

Connections

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The journal of the Global,
Environmental & Outdoor
Education Council



To promote involvement in
quality environmental and
outdoor education

What GEOEC Does

The Global, Environmental & Outdoor Education Council (GEOEC) is an interdisciplinary specialist council of the Alberta Teachers' Association. Our mission is to provide resources and venues for dialogue and networking, as well as to promote quality professional development for Alberta teachers in the area of global, environmental and outdoor education. Members receive current news items, teaching ideas, information about our workshop series and food for thought through our quarterly journal *Connections*. We are also active on Facebook (www.facebook.com/geoecalberta) and Twitter (@GEOEC) with up-to-date information on PD opportunities and initiatives in Alberta.

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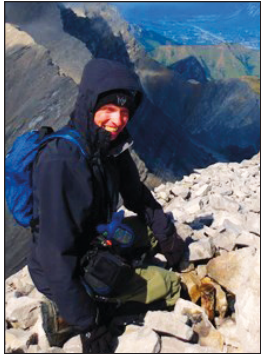
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Message from the President



Wow! We're only days away from the 2015 GEOEC conference, "Back on the Trails," at the Palisades Centre, in Jasper. Our full program includes a campfire on Friday night, a social on Saturday and sessions on Sunday in the town of Jasper. The conference program and registration details can be found at www.geoec.org.

The annual general meeting (AGM) is set for Saturday, May 2, from 7:30 to 8:30 AM at the Palisades Centre. If you're interested in getting involved with the council's executive, join us at the AGM and elections. We have a position for you. See the complete list of executive positions on our website.

The 2015 Earth Matters Conference is a nationwide environmental education conference taking place in Canmore during the second weekend of October 2015.

Join GEOEC (Global, Environmental & Outdoor Education Council), ACEE (Alberta Council for Environmental Education) and EECOM (Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication) and our regional partner organizations for a conference loaded with dynamic keynotes, outstanding sessions, plenty of professional dialogue and, of course, time to socialize with your buddies. Check out the ACEE website for registration details. The first 100 delegates register for \$225, which includes the conference meal plan—a pretty tasty deal!

Have a terrific summer and stay safe in your travels or backcountry adventures!

Don McLaughlin

Message from the Editor



What a fickle spring we have had! It is here, then gone. However, as I write this, I think perhaps it is here to stay this time. The robins are back, as are the red-tailed hawks; no doubt other migrants will be arriving soon. The tiny, burgundy, star-shaped beaked hazelnut flowers are out already, and next will be the lovely early blue violet that is pictured on the cover of this issue. It never fails to astound me how quickly the leaves appear—one day only buds, the next a pale green delicious haze, then two or three days later the leaves are fully out. Likely by the time you read this, summer will be upon us in all its glory!

The first Feature Article is by David Suzuki. The title tells it all: “Learning in Nature Is Good for Students and Teachers.” Be sure to check out the websites at the end of the article for additional resources. Both articles, “From Turf to Teaching Space,” by Michelle Drissler, and “Outdoor Classrooms,” by Kathy Goble, focus on creating green learning spaces in what otherwise are often sterile school grounds. This is a growing trend and one that is greatly needed as we begin to realize how beneficial and important it is to get children outside and connected to the natural world. “Critter Cams,” by Tyler Dixon, is a follow-up article to last issue’s “Base Camp.” In this piece Tyler focuses on the use of the wildlife cameras to inspire and educate children.

Connections should provide teachers with resources as well as inspiration, so I plan to highlight one or two of the nature and outdoor centres in Alberta in each issue. This time Breanne Oakie-Carriere introduces us to a hidden gem in central Alberta, the Kerry Wood Nature Centre. I certainly plan on stopping there the next time I am in Red Deer. One of my favourite places to visit in the Calgary area is the Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area. Maureen Luchsinger and Laura Griffin are lucky enough to work there and have written a lovely piece about the area. If you haven’t been, you definitely should!

Two new additions to this issue will become regular features: Favourite Trails and Readers’ Corner. I hope that GEOEC members will contribute to these new aspects of *Connections*. In this issue Don McLaughlin shares his “Terrific Little Shoulder Season Hike and Scramble,” and Suzanna Wong writes about being “On Top of the World.” In the Readers’ Corner, I share two of my favourite books: *Ecopsychology* for adults and *The Other Way to Listen* for children. Last, be sure to check out the Happenings section for upcoming conferences, workshops and courses.

The snow is almost all gone ... for now ... time to get your hiking boots out and get back on the trail! Happy spring!

PS. Don’t forget to send me a short piece on your favourite trail or book!

Antonella Bell

Feature Articles

Learning in Nature Is Good for Teachers and Students

David Suzuki

Children belong outdoors. We know this intuitively, but now an extensive and ever-growing body of research supports it. Kids who spend time outside every day are healthier, happier, more creative, less stressed and more alert than those who don't. Several recent studies even show time in nature or green space helps reduce ADHD symptoms.

But what about teachers who take children outdoors, contributing to their learning and growth? More alert, calm and creative students are a plus to them as educators. Could they also benefit as individuals from taking students outside every day?

With most of Canada's educators back from the summer break, facing the many challenges that contribute to the country's high rates of teacher attrition—from increasing class sizes to mounting curriculum expectations—it's a good time to ask: How can "nature as classroom" support teacher well-being?

So far, only a few studies focus on the benefits of green time for

teachers, but those indicate that teaching in nature has great effects. A study out of the UK's King's College London suggests teaching outdoors makes educators more confident and enthusiastic about their work, and more innovative in their teaching strategies. By extension, schools benefit from the leadership and influence of their teachers who take students outside.

Rob Ridley, field centre coordinator with Ontario's Peel District School Board, says he has seen many educators gain confidence and renew their interest in teaching simply from taking their classes outdoors.

"Going outside takes away the boundaries of your classroom walls," he says. "It opens you up to new ideas and lesson plans. You'll step outside to study science or social studies, and suddenly you'll see ways to connect it to math or language arts."

Hopi Martin, who teaches at the Toronto District School Board's Forest Valley Outdoor Education

Centre, agrees: "Teaching outdoors demands that we respond to the wonder of students and opportunities that arise. I could have a beautiful lesson on tree identification prepared that gets totally derailed by the discovery of ants on a tree. Going outside has made me a stronger, more innovative, more resilient teacher."

For Michael Mendoza, a teacher-librarian at Wilmington Elementary School in Toronto who regularly takes students outdoors, it's seeing "an immediate absorption of knowledge and the students' contagious eagerness and curiosity" that refreshes and inspires him as an educator. On a personal note, he adds, "Being outside makes me feel more awake and alive."

"The fact is, teachers aren't just teachers, they're human beings," says Aryne Sheppard, senior public engagement specialist at the David Suzuki Foundation. "And research has shown time and again that nature makes humans happier, less irritable, and more creative and

generous. Teaching is stressful work, and nature provides a powerful stress buffer.”

Despite all the benefits for students and educators, moving classes outdoors can be daunting. Teachers cite a host of barriers, from parental concerns to lack of time, confidence and support from administration.

So how can a teacher ease in (or jump right in) to teaching outside?

Ridley suggests joining forces with fellow educators for support and advice. Mendoza also seeks out guidance from outdoor enthusiasts. Several online communities exist to help and inspire, like the popular weekly #EnviroEd Twitter chats.

