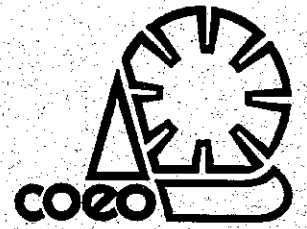


# Pathways

THE ONTARIO JOURNAL OF  
Volume 9, No. 1, February 1997

OUTDOOR EDUCATION



# Pathways

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**Pathways Chair:** **Mark Whitcombe**  
34 Blind Line, Orangeville L9W 3A5  
(B) 705-435-4266 (H) 519-941-9966 (Fax) 705-435-4281  
e-mail: mwhitcombe@headwaters.com

**Membership:** **Glen Hester**  
20 Linn Cres., RR#3, Caledon East L0N 1E0  
(B) 416-394-7860 (H) 905-880-0862 (Fax) 416-394-6291

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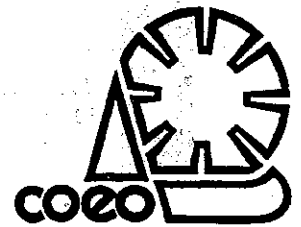
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North York, Ontario M3C 3C6  
Telephone: (416)426-7276

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Volume 9, No. 1, February 1997

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## Pathways Editorial Board

**Chair: Mark Whitcombe**

34 Blind Line, Orangeville, L9W 3A5  
(B) 705-435-4266 (H) 519-941-9966  
Fax 705-435-4281  
(e-mail) mwhitcombe@headwaters.com

**Mary Jeanne Barrett**

RR#1, Orangeville L9W 2Y8  
(B) 905-846-6060 (H) 519-942-0075  
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**Clare Magee**

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(B) 905-833-3333 (H) 905-898-0467  
(Fax) 905-833-2085

**Barrie Martin**

c/o L.M. Frost Natural Resources Centre  
Dorset P0A 1E0  
(B) Fax 705-766-9677 (B) 705-766-2451  
(e-mail) martinbb@epo.gov.on.ca

**Barbara McKean**

c/o Royal B.G. Box 399 Hamilton, L8N 3H8  
(B) 905-527-1158 ext. 247  
(H) 905-523-8961 (Fax) 905-577-0375  
(e-mail) bmcckean@mcmaster.ca

**Tom Potter**

School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and  
Tourism, Lakehead University P7B 5EB  
(B) 807-343-8843 Fax 807-346-7836  
tpotter@sky.LakeheadU.Ca

**James Raffan**

Faculty of Education,  
Queen's University, Kingston  
(B) 613-545-6209 Fax 613-545-6584  
(H) 613-387-3568  
(e-mail) raffanj@educ.queensu.ca

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ISSN: 0840-8114



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## E ditor's Log Book

*I would like to take this opportunity to thank the students and faculty who contributed to this issue.*

It is with great honour, excitement and pleasure that the students and faculty of the School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism (ORPT) at Lakehead University contribute to this issue of *Pathways*. A wide variety of articles, primarily from students, is presented between the covers. Tom Stevens, the School's Director, opens the issue with a description of the programme. Unique in Canada for its dynamic, broad and experientially based degree, the School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism continues to prosper. Several articles on students' perspectives of some of the more distinctive elements of the programme are presented; such as the honours thesis project and extended field trip components. Two research projects are contributed, one on women in outdoor pursuits and another on the value of experiential learning. Other articles include a thoughtful reflection of what outdoor recreation really means to a student, the importance of cultural respect in tourism, the significance of interpersonal interactions while travelling, and a book review

on women and canoeing. The authors of the Bark Lake reflections article also have close connections with Lakehead. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the students and faculty who contributed to this issue. A special thanks goes to Professor Robert Dye for his efforts and editorial skills, and to Robin Bloom, the edition's artist.

In addition to the Lakehead material, there are also some strong thoughts in this issue about our past Annual Conference — some reactions that should make us think about COEO. What is our personal relationship to this organization and to each other?

*Tom G. Potter  
Faculty member in the School of Outdoor  
Recreation, Parks and Tourism  
Lakehead University*

## S ketch Pad

This month we feature art work by Robin Bloom, a third year student in the School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario. In designing the cover for this issue, Robin has accomplished the seemingly impossible; he has managed to capture the spirit, diversity and reflective thoughtfulness of the Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism programme in one drawing. With the magical Sleeping Giant in the background, Robin has woven the rigorous academic and experiential components of the programme together. For in reality, at Lakehead,

these two programme ingredients are inseparable; together they are more vigorous and meaningful than the sum of their parts. Thank you Robin for your creativity, ingenuity, inspiration and special talents.

*Tom G. Potter*

Last month, I was able to entice the members of the Board of Directors into driving north to South River, with the promise of some good skiing followed by a hot tub after COEO business was done. The weekend also gave us some time to get to know each other better. We are a high-achieving fun bunch of folks with really diverse backgrounds. Amongst our ranks are entrepreneurs, elementary and secondary school teachers, Outdoor Ed Centre staff, students, Ministry of Natural Resources staff, private camp directors, and facilitators of alternative programmes. (See our mini-bios.) Please consider us part of your resource network and call us if we can help you with anything. COEO is in the process of establishing a database of members with skills to share — sign on with your Regional Rep.

Conference 96 was a definite success. The Committee even managed to generate some revenue for COEO! This was great news for our tight budget. COEO costs are being cut wherever possible. Did you know that our Directors currently pay all their expenses and then some (i.e., phone bills) out of pocket? These are dedicated volunteers!

Have you checked out COEO web site yet? [<http://www.headwaters.com/COEO>] You can find out about regional events. On tap this winter is indoor climbing, a family hike, ice-climbing, a day ski, and dog sledding. On the professional development front, NIU will be running two Masters level course this spring (Toronto and Ottawa). One of the latest COEO publications, *The Inventory of Integrated Programmes*, is in its second printing. The *Pathways Index* is also available. Both can be obtained from Cheryl Dell.

Our next Board meeting is scheduled for the weekend of March 1-2. If you have any issues you want addressed or would like to attend, just call me.

*Linda McKenzie, COEO President.*

## COEO's Board of Directors

*Linda McKenzie* first got hooked on the outdoors at Bark Lake where she was a camper back in the days of outhouses. Summers working at camps eventually let to the OEE programme at Queen's and a teaching position in South River. When the opportunity to leave the classroom presented itself, she took it and has been teaching at Project DARE, a wilderness adventure camp for young offenders, since 1989. Linda's main passions in life are animals, wilderness pursuits and chocolate.

*Tammy Hand* presently works as a facilitator at both the Jack Smythe and the E.W. Finlayson Field Centres, which are operated by the Peel Board of Education. She is a graduate of Waterloo's Co-op Recreation programme and got her B.Ed. at the University of Ottawa. Many outdoor education centres have benefited from her expertise and enthusiasm: Toronto Island, Noisy River, Etobicoke Field Studies Centre, Albion Hills and East York's Outdoor Education on Wheels programme. Tammy's other passion in life is travelling, this summer touring England and Europe. Previously, she has visited Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Korea, Hong Kong, and Thailand.

*Ian Hendry* got his grounding in Guelph's Biology programme and the OEE programme at Queen's. He has over fifteen years experience as a teacher/naturalist, working in a wide variety of settings, including school board outdoor education centres, conservation authorities, and government- and privately-run facilities. Ian presently runs Terra Nova Environmental Programmes.

*Cheryl Dell* grew up canoeing, camping, and sailing. Not surprisingly then she has been a lifeguard, and a canoeing and boating instructor, sold outdoor equipment, and worked in co-operative housing. She is a graduate of the University of Waterloo and Queen's OEE programme. Cheryl is continuing to gain experience through additional qualifications while waiting to jump into a teaching opportunity. Meanwhile office work pays the bills and allows her to indulge in downhill skiing, music, and books.

*Please consider us  
part of your  
resource network  
and call us  
if we can help you  
with anything.*

*Judy Halpern* has been a teacher since 1983 and has recently returned from a year's leave of absence travelling the globe. She has since combined her love of literature with her love of the outdoors by creating her own venture. The Magic Suitcase is a travelling environmental education programme that provides literature-based outdoor activities for primary students and teachers in their own schoolyard.

*Debbie Knight* started teaching in North-western Ontario in 1982. After five years in one-room schools, Debbie went on to become the Science Consultant for the Isolate School Boards of N.W. Ontario. At present, the East Parry Sound Board of Education is fortunate to have her as a classroom science teacher.

*Joan Kott* dedicated a good part of her teaching career to the Canterbury Hills Outdoor Education and Environmental Studies Centre. Since its closing she has adapted to classroom life. She is currently a Learning Centre teacher at a K-8 school, and actively co-ordinating environmental projects there. Joan and her husband are much-valued volunteers with their local conservation group and the HELP League that serves as a rescue operation for Alaskan Malamutes, which they also raise, train, and show!

*Lisa Primavesi* come to us from the Far North, where she was an invaluable member of the staff of Kingfisher Outdoor Centre in Thunder Bay. Lisa is presently completing her B.Ed at Queen's and is really enjoying the Outdoor and Experiential Education programme. (Notice how well represented the OEE programme is on the COEO Board?)

*John Etches* is our Frost Centre connection. He has been teaching and developing school programmes there since 1983. John's varied programmes focus in furthering students understanding of the interrelationships between the physical and biological realms, along with human impacts on ecosystems. John is also a geologist who has worked in mineral exploration in the Arctic and the Maritimes. His passions include whitewater kayaking, wilderness trekking, photography, guitar, and badminton.

*Jennifer Jupp* is another fine product of the Queen's OEE programme. JJ spent two years involved in the Bronte Creek Project. This is an integrated environmental leadership programme for high school students. JJ has spend the last several years at Camp Arowhon in Algonquin Park, where she is now the Associate Director. She is currently developing a three-season programme offering for the new Arowhon Outdoor Centre, which as Director, she will help implement.

*Mark Whitcombe* is the big man with the big smile at the heart of Sheldon Centre for Outdoor Education. He is like a swiss army knife in that he can do most anything. Mark is an accomplished botanist and general naturalist. He has long been involved with COEO and *Pathways*, and most recently has established the COEO web site.

## THE GATHERING: from 1996 ... on to 1997

by Clare Magee

The 1996 Annual Conference gathering was a mix of tradition, innovation and celebration. It had the traditional COEO blend of camaraderie and support, of exposure to new ideas and new applications of old ideas, of welcoming new attendees and "kibitzing" among the old.

The location was innovative. Although centred in Odrohekta, the new Six Nations Tourism Building, conference sessions took place at venues around the village of Ohsweken. Six Nations educators and resource people were part of the whole conference. A very successful financial and cultural partnership was lived out through the conference. Good will and understanding were extended.

The 103 full-time conference delegates were joined by 29 additional COEO "elders" for a Saturday evening celebratory banquet: "25 Years of COEO". Orchestrated by Alice Casselman and a "25 Year Committee", lighthearted but meaningful honouring occurred for those COEO stalwarts who were present. Their certificates read in part "On the 25th Anniversary of COEO recognition is awarded for significant contribution to outdoor education in Ontario." There were excerpts from congratulatory letters and faxes sent by "old-timers" who could not attend. There were lots of guffaws, applause, and good feelings.

The 22 delegates attending the pre-conference Friday programme experienced a morning with native educators and native students. We broke for lunch having experienced some excellent corrective surgery on our cultural myopia. In the afternoon, Mary Roberts shared some very useful work done in documenting a range of common curriculum outcomes that can be achieved through some of the outdoor education programmes at Sheldon Centre for Outdoor Education. Ramona Curtis and Jean Patten of Pathfinder School in Seattle, Washington, concluded the afternoon with a peek at their inspirationally successful school learning model based on self-respect and inter-cultural learning.



COEO salutes and thanks the key organizing group for the 1996 Annual Conference.

back: Ian Hendry, Flora Smith, Dave Lyon, Jim Gear

front: John Pyke, Lee Wilson, Clare Magee plus key part-time contributor: Cheryl Dignan

Saturday and Sunday had a balance of sessions conducted by First Nations resource people and a balance of those aimed at meeting COEO member needs. Personal and professional growth from native content was a strong motivator for a number of attendees. Equally well received though were sessions such as: No-cost Low-cost Outdoor Education, A Bottled Ecosystem for the Classroom, Ubiquitous Plants, their identification and values, Progressive Use of Solitude in Outdoor Education, Common Curriculum Outcomes via Outdoor Education, Lemon Aid for Field Centres, Entrepreneurship in Outdoor Education. Conference organizers overheard lots of "Thanks for that really useful session" comments. In fact, conference organizers heard many positive comments about many aspects of the Conference. It was a great success.

A contingent from the Eastern Region of COEO extended a spirited invitation to those of us at Ohsweken to travel to the shore of the St. Lawrence River for the annual "Gathering" in 1997. There, the tradition, innovation, and good times will continue.

## COEO ANNUAL CONFERENCE '96

by Audrey E. Wilson

*It takes people  
to make things  
happen.*

In September I was pleased to attend the 25th Anniversary of COEO. It seems like yesterday that a small nucleus of us met at Toronto Island and the following year at MacSkimming, Ottawa and the result of these sessions was the birth of what we now know as COEO.

