



# CREED

Curriculum Resources for  
Environmental Education Development

Fall 2015



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## President's Letter

**Jabin Burnworth**

It's Wednesday, September 30th, and I'm still experiencing feelings of withdraw. Spending the weekend at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore and Dunes State Park with many of you was not only good for my mind, it was good for my soul. Congrats to Chairs Ericka Popovich and Natalie Haley for a working hard to make this an amazing conference.

Thanks also to Paul McAfee, Erin Crofton, Kim Swift, Brigitta Adkins, Kara Salazar, Jim Poyser, Kristin TePas, Terri Hallesy, Christy Gerlach, Nicole Messacar, Kip Walton, Alicia Ebaugh, Darci Zolman, Allison Neubauer & Bernadette de Leon for their help. The conference would have not been the same without you.

Welcome to new board members Terri Hebert and Maddie Grimm. Our new Secretary, Terri, teaches undergraduate courses for the elementary education program, including courses in science methods and inquiry at IU South Bend. Our newest Member at Large, Maddie, is Director of Education at Taltree Arboretum and Gardens. Welcome to the board Terri and Maddie!

Lately, I've been reflecting on what EEAI means to me. On my drive home from the dunes, I wondered what EEAI means to you. Would you be willing to send me your thoughts? Some example questions include: Why are you a member of EEAI? When a friend asks, "What is EEAI?", what is your reply? Why do you attend the conference? Why haven't you attended the conference lately? Of course, you don't have to answer all of these questions. I'm ultimately interested in the main question, WHAT DOES EEAI MEAN TO YOU? Email your responses to [president@eeai.org](mailto:president@eeai.org)



Are you aware of our amazing programs? Think about joining groups to promote the Indiana Children in Nature Network (ICAN) <http://www.indianachildrenandnature.org>, the Environmental Literacy Plan (ELP), and Envirothon. Also, look for news from your Regional Chairs in the near future! Have you followed us on Twitter and Facebook? Links for both can be found on the main page of <http://www.eeai.org>

I hope you all can get outside and enjoy our Indiana Fall!

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## Climate Camp: an immersion in science & stewardship

By Jim Poyser

Over the past year or so, my position at Earth Charter Indiana and working with youth has evolved into regular immersive gatherings we call Climate Camp. The official mission is to combine climate stewardship with civic leadership, empowering youth, from 8-18 (and beyond), to make their voice heard.

To date, I've held two weeklong camps at Eagle Creek, one overnight camp in South Bend, and a half dozen day camps at various locations. Along the way I've relied on numerous partners, mostly environmental educators like beekeepers, hydroponic specialists and aboriginal technologists. Nice sounding group, eh?

It sure is fun, especially when you fold in the theater and visual artists and the poets.

Since the science of climate change is settled, our youth are assessing major life decisions within the context of those climate challenges: career path, food choices, transportation options, energy resources and family.

We strive to create the context for these campers to ask questions for themselves and for their communities, and begin to explore career and lifestyle decisions. To that end, we eat vegan meals, ride bikes and take mass transit to visit local farms, plus sites that feature renewable

energy and energy efficiency, and, on occasion, the Indiana Statehouse.

At our August camp, a certified arborist led the students through an exercise where they studied the impact of tree canopies when it comes to rain. The students weighed a leaf dry, then wet; next we estimated the number of leaves on a tree and then calculated the amount of rainfall intercepted by trees — and discussed the impact trees have on the soil and overall groundwater system.

We also watched a couple of videos later that day that not only reinforced the science behind why trees are so important to the eco-system, but also the economic benefit trees provide.

The following week, I took a STEM-observation training, courtesy of Harvard University. I realized I had done a fairly decent job the previous Saturday with the tree exercise, but I could do a lot better overall at creating informal, hands-on, minds-on, interactive projects and experiments for our climate campers.

Some of you might be able to help. If you have any ideas for me, I'd be pleased to hear from you.

Jim Poyser, Executive Director of Earth Charter Indiana, can be reached at <mailto:jimpoyser@earthcharterindiana.org>. His blog, <http://www.climatechronicles.com>, has numerous posts about Climate Camp.

## 2016 Envirothon Set for 25th Anniversary Contest Season!

by Darci Zolman

Indiana Envirothon is gearing up for an exciting 2016 contest season, which will be the 25th Anniversary for Envirothon in Indiana. Regional Contest Coordinators are in place, dates are on the calendar and contest sites have been booked.

