



Volume 10, Number 2

The Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia

Spring Newsletter 2001

## Defining Non-formal Education in QCC Terms

by Carla Babun, Chattahoochee Nature Center, Roswell, Georgia

Facing increasing demands on time in the classroom, teachers are more carefully evaluating the relevance of field trips. While visits to theaters and historic sites are often easy to match to specific curricular topics, environmentally-themed “nature hikes” appear more challenging as direct correlations to curriculum.

At the Chattahoochee Nature Center, we have discovered through school field trip evaluations that most teachers visit us with their classes to “enrich (their) program” or to have an “outdoor experience.” In order to accentuate the direct relation of our on-site classes to public school curriculum, we found it necessary to define each on-site class in terms of the Georgia Quality Core Curriculum (QCC) reference number. In addition, an objective statement was devised for each class. **Both the QCC reference and the objective were then added to our school program guide for teachers to use in lesson plans and in field trip proposals.**

The QCC research proved to be a relatively simple task. With the purchase of the QCC volumes (\$100, complete set, Georgia Dept. of Education, Curriculum Unit, 1766 Twin Towers East, Atlanta 30334-5040, 404/657-2461), we noticed that most of the Nature Center’s classes were already aligned with appropriate grade levels. Nonetheless, some better alignment with the QCC remained as a challenge. Second grade required two separate classes to accommodate “Habitats” and “Plants” as different topics. Third grade needed the creation of a new class on life processes, while it was also necessary to split a class about relationships in nature into both a fourth-grade and a seventh-grade format.

The requirements for middle school students were also addressed by revising an existing Native American cultural program and by adding a Georgia history program component. These latter two classes incorporated research into the QCC guidelines for social studies as well as science correlations.

Writing objectives was a much more intensive task. We discovered the need for in-house training on the appropriate style for these statements. This included reviewing Bloom’s Taxonomy and following a learning style inventory guide developed by Hanson Silver, & Strong Associates, Inc. (Moorestown, NJ). **We also carefully evaluated each objective in terms of observable behaviors, measurable performance, and/or authentic assessment that could be used by the classroom teacher.**

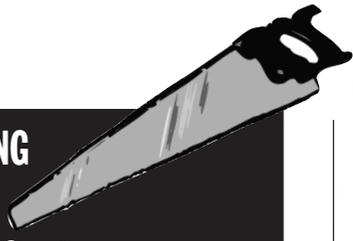
Multi-level classes, such as those covering ranges of third to twelfth grades, could not be assigned QCC references. However, these classes were given related Science Process Skills (e.g., observing accurately, recognizing relationships, ordering events logically, or making comparisons). These skills were extracted from a variety of science texts including Scholastic’s *Science Place* assessment materials.

Overall, the QCC research proved to be well worth the time investment. Teachers have responded with “Thank you so much for making my job easier.” As accountability for time and effort continues to receive greater focus, teachers cannot venture far from immediate QCC relevance and objective-based activities. Nature centers must therefore reflect the same educational goals and guidelines in order to move beyond the narrowly perceived “nature hike” stereotype.

*This issue of **The Link** will focus on Georgia and national education standards and why environmental educators interested in public school audiences should integrate these standards into their programs.*



## SHARPENING the Educator's Saw\*



Two documents in the field of environmental education remain the strong foundation for a shared vision of the core concepts and skills needed by environmentally literate citizens:

**1.** "The goal of environmental education is to develop a world population that is aware of, and concerned about, the environment and its associated problems, and which has the knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivations, and commitment to work individually and collectively toward solutions of current problems and the prevention of new ones." —*Belgrade Charter* (UNESCO-UNEP, 1976)

**2.** "To foster clear awareness of and concern about economic, social, political, and ecological interdependence in urban and rural areas; to provide every person with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, values, attitudes, commitment, and skills needed to protect and improve the environment; and to create new patterns of behavior of individuals, groups and society as a whole towards the environ-

ment." —  
*Tbilisi Declaration*  
(UNESCO, 1978)

Source: North American Association for Environmental Education, *Environmental Education Materials: Guidelines for Excellence*, p. 1.

\*Inspired by Stephen R. Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. Share your ideas for renewal in this regular feature!



Petey Giroux takes the form of Turkey Vulture to highlight the Buzzard Hike and Bike event.

# EEA's Annual Conference 2001 A Huge Success!

by Eric Lindberg, Rome-Floyd Planning Department, Rome, Georgia

The official survey results for the 2001 EEA Conference in Columbus are in and confirm a resounding success! In addition to the ratings attendees provided for organization, content, cost, lodging, food, and sessions, many comments and good ideas were provided for making next year's conference even better.

A total of 53 evaluations were received and the "Overall Program Rating" scored 4.6 on a scale of 1-5 (with "5" as excellent). In this category all scores were either "4" or "5" showing that participant satisfaction was very high.

