



## CREED

Curriculum Resources for  
Environmental Education Development

Summer 2017



CREED features:

- President's Letter
- Conference and how you can help
- Executive Director
- ELP
- Envirothon Update
- One Man's Perspective
- ICAN Update

## A Letter from Ann

“The art of communication is the language of leadership”

- James Humes

Our vision statement says EEAI promotes networking and communication providing opportunities to share knowledge, skills and resources. And for almost 50 years, we have done just that. At the beginning, the opportunities to communicate and share knowledge, skills and resources was much more limited. Conferences provided time to share skills and resources, the CREED served as a resource and sharing of knowledge, and in between these, there were a few other opportunities to reach out to our members.

Things have changed and today with social media and internet the opportunities are so much greater. I can simply look up websites to learn about things, webinars can share skills, emails connect me to resources, and social media provides a type of networking.

This made me really think “what is our role now?” As I see it, our role is even more important. So many organizations are working to get children outside, nature centers and land trusts are working on preserving our natural resources while educating their visitors, and even zoos and museums are working to help get kids connected to nature. There seems to be more organizations across a broader spectrum doing similar work to EEAI. Networking and communication with these organizations can make our efforts reach even farther than working alone. EEAI’s communication and networking can eliminate some duplication and provide resources and opportunities to those who don’t know we already exist. It is time Indiana really knows EEAI is here to help.

We are working on communicating across the state in many ways. For instance, we had over 160 Nature Play Days this year! Thank you to so many of you who participated! Let’s keep that number growing! Consider adding your events or hosting a new event next year during the nature play days 2018!

Our project Indiana Children and Nature, ICAN, also hosts quarterly brown bag lunches on the third Thursday of the months of June, September, and December. It is a “bring your own lunch” casual gathering with organizations and individuals interested in helping get kids outside. Nancy Stark of Conner Prairie hosted our last lunch. It was a nice gathering and fun to walk the grounds of Conner Prairie to see all that they are doing to foster a connection to nature. Thank you, Nancy!

Purdue is also reaching out to the young adults and has a student chapter of EEAI. We are ready to welcome even more young adults with more student chapters.

And work is underway to bring Indiana an Environmental Literacy Plan. The Environmental Literacy Guidelines hope to be adopted by the Department of Education and we are currently aligning the guidelines with teaching standards.

There is so much going on with EEAI. Keep talking about all that is going on! EEAI’s communication is a language of leadership! If you want to get

more involved send me an email.

Ann Niednagel

[ann.niednagel@gmail.com](mailto:ann.niednagel@gmail.com)



**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>

## How YOU Can Help with the 2017 EEAI Conference Top Ten List

By Bernadette de Leon

10. Invite someone who can benefit by joining the EEAI community
9. Forward this newsletter to colleagues so that the word spreads
8. Plan which books and mugs that you will share
7. Contact potential sponsors and share the “ask letter” to gain sponsorships or exhibitors [EEAI 2017 conference sponsor letter -- generic.pdf](#)
6. Plan to bring something for the silent auction
5. Nominate someone who deserves recognition for an EEAI award <http://eeai.org/Awards>
4. Consider having a table for your organization or activity at the Chautauqua event
3. Write a song about the forest and/or the trees (Songwriting Contest evening of Friday, Oct. 13<sup>th</sup>)
2. Volunteer to help at the conference by contacting Bernadette de Leon [deleon@indiana.edu](mailto:deleon@indiana.edu)
1. Register you (and a friend) at <http://eeai.org/2017-Register>

**EEAI pursuing possibility of an Executive Director**

## **By Alison Clark Zajdel**

EEAI is excited to be pursuing the possibility of a much-needed Executive Director. So many great environmental education efforts in the state need a central "office" to flourish and avoid duplication- we look forward to being THAT place for Indiana! The director's "short list" of duties will include streamlining communication between nature-focused organizations, forwarding the ICAN initiative, coordinating student EEA chapters, supporting the state's Envirothon competitions, and working to put an Environmental Literacy Plan in place. We are excited about the possibilities this presents for Hoosier children and hope you will support our efforts to make Indiana an exceptional example of high quality environmental education coordination.

## **ELP**

### **By Jabin Burnworth**

In May, Ann Niednagel, Vera Vander Kooy, and Jabin Burnworth met with the Indiana Department of Education to discuss our Environmental Literacy Guidelines. We asked the IDOE to provide a representative at our quarterly meetings of the Working Group for Environmental Literacy. We also asked the IDOE to will be available to review materials, share information, and include the ELG on their website. Updates on this process coming soon!

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## **Indiana Envirothon: Looking Ahead to Expanding in 2018**

### **By Darci Zolman**

The 2017 contest season is barely over and Indiana Envirothon is looking ahead to 2018. Growth in two areas, an expanded steering committee and the addition of regional contests, are goals for the next year. A summer planning meeting will take place in June to continue these efforts.

An expanded steering committee will allow for greater input from a broader base and transition of leadership. Envirothon has evolved a lot since it came to Indiana in 1991, and we are committed to continue making it a first

class competition for Indiana students. If anyone is interested in this opportunity, please contact Darci Zolman, [darci.zolman@in.nacdnet.net](mailto:darci.zolman@in.nacdnet.net).

We are also hoping to add a regional contest in central Indiana in 2018, and possibly bringing back a Southeastern competition. If you are from these areas and would like to assist with either of these, please contact Darci.

We are also supporting North Harrison FFA, our state winning team, as they prepare for the NCF International Envirothon Contest in July at Mount St. Mary's University in Maryland. We wish them the best of luck!