The "Back to the Future" plenary panel so ably chaired by Dorothy Walter brought back numerous memories. Many of the current concerns of Outdoor and Environmental Education expressed during this session were similar to those we experienced in the late 1960's and 1970's, with one major exception. The present climate that we find ourselves in tends to be one of doom and gloom as many are affected by cutbacks and severe financial restraints. However, many similar problems existed in those early years with one main exception. The overall feeling was one of great excitement and anticipation with visions and dreams of what Outdoor Education held for the future. Just this morning Mark Rupke, the last Outdoor Education staff member that I hired, came in to tell me how a county volunteer is working with his co-op student at our original Outdoor Education day centre to develop a topographical map through the new technology of GPS, e.g., Global Positioning Systems. Thus, neat, exciting things are still happening out there.

In many cases money was as scarce in those early days as it is now, but for different reasons. We had to convince administrations and society that Outdoor Education warranted funding. That hurdle has been conquered and the cutbacks now are a reality cutting across all aspects of society, not just Outdoor Education. Thus, at present, we are challenged to look at alternatives for funding.

I am a firm believer that it takes people to make things happen. In the past, when staffing Outdoor Education programmes, I sought out individuals who would willingly go the extra

mile. Winter camps, canoe trips, and cross-country ski sessions were frequently conducted on weekends with no thought to overtime or time-in-lieu, but simply for the love of sharing these experiences that we so firmly believed in. How many times have we taken piles of secondhand socks, mitts, etc., home to be laundered and readied for next week's students or taken home-made equipment to the basement workshop for repair and maintenance?

One major aspect Dorothy's panel discussed was location of programme, e.g., day centres versus residential. It was imperative 25 years ago that we started in our own back-forty. School-yards, the nearby vacant lot, or nearby field and stream areas were adequate and still are, I might hasten to add. These community-based locations alleviated the costs of transportation. For the K-3 student it was a great introduction to the world of nature. It also served the purpose of letting administration, from the principal up, as well as parents, be aware of what one was attempting to accomplish. As students and staff became comfortable in their surroundings they expanded farther afield. Soon students from about the grade 6 level upwards were able to conduct independent studies.

In the early days, far more so than now, we had to earn the support of community and administration just to go out beyond the four walls. One sure-fire way of accomplishing this was to expose the very young child to worthwhile activities in the out-of-doors. Nowhere is one under greater scrutiny than when they are dealing with those precious 5-, 6- and 7-year-olds! Fresh young parents need the assurance that their little people are safe and having fun while learning. When we achieved this successfully in those early days, we created a support team that was both comfortable and confident that Outdoor Education was a worthwhile extension of the classroom. Yes indeed, the ground-work was laid and current outdoor



educators do not have to concern themselves with this problem.

Probably one of the best solutions to making certain outdoor education maintains this credibility is to ensure each outdoor experience is such an integral part of curriculum that it simply cannot be eliminated. Many things are handled better in the out-of-doors than in the classroom. However, one should never cross that threshold unless they are super-prepared. Safety, adequate conservation ethics, and good self-discipline are all important aspects resulting in positive learning experiences.

Outdoor Education would not exist today if the pioneers or elders had not been willing to risk. At that time, liability policies, certification programmes, etc., were not in place. As Outdoor Education became more sophisticated those components began to fall into place. Personally, I worked on the theory of "never ask permission but just do it!" However, that meant every detail had to be worked through carefully to avoid courting disaster. I appreciate the liability issue is vastly different now, but at times I feel it is also used as an excuse by reluctant participants.

Because our programme operated on a shoestring, we relied heavily on a strong interpretive component. This was done by competent Outdoor Education Naturalists whose skills had been honed by experience and lifestyle. There is no such thing as an "instant naturalist". Recipe box activities are no replacement for the skills of a good interpreter. Coupled with good common sense a programme can be very effective with little expense and few props. Even the toughest administrator cannot deny success when parents, classroom teachers and principals are all in support of a programme.

Finally, I had to smile when the arguments of Outdoor Education as a subject versus methodology arose during the panel discussion.

How well I remember struggling with those same arguments at Michigan State University when doing post-graduate studies under Dr. Julian Smith in the early 1970's. I firmly believe Outdoor Education and Environmental Studies are just a means to an end, or in other words, it is truly a methodology. Make it a subject and in hard times danger of total elimination is quite feasible. Outdoor Education is a completely integrated approach to learning, be it through language, math, history, geography, art, music, science or recreation skills. In this way, everyone can participate no matter where they are coming from. Surely the final objective of every educator is to turn out students better able to cope in society. Hopefully they'll possess a keen eye to being good stewards of our environment and utilize their spare leisure time effectively through skills and appreciation.

Above all, try not to despair! Remember there is always more than one way to skin a cat, as the old saying goes. If one believes strongly enough in what they believe, a way will be found. These times of restraint and cutbacks are only a blip on the overall screen of life, similar to the ups and downs of the stock market. The challenge is to find acceptable alternatives in order that we, who believe in Outdoor and Environmental Education, do indeed make this a better world to live through our young charges.

---

*Audrey Wilson is a retired outdoor education Consultant from the Northumberland-Newcastle Board of Education. Her writing and her workshops helped spread positive seeds of outdoor education through the 1960's, 1970's, and 1980's. At the 1996 COEO Annual Conference Dinner, Clare Magee asked everyone who had directly had an interaction or workshop with Audrey to stand: almost half the audience rose. And then those who had had direct interactions with those standing were also to stand. All rose! Audrey is truly one of many regarded COEO 'elders'!*

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*Ensure each outdoor experience is such an integral part of curriculum that it simply cannot be eliminated.*

## Give and Take within COEO

by Lisa Primavesi

*The three related issues that stand out are: 1) declining membership; 2) an outdated mandate and an unclear focus of COEO's objectives particularly related to the needs of members; and 3) a lack of generational links within the organization.*

In September I attended COEO's twenty fifth anniversary conference and celebration with six classmates from the Outdoor and Experiential Education class at Queen's, all of whom were first time conference goers. We were all excited and enthusiastic about participating in the celebration and discussion of directions for COEO in the next twenty five years. However, beneath the surface atmosphere of joviality I sensed a less than optimistic undercurrent. In the talking circle that I participated in, people talked about being in the classroom as purgatory and children like frogs trying to get out of the box. As I surveyed the hall during the celebratory supper on Saturday, I noticed that young sat with young and trailblazers with trailblazers. When a networking sheet was presented, no more than five of those that I would consider to be trailblazers signed up. At the panel discussion on the future of COEO we ran out of time just as people were beginning to offer thoughts and comments. And at the end of it all there was not an evaluation sheet to collect feedback from attenders on the conference or the future of COEO. If we, the membership of COEO and others interested in the field of outdoor education want to celebrate in another twenty five years then we need to devote some serious time, thought and action to the future of this organization to ensure that we have supporters and are relevant in the 21st century.

I have been a member of COEO for six years and the regional representative of the Far North region for three years and though not a trailblazer, I believe strongly that there is a place for an organization such as COEO in this province. I feel that I have been privileged to reflect on COEO as an active participant and with great input and discussion from newcomers. From this perspective I would like to share some of my thoughts on where I think that this organization needs to go in order to survive in the next year, decade, century. The three related issues that stand out are: 1) declining membership; 2) an outdated mandate and an

unclear focus of COEO's objectives particularly related to the needs of members; and 3) a lack of generational links within the organization.

For several years now the Board has been concerned with the issue of declining membership. With wage freezes and job losses it is truly a challenge to get people to part with a forty dollar membership fee, never mind a few hundred dollars to travel to and participate in a conference. As well, the pool of people who relate the term outdoor educator as applying to them is constantly dwindling, as board-run centres close and conservation authorities make massive staff cuts. James Raffan, (*Pathways*, 8,(3)) makes the point that many teachers are still doing what they have always done: outdoor education from the classroom as part of an experience-rich programme. And yet classroom teachers who are doing outdoor education often don't identify with COEO or feel that COEO has anything to offer them in their classroom setting. In turn we often don't acknowledge them as outdoor educators or design our journals or conferences to suit their needs. Classroom teachers are our biggest membership market; we must invite, entice and embrace them into our organization and we will grow in strength and diversity.

The issue of declining membership may be linked to the unclear focus of COEO's objectives. COEO's identity crisis is reflected in name, mandate and lack of guidelines in forming partnerships with other organizations. We call ourselves The Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario, but who are we really? My observations at the fall conference showed COEO members to be teachers, post-secondary students, entrepreneurs and government employees, amongst other things. All of these individuals, while not specifically outdoor educators, found that the term includes them. There were few people there who would call themselves outdoor educators. How can we show more people that outdoor education is an educational

philosophy and learning style as well as a profession? Perhaps we should consider changing our name to something else that is more inclusive.

A second sign of COEO's identity crisis is found in the mandate of the organization. The objectives of COEO are stated in our constitutional mandate as follows:

"The prime objectives are: to establish and maintain professional practices in the field of Outdoor Education; and to promote qualified leadership in Outdoor Education."

I'm not really sure how we are achieving these objectives but then again I don't feel that they are really relevant to the membership of COEO today. Should COEO be encouraging new incentives and directions in outdoor education from a classroom base? Do members want hands-on activity ideas, philosophies, articles on integrating outdoor education and rationalizing it to administrators, or all of the above? When we form partnerships with other agencies, what criteria should apply in determining appropriate partners? This would be an excellent time for a membership survey to get back in touch with what members value from the organization and to focus on serving these needs in the future.

A final issue, again related to declining membership and lack of focus, is the generation gap that exists within the membership. Let's face it that COEO doesn't really have a younger generation. None of the first timers from Queen's OEE class in 1994 attended the conference this year. And my classmates generally felt that they didn't get their money's worth out of the conference. There was very little interaction between the seasoned COEO members and potential newcomers; nothing drew them in. Newcomers that I've talked to felt that they were not consulted for their ideas, appreciated for their potential or called upon to serve in meaningful ways. No one asked them about their vision of COEO or how they would be willing to help out or what would make them stick around year to year. I thought about what kept me involved after the first conference. It was Bob Henderson. He took the time to talk to me, corresponded by letter about COEO issues,

encouraged me to write for COEO and become the regional representative; he opened the door and welcomed me. Now Bob has a great gift for that but the point is that there was no way for these people to connect and feel a vital part of the organization and so it is easy for them to slip away. Someone had a great idea for a mentoring program where people could establish and maintain contact with someone who has been in the field for a while; but the idea died before it was presented. Establishing these generational links is critical to creating continuity in the organization.

So what can we as members do? First of all, we can reflect on what makes COEO a relevant organization to us as individuals. We can then think of ways to convey that message to the Board and to other people who are not yet members, to show that the organization has something of value to offer to a wide range of people in the province. We should think of things that COEO could be doing for members and for the field of outdoor education. We can suggest these ideas to the Board and even start to implement them. We should also think of things that we have to offer to COEO: our ideas, time, knowledge. I feel that these ideas of give and take between members are prime issues for focus and discussion at next year's conference. COEO should be about hands on learning, sharing what we're doing and supporting our diverse projects. We can each struggle along in our own little world; but the advantage of belonging to an organization of like-minded people is that together we can learn from each other and as a group, the cause, outdoor education in whatever setting with whoever facilitating, will be furthered. In these difficult times, we need an organization like COEO to be a strong and supportive voice, to provide continuity during times of change and to generate a rekindled spirit for outdoor and experiential education in Ontario.

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*Lisa Primavesi is a student in the Outdoor and Experiential Education programme at Queen's. She has been on staff at Kingfisher Lake Outdoor Centre in Thunder Bay and has been the Far North Regional Rep for the past three years.*

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*These ideas of give and take between members are prime issues for focus and discussion.*

## Elders and "Youngers": The Present and The Future of COEO

by Holly Bickerton

*COEO needs to make mentoring and youth involvement central to its task.*

**A**lthough I have been familiar with COEO through *Pathways* for a few years, I am a new member and was a first-time conference attendee at Ohsweken this fall. I attended several excellent sessions and had the opportunity to speak with many inspiring people. But as a "young member" (I am about the same age as COEO and a student in the Queen's Outdoor and Experiential Education programme), I admit to feeling frustrated with Saturday's forum, entitled "Back to the Future".

With a jovial 25th anniversary program outline in one hand, and Jim Raffan's visceral article "About Boundaries" (*Pathways*, 8(3)) in the other, I was already perplexed about the current and future identity of COEO when I arrived in Ohsweken. I listened carefully to the suggestions about COEO's future, about its need to be more political, to put greater emphasis on practical workshops, to reach out and expand membership, and to form linkages with similar groups. *I could help*, I thought: COEO is an organization whose ideals I support and which I could support with personal involvement. My frustration lay in finding that there were no tangible ways for newcomers to become involved with any of these suggestions. I would have been happy, for example, to participate in a working group to tackle some of these issues. Instead I left, feeling disappointedly eager, and a bit as though I hadn't really been asked for contributions.

Since younger members of COEO find themselves less often in classroom teaching roles or even at outdoor education centres, I understand that there may be a particular difficulty in sustaining youth involvement. But despite often dismal job prospects, many of us remain dedicated and energetic. And many of my colleagues at Queen's, for example, offer a familiarity with centres across several Ontario school boards.