Of the respondents, 62% are non-formal educators, while 19% are teachers in public or private schools. The remaining 19% represent a variety of backgrounds, including professors, curriculum coordinators, state and local government officials, and others. This shows a fairly diverse group of attendees, and also provides EEA with information about who is receiving its message, how the resources provided are being used, and how to best focus efforts to meet this educational community's needs.

In the section regarding what people would like to see at future conferences, 64% indicated that they would like more hands-on activities, 28% said more speakers, 17% wanted grant writing workshops, and 15% wanted workshops for continuing education credit (most surveys had more than one category selected). Many of the respondents wrote that this year's conference had a good mix of sessions and activities and that their responses to this question indicated what they enjoyed the most.

Thanks to all who attended the conference and took the time to fill out and submit evaluations — and especially to

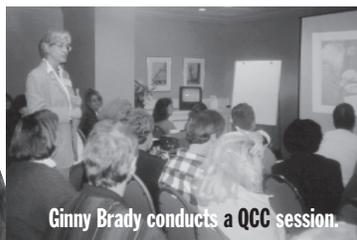
those who presented and brought materials to

share. Special recognition must also go to Dr. Becky Champion and Gay Carney at Oxbow Meadows Environmental Learning Center, who served as the hosts of the conference. Their hard

work and on-site coordination made the conference possible and wonderful. EEA board members are looking forward to the challenge of outdoing themselves at next year's conference. Every year the goal is to set the bar even higher. After Columbus, this will be no easy task.



Deron Davis is recognized by EEA president Peter Gordon for his contributions to environmental education.



Ginny Brady conducts a QCC session.



EEA Conference Banner signed by all.



Bert & Veronica entertain with songs and stories during the Awards Banquet.

# Standards for EE: Theory and Practice

by *Deron Davis, Environmental Education Services, Atlanta*

**National EE Standards:** In EE, we usually develop our programs and are judged by a variety of educational standards. The North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) provides two resources for meeting national standards in EE [*EE Materials: Guidelines for Excellence* and *Excellence in EE: Guidelines for Learning (K-12)*]. Available from NAAEE by visiting [www.naaee.org](http://www.naaee.org) <<http://www.naaee.org>>. Both of these should be a part of every environmental educator's tool kit.

**Georgia's State Education Standards:** The Quality Core Curriculum: The Quality Basic Education (QBE) Act of 1986 led to the establishment the Quality Core Curriculum (QCC). The QCC is a statewide basic curriculum that includes the competencies that all students must master before completing high school. The QCC provides the standards that public school teachers must follow, and therefore should be of interest to any environmental educator interested in serving Georgia public school audiences.

**The following courses of study are additionally required by QBE:**

- Federal, state, and local governments
- Georgia and U.S. history • Health education
- Character education • Physical education

Beyond these requirements, local school systems have latitude in developing courses needed to provide the basic curriculum and any enrichment courses that they may wish to provide with local funds. Environmental educators should note that EE is an appropriate vehicle to help teachers with some of the required courses of study listed above, as well as the more traditional disciplines of study.

The QCC is important to environmental educators in Georgia because it provides a common language between formal and non-formal educators. Although neither textbooks nor standardized tests are developed to meet the QCC, formal educators typically assess the relevance of learning opportunities on the basis of their correlation to the QCC.

EE programs demonstrating a relationship to the QCC are more likely to be used by formal educators.

## **Help Us Build an EE Clearinghouse**

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division, through a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grant, is developing a web site for teachers that will serve as a clearinghouse of QCC-correlated environmental education activities, opportunities, and resources. Please join the Environmental Protection Division, the Georgia Department of Education, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and the Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia in building this web site.

## **What You Can Do:**

Become familiar with Georgia's QCC (Visit [www.glc.k12.ga.us](http://www.glc.k12.ga.us) <<http://www.glc.k12.ga.us>>). Join other environmental educators by developing and submitting QCC-correlated lesson plans to the QCC web site (Georgia Learning Connections, or GLC).

## **Here's how:**

1. Go to [www.glc.k12.ga.us](http://www.glc.k12.ga.us) <<http://www.glc.k12.ga.us>>.
2. Click on Lesson Plan Builder icon (red oval at top of page)
3. Click on Enter LP Builder
4. Click on Invited to Join a Group?
5. Click in the Teacher circle to select, and enter epdteach in the group code. Click on Enter.
6. Enter your profile information. Fill in all blanks. Note your username and password. We have no way of getting this information to you if you forget it!
7. Click on Enter when you have completed your profile.
8. You may now use this information to enter the Lesson Plan Builder from now on.

Help us integrate EE in the formal classroom curriculum by developing and submitting QCC-correlated learning activities!