Regional contests and locations:

March 2: East Central, Hayes Arboretum, Richmond, IN

March 9: South Central, Lawrence Co fairgrounds, Bedford, IN

March 15: Southwest: Pike Co fairgrounds, Petersburg, IN

March 16: North Central, Camp Buffalo, Buffalo, IN

March 16: West Central, Wabash Valley fairgrounds, Terre Haute, IN

March 17: Northwest, Red Mill County Park, Laporte, IN

March 17: Northeast, Peabody Library, Columbia City, IN

State Contest

April 27: Beck Agricultural Center, West Lafayette, IN

N. America Contest

July 24-29: Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario, Canada

The current issue for 2016 is Invasive Species: A Challenge to the Environment, Economy and Society.

Does Indiana Envirothon sound like something you want to know more about? We would love to talk to you about opportunities with this fabulous competition for high school students. Contact: Darci Zolman, 574-267-7445, x3 or <mailto:darci.zolman@in.nacdn.net>

## One Man's Perspective: Travels With Morris (Part 3)

by Sam Carman

Author's note: In the last issue of CREED I introduced you to Morris, an acquaintance I made in 2009. In that year, Morris began an amazing journey—one that is being shared with you through my ghostwriting of this series of articles. So without further ado, I'll turn it over to Morris.....

Hello again! As you might recall, my destiny was to make a round-trip from my original home in Florida all the way to Maricopa County, Arizona, and back again. So far, though, it's been a very round-about trip with stops in northern Michigan, Montana and Oregon before finally arriving in Arizona.

I've finally become accustomed to the hot, arid Arizona climate and don't even mind the occasional rattlesnake or scorpion passing by. Yes, I said "scorpion"! The giant hairy scorpion (*Hadrurus arizonensis*) is not uncommon here. In spite of its large size, reaching a length of 5 inches or more, it is not a particularly dangerous animal. Its sting is often compared to that of a honeybee. If I were a hiker, I would be much more concerned about encountering a bark scorpion (*Centruroides exilicauda*). Don't let its long, skinny tail and mere 3 inch length fool you—this is one of the most dangerous venomous critters you'll find in North America. Its sting has rarely been deadly, but would still spoil a walk in the desert (and your entire vacation) very quickly.

But enough about some of the dangers here. The beauty of the many cacti in bloom makes a trip well worth the time. Amidst the towering saguaros you might run across the feathery-orange blooms of ocotillo, yellow of barrel, prickly pear or cholla, the beautiful purple of pincushion or common beehive, or the specular, huge white flower of the organ pipe cactus. Depending upon the time of year, this desert environment can be a truly awe-inspiring place.

Like the desert flowers that are here for a short time then gone, the time came for me to leave this place and begin my journey back to Florida. Before leaving, though, you might recall from my first article that I was to have my picture taken at the half-way point of my intended journey—to be precise, right next to a specific U.S. Geodetic Survey benchmark (exact location: N 33° 51.210 W 112° 37.380). Mission accomplished on January 15, 2009! As you can see from my picture (that's me in the upper right), I made it to the benchmark and was ready to start the long journey back home.



So now that you've seen my picture, do I look anything like you imagined? You might recall from my first article, I told you that I am a bug with no legs—a Travel Bug, that is. If you haven't already figured it out, I am a Geocaching Travel Bug. My full name is Morrystown Benchmark Micro Geocoin. (You can understand why most folks just call me Morris!)

Having made it to the benchmark in Mariposa County, Arizona, the next challenge was to complete the trip back home to the Florida Panhandle, then to be retrieved by the Geocacher who had first put me in circulation. It had taken 310 days for me to reach my first destination. Believe it or not, I made the return trip to my "home" state of Florida in only 77 days! Upon learning the news, the Geocacher who had originally placed me in circulation posted, "Very happy to see this one back in Florida, and hope to reunite with it soon."

And if that was the end of the story, I'd have nothing to write about for the next CREED. But fate can sometimes deal a hand with a wild card; and believe me, this story will get pretty wild before it's over! So be sure to check the next issue of CREED for the conclusion (?). Until then, rendez-vous la prochaine fois, l'ami! (Just a little hint of things to come!)



## Indiana Children and Nature Network

The Indiana Children and Nature Network (ICAN) is gearing up for 'Nature Play Days!' ICAN is holding a week-long event – from June 11 to 19 - to encourage kids to get outside. We are inviting organizations, families and individuals across Indiana to plan a special time to play outside. These events can be registered with ICAN and we will put them on our website. ICAN will offer ideas of activities that could be used during an event. So, gather your friends, your church, scout troop, YMCA or others and pick a time to get outside. Let us know what you are doing! And share pictures with the hashtag: #ICANNaturePlayDays.

ICAN is also teaming up with the Indianapolis Zoo to offer a Family Nature Club Training on March 11. This project is part of the Indianapolis Zoo's growing commitment to getting kids outside. ICAN is partnered with the Zoo with support from a Disney/AZA Grant.