Organizations all across the country, including the David Suzuki Foundation, offer workshops for educators interested in taking students outside. These often include sample activities, logistical tips and advice for getting parents and administration on-board. And many of the same organizations

have published excellent educational resources for teaching outdoors.

The Foundation’s own Connecting with Nature guides for kindergarten through Grade 8 are full of lesson plans, step-by-step instructions and ideas for engaging local communities.

So while the idea of moving science or math class outdoors might be unnerving at first, the end result is more than worth it for the well-being of everyone involved.

“If teachers are happy and connected to nature, they can pass that on to their students,” Sheppard says. “They can be the role models parents want for their children—role models the world needs.”

After all, those who learn to appreciate and love nature are more likely to protect it.

David Suzuki is a scientist, broadcaster, author and cofounder of the David Suzuki Foundation. Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation Connecting Youth with nature project lead Rachele Delaney.

Learn more at www.davidsuzuki.org. Reprinted with permission. Minor changes have been made to conform to ATA style.

Website Links

Reduces ADHD symptoms:

<http://davidsuzuki.org/blogs/science-matters/2013/03/healthy-kids-need-time-in-nature/>

Increasing class sizes:

www.bctf.ca/IssuesInEducation.aspx?id=21453&libID=21443

A study out of King’s College:

www.lotc.org.uk/2011/09/understanding-the-diverse-benefits-of-learning-in-natural-environments/

Connecting with Nature guides:

www.davidsuzuki.org/what-you-can-do/connecting-youth-with-nature/#teachers-tab

From Turf to Teaching Space: Realizing the Dream of an Outdoor Classroom

Michelle Drissler

The Grounds for Change Program, a collaboration between the Calgary Zoo and Agrium, has been helping schools transform a piece of their schoolyards since 1998. The Zoo, whose mission is to take and inspire action to sustain wildlife and wild places, got involved with this work in order to help school communities participate in the act of conservation and foster nature connections, while creating engaging learning spaces.

Grounds for Change worked on its first project with Wildwood Elementary School, a 45 x 25 metre native plant garden, based on the ecoregions of Alberta. This garden was brought to life over a two-year period by the hard work of a naturalization committee. The committee developed a vision statement, met with ecologists, created plans, fundraised and found ways to involve students in every step. Student involvement ranged

from design competitions to projects to thank you letters and finally planting. Each year, students use the garden for their learning as well as participating in weeding and new wildflower plantings.

Since then, the Grounds for Change program has worked with over 90 Calgary-area schools in many different capacities to help them realize the dream of building an outdoor classroom. The program offers a manual, timeline,



curriculum-based resources for pre- and postimplementation, and modelling of these curriculum-based activities.

Seedlings is an activity modelling program offered to help tie curriculum to the design phase of outdoor classroom projects. The goal of this program is to allow students to have the maximal input into their garden designs, recognize the plant species used and still cover curriculum objectives.

One of the recent schools participating in the program was Belvedere Parkway. They developed a potato garden with the Grade 3/4 students who were working on their plant unit. Together with Grounds for Change staff and school volunteers, these students investigated their soil quality, researched the potato plant and its diseases, investigated the history of potato growing and finally planted and harvested their own potatoes. After harvest they celebrated their project with a potato festival, including tasting and potato sack races.

Another school currently in the process of developing a garden is the Calgary Girls' School (CGS). The Grade 6 students at CGS are using the project as an inquiry learning opportunity for the math curriculum, as part of a larger project with the University of Calgary to develop assessment tools for inquiry. After learning math concepts, such as angles and shapes, students are provided with the guidance and opportunity to use these concepts in assessing their current school grounds and designing an outdoor classroom. The project is being designed in several phases, with opportunities

to use math concepts at each level for some of the components. Not only is this demonstrating a direct application of the concepts to these students, it also allows students to develop ownership and understanding of this future space.

Mitford School started their outdoor classroom project last year as part of their desire to provide authentic environmental education experiences. Three classes at the school spent time investigating their schoolyard as a place for play and classroom learning, finding it lacking for the diversity of age range and learning styles of the students. With the help of the Grounds for Change program and other community partners, these classrooms researched natural structures and plants that could be suitable for this space and developed proposals on which the rest of the student-body could vote and comment. After the voting, students continued their investigations using experts, including staff from the Grounds for Change, to help them finalize their plans with designs, budgets, maintenance plans and plant species. A Sustainable Lifestyle Committee, composed of teachers and parents, worked alongside the students and helped submit the design to city council, school board and granting agencies. The final design includes a log reading area, interpretive native plant trail, wooden play structure and teepee. The Stoney Nakoda First Nations will help with the latter element. This design and school efforts have earned Mitford School a spot in the finals for the Majesta Trees of Knowledge Outdoor Classroom competition, a grant that would help

them implement their dream. You can find the video students created for this grant at <http://mitford.rockyview.ab.ca/outdoor-classroom>.

These examples are evidence of the fact that students of all ages can be involved in the planning of an outdoor classroom in a way that makes their learning meaningful. Designing outdoor spaces, whether simply planning the layout of a basic garden bed or developing a more complex learning garden, allows students to apply cross-curricular knowledge, learn in a sensory-stimulating way and practise ethics by producing their own food and/or providing habitat for local fauna.

Michelle Drissler is the coordinator for the Grounds for Change Program at the Calgary Zoo. This position combines her passion for the outdoors, degree in agricultural ecology and experience teaching outdoor education at various camps. She is excited to be able to share her love for nature and to assist children in becoming young conservationists.



Outdoor Classrooms— More Than Just a Green Space!

Kathy Goble

All school grounds, whether flat or hilly, treed or grassy, or even just a few weed-filled cracks in the pavement, are educational frontiers waiting to be explored. However, most school grounds can be improved with some additional greening. Adding well-chosen trees and plants can greatly enrich the learning opportunities on a school site.

For 12 years, Evergreen's Edmonton Learning Grounds Program has been helping area schools and daycare centres build and sustain successful school ground greening and food-gardening projects from the ground up. As one of the Edmonton design associates, I work with teachers, parents, students and

administrators to create safe, natural and developmentally appropriate outdoor environments, where young people can learn, play and connect with nature.

While the program has traditionally prioritized school ground design and implementation, the demand for dedicated training on how to teach and steward in



these unique spaces has been overwhelming. As such, wraparound supports such as teacher training, curriculum-linked learning activities and site visits have become an integral component of the Learning Grounds Program and underpin projects' long-term success.

I have had the opportunity to work with many school groups and am always delighted by the unique aspect of each project. I recommend that students contribute to the planning and design of a project. They have wonderful ideas on how to create gardens on their school grounds and are excited to see their ideas made real. There is also a sense of ownership when students not only see their ideas come to life but also help to plant and care for the green space. Students know exactly which plant they planted, and often times they give the trees a personal name. From a child's perspective, even a relatively small planting of trees and shrubs is a forest to be explored. Time and time again I see students happily

digging in the dirt, finding bugs, examining seed pods and generally engrossed in the natural world.

The outdoor learning environment provides opportunities to inspire wonder and curiosity, integrate learning from different subject areas, and foster an understanding of and an appreciation for the natural world. Learning can be both informal and formal, and even simple projects can be layered with many learning opportunities. So, while a potato garden is a great place for students to gain understanding of where their food comes from, it can be so much more. Writing potato poetry, building a potato clock, creating art using potato stamps, calculating samples or donating potatoes to a food bank are all curriculum-based multigrade activities. Using the garden as a teaching venue provides concrete experience to clarify abstract concepts.