---

## Developing QCC-Relevant EE: Georgia's 4-H Program and Character Education

by *Diane Davies, University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service, Rock Eagle 4-H Center, Eatonton*

The statewide 4-H Environmental Education (EE) Program was begun in 1979 at Rock Eagle 4-H Center. This program has incorporated character education since its inception, and offers an example of how a QCC requirement may be met through non-formal EE programs.

The primary purpose of the 4-H EE Program is to use the outdoors as a living laboratory for academic study. Although the primary focus of the program is cognitive, affective learning also plays a part. To en-

hance opportunities for character education, the 4-H EE Program takes advantage of its residential status. In the 4-H program, children learn to live, learn, and work together. This aspect of the program emphasizes tolerance, fairness, and cooperation. The program pivots on respecting others so that concepts such as privacy, lifestyle choice and habits, and consideration for others are an integral part of the learning environment.

By using the experiential, interactive, and relationship-building qualities of envi-

ronmental education, environmental educators can contribute to character education and other required components of the formal curriculum. The 4-H EE Program is just one example of how environmental education can help teachers meet statewide QCC standards.

Learn about Georgia 4-H EE at [www.griffin.peachnet.edu/georgia/ga4h08/main/envired2.html](http://www.griffin.peachnet.edu/georgia/ga4h08/main/envired2.html) <<http://www.griffin.peachnet.edu>>

# Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia, Inc.

Elachee Nature Science Center • 2125 Elachee Drive • Gainesville, GA 30504

[www.eealliance.org](http://www.eealliance.org)

NON-PROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
BULK RATE  
PERMIT #217  
GAINESVILLE, GA 30501



EEA is a self-governed, non-profit organization that promotes communication and education among professionals in the field of environmental education in Georgia. EEA is an affiliate of the North American Association for Environmental Education.

**Time to renew your EEA membership?  
Check your mailing label for your membership expiration date.**



## EEA MEMBERSHIP FORM

*Become a Member Today!*

Fill out this form and mail it along with a check to Elachee Nature Science Center at the address above.

### MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:

**Quarterly Newsletter** – Provides educational resources, legislative updates, notice of workshops and events, grant opportunities, and much more.

**Annual Spring Conference and Fall Retreat** – Held at different sites throughout Georgia with guest speakers, workshops and field trips. A great opportunity to meet people and share.

**Sharing and Exchanging Exhibits** – The opportunity to find out and exchange exhibits from member organizations.

**The Georgia Environmental Education Teacher Resource Guide** – 132 pages of environmental education resources and learning opportunities in Georgia.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Category:  Individual \$15  
 Organizational\* \$50  
 Corporate\* \$100

\*Please Note: organizations and businesses can list up to five representatives to receive EEA mailings and information.

Please check the category of your affiliation so that we may serve you better:

- Community Outreach       Private and/or Non-profit  
 Government Agency       Business and Industry  
 Environmental Education Center  
 Formal Post Secondary Education  
 Formal Education, Pre-K through 6  
 Formal Education, 7 through 12

## Newsletter Committee

Vicki Seastrom, National Wildlife Federation & Barbara McDonald, U.S. Forest Service,  
*Managing Editors*

Kristen Smith, *Production Artist*

*The Link* is published four times annually. EEA member contributions are encouraged. Deadlines for articles and news of interest are:

Issue	Deadline
Winter .....	December 1
Spring .....	March 15
Summer .....	June 15
Fall .....	September 15

E-mail articles to: Vicki Seastrom, [seastrom@nwf.org](mailto:seastrom@nwf.org), (404) 876-2602, ext. 223 or to Barbara McDonald, [barmac@bigfoot.com](mailto:barmac@bigfoot.com), (706) 559-4224.

## 2001 EEA Officers

Per Article Five of the Bylaws of the Environmental Education Alliance, Inc., adopted November 12, 1992: (5.1) the executive officers of the corporation shall consist of a president, one or more vice-presidents, a secretary and a treasurer; (5.2) officers shall be elected for one-year terms at the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors, and serve until the next Annual Meeting or until their successors have been elected and qualified.

**Peter Gordon** (*President*)  
Elachee Nature Center, Gainesville  
E-mail: [peter@elachee.org](mailto:peter@elachee.org)

**Petey Giroux** (*Vice-President*)  
Project WET  
EPD-Water Protection Branch, Atlanta  
E-mail: [petey\\_giroux@mail.dnr.state.ga.us](mailto:petey_giroux@mail.dnr.state.ga.us)

**Heather Merbs** (*Secretary*)  
Oatland Island Education Center, Savannah  
E-mail: [hmerbs@aol.com](mailto:hmerbs@aol.com)

**Monica Kilpatrick** (*Treasurer*)  
Project WET  
EPD-Water Protection Branch, Atlanta  
E-mail: [monica\\_kilpatrick@mail.dnr.state.ga.us](mailto:monica_kilpatrick@mail.dnr.state.ga.us)