



CREED

Curriculum Resources for
Environmental Education Development

Fall 2017



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A Letter from Ann

As I write this we are waiting to see what damage Irma will do and we are watching the recovery efforts in Texas after Harvey left his mark. I personally am feeling a bit helpless. And in awe that so many are suffering in ways I can hardly imagine.

This October Natalie Haley and I will be going to the North American Association of Environmental Educators, NAAEE, conference to be held in Puerto Rico. Instead of field trips I wonder if we will be helping with clean up. The future is never certain. These tragedies have really left me wondering what to do.

Perhaps these natural disasters can be a wakeup call for all. A time we need to work even harder to educate Indiana about how interconnected we are. In all that we do, we impact our world which impacts others. It's time to really step up and work together. Environmental education is important and

we want everyone to be environmentally literate so they know that their actions make an impact no matter how big or small.

Here are some ways to get involved. Join the EEAI board! With all that EEAI is involved in we have decided to expand our board. There are professional development opportunities involved with being on the board.

Join one of the quarterly brown bag lunches organized by the ICAN committee. It's a time to get together and communicate. Learn for what others are doing and brain storm on what else we can be doing. Our next one will be in December on the third Thursday. If you are interested in joining or hosting, let me know. If you didn't get an invitation to the last lunch let me know and we will work on getting that fixed.

Conference planning is underway and we should have a wonderful time at Waycross this year. If you haven't registered, what are you waiting for? See the article below for more information. Bring a friend!

The working group for the ELP took the summer off but hope to gather soon to talk about next steps. If you are interested contact Jabin.

I hope to see you all soon at the conference where we can support each other and be inspired to continue to work toward and environmentally literate state.

Ann Niednagel

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Empower learners from diverse backgrounds, discover resources and teaching techniques from a wide range of educators, experience the local area via hikes and field trips – at the height of fall color in beautiful Brown County, celebrate the achievements of our award winners, share your special tricks and techniques at the Chautauqua, dance, sing, meet friends in the Hospitality Room, and explore your strengths and “branch out” & grow!

Conference Registration is open!

Reserve your spot today! EEAI Conference 2017 - Seeing the Forest and

the Trees at Waycross Conference Center in Brown County, October 13-15, 2017! To register for the conference, go to <http://www.eeai.org/2017-Register>

Conference Keynote Speakers

Rue Mapp - Founder of Outdoor Afro

Dr. Leon Walls, PhD - University of Vermont professor and researcher of elementary science education

Read their full bios at <http://www.eeai.org/2017-Keynote-speakers>

Conference Schedule at a Glance (Eastern Daylight Time)

Friday, October 13, 2017

9:30-12:00 Pre-conference workshop: Project Learning Tree (PLT) Sampler
OR

9:30-12:00 Indiana Children and Nature Network (ICAN) Swarm

12:30 Arrival / Registration

1:00 Welcome / New member welcome / Introduce committee and officers /
Ice breaker

1:30 Sessions

3:00 Sessions

5:00 Dinner, Environmental Literacy Plan (ELP) update

6:00 New member orientation - Hospitality room

6:30 Evening Program - Leon Walls

7:30 Song writing contest, Campfire, Hospitality room activities

Saturday, October 14, 2017

7:00 Dawn walk

8:00 Breakfast

9:00 Chautauqua

10:30 Sessions

12:00 Lunch Keynote: Rue Mapp

1:30 Field trips

6:00 Dinner

7:00 Business Meeting / Awards / Election results / 2018 Conference promo

8:00 Barn dance, Hospitality room activities

Sunday, October 15, 2017

7:00 Dawn walk

8:00 Breakfast

9:00 Sessions

10:30 Sessions

12:00 Lunch

1:00 Conference closes

Indiana Envirothon: Lots of "News"

By Darci Zolman

Indiana Envirothon is very "New-sy" this fall. Several new changes have been put in place to make this season of competitions better than ever!

*Jan Came has been elected the new Vice President of Indiana Envirothon. Jan has been a regional contest coordinator of the West Central contest for several years and is a great supporter of

Envirothon. She will be a great asset to the leadership team and will chair the Appeals Committee.

*A new contest has been added for 2018! A Central contest will be held at the Hamilton County Fairgrounds in Noblesville and will be coordinated by Ginger Davis. This gives the Envirothon contest coverage in the Indianapolis and adjacent areas, which has been a goal of the Envirothon steering committee.

*The test committee and writers have two new members for 2018. Susannah Hinds and Cara Hannon will join Teena Ligman, Stephanie McCurdy and Darci Zolman as test writers. We are excited to have some new members of this committee!!

*The 2018 brochure will soon be available on the IASWCD website: <http://wordpress.iaswcd.org/events-2/envirothon/>

For additional information about Indiana Envirothon, please contact Darci Zolman, darci.zolman@in.nacdn.net or 574-267-7445 x5374.