Many students who do poorly in the indoor classroom thrive in the outdoor classroom because of the change of pace, the change to tactile

learning or simply the immersion in nature. It seems to create a level playing field. Observing children when they are planting shrubs, flowers or vegetables, or pulling weeds or watering plants, they all participate equally.

As living library and laboratory, school grounds can be used to observe changes that happen each week, each month and each season. As site of applied knowledge, they are an ever-changing teaching resource. But even more than simply an outdoor classroom, wild or well-designed green spaces can provide a dynamic space for exploration, reflection and inspiration.

Kathy Goble has worked as a school ground design consultant with Evergreen, a national nonprofit that inspires action to green cities, for the past 12 years. She guides school greening committees through a participatory process of planning, design, fundraising, plant selection, implementation and maintenance. She also hosts Teaching in the Outdoor Classroom workshops for teachers.

Critter Cams— Capturing Wild Moments

Tyler Dixon

If you're reading this, you have no doubt spent a considerable amount of time in nature. Field trips, outdoor recreation, family vacations or just good old relaxation can all happen outside, but have you ever wondered what goes on in the forest when you're not there? It was that question that prompted Jeff (my co-teacher) and I to develop a wildlife camera program at school. If you are a regular reader, you may remember from the last issue of *Connections* (Fall 2014) that I did a short story highlighting our workplace: Enviros Wilderness School's Base Camp program. Although I have since transitioned into a new teaching role in Calgary, Jeff is still at Base Camp and running the camera program with his new teaching partner. Base Camp's unique location, nestled in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, offered an

unparalleled opportunity to learn about the wildlife in the surrounding forest.

The majority of the students who attend the Base Camp program reside in urban centres and have spent little to no time outdoors. Wildlife, being an unknown variable during their time at camp, can be both fascinating and fearful at the same time. It is not uncommon for us to see different animals, hear them in the distance or uncover evidence of their existence. To help satisfy their curiosity and further promote positive relationships with the natural world, Jeff and I filled our small school with taxidermy, antlers, fur, skulls, feathers, bones and a host of other wildlife-specific educational material. To be honest it looks more like a museum or a hunting lodge than a school. As beneficial as all of this was, we really wanted to learn more about who

was sharing the woods with us. We decided that a wildlife camera should be our next purchase.

Using the technology budget that is available through our parent school (West View School), we purchased two remote trail cameras in August of 2012 and immediately set them up in various locations around our site. Because neither of us had used these types of cameras before, there was definitely a learning curve in determining the correct settings for the outside temperature, the ideal height for placement and the field of view for the sensor. Maybe it was just dumb luck, but we managed to capture three different species in our first week of using them. As we became more comfortable with the new technology and slowly discovered the best spots to place them, we began having a lot more success capturing wildlife on film. Over the



next two and a half years, our fleet grew to include five cameras, allowing us to cover more of the surrounding wilderness. To date we've captured 23 different species of mammals and birds, including males, females and sometimes even their young. It's very exciting to head out and check the cameras because it's always a mystery as to who or what's walked by!

Once Jeff and I were comfortable enough using the cameras, the logical next step was to include the students in this project. We were able to link the cameras to the Alberta Education curriculum through the Career and Technology Studies (CTS) branch of courses. Within CTS there are many different areas of study, including Natural Resources (NAT), which focuses on conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. Within the NAT cluster are several Occupational Areas, one of which is Wildlife (WLD). Students enrolled in the WLD stream examine human relationships to the natural environment and consider the impact various human pursuits can have on species and ecosystems. Utilizing the educational outcomes outlined by Alberta Education, Jeff and I were able to develop a one-credit course

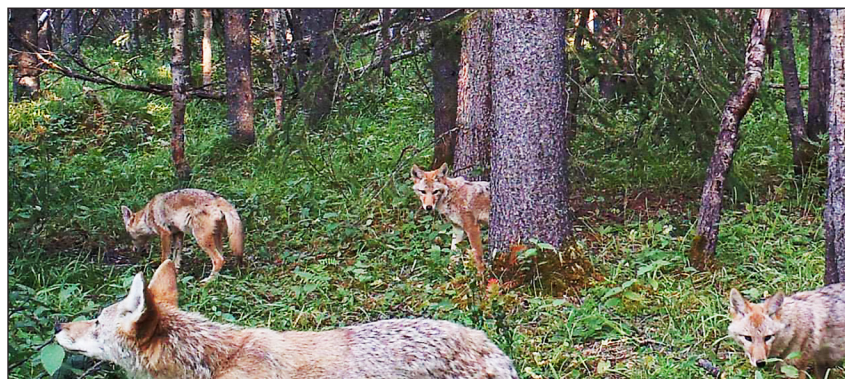
using the wildlife cameras. Because of our students' short length of stay (90 days is the maximum amount of time they can be enrolled in the program), we really encourage them to take at least one WLD course, in addition to core courses. It is our hope that they'll learn something new about the natural world and leave with a few more credits than when they arrived.

The camera program has been more successful than we first imagined. We were getting so many great shots that we needed a way to showcase our findings. We started the *Wild About Base Camp* blog (<http://envirosschool.blogspot.ca/>) and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/wildaboutbasecamp) that allowed us to share the best photos and videos with anyone who was interested. If you're intent on seeing what we've captured over the years, the blog is your best opportunity. The year-in-review videos highlight the best footage from each school year, and there's even a coyote documentary that was created by one of our past students. In addition to the blog and Facebook page, the photos and videos have been used in a variety of other ways. They've been incorporated into student work, displayed on the

walls in the school, shared over social media, included in the students' camp-completion journals and most recently have been requested by a researcher from the University of Calgary doing a coyote study. More often than not, the students who have been involved in the camera program will request copies of the photos and videos when they leave Base Camp. They want to take them home so they can show their friends and families what they captured during their stay. For some, it's the highlight of their camp experience.

We'd love to hear from you if you have any questions or comments about the camera project or the program as a whole. Please don't hesitate to contact us (teachers@envirosbasecamp.org).

Tyler Dixon is from Saskatchewan but has been teaching with the Calgary Board of Education for the past eight years, all of which have been at Enviros Wilderness School. Tyler does some volunteer work with GOT Parks and Calgary Is Awesome. During his time away from work, Tyler enjoys a variety of outdoor activities, team sports, travelling, photography, spending time with good friends and being at home with his wife, Christine, and German shepherd, Rome.



Kerry Wood Nature Centre— A Gem in Central Alberta

Breanne Oakie-Carriere

Nestled along the Waskasoo trail in central Alberta is a gem of a place called the Kerry Wood Nature Centre. When I first moved to Red Deer 10 years ago, I stumbled on this place by accident as I was exploring the river valley trail system. I was impressed with the extensive programming it had for adults, children and schools, and I found myself spending my weekends there.

The centre backs onto a peaceful sanctuary that supports a four-kilometre trail. As you climb up and down stairs, stop at observation points and view wildlife from

elevated wooden structures, you can see anything from muskrats to moose enjoying peace and quiet in their natural habitat as well as the birds that make it their home during their migration. The trail is strictly for walking purposes, not allowing bikes or dogs, to avoid any stress on the natural inhabitants.

Whenever I head to Red Deer on a weekend, I make sure I take some time for myself and I enjoy some solitude at this sanctuary.

