



Exploring the Richness of EE: Your Practice, Profession, and Partnerships

5th Annual Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance Conference and Research Symposium

March 3-5, 2017 • Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center, Buford

Registration is now open for the 5th Annual Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance (SEEA) Conference and Research Symposium! EEA is very excited to be hosting environmental educators from across the southeast region this year in conjunction with our annual conference. We have added several exciting components to our event and invite you to join us in celebrating 25 years of our professional association in Georgia.

Conference highlights:

- Regional Research Symposium
- Keynote Speaker - Christopher Uhl, professor of Biology at Penn State
- Robust program featuring speakers from throughout the southeast and sessions on board governance, residential farm schools, natural communities and ecoregions, 3-D science, geology of the southeast, and much more. [Download the program](#)
- Friday evening networking social (Beer, Pizza, and Game Night)
- Affiliate sharing session
- Live auction, book signing, and photo booth during Saturday evening's *Sip & Stroll*
- 5K Fun Run
- Sunday Family Fun Day
- EEA Store and Exhibits, Buzzard Hike, and silent auction

Full registration includes access to all sessions and events Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, all meals and evening socials, one free guest to attend the Sunday Family Fun Day, and a discounted rate to participate in the Buzzard Run 5K Fun Run (with t-shirt!) on Sunday. Wow! The cost is \$175 for EEA members and \$200 for non-members (includes a one year EEA membership). For information and cost details for Friday or Saturday only registration, Sunday Family Fun Day registration, and special event tickets (evening socials, awards luncheon, and 5K fun run), visit the [conference webpage](#).

Register today to take part in this exciting opportunity to network with environmental educators from across the southeast and renew your practice. As an important member of Georgia's environmental education community, we would love to see you at the conference!

Register for the 2017 SEEA Conference at

www.ealliance.org/annual-conference.

Read more about the conference on pages 2 and 3.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

2017 SEEA Conference Highlights	2
Interpreting on a Shoestring Budget	4
Every Student Succeeds Act Update	6
Grants & Awards	6
"Restoring Peace"	7
Member Spotlight: Berkeley Boone	9
ATEEG Courses	10
2016 OLS Reflection	11
Cornerstones: Monica Kilpatrick	13
NaturePlay Film Screening	14
EEA Board of Directors Nominations	14
EEA's 25th Anniversary	15



SEEA Conference... Continued from cover

THE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ALLIANCE OF GEORGIA PRESENTS:

Exploring the Richness of EE: Your Practice, Profession, and Partnerships

at the

5TH ANNUAL SOUTHEASTERN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ALLIANCE CONFERENCE AND
RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

March 3-5, 2017 • Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center, Buford

Register today!

www.eealliance.org



This year's conference will feature speakers from throughout the southeast and sessions on board governance, residential farm schools, natural communities and ecoregions, 3-D science, geology of the southeast, and much more.



Speakers at a Glance:

EXPERIENCING NATURAL COMMUNITIES AND ECOREGIONS

Leslie Edwards, Independent Author/Ecologist & Cindy Reittinger, Fernbank Science Center (GA speakers)

Learn about natural communities, from forests to outcrops, and ecoregions from the Coastal Plain to the Cumberland Plateau, and how a partnership enables teachers to travel among them, enriching their understanding of the habitats of the southeastern United States.

DELIVERING ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION TO COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

Darryl Haddock, West Atlanta Watershed Alliance (WAWA) (GA speaker)

WAWA programs focus on youth leadership and community development. We are intentionally targeting intergenerational audiences in place-based K-Grey EE and service learning. We will summarize recent programs and efforts to build environmental literacy and community capacity through environmental action projects.



GEOLOGY FOR EVERYONE TRACK

Bill Witherspoon, geogiarocks.us &
Don Byerly, University of Tennessee (GA & TN speakers)

Authors of geology guides for the public take you to favorite destinations that illuminate Earth's history: Session 1 - Valley and Ridge, Plateau, Interior; Session 2 - Piedmont and Blue Ridge; Session 3 - Coastal Plain.

STORYTELLING: IMAGINE, CONNECT & INSPIRE!

Renee Raney, Georgia-Alabama Land Trust CE Institute (AL speaker)

Storytelling is a powerful educational technique that allows the teller to teach by guiding the listener's experience. It is an intimate connection between interpreter and audience that inspires imagination, creativity, and learning. In this session, participants will listen, tell, and experience several storytelling techniques that can be utilized to enhance curriculum in classrooms and interpretive programs.



CHAT WITH CHARLIE

Charlie Seabrook, Author (GA speaker)

Join our good friend and author Charles Seabrook for a conversation on his approach to writing about science, nature, and conservation.

LICHENS COLOR OUR WORLD

Malcolm Hodges, The Nature Conservancy (GA speaker)

Lichens are an underappreciated but fascinating slice of our native biodiversity. This talk will lead to a better understanding of what lichens are, the breadth of lichen diversity, where they live, how they survive, and the roles they play in nature.



Continued on page 3

SEEA Conference... Continued from page 2

The 2017 SEEA Conference features a diverse program of hands-on sessions, inspiring outdoor activities, and countless opportunities to network with fellow educators from across the southeast. [Registration is now open.](#)

Conference Highlights:

ROBUST PROGRAM OF DIVERSE SPEAKERS, WORKSHOPS, AND FIELD TRIPS

This year's conference will feature speakers from throughout the southeast and sessions on board governance, residential farm schools, natural communities and ecoregions, 3-D science, geology of the southeast, and much more. Activities and sessions are categorized into three strands: 1) Practice - Considering Your Educator Identity, 2) Profession - Defining Environmental Education, and 3) Partnerships - Developing Engagement, Capacity, and Community.

[Download the program.](#)

2ND REGIONAL EE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

Friday, March 3, 2017, 9:30am, 1:00pm (Poster Session), 2:10pm

First implemented in 2014, when North Carolina hosted the regional conference, the research symposium is intended to facilitate communication through face-to-face discussion about best practices for environmental education, provide researchers with a forum to share their work and ideas with peers, create networking and partnership opportunities for participants, as well as expand knowledge and skills about research methodology.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER - CHRISTOPHER UHL

Christopher Uhl, author of [Developing Ecological Consciousness: The End of Separation and Teaching As If Life Matters: The Promise of a New Education Culture](#), is a professor of Biology at Penn State. In his own words, Uhl explains his philosophy of teaching: "... teaching grows out of my experiences as a learner. Looking back over my learning history, I note that often my true "classrooms" and best "teachers" have shown up in daily life, not in formal education settings... Learning for me has been synonymous with living, a realization congruent with John Dewey's view that humans learn best by doing!" Chris will also be participating in our Author Corner on Saturday night, signing books and talking to participants about his work and transformative education.

SEEA AND NAAEE UPDATES

Friday, March 3, 4:40pm

We are also fortunate to have attending this year SEEA Executive Director, Ashley Hoffman, and North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) Director of Policy and Affiliate Relations, Sarah Bodor. They will be speaking about the regional and national agenda as well as giving an update on the status of regional projects and the collective impact of our efforts.

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY EVENING SOCIALS

Not able to attend the conference? Please join us for an evening of fun and networking at the Friday or Saturday night socials! Enjoy drinks, pizza, an ice cream bar, and games at our Friday night social. During the Saturday evening *Sip*



and Stroll, we will be serving heavy hors d'oeuvres alongside a silent auction, book signing, and photo booth, and attendees are welcome to explore the exhibits at the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center. The cost is \$30 per social. Purchase special event only tickets [here](#).

SUNDAY FAMILY FUN DAY

Bring your family and friends on Sunday to enjoy environmentally themed, hands-on, all-ages activities. Learn the power of play, build a nest box, take an incredible water journey, make giant bubbles, laugh while doing yoga, and so much more! Our annual Buzzard Hike and 5K Fun Run will also take place on Sunday.

How on Earth are we supposed to do that?

INTERPRETING ON A SHOESTRING BUDGET

by Hannah Penn, Stone Mountain Memorial Association
and Jackie Sherry, Dunwoody Nature Center, ATEEG Committee Chair

SIGNING ON TO THE INTERPRETER'S CAREER PATH is rewarding yet challenging. We are all too familiar with the challenges of working in remote locations, working with a small staff, dealing with the public's misconceptions, and managing programs on a small budget. We are often tasked with creating revenue generating programs for our site on a limited or nonexistent budget...how on earth are we supposed to do that? While this sounds like a daunting task, we have compiled some essential tricks and tips that every interpreter should keep in mind while creating programs.

Have a solid interpretive plan: Interpretive and management staff should work to align programming with the organization's mission and vision. If your interpretive plan is in need of a change, take a staff field trip to other sites with a similar type of interpretation to do some research. First, visit a place that works with a comparable funding source and budget. You can compare interpretive plans and programs that have and haven't worked for your respective sites. Second, visit places that work with a larger budget than yours. They might not provide practical ideas on programming and exhibits, but it is possible they have been in your position before and can offer some good advice of how to build your program moving forward.

Capture new audiences: An important part of your interpretive planning is not only knowing your audience but also understanding how to reach them through advertising. The two main types of audiences can be described as either a "preaching to the choir" audience or a "general/broad" audience. The first group is easier to reach based on their current knowledge of your programming and desire to stay up to date. The second group is a bit more challenging. Consider focusing your programming in a way that will cater to them. Chances are, they are unaware of how the programs at your site meet their interests or needs. There are many outlets to reach these audiences, including advertising through social media, distributing

flyers around town, submitting press releases, updating online community calendars, sending regular email newsletters, and advertising with partner organizations. These methods of communication aren't expensive and are essential to getting your message across.

Have a theme to connect all aspects of interpretation: This tool should be used through every type of interpretation including guided tours, nature hikes, birthday parties, trail signage, and larger events. Help visitors connect the dots by asking questions such as: What is the story that your site can tell? Why is it worth telling? A great theme can exist on both a small and large scale in relation to the site you are interpreting.

It's also important to keep your theme in mind as you are interpreting with passive visitors. Self-guided interpretation with superb signage allows you to educate visitors who aren't attending one of your programs. When we interpret through signage, the theme of the information should be obvious within the first few phrases, since the majority of visitors will only read a small portion of the text provided. Thematic connectivity doesn't have to stop with the text on your signs. Take an extra step and use the colors from graphics on the sign or surrounding scenery to provide a visual connection. This will make an attractive display that your visitors can continue to recognize during their visit.

Continued on page 5



Marshmallow Roast - A hike ending with a marshmallow roast creates a more personal touch on an already great program.

Shoestring Budget... Continued from page 4

When adapting or creating signs, keep in mind how the use of technology is changing the way our visitors experience interpretation. Adapting signs to include QR codes will allow visitors to scan the code with their phones to receive additional information about the topic. This type of technology encourages visitors to further explore and search for more informational signs. It works well with a limited budget, and is a great project for service groups, interns, or scouts.

Know your resources: Defining resources as an interpreter ranges from knowing the history and significance of your site to the materials and funding sources of your programming. Knowing the ins and outs of your site's history will allow you to answer questions like: Why was your site first protected or preserved? Who were the initial leaders in establishing your site?

What changes has your site or interpretive plan been through? Other than historical information, be able to answer questions about programming, including available materials or supplies, programs that have and haven't worked, ways your programs are funded, and your partner organizations.

Once you have defined the available resources, creating programs on a limited budget or with minimal materials will come easily. For example, station based classes with sand/water tables, simple crafts, scavenger hunts, stories, and hikes make for a great morning out for families with young children. Crafts

using recycled and natural materials are cost-effective and environmentally friendly. They are not only easy to produce, but often are some of the most popular programs with visitors.

Demonstrate personal interest in your topic: Most of us have attended a program where the guide was a wealth of knowledge, but it sounded like they might be reading from a book. First, knowing your topic is key. Visitors will likely ask questions, and you want to answer them with the most accurate information. While it's nearly impossible to know everything, we should be ready to say "I'm not sure, but I will research that more." The next challenge is to nurture visitors' interest in the subject by helping them see the vital, significant, or even interesting parts of the story. Your excitement level helps guests answer all of the "so what?" questions they come into the program with. While

we can't change everyone's opinion of the importance of the resources we manage, the history or culture we interpret, or the fees they pay to visit a site, we can help them see that the staff believes in the site's purpose and finds great importance in what they do. By inspiring our visitors, they encourage others to visit and possibly become that new long-term volunteer we all need.

Let your personal interest motivate your growth as an interpreter through networking and professional development. Attending workshops, webinars, conferences, and trainings are all excellent opportunities to connect with fellow interpreters and begin relationships for collaborative programming. Collaboration with other organizations helps open restrictions on resources, staff, space requirements, knowledge of a subject, and a small budget. Your organizations can partner on teaching classes, hosting workshops, planning events, and advertising programs.

Finally, preserving your personal interest is essential. It's important to schedule personal reflection time in addition to the professional development and networking. Make sure to schedule specific, recurring times (every Monday afternoon, for example) to research and explore your resource. Don't let other duties intrude on this time.

Even though a small budget for programming can be daunting at times, successful interpreters come with a "tricks up our sleeves" kind of attitude. We accept jobs working for organizations with a small programming budget because we

are passionate about sharing knowledge with the public, and we know the story is worth telling. The ideas shared above are meant to help inspire your inner creative ability to adapt a program or create one that will be the new crowd favorite. So take a breath, maybe two, and start to organize your interpretive plan. Let it help you decide what the next big thing is going to be at your site, and how it will help your visitors see the "so what?" Remember, you can accomplish that with any size budget.

Learn more about this topic at the [2017 SEEA Conference!](#) Hannah and Jackie will be presenting "Programming on a Shoestring Budget" Saturday afternoon of the conference. The conference takes place March 3-5, 2017 at the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center in Buford. Read more about the event on the cover and on pages 2 and 3.



Utilize minimal materials with programs that are reusable or recycled to help with a small budget.

Legislative Update: Every Student Succeeds Act and Good News for EE

In October 2016, the U.S. Department of Education issued non-regulatory guidance to the states on the eligible uses of funding under Title IV, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act. This guidance will be relied on heavily by states and school districts as they seek to understand and plan for the use of these new grant funds. The good news for EE is that the guidance:

- explicitly addresses EE programs as an allowable activity,
- includes Project Learning Tree as an example of the kind of program that may be funded under Title IV, Part A, and
- references NAAEE's Guidelines for Excellence in K-12 Learning, UL's E-STEM awards program, and U.S. Green Ribbon Schools.

As a result, the guidance offers a powerful tool for communicating with school district leaders about how environmental education programs can support school districts in their efforts to provide students with a well-rounded education. The full guidance document can be found on the [U.S. Department of Education website](#). A summary of the relevant text on EE can be found [here](#).

Grants & Awards

2017 EEA AWARDS

Nominations for the 2017 EEA Awards are now being accepted! These awards are given annually to individuals, non-governmental and governmental organizations, institutions and agencies, and for-profit and not-for-profit entities that have made significant contributions to the cause of EE or to EE research. The award categories are: Dr. Eugene Odum Lifetime Achievement