



Volume 12, Number 1

The Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia

Winter 2003

EEA's Annual Conference

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION: CONNECTING COMMUNITIES AND CLASSROOMS

Leaders across our state are strengthening their communities by taking on the challenges of a healthy environment. They rally for green space, organize cleanups, protect their watershed and use their influence to affect change. Other leaders are addressing the challenges of student achievement. They work in Georgia classrooms and non-formal education

centers to balance the demands of real life learning with high stakes testing. They use their influence to affect change by helping shape the minds of our next generation. Georgia's community leaders, non-formal educators and classroom teachers will gather **March 21-23, 2003 at The Coastal Georgia Center in the historic and beautiful city of Savannah** for the Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia (EEA) Conference to share ideas, programs, lessons, and resources.

EEA will offer full-day workshops, concurrent sessions, thematic panel discussions, exhibits, sharing sessions and fieldtrips. Session details, event schedules, and a registration form are included

with this newsletter. **To qualify for our early bird rates, your registration must be postmarked by February 28!**

Onsite registration and check-in begins at 8:00 a.m. on Friday, March 21. For those arriving on Thursday, March 20, check in is from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and from 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday registration will begin at 8:30 a.m.

This year we have a variety of pre-conference activities. The University of Georgia's Project for Excellence in Environmental Education offers the "Fostering Learning" course Tuesday - Thursday, March 18-20, 2003 at the Mary Kahrs

Warnell Forest Education Center in Guyton (just outside of Savannah). Registration and additional information about the course—one of six required to become a certified environmental educator in Georgia—is available at EEinGEORGIA.org. You can also contact Richard E. Osorio at 706-542-8905 or rosorio@uga.edu for more information.

Why not break up your Interstate travels to Savannah with a stop at the Georgia Southern University Center for Wildlife Education just 10 miles off I-16 in Statesboro? Visitors who arrive on Thursday, March 20 between 3:00-5:00 p.m. will be treated to a behind the scenes tour of this fascinating raptor and reptile center. Call 912-681-0831 or visit www.bio.gasou.edu/wildlife/ for more information.

We also invite the Thursday arrivals to join the EEA Conference Hospitality Committee for dinner and live Irish music at Kevin Barry's on River Street and an evening stroll around Savannah's charming historic district. Don't be surprised to hear a few ghost stories along the way!

Look inside to find the MANY great sessions, special events, and field trips from which to choose Friday through Sunday of the Conference. See you at the Coastal Georgia Center, 305 Fahm Street, in Savannah!



Students measuring the changes taking place in a salt marsh ecosystem.



The University of Georgia

Georgia EE Providers: Region 4



Editors' Note: With the publication of The Georgia Environmental Education Teacher Resource Guide, EEA and The Link continue to share with our members and readers a sampling of EE providers from various regions across Georgia. In this issue we highlight several EE providers in the location of EEA's 2003 Conference: Region 4.

Beauty, history, ocean breezes, good food . . . and much, more. To add to the richness of Region 4, there are numerous environmental facilities and programs for you to visit and learn about. What better place to have an Environmental Education Conference!

Follow the old Coastal Highway 17 to the **Bamboo Farm and Coastal Gardens**. As a research facility for the University of Georgia and an educational resource, visitors can see a variety of trees, shrubs, and bamboos as well as native, regionally adapted plants. This facility has butterfly and display gardens, bamboo collection, rare and unique plants, palm collection and many other projects. For more information visit www.ces.uga.edu/agriculture/horticulture/coastalgarden/coastalgarden.htm

The Center for Wildlife Education consists of five beautiful acres in the heart of Georgia Southern University in Statesboro and is the setting for The Lamar Q Ball, Jr. Raptor Center. Enjoy a self-guided nature walk through six habitat displays, housing eleven species of live birds of prey. These habitats, including a wetlands area, an old-growth forest, and a mountain display, provide an opportunity to view our native raptors in their natural environments. An elevated walkway allows visitors an up-close encounter with a Bald Eagle nest, complete with live Eagle! The facility includes the Children's Discovery Trail with 17 exploratory stations and a "Fly in and Perch" full size eagle's nest. Visit www.bio.gasou.edu/wildlife/

Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary is one of the largest near shore live-bottom reefs of the southeastern United States. The sanctuary is located 32 kilometers off Sapelo Island and encompasses 58 square kilometers of live-bottom habitat. Although this site might be a little tough to get to, the management office housing the research and education coordinators is lo-

cated on Skidaway Island. For more information, www.graysreef.nos.noaa.gov

Just across the street on the same island is the **University of Georgia Marine Education Center and Aquarium (MECA)**. This site offers field, laboratory, and classroom educational programs in ecology and marine science with an emphasis on hands-on learning. Facilities include field sites, well-equipped learning classrooms, touch tanks, nature trails, docks, outboard motor boats, and the Sea Dawg, a 43 foot trawler, dormitories, and a full-service cafeteria. The facility is located on Skidaway Island adjacent to the Skidaway River and includes salt marshes and a maritime forest. Visit www.uga.edu/aquarium or email mared@uga.edu

While you are still on the island, make a day of it and visit the **Skidaway Island State Park**. Encompassing 520 scenic areas, this park includes hiking trails, campsites, wildlife observations towers and a swimming pool. You might even consider camping here instead of staying in a hotel.

Located on 1,900 acres of managed, working forestland in Effingham County is the **Mary Kahrs Warnell Forest Education Center**. The mission of the center is to provide education and demonstrate responsible forest management, convey the need for and benefits of sustainable forest management, and interpret the natural patterns and processes of forest ecosystems. Facilities include an indoor classroom with state-of-the-art audio and visual equipment; an outdoor deck; an exhibit area with interactive displays and 1.5 miles of interpretive hiking trails. Contact Gail Lutowski, glutowski@smokey.forestry.uga.edu, for more information.

Fifteen minutes from the EEA conference site is the **Oatland Island Education Center**. It is located on a marsh island just east of Savannah and operated by the Savannah Chatham County Public Schools. Located along a 1.75 mile trail, more than 50 indigenous Georgia animals, many of which are endangered or threatened species, live in large, natural enclosures and are used in educational programming. View bison, panthers,

wolves, alligators, bears, and diverse raptors. For more information, visit www.oatlandisland.org

Savannah Coastal Refuges is a complex of seven national wildlife refuges (NWR's) spanning a 100-mile stretch of coastline from Hilton Head Island, South Carolina to Darien, Georgia. Five of these, Pinckney Island, Savannah, Wassaw, Harris Neck and Blackbeard Island NWR's are open to the public seven days a week for wildlife observation and photography, environmental education and interpretation, fishing, and hunting. Savannah and Harris Neck NWR's both have a u t o - t o u r routes providing easy access to many exceptional wildlife viewing areas. For more information, call 912-652-4415.

Tybee Island 4-H Center is located on a 6 acre hammock on Tybee, the northern most Georgia barrier island. Georgia 4-H is an organization for youth sponsored by the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service. The center on Tybee is one of five state facilities. Tybee's programs are interdisciplinary with an emphasis on science and social studies, are aligned with Georgia's Quality Core Curriculum, and include activities such as seining, beach ecology, and marsh explorations. For information, call 912-786-5534.

While still on Tybee, check out the **Tybee Island Marine Science Center (TIMSC)** located on the beach. The center houses small aquariums containing organisms indigenous to the coast of Georgia. Visitors can get "up close and personal" with some local creatures such as hermit and horseshoe crabs, sea snails and sea stars. In addition, there are various hands-on exhibits to explore including shells, sea turtles, sharks, marine mammals, a salt marsh replica and a discovery room with microscopes.



Linda Hoody: Connecting Communities and Classrooms across America

Get ready to embrace a sound approach to effective teaching that is making its way across the country and is right at home here in Georgia!

Linda Hoody's inspirational stories of students, teachers, administrators, nonformal educators, and community leaders will turn you on to this dynamic school improvement model. She will leave you energized with a renewed commitment to environmental education and new tools that are documented successes. **Linda Hoody** will speak at **noon on Sunday, March 23.**

As the Program Evaluation Coordinator for the State Education and Environment Roundtable (SEER), Ms. Hoody co-authored *Closing the Achievement Gap: Using the Environment as an Integrating Context for Learning* (EIC). This



ground-breaking national study documents EIC's significant positive effects on academic achievement, classroom behavior and instructional practices.

She has been in the field of education for 28 years, holds a lifetime California teaching credential (kindergarten through adult), has taught at elementary through university levels, and designed and directed staff development for school and outdoor education programs. In her personal life, Ms. Hoody raises two great kids, studies yoga and explores the beautiful natural areas of the wild west.

Linda Hoody's a hoot! Don't leave the conference without a full stomach and a full spirit. Come join us for the closing ceremony and rededicate yourself to connecting communities and classrooms.

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1:00 – 1:45 pm **Presentation: Resources for Environmental Education**, Kim Bailey, DNR/EPD, EEinGEORGIA. Take an interactive tour of the new and improved EEinGEORGIA.org, Georgia's online clearinghouse for EE resources. Explore teaching materials, field studies, workshops, ready-to-go lesson plans, and more!

SUNDAY, March 23

8:15 – 9:00 am **Presentation: Spirit and Environment: A Case Study of Environmental Spirituality**, Barbara McDonald, US Forest Service. What is the relationship between spirituality, spiritual practice, and environmental action? This session will present the results of a qualitative study of the spirituality of committed environmental activist, with an emphasis on how the vital force is experienced and interpreted.

10:00 – 12:00 pm **Hands-On: Where does your garbage go?** Suki Janssen, Keep Georgia Beautiful. Participants in this session will experience hands-on lessons taken from Waste in Place, an interdisciplinary K-6 curriculum from Keep America Beautiful that promotes proper waste handling practices in children (curriculum is correlated to QCC's). Participants will receive classroom materials.

10:00 – 12:00 pm **Hands-On: Camp Professionals Round Table**, Amy Bram and Kelly O'Keefe, Chattahoochee Nature Center. Come share ideas and network with other camp professionals who share the challenges of planning and running a nature camp. Topics will include (but not limited to) activities, logistics, staffing, and recruitment.

10:00 – 10:45 am **Panel Discussion: CONNECTING COMMUNITIES & CLASSROOMS—Using the Environment as an Integrating Context for Learning (EIC)** Moderated by Deron Davis, DNR/EPD Georgia EIC and Georgia Project WET. Meet Marilyn McLean, a 4th grade teacher at Armuchee Elementary in Floyd County, Ulrica Corbett, the principal at Stewart-Quitman High in Stewart County and Peter Gordon, the community partner for Gainesville Middle School and Director of Education at Elachee Nature Science Center in Hall County. They will offer their perspectives on how The EIC Model™, a Georgia Department of Education initiative, has impacted students and teachers in its first year.

10:00 – 10:45 am **Presentation: A Community Perspective on Environmental Justice**, Dr. Fatemeh Shafiei, Spelman College. Participants will engage in a case study where community activists confronted pollution and public health issues.

10:00 – 10:45 am **Presentation: Wet, Wild and Wonderful: Connecting Communities and Classrooms**, Al Tate, Fernbank Science Center and Stephanie May, Stephenson High School. A junior class is working with Fernbank Science Center, DeKalb County Parks and Recreation Department and the Hidden Acres Alliance to develop Hidden Acres Park into a wetland education center while the class learns about wetland ecosystems.

10:00 – 10:45 am **Presentation: Project H2O: Connecting Middle and High School Students with their Watershed**, Jason Weinberger and Allison Ericson, Chattahoochee Nature Center. The Chattahoochee Nature Center uses Project H2O as a three-part water-quality exploration focused on the stewardship of our water resources. Participants will explore this program and its highlighted activities, which can be adapted to individual schools and watersheds.

10:00 – 10:45 am **Presentation: An Aquarium Like No Other: The Bernie Marcus Story**, Jeff Swanagan, Georgia Aquarium, Inc. The Georgia Aquarium is a \$200 million gift to Georgia by Bernie Marcus, co-founder of The Home Depot. The presentation will answer questions about the scope of the project, scheduled to open in 2005.

11:00 am – 12:00 pm **Sharing Sessions: 10-Minute Ideas** Five 10-Minute speakers, examples include:

• **Access Nature**, Jake Scott, National Wildlife Federation • **The Interactive Environmental Classroom: Taking the New American Schoolyard to the Web**, Ann English and Dr. Carl Schmidt, Barnett Shoals Elementary

12:00 – 1:30 pm **Closing Luncheon** with **Keynote speaker, Linda Hoody**. See above for details.

If you have received duplicate copies of this document, please pass this on to someone who might be interested in the EEA Conference. Thank you!



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.



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Third Annual EEA Awards Ceremony

EEA invites you to join us for a casual get-together at **6:30 p.m. on Saturday evening at a Cash Bar Social**, even if you aren't planning to stay for the awards banquet. Take this opportunity to network, meet new colleagues and entertain fellow Buzzard Hikers with your adventures in Savannah! As an added bonus there will be a silent auction to benefit environmental education in Georgia. Please support a good cause by donating an item to be auctioned.

After the social please join us **at 7:30 p.m.** for the **Third Annual EEA Awards Dinner**. Through this special event, members of EEA and its conference partner organizations, including Georgia Adopt-A-Stream, Georgia Project Learning Tree, Georgia Project WET, Georgia Wildlife Federation, and National Wildlife Federation will honor outstanding environmental educators and volunteers who through dedication, leadership, and ingenuity have made significant and lasting contributions in the field of environmental education.

Following in the tradition of previous banquets, the evening will be topped off with energetic entertainment. This year the banquet will feature the dynamic duo of **Laughing Matters**.



As in the television show *Whose Line is it Anyway?*, the improvisational comedy troupe, Nancy Meyer and Tommy Futch, will use audience suggestions, ideas, and maybe even an audience member or two to create scenes, stories, and musicals on the spot. Bring your thinking caps and prepare to challenge these fearless participants in theatre without a net. This evening is guaranteed

to leave you feeling inspired, energized, and entertained! After all—it's environmental improv!

EEA Conference 2003

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

E-mail articles to: Paul McClendon,
p.mcclendon@chattnaturecenter.com 770-992-2055, Ext. 113

TYBEE ISLAND BEACH PARTY

Join us on the beach for a traditional low country boil (and vegetarian fare) at the beautiful Tybee Island Pavilion and Pier! There will be a cash bar beginning at 6 p.m. with dinner starting at 7pm. Visit the Tybee Island Marine Science Center, stroll on the beach, listen to live music and gaze at the stars at this great networking opportunity sponsored by the Georgia Forestry Association. See the conference registration form for more details.