## One Man's Perspective: Nature Is Where You Look For It

by Sam Carman

Growing up in “The Region” where one city seamlessly melts into another with no discernable boundaries and the landscape is dominated by bricks and steel, finding “nature” was somewhat like finding Waldo. Among the maze of city streets, neighborhoods and industrial areas, it had to be there somewhere. That was my childhood in the 1950’s and ‘60’s, and I found my slice of the great outdoors in the land behind our house that was owned by the Northern Indiana Public Service Company, better known in the area as NIPSCO. That company not only supplied our electrical power, but also provided a place for me to play, rendezvous with friends, and explore a wooded, mostly swampy ecosystem that held amazing wonders.

**A place to play:** Between our house and the swampy woods was a gravel access road used by NIPSCO employees, and between that road and our house was an open field that we agreed to keep mowed in exchange for being allowed to use it as a baseball field. Using an 8 foot-tall chain-link gate that some business had scrapped long ago, we constructed a backstop. It was also good for climbing until you reached the top, where three strands of rusty barbed wire remained from its previous life. That field witnessed many wins, losses and inevitable fights that were all part of baseball when it was still a child’s game. Rules were invented and disputes settled (almost always peaceably) without adult interference or supervision—a game played as it should be.

When the boys of summer were ready to move onto autumn, NIPSCO Field was transformed from a baseball diamond to a football field. It wasn't ideal because remnants of broken glass, rocks and other debris were sometimes painfully discovered (I still have a faint scar on my leg from the sharp edge of a partially buried brick), but no field is perfect. I'm sure Andrew Luck probably started out the same way. Or maybe not.

**A place to rendezvous with friends:** This is the part of the essay where I could tell you about us kids going out in the woods where we couldn't be seen, so we could do things we weren't supposed to be doing. While the statute of limitations has long since expired for such a confession to earn me a spanking, getting grounded, or worse, some things are just better left to your imagination. Besides, your kids might be reading this, and I don't want to plant any ideas. But I will mention the many tree houses and forts that would have made Frank Lloyd Wright sit up and take notice. These citadels hosted foreign dignitaries (i.e. kids who went to a different school), secret club meetings, and were great places to wait out a passing shower, although they usually leaked. They were also a major center of commerce where baseball cards, comic books and Mad magazines were negotiated, bartered and sold. These dealings sometimes even included risqué contraband reading material; but now I'm drifting back to how this paragraph began—better move on.

**A place to explore a wooded, swampy ecosystem:** Regardless of what else I might collect on an outing in this woods, a multitude of large welts from mosquito bites was a certainty. These minute vampires seemed to travel in swarms that would darken the sky, descending on us to feed as soon as we entered the woods. Some of these pests were so engorged after feasting on my tender flesh that they were just too fat to fly, rolling over to take a nap before being swatted or brushed away. But braving the mosquitoes was something that had to be done if I were to succeed in fulfilling my mission—to catch and collect pretty much anything that moved. Most kids in my town did not have access to exotic wildlife like I did. I became a master of the principle of “supply and demand” long before I ever heard those terms. Grasshoppers and tadpoles were small currency, but crawdads, frogs and turtles could be traded for candy, comic books or even small sums of money. And bringing home two snakes was the motherlode! (In order to trade a snake, I would have to collect two because one was always for me.) A garter snake would easily fetch a Mad magazine, and any other species of snake could command one of those “other” magazines mentioned earlier. Enough said.



I don't know if Aldo Leopold or Richard Louv were "environmental entrepreneurs" when they were kids. I also don't know if my other outdoor adventures are typical or common with others who managed to find their slices of nature in an urban or town environment. What I do know is that those experiences are my fondest, most powerful memories of my childhood, and I am absolutely certain they are what drove me toward the career path I later chose. Capturing wildlife to keep or sell to the highest bidder was an enterprise I left behind with my childhood. But I still might keep something for a day or two so that my grandsons can observe it up-close, because I want to encourage that sense of wonder so desperately needed in our young people. They both love to be outdoors and are now wanting to build their first tree fort. Since we live in the country and they don't, they want to construct it out behind our house. I look forward to supplying the materials and helping them, then stepping away so they can have their own special place to trade Pokemon cards and Minecraft characters with their friends, and to amass memories that will last a lifetime.

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## **Indiana Children and Nature (ICAN)**

### **By Sarah Kempfer**

ICAN's Nature Play Days expanded this year from 115 events held around the state to 160 events! Kids all around the state were getting outside with many different organizations. The ICAN network of organizations getting kids outside is growing. See the ICAN website for a list of all the events that were held. New local networks were formed to organize and promote Nature Play Days close to home. For instance, Putnam County Hospital, Putnam County Library, Putnam County Museum, and Greencastle Farmer's Market joined together to offer ten nature play day events. Promotions included the following:

- A flyer distributed to ALL kids in the three school corporations in Putnam County as well as area businesses, etc.
- Posters: Distributed to area businesses
- 'Passport'/brochure and punch card: Distributed to the 4 locations where families can pick up



- Press release
- Radio Spot: Running on WREB (the local radio station)
- Yard Signs: Distributed to area businesses and supporters
- Prescription Pads: Distributed to all area docs/providers to give to young patients

ICAN also sent many of the sticker sheets for the ICAN Play 30 pledge to the Nature Play Day organizers. Plan to host your own event or organize your own local network next year!

ICAN Brown Bag Lunches are scheduled for the third Thursday of the third month. A successful meeting was held on Thursday, June 15, 11:30 to 1 at Conner Prairie. The next brown bags are scheduled for:

Thursday, September 21, 11:30 to 1, at the Indianapolis Zoo

Thursday, December 21, 11:30 to 1, place to be announced

## **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](mailto: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>