When I was a substitute teacher, I worked with children on my weekends providing respite care. The Kerry Wood Nature Centre was

one of the places I would take them to participate in activities on their Savvy Saturdays and Discovery Sundays. The interpreter would take us on the trail and ask the kids questions about seasons, the types of trees and the animal prints found in the snow. However, my favourite weekend event was visiting their indoor planetarium. The planetarium is an inflatable dome that you crawl into that has the night sky projected on the roof. The interpreter tells stories of the constellations and how the skies look different in the seasons. The planetarium is also available to rent for classrooms if you are studying the night sky. I look forward to taking my son to this event this year.

The Kerry Wood Nature Centre also hosts community events and adult workshops. Seven years ago, I attended a viewing of Annie Leonard's "The Story of Stuff" and met some people who were integral in the start-up of ReThink Red Deer, a local sustainability group that is really making headway in central Alberta. Now that it's spring, gardening sessions are on the calendar, and in the fall, canning will follow suit. It also has meeting rooms, which GEOEC has rented out, as well as an art gallery you can



visit and hands-on museum displays.

Last summer, when a friend and I met for a summer bike ride at the centre, I saw a sign saying that they were looking for volunteers to help set up their new outdoor nature playground. I was very excited about this development. The centre already offers nature-based preschool programs that take the children outside, but now they would be able to do some of their learning in a natural environment constructed for that purpose. This spring, my son and I decided to head out and see what this playground was all about. As soon as we arrived, I could see all the possibilities for little ones and their learning. There are shelters with stumps as chairs, perfect for an outdoor story-time setting. There are outdoor chalkboards and standing wooden tables for drawing and lessons. The only apparatus that exists in the park that would be found in any regular playground is a slide. If anything, the playground fosters imagination, something my son keeps asking if I have.

As soon as we entered, my son created a route for us to follow—over and over. First, we would run to the slide, climb the rope wall up, slide down, run to a rock cave, jump off the roof, run to the huge carved-out stump and go through the tunnel, then run back to the slide. He didn't need swings or a teeter-totter to be entertained; the idea of being in the trees appealed to him just fine. Another one of his favourite activities in this park was rock jumping. There are a series of large rocks, made to be like a



riverbed and support water (in summer), and we walked in a circle over and over. However I guess I was doing it wrong as I was supposed to jump, not casually walk, rock to rock. We played on the rope spider and the ropes tied between trees, trying to balance before heading out on the trail to look for muskrats. The materials used for this playground make you feel as if you are submerged in the forest, but the learning elements such as the tables, chalkboards, sensory tables and shelters give the park the ability to transform into a classroom as well. I look forward to returning once the snow is gone to see how the centre uses this park with students and maybe while I'm on my maternity leave, enrolling my son in their programs knowing how much he would gain from learning in this environment.

So if you are ever driving through Red Deer or you live in the area, I recommend taking a break and heading over to the centre for

a breather. Enjoy the book shop, have a coffee, look at the art, go for a walk or just strike up a conversation with the volunteers and employees who take on their tasks for the betterment of their community. You will not regret it in the least.

The Kerry Wood Nature Centre is a part of the Waskasoo Environmental Education Society, which also includes the Gaetz Lakes Sanctuary, Allen Bungalow and Historic Fort Normandeau.

Breanne Oakie-Carriere has been teaching in central Alberta for the past 10 years. She teaches Grade 7 social studies, language arts and environmental and outdoor education in Rocky Mountain House. She has been an executive member of GEOEC for the past three years and enjoys learning new ways to incorporate global, outdoor and environmental education into all subjects and curriculum. She lives in historic Markerville, surrounded by nature, with her family and plethora of dogs and cats.

Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area—A Sanctuary in the Foothills

Maureen Luchsinger and Laura Griffin

Cross is a place,
For you and for me,
A place to learn,
Laugh and see.
—*Student participant*

If you come to the Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area (ASCCA), there is a place that has endeared itself to our education program visitors. Walk west through the prairie grasses, wildflowers and pocket gopher mounds along the Mountain Lookout hiking trail of the ASCCA as it slowly meanders up one of the many rolling foothills. At the sandstone boulder, where the Rocky Mountains rise up in the distance to greet you, your path will lead you north to finish the last little crest

before you come to a stunning view of Calgary. This is the place that the ASCCA staff have affectionately christened as Sandy's Lookout.

There is a bench facing the distant downtown core that rises out of a rapidly urbanizing landscape of houses and development. This is a view that came to disturb the late Sandy Cross as he patrolled his home on the range, a view that spurred his desire to keep his ranch away from the development and instead donate it to the province of Alberta as a conservation area. Ann and Sandy's generosity in donating the land for conservation and education was founded on their relationship to the land and to the future stewards of

the land. In their own words, "We wish the land to be disturbed as little as possible. It is also our desire that the land provide an educational tool for schoolchildren, university students and the public."

Experiential, place-based learning is an important facet in building connections with nature and is an integral part of the ASCCA mission. Our conservation education programs for youth are designed to increase awareness and appreciation of the natural world and build environmental and conservation knowledge and skills with a strategy of hands-on, outdoor experiential learning in the natural environment. It is evident to Campus Calgary teachers who get to see the growth



of their students over the course of a week.

The landscapes give students a taste of nature that they don't get in the city. It created cognitive dissonance and makes them think about their own ideas and perceptions. By just sitting and looking, listening and becoming a part of the land they get something they would not otherwise.

—*Teacher participant*

One of our education goals is to encourage a love of the natural environment by inspiring a sense of wonder.

I think: no wonder Sandy loved nature. Anyone who had seen and experienced what we have experienced would become a nature lover.

—*Student participant*

To build caring and compassionate children for the natural world we educators need to inspire connections and a love of the natural environment through outdoor experiential learning for children. There are so many teachable moments where something interesting is happening in nature. These shared experiences reinforce and continue the learning through the children's shared memories. Learning about the habitat of a cougar and feeling the pang of excitement as you then discover the track of a cougar, together with discussions around the importance of understanding and honouring these animals, helps students develop a powerful awareness about place, responsibility, environmental understanding and action. Children need to establish a sense of place and connection to call their own. It is important to care about your own physical

surroundings, as it will be those memories that will sustain a sense of caring for the environment.

Our education programs have reached over 100,000 students and still continue to delight and inspire both teachers and children who visit the land. Whether it is the sight of a fuzzy purple prairie crocus for the first time or an animal that they have never even heard of before, such as a great grey owl or a damselfly nymph, visitors leave the ASCCA with an appreciation that humans have a responsibility to act as stewards for wildlife and take action like Ann and Sandy Cross to make sure that this piece of landscape continues to exist as a healthy ecological system despite our visitations.

The ASCCA promotes caring for the earth and animal habitats. I think children are the best promoters of this. Thanks so much.

—*Teacher participant*

Research by environmental psychologist Louise Chawla has shown that learning within a natural environment by providing outdoor experiential place-based learning opportunities, with trusted adult mentors, will inspire children to make a stronger connection to the natural world, establish a foundation for inquiry to develop lasting knowledge and build an environmental ethic of care. However, at the time of Ann and Sandy Cross's donation, research into the cognitive effects on students in an outdoor environment would have been difficult to find. What the couple did know was what the land meant to them and that perhaps if they could share their land in its natural state, visitors



might begin to connect and love the landscape and its inhabitants as well. We feel it is important to carry on their legacy, to connect youth with nature and to encourage them to feel the wonder, curiosity, interest and awe of a natural environment. In making these connections, youth will have a place to engage, to enjoy, to love, to feel alive, to care about and someday to take care of and protect.