As a generation of teachers retires in the next years, COEO needs to make mentoring and youth involvement central to its task. Informally, I know that some mentoring occurs, and I have been fortunate to benefit from it. I have spoken to several colleagues whose personal mentors can be found among the long-time members. This needs to be continued, and even increased and encouraged.

But youth involvement also needs to be formally recognized and institutionalized. COEO needs to offer opportunities for continued and increased connections between new and long-time members, that extend beyond its annual conference days. Local and regional workshops would help to sustain interest, broaden the community and capture the initiative and energy of new teachers. Involvement of younger educators in all aspects of COEO, including in its decision-making and planning, are necessary to bridge this gap. In short: don't let us leave conferences without showing us that our involvement is needed, and asking us how we can help!

If COEO were to founder in the next years of cutbacks and teacher retirements, that would be a shame. Perhaps a new generation of educators would re-invent the organization around a different kitchen table. Such a rejuvenation might re-energize the spirit of outdoor and experiential education, but re-invention comes at a tremendous price. We need you as much as you need us! We are *all*, both elders and "youngers", the present and the future of COEO.

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*Holly Bickerton is a student in the Queen's Outdoor and Experiential Education programme. She and others are organizing a winter workshop, "Taking the Freeze Out of Winter", a free hands-on workshop featuring strategies for using winter schoolgrounds, on Saturday March 1st in Kingston. (See 'Tracking' for further details.)*

## The School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism at Lakehead University

by Prof. Tom Stevens, Director

The School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism at Lakehead University is a broad-based four-year university honours programme that leads to an Honours Bachelor of Outdoor Recreation Degree. The programme was initiated in the late 1970's as a minor offering in the Geography Department and then became a small part of the Physical Education Programme. In the early 1980's, the programme became a separate entity and now has more than four hundred full-time students. Although the School originally focused on leadership and administration in outdoor recreation, the scope of the programme has been increased to include all aspects of recreation in the natural environment, and course offerings have been increased to include both the parks and tourism areas.

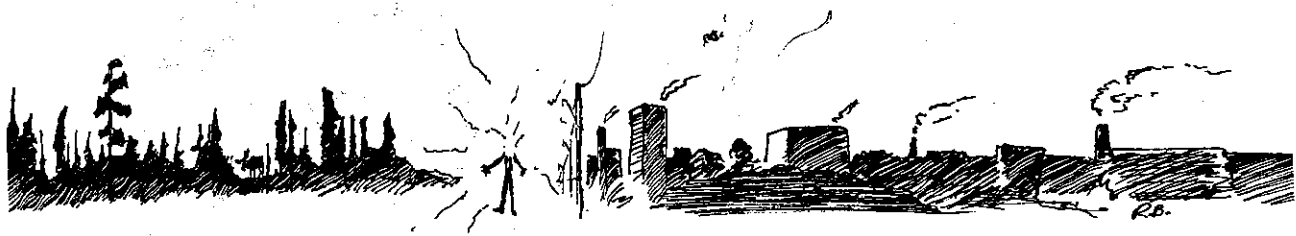
From a compulsory basis grounded in recreation theory, environmental issues, administration, tourism, parks, leadership, social psychology, planning, programming, statistics, research methods, issues, field trips and applied field courses, students can elect to take a general programme or specialize in any of the three areas of leadership, parks, or tourism. In addition, they may elect to complete a second degree in natural science, geography or history. All students are required to take forty-four half courses and complete an honours project before graduation, in addition to acquiring certification in first aid and lifesaving, and an instructor's rating in a selected outdoor recreation discipline. The programme is rigorous and challenging, and has continually attracted a large number of

applicants (in most years, nearly one thousand) for a relatively limited number of spaces (currently one hundred and forty per year), with a correspondingly high admission average (usually in the mid-seventies or higher).

The School has been fortunate in attracting a very high calibre of student with a very high proportion of students holding scholarships. A rather inordinate number of Presidential Scholars (highest marks entering university) have attended the School in recent years. As a result, the atmosphere in the School is rather unique. A tremendous amount of energy, excitement and ability is combined with a close, friendly and open environment where there is open interchange and communication between faculty and students. On campus, the students in the School are leaders in student activities as well as being active in their own student society (ORSS — the Outdoor Recreation Student Society, with its own newspaper, the *Quinzee Quarterly*) and in just about everything else happening on campus and off.

In the fall of 1996, courtesy of Canadian Press, the School was highlighted in newspapers across the country as an unusual programme that combined both theoretical and applied elements in a unique way. The articles pointed out the popularity of the programme as well as the high standards and difficulty in gaining admission. In addition, the articles also emphasized the contemporary and demanding nature of the programme.

*...all aspects of recreation in the natural environment...*



*The School will continue in its efforts to protect the environment and enhance opportunities in natural resource based recreation.*

In spite of financial and enrolment difficulties facing university programmes throughout Canada and other countries, the School has been able to maintain its growth and has been able to position itself well to face the challenges brought about by changes in the university system. By being current and popular, the School has been able to avoid the rather negative fate of many programmes, and is poised to continue its growth and development

In the future, the School will continue a process of dynamic evolution. Additional courses are planned to augment current offerings. In particular, a number of new courses are being prepared in the parks and tourism areas. A new Geographic Information System has been installed to support new initiatives, and new courses in systems, marine parks, river recreation, marketing and consumer behaviour are already in the planning phase with the first new courses being offered on a limited basis in January, 1997. Existing courses will also be

continually reviewed and refined to enable the School to be at the forefront in its field. Efforts are also being made to enhance the research capability and output of the School, in addition to plans to seek out increased involvement with the professional community.

The School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism at Lakehead University is a dynamic, unique and growing entity. Although current constraints will make the task more challenging, the School will continue in its efforts to protect the environment and enhance opportunities in natural resource based recreation.



## A Cycling Journey: Critical Interactions

by Laani Uunila (second year ORPT student)

**W**hen I first got on my bike in Thunder Bay I was barely able to steer because of the weight of the gear. We had our first mishap before we reached the highway when my friend lost his toothbrush; when the toothbrush was repacked we began our journey across Canada. I began the trip thinking I was going to see the country that separated me from the West Coast and my home, but instead I found inquisitive and supportive people.

We arrived in the evening at a picnic area in Northwestern Ontario, out of water. The picnic area was on a lake shore, so we decided to boil water from the lake. As my friend and I were debating how long we should boil our water, a couple from the Yukon offered us water from their camper. We accepted, and were given information that we were 45 km away from the next fresh water source. That would mean almost half a day of biking for us; luckily the couple was generous enough to fill all our water bottles.

The average school or group recreation trip involves the participants coming to an area, doing their planned activity, and leaving. Due to the clique mentality of the recreation groups, a trip rarely encompasses time for interaction with the local people. The purpose of recreation trips is usually to experience the outdoor environment and participate in a planned activity. Local people interact and belong to the outdoor environment, so should they not be part of the recreation experience? Wilderness areas are an exception because the definition of the wilderness area encompasses the lack of people; however, all other natural areas have some amount of human influence. Depending on the purpose of the trip, it could be useful to create contacts with people who know the area. Even if it is just a small outfitters store along the highway, locals can add a human element to the geography of the area and a knowledge of sometimes colourful local lore.

As my friend and I stopped for a break, a couple from Florida pulled up in a Volkswagen van; they were hoping to find a washroom at the

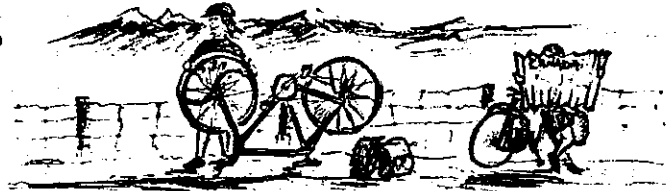
gas station where we were. They planned to cross Canada, spending time in each province. They asked where we were spending the nights,

we told them that we had a tent, and if we could not find a picnic area, we'd just pull off the side of the highway. They looked astounded, and asked "Aren't you afraid of being shot?"

They had spent every night in a motel because they were under the impression that all Canadians enjoyed going out in the evenings and shooting, just for fun. Though this is an extreme example of what can occur by not talking with people from a region, local knowledge can help most people when they are planning or participating in a trip.

Interaction with people is not only informative to yourself, but can inspire others to enjoy recreation experiences. In Wynyard, Saskatchewan we stopped at a gas station to repair several problems (a broken spoke and two tearing panniers). A father with a small son came up to us and started asking questions, on how far we were going, and other trip particulars. He then turned to his son and said "Some day when you're older, maybe we can make a trip like this ourselves." The man, who had probably never before considered a bike trip across the country, was now contemplating doing a trip with his son.

Interactions on a recreation trip cannot be predicted or planned for; moreover, each person interprets situations differently. Though the interactive elements of a trip cannot be preplanned, time for interaction should be allowed because the benefits are immeasurable. Each encounter I had with a person I remember — whether it was a philosophical discussion at a picnic area with a fellow cyclist, or a farmer taking time from ploughing his fields to help my friend and me — the experience was unforgettable.



*Time for interaction should be allowed because the benefits are immeasurable.*

## To Create Anew...

Jonathan Harris (Third Year Student in the ORPT Program)

*Creating oneself again through the connections (or re-connections) that we have while being in touch with the natural environment.*

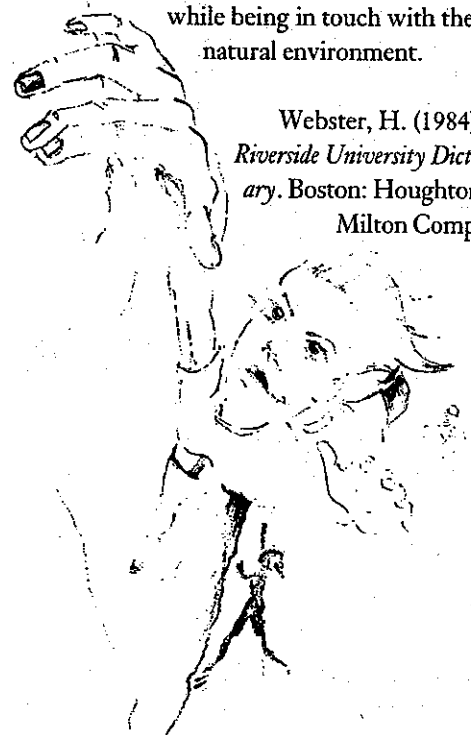
The step from being continually active in the out-of-doors and being in touch with the natural environment this past summer, to the life of a university student this autumn, was definitely a much more difficult transition than I have ever felt before. This distance from the natural world became a harsh reality when I returned from a summer of instructing outdoor education at a residential centre in Muskoka and working as an assistant director of a camp programme. Every morning, here in Thunder Bay, I witness the majesty of Nanabijou, the Sleeping Giant, an incredible peninsula that curves into Lake Superior and forms the prone silhouette of a mythical native character. Each day, as I walk to my morning classes, he reminds me of what I am missing and I know that I can hear him calling me, to get back in touch with natural world that I miss so much.

The School of Outdoor Recreation Parks and Tourism (ORPT) provides an excellent environment for learning because both the faculty and the students bring such a wide variety of experiences with them. The depth and the breadth of our school provides an incredible opportunity to learn from others, but I have also found that I need to take the look inside to learn from my own experiences and synthesize the meanings of simple words and jargon that can be so easily spoken but not always so easily understood. So, in a sea of the vast definitions of *outdoor recreation* I have found glimmerings of hope, but nothing that speaks the words to encapsulate exactly how I would define these two so seemingly simple words. My perception of outdoor recreation follows, moulded by my relationship with the natural world and my experiences that have shaped my conception of what outdoor recreation really is.

What does it mean to *re-create* in the out of doors, and what makes the natural environment so important in terms of the setting for us to *re-create*? This does depend on how we use the word. Webster's dictionary (1984)

defines *create* as to *give into being* and *creation* as the *act of creating*. While to *rec-re-ate* is defined as to *relax and divert* oneself, whereas *re-cre-ate* is defined as to *create anew*. So what is the distinction between these definitions? I can understand *rec-re-a-tion* as the *refreshment of one's body and/or mind or the process of relaxing or diverting oneself*. But I know deep down inside that this is not what I strive for when I recreate; the word *divert* screams at me as the last thing that I want to be doing when I am out doing what I would label *re-creation*. To be diverting myself would be to take away from the experience I was striving to achieve. I believe that to experience the feelings that I associate with *re-creation* I must come as a whole and not be running or diverting myself from anything, and only then can I truly feel connected with the natural world around me. My pursuits and experiences have led me to define *outdoor re-creation* as the refreshing and renewing of one's body or mind, through the process of creating oneself again through the connections (or re-connections) that we have while being in touch with the natural environment.

Webster, H. (1984) *New Riverside University Dictionary*. Boston: Houghton Milton Company.





## The Magnificent Classroom

by Andrea Swatton (third year ORPT Student)

The sound of the crying loons carried over the calm waters of Lake of the Woods, alerting our ears as the soft gentle breeze cooled our faces. The details of the trees and rocky shoreline of the island before us became illuminated by the sun's magnificent light from the west. Above us, long white wispy clouds stretched across the sky as we comfortably sat upon a thin layering of humus that covered a slab of the great Canadian Shield. This was one of our classrooms on our twelve-day voyageur canoe expedition from Crilly Dam to Sioux Narrows, and the night's lesson was navigation.