One Man's Perspective: "Is it Safe?"

by Sam Carman

"Is it safe?" Once you've seen the 1976 movie "Marathon Man" starring Dustin Hoffman, Laurence Olivier and Roy Scheider, you'll never hear those three simple words the same again. (In fact, that line is ranked #70 in the American Film Institute's list of top 100 movie quotations.) In the film, Hoffman plays Thomas Levy, a graduate student who has no idea that his older brother is a government agent in search of a Nazi war criminal. When his brother is killed, Thomas finds himself the target of those who believe he is also an agent. In one particularly disturbing scene, a Nazi dentist "probes" Thomas for information, using code words he believes Thomas will recognize:

Dr. Szell: Is it safe?

Thomas: You're talking to me?

Dr. Szell: Is it safe?

Thomas: Is what safe?

Dr. Szell: Is it safe?

Thomas: I don't know what you mean. I can't tell you something's safe or not, unless I know specifically what you're talking about.

Dr. Szell: Is it safe?

Thomas: Tell me what the "it" refers to.

Dr. Szell: Is it safe?

At this point, the sadistic Doctor Szell poked around a bit with his dental pick before deciding that the drill would be a more effective tool of persuasion. I'm sure you can imagine where things went from there.

During a recent outdoor education class I taught, I began to feel the presence of Dr. Szell—not in the sense of one of the students being cruelly sadistic (thank goodness), but rather in this student's line of questions. Regardless of what activity or aspect of the outdoors I addressed, her skeptically-tinged questions all fell under the category of "Is it safe?".

I've thought a lot about that student's persistence with variants of the question "Is it safe?". Given the type of class I was teaching and the fact that all of the students were adults attending voluntarily, I made an assumption that their levels of comfort with the outdoors were similar to mine—obviously an incorrect assumption in this case. When talking with people about outdoor activities, we need to assess their levels of comfort with the natural environment. Doing so with this group would not have changed the content of my presentation, but it certainly would have changed my approach. Identifying possible fears (real or perceived) and addressing them might have gone a long way toward making at least one particular student more open to the concepts and outdoor activities I was teaching.

Let's be clear—all outdoor activities have inherent risk. The ground has uneven surfaces suitable for tripping; the sun can burn your skin; the cold can freeze your skin; bees sting; mosquitoes and ticks suck your blood and

can potentially spread disease; poison ivy can cause uncontrollable itching; and the list goes on. Even highly unlikely, completely unpredictable things can happen. We once parked our car under a very large tree on a calm, windless day, unaware that a lightning storm the prior week had left a huge, hidden limb severed at the top. The limb smashed through our windshield crushing the entire console and dashboard. Had we still been in the car, I would not be writing this today.

Those of us who love the outdoors are generally aware of the possible perils and take them into consideration. But we've also learned to weigh risks versus rewards. I am comfortable skiing some of the black diamond slopes in Colorado or camping in areas where there are no facilities or other people because I've learned to do both; but rappelling and scuba diving are risks I would not take—at least not until properly trained. There are certainly some risks that cannot be foreseen (like trees falling from the sky to crush your car). But after doing your homework about a given activity, you'll find that most risks are predictable.

When teaching an outdoor activity, I think the best we can hope for is to guide students away from asking the instructor "Is it safe?", and toward asking themselves "Are the rewards worth the risk?". If we've effectively done our job of instruction, they should be able to assess their confidence and comfort level to answer that question.

Get Involved with Indiana Children & Nature Network (ICAN)

By Melissa Moran

The Indiana Children & Nature Network (ICAN) is a committee of EEAI that focuses on promoting and engaging kids in nature play. In addition to Nature Play Days, there are several ways to participate and help grow the number of youth who are exploring nature. One option is to join this year's ICAN Swarm. It will be held Friday morning at the Annual Conference and it a great opportunity to share ideas and resources for promoting nature play with your

peers around Indiana. For more information about the Swarm, visit <http://www.eeai.org/ICAN-Swarm>. A second opportunity is to join a Brown Bag Lunch. These are informal sessions inviting all who work with kids and nature to gather and share ideas. So join us at a future event (details here <http://www.indianachildrenandnature.org/events.html>) and help us reach more youth with your ideas and enthusiasm!

ICAN Brown Bag Lunches - you should come!

By Sarah Wolf, EEAI secretary and Hendricks County Parks Naturalist

I finally had a chance to attend one of the ICAN Brown Bag Lunches in September! I wasn't sure what these were all about, and I didn't have time or want to attend yet another meeting. Well, these aren't true meetings, and you NEED to put these on your calendar! These lunches are very informal and a great way to connect with other people who also work with kids and encourage kids to get outside. We had a small group join in the September lunch. Several people told us about projects on natural playgrounds and Nature Explore classrooms, and a lot of networking and idea sharing went on.

Have something that you would like to be included in The CREED?

The CREED is published seasonally. Submissions to CREED will be accepted at the discretion of the CREED board. Submission deadlines are the first Wednesday of March, June, September, and December. Email your articles to the EEAI secretary Sarah Wolf at swolf@hcparks.net and include "CREED submission" in the subject line.

Don't forget to register for the EEAI Conference!

Check out the website for more details! <http://www.eeai.org/2017-Register>