When you connect and love the natural world, you will care what happens to it in the future and become true stewards of the earth. Walking up a steep hill side by side with a young man eight years of age, breathing in the experience of the ASCCA, he looked over at me and said, "I love life." This was a truly inspirational moment and perhaps the beginnings of a great future steward.

Maureen Luchsinger is the education coordinator, and Laura Griffin is the educational interpreter at the Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area (ASCCA). They have taught youth from preschool to university in Calgary and the surrounding area. They are passionate about conservation education to inspire youth to make connections that develop a love of the natural environment.

Favourite Trails

Terrific Little Shoulder Season Hike and Scramble

Don McLaughlin

One of my favourite hikes is the Eagle Lake–Poplar Ridge circuit. The Ya Ha Tinda Ranch (about 75 kilometres west of Sundre on the Coal Camp Road) offers terrific hiking trails and scramble options along a ridge network from Eagle Lake to Evangeline Peak. If you like a challenging little day hike and scramble, try this trail, which starts from the Eagle Lake parking area. I would recommend doing the

circuit as a counter-clockwise loop and be prepared for a 21–23-kilometre day with 1,200 metres of elevation gain along the way. There is only one little challenging spot: a 25–50 metre section along Poplar Ridge.

Near the completion of the loop at the bottom of Poplar Ridge, pick up the seasonally well-used equestrian trail that takes you back past the YMCA Camp, then to the

Eagle Lake parking area. The ridgetop elevation averages roughly 2,300–2,400 metres but is largely snow free year-round due to the unique micro climate in the area.

By the way, the Ya Ha Tinda Ranch is a popular wintering area for elk from Banff National Park and is the training area for horses used by National Parks' staff. Come on out to the Ya Ha Tinda and check out Bighorn Falls while you're in the area.



Don McLaughlin is a Calgary elementary teacher with a passion for the outdoors and the lesser-travelled trail. He is the GEOEC president and advocate for the integration of global, environmental and outdoor education in the classroom.



On Top of the World: Sulphur Skyline Summit

Suzanna So Har Wong

My favourite hiking trail for children and adults is the Sulphur Skyline, or as the locals call it, the Sulphur Ridge Trail, in Jasper National Park, Alberta. I love this hiking trail for many reasons, but the best reason of all is soaking in the Miette Hot Springs after a strenuous hike to the panorama summit. I have hiked this trail with someone as young as two years old to someone in her eighties.

Summary of Sulphur Skyline Trail

It has some of the most breathtaking panoramic views that Jasper National Park has to offer.

The hike is a stiff climb from the beginning of the trail until you reach the top, but in the spring there are many beautiful spring flowers on the way for you to enjoy as you take a break and catch your breath. So take plenty of water and energy snacks.

- The total distance is about four kilometres to the Skyline Summit, so I would budget about three hours for the round trip.
- You will gain 700 metres within four kilometres (short and steep), but it is extremely rewarding.

- Here are some flowers you may see on the way (photographed by Suzanna Wong):



Calypso Wild Orchid



Alpine Columbine



Alpine Violet near the summit.



A Grade 3 student found a robin's broken eggshell on our hike.

- The ascent can be tricky because the final kilometre is a bit of a scramble with loose rocks.

How to Get There?

Park at the Miette Hot Springs parking lot. Head up toward the hot springs swimming pool, and on your right is the trailhead with an information board. Your hike starts on pavement uphill. Turn off left near the water storage tank, watch for the signage for Sulphur Skyline or Sulphur Ridge Trail, and the rest is straight up the trail.

My Recommendation

Pack a lunch and eat it “on top of the world”—the summit—but there are a few very bold chipmunks up there who can steal your food. Make sure you don’t feed them! Also make sure you bring your swimming suits and towels, and leave them in the car (I often forget and pack them in my hiking pack, and there is no need for anchoring weight).

Note: On every parks day, I conduct a guided walk on this trail. Go to Friends of Jasper site for more details (www.friendsofjasper.com).

Suzanna So Har Wong is completing her doctoral of philosophy at the University of Alberta in elementary education department with a focus on language and early literacy. Her research interests are early literacy development, new literacies, multiliteracy learning and using current technology tools. She has been a passionate global, environmental, outdoors and literacy educator for many years.

Readers' Corner

Ecopsychology: Restoring the Earth, Healing the Mind

Edited by Theodore Roszak, Mary E Gomes and Allen Kanner

Antonella Bell

Ecopsychology provides a powerful new dimension to the environmental movement, suggesting that by living in greater harmony with the natural world we shall not only help to save our planet from ultimate destruction but shall also improve our mental health and be happier and more fulfilled human beings.

—Jane Goodall

I came across this collection of essays while doing research for my dissertation and found it incredibly inspirational. All authors spoke clearly and loudly for a renewed relationship between humans and the rest of the natural world. It seems that if we can do this, it is a win-win solution. As the title suggests, we restore the earth and heal our minds! Just to give you an idea of some of the pieces, I have listed the titles and the authors'

brief description of some of my favourites.

The Psychopathology of the Human—Nature Relationship,
by Ralph Metzner

We have forgotten something our ancestors once knew and practiced—respect for the mysterious, and humility in relationship to the infinite complexities of the natural world.

Are We Happy Yet?

by Alan Thein Durning

The future of life on earth depends on whether the richest fifth of the world's people, having fully met their material needs, can turn to nonmaterial sources of fulfillment.

When the Earth Hurts, Who Responds?

by Sara A Conn

We have cut ourselves off from our connection to the Earth so thoroughly that even though we are "bleeding at the roots" we

neither understand the problem nor know what we can do about it.

Restoring Habitats, Communities, and Souls, by Elan Shapiro

This art and science of helping the web of life in a particular place heal and renew itself can serve as a mirror and an impetus for individual and community renewal. A glad welcome to this affirmation by a group of psychologists that the self does not stop at the skin nor even with the circle of human relationships but is interwoven with the lives of trees and animals and soil; that caring for the deepest needs of persons and caring for our threatened planet are not in conflict.

—Mary Catherine Bateson

A truly remarkable book—one that has changed the way I look at the natural world! Perhaps it might shift your perceptions as well!