This fall, ICAN is busy participating around the region to promote our message. We have participated with Connor Prairie and Noblesville in the White River Festival and others!

ICAN has also developed a strategic plan and added to our leadership in the Steering Committee. This developing program continues to grow!

Join in the Zoo Nature Club training and set up your Nature Play Day!



## 2016 Summer Conference

The 2016 conference will be our first ever summer conference. Earlham College will be the home of next year's conference and the best time, in fact the only time, for a conference at Earlham is in the summer. The dates will be June 17-19, 2016.



Why Earlham College? Because of its proximity to Cope Environmental Center, which will be the center of Indiana Bicentennial attention next year. In fact, our conference will be the host of the dedication of the Children of Indiana Nature Park, which is a project of The Nature Conservancy and Cope Environmental Center.

### Indiana Bicentennial

2016 marks the 200th anniversary of statehood for Indiana. The state of Indiana has decided that this is cause for celebration, even creating an Indiana Bicentennial Commission - <http://www.in.gov/ibc/>. This commission is partnering with everyone they can to celebrate everything they can about Indiana and its history, including its natural history. They are partnering with TNC and Cope to create the Children of Indiana Nature Park.

### Earlham College

This 800 acre, 170 year-old institution - <http://www.earlham.edu/> is a top 10 college for undergraduate teaching, making it a perfect venue for a conference on education. It is small, with the classic college campus look; old brick buildings, grassed courtyards, sidewalks between the dorms and the campus buildings with parking around the perimeter. It is also in the middle of significant renovations which will add a touch of modern living to the campus.

We'll be staying in the dorms, which are quite nice. It will make you feel like a student again!

### Cope Environmental Center

Cope - <http://www.copeenvironmental.org/> was chosen to partner with TNC and the state for several reasons. They wanted to focus on the east-central part of the state due to the paucity of protected natural areas in the region. They were also impressed with the strong leadership at Cope whom they thought would be able to administer this sort of project.

Cope is building a new environmental education center which will be certified under the Living Building Challenge - <http://living-future.org/lbc>, which has been described as LEED on steroids. The Saturday of our conference will be held at this remarkable building.

### Children of Indiana Nature Park

Each of the 1.1 million K-12 students in the state of Indiana will receive a ceremonial deed-of-trust for one square meter of the Children of Indiana Nature Park - <http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/indiana/explore/childrens-park.xml>. This "piece of land" is meant to be a platform from which to learn and will provide students a vested interest in the Park. Cope Environmental Center will continue to use the property for environmental education activities.

The dedication of the Park will take place on the Saturday of our conference, with dignitaries from across the state in attendance. TNC is hoping that this will be a model for counties all across the state to create children's parks. This is an exciting event for environmental education in the state of Indiana!

### **The Nature Conservancy**

Mary McConnell, the executive director of the Indiana TNC - <http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/indiana/index.htm>, will be the keynote speaker for the conference. The Nature Conservancy is involved in protecting natural areas all around the world, and has occasionally dabbled in education, but not to a great extent. This will be their biggest step into the environmental education world and it is very appropriate that we are there to share the expertise of environmental educators from across the state.

## **Howard Michaud Award**

Natalie Haley wrote in her nomination of Fred Wooley "He was at each program that I went to early and more than willing to stay late to socialize and answer people's questions. He understood, that sometimes people visit your park to rejuvenate their spirit as well as their mind, and sometimes they need a friend there to greet them at the door, welcome them inside and hand them some time and sincere care. You see, if people feel welcomed, then they may stay long enough to see, to hear, to feel nature surrounding them, and then to understand." Congratulations Fred!



## **Joe Wright Award**

Sandy Belth is a part-time Naturalist at Monroe County Parks and Recreation. She presents school programs and leads field trips and plans special events, including Bug Fest. Bug Fest has been held for the past 3 years and attracts about 900 people who come to learn more about insects and other small creatures. Sandy organizes the event that include several local agencies, dozens of volunteers, performers, a food drive, speakers, signs, publicity, crafts, food trucks, tents, activity and information tables, portable toilets, and much more. She and her husband Jeff are dedicated to sharing their enthusiasm about insects with others and she is an asset to the department and the field of environmental education.



## Presidents Award



Paul Steury was awarded the 2015 President's Award. Paul teaches 7th Grade Science at Goshen Middle School. Paul's dedication to EEAI, his present and past students, and to the environment as a whole is contagious. Paul's enthusiasm challenges others to become more aware of their surroundings. Hiking with Paul is a spiritual, educational, and culinary experience. We are grateful for many roles Paul has played for EEAI.

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## 2016 Conference

The conference for 2016 is in the planning stages. If you are interested in helping plan the conference please contact [Paul McAfee](#)

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