4V1
(H) 613-546-0790 (W) 613-328-3150
nashes@sympatico.ca

Membership: Deborah Diebel
P.O. Box 1339, Warton N0H 2T0
(W) 519-534-2767
deborah_diebel@bwdsb.on.ca

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Pathways Editorial Board

Interim Chair: **Bob Henderson**
2631 Concession #7
RR#4
Uxbridge, ON L9P 1R4
(H) 905-649-8945

Heather Andrachuk
28 Oriska Way
Ottawa, ON K2J 4N8
heather@carpridgelearningcentre.ca

Ben Blakey
john.blakey@mail.utoronto.ca

Erin Cameron
emcarte1@lakeheadu.ca

Scott Caspell
355 Ambrose Street
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 1M1
scottcaspell@hotmail.com

Indira Dutt
14M-100 Bain Ave
Toronto, ON M4K1E8
indidutt@gmail.com

Kathy Haras
kathy@adventureworks.org

Connie Kavanagh
1928 Main St W #1001
Hamilton, ON L8S 1J4
connie.elizabeth2@gmail.com

Zabe MacEachren
Duncan MacArthur Hall,
Queen's University, Kingston ON K7L 3N6
(H) 613-541-1756 (B) 613-533-6209

Managing Editor: **Randee Holmes**
605 Arbor Road, Port Credit L5G 2K1
(B) 905-271-6129

Layout and Design: **Karen Labern**

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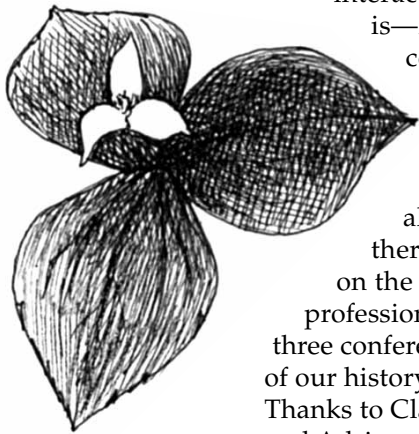
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Well another COEO Annual Conference has come and gone. But, they are never really gone, are they? COEO conferences tend to linger in a positive way. And for no COEO conference was this more evident than with our 40th annual gathering at Camp Pine Crest. The conference committee hoped to attract members from our esteemed alumni back into the fold. We hoped a synergy of “younger and older” would grace the blue lake and rocky shores at Pine Crest. We hoped for the usual too—a spirited gathering of engaged learning, professional interaction and much fun. The truth is—future COEO conference committees, take note—if you set it up right, it runs itself.



That said, the question for *Pathways* is, “how to capture all this for those who were not there?” The focus here will be on the learning potential of such a professional gathering. We start with the three conference keynotes: interpretations of our history, our present and our future. Thanks to Clarke Birchard, Tim O’Connell and Adrienne Blattel, respectively, for delivering these keynotes. These are followed by a series of synopses of each of concurrently run conference sessions. Thanks to all who contributed.

Finally, from the Adventure Education Program at Prescott College in Arizona, we are pleased to include the feature, “Inspiring Environmental Stewardship,” by Kristen Litz and Denise Mitten. It is a pleasure to receive submissions from readers far afield. Note the connections easily made between Litz and Mitten and Indira Dutt, Jim McHardy and...we’ll let you do the rest.
Bob Henderson

COEO’s conference leaders and volunteers, along with D’Arcy Munn and his crew at Camp Pine Crest, were so well organized and joyfully accommodating that the position of Site Coordinator was a pleasant experience in redundancy. It was truly an honour to be involved with such a great group of people. I left there feeling like my career in outdoor education was part of something that mattered in all the ways I ever hoped it would.

Mike Lavin

To quote from W.P. Kinsella’s *Shoeless Joe* (later adapted to become the iconic film, *Field of Dreams*), “If we build it, they will come.”

And come they did! Thanks to everyone whose enthusiastic presence at Camp Pine Crest contributed to making COEO’s 40th Anniversary Conference such a celebration!

A huge heartfelt thanks to the over 40 stalwart COEO Alumni who “answered the call” and shared their considerable wisdom and gracious humour so generously throughout the weekend...often well into the early hours of the morning!

We’d also like to acknowledge the unconditional, professional support we received from Pine Crest Program Director, D’Arcy Munn, and his multi-talented staff who were a tremendous help throughout the entire conference planning process!

Special thanks to all members of the conference planning team: Kyle, Tammy, Jena, Ruthie, Margot, Mike, Lisa, Erin and Bob. It was a privilege and a gift to work alongside such a terrific group of COEO friends!

Ron Williamson

Sketch Pad – Joan Crawford works as a freelance graphic artist/illustrator in Niagara Falls, Ontario. She spends as much time as she can in the out of doors; but, wishes more of that could be spent with her brother. Her art appears on pages 2, 5, 6, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 27, 28 and 35.

Zabe MacEachren is a faculty member at Queen’s University in the Outdoor Experiential Education Program. Her art appears on pages 23 and 24.

Katie Sweet has been a regular provider of the COEO conference poster and contributor to *Pathways*. Her art appears on the cover and pages 21, 22, 25 and 26.

I must admit that, with all of the excitement generated by COEO's 40th Anniversary, my attention was drawn elsewhere. As a result, I was remiss in not acknowledging in my most recent "President's View" column another very special milestone for our organization. It appears that this accomplishment passed quietly, going unnoticed by many of us. But perhaps you spotted this significant achievement when you received your last copy of *Pathways*—**Volume 25, Issue 1**. Yes, the recent autumn issue marked 25 years of *Pathways: The Ontario Journal of Outdoor Education*.

For many long-time members of COEO it may be hard to believe that *Pathways* has been around for 25 years, however since the winter of 1989, this "friendly, practitioner-focused journal" has consistently delivered rich and diverse content while also serving as an invaluable resource for all of COEO's members as well as a great number of outdoor educators beyond Ontario's borders.

I was reminded of *Pathways'* far reaching influence and value while attending the Association for Experiential Education's International Conference this past autumn. I was very happy (but not all that surprised) to hear *Pathways* mentioned by conference attendees on multiple occasions. As I sat in on a presentation for emerging authors and academics in the field of outdoor and experiential education, members of an invited panel referred to *Pathways* several times, describing it as an excellent and accessible publication and a great option for those searching for a journal to which to submit their scholarly work. Also, members of other organizations expressed great envy when speaking about *Pathways* and wished that their own publication could offer the same kind of flexibility and space, as well as usefulness for practitioners that our journal achieves. *Pathways* does in fact occupy a unique niche and the accolades it receives are a reward for providing so many opportunities to authors, editors and artists for the past 25 years.

Of course *Pathways* could not have lasted this long if it were not for the ongoing support of

its editorial team. Many members of COEO have contributed to the journal's editorial board over the years, lending their hand to the direction of the content. Whether it was to select themes, spark interest, broaden our horizons or take us on a challenging journey, the members of the editorial board have worked hard, always striving to keep *Pathways* useful, relevant and full of new insight. It would be impossible for me to mention everyone who has assisted with *Pathways* during the past 25 years, but the following individuals should be recognized as having played a vital role in the continuance of the journal: Bruce Murphy, Dennis Hitchmough, James Raffan, Mark Whitcombe, Ralph Ingleton, Bill Andrews, MJ Barrett, Clare Magee, Barb McKean, Carolyn Finlayson, Barrie Martin, Tom Potter, Connie Russell, Mike Morris, Zabe MacEachren, Kathy Haras, and Scott Caspell. Now, let's see, did I miss anyone else important? Oh, what about Bob? How could I have forgotten him?

Certainly this list would be incomplete without Bob Henderson's name on it, as Bob has contributed in some way or another to nearly every issue of the journal. For many, Bob's name is synonymous with *Pathways*, as he regularly canvasses his colleagues, peers and students for contributions to the journal. Always encouraging new voices, sponsoring diverse perspectives and offering a venue for talented authors and artists, Bob Henderson has been a great steward of *Pathways* and his continuing efforts are greatly appreciated. While I am at it, I should also mention the work and efforts of Randee Holmes, the Managing Editor of *Pathways* since 2001. Randee should also be acknowledged here, as her attention to detail and adherence to timelines has ensured that *Pathways* continues to be a professional quality publication.

Looking forward to the next 25 years of *Pathways*!

Kyle Clarke

An online archive now exists on our website containing all back issues of *Pathways*. Visit www.coeo.org/pathways-journal.html and download the pdfs to read and share.

Inspiring Environmental Stewardship¹: Developing a Sense of Place, Critical Thinking Skills, and Ecoliteracy to Establish an Environmental Ethic of Care

By Kristin Litz and Denise Mitten

To successfully inspire students to live, think and act as autonomous environmental stewards, educators need to captivate students' sense of wonder for nature, role model an ethic of care as they teach, and add equal parts critical thinking and ecoliteracy skills. By designing curricula using experiential activities that embody the enchantment of nature, educators can ignite students' passion for preserving the natural world because these activities provide students with intrinsic motivation to care for places they already love. To make such education a reality, educators need to be willing to move their classrooms outside and to design and implement intentional place-based curricula that include developing a sense of place, an ethic of care, critical thinking skills and ecoliteracy.

Like all educators, environmental educators aim to shape students' behaviour. They have, however, moved away from the notion that presenting students with fact-laden information will suffice in reaching the fundamental objective of influencing thought and behaviour (Ramsey & Rickson, 1976; Pooley & O'Connor, 2000). Additionally, research has shown a weak link between recreation and environmental stewardship, indicating that being outside and enjoying and appreciating the environment are not enough to reliably engage people in stewardship (Hockett & McClafferty, 2005). This line of didactic thought shows that, for education to be effective, curricula must include individual intention together with a thorough understanding of relevant issues, as well as encourage an intrinsic desire to act. Successful curricula also incorporate situational factors, including economics and social pressures, and present opportunities for student empowerment, ownership and

action (Hines et al., 1986/87; Hungerford & Volk, 1990).

Building on this foundation, we suggest that environmental education curricula ought to include activities and opportunities that encourage students to develop 1) a sense of place; 2) an ethic of care; 3) critical thinking skills; and 4) ecoliteracy. Embedding these components into existing or newly designed curricula will improve the efficacy of environmental education. This intentional curriculum will call students to civic action, wherein they will likely behave with responsible and optimistic environmental stewardship.

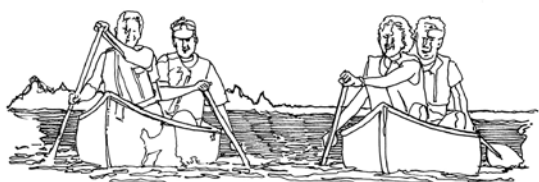
This concept of curricula flows from helping students create a sense of place guided by an ethic of care and supplemented with critical thinking and ecoliteracy skills. Our goal is to advance the field of environmental education by identifying these four components and helping educators understand the importance of embedding them into curricula. We present this concept of curricula design by describing the four components and go on to suggest that educators use a rubric as a self-reflective tool to evaluate and modify activities to best inspire and empower students to become autonomous environmental stewards (for an example and in-depth discussion of the rubric tool, see Litz, 2010).

In this article, we present the four components in a linear fashion. Educators, however, must be aware of the fact that students enter into education programs with varied levels of previous knowledge and life experiences. We recommend that educators provide adaptations appropriate for their individual students. We leave the specific curricula to the educator to re-work or develop, as it depends

on many factors, including the region of the delivered curricula, age, experience, and other demographics of the students, and local community opportunities for engagement.

A Sense of Place

A fundamental component of our proposed paradigm for curricula first involves helping students develop a deep connection to Planet Earth. This meaningful relationship, which we are calling a sense of place, is rooted in the concept that people form an emotional, spiritual and meaningful bond with certain areas (Williams & Stewart, 1998). Place-based education, an ideal venue to help students develop a sense of place and a resultant resilient bond with the natural environment, can ignite students' sense of wonder and love for the natural world (Warren & Wapotich, 2012). Bonding with the land is the central component of place-based education. This deep connection often builds a profound sense of reverence that gives students the intrinsic motivation (though not yet the complete skill set) necessary to treat nature with respect.



In line with this curricula model, educators give students the “opportunity to bond with the natural world, to learn to love it, before being asked to heal its wounds” (Sobel, 1999, p. 10). Imagine, for example, a nature trail along a serene creek behind an elementary school. As part of their interdisciplinary curriculum, students visit this creek regularly. They observe the phonological changes that happen throughout the year, they delight in discovering hidden signs of animals, and they revel in the magic of childhood during their scholastic adventures. The nature journal is one of these students' most cherished belongings. This special place is an integral part of their schooling

throughout their adolescence. Now imagine the students' reactions when they learn their special place is up for sale and a housing developer plans to turn it into a concrete jumble of private property. The fox den will be replaced by a tennis court and the ancient oak by a telephone pole. How would the students feel about this? They may choose to contest the development in order to retain the natural area; the remainder of the curricular components offer them the skills to do so.

We assert that once students recognize the inherent value of nature, they gain intrinsic motivation to treat biotic communities with respect. This encourages students' commitment to a personal decree of living and behaving in environmentally sensitive ways (for an extensive treatment of how to use place-based education, see Sobel, 2005).

Ethic of Care

We suggest that by modeling and teaching an ethic of care, while simultaneously helping students develop a sense of place, students better discover intrinsic motivation to treat our planet with respect. An ethic of care reinforces a compassionate bond with nature developed through place-based education. Based on the belief that people are not superior to nature and that we have neither the right nor the responsibility to dominate Earth (Russell & Bell, 1996), an ethic of care is a moral code that advocates treating others, including the biotic community, in a loving, respectful and caring manner. Thus, educators help students move from possibly non-environmental reasoning to anthropocentric moral reasoning and then to an ecocentric moral perspective (Kortenkamp & Moore, 2001) through blending a sense of place and an ethic of care. The goal is to help students become compassionate individuals (Noddings, 2005) (for a deeper treatment of the ethic of care, see Noddings, 2005).

Teaching an ethic of care requires collaboration between teachers and students, where curriculum is student-centered, but guided by a teacher who

models respect for the students, all aspects of nature, culture, society and self. An ethic of care is internalized when compassion is experienced and practiced. The teacher shows an understanding and practice of ecological systems and models working towards stewardship with a global perspective. Thus, educators are walking their talk about respect and compassion.

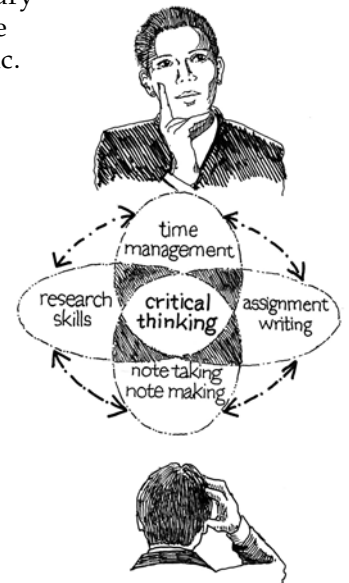
When students adopt an environmental ethic of care, they commit to caring for Planet Earth and treating all parts of nature and the global community with respect, including biotic and inanimate entities. This regard envelops all aspects of community, including human culture and all of the diversity therein. In the words of S. J. Gould (1991), "We cannot win the battle to save species and environments without forging an emotional bond between ourselves and nature as well—for we will not fight to save what we do not love" (p. 14).

Critical Thinking

Kortenkamp and Moore (2001) found that land use conflicts tend to influence people to become more ecocentric in their thinking. In our land use example in this article, we show that becoming more ecocentric in thinking needs to be accompanied by critical thinking and ecoliteracy skills in order to make appropriate stewardship decisions. Critical thinking is the ability to analyze and evaluate one's thinking in order to improve thought and decision making. These skills help students recognize assumptions and bias in personal thoughts, as well as in the words and actions of others (Scriven & Paul, 1987; Nosich, 2012). Critical thinking is an essential component in our proposed curriculum for environmental education. By teaching critical thinking skills, students learn to ask apposite questions, decipher implications, interpret assumptions and accurately categorize information. Through ingrained aspects of activities, students learn to reflect upon different points of view and verify information for accuracy, completeness, fairness, relevancy and logicity. Such analysis helps students reach valid and just conclusions. This less-biased thought

leads students towards pragmatism. They learn to think for themselves. These skills help students understand and evaluate the complexities of the natural world and modern environmental issues in a less biased, more fair-minded manner, but still act passionately. As students learn to think with an awareness of bias and the ability to understand assumptions, they gain greater open-mindedness that helps them acquire the knowledge, skills and enthusiasm necessary to build a proactive environmental ethic.

In other words, to inspire holistic environmental decisions, educators must teach students *how* to think, not *what* to think. In this way, students learn ways to embody personal values and transform these into effective action.



Imagine our students mentioned in the example above, whose special creek was about to be disfigured by a potential sale to a housing developer. Our proposed model suggests that place-based education, when guided by an ethic of care and supplemented with critical thinking activities, would have taught these students how to identify the problem they want to solve (i.e., stop the housing development) and use their reasoning skills to analyze practical solutions (i.e., provide the city with a cost-benefit analysis of buying the land and classifying it as a nature preserve). Using their deep respect for nature as a driving force, the students would apply their well-honed critical thinking skills to identify and access pertinent information about the history of the land, the money involved, the agendas of all involved parties, and the pros and cons of all possible solutions. Because their teachers had

continually designed activities requiring critical thinking, the students would know how to identify possible assumptions, inaccuracies and irrelevancies, and they could recognize the suppositions that come with their personal points of view. Because their teachers had taught them *how* to think, they would be able to consider other perspectives (such as the plans of the developer) with an open mind. In other words, our proposed model of environmental education would empower these students to create and implement a pragmatic and effective action plan.

Ecoliteracy

Ecological literacy, or ecoliteracy, is the ability to understand and apply ecological principles and processes to everyday life and decision making (Center for Ecoliteracy, 2000). This implies that one understands conservation biology and has the know-how to gain the political support necessary to advance conservation practices. Ecoliteracy requires fascination, intent and a deep understanding of the interconnected mechanisms of ecological systems. It also requires familiarity with the political methods that effectively turn passion and ambition into successful action plans. In other words, ecoliteracy means that one has acquired the knowledge and skills to make sound ecological decisions a reality. Such wisdom provides students with the skills to act with integrity towards Planet Earth. It provides them with the expertise to actively change the politics and conversations of the world around them.

To summarize, we suggest that by using a sense of wonder as a platform, place-based education helps students bond with the natural world. By simultaneously encouraging the development of a resilient ethic of care and improving students' critical thinking skills, educators guide them towards ecoliteracy. By providing students with this toolbox of skills and knowledge, educators help nature become relevant to students' lives and students gain the intrinsic motivation and skills to treat Planet Earth with respect. Figure 1 is a schematic diagram illustrating how these concepts interconnect and influence one another.

Through passion, love and commitment, every student can be an environmental steward and advocate for the natural world. They (we) *can*, and *will*, make a difference. Students will not save every forest, every species, or every river, but they can save some. By teaching passion to our youth, we help students realize that their actions will engender peace and harmony between humans and nature. We suggest that this loving bond is best nurtured through place-based education that is built from modeling an ethic of care and enhanced through critical thinking and ecoliteracy skills. This concept of environmental education involves real-life projects that provide opportunities to behave compassionately, think critically and act responsibly in concert with one's natural environment. It stimulates awe and wonder in the mystery of the ordinary.

Such pedagogy inspires proactive and momentous environmental stewardship.

¹In this article, we use the term stewardship to mean an ethical responsibility to care for the environment.

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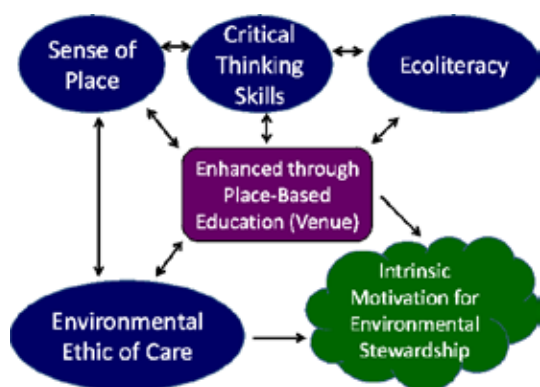


Figure 1

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-
- Kristin Litz, MA, is a wife, a daughter, a sister, an adventurer and an educator. With a background in adventure and place-based education, she brings her passion for nature into the elementary classroom with the hopes of reminding all children that they are worthy of a wonderful life. Kristin can be reached at k.litz@hotmail.com
- With a background in forestry and forest ecology, Dr. Denise Mitten wrote her first ecology curriculum in 1978, *Field Ecology at the John Dorr Nature Laboratory for the Horace Mann School, NY* and spent a decade teaching ecology and natural sciences using field courses such as *Canoeing Minnesota Rivers*. Denise teaches at Prescott College in the graduate Sustainability and Adventure Education programs, and researches nature's impact on wellness, spirituality and nature, and women and body image. Denise can be reached at dmitten@prescott.edu

Honouring Roots

By Clarke Birchard

Based on notes from the keynote presentation given by Clarke Birchard (and friends) at COEO's 40th Conference, Camp Pine Crest, October 22, 2012.

It is an honour to represent my colleagues from the roots of outdoor education in Ontario and the years leading up to and following the founding of COEO. I have been retired and involved fairly intensively in numerous other activities for 20 years. So recalling the circumstances, events, people and places that were instrumental in the early rapid growth and spread of OE in this province has been a challenge.

Before some of you were born I attended the Man-Environment Impact Conference in the 1980s, and delivered there a paper entitled "Outdoor Education in Ontario: Retrospect and Prospect." This was later reworked into an article for *Pathways* (Vol. 8, No. 2, March/April, 1996) titled "To Find a Better Way." In the spirit of reuse and recycle I will refer to portions of those previous works focusing mainly on and 1960s and early 1970s. Let me emphasize that outdoor education was alive and happening before the founding of COEO. COEO grew out of a need among outdoor educators in school boards, conservation authorities, parks and hands-on museums such as St. Marie Among the Hurons to have a mechanism for networking, communication and mutual support.

For a brief look into the social, educational and political climate of the time I can do no better than to quote and paraphrase a few paragraphs from a 1994 *Pathways* article:

The following words from a John Denver song sum up the social climate of the 60s and 70s – " ... it is here we must begin to see the wisdom of the children / And the graceful way of flowers in the wind. / For the children and the flowers are (our) sisters and our brothers, / Their laughter and their loveliness could clear a cloudy day. / And the song that (we) are singing is a prayer for non-believers. / Come and stand beside us we can find a better way."

The late 60s and the 70s were a time of optimism and hope, of searching for a better world and a firm belief that it could be achieved. Consider some indicators of the climate of thought at the time. The Vietnam War had been brought to an end, many thought, due to the concerted social action of the youth of the nation. The folk music included John Lennon's "Imagine" and many other singers and their songs that were utopian, uplifting and inspirational. Young people were hitchhiking across the country and around the world and were almost being encouraged to do so by a young, vigorous, adventurous and intellectual Prime Minister, Pierre Elliot Trudeau. There was an awakening and intensifying of concern for the environment. We were becoming keenly aware of the importance of the natural environment for life, adventure and spiritual renewal. The first Earth Day was held. American environmental philosophers such as Aldo Leopold and Henry David Thoreau were being rediscovered, studied in university courses and enjoyed for recreational reading, inspiration and deeper understanding of our relationship with the earth, solitude, etc. Canadians were basking in the euphoria of 1967 centennial year celebrations. Americans were putting people into space and onto the surface of the moon. President Kennedy had said to the American people in the early 60s, "We will put a man on the moon in this decade – not because it is easy but because it is hard."

Those of us who were fortunate enough to be in positions with some degree of influence in education at the time believed that significant experiences outside of the classroom and in the natural world were essential for the education and wellbeing of all students, that they should be available to all students and that this could be accomplished and done quickly.

The Educational Setting

Reflecting on those times it is clear that things happened around people, programs and special places that served as models and mentors. Models and mentors provided advice, assistance and inspiration to others.

Early starters were mainly teachers and often those who had experiences and connections with summer camps or nature organizations. Examples were Audrey Wilson, Jean Wansborough and others; schools such as Atikokan High School; boards of education such as Toronto with the Island Natural Science School; and, agencies such as the Metro Toronto Conservation Authority with the Albion Hills Conservation School.

Key people who organized pre-COEO gatherings, meetings, speakers and conferences included Norman Massey of the Department of Education; Jack Passmore of the Ontario College of Education (OCE); Kirk Whipper also of OCE as well as Camp Kandalore and the Ontario Camping Association; Dorothy Walter of the Bark Lake Leadership Centre (then part of the Department of Education, Culture and Recreation); Robin Dennis principal of the Toronto Island Natural Science School; and many others.

Gathering places were essential for sharing and being inspired. These included the Ontario Athletic Leadership Camp (which became the Geneva Park Conference Centre); the Ontario Camp Leadership Centre, Bark Lake; the Leslie Frost Natural Resources Centre; the Toronto Island Natural Science School; Albion Hills Conservation Centre; MacSkimming Outdoor Education Centre near Ottawa; and Camp Kandalore. We all know how this list of locations expanded following the founding of COEO.

COEO was officially founded (name, mission, constitution, bylaws and a first executive and board of directors) at the LMFNRC, "Education Without Boundaries Conference" in September 1972. Numerous other significant conferences, workshops and courses followed with guest instructors and presenters such as Julian Smith from the US and directors of some of the British Field Studies Centres, to supplement Ontario and Canadian leaders.

I would like to invite a few old friends to join me with their memories and observations:

Peter Middleton – role of Toronto Island Natural Science School as model, and mentor to many others.

Lloyd Fraser – memories of the early days.

Clare Magee – Bark Lake and Dorothy Walter.

Administration

That bad word is sometimes resented and its importance overlooked. Creative, energetic people do not like the limitations and requirements of administration, but they do exist and are the infrastructure within which we all must work. No matter how inspirational and well-developed they were, successful programs and activities had to happen within organizational and administrative structures that were sometimes not suited for the new initiatives. New approaches had to be developed for budget, staffing, transportation, accommodation, curriculum and safety. Although our respective working conditions were very different from one another, when we were starting up in Bruce County, I called Lloyd Fraser many times for advice on organizational and administrative matters.

Wrap

COEO provided an essential forum for networking, idea sharing, mutual support, inspiration and advocacy during the early years. I have no doubt it continues to do so. I congratulate and thank those who took the torch and have kept it burning through difficult and challenging times.

This has been but a very superficial glimpse of the early roots of outdoor education in Ontario and COEO. The "shoots" can recognize the "roots" by the colour of our hair, if we have any left.

Thank you for this opportunity to remember and share.

Clarke Birchard is an honorary life member of COEO having held a number of positions on the COEO executive and board from its beginning in 1972. He retired in 1992 from the position of Supervisor of Outdoor Education and Science with the Bruce County Board of Education.

Standing Tall: The Growth of a Seed—Reflections on Outdoor Education in Ontario Today

By Tim O'Connell

When asked to speak about the “state of the nation” of outdoor education in Ontario at the recent Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario conference, I struggled at first to find a way to make a connection with the conference theme. When I sat down to think about this more earnestly, I was looking out my window at one of my favourite trees (a big old white pine that leans from right to left, its branches swept downwind like the weeds in moving water) and had that wonderful “aha” moment: I’d use the metaphor of my white pine to frame my perceptions of trends and issues impacting outdoor education in all its myriad forms and functions.

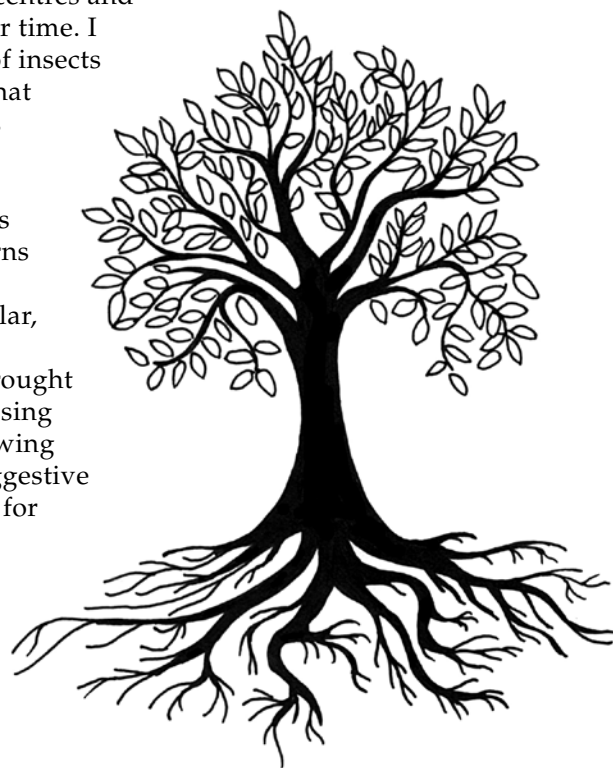
Here’s what I saw: strong roots that had supported it from its birth, a strong, tall trunk, many branches with soft needles and new growth, and its service as a home for a multitude of squirrels and birds. To me, this represented outdoor education in Ontario. The foundation of outdoor education, like the roots of the tree, have been firmly in place and nurtured the growth of a vibrant community of professionals, students and academics. The trunk represented the long-standing programs, practices and theories on which outdoor education has flourished. The fresh growth is reflective of the renewed interest in outdoor and environmental education that has appeared in recent years. Finally, my white pine hosted the activities of many other denizens of nature, just as outdoor education helps participants reach a variety of goals and objectives not directly related to being outside.

However, I also saw some of the less romantic aspects of my white pine, which reminded me of certain parts of the current context of outdoor education in Ontario. For example, the trunk was scarred by lightning strikes (the sudden, inexplicable impacts of society’s impulses on outdoor

education), and there were dead limbs on the ground from the “self-pruning” process that reminded me of the closure of outdoor education centres and other programs over time. I also saw the signs of insects and woodpeckers that represented the less obvious impacts on outdoor education such as video games and parental concerns about child safety. This year in particular, my white pine was showing signs of drought despite some promising signs of a good growing season that was suggestive of reduced funding for outdoor education in Ontario. Its branches are bent to the east from the prevailing winds—a reminder of the impacts on outdoor education of the happenings on Parliament Hill and in Queen’s Park.

Spurred by the image of my white pine and its metaphor for the state of contemporary outdoor education in Ontario, I think the following points capture where we are today:

- The demographics of Ontarians and Canadians are changing (while outdoor education in Ontario is slow to meet this change):
 - There are more people from different cultures and countries and who have a different relationship with nature and the outdoors than ever before.



- o The population is aging and becoming more urban and suburban centred.
 - o The world financial situation impacts societies' and peoples' willingness to support outdoor education.
 - Technology has impacted how people interact with the outdoors and nature, especially youth:
 - o Overall, there is decreased time spent in the outdoors and recreation and leisure in general.
 - o Our history has influenced many Canadian outdoor educators' willingness to integrate technology into practice creating an uneasy tension. This raises the question of how to use technology yet honour traditional outdoor education customs in Ontario.
 - Access to public land is becoming more limited or regulated:
 - o There have been increases in fees for using Ontario Provincial Park areas (e.g., Temagami required permits in 2004).
 - o Costs of transportation to reach outdoor education facilities and preferred locations have risen considerably.
 - Urban and suburban programs have flourished.
 - Mid-sized outdoor education service providers have emerged:
 - o These providers are able to respond to the needs of schools and other clients in an effective, efficient and cost-effective manner.
 - There are programmatic considerations, such as the following:
 - o Professionalization of outdoor educators.
 - o Ontario College of Teachers Additional Qualifications.
 - o The certification vs. experience debate.
 - o The need for outdoor educators to make their skill set more applicable and adaptable to multiple environments (e.g., inner city, urban, suburban, rural, wilderness).
 - o Standardization of curriculum and certifications:
 - Accepted curriculum.
 - Teaching guidelines.
 - Definitive principles embedded in overarching subjects.
 - o Financial supports and lack of awareness of these opportunities:
 - As an example, Ontario Ministry of Education (2012) – \$20M to education programs specifically for outdoor education.
 - o Perceptions of risk:
 - Impacts of technology.
 - Ideas of outdoor education as higher risk than traditional education activities.
 - Increased administrative tasks and the impact of this on willingness to engage in outdoor education activities.
- So what does it all mean? There have been some impactful initiatives on behalf of outdoor education in Ontario and Canada. For example, in terms of program outcomes and research, COEO published its research summary, *Reconnecting Children Through Outdoor Education*. The

disconnect between what many researchers are interested in (process) versus what program administrators are interested in (evidence-based outcomes) is narrowing. Good exemplars are the research specific to wilderness/adventure therapy that is focused and organized and the recent work on Ontario's integrated studies programs. The renewed focus on human-nature interaction, as people have become increasingly disconnected from the outdoors, will provide opportunities for research. Outdoor education as a field must do more to develop a strategic research agenda that can be used to advocate for the good work we all do, but have little evidence to support.

In closing, outdoor education in Ontario is like that big old white pine in my backyard: the roots and trunk are strong, and, despite that some branches have dropped off and evidence of lightning strikes and other negative impacts exist, there is new growth as the tree adapts to conditions around it. As Ilan Shamir (2002) so aptly recommended in *Advice from a Tree*:

- Stand Tall and Proud
- Go Out on a Limb
- Remember Your Roots
- Drink Plenty of Water
- Be Content With Your Natural Beauty
- Enjoy the View

However, we can't be complacent. If we want outdoor education to continue to be strong, we must be like that tree and be vigilant and responsive to those things that affect it.

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Tim O'Connell is Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies at Brock University. Among his favourite coniferous trees are white pines. Tim may be reached at tim.oconnell@brocku.ca



Branching Out: Involving New Canadians in Outdoor Recreation

By Adrienne Blattel

Since 2010, I've been crafting an "intercultural" outdoor recreation program, bringing together new Canadians, mostly adults, with other Montrealers through snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, skating, canoeing, camping, kayaking, hiking, cycling and more. The idea of getting new Canadians outdoors is popping up all over the place these days, from learn-to-camp programs offered by Parks Canada to a spate of Master's students researching outdoor recreation and cross-cultural communications.

This fall I had the pleasure of presenting this new outdoor recreation program at the 40th anniversary conference of the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario under the category of "Branching Out." In this article I'll focus on a few key things I've learned over the past couple of years, advice that could serve as much for my own activities as for anyone hoping to develop this kind of programming in their own community. You can find more information about the nuts and bolts of this work in the summer 2011 issue of *Pathways*. I run these activities through a local community centre, the Milton Park Recreation Association, and you can check out our bilingual blog at www.pleinairinterculturel.com.

The first thing I'm happy to report is that this actually seems to work. Getting people of different origins outdoors together does indeed seem to result in new friendships and connecting across cultures. Newcomers to Canada that can try out some of our traditional outdoor sports really do feel more a part of things and often go on to pursue these activities on their own or with families and friends. In the best case scenarios, I've had people become downright obsessed with cross-country skiing or skating, to my delight! People have reported back to me that a canoe-camping weekend has meant a lot to them and has played a critical role in their sense of integration here. And while

not every outing has revolutionized the life of each participant, I've observed a lot of people having fun—a necessary break in the stressful process of arriving to a new country and everything that entails. So far I've encountered people from around 40 different countries! I've been trying to measure some of these encouraging results through evaluation sheets and personal observations.

Second, I've noticed that winter is the most popular season for these activities. Newcomers hear over and over how long and cold winter can be, particularly here in Quebec, and how it is necessary to have at least one fun outdoor activity to keep you motivated. New Canadians have not necessarily ever had the chance to try skating, cross-country skiing or snowshoeing, and in many cases don't even know what these sports are, but they certainly seem keen to try them out regardless. People are also eager to learn how to dress properly for winter sports. There's a lot of material to share in winter. Another advantage of winter is that, here in Montreal, we can do all of these sports right in town, which makes them a lot more accessible.

Third, by definition, my activities will never be universally accessible, and I've learned to accept and be conscious of that. Although I design my activities with new Canadians in mind—that is, for people who typically lack gear, cars, money or experience—the practices of each cultural group are sometimes mutually exclusive with the activities I offer. For example, camping activities during the month of Ramadan will probably not be possible for practicing Muslims, who don't eat or drink until after sundown. And Ramadan has happened during August over the past few years, prime learn-to-camp season if you want to minimize bugs! In addition, any weekend activity at all will probably exclude anyone with weekend religious commitments. People with strictly kosher or halal diets

may not think to join outdoor activities involving collective meals. And anyone with stringent dress codes or needs in terms of segregating men and women will probably hold off participating until there is a women- or men-only activity available. Personally, I've decided to forge ahead with activities that are generally accessible, but not designed with a particular cultural group in mind. If a newcomer is particularly motivated and we can make it happen, we will! Fortunately, other organisations have been making an effort to design activities that respond to some of these specific constraints, and I think these are much needed and great initiatives.

Fourth, I've learned to assume people don't have much gear, and then be pleasantly surprised when they do. In terms of cars for carpooling, our groups usually come up short. I try to assume this will be the case in advance, and organise trips that are accessible by transit, convince friends to come as drivers or plan to rent a car.

Few newcomers to Canada have sleeping bags, good raincoats, hiking boots or flashlights, though neither do many other city folks. Sometimes people don't have items I'd consider basics, such as bathing suits or shoes they can afford to get wet. It's good to have extra gear to lend, and to plan to rent or borrow sleeping bags and tents for everyone, although this can add to the cost of organising trips. This is where developing good partnerships is key. For example, Montreal's kayaking club has been lending us kayaks, paddles, lifejackets and sprayskirts for our introduction to kayaking pool sessions. Mountain Equipment Co-op here in Montreal has a whole set of snowshoes available specifically for community groups.

And finally, I've noticed that simple, inner-city activities can be just as much fun for participants as ambitious, multi-day trips. I think both are equally important. People haven't necessarily had the chance to spend much time in local parks, or figure out how to get there. One urban hike I led this fall was an opportunity for a newcomer from Lebanon to

try out Montreal's subway system for the first time ever! New Canadians haven't necessarily seen or heard of raccoons, poison ivy or birch trees, giving me the chance to seem like much more of an expert than I really am. I've also learned to see raccoons and squirrels in a whole new light—as the fascinating creatures that they really are!



It's important for people to get a sense of where they live by exploring the waterways and key geographical features that surround them. But it's also great to get out of town. Sometimes it takes newcomers years before they get the chance to leave the island of Montreal and experience the great Canadian wilderness they may have heard about before they got here.

I'm learning and relearning all of these lessons and so many more, through trial and error, and am constantly being rewarded by this incredible opportunity to meet people from all over, in the best possible context. I wish you the best of luck and fun in getting outdoors with new Canadians wherever you are!

Adrienne Blattel (ablattel@sympatico.ca) is the coordinator and guide for the Milton Park Recreation Association's Intercultural Outdoor Recreation Program in Montreal. An avid outdoors-person herself, Adrienne founded this program in 2010.

Tree Energizer

By Tammy Hand

Adapted from “Hug a Tree” by Joseph Cornell

The concept of the tree energizer was conceived to get conference participants together as a part of a living working tree that represented the different and many layers of COEO. People were asked to participate at a level they felt comfortable with. They were asked to listen to the descriptions of each layer of the tree and choose where they thought they fit within the COEO organization.

The first layer of the tree was the HEARTWOOD. This layer of the tree provides inner strength and a core. We asked for people that felt they would represent the key founders of COEO or that had been around and involved with COEO for 30+ years. We also mentioned names of people and organizations that represented these key founders but could not be with us. The people in this layer of the tree stood facing inwards and were asked to make a ‘thump, thump’ noise when the tree came to life.

The next layer of the tree was the ROOTS—both lateral roots and tap roots. The tap roots of a tree anchor the tree to the ground and retrieve water from deep locations in the soil. The lateral roots are the straws of the tree. They suck up the water from the soil and close to the surface of the soil. We asked for people who had or were serving on the COEO Board of Directors or that had helped to organize and run conferences in the past. These people represented the constants in COEO. The people who help to keep COEO anchored to its beliefs and mission. These people were asked to sit on the ground with their legs facing outwards from the heartwood. They were given pipe cleaners to act as lateral roots and were asked to make a slurping noise when the tree came to life.

The next layer of the tree was the SAPWOOD/XYLEM. This layer of the tree

takes water from the roots to the branches. We asked for people who had been with COEO for more than ten years. This layer of the tree stood facing the heartwood and formed a circle around them. They were asked to start with their hands low to the ground. They were to gradually stand up and make a ‘whewee’ noise. They were asked to repeat this numerous times when the tree came to life.



The next layer added to the tree was the PHLOEM. This layer of the tree carries the water to the leaves and transports food around the tree. We asked for people who had been with COEO for approximately five years. Long enough to both know what COEO represents and to still be full of energy. This layer of the tree made a circle around the sapwood. They were asked to start with their hands in the air reaching to the sky with fingers outstretched. When the tree came to life they were asked to bend to the ground, stand and repeat making the sound ‘woooow.’

The next layer of the tree was the CAMBIUM and the LEAVES. These parts of the tree represented new life and the food factory that nourishes the tree. We asked for people who were new to COEO. Maybe they had been to one other event or maybe this was their first conference. These people represented the new energy and ideas that come into COEO. This layer of the tree was asked to stand in clumps or on the outside of the cambium with their hands waving in the air. They were asked to make a 'zap, buzz' noise when the tree came to life.

The last layer of the tree was the BARK. The bark of the tree protects it and keeps it safe. It also is one way that trees are identified. We asked for anyone that was not a part

of the tree already to come and join as the bark. This layer of the tree made a circle around the rest of the tree. They were asked to stand facing outwards with their backs to the rest of the tree. They were told to look and grunt/growl like linebackers in a football game.

When the tree was ready we counted to the three and it came to life representing the many diverse members and layers within COEO. Thanks to everyone who joined us and showed their true COEO spirit.

Tammy Hand is the lead facilitator at the Finlayson Field Centre with the Peel District School Board.



COEO's Heritage "Who's Who?"

As part of the effort to honour COEO's rich and diverse past throughout the 40th Anniversary conference (and admittedly in a somewhat lame attempt to replicate the spirit of the famous Canadian Wildlife Service's "Hinterland Who's Who?" vignettes), returning alumni were invited to respond to a series of "statement starters" related to such items as personal COEO involvement, favourite memories, inspirational "mentors" and wishes for COEO as it enters its fifth decade.

Below is a representation – a brief "sampler" – of the kinds of responses that were submitted...several of which were anonymously shared throughout the conference with delegates being asked to attempt to identify the Alumnus in question!

Most influential/inspirational OEE mentors: (Note that many names were mentioned more than once)

Cathy Beach	Linda McKenzie
Clarke Birchard	Hugh McPherson
Don Brown	Peter Middleton
Harry Brown	Don Morrison
Rachel Carson	Jack Passmore
Alice Cassleman	Jack Pearce
Robert Common	Bill Peruniak
Skid Crease	Bob Pieh
John Fallis	Jim Raffan
Lloyd Fraser	Jan Stewart
Frank Glew	Joan Thompson
Bill Hammond	Henry Thoreau
Bob Henderson	Doug Wade
Chuck Hopkins	Dorothy Walter
Bert Horwood	Mark Whitcombe
Ralph Ingleton	Bud Wiener
Kathy MacDonald	Kirk Wipper
Bill Mason	...and others!

Personal wishes for COEO as it enters its fifth decade:

- keep progressing in broader, deeper, higher ways; more inclusion; more political advocacy
- continue to be a guiding influence in the development of our youth
- contribute to grow and be a positive change in a troubled world
- grow and engage ALL teachers; every teacher needs to be comfortable/ capable of taking students outdoors—all grades/every subject
- keep up with the "youth effort"—concentrate on "nature-based thinking"
- face the challenges of a changing world with the vigour, creativity and commitment that have always been the hallmarks of COEO!
- engage younger teachers with outdoor experiential education professional development; the spirit of COEO is needed now more than ever
- stay real and relevant while broadening and "extending our reach"
- the strength of COEO rests with our deep roots and routes of sharing and support
- embrace and harness the potential of technology to help people connect, relate, value and care for the outdoors
- survive and thrive; our children need to know that our environment is **ULTIMATELY** key
- continue to mentor younger members... as I was mentored by those who went before me
- continue to connect children of all ages to the natural world ... become 21st century eco-warriors
- lobby for expanded outdoor experiential education in all schools
- educate the "whole child" through outdoor experiential education and be open to fresh ideas
- ... and many more!



Quotes from the Tree of COEO Life

- Line dancing and square dancing at Kandalore and at Bluewater District Outdoor Education Centre
 - Make Peace with Winter conferences—all of them
 - Remembering my first welcoming smile
 - Smiling so much my cheek muscles cramped up
 - Remembering early COEO conferences and meeting like-minded people who gave of themselves fiercely
 - Line dancing till we dropped
 - Years of goodies purchased from auctions and vendors—books, tools, toys and treats that kept me inspired in the months that followed
 - My relationship with COEO is still quite young...but I cannot wait to be able to “hoot, hoot” as an elder owl
 - Early morning “quiet” paddling and poetry with Peter Middleton
 - Linda Leckie and Bob Henderson’s Experiential Education session at my first COEO conference in 2001; playing with ropes to create maps, waterways and explore history; this opened my eyes to a whole new way of teaching and facilitating
 - Having to buy my own pjs back at the live auction
 - The “Quest for New Horizons” COEO conference in 1988 at Bark Lake—amazing
 - Bringing a friend to Paradise Lake who had previously never been outside of Toronto and had never seen the night sky
 - Dawn tea and vigil at the Frost Centre
 - A trip to the Antarctic with students because I heard about it at COEO
 - Remembering how the entire COEO executive ran around on Gin Rock, Georgian Bay, September 21, 1985
 - Road trip from Brock University to here
 - Square dancing, live auctions with Bonnie and Dave, kayaking as the ice candled, Frost Centre shenanigans
 - Square dancing at Kandalore and the floor shaking because we were dancing so hard
 - “Learn to Climb” for kids (University of Guelph)—my pilot program in 2009 that is still going
 - Eating fire at Bark Lake
 - Rock balancing and Dave Lyons’ rock session at Bark Lake; I still balance rocks wherever I go
 - Local food at the Eastern Conference in 2009 at RKY Camp
 - Hiking in Killarney at the Sudbury conference with other COEO folks
 - Zabe teaching everyone the paddle dance of the coureurs de bois
 - COEO 2011 swing dancing
 - Drumming circle with native elders 2010
 - Mystery box reveal
 - 2008—inspiring words, welcoming support and awe at the calm wisdom of COEO people; inspiration to continue working on nature/relationships
 - Being both inspired by the elders’ wealth of experience as well as the new leaves and new growth; bring it on
 - Setting up Northern Illinois University connection with COEO
 - Canadians are so fun loving and efficient that I came to be inspired—thanks Cliff Knapp
 - Kyle Clarke and a cooler of beer at the campfire
 - Developing our COEO logo
 - Make Peace with Winter outdoor activities all day; reconnecting with friends; singing into the wee hours
 - The amazing, caring Ron Williamson
 - Seeing the amazing Northern Lights at the Frost Centre during the Make Peace with Winter conference
 - Sitting in a voyageur canoe with Lecko
 - If they wanted to prove that the outdoors makes people happy, uninhibited and whacky, all they had to do was come to COEO
 - Graduated from Northern Illinois University in 1995; meet yearly to do a nature trip; this year it’s this COEO conference
 - Seeing the first ever new journal, *Pathways*
 - Meeting and working with those who want kids to know a better world
-
- Submitted upon request by conference participants, 2012*

COEO Song 2012

*Created for COEO's 40th Anniversary, Camp Pine Crest, September 2012
(guitarists can play in 'E' form Capo III)*

Come together
Circle of Friends
Share your stories
Where have you been?

*Wandering through the forests
Paddling down the stream
Walking with the children
Listening to their dreams*

Kindred spirits
For forty years
Light the fire
And gather near

*Planting seeds of wisdom
Help each other grow
Building strong connections
Watch inspiration flow*

O, COEO
That's COEO
We're COEO

Words and music by COEO members and David Archibald

Make the Time

Created for COEO's 40th Anniversary, Camp Pine Crest, September 2012

When you plant a seed
You want the roots to grow
You want the shoots to show
Right away
Sometimes you wonder
If they're seeds of doubt
'Cause nothing's working out
Day after day, but...

*It takes time to find each other
It takes time to build a dream
It takes time to work together
It takes time to build a team
And to nurture every seedling
Till it's strong enough to climb
We've got the will
Let's make the time*

When you plant a tree
You kneel upon the earth
Waitin' on the birth
Seems so slow
Sometimes you wonder
What it's gonna yield
This barren field
But, you should know

CHORUS

Then, you will catch the wind
You will hold the sun
You can drink the rain
And you can fill our lungs

When you plant a dream
Your actions teaching us
Your branches reaching us
We won't forget
Where you belong
That's where you'll set your roots
But, don't take off your boots
We're not done yet

CHORUS

*Words and music by David Archibald
© Rogues Hollow Music 2012*



Julian Smith's Importance to the Development of Ontario Outdoor Education

By Bud Wiener

In 1972, the year after the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario was formalized and held its first open meeting, this youthful organization carried out an international conference—"Outdoor Education Without Boundaries." The four-day event was held in conjunction with the fifth National Outdoor Education Conference sponsored by the Outdoor Education Project of the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (AAHPER).

Why was the Outdoor Education Project a co-sponsor? What were the Project's purposes? How had Ontarians been involved with the Project prior to the conference? And who was its leader? These are questions



that can be addressed by examining connections between some Ontario outdoor educators and Julian Smith, and by briefly citing Julian Smith's leadership role in the outdoor education movement.

After 22 years as a Michigan public school teacher, principal and coach, Smith assumed a position in the Michigan Department of Public Instruction. There he gained experience in a state-wide leadership role

working with schools and committees, handling administrative details and editing a newsletter.

In 1946 Smith was appointed within that department as director of a new project involving school camping and outdoor education. The project continued for seven years, and when it ended in 1953, Smith joined the faculty at Michigan State University (MSU). In 1954, AAHPER initiated a nation-wide Outdoor Education Project and asked Smith to serve as its director. With a quarter load at Michigan State, he was able to devote a majority of his time to intensifying and speeding up the development of outdoor education in schools and colleges. The project was aimed at providing leadership training through workshops and clinics, interpreting outdoor education and its implications for programming, and preparing and distributing needed instructional materials.

During the 20 years of the Outdoor Education Project until his death in 1975, Smith gained national and international prominence as a spokesperson, prolific writer, interpreter of the outdoor education concept, and recognized key leader of the outdoor education movement. The Project conducted more than 400 state and regional workshops and clinics, and sponsored four national conferences prior to the Dorset conference in 1972.

MSU and the Outdoor Education Project, under Smith's leadership, annually held summer outdoor education workshops at the Kellogg Biological Station, Gull Lake, Michigan. They took place the last two weeks of August and offered four hours of graduate credit. The workshops encompassed all aspects of outdoor education including outdoor interpretation, conservation activities, outdoor classroom programming and outdoor leisure skills. Participants included school and

university administrators and teachers, conservationists, and recreation and youth leaders who came to gain knowledge, experiences and leadership skills that they could employ back home.

In the 1950s and 1960s Ontarians were looking for leadership training and advanced preparation to further their professional careers in outdoor education. Because of the prominence of Smith in the movement, Kirk Whipper, Audrey Wilson, Chuck Hopkins and others attended the summer workshop in Michigan, and also became familiar with MSU's advanced degree programs that emphasized outdoor education.

Working cooperatively with COEO, as he had on so many previous occasions with sponsors of workshops and clinics, Smith assisted the Dorset conference planners by providing key speakers, session presenters, publicity through his newsletter and the Outdoor Education Project, and financial resources. His input prior to, and his presence during, the Dorset conference were invaluable. Approximately 650 persons from Canada, United States, Great Britain and Germany attended. It gave a big boost to COEO's reputation and memberships began to swell. Regional activities began to increase in the following years.

Julian Smith was a tireless advocate for advancing the broad approach to outdoor education. Throughout his career his publications included numerous articles and essays in professional journals, booklets and yearbooks. His impact on Ontario outdoor education was acknowledged by those who found his writings relevant to their goals and who came in personal contact via experiences in both Michigan and Ontario.

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In 1957 Bud Wiener was a school camp teacher in Tyler, Texas when Julian Smith came to Camp Tyler for the East Texas Regional Outdoor Education Workshop. In 1960 he and his new bride, Pat, moved to East Lansing, Michigan and he enrolled in a doctoral programme at Michigan State University. He worked closely with Julian during his three years there before accepting a position in Outdoor Teacher Education at Northern Illinois University.



Giant Map Fits in a Backpack and Brings Canada into Your Classroom

By Zabe MacEachren and Andy Williams

The sound of sharpeners whirring around packages of coloured pencils, groans echoing off classroom walls, doctors' notes appearing out of thin air—it must be a lesson about mapping. Are you looking for an eye-opening way to introduce your students to mapping? Perhaps you are looking for a more interactive way for your students to learn about this great country of ours? Look no further than COEO's giant cloth map of North America.

COEO's giant map of North America was inspired by National Geographic's Giant Traveling Map. Anne Smith, a geography education professor at Queen's University, was the first to bring one of these giant maps to Canada. The map of Asia arrived in Kingston, Ontario in the spring of 2011. The map was an instant success with teacher candidates at the Faculty of Education as well as with teachers and students at the local schools it traveled to. Upon hearing that the map of North America would arrive in the spring of 2012, Zabe MacEachren, Outdoor Experiential Education professor at the Queen's Faculty of Education, began planning how to make a similar map in association with COEO's 40th anniversary. The aim was to create a giant map of North America that would be ready for COEO's annual conference and afterwards could be shared with the COEO community.

The first maps created by National Geographic were made of a heavy, thick vinyl, which required transportation within a large metal case. The sheer size and weight of such a map made shipping it costly and moving it logistically difficult for teachers. If a map was to be created for COEO it was

determined it would need to be much easier to transport than the National Geographic version. Luckily, Zabe had previously created a canvas map that had been used on the side of a tent during a voyageur re-enactment. Zabe also had experience folding large canvas wall tents and realized that, even if not as strong, a lighter fabric would be more practical for COEO's purpose.



Quilt backing material was determined to be of an appropriate width and available in the large quantities needed. It would take two bolts and two long seams to stitch together the fabric to make a fabric map of a size equivalent to the National Geographic model (approximately 8 x 15 metres).

Once the logistics were planned, a dedicated team consisting of Zabe, Master of Education student Andy Williams, and member of the Queen's community Kelly Mannen tackled the ominous job of constructing the map. After several trying evenings spent on hand and knee, the team finished the first phase of the map production with the major features in place and having used the National Geographic map as an aid to draw the COEO map to appropriate proportions.

The National Geographic map continued its tour and the COEO map was packed up for the summer months while the team took a break to rest aching knees and backs. The map was unpacked again in the fall of 2012 for a few more days of work to turn pencil marks into completed colour lines and to see the finishing touches (and a waterproof coating) added. The map was presented at Camp Pinecrest as part of COEO's 40th anniversary conference and is now available to be shared with the COEO community.

The map is ready to travel along with a package of manipulatives to be used to help students explore and build an understanding of the map and the areas that it depicts. An outdoor experiential education teacher candidate, Amber Morten, is coordinating the map's movements and has developed a teacher binder to aid individuals who want to use the map. The map will travel with resources including flags, landscape photographs, pictures of Canada's national parks, and capital city postcards that can be used to help students identify locations on the map. As the map is focussed on physical rather than political features, lengths of fabric are included so students can outline the provinces. This activity can be taken a few steps further to allow students to outline the map of Canada throughout the process of Confederation. Forts, voyageur sashes, and railways can be placed to depict the development of Canada's system of trade. The watersheds of North America as well as the extraction of natural resources can be explored through the use of various resources. Students can also practice their use of map reading skills through a longitude and latitude game while "Simon Says" provides a chance for a more relaxed activity to familiarize students with areas depicted on the map. Various sized white sheets allow teachers to talk about

decreasing ice caps and the impact on polar bears, while copies of various books can be brought in and placed according to the landscape in which the stories take place. This giant map is, well, giant, so too are the possibilities for using it.

Ultimately the aim is to have this giant map of North America travel to at least 40 different classrooms as part of COEOs 40th anniversary. Teachers who book the map will have to take some responsibility in caring for the map and transporting it between teachers and/or schools. We are proud that COEO's giant map and accompanying items fit into a large canoe pack with some room to spare. If you would like more information on how you can access this great resource, please contact Amber at 7alt1@queensu.ca

This map is well worth your while to introduce to your school. Take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to travel across Canada in a few giant steps while never leaving the gym floor.

Zabe MacEachren is an associate professor in the Faculty of Education and Coordinator of the Outdoor Experiential Education Program at Queen's University. Andy Williams is a graduate student in the Faculty of Education at Queen's University.



Playgrounds for Sale

By Indira Dutt

School architecture needs to be radically re-thought...We need to design buildings and landscapes that resonate with our biological and aesthetic sensibilities, because the ways students experience schools will forever shape their paths on this precious and fragile planet.

—Rena Upitis in “Tackling the Crime of School Design”

As many, if not all, of you are aware, in recent months in Toronto there has been much controversy regarding the use of outdoor school spaces and their value. On November 19th the *Toronto Star* stated that, after a provincial freeze of funding, the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) intended to sever land off school playgrounds to sell to developers so that they could raise enough capital to expand or renovate existing schools, pending TDSB getting their books in order.

Although a majority of trustees rejected the Capital Plan that included the severance of school sites, the latest of a flurry of subsequent newspaper articles outlines a motion put forward by two trustees revisiting the idea to sell off parts of schoolyards to developers. Essentially the sale of TDSB land is and continues to be a real possibility in the years to come, which presents us with an opportunity to question and re-think the design of playgrounds and school sites. What values are currently imbued in school green spaces? What do we want to change? How can we as educators, with a keen interest in the outdoors, be a constructive force during this process?

I would argue that a majority of school-aged children in North America spend “most of their lives” in school buildings and on school grounds. Unfortunately many school buildings look like factories or prisons and too often school grounds lack naturalized areas. It is dangerous to believe we are not a part of nature and I often wonder

if we are reinforcing this belief with our current school design practices. What are the implications in a large school board like the TDSB of selling off parcels of green space and playgrounds? It is hard to put a dollar value on the health and well-being of school-aged children and youth. Although I’m preaching to the converted, active participation and creative problem solving are much needed as we face the seemingly inevitable loss of green spaces in Ontario.



As part of a small study I undertook at Bowen Island Community School (BICS) with a group of grade six and seven students, I explored the following questions: How does the design of a school building or grounds foster or hinder a child’s relationship with nature? What do children value about their school buildings and school grounds? Do biological or aesthetic sensibilities make a significant difference in the daily lives of students?

Though I will expand on my findings in a subsequent article, I will summarize the main discovery here: What students value most in a school is their sense of freedom. The places they felt the most free were in the naturalized areas on the school

grounds and where there was a presence of interfaces that allowed for a connection between the indoors and outdoors (examples include skylights, windows, natural building materials and aquariums). Even when students were inside, they felt more freedom when they were in the presence of nature. When I asked students questions about their school building, they spoke in detail about their school's exterior and the surrounding school grounds. This showed the students had a strong affinity for the natural world, which was being nurtured by their daily access to their school grounds that included a forested area and two gardens. In addition to freedom, students valued the joy, aesthetic pleasure and comradery the natural spaces on their school ground afforded them.



In the Reggio Emilia approach to learning, founded in Italy in the 1940s, the environment is considered the third teacher. The aesthetics and functionality of a space are promoted as critical and integral to children's ability to learn. Closer to home, well-known educators such as David Suzuki and David Orr also argue that we learn from our environments. In "Architecture as Pedagogy" Orr (1999) states, "the curriculum embedded in any building instructs as fully and as powerfully as any course taught in it" (p. 212). This is just as true for school playgrounds. In fact, Suzuki (2007) claims that,

The place where we spend most of our lives molds our priorities and the way we perceive our surroundings. A human-

engineered habitat of asphalt, concrete and glass reinforces our belief that we lie outside and above nature, immune from uncertainty and the unexpected of the wild. (p. 261–62)

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Indira Dutt is a graduate from the Center for Cross-Faculty (Architecture and Education) Inquiry in Education at University of British Columbia. She is currently participating in a Participatory Design Process at Cassandra Public School and working at Outward Bound, Evergreen Brickworks.



Family Engagement through Outdoor Education Programs: Expanding the Scope of Practice

By Jim McHardy

This is a condensed version of a workshop facilitated by Jim McHardy, Director of the Kinark Outdoor Centre, at the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario Annual Conference 2012.

The rapidly growing body of research that articulates the importance of “green time” has resulted in an increased interest in family nature programs. Declining school enrolment and increased transportation costs have spurred outdoor education and nature centres to examine alternative formats for achieving their learning objectives. The increased value given to family engagement by both the public education system and mental health services has raised awareness of methodologies and program tools for reaching out to families. By facilitating and supporting family units to experience time in nature and outdoors we are providing for the long-term physical and mental health of our communities.

Family connectedness is a primary support or protective factor for mentally healthy children and youth. While there are not, as of yet, academically rigorous studies demonstrating the link between shared nature experiences and family connectedness, anecdotal evidence leads us to strongly believe it is there. We know that parent involvement with the school experience enhances both learning and child commitment. We also know that engaging a child in a mental health treatment program without family involvement is seldom effective. As outdoor educators it is important for us to adopt structures that reach out and engage children and families in different ways and in different settings so that we can empower parents and other family members to be a part of a shared experience that supports growth and relationships beyond the duration of the one time activity.

Changing the way we engage students to include parents in nature activities involves giving ownership to and encouraging collaboration between teachers, school administration and the community. It starts with the recognition that it is an education process for all involved, there is shared responsibility and ownership, both parents and teachers hold knowledge, and all activities need to be adapted to the life situations of the participants. The potential outcome is rich and long lasting.



According to Martha Farrell Erickson, developmental psychologist and founding director of the University of Minnesota's Children, Youth and Family Consortium,

By following a prescription for more nature experience together, families will discover a win/win situation in which both children and adults benefit as individuals, even as they are strengthening those important family bonds that all children (and adults) need.

Jim McHardy has been the Director of the Kinark Outdoor Centre (www.koc.on.ca)—a program of Kinark Child and Family Services—since 1985.

Model Rocketry for Outdoor Education

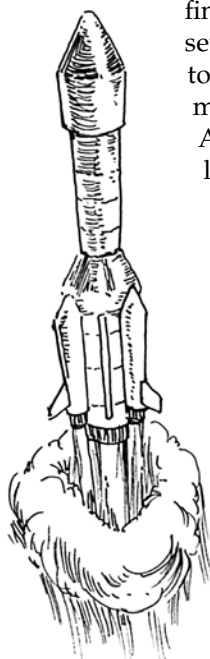
By Walt Sepic

It may seem a little far-fetched to even suggest that model rocketry has a place in outdoor education, but one certainly cannot launch rockets indoors. Also, it is a great culmination to a unit on flight from the Ontario Grade 6 science curriculum. Clearly there are safety issues and regulations that control the hobby (the same regulations that control fireworks), so you should know what you're doing. There are rocketry clubs in many large towns as well as hobby shops that can inform and guide as well as provide materials. I must state here that it is illegal to launch a model rocket within five kilometres of an airport.

The rockets I use in teaching the flight unit are homemade, mostly of cardboard construction; you can, however, purchase a rocket kit, complete with launch pad, control panel, rocket and engines for under \$40.00. Feel free to contact me regarding instructions to make your own rocket.

I begin the flight unit with properties of air, demonstrating that air is a gas but has mass and weight. I begin with having students blow on their hand. Then I have them blow across a curved sheet of paper and observe as it lifts upward. This introduces Bernoulli's principle of lift, which I explain with a cross section of a wing. After a discussion of the four forces that affect flight—gravity, lift (Bernoulli), drag and thrust (an engine)—we make paper airplanes and students learn how to steer them using their new understanding that air has mass and can deflect a surface and change the plane's direction by creating and bending the paper elevators and rudders. This knowledge can be applied to a birding outing with binoculars and bird guides.

When introducing the rocket, I use two large diagrams: One shows a cutaway view of the rocket and its labelled parts, the other shows the stages of a launch from "blast off" to parachute landing. I show the students how to "load" or prepare a rocket, starting with the recovery wadding that protects the parachute from hot engine gasses, next the parachute neatly rolled up and wrapped in the shroud lines, then the nose cone and, finally, the engine and igniter. There are several engine sizes from A (the smallest) to D. Each letter from A doubles in thrust, meaning a D has eight times the thrust of an A. I would recommend an A to start. (I have lost a few rockets powered by Cs).



Now it's time to launch! Here, I divide the group into three teams: a countdown team who leads the sequence, a tracking team who "points" at the rocket throughout the launch and recovery process, and a recovery team who retrieves the rocket. Then we walk to the launch site, a time during which students are invariably full of excitement.

The launch site should be a large open area. Sports fields are best. The launch site is chosen taking into consideration such factors as wind, buildings, trees and so on. The rocket can be "aimed" a little to compensate for the wind if needed. The countdown and tracking teams stand behind the launch control panel at the end of a five-metre wire that connects the battery pack to the igniter inside the engine. The recovery team is spread out downwind of the launch site. A student is chosen to press the button on the control panel. This student is chosen in consultation with the teacher and is usually one who would benefit from the experience. When all are ready, the countdown begins—"Five, four, three, two, one, blast off!"

Walt Sepic has recently retired from years of teaching in the Algonquin and Lakeshore Board of Education. He can be reached at waltsepic@gmail.com

Igniting the Fire of Learning: Waldorf Education and the Outdoors

By Charlotte Jacklein, Jessica Gladio and Carolyn Ross

Waldorf teachers have been bringing students outside to learn since the first school was established in Germany in the 1920s. Ongoing exploration of the natural world and a deep appreciation for nature are integral parts of the curriculum. In addition to a distinct curriculum, many Waldorf schools have small class sizes, naturalized schoolyards and little “red tape,” all of which make teaching in the outdoors easier to arrange than in traditional school settings.

Waldorf kindergartens spend most of the day outside in a naturalized playground. Grade 1 and 2 children go on nature walks one afternoon a week allowing them to play freely and interact with nature. Gardening is a key component of the Grade 3 curriculum and includes such activities as planting vegetable gardens and learning how to compost. In the upper grades, students study botany by drawing plants and participating in a variety of outdoor field trips, including at least one canoe trip.

Reverence for and connection to nature is fostered through special events that mark the passing seasons. Each fall, schools celebrate a “Michaelmas” festival to mark the end of summer. Around winter solstice, special assemblies are held to celebrate the return of the light. Springtime is ushered in with a joyous May Fair and a student performance of a traditional maypole dance. Year-round each classroom contains a nature table created out of natural materials representative of the current season.

In Waldorf schools, lessons start each morning with movement and games—often done outdoors—to wake the children up and get them interacting with each other. Circle games involve poetry and word games while beanbag tossing helps children to master times tables. The children also sing together and play recorder to help train their musical ears. Themes from the unit are woven into these morning activities in an effort to integrate

new concepts through experiential and artistic pursuits.

Storytelling is the backbone of the Waldorf curriculum. In each grade history is taught orally through the sharing of myths and stories that shaped human culture. The themes of the stories change each year to align with the developmental phase of the child. These stories help students develop the observation, attention to detail and critical thinking skills that will help them succeed in the higher grades and beyond.

In Waldorf schools, sciences are taught experientially and artistically. Rather than being told what the laws of nature are, students are taught to hone their sense of observation so they discover the laws of nature from their own experiences. For example, in the acoustics unit in Grade 6 physics students listen to various sounds and learn the principles of acoustics through observation and hands-on experiments.

Waldorf schools face unique challenges such as the financial stress that can be caused by running an independent school while keeping tuition as accessible as possible. However, they are making a concerted effort to offer parents an alternative schooling model that strives to create ideal environments in which for children to develop. In teaching holistically, the schools acknowledge the importance of raising nature-connected children who recognize our deep connection to the earth, air, land and water.

Charlotte Jacklein teaches Grade 6 at the Halton Waldorf School in Burlington. She is a skilled outdoors woman, adventurer and teacher of outdoor education. Jessica Gladio teaches Grade 4 at the Trillium Waldorf School in Guelph. She has been with her class since Grade 1 and continues to inspire them with her artistic talent and unique approach to teaching. Carolyn Ross taught Grade 6 for one year at the Trillium Waldorf School in Guelph. She is currently expecting a child and eagerly anticipating parenthood.

Stepping Forward by Looking Back

By Dave and Kielyn Marrone

The two of us have been interested in winter camping for many years. Through our experiences at Laurentian University, and via Conover and Conover's (2006) influential book, *A Snow Walker's Companion*, we were introduced to the concept of traditional winter camping. Essentially, to us this means looking back to the techniques, materials and designs that evolved for living in our area over hundreds of generations, and attempting to apply these same practices to travel in our area today. Not surprisingly, what has worked in the past often continues to work extremely well today.

Our initial forays into using winter moccasins, traditional snowshoe designs and simple hauling toboggans have opened our eyes to an entirely different approach to winter camping and travel on the land. We now focus on what we call *terrain-appropriate technology and techniques* for our travels, and this mindset has allowed us to comfortably complete winter expeditions hundreds of kilometres in length and up to 40 days in duration. Snowshoes are a great example of terrain-appropriate technology. Modern snowshoes developed out of mountaineering practices; while excellent for travelling on wind-crusting snow and ice or hard-packed trails, they lack the floatation properties of traditional snowshoes necessary for efficient use hauling a toboggan in deep powder snow.

Historically, clothing and equipment for the trail was personally handcrafted by the end user, and we try to uphold this tradition today. Our passion for traditional handcrafts has grown out of our passion for winter camping. Initially done as a means to an end (so we could have winter gear), crafting for us, has become an end in itself. Crafting gives us a much greater appreciation of those who lived and travelled on the land before us, including insight into the ways in which they were moulded by the landscape and the elaborate design refinements they produced as a result.

Through winter camping we have developed our love of crafting, and in turn through crafting we have developed our love of winter camping. With each passing year, and every new skill development, we step further into a totally immersive outdoor experience. As we begin to use more traditional technologies we have come to appreciate that these technologies not only evolved over a long period of time to fit their landscape, but they also evolved to fit each other. Moccasins, simple harnesses, snowshoes and toboggans all work together as a system that is greater than the sum of its parts. It is difficult to appreciate just how well these systems work together until used as a whole.

Through this journey of discovery, we have started Lure of the North—a company dedicated to sharing our passion for traditional winter travel, crafts and culture. Traditional crafts are often elaborate in design refinements and minute details, yet simple to understand and undertake—in other words, “days to learn, a lifetime to master.” At a time when fewer and fewer opportunities exist to create functional items for ourselves with our hands, we have seen the impact crafting has had on young and old alike. We have seen the surprise and excitement when people first begin to understand the new skill in their mind while the craft comes to life in their hands. Make it, use it, love it!

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Dave and Kielyn Marrone studied outdoor adventure leadership at Laurentian University. They live in Sudbury and are the owners of Lure of the North (www.lureofthenorth.com), now in its second year.

What We Think and How We Teach Environmental Education

By Chris Kopar

It was a privilege to be able to speak at the 40th Anniversary Conference of the Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario. At that joyous event I shared the preliminary findings of my thesis topic: the characteristics of effective environmental education centres.

It is my hope that the following description becomes a mirror for outdoor and environmental educators to ponder and discuss among the members of their community.

For my Master's thesis I have two objectives:

1. to understand what environmental educators perceive are the most important aspects of effective environmental education
2. to create a formative tool for centres to assess their progress in attaining those crucial aspects

The study I have undertaken involves interviewing environmental educators from a variety of settings, including non-profit agencies, for-profit organizations, conservation areas and school boards. The common denominator across all interviews is that all the participants actively participate in the education of people, mostly youth, with the aim of increasing environmental literacy or consciousness.

The interview data is analyzed to identify commonalities and differences across participants. Themes that link all the narratives are constructed and further explored in subsequent interviews. No two interviews are conducted in exactly the same way, just as no two participants have the same experience.

To date three prominent themes have emerged from my analysis. In no particular order, these are performing assessment, programming and building consciousness.

Performing Assessment

Since the second objective of my thesis is to develop an assessment tool, I was interested in finding out how environmental educators perceive they are doing on the job. The interview data revealed that educators assess themselves according to only a few different means for virtually the same outcome. Most of the participants stated that formal assessments were undertaken primarily to ensure further funding and rebooking of groups. Some spoke of the need to assess the programs for the reasons of lesson improvement or to fulfill community needs. Environmental educators, true to their philosophical roots, conduct almost exclusively informal assessments of both themselves and their programs. The "gut-check" is the one universal assessment tool educators rely on to determine the quality of their instruction. If a group leaves the facility with smiles on their faces and comments like, "Today was the best day ever!" then most educators feel that it has been a good lesson. This dependence on the gut-check assessment tool can be problematic, of course, due to its wholly subjective nature. One educator's perception may be totally different than another's. Additionally, it is hard to justify programs to administrators citing only the fact that the programs are effective because the facilitators feel good about the experiences they provided.

So the bureaucrats want numbers or an evaluative tool to prove a program's or centre's worth. The almost-universal tool used by educators to this end is the survey. Surveys are usually administered during the departure phase of a group. They are hastily done and often without proper forethought by supervising adults that have already switched to supervision mode for the bus trip home. Completion rates, even for online surveys, are low. Also problematic is the issue that most surveys are written with questions that could have been used in a restaurant: What did you like? What could we have done better? Were the services or programs provided according to

the curriculum points you wanted covered? There are few deep questions because group supervisors do not always have the time or inclination to respond in depth. The result is that formal surveys become marketing tools instead of tools to assess program goal attainment.

Programming

The programs environmental educators create are magnificent. Truly successful programs simultaneously juggle curriculum linkages, teacher characteristics, student characteristics, time constraints, cultural norms, risk aversion and assessment, and location (climate and weather) all at the same time. It is environmental educators that are the jugglers. Most educators do it with formal curriculum linkages as the first consideration. Clear and strong curriculum links drive a successful centre or program. Thankfully, the Ontario curriculum is structured in such a way that once the participants are on the site, inquiry-based unstructured activities can occur. However, all too often the barriers of program funding, location (bussing costs), and fear of litigation or injury prevent programs from being gifted to groups that most need to experience the lessons the natural world can provide. Additionally, educators and their centres do not regularly perform pre-visit and post-visit activities with the participating groups. A familiar theme in many of the interviews can be paraphrased as, "The groups book a trip, they appear, and then, it is hoped, the same teacher brings next year's crop to the centre again." This is problematic because it means that centres and educators are operating in an environment of constantly being surprised at who is arriving for their experience. Environmental educators become, very quickly, superior problem solvers and multi-taskers.

The spectre of justifying the necessity for environmental education experiences arises again when group leaders, mostly teachers, need to sell administrators and parents on the cost and risk level of the trip they are planning. Some teachers may be forced to provide strong curriculum linkages, and time management and risk management regulations for every minute

of the experience. This leads to a highly structured program that leaves little room for those unstructured discovery activities that all environmental educators know are vital in increasing a person's environmental consciousness.

Increasing Consciousness

Some of those interviewed related their frustration with these sobering realities. All the interviewees confirmed it is the unstructured immersion in the natural world that truly increases a person's environmental consciousness. They all felt that if you give a person a chance to engage in the natural world, with the etiquette modelled by a person in love with that environment, environmental consciousness is increased. This immersion in the natural world is best accomplished with the repetition of experiences that vary in depth and cognitive focus. The best experiences evoke an emotional response in the participant. The educators reported that some of the best methods to create these consciousness building experiences are through experiential, unstructured, repeated and slow-paced activities. Environmental consciousness building experiences rarely occur in places and situations that demand speed, efficient order and wide-bore vessels.

My feeling is that one way we can all make environmental education better is to coordinate with each other in a more meaningful way. I feel we need to provide classroom teachers the assistance they require to take their classes out of doors. This means leaving our centres, travelling to schools, and teaching teachers about their environment. We need to develop partnerships with and between centres so that we can provide a consistent repetitive (everyday) experience for children. The trip-killing barriers of risk aversion and budget justification will always be present to mould our centres and programs into arteries of curriculum delivery.

Chris Kopar (ckopar@uwaterloo.ca) is a master's student at the University of Waterloo in the School of Planning.

The Outdoor Council of Canada

By Colleen Lee



The Outdoor Council of Canada (OCC) is a national non-profit promoting education and recreation in the outdoor environment. It aims to ensure that the long-standing Canadian tradition of connection with and involvement in the natural world is maintained and nurtured in *practical* and *accessible* ways. The OCC was formed in 2008 in an effort to address critical community health, education and environmental issues. Its vision is that every Canadian has access to outdoor education and recreation.

There is a shortage of appropriate training or certification available for potential leaders within organizations such as schools and community groups. As a result, cumbersome and inefficient risk-management systems are often required by organizations offering outdoor programming. Combined with increasing expectations for the safety of minors in the care of others, an increased number of parents who do not have the ability to introduce their children to meaningful outdoor experiences, and pre-service teacher education that does not provide leadership training for outdoor activity, children are spending less and less time outside.

The OCC is striving to counter this gap by creating a national certification system that provides outdoor leadership training that is *affordable*, *accessible*, and at an *appropriate* level. The leadership program is a graduated program that guides leaders from their first experiences of leadership through to becoming a qualified risk manager for a sophisticated organization. The two-day Leadership Level 1 (LL1) course is designed for entry level staff or students for land-based activities (hiking) or flatwater-based activities (paddling). The curriculum covers topics such as pre-event planning, team building, environmental responsibility, group management, accident and emergency

response, and debriefing. This training is recognized across Canada and a leadership register is maintained on the OCC website. To date 40 Leadership Level 1 courses have been delivered in Canada. Camp Leadership Training programs are also available to camps and non-profit organizations.

The OCC desires to connect all of the many organizations that offer outdoor programming in an effort to strengthen our industry and help build the case for the resources needed to offer your programs locally, provincially and nationally. The OCC believes the same skills that promote safer programming will provide higher quality programming. By pooling our expertise and resources into a national program, we will improve the experience for those who follow. We are working to raise awareness of the benefits of outdoor activities and education and to be an advocate for improved sport, health and education policies as quality outdoor experiences for youth are the foundation of a national commitment to a healthy individuals, communities and environment.

As of November 2012 the OCC has 302 individual members. Of these, 47 are certified instructors of the LL1 course and 224 members have received their Leadership Level 1 certification. Please join us in promoting and enabling outdoor education and recreation in Canada. Visit www.outdoorcouncil.ca or send an email to mrs.colleenlee@gmail.com for more information on becoming a member, registering for the Camp Leadership Training program, or enrolling in an upcoming instructor course in Ontario.

Colleen Lee currently teaches outdoor education at a private high school in southern Ontario and shares her love of the outdoors with her students, husband and community by spending time outside adventuring with them on foot, on skis, by bike or by canoe.

Navigating the Whitewaters of Social Media

By Cathy Beach

The biggest lesson I've learned over the past couple of years is that social media is all about making connections and creating relationships—not the technology!

A virtual tsunami of educational change has come ashore, and we're all having to deal with it as wave after wave of stunning new changes keep breaking over us. Entire professions are needing to re-educate and re-create themselves in order to be relevant in this new age, with education in the very thick of it—including outdoor education. Are you learning to ride the waves, or keeping your head underwater hoping that it'll all just go away?

My own unexpected journey with technology began with a trip to the Olympics in 2010. (You can catch a shortened version in a Smilebox introduction I created for one of the courses I've been taking at <https://beachcat11.wordpress.com/2012/09/12/smilebox-intro-for-plp/> ; password: outdoored)

I've learned that technology and social media offer so many tools to help people connect to the natural world!

- Apps on tablets and smart phones quickly help to identify the trill of a Swamp Sparrow or the tiny petals of a spring beauty, and then provide immediate access to information for questions that arise.
- Photographs, videos, data and notes taken on iPods and smart phones offer students an unprecedented opportunity to capture, document and share their learning—an essential part of the 2013 classroom.
- Tools like Edmodo, Facetime and Skype allow students missing activities to join in on the learning in real time, and then to chat with experts and other students around the world about the real-life issues they're studying.
- Writing a tweet or blog post at the end of the day about an exciting pond study or a first high ropes traverse can inspire students to make powerful reflections on the natural world and personal experiences in it.
- Posting online communicates to parents, teachers, administrators and the public the valuable lessons our students are learning in the outdoors.
- Satellites and solar-powered chargers offer a chance for continuous connections for both safety and tweeting or blogging about adventures far from the maddening crowd. This defeats the whole purpose, you say? That's the purpose of the power button, I say!

Ah, and therein, methinks, lies the rub. We want to enjoy the benefits of technology, but we want to control the use of it by our youth. We don't trust them to turn off their devices and keep them off, and with good reason. How can we control who they connect with, doing what, why and when? And how can we get them to appreciate the joys of the natural world that we love and cherish, if they're still connected to the human-made one?

It reminds me of my first outdoor education job trying to teach inner-city kids from Detroit, being shocked to discover they wouldn't go on night-hikes or sit down in the woods—the dark was too scary and the ground too dirty! Is that any different from kids today bringing their technology into the outdoors? We need to teach them to overcome their fears and discomfort of being disconnected in order to truly experience and appreciate the natural world. We need to teach them to use new technologies effectively in the outdoors, while at the same time become comfortable and value being disconnected from technology in the natural world. Taking away their devices doesn't do that, nor does insisting that the outdoors

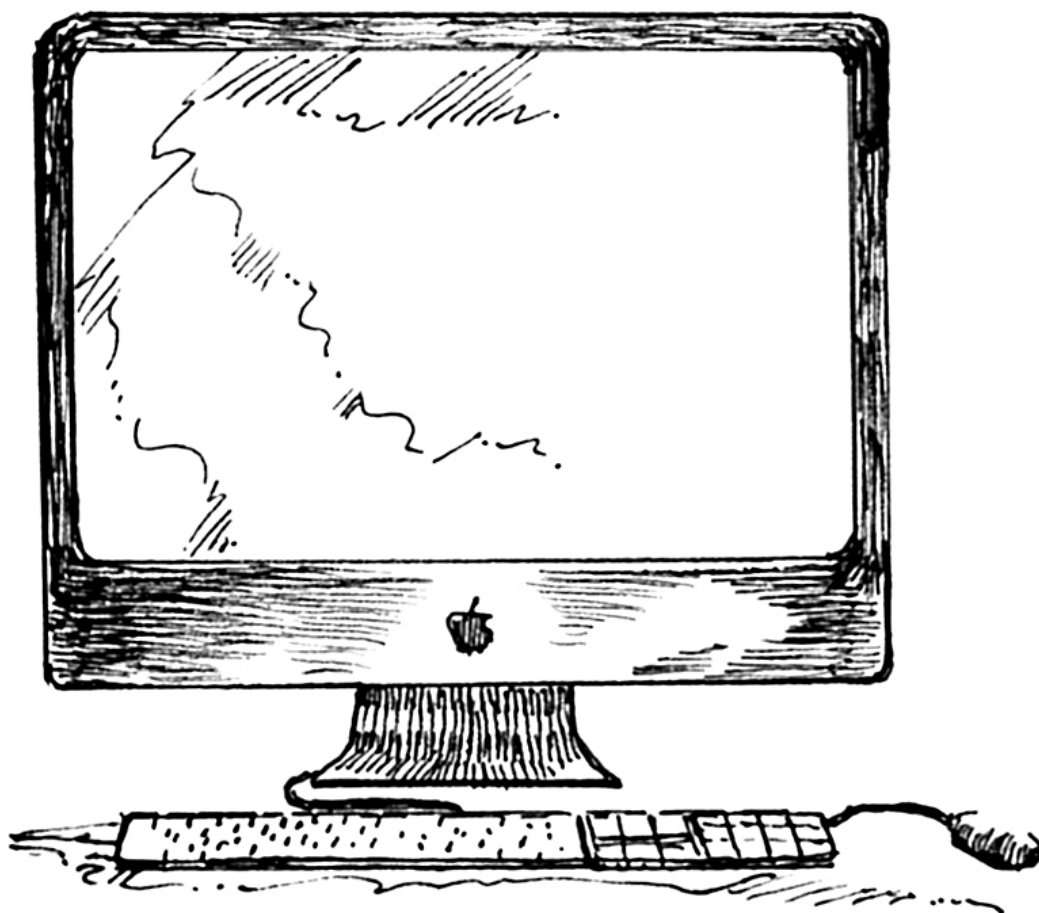
is no place for technology. Now, even I wouldn't respect that thinking.

Because the other valuable lesson I've learned along the way is that our students have been shuffling along and putting up with us in education because they have to, while they wait with baited breath until they can get back to their "real" world. When I asked my students to bring their iPods and cellphones into class one day, they lit up like fire-crackers and showered me with new respect and an unexpected excitement for learning. They literally thanked me for affirming the value and relevance of bringing their connected world into learning and school. I had no idea so many of my kids

were being so polite and tolerant of my irrelevance and foolishness.

Now, because of them, I have even more questions I want to answer, and issues and problems to solve. I look forward to learning so much more on this journey, in the middle of rapids where people like Peter Raspberry are embracing the exciting role of technology in outdoor education. Are you?

Cathy Beach has served as the COEO president in the past. Pathways was launched during Cathy's term in this role in 1989. She currently works as an elementary teacher with the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board. @beachcat11



Information for Authors and Artists

Purpose

Pathways furthers knowledge, enthusiasm and vision for 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 (kathy@adventureworks.org).

We prefer a natural writing style that is conversational, easy to read and to the point. It is important for you to use your style to tell your own story. There is no formula for being creative, having fun and sharing your ideas. In general, written submissions should fit the framework of one of *Pathways*' 20 established columns. Descriptions of these columns may be found at www.coeo.org by clicking on the publications tab.

Whenever possible, artwork should complement 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. Please use Canadian spelling and apply 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 or footers, and running heads.

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

Submit articles 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 8½ by 11 paper.

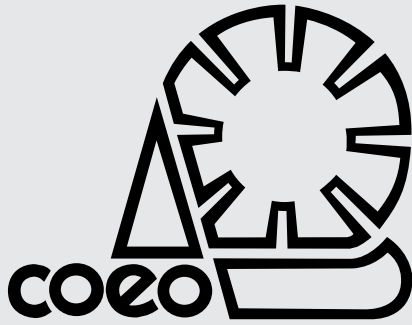
Submit artwork to the Chair of the Editorial Board or issue Guest Editor either as a digital file (jpg is preferred) or as a hard copy.

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 receives one copy of the issue in which the article appears and one copy for each co-author. Lead authors are responsible for distributing copies to their co-authors.



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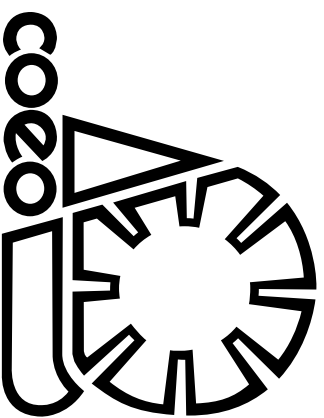
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