With much enthusiasm, our leader Mike Oades thoroughly reviewed topographic maps, compass and map work, and declination. I thought, "I've already heard all this in class." But it was different this time. I felt alert and aware of my surroundings, and everything I was hearing and doing. My mind was a sponge trying to soak up all that was being presented.

I had never felt so alive during a lecture. I was not only physically there, as I am in a regular classroom, but also mentally and spiritually present. Why? I think this resulted from the past days' events. Paddling a 36-foot voyageur canoe with eleven other folks over 100 km across the majestic Lake of the Woods was a very intrinsically rewarding experience. I was filled by the natural beauty surrounding me and for once my mind was not wondering off to other worries and concerns.

Mike was firing questions at us and we had to be quick to find the answers that were right in front of us on our topographic map. In groups of three to four we worked the answers out and fired them back the second Mike asked our group. This created great involvement from everyone.

"What's the title and map name of the map in front of you?" Mike asked.

Simple review, we thought, until we had a second to think about our answer. Sioux Narrows is title and 52 E/8 is map name. We

stopped ourselves in our tracks \_ no it's the other way around. Covering this material in class seemed so boring, but not out here. Using maps from our trip made it exciting and meaningful because we were looking at either our past tracks and reminiscing, or our future tracks and dreaming.

Just as Mike was asking us to take a bearing off the west point of the island before us, a magnificent sunset caught our attention. This called for a break! In silence we admired the sheer beauty of the sunset. It disappeared quickly behind the trees on the horizon but the light rays still reflected radiant red and pink off the clouds above. Words cannot describe how I felt, and I'm sure I was not alone. Breaks like this are hard to come by in a regular classroom \_

"Alrighty folks, if I can get your attention back \_ " I stored that special sight in my memory and returned to the matter at hand. After hearing about the importance of shooting accurate bearings and then practicing them it became apparent how useful this review would be for the remainder of the trip. Every day of the trip is an opportunity to practice navigational skills, especially when we are leaders of the day. This just gave me even more motivation to obtain as much as I could from this lesson.

I'm not one to ask too many questions or speak out in a classroom but I was out here. I felt comfortable and certainly less intimidated in this natural learning environment with a small group of fellow students to inquire about any of my concerns. There was no hesitation in asking someone for help or consulting them on any problem because we were all there for each other. Together we wanted to learn what we could from each other and our experience.

I value highly the back country classroom because it provides a comfortable atmosphere and an incredible learning environment where I can hear, see, and most importantly, do. As we have heard so often, "I hear, I forget. I see, I remember. I do, I understand."

*Breaks like this  
are hard to come by  
in a regular  
classroom...*

## Joie de Vivre

by Tobin Day (third year ORPT student)

In August of 1996 a group of ten students, one trip leader, and one professor headed out on a two-week adventure following a historical voyageur canoe route. As much as possible traditions were kept. We had one 36-foot *canot de maitre*, a canvas tarp to sleep under (as well as our tents), *voyageur* clothing and the spirit of the *voyageurs* in our hearts. The trip was experiential education at its best.

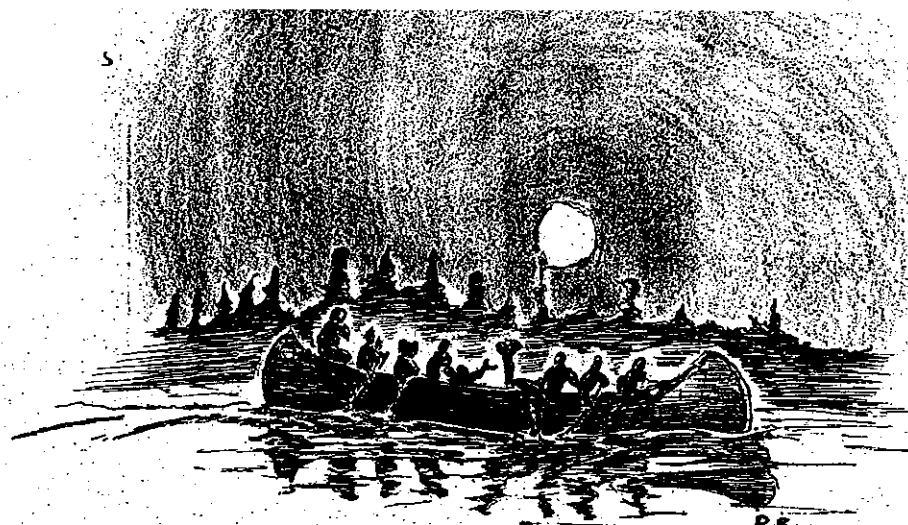
Under a full moon and star filled sky, our bouts of hilarious laughter slowly died out. As my companions drifted off to sleep, I alone continued paddling our 36-foot *voyageur* canoe. Ever so quietly Karen joined my paddling, then Mike, then Craig. In complete silence, the boat glided down the Rainy River startling the white pelicans that flew with a grace unexpected from their gangly bills and large size. There were twelve of us in the boat, students and professors from the Outdoor Recreation program at Lakehead University — the Lakehead *Voyageurs*.

This night was the fourth of a two-week trip required to graduate from Outdoor Recreation. We had started tracing a historical *voyageur* canoe route just west of Thunder Bay. We had paddled far and travelled through

downtown Fort Frances (quite a spectacle: we were portaging our canoe down main street, with a police escort out front)! Our journey would continue until we reached the Lake of the Woods area. This was our longest day. After 47 kilometres of paddling, as well as the 2 km portage, we were all pretty tired.

Ever so gently, Amy began to paddle. The night was magical, as was the camaraderie forming between group members. We had paddled long days, with Mike slowly easing us into the short, fast *Voyageur* stroke. We had watched a deer in the last moments of its life, we had been witness to glorious sunsets, and the generosity of human spirit. And all of this occurred in a space of only 36 feet. Before this trip I had been apprehensive. I require personal time, my own space. I often don't even want to communicate with people when I am paddling (it's easier to be close to the waters and land that way). How would I survive in a boat where the slightest misplacement of a paddle could be sensed by the whole group?

To my amazement, I had been perfectly happy ever since we left the bus and trailer behind. Laughter was the master of our boat and only good spirits seemed apparent.

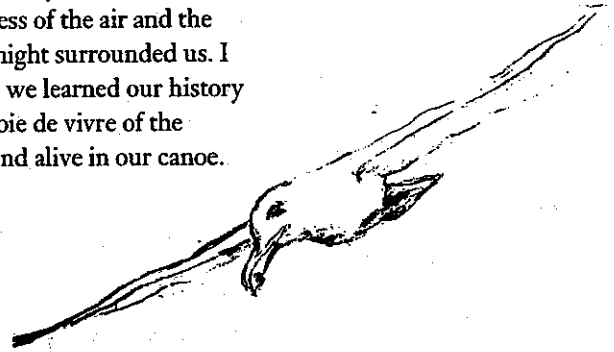


Scott struggled with his voyageur shirt and paddle. He did not seem to know which one went in the water. After waking up though, he too joined in our silent paddle. A radio crackled in the distance, reminding us of the closeness of the civilized, human world. This was by no means a wilderness trip. It didn't seem to matter though, we carried our happiness and the history of canoeing with us.

There is no better way to understand the history of our country than to go out and re-create it as best as possible. We had tents, mosquito repellent, and stoves, and a canoe made out of fibreglass. The voyageurs had canvas tarp, bear grease, and flint and steel. Their canoes were made of the materials of nature, not those of humans. Many died on the

trail. And yet, history tells us that they also had a certain "joie de vivre" so rare in our world today. If times were tough, the solution could simply lie in a song.

The lights of Emo were in sight. Mike, without speaking, pointed towards the harbour that would be our haven for the night. No one spoke a word until we were safely docked (a comfort unheard of in the days of the voyageurs). The sweetness of the air and the calm of a small town at night surrounded us. I could feel only joy. Had we learned our history lesson? I think so. The joie de vivre of the voyageurs was present and alive in our canoe.



## Feature

# Tourism Transformed into Perspective

by Sara Mimick (4th-year ORPT student)

**T**hroughout my four years in the school of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism (ORPT) at Lakehead University, I have learned much about outdoor activities, leadership, parks planning, recreation management, and tourism. The tourism component of ORPT consists of various courses, such as Foundations of Tourism, Tourism Planning, Parks Planning and Management, and Tourism Analysis. This past summer I backpacked in Australia, a country vast with tourist activities and services. Relating the information I have gained from tourism courses in ORPT to the tourist activities and services in Australia gave me a new perspective on tourism and my life. During this time I was able to observe and connect tourism in Australia

to the cultural, economic, and environmental effects the industry has on the country.

Culturally, I observed many effects of tourism. Australia is similar to Canada in the way that various cultures and sub-cultures exist within different geographical regions of the country; Canada is diverse with French, English, and Aboriginal cultures, with sub-cultures existing in Western and Eastern Canada. Similarly, Australia is diverse with English and Aboriginal cultures with distinct sub-cultures in geographical regions. For example, in Eastern and Southern Australia, I noticed that surfing is a tremendously popular activity, with a unique and laid-back way of living. In the desert (the Outback), where the heat is extreme, I experi-

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*I was able to observe and connect tourism in Australia to the cultural, economic, and environmental effects the industry has on the country.*

enced many other sub-cultures, such as an underground opal mining town, ranchers, and the fascinating Aboriginal culture. The North is full of a culture valuing beautiful national parks, where the rainforest meets the sea. While I did not travel to the West, I understand that it is also just as laid-back as in the East.

To provide an example of the cultural effects of tourism, I would like to write about Uluru (or Ayers Rock), the spiritually significant rock located in the centre of the desert just outside the town of Alice Springs. Uluru is magnificent. Surrounded by orange and brown desert soil, Uluru stands alone. From sunrise to sunset Uluru continuously changes colour, and if the rain touches the desert soil (which is rare in the middle of the desert), the magnificent rock turns a deep black. The physical features of the rock are so pronounced that I am not surprised that this rock has great spiritual significance for the Aboriginals of the Australian desert.

During my visit to Uluru I was fortunate to have a knowledgeable, funny and relaxed tour guide named Joe. Joe would share with my group tiny bits of information about the "black fellas" lifestyle, the term "black fellas" referring to the Aboriginals, a term that is acceptable to the Aboriginals for describing themselves. On the drive to The Rock, Joe taught us about the Aboriginal culture but he always asked for something in return, just like the Aboriginals do within their culture. For the Aboriginal people who live in the Australian desert, knowledge and traditional stories are passed on when one is ready to learn and to give something back in return. In our situation, Joe asked for our respect for their way of life while we visited their Aboriginal land and learned of their culture.

When we arrived to Uluru it was surrounded by many other tour coaches with tourists from all over the world. The viewing of sunset was an especially busy time with people crowding me everywhere I turned. In this chaos our group had a choice. We could climb The Rock, but Joe discouraged this option because it is against Aboriginal culture to climb Uluru. Our second choice was to participate on an

interpretive walk around the base. Half of my group chose to walk around the base where we learned about significant elements of the Aboriginal culture, while the other half decided to join the masses and scramble up to the top for the physical challenge and the pleasure of saying "I climbed *The Rock*".

Our next and last stop was the Aboriginal Cultural Centre, usually the first stop for the majority of tourists. Here we were able to read and learn about the history and significance of Uluru to the Aboriginals. After just witnessing many people climbing Uluru, who looked like ants scrambling up the hill, I could not believe my eyes when I read a sign in big black bold letters in the cultural centre. It clearly stated "**PLEASE DO NOT CLIMB ULURU!**"

In conclusion, many unique cultures exist and surround physical natural structures in our world. Tourism has profound effects on the cultures and the natural landscapes, such as in the case of Uluru. Why tourists are allowed to climb The Rock and why a pleading sign is the only method (legally) of discouraging the climbing of Uluru is another issue. Whether tourism to The Rock and to other similar significant areas helps or hinders the cultures involved is a complex issue. Discussions of these issues are interesting and are common events that occur in the Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism courses. In ORPT we learn how to conduct research pertaining to the positive and negative effects of tourism, both locally and internationally, and how we need to balance it with respect for the native cultures. With tourism becoming the biggest international business in the world, determining its environmental and cultural effects is crucial.

## The Honours Project

by Geof Harries (fourth-year ORPT student)

**D**readed by many, loathed by some and revered by few, the Honours Project is both a blessing, and a curse of the Honours Bachelor of Outdoor Recreation degree programme at Lakehead University. Dangling in front of the eyes of third-year students, and darkly looming over the head of fourth-years, the completion of the Honours Project is viewed by the majority of those in the School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism as a rite of passage into places both mystical and intellectually unknown.