The Other Way to Listen

By Byrd Baylor and Peter Parnall

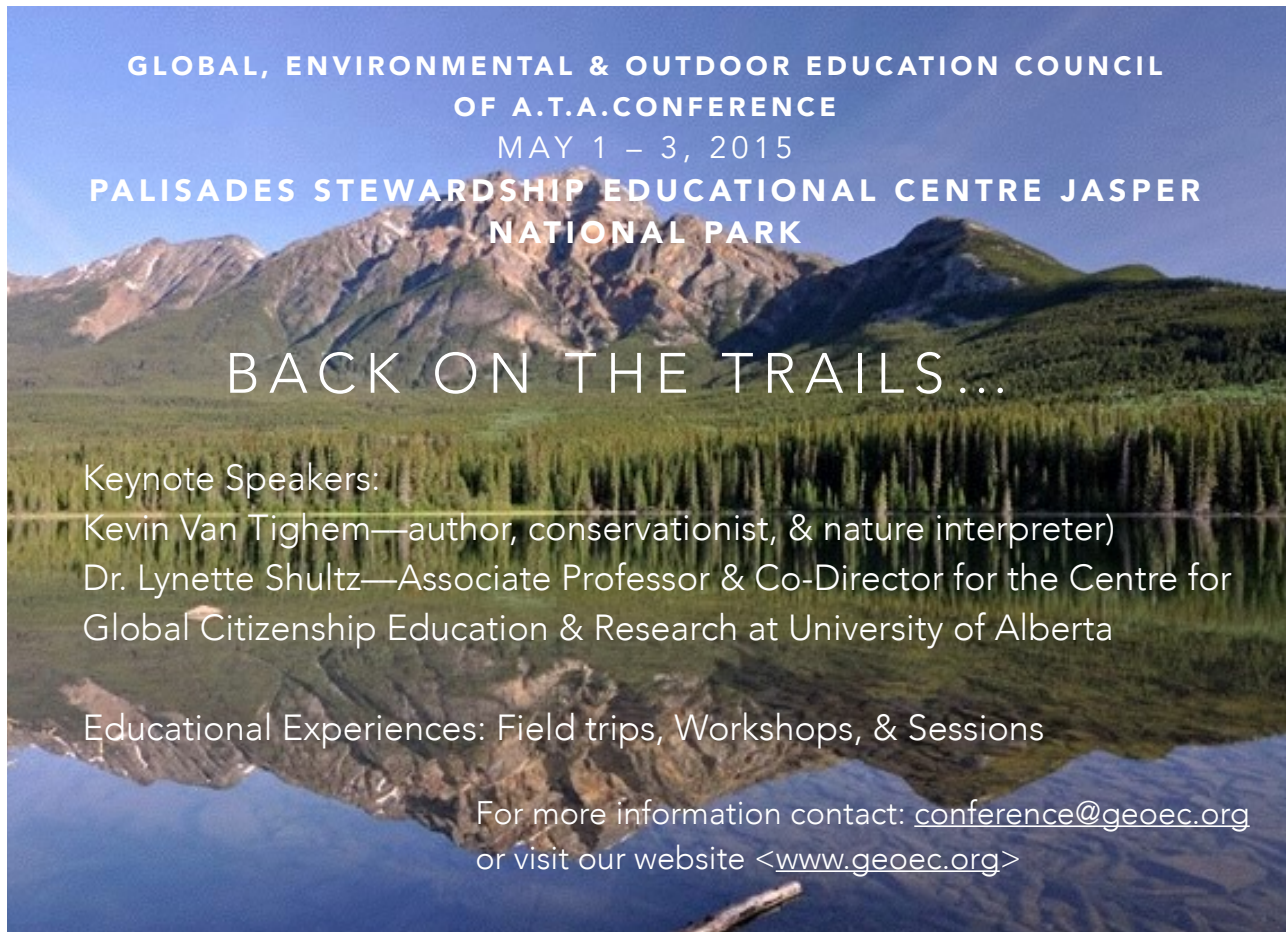
Antonella Bell

This is my all-time favourite children's book. Reading it aloud was how I started every nature-immersion program I have led, both for children and adults. Baylor's message is simple and beautiful, and Parnall's minimalist images are a perfect foil for the text. Essentially the poetic words tell us that if we spend time alone and quietly in the

natural world, we can begin to hear its myriad of voices. Sitting quietly in a tree, on a hill or beside a rock and just listening, we can begin to hear, or perhaps sense, the other's presence. How much this can add to our lives! Imagine hearing a whole sky full of stars! Or a lizard talking to a rock! Or cactus flowers blooming in the night! But as we are told, if we

do not respect whatever it is that we are with, we will never hear its voice even if we sit there forever! The kind of sound we can hear when we listen the other way is not like any other sound we might normally hear, but it is there and when one finally hears it, it seems to be the oldest and most natural sound in the world! A wonderful read again and again!

Happenings



GLOBAL, ENVIRONMENTAL & OUTDOOR EDUCATION COUNCIL
OF A.T.A.CONFERENCE
MAY 1 – 3, 2015
PALISADES STEWARDSHIP EDUCATIONAL CENTRE JASPER
NATIONAL PARK

BACK ON THE TRAILS...

Keynote Speakers:
Kevin Van Tighem—author, conservationist, & nature interpreter)
Dr. Lynette Shultz—Associate Professor & Co-Director for the Centre for
Global Citizenship Education & Research at University of Alberta

Educational Experiences: Field trips, Workshops, & Sessions

For more information contact: conference@geoec.org
or visit our website <www.geoec.org>

Ecological Literacy Workshops

<p>Edmonton</p> <p>To register for this learning opportunity, please visit www.eric.ca/programs/details.php?id=5606.</p> <p>Facilitator Antonella Bell</p> <p>Date May 21, 2015</p> <p>Time 9:00 AM–3:30 PM</p> <p>Cost \$55 per person</p> <p>Location Alfred Savage Building, 13204 Fox Drive NW, Edmonton</p> <p>Course code 15-LI-244</p> <p><i>Workshop will also be offered through other Alberta Regional Consortia—dates TBA. Register for ERLC workshop by May 14, 2015, at 10 AM.</i></p>	<p>Calgary</p> <p>To register for this learning opportunity, please visit www.crcpd.ab.ca.</p> <p>Facilitator Antonella Bell</p> <p>Date June 3, 2015</p> <p>Time 9:30 AM–3:00 PM</p> <p>Cost \$35 per person</p> <p>Location Sandy Beach Park, 4500 14A Street SW, Calgary (Participants to meet in parking lot)</p>
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Who Should Attend

Grades 4–6 teachers

Bring a packed lunch, water, sturdy footwear and clothes for all weather.

About This Learning Opportunity

What's important is that children have an opportunity to bond with the natural world, to learn to love it and feel comfortable in it, before being asked to heal its wounds . . . our problem is that we are trying to invoke knowledge and responsibility, before we have allowed a loving relationship to flourish.

—David Sobel

Come and explore our beautiful river valley and learn how any accessible green space can encourage a greater connection between children and the natural world. In this experiential outdoor workshop, you will learn how to lay the foundation for ecological literacy, that of establishing a caring and respectful relationship with the natural world. You will be introduced to nature journalling, earth art and simple observational activities as ways of increasing awareness and appreciation of nature. This workshop links directly to aspects of the language arts, fine arts, science, social studies, health and physical education curricula at the Grades 4–6 level.

Research has shown that getting children out into the natural world benefits them on all levels: physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. With regular time outdoors children

become calmer, more able to focus, happier and more creative. Come and learn how to take your students outside in ways that foster an emotional connection with the natural world. In promoting the renewal of a loving relationship with the natural world, we not only help our children and ourselves but also contribute to a brighter future for our world.

About the Facilitator

Antonella Bell, BA, MEd, is a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. Recently she developed and taught a nature immersion summer session course for education students. Previously she initiated and ran Green School, an award-winning nature immersion program at the Devonian Botanic Garden.

Environmental Inquiry Workshop: Preparing Alberta Students to Create a Sustainable Future Through Authentic Learning

Cochrane

To register for this learning opportunity, please visit www.crcpd.ab.ca.

Facilitators Deb Rougeau-Bell, Kim Kendal and Grayson Adams

Date May 20, 2015

Time 4:30–7:30 PM

Cost \$47 per person

Location Elizabeth Barrett Elementary School, 605 Fourth Avenue North, Cochrane

Who Should Attend

Kindergarten–Grade 8 teachers

Bring a packed lunch, water, sturdy footwear and clothes for all weather. Be prepared to be outdoors for a portion of this session.

About This Learning Opportunity

This learning opportunity is subsidized as a result of a grant from Alberta Education to support Curriculum Redesign Implementation.

David Orr states, “Given the vulnerable state of our natural

world, we need a different approach to education”—one that not only develops cross-curricular competencies and knowledgeable students but also environmentally and socially conscious citizens. What knowledge and skills do Alberta students need to create a sustainable future? What should they learn about energy and the environment?

This workshop will explore how designing authentic knowledge building opportunities with respect to the four dimensions of environmental inquiry—*inquiry learning, experiential learning in nature, integrated learning and stewardship*—can be used to develop students’ environmental

literacy, and energy literacy and empower them to act locally and globally to make a difference. Real life authentic teacher and student learning stories for designing “what learning looks like” for preparing students to create a sustainable future will be shared.

Participants will also be introduced to the *Curriculum for a Sustainable Future*, which was developed by an Education Task Force in 2014 to support the Alberta curriculum redesign and develop competencies of engaged thinkers and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit. Participants will also spend some time in nature engaged in experiential learning.

About the Presenters

Deb Rougeau-Bell has been an elementary school teacher, assistant principal, principal and consultant. Both as a principal and as a mentoring specialist for Rocky View Schools, she has worked with schools in leading the transformation to a culture of environmental stewardship and sustainability. As a contractor for the Alberta Council

for Environmental Education (ACEE), she has been highly involved with the *Curriculum for a Sustainable Future* initiative and increasing student's environmental and energy literacy.

Kim Kendal is a teacher with Rocky View Schools, presently teaching Grade 5/6 at Banded Peak School. Kim is a biologist and specializes in environmental inquiry and emphasizing the importance of getting kids outside. She is

enthusiastic and passionate about uncovering curriculum through real life authentic knowledge building opportunities.

Grayson Adams is a teacher with Rocky View Schools, presently teaching Grade 4 at Glenbow School. Grayson specializes in inquiry-based constructivist learning and environmental learning. He is passionate about connecting kids with nature through experiential learning and place-based education.

Mark Your Calendars

Two amazing speakers will be in Edmonton this fall!

- Jane Goodall will be at the Winspear Centre on September 9, 2015.
<https://tickets.winspearcentre.com/event/performance/4693>
- Stephen Lewis will be at the Shaw Conference Centre on October 2, 2015, as part of the St Stephen's College Chancellor's Gala.
<http://ststephenscollege.ca/#sthash.Zn3cYBpD.dpbs>

Mahatma Gandhi 2015 Summer Institute: Building Peaceful Communities

July 6–16, 2015, University of Alberta

The Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta and the Mahatma Gandhi Foundation for World Peace are sponsoring the Mahatma Gandhi 2015 Summer Institute: Building Peaceful Communities. The Centre for Research for Teacher Education and Development is coordinating this Institute.

The 2015 Summer Institute, Building Peaceful Communities will

- focus on building peaceful communities, a relevant theme for schools;
- contribute to teachers' understanding of community-building in schools and classrooms;
- offer strategies for thinking about, addressing and building

inclusive communities that resist bullying and marginalization;

- offer an opportunity to engage with other practitioners from across Canada and the US around the important considerations of community building;
- offer an opportunity to engage in thoughtful consideration of complexities around community building in an increasingly diverse society; and
- be relevant to classroom curriculum across subject areas and grade levels.

Structure

There are four separate three-credit graduate-level courses

organized into an institute format.

Each student will enroll in one course. The four courses are Narrative Inquiries as Relational Research Methodology, Toward a Curriculum of Community, Toward a Gandhian Pedagogy and Narrative Pedagogy as Social Justice.

In addition to the courses, there will be three afternoon lectures (open to the public). All students will attend these events.

For more information and to register, contact Eliza Pinnegar at elizapinnegar@gmail.com or the CRTED at 780-492-7770; or visit www.elementaryed.ualberta.ca/en/Centres/CRTED.aspx and follow the link to the Mahatma Gandhi 2015 Summer Institute: Building Peaceful Communities page.



WILD Pedagogies



The Canadian Wildlife Federation's **WILD Pedagogies program** is a new **conservation initiative** offering **adventure learning journeys** for educators and their families.

"Wild Pedagogies is a one of a kind experiential learning program that blends graduate level studies in education from top university professors with travel on the landscape. This is an amazing opportunity for advanced education in the outdoors."

Wade Luzny, CEO Executive Vice-President of the Canadian Wildlife Federation

This year the program will include sea kayaking on Lake Superior, backpacking in Cape Breton Highlands National Park and horse assisted hiking in the Tonquin Valley in Jasper National Park. Conservation science including CWF work with endangered species such as caribou will be highlighted.

Each program is \$1,500, including meals, programming and outfitting. Participants will be responsible for their own transportation to and from the parks where the adventures will begin and end. The journeys will be offered concurrently at the end of August, 2015.

World renowned professors from Brock University, Cape Breton University and McMaster University will guide the innovative programs. CWF thanks Dr. Mary Breunig, Dr. Pat Maher and Dr. Bob Henderson for their leadership.

Enrollment will be limited to ensure a personalized experience. While everyone is invited to apply the course is geared towards formal and non-formal educators and will include physical activities as well as camping.

"This is a unique approach to enjoying and appreciating Canada's wild species and spaces while learning about conservation and best practices in education from some of the most outstanding professors in the field," Luzny said. "Let's put ourselves out there and connect to nature while learning how best to spread the conservation message!"

2015 programs:



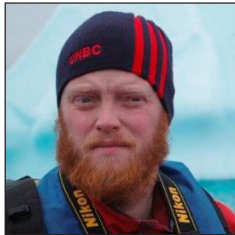
A Superior Learning Journey with Dr. Mary Breunig

When: August 24 – August 30, 2015

This beginner to intermediate sea kayaking experience will take you to Slate Islands Natural Environment Provincial Park, formed millions of years ago when a meteor impacted with the earth. This park is famous for its woodland caribou population who thrive due to a lack of predators.

This program will focus on reading and writing toward an understanding of place, with a focus on conservation and habitat.

Dr. Breunig is the past president of the Association for Experiential Education, a Professor at Brock University, and a NOLS and Outward Bound Instructor. Her research focus is nature as a site for social and environmental justice.



Pedagogy in the Park with Dr. Pat Maher

When: August 24 – 28, 2015

Where: Cape Breton Highlands National Park

This family-based adventure will focus on educational programming in the outdoors. You and your family will visit Cape Breton Highlands National Park and will camp with a group of other families. You will take part in activities and conversations that connect pedagogy to place while enjoying hikes through the Highland landscape.

Family members will be able to take part in some programming delivery, but should also plan to be independent at times. Please note that additional fees for food/camping will be required for family members.

Dr. Maher is a 3M National Teaching Fellow, editor of the Journal of Experiential Education and an Associate Professor at Cape Breton University. His research involves the outdoors and how people understand and value that. It is also aimed at learning how to better manage the outdoor environment for all.



A Tonquin Valley Adventure with Bob Henderson

When: August 22 – 29, 2015

Where: Jasper National Park

The Tonquin Valley is one of the crown jewels of the Canadian National Park system. Ansel Adams visited here in 1928, photographing an early trip. When asked about his experience, his only complaint was that he did not have enough time to photograph everything.

You will travel with horses and take part in a program that will focus on park politics, ethics and heritage. Also covered will be pedagogy of the journey (best practices for teaching about nature by experiences nature) and issues of the journey. The focus will be on Place, Story and Technology.

Dr. Henderson is a Professor Emerita at McMaster University and the author of many books. He is particularly interested in the intersection between expeditions and the story of place.



Canoeing in Quetico with Dr. Carrie Nolan

When: August 17 – 23

Where: Quetico Provincial Park, Ontario

This classic canoe trip in Quetico Provincial Park on the Path of the Paddle will bring you to travel by water amongst towering white pines and exposed Canadian Shield. The Path of the Paddle is the Trans Canada Trail connection in NW Ontario; when you paddle on it, you are connected to the rest of Canada by the world's longest trail, at 23,000km.

This program will focus on connections between ourselves, others and the land, using experiential pedagogy to foster such connections. Intended for classroom and non-traditional educators, this program will help expand educational toolboxes in considering many ways to communicate the idea of connectivity with students.

Dr. Carrie Nolan is a Kickass Canadian, an award winning educator and cross Canada canoeist as well as the General Manager of the Path of the Paddle Association. Also, she was the Association for Experiential Education's Outstanding Educator of the year for 2007. Her research interests focus on educative encounter, looking at how we grow from meeting ourselves, others and the world in a head, heart and hand manner.

For more information or to register, please call at 1-877-599-5777 or email mikeb@cwf-fcf.org.

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Questions?

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Diversity • Equity • Human Rights Diversity • Equity • Human Rights

We are there for you!



 The Alberta Teachers' Association

Diversity • Equity • Human Rights Diversity • Equity • Human Rights

Specialist councils' role in promoting diversity, equity and human rights

Alberta's rapidly changing demographics are creating an exciting cultural diversity that is reflected in the province's urban and rural classrooms. The new landscape of the school provides an ideal context in which to teach students that strength lies in diversity. The challenge that teachers face is to capitalize on the energy of today's intercultural classroom mix to lay the groundwork for all students to succeed. To support teachers in their critical roles as leaders in inclusive education, in 2000 the Alberta Teachers' Association established the Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee (DEHRC).

DEHRC aims to assist educators in their legal, professional and ethical responsibilities to protect all students and to maintain safe, caring and inclusive learning environments. Topics of focus for DEHRC include intercultural education, inclusive learning communities, gender equity, UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network, sexual orientation and gender variance.

Here are some activities the DEHR committee undertakes:

- Studying, advising and making recommendations on policies that reflect respect for diversity, equity and human rights
- Offering annual Inclusive Learning Communities Grants (up to \$2,000) to support activities that support inclusion
- Producing *Just in Time*, an electronic newsletter that can be found at www.teachers.ab.ca; *Teaching in Alberta*; *Diversity, Equity and Human Rights*.
- Providing and creating print and web-based teacher resources
- Creating a list of presenters on DEHR topics
- Supporting the Association instructor workshops on diversity

Specialist councils are uniquely situated to learn about diversity issues directly from teachers in the field who see how diversity issues play out in subject areas. Specialist council members are encouraged to share the challenges they may be facing in terms of diversity in their own classrooms and to incorporate these discussions into specialist council activities, publications and conferences.

Diversity, equity and human rights affect the work of all members. What are you doing to make a difference?

Further information about the work of the DEHR committee can be found on the Association's website at www.teachers.ab.ca under *Teaching in Alberta, Diversity, Equity and Human Rights*.

Alternatively, contact Andrea Berg, executive staff officer, Professional Development, at andrea.berg@ata.ab.ca for more information.

Global, Environmental & Outdoor Education Council

Mission Statement

To promote involvement in quality global, environmental and outdoor education

Objectives

- To provide a vehicle for Alberta teachers for professional development and communication in global, environmental and outdoor education
- To study and make professional recommendations about global, environmental and outdoor education issues
- To network with other provincial organizations that have similar concerns

Membership

- Regular member—Active and Associate members of the Alberta Teachers' Association, as specified in ATA bylaws, are entitled to full privileges of council membership including the rights to vote and to hold office.
- Student member—Student members of the ATA are entitled to all benefits and services of council membership except the right to hold office.
- GEOEC members may also choose to belong to the Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication (EECOM) for an additional fee.
- ATA members may sign up for a GEOEC membership through the ATA website as their choice of one free specialist council membership included in the ATA annual fee.
- ATA members and subscribers may also sign up for a GEOEC membership and pay a fee determined by the GEOEC executive. From time to time the executive may decrease the fee to provide incentives for membership recruitment.

Subscribers

- Persons who are not ATA members as specified by ATA bylaws receive all the benefits and services

of council membership except the rights to vote and hold office. Subscribers do have the right to serve as community liaisons on the council executive.

Publications

- The GEOEC recognizes the wide range of interests among members and strives to foster the exchange of ideas and provide information and articles relating to the various components of the elementary and secondary curricula through the publication of *Connections*.
- The GEOEC maintains a website in order to publish timely information and provide access to like-minded organizations and individuals.

Annual Conference

- The annual conference features a blend of activities, indoors and outdoors, ranging from hands-on workshops to social gatherings. All grade levels are represented in sessions. The emphasis is on practical information and application. The annual general meeting of the GEOEC is held in conjunction with the conference.

Executive

- Members are elected to serve on the GEOEC executive.
- Contact the president or past president of the GEOEC through the ATA office if you are interested in seeking a position.
- Elections take place at the annual general meeting during the annual conference.

Workshops

- Various activities and workshops are organized by the GEOEC either as standalone events or in conjunction with other organizations.

Join now and become involved in the Global, Environmental & Outdoor Education Council

Name _____ Alberta Teaching Certificate No _____
Address _____ Postal Code _____
School or Employer _____ Grade Level/Specialty _____
 New Membership Renewal of Membership
 \$25.00 Regular Membership
 \$12.50 Student Membership
 \$30.00 Subscription
 \$10.00 EECOM Membership (in addition to GEOEC membership)

Make cheque payable to the Alberta Teachers' Association and mail it with the application to the Association at 11010 142 Street NW, Edmonton AB T5N 2R1.

Permission for Use of Photographs or Student Work

The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) requests the permission of parents/guardians for the reproduction of photographs depicting their children and/or the reproduction of work assignments completed by their children. The photograph/work will be reproduced in the Global, Environmental & Outdoor Education Council (GEOEC) newsletter, *Connections*, and is intended for teacher professional development.

Name of student _____

I, _____ (printed name of parent/guardian of student), agree to the use of this photograph/work for the purpose stated above.

Signature _____

Relationship to student _____

Address _____

_____ **Postal code** _____

We have recently begun posting archived issues of *Connections* on the GEOEC website (www.geoec.org/newsletter). Are you willing to have your child's written work posted on the Internet as well?

- Yes, I agree to have my child's written work posted on the GEOEC website.
 - Yes, I agree to have my child's written work posted on the GEOEC website, using a first name only.
 - No, I do not want my child's written work posted on the GEOEC website.
-

Please fax or mail forms to

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Phone 780-447-9491
Fax 780-455-6481



The Alberta Teachers' Association

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