

Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia, Inc.
The University of Georgia
C/O Richard Osorio
Environmental Health Science
Athens, GA 30602-2102
www.eealliance.org

For information about the LINK or to comment on articles and features,
please contact Paul McClendon at paulmcclendon2@cs.com



Volume 12, Number 4

The Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia

Fall 2003

EEA Membership Form

Is it time to renew your membership?

Fill out this form and mail it along with a check to Richard Osorio, The University of Georgia, Environmental Health Science, Athens, GA 30602-2102

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.

EEA Memmbers:

Nominate individuals to serve as directors and officers and help the Nominations Committee accomplish its mission -- to promote cultural, geographical and organizational diversity in EEAs leadership. The terms are three years for directors, two years for vice president and treasurer, and one year for president, president elect, and secretary. For more information or to submit nominations (please include resumes), contact Nomination Committee Chairs Vicki Seastrom (seastrom@nwf.org)

and

Walter Lane (walter_lane@dnr.state.ga.us)

or by mail to Vicki Seastrom, National Wildlife Federation,
1330 W Peachtree St #475, Atlanta, GA
30309. Nomination deadline: November 20, 2003.

Mark Your Calendar!

The 2004 EEA conference will be at the Retreat at Lake Blackshear, Georgia Veterans State Park in Cordele, Georgia March 12-14th, 2004.

The theme this year is Environmental Education: Promoting Excellence Through Teaching, Research and Service. Please check www.eealliance.org for more information.

EEA Board Members

Kim Bailey : Georgia EPD —EinGeorgia
Sarah Bexell : Zoo Atlanta
Laura Bryant : Mill Creek Nature Center
Ann Campbell
Becky Champion : Oxbow Meadows Env. Learning Ctr.
Meredith Devendorf : Melon Bluff Nature Center
John DiDiego : Blue Ridge Outdoor Education Center
Kitty Esco : GA DNR
Karen Garland : The Georgia Conservancy
Petey Giroux - President : EPD- Water Protection Branch
Heather Merbs —Vice President : Oatland Island Education Center
Kim Morris-Zarneke : EPD - Water Protection Branch
Richard Osorio —President Elect : The University of Georgia
Ginger Perdue : Long County Extension
Carla Rapp : Georgia Forestry Association
Cindy Reittinger : GA DNR
Deborah Riddleberger - Treasurer :
Oconee River GYSTC at Northeast Georgia RESA
Dodie Sanders : The University of Georgia
Vicki Seastrom : National Wildlife Federation
Kristi Hastie : Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper
Christi Heidt : Environmental Education Center
Terrie Kielborn : South Paulding Middle School
Walter Lane : GA DNR Charlie Elliott Wildlife Ctr.
Eric Lindberg - Secretary : Rome-Floyd Planning Dept.
Jennifer McCabe
Paul McClendon
Lynn McCoy : SW Georgia RESA
Barbara McDonald : USDA Forest Service
Jof Mehaffey : Columbus State University
Anne Shenk : State Botanical Garden of Georgia
Theodosia Wade : Oxford College of Emory University
Lyndall Warren : Georgia College & State University
Jane Whaley : Piedmont & Bond Swamp National Wildlife Refuges

Environmental Education and Geography: Science and Social Studies Join Hands

By Lynn McCoy, Southwest Georgia RESA



Lynn McCoy is the Social Studies Consultant for Southwest Georgia RESA. See page 2 for the LINK's exclusive interview.

Humans are prone to categorize information in an effort to construct understanding of the world around them, sometimes resulting in a failure to see patterns and connections. Such is often the case with science and social studies. The term environmental education conjures visions of scientists getting down and dirty to unlock the secrets of Mother Earth's ecosystems and their incredible array of plants and animals. Similarly, the term geography conjures visions of geographers raversing the globe, map and compass in hand, seeking to discover unknown frontiers in the global environment we know as planet Earth. Certainly, in our schools, science class and social studies class bring to mind distinctly different scenarios.

A deeper look into the philosophy of environmental education reveals a broader, richer concept that goes beyond the confines of science alone. Environmental education is education in, about, and for the natural environment. This definition tells us where the learning takes place, the topic to be taught, and the purpose of the activity. It refers to the total environment and is all-encompassing, including population growth, pollution, resource use and misuse, urban and rural planning, and modern technology's demands upon natural resources. It may come as a surprise that implicit in this description we find plenty of geography, as well as connections to civics, economics and sociology. Separating the science from the social studies becomes difficult at this point.

A closer look at the dimensions of geography also reveals multiple facets, in this case crossing over into science. Literally, the Greek derivation of geography is geo, which means Earth, and graphia, meaning description. The National Geographic Standards (1994) states that geography studies the relationships between people, places and environments by mapping information about them into a spatial context. Clearly, the natural sciences are inextricably woven into this web as the subject matter to which geography's skills and perspectives are applied. Geography's goal is to understand the physical and cultural features of places and their natural settings on Earth. Further, a geographically literate person knows and understands our world in spatial terms, and has a grasp of places and regions, physical and human systems, environment-society interaction and the uses of geography. Again, boundaries between what is science and what is social studies fade and blur.

The theme for this edition of The Link, newsletter of Georgia's Environmental Education Alliance, is Habitats: Home Sweet Home. Science teachers across the state will guide students exploration of an amazing variety of habitats, such as deserts, bogs, marshes, tundra, forests, swamps, lakes, rivers, prairies, oceans, and even cities and suburbs. Students will examine the biodiversity of plant and animal life as they seek to understand the interdependence of each component and the resulting uniqueness of each habitat. Across the hall, social studies teachers will be teaching the very same content and concepts as they address Habitats: Home Sweet Home, the theme for this year's Geography Awareness Week in Georgia, scheduled for November 16-22, 2003. It is likely that they will take it a step further, linking the pressing issue of habitat degradation to the need for responsible civic action. Surely they will instill in their students a personal commitment to stewardship of our natural resources in search of sustainability that will ensure access for future generations. Discussion may even branch into the economic impact of environmental responsibility and irresponsibility. The tough social issues of changing long standing behaviors in a society may also enter the discussion. But, across the hall, science teachers will probably be doing the same.

So the question is asked, Is the study of habitats science, or is it social studies? Obviously, it is both. The disciplines are so intertwined as to make separation analogous to splitting hairs, a task hardly worth the effort. The glib answer would be, Who cares? Just reach across the hall, join hands, and enjoy the richness of teaching it together!