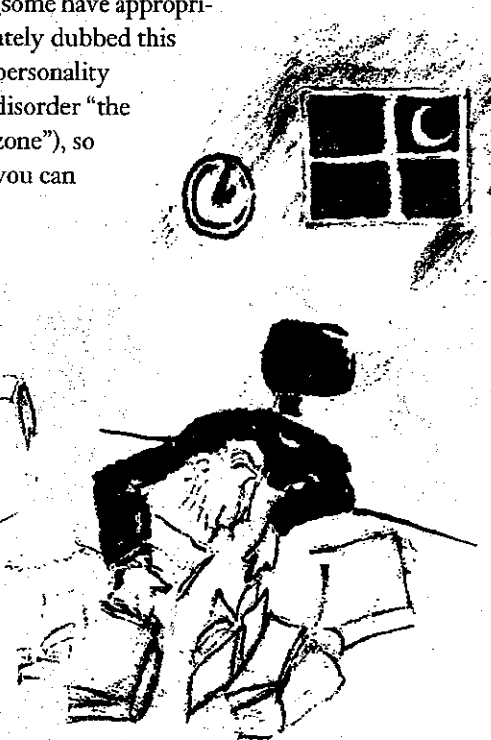
The Honours Project, described in the Lakehead course calendar as OR 3075 and OR 4075, is a combination of two courses that require the implementation of research strategies to thoroughly examine a problem or issue within the outdoor recreation spectrum. As OR 3075 and OR 4075 are required courses for graduation with an Honours Bachelor of Outdoor Recreation degree, many a lengthy tale has been told in order to strike fear and anguish into the hearts and minds of those unfamiliar with such tasks. Alas, there are a select few, myself included, who gratefully accept and appreciate the challenge of this prolonged academic adventure.

An Honours Project, once initiated by a student (although seemingly just another notch in the fabled belt of infinite wisdom) is a journey not unlike a year-long expedition to the most remote island of the Canadian North. A comparison between the two endeavours is therefore in order. A year-long expedition requires extensive planning, organization, and execution of administrative tasks. An Honours Project necessitates the same range of tasks to be completed, requiring a student to spend lengthy hours in libraries perusing dusty books that nobody has signed out since the seventies, and exhaustively harassing the library staff in order to locate the required literature. When these two tasks are performed, excessive

mental anguish sometimes occurs, most often when the person finds out the book they had planned to base an entire hypothesis on was recently banned by the national censorship board.

Another aspect of the expedition that is relative to the Honours Project is the implementation and execution of the journey. Much like one's first day into a wilderness expedition, where everybody is congenial, polite and accommodating of each other, the Honours Project requires a certain measure of responsibility, courtesy and respect for one's friends, roommates, and most importantly, the academic advisor. Not soon after the first few days of an expedition and several weeks into the third-year portion of the Honours Project, these attributes begin to crumble under the pressures of the work. Fortunately, it is not difficult to identify individuals engrossed in the Honours Project (some have appropriately dubbed this personality disorder "the zone"), so you can

*A process leading students to, and through a door revealing the horizon that so many people dread to encounter — the real world.*



do your best to avoid the wrath of people becoming both emotionally broken and disarrayed. Listen for erratic piercing screams from within the seat of a chair facing a virus-inflicted computer that has just devoured a disk full of data (Hamel, personal communication and experience, 1996). Look for people in the hallways trembling from the effects of a caffeine-infused late night, prolonged grumbling under their breath, and the clenching of a 50-page paper now laden with red ink.

The Honours Project is not entirely a terrible thing, nor is it a living entity that will take over individuals' lives and reduce them to a slobbering mass of inhuman proportions (denial is a therapy of sorts). Perhaps if the Honours Project, like an wilderness expedition, is undertaken with the comprehension that it will require countless hours of research, intricate organization and prolonged commitment, may act as an invaluable and unforgettable experience in individuals' lives. The completion of an expedition is widely viewed as the point at which all things in an individual's life seem to make sense and their place in the world becomes much more defined. In essence, the completion of the Honours Project is a process leading students to, and through a door revealing the horizon that so many people dread to encounter ... the real world.



## Strategies for Successfully Introducing Women To Active Outdoor Pursuits of an Instrumental Nature.

Jamila Boukhedouma (4<sup>th</sup> year ORPT student)

**R**ooted in a quest of self-discovery, research for my undergraduate degree was focused on the ambition to uncover a set of reasons behind a female's aversion to pursuit in instrumental outdoor activity. Instrumental activity (Duquin, 1978), can be characterized by a strong emphasis on the participants autonomy/power capabilities and a focus on winning over performance. Through theoretical examinations of the psychological and sociological components necessary for success within instrumental sport, as an elite female athlete, I was able to uncover methods for promoting involvement and providing effective instruction to beginner females.

Throughout history, highly instrumental activity has been fastened to concepts of masculinity (Murray & Matheson, 1993; Nelson, 1991; Oglesby, 1978; Twin, 1979). In relation to this theory, it was discovered that how one views 'hard skill' participation will evidently be directly related to your gender. A major result of perceiving an activity as an agent of masculine orientation, is that a majority of females will not desire prolonged or serious participation within such activities (Duquin, 1978). How can we increase participation in such pursuits then, as many outdoor recreational activities clearly exhibit a strong instrumental basis for participation?

One of the biggest hurdles to overcome when answering this question are the women's attitudes toward the activities themselves and, resultantly, participation within them. In many introductory situations women are forced to compare their own physical prowess and performance to their male counterparts, as female to male ratios remain skewed to the later within instrumental pursuits (Frieze, 1975;

Snyder, 1993). Such unrealistic comparisons often result in increased anxiety and decreased self-confidence levels within the beginner female participant. While co-ed excursions are seen to be beneficial to female athletes who have already mastered their skills and seek to derive heightened training benefit from inter-sex competition, such recreational engagements will produce unnecessary levels of perceived competition within unskilled female athletes (S. Balantyne, Personal Communications, 1996; Donnelly & Birrell, 1980; C. Redden, Personal Communications, 1996). Therefore, these extrinsic motivations for success will only inhibit progressive skill development and may deter females from future participation within the sport.

All-female environments, however, appear to emphasize the feminine originality behind involvement in such instrumental activities by portraying the image of female participation as a separate identity from male performance that is different, but equal in worth. As a result, retention of one's female sport identity has been shown to help eliminate the shame associated within masculine comparison (Brennan, 1994; Campbell, 1981; Diem, 1981; Phelan, 1995). In turn, 'women-only' outings are seen to reduce interpersonal and gender based feelings of excess competition. Such anxiety reduction has lead to a more productive learning environment and a higher level of receptivity among female participants (Nelson, 1991; Yerkes & Miranda, 1985; Phelan, Personal Communications, 1996). This evidence displays the importance of supportive suggestion to female athletes by coaches and educators, that female performance in instrumental activity is both admired and accepted.

As seen through the responses of many elite

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*I was able to uncover methods for promoting involvement and providing effective instruction to beginner females.*

*The most important key to female sport introduction however, appears to be that of maintaining the level of 'fun' within the activity.*

female athletes involved with the professional pursuit of instrumental activity, the ideology that female athletes can also be coached more favourably by competent women, may be based upon the theory that women as coaches or role models have had similar learning curves and skill based difficulties in relation to the beginner athlete (Bialeschki & Henderson, 1993; Frieze, 1975; Outward Bound, 1995; Yerkes & Miranda, 1985). In addition, females are seen to inherently provide a more nurturing environment to beginners than males (Empowering Women In Sports, 1995; Glock, 1994; Outward Bound, 1994). Therefore, women will be more likely to provide the supportive, evaluative environment necessary to promote intrinsic successes.

The most important key to female sport introduction however, appears to be that of maintaining the level of 'fun' within the activity. People are often drawn to an active outdoor pursuit because of its exciting appeal. More often than not, the fun is quickly lost in pursuit of competition. Coaches and educators alike should recognize the importance of keeping instrumental activities enjoyable for female participants in order to both reduce negative anxieties and promote self-confidence (S. Balantyne, Personal Communications, 1996; S. DeMattei, Personal Communications, 1996; Hinz, 1991; Petri, 1871; Phelan, Personal Communications, 1996; C. Redden, Personal Communications, 1996; Nelson, 1991). Successful female introduction into instrumental outdoor activity must provide a fun, non-competitive, challenging and approachable method for promoting positive interactions between the athlete and her environment. But how can we, as outdoor educators, provide such an environment for introductory females?

Let us first examine some primary stressors to a female's initial attempts at instrumental performance within an outdoor recreational activity. In this way, strategies for overcoming such barriers can be presented as methods for both encouraging and continuing female participation through success based environments.

Historically, females have shown to often

suffer from a lack of experience in instrumentally competitive situations and to this day, often report higher confidence levels and greater performance when working alone in a comparative or competitive situation (Bandura, 1977; Lirgg & Feltz, 1989; Roberts, 1972, S. Schike, Personal Communications, 1996). It has been recognized that the presence of an evaluative audience (peers, teachers, parents, etc), may act as an inhibitor on the performance of an individual during her initial mastery attempts (Cratty, 1981; Hitchman, 1975; Iso-Ahola & Roberts, 1975; Martens, 1969; Martens, 1975). During the early stages of learning, *wrong responses* are dominant and have greater habit strength than the correct response. Therefore, the presence of others while learning a task increases the emission of the dominant incorrect responses which are detrimental to performance, and causes the emission of the correct response to be omitted or postponed (Hitchman, 1975). Because the beginner female's skills have not been mastered sufficiently, the presence of an audience may increase fears of failure and inevitably end in negative consequences for the beginner athlete. Conversely, for females who have mastered their skill performance, an awareness of the supportive aspects provided by a spectating audience may prove beneficial, if brought to their attention.

As an audience is inevitable in many of today's outdoor recreation settings, a minimal requirement in the promotion of a positive learning environment for the beginner female involves the advancement of strategies to deflect negative appraisals from an audience. A suggestion to accomplish this may be to focus the athletes attention on primarily deriving achievement motivations from the intrinsic evaluations of her own performance while examining audience appraisals from a detached perspective.

Similarly, how a novice female athlete views critical assessments of her performance can drastically effect the stability of her learning experience. Coaches and educators must realize that female athletes who are adversely effected by negative criticism would respond better if failures were de-emphasized and successes



emphasized (Donnelly & Birrell, 1980). In this respect, how a criticism is phrased holds as much importance as what is being said. It must therefore be recognized, that in regard to females engaging in sport activity, negative appraisals which are preceded by positive assessments will be responded to much more receptively than harsh criticisms directly.

Ample evidence exists to suggest that females often lack confidence in achievement situations of an instrumental nature (Corbin, Laurie, Gruger, & Smiley, 1984; Lirgg & Feltz, 1989; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974). What are the effects of low self-confidence levels on instrumental performance, and what can be done to increase confidence? When analysing levels of self-confidence towards performance, it is important to recognize that a self-confident individual is one who is optimistic about their performance in an activity rather than one who acknowledges to have an overall sense of competence (Lirgg & Feltz, 1989). Research presents that, in cases where strong motivations to succeed are guided by high fears of failure, fluctuations in the self-confidence levels within the female participant are likely to occur. In relation to this theory, it has been found that an athlete's tendency to set unrealistic goals for their performance has a positive correlation to the athlete's level of fear towards failure (Levy, 1973; Roberts, 1973). Conversely, female athletes identified as exhibiting a high need to achieve will be prone to set more realistic goals for themselves and resultantly portray higher self-confidence levels by accomplishing realistic achievements. But how can this information be used to create a more suitable learning environment? It is suggested that the goal setting behaviours of all female athletes should be monitored and regulated for realistic achievements, in hopes of raising their self-confidence levels for performance within an instrumental activity. By exposing the goals of a novice participant, activities can be formatted to maximize successes through sufficiently challenging endeavours.

Evidence that some females ultimately fear success itself creates many a barrier for the

outdoor educator and coach. It is suggested that females who are fearful of success should first participate in non-competitive environments with female role-models in order to acquire the skill base necessary to perform at competitive or evaluative levels. Through increased self-confidence, the coaching body may be able to create an awareness within the athlete of the successes already accomplished that did not result in negative consequences, and then further motivate the participant by highlighting her positive experiences.

The barriers that I have presented here provide only a fraction of the difficulties that females may encounter in their attempts to perform instrumentally. However, it is hoped that through further examination into this field of research, coaches, parents, educators and peers of both sexes will better be able to provide a nurturing environment for the involvement of larger numbers of females into active outdoor pursuits of an instrumental nature.

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*Editor's note: If you contact the Editor, you can receive a very complete bibliography for this research project. Due to space restrictions, we did not print the listings.*



## Do Students Value Experiential Education in The School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism?

By Laara Clarkson, (4th year ORPT student)

The results of a recent study (Clarkson, 1996) reveal that students in The School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism (ORPT) at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario, feel that the experiential education components in their course curriculum are extremely valuable. As a fourth year student planning to graduate from ORPT in the spring of 1997, I am currently completing an honours project thesis on ORPT students' perceptions towards the experiential education courses which exist within the programme curriculum. Such courses include laboratories (i.e., natural interpretation laboratories), practicums (outdoor recreation theory, skills and instructional courses), and field trips (extended wilderness expeditions).

The data for my study was gathered from two group interviews which occurred in October, 1996. Each group consisted of five to six third- and fourth-year ORPT students who had previously been involved with The School of ORPT's extensive experiential education programmes. During the group discussions, students were asked whether or not they feel that ORPT's curriculum in experiential education is valuable. Regarding this question, the following is a summary of several of the main themes which emerged.

### The Nature of ORPT

One of the first and foremost reasons as to why both groups feel experiential education in ORPT is valuable pertains to its applicability to the nature of the programme. Students believe that ORPT is the perfect programme in which to incorporate experiential learning techniques. With outdoor recreation being a critical compo-

nent of ORPT, it is only natural for students to seek to learn about subject matters in the most beneficial and appropriate setting: the out-of-doors. One student remarked, "If you're going to learn about the outdoors, why not learn about it in the outdoors? That's what we're doing, learning about the outdoors and managing wilderness — so why not be out there?" Since the students feel that it is best to learn in the most appropriate context, they think that ORPT would not be as meaningful if it did not place an emphasis upon experiential elements within the course curriculum.

### The Active Learning Approach

The 'hands-on', active approach to learning is another reason why students value ORPT's experiential education programmes. Students agree that attempting to learn from lectures can sometimes be difficult, as students may not be given the opportunity to fully understand the information. It is felt by the students that an active learning approach allows them to internalize information, which makes the information easier to understand. One student's view regarding this is, "Theories might not make sense when they're being told to you or when you're reading about them, but when you actually do something and practice it, it really comes together". The students also feel that once an understanding of information occurs, it can be remembered more easily, and is deemed more meaningful and valuable. A student commented that, "You remember what you are learning, it's not just words being put into your head with no real meaning attached".

## **Attainment of Diverse Knowledge**

Students also value the way in which ORPT's experiential education programmes allow them to learn other important skills, aside from those primarily intended to arise from the lessons. Such skills include group skills (i.e., group dynamics), leadership skills and social skills. The students feel that although these items are not necessarily being taught to them directly, they are very important and extremely significant. These thoughts were expressed when one student said, "There are a lot of skills that we have learned that come about as a result of the experience. Although they aren't taught in a lesson most of the time, they are still really, really valuable".

## **Added Meaning to University Career**

Students feel that participation in experiential education components definitely make their university careers more meaningful. They explained that throughout the experiential education courses, they were truly enjoying those programmes and could tell that others were enjoying them as well, thus making their university experiences more meaningful. A statement which reflects this was made by a group member who said:

"If you stand back and look around the class from a third person perspective, you see that everybody's really excited to learn. It's like children \_ you see a lot of excitement and curiosity to learn and everybody's having fun. I think that's an amazing thing and it's due to experiential education."

Students feel that experiential education produces an atmosphere which is enjoyable for everyone, and that experiential education adds much meaning to their academic careers.

## **Personal Growth**

Another reason why students believe The School of ORPT's experiential education is valuable is the personal growth which students feel occurs as a result of the programme. The students associate a high level of internal growth with experiential education in the course curriculum. They feel that they have grown as individuals due to experiential education in many ways. Students feel that they have gained considerable self-confidence and willingness to try new things, which is the underlying basis necessary for trying new things and facing challenges. One person said, "It has built my confidence \_ I'm not as self-conscious anymore." Another remarked, "It gives you a better sense of who you are."

The aforementioned results represent only the main themes which emerged from the results of this study regarding the reasons as to why Lakehead University's School of ORPT students value the large experiential education components of their programme. My honours thesis reveals many other important reasons, and compares the all the students' views with related literature and other research which has been undertaken regarding experiential education in higher education. In conclusion, the main reasons why ORPT students value experiential education relates to the nature of the ORPT programme, the active learning which occurs, and the attainment of various skills other than those being directly taught, the meaning experiential education provides for students, and the personal growth which occurs.

## **Reference**

Clarkson, L. (1996). *Third and Fourth year Students' Perceptions Toward Experiential Education within the School of Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism at Lakehead University*. Unpublished honours thesis, Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada.

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*"There are a lot of skills that we have learned that come about as a result of the experience. Although they aren't taught in a lesson most of the time, they are still really, really valuable".*

## Rivers Running Free: Canoeing Stories by Adventurous Women

Edited by Judith Niemi & Barbara Wieser, Seal Press, 1987

A Book Review by Tracy Smith (fourth year ORPT student)

The book, *Rivers Running Free: Canoeing Stories by Adventurous Women* is a collection of short stories, trip logs, and excerpts from previously written books, which document the paddling adventures of women. Edited by Judith Niemi and Barbara Wieser, and published in 1987 by Seal Press, the book examines the various canoe and kayak tripping experiences of 34 different women.

The book is divided into five chapters, each containing from four to ten short stories. Corresponding maps, as well as historical and contemporary photographs accompany the stories. Chapter titles are as follows: *The Companions of Her Days*, *The Whitewater of Life*, *Urban Wilds*, *The Very Poetry of Travel*, and *Listening*. I found Chapter Four to be especially meaningful, as it is dedicated to the history of women paddling. As a woman who paddles today, reading about avid female canoeists who paddled almost 100 years ago was both interesting and inspiring.

A central theme in the majority of the stories is one of transition and change. Many of the authors had participated in a canoe or kayak trip while they were encountering personal life changes. While on their respective trips, they experienced another form of change, one of personal growth. Virtually all of the short stories in *Rivers Running Free* mention this personal growth as one of the most valued aspects of their trip. It was easy to relate to this aspect of the book, as I myself seem to grow a little more each time I participate in a canoe or kayak trip. I have also witnessed this growth in many others with whom I have paddled. For many summers I have worked at a children's summer camp, and have had the pleasure of leading trips, many of which have been all-female. It is exciting to see a teenage girl finish a long buggy, bushwhack

portage with an expression of both relief and accomplishment on her face. Many girls such as this have never been on a canoe or kayak trip before, and prior to leaving are scared, apprehensive, and intimidated of the unknown. In addition, they very often doubt their own skills, strength, and ability to complete a canoe or kayak trip. I find it amazing that once the trip is over, they feel as though they have conquered the world, and there is nothing they cannot do. One year I led an eight day sea kayaking trip, and on that trip was a shy, unconfident girl who took little initiative. She returned the next year, and again was in my group, this time it was a 14-day sea kayaking trip along the north shore of Lake Superior. On this trip, she was more outgoing, willing to try new things, took a great deal of initiative, and wanted to improve her technical skills. Subsequently, she returned for several years, and participated in every expedition that the camp offered. Although her transformation, and increase in self confidence may be attributed to many factors, it is clear to me that her first trip experience was a positive one, and it greatly enhanced her self-esteem. I have no doubt that these trips have helped her grow into the person that she is now.

*Rivers Running Free* is a valuable book for paddling enthusiasts, especially women. The stories within the book are inspirational, which may encourage women to either begin canoeing or kayaking or to enhance their existing paddling and tripping skills.

The book is also recommended to all outdoor leaders. Women have been participating in canoeing and kayaking for many years, and this trend is rapidly developing. As more women participate in paddle sports, and in outdoor recreation activities in general, it is important for outdoor leaders to recognize that women's

perceptions of outdoor experiences may often differ from that of men. The variances in perceptions between men and women of an outdoor experience can be rationally attributed to the different ways in which society enculturates and socializes girls and boys into gender specific roles. *Rivers Running Free* allows the reader to gain insight into a woman's perception of her outdoor experiences as the authors eloquently write of their experiences and perceptions.

In my trip leading experience, I have seen the same girls behave differently depending on whether the trip was all-female, or co-ed. I now realize, that in the past, I myself have acted differently when co-leading a trip with a male. Unfortunately, we may tend to bring stereotypical sex roles into the wilderness, and pass these stereotypes on to the participants that we lead. It is imperative for outdoor leaders to treat participants equally, as well as to model gender neutrality. I feel that this book, in addition to allowing the reader to better understand a woman's perception of an outdoor experience, also re-emphasizes the fact that women are competent, proficient and capable canoeists, kayakers and wilderness trippers.

*Rivers Running Free* is an inspirational book that shares the stories and experiences of women paddlers. The writings motivated me to enhance my paddling and tripping skills, and quite possibly would do the same for others. It is a valuable resource for outdoor leaders, as it allows the reader to gain insight into a woman's perception of her outdoor experiences. The authors write in an expressive manner that share the thoughts and feelings of women paddlers, permitting the reader to see their view, perceptions, and feelings of canoeing, kayaking, tripping and the wilderness. I recommend *Rivers Running Free: Canoeing Stories by Adventurous Women* to paddling enthusiasts, particularly women, as well as all outdoor leaders.

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*Insight into a woman's perception of her outdoor experiences as the authors eloquently write of their experiences and perceptions.*



## Echoes of Bark Lake

by Nicky Duenkel and Jeff Hemstreet

*"... the laugh of the loon and the wail of the  
whip-poor-will,  
memories that stay with us many a year..."*  
(*'Oh Bark Lake' song*)

After 49 years of operation as a premier leadership centre offering a wide range of outdoor adventure and environmentally-based courses for youth and adults alike, Bark Lake Leadership Centre regretfully closed its doors in August of 1995. As we drove away that summer, we were aware of, and saddened by, the thought of having facilitated one of the last courses in the centre's impressive history. Yet, a small part of us maintained hope through the ensuing year. Perhaps the NDP government would revoke its original decision and come to realize the unique and irreplaceable experiences which Bark Lake consistently offered Ontario's youth and adults.

Perhaps a change of heart would come with the then newly elected Harris government. Or perhaps a wealthy benefactor would appear on the scene and enable the centre to keep its doors open. Perhaps...well who knows — miracles happen ....

It has been over a year now since we drove by those familiar stone gates for the last time. Indeed, it has finally fully dawned upon us that the Bark Lake Leadership Centre is no longer. Sadly, as with other taken-for-granted aspects of our lives, we are often times not fully conscious or aware of the full value and meanings of experiences until the opportunity to further those experiences has been taken away. In some ways, we realize that we have only just begun to appreciate the impact that this remarkable combination of place, people and programmes has had upon our lives. It is this story, as it continues to emerge and be understood by us, that we wish to share and celebrate with you here.

As we reflected upon our experiences, our original intent was that of finding a common voice with which to describe our shared — yet differing — perspectives and memories of Bark Lake. Our efforts in this realm, however, were

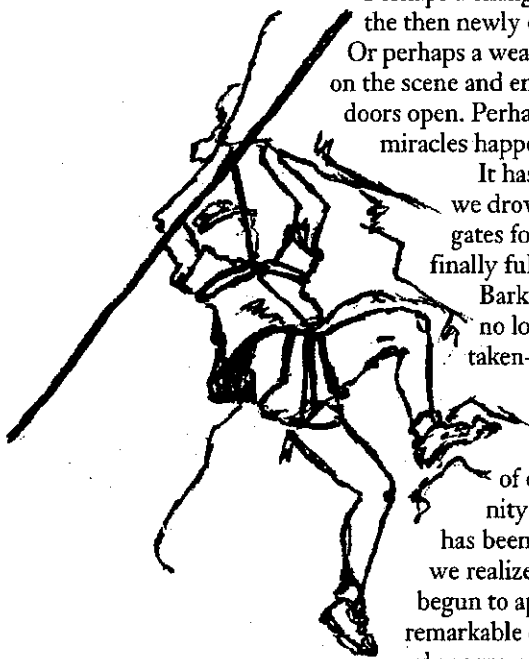
less than fruitful as inevitably we discovered that in searching for a common voice we tended to silence our individual ones. We have chosen, therefore, to tell our stories side by side, just as we have continued to play and work over the years. In doing so, it is our belief that we are being more truthful to the variety of stories, meanings and emotions engendered by Bark Lake.

### Jeff:

It began for me in the spring of 1981 at Centennial Secondary School in Windsor, Ontario when Mr. Chris Morgan (affectionately regarded as Mr. C.) approached me in the hall one day and asked if I'd be interested in attending the Bark Lake Leadership Centre on behalf of the Outdoor Education programme at my school. Unknown to me, young people from across Ontario had been supported by both their schools and the government in developing their leadership skills in the outdoors for many years. I was fortunate to have been given this opportunity.

My two weeks at Bark Lake far surpassed the word 'significant'. These exceptionally busy days were jammed full of leadership exercises, ropes course challenges, co-operative games, sailing, rock climbing, kayaking ... the list of programmes was seemingly endless. As the two weeks drew to a close, it became apparent that many of us, myself included, had little grasp on what had happened to us. In only 14 days, 120 strangers were united into a community which was governed by co-operation, risk-taking, responsibility, compassion, honesty, ownership, and empowerment. The Resource Counsellors were a talented collection of educators who modelled these qualities and nurtured our growth well beyond our comprehension. The impact that some of these staff had on me both consciously and subconsciously has to this day been arguably realized. Although difficult to put into words, this experience taught me to validate who I was as a person thus providing me with an honest confidence in being myself.

With this new found confidence, I remember climbing on an emotional bus bound for Toronto. In a matter of hours I was jolted out of



the Bark Lake reality and back into that of the life of a 16 year old from Windsor, Ontario. Throughout the ensuing months, not only did my ambitions for student leadership within my school emerge, but interests and goals became more obvious and defined. Among the thoughts that were struggling to be articulated in my youthful mind were those of one day being a Resource Counsellor at Bark Lake and that of pursuing a career as an outdoor educator.

*"All my life's a circle, sunrise and sundown,  
The moon rose through the darkness 'til the  
daybreak comes around,  
All my life's a circle, but I can't tell you why  
The seasons spinning around again, the year's  
keep rollin' by..."*

All My Life's a Circle - Harry Chapin

In the spring of 1986 I returned to Bark Lake to assume a staffing position known then as the Programme Assistant for Outtripping. After five years away I was returning! Needless to say, I was welcomed back with open arms similar to what I might have expected. I worked with a talented collection of people that spring and as the training weekends came and went, my expectations were exceeded and my memories reinforced. Once again the Bark Lake environment provided learning opportunities in which I could challenge myself and enjoy the successes and frustrations of my own learning. The extraordinary qualities of Bark Lake were starting to become clearer to me as I progressed through my undergraduate years and understood further the direction I would pursue in my professional career.

*"Well the years roll by and now the boy is twenty,  
His dreams have lost some grandeur coming true.  
But there'll be new dreams, maybe better dreams  
and plenty  
Before the last revolving year is through."*

Circle Game - Joni Mitchell

Having decided in the fourth year of my undergraduate degrees that teaching in the area of Outdoor and Experiential education was the area that most fit who I was, I persisted with my applications to work at Bark Lake, knowing that the experiences I would have there would contribute greatly to my professional aspirations. During the summer of 1989 I assumed the role of Resource Counsellor and was fortunate to facilitate four youth courses at Bark Lake. I had finally achieved what I had dreamed about years earlier. I entered the summer with feelings of intimidation, self-doubt, excitement and a distinct sense of "Do I have what it takes to

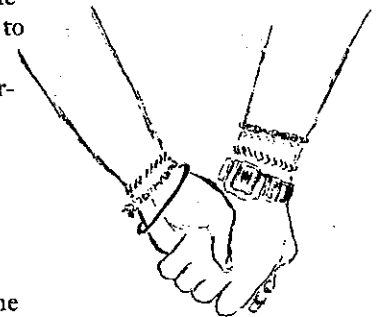
facilitate a group?" True to form, I was nurtured, supported and allowed to blossom by various Course Directors, fellow staff members, and the participants themselves.

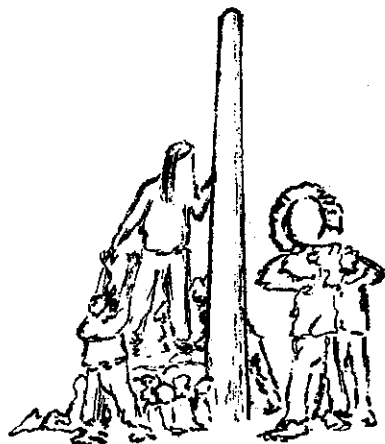
By August 1995 I had had the fortune of being on staff for 18 youth and adult courses. Over the past 6 summers, I had grown used to the "fix" I received each summer as I escaped to the healthy and supportive climate found at Bark Lake. Bark had become a home - a place where I could risk being myself and know that those around me would provide a mirror for me to learn more about who I was and how I could become an even healthier person.

As a professional educator, there has been no other single learning opportunity which has been as beneficial to my career and my development as a person than the collective learning experiences I have had at the Bark Lake Leadership Centre. As a strong advocate of outdoor, experiential and adventure education, Bark Lake has helped me to define what I methodologically value as a practitioner. The philosophical template from which I teach has to a large extent been cast by the fundamental programming principles practiced at Bark. Approaches to education which put the role of learning in the hands of both the "student" and the "teacher" helped to demonstrate to me the power of facilitation and the empowerment that is subsequently felt by all involved. The methodology practiced at Bark Lake nurtured groups of people to work co-operatively and supportively together through various activities whereby the outcome of the activity was always secondary to the process of experiencing the activity. The power in this style of learning and the structuring of activities to facilitate such learning will remain a part of my delivery as an educator throughout my career.

When thinking of Bark, I find comfort in the analogy of a woven blanket. In this, each person that was present throughout a course would be represented by a strand of yarn in the blanket. Each one of these strands was unique in colour, texture, and perhaps size. Yet each of these strands fulfilled a dual role of supporting the others while at the same time, working its own way through a path in the blanket's colourful pattern. The end result was a collection of individual strands that together made something unique, valuable and wonderful. I believe that this analogy has something to do with capturing some of the essence of what Bark Lake represented. Sadly, this quality of learning

*...there has been  
no other single  
learning  
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my career and  
my development as  
a person than the  
collective learning  
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had at the  
Bark Lake  
Leadership Centre.*





*Processing, debriefing, effective communication and decision making, conflict resolution and self awareness were all held on the same playing field as rock climbing, kayaking, trip planning and orienteering skills.*

experience has clearly not met the bureaucratic definition of valuable. Our culture is not yet at the stage where we believe that something can honestly be evaluated through intangible and qualitative benefits; dollars and cents, profit margins, and quantitative statistics regrettably remain as our prevailing rulers of measurement.

Certainly all those who have over the past 49 years had the good fortune of crossing paths with Bark Lake will have memories and meanings to carry with them onto the paths which still lie unexplored in their lives. I hope all are able at some level to decipher what made this place so remarkable for them. It has been in listening to myself share my experiences here with you that I have been able to achieve some personal closure to the closing of the Bark Lake Leadership Centre.

*Day is done, gone the sun  
From the lakes, from the hills and from the sky,  
All is well, safely rest ...*  
TAPS

### **Nicky:**

Unlike Jeff, I don't have a long-lasting personal history with Bark Lake. In fact, my Bark Lake days began and ended in one short season. I had been aware of Bark's existence and influence for quite some time and had benefited indirectly from the experience through my interactions with many who had participated in their programmes, at one level or another. Yet, it wasn't until April 1995, after 3 years of Jeff's constant and friendly haranguing, that I decided to forego my other summer plans and step into the Bark Lake experience. It was only a matter of days after I had agreed to take on a facilitator's position that the administrative staff announced this would indeed be Bark's final season as a leadership centre.

It didn't take me very long to realize that I had been blessed with an opportunity to work alongside a group of wonderfully talented individuals. And as time went on, those initial feelings grew in their significance. Educators from all walks of life joined together at Bark Lake in their commitment to creating a rich and meaningful educational experience. The staff would work very hard, throughout the span of a 2-week course, to help participants find connections to themselves, others and the natural world. We would strive to create a community in which feelings of relationship and connectedness were valued equally alongside those of individuality and autonomy.

Rarely was an activity viewed as an end in itself at Bark. Instead, they were vehicles through which to enable leaders to find their own voices and become more effective community members. For me, that was truly a breath of fresh air. Too often, I have been confronted with the belief that acquiring the technical skills is of primary importance, whereas interpersonal skills were assumed to come 'naturally' to everyone. Inevitably this resulted in my becoming the 'crusader of the interpersonal'. Not the case at Bark Lake! The inherent value of both interpersonal and technical skills were recognized by all of the staff members. Processing, debriefing, effective communication and decision making, conflict resolution and self awareness were all held on the same playing field as rock climbing, kayaking, trip planning and orienteering skills. Participants learned that white water canoeing is as much about co-operation and communication as it is about high and low braces. An afternoon on the high ropes course was viewed as much as an opportunity to deal with teamwork, community support and individual levels/types of risk taking, as it was a time to overcome one's fear of heights by climbing up and jumping off a 30-foot pole.

At times, participants could become overwhelmed with feelings of frustration and confusion as they struggled, both inwardly and outwardly, with an experience. As facilitators, this is where we had to learn to tiptoe a very fine and fuzzy line between intervening and stepping back, learning to provide questions rather than answers, following our intuitions as to how to maximize everyone's learning, encouraging participants to take their learning a step further in discovering how to carry it beyond the physical boundaries of Bark Lake and into the broader context of their home lives. In doing so participants ultimately are able to reach into the realms of their inner beings and extend themselves far beyond their initial goals and expectations.

*"I'm gonna reach, I'm gonna reach  
I'm gonna reach, reach for the sky.  
I'm gonna reach, I'm gonna reach  
I'm gonna reach, 'til I know why  
'Til I know why."*

Branching Out - John Gorka

Of course, there were times throughout the summer where not all was seen through rose-coloured lenses. I found myself challenged on numerous occasions both as a facilitator and as a



person. Several images come to mind: Tension with a co-facilitator stemming from a lack of communication; a confrontation with a leader who now felt empowered enough to speak her mind but had yet to learn how to do so in an appropriate and effective way; the realization that an experience could have been much more powerful and engaging had I chosen to facilitate it differently. Challenges were simply another given — an accepted and important part of the overall process. Learning and growth were never perceived as a one-way street at Bark Lake.

It seemed as though many of the meaningful components which I had derived from previous experiences (as participant and facilitator) somehow managed to all come together as one at Bark Lake. But it was more than that. The Bark Lake community often functioned as would a healthy ecosystem, with all of its inherent checks, balances and cycles. Relationships to self, others and the natural world were fostered in such a way as to allow us to occasionally catch a glimpse of a level of complexity which I believe reached far beyond our ability to comprehend. All the pieces were there — they fit together — and it worked.

Is it surprising that in a single season as a facilitator at Bark, I could become as deeply affected by the experience and place as those who have returned year after year? No, I don't think/feel so. In essence, that is the very nature of the Bark Lake experience.

*"Like water to the roots of a tree  
you come to me and I grow..."*

Like Water - Thom Lambert

In travelling through this process of attempting to verbalize what Bark Lake has meant to us, we've come to realize that this is not the first experience in our lives which we feel we have not been able to do justice to by putting words to paper. Nor will it likely be the last. Regardless of our inability to fully articulate the saliency of this experience, Bark Lake has claim to a special place in our hearts and souls and, though no longer in existence, will continue to inform us both personally and professionally as we venture through this life. No doubt, the spirit of Bark Lake will be carried onward by all those who have had the fortune to pass that way.

*"There's a circle in the seasons*

*There's a circle in the wind*

*There's a circle in all life forms*

*It's the same with beginnings and ends."*

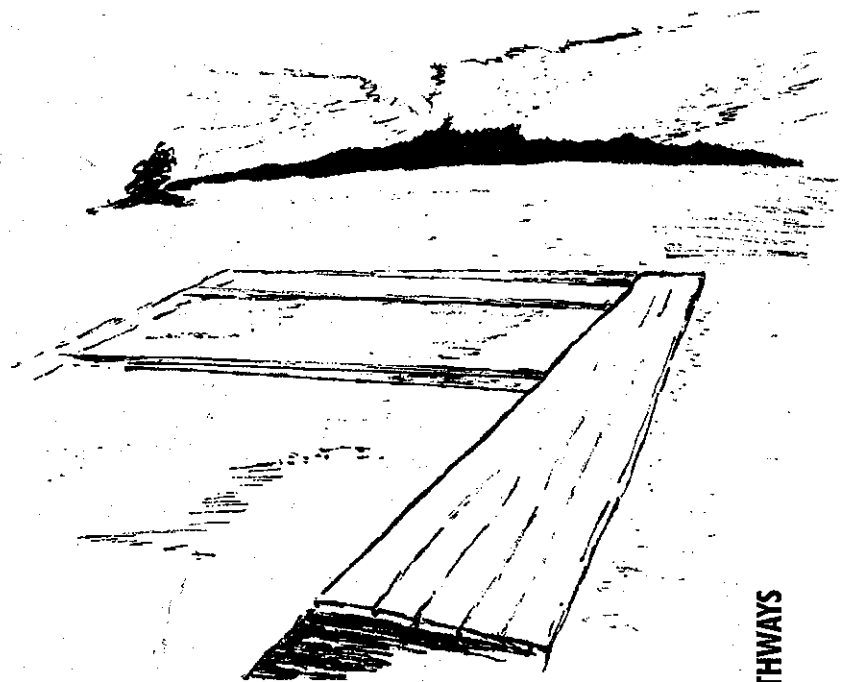
"New Age" version, Will the Circle be  
Unbroken - Author Unknown

### To the Reader:

It is the hope of the authors, that through our stories, a chord has been strummed in your memories. In the spirit of valuing your stories and narratives regarding Bark Lake, the present authors are hoping to compile enough Bark Lake experiences for a potential issue of *Pathways* designated to Bark Lake throughout the years. In doing so, not only can we as a network of educators embrace the value of this special place, but we can also hold true to the conviction of celebrating qualitative evaluation and storytelling as a valid and insightful method of gaining passage into understanding experiences. Please forward your story to the editors of *Pathways*. Thank you.

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*Nicky Duenkel is a faculty member with the Audubon Expedition Institute based out of Maine. Jeff Hemstreet is a high school teacher in Ottawa and runs an adventure education business called Adventure Alternatives. Both have connections with Lakehead: Jeff as a former student, and Nicki as a former instructor.*



## Wellspring of Well-being: Groundwater and the Move to Protect It

**G**rowing up in Stratford Ontario, I was aware even as a child that our tapwater was special. It came from artesian wells, my parents told me. I had no idea what an artesian well was, of course, except that it supplied good water. To my mind, the proof was in every glass. Stratford's water tasted great- especially compared to that which we drank when visiting friends in Toronto.

I grew up with complete confidence in my drinking water, but now it seems that such peace of mind may be a luxury of bygone days. It appears that many sources of groundwater have been contaminated as a result of human (primarily industrial, agricultural and waste disposal) activities. In other words, we have managed not only to degrade the lakes and rivers which flow around us, but to create problems which run much deeper.

Twenty-six percent of Canadians and twenty-three percent of Ontarians rely on groundwater. While their water sources have long been tested for bacteria and some organic and inorganic compounds, routine testing for pesticides and a wide range of hazardous compounds has not been required. For example, few groundwater supplies in Canada are tested for chlorinated solvents, several of which were found to be the most common groundwater contaminants in American, British and German surveys. As a result of this limited testing, the exact extent of contamination in Canada is not well known.

In Ontario, as of this year, drinking water supplies will be tested for a wider range of contaminants, including additional pesticides and hazardous compounds. Recent discoveries of contamination in places like Elmira and Manotick suggest that problems exist and may have existed for some time. If recent American studies are any indication, the contamination may be widespread, and the cost of clean-up astronomical. There, the estimated bill for remediation of sites known to be contaminated is \$US 750 billion.

Obviously, after-the-fact attention to the problem will take its toll on our pocket-books and, more importantly, on our health. With few exceptions, however, forward-looking measures to protect groundwater have been minimal. Sources of contamination include surface spills, septic systems, leaky sewer lines, land wasting of sewage, landfills, commercial dry-cleaning facilities, leaky underground storage tanks, industrial activities and wastes, pesticides, fertilizers, mine tailings, underground injection wells, road salt, and airborne pollutants. Legislation governing such activities with regard to their impacts on groundwater is both piecemeal and outdated.

Concern about groundwater quality is mounting. To gauge the magnitude of existing and potential problems, and to encourage preventive action, the Eastern Canada chapter of the Sierra Club, the University of Waterloo, and the Waterloo Centre for Groundwater Research are engaged in a joint, nation-wide groundwater project. It is a three-pronged effort which includes a national survey of selected municipal and communal groundwater supplies, a comprehensive assessment of legislation with respect to the use and protection of groundwater, and an educational outreach programme to raise public awareness. The information gathered through the survey and the legislative review will be disseminated in the form of fact sheets, articles and an education kit.

COEO members may wish to take advantage of/contribute to the outreach effort. Since the education kit will present information specific to Canada and Ontario, it promises to be of interest to teachers, learners and their families and of direct relevance to those who are dependent on groundwater. For more information, contact Gary Blundell, at the Sierra Club of Canada, Toronto, ON, M6G 4A2; Phone: (416) 960-9606; fax: (416) 960-0020.

*Anne Bell is graduate student at the Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University and a director of the Wildlands League chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society.*

## What's in a label? — Global, Environmental, and Outdoor Education.

Constance L. Russell

**G**lobal education, environmental education, outdoor education. Many a time I have been asked, "So, what's the difference?" The question is a good one with implications beyond what the questioner often initially expected. For in these times of limited funding, we are often quick to proclaim how we, as an "x" educator, are unique and thus deserving of whatever pot of gold we are seeking at a particular time. Not surprisingly then, for many global, environmental or outdoor educators, there is a vested interest in describing and focusing upon differences thereby establishing a niche that can be defended. The resulting "turf wars" can be problematic in that they can inhibit co-operation and potentially fruitful collaborations.

I suppose that I should say from the outset that I personally think that there are more similarities than there are differences between these three "types" of education. Perhaps this opinion is a reflection of my own eclectic (some might say scattered!) academic background and my neophyte status in the educational world. Certainly my exposure to interdisciplinarity at the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York has greatly influenced me. And, of course, my own predilection for messiness is a factor; I've never been terribly keen on boundaries, except in my kitchen.

Part of the problem results from difficulties of definition. Depending upon the ideology of the definer, what gets to count can vary widely. For example, global education, particularly in the United States, may take a markedly conservative turn and refer to education designed to ensure that students are "competitive" in the "global marketplace". In Canada, the approach is more critical and places greater emphasis on social and environmental justice issues. (The latest issue of *Orbit* is a good example of this approach.)

Here, global education is often described in terms of the "progressive" educations that tend to seek shelter under its umbrella: development, human rights, peace, gender equity, race equity, environment and, now, humane (Selby, 1995). These types of education are seen to be intimately connected and, together, form a package that is greater than the sum of its parts: "whilst each 'education' has its own distinctive features

and starting point, their concerns are finally mutual and overlapping" (Greig, Pike & Selby, 1987, p.23). As readers of this column have probably already surmised, I have great difficulty defining environmental education. There are myriad foci and approaches to the field. Regardless of approach, however, I would wager (admittedly based only on a hunch) that many environmental educators would hesitate to name themselves global educators. Their "starting point", concern about environmental issues, remains paramount.

And what about outdoor education? Is outdoor education merely one form of environmental education which is, in turn, one part of global education?

And does all this definitional wrangling really matter? Perhaps the words of this teacher sum up well the thoughts of many: "Whether it's global education, or it's identified as environmental education, or as critical theory the bottom line is that I teach for change." (Pike, 1996, p.10) Yet it appears to me that while the goals of global, environmental and outdoor education are often quite similar, their priorities are somewhat different. The challenge, then, is quite similar to that currently faced by ecofeminists who are trying to encourage solidarity while providing room for, and honouring, the diverse interests and backgrounds of the women and men attracted to that movement.

To be frank, I am not sure where I stand on this issue of labels. When asked, I describe myself as an environmental educator yet I could easily have called myself an outdoor educator given I spend most of my time blathering on about nature experience. I also could have called myself a global educator because I am greatly interested in how environmental issues intersect and overlap with social justice issues. Perhaps the issue of "starting point" is central: when all is said and done, my passions ignite around the "environment" (whatever that might mean, another definitional conundrum). Still, I would hope that by identifying myself in this way, I am not closing doors and windows and hearts that I want to remain open.

Connie Russell is a doctoral student at O.I.S.E., University of Toronto and can be contacted by email ([crussell@oise.utoronto.ca](mailto:crussell@oise.utoronto.ca)) or snail mail (252 Bloor St. W, Toronto, M5S 1V6).

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Greig, S.; Pike, G.; & Selby, D. *Earthrights*. London: Kogan Page & WWF, 1987.

On becoming a global citizen. *Orbit*, 27(2), 1996. Pike, G.

Perceptions of global education in Canada: A passion for internationalism. *Orbit*, 27(2), 7-11.

Selby, D. *EarthKind*. Staffordshire, UK: Trentham, 1995.

### For COEO members and their spouses.

On the weekend of February 21-23 the Northern Region will be hosting a Dog Sledding weekend extraordinaire. The weekend includes accomodation Friday and Saturday nights at a COEO member's home, a full day of dog sledding with your own team (all day Saturday), lunch on the trail and a gourmet dinner at the end of the day, breakfast on Saturday and Sunday, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and hot-tub.

All this for \$125.00 per person!

There is a limit of 8 persons so book early. For more information and/or to book your spot please contact Debbie Knight at home: 705/789-5081 or e-mail: knightjr@vianet.on.ca

### Come and Climb with the Western Region! Guelph Grotto Climbing Gym 2:00pm Saturday February 22

Bring friends and family  
(non members too!)

P.S.: Please call JJ at 519/836-1292 if you have little or no climbing experience. The gym will test you first!

### Fill your Tummies and your Minds! Western Region Potluck

March 5th, 7:30pm at J.J.'s house,  
4B Dublin St. N, Guelph, Ontario  
We'll share food and ideas about outdoor  
ed. for classroom teachers and others!

Call JJ for directions and food ideas.

Non members, Central members, etc.,  
welcome.

### COEO Eastern Region presents: "Taking the Freeze Out of Winter"

A hands-on workshop featuring strategies for using winter schoolgrounds as learning grounds across the curriculum.

Saturday March 1st, 10 am \_ 4 pm  
Duncan McArthur Hall, Rm B180  
West Campus (Union & Sir John A.),  
Queen's University, Kingston

It's free! but please RSVP to Janine @  
(613) 544-3512 (and bring a bag lunch)

### Announcing Yet Another COEO Moment to Celebrate!

*Pathways* is approaching the 50th issue! We (the Editorial Board) are seeking your humorous outdoor education stories, fiction or non-fiction, personal experiences, or other experiences or otherwise totally fun and funny or fun with a serious element. Any length is appropriate. We can also use favourite cartoons, excerpts from other literature (we'll need references) and comic photos of old and new. We are open!

We hope to celebrate COEO and outdoor education in an upbeat, 'let's have fun, let's laugh at ourselves' kind of way. Well, OK, we can be satirical or cynical too as long as there is a full belly roar, a modest guffaw, or a sneaky snicker.

So the Comedy issue for *Pathways* 50th issue is coming soon! The deadline for submissions is April 1, 1997, ... hmmm... Please send submissions to Bob Henderson, 4124-126 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6J 2A4. tel: 403/435-2307 (home); 403/492-2829 (work); fax: 403/492-2364

### Animal Tracking & the WWF

The World Wildlife Fund Canada is looking for ideas and suggestions for an exhibit we are planning to build about animal footprints or tracks. Any information or neat ideas on educational programmes, exhibits designs, or animal tracking programmes that have already been done would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Geoff Barrett at (905) 833-3566 or email at 'gbarrett@interlog.com'.

## Tools of the Trade

By Amy Gaudie - Fourth Year ORPT Lakehead Student

**P**acking up the car for my first year of university at Lakehead in Thunder Bay, my mother presented me with a black container, a tool box containing a screw driver with multiple heads. At the time I was unaware of my mother's experiences with, and insights on, the importance of tools. Hesitantly, I thanked her politely, tucked it away for safe storage, and I turned to the thought of my next four years in the Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism programme.

To my surprise I acquired a few more tools throughout that first year of school. Here I found a class of just over one hundred students intimidating. Having never met so many individuals who all shared a similar passion for the outdoors, but who strove to be noticed for their uniqueness, I found myself lost in the crowd. However, during this time I learned how to use an important tool, my compass. A few lessons pertaining to the magnetic needle, declination, catching features and attack points provided me with a clear understanding of how to pinpoint a direction and supplied me with the means to ensure that I would not overlook my destination. Studying this directional tool showed me a North bearing and confirmed my notion that I was in the right course.

A tape measure and some carpenters white glue was placed in my big black box in second year. I realized its significance when I was suddenly overloaded with an unimaginable quantity of work. Here, I learned how to gauge my time wisely and to stick to a schedule in order to complete the required assignments.

Life was a little hectic in year two, with school pulling me one way and extracurricular activities yanking me the other. It was finally time to use the multiple head screw driver from my mother as I attempted to tighten a loose hinge. Baffled by the complexity of the instrument, I decided to use the screw driver on my jack-knife, and the hinge was fixed in no time. The simplicity of the outdoors had come inside. Existence could be simple if I wanted it to be.

I attempted to carry the thought of simplicity onto third year, but became overwhelmed by the task of beginning my full credit honours research thesis. Magic was required. Yet again, it was my tools, not wizardry or miracles, that helped me to take that initial step. The first aid kit, with tape, scissors and band-aids, did the trick. I cut and taped ideas together in my mind, and they soon appeared on paper. Band-aids covered up my mistakes and allowed me to continue.

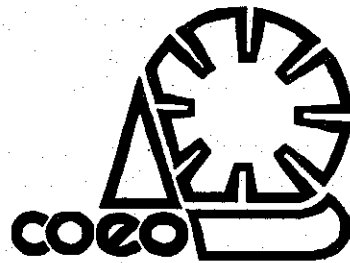
As I reach the middle of my fourth year, I look back and realize that there were many times I was standing close to metal objects and I lost my direction. Dealing with occasional winter blues, school-inflicted frustrations and sometimes reflective questioning of what I was doing in university, prompted me to look toward other directions. These inner battles with doubt, encouraged me to understand why I chose the Northern direction. New lessons from others and experiential learning with my compass reaffirmed my North again and I continued to persist.

My tool box is filling up, but there are still a few open compartments. Looking into my black box of experience, I realize that I can not tangibly handle many of my tools but I can feel them. Teamwork, organization, an understanding of nature and a knowledge of myself fill the bottom layer of the container. The base covering has always been there but, it is sturdier now.

Staring into my future, my binoculars fog up. The tools are ready, but I am sometimes unsure when and where I will be able to use them. I feel a sense of anxiety concerning the economy and the lack of readily available jobs for my generation. At the same time, however, I dream of all of the possibilities in the "real world" for me to experience, and feel a sense of confidence knowing that I can fix, create, and deal effectively with whatever challenges come my way.

The door is jammed. It is closed in my face and I stop to think for a moment. I grab the

black box and jump into action. It feels natural, it is what I have been preparing for. The door is once again open. It is unpredictable how many doors will be closed, but it does not matter because I have gained the tools and the experience needed to unlock them. The learning that has gone into my tool box has taught me how to ascend obstacles to reach goals. A closed door can be opened, and a large rock can be moved. I am a Lakehead Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism Graduate with my tool box in hand, harnesses and carabineers fastened and ready to climb any wall that gets in my way.



## **Tributaries ...**

*Where the Waters Meet*

### **COEO's Annual Conference**

October 3 to 5, 1997, Gananoque, Ontario

#### *Call for Presenters*

If you have an interest in being a contributor, please contact:

Conference Chairs:

**James Raffan**

**Gina Bernabei**

**Jeff Hemstreet**, Programme Chair

tel: 613/230-1522 fax: 613/230-3079

e-mail: [jeff\\_hemstreet@ocebe.edu.on.ca](mailto:jeff_hemstreet@ocebe.edu.on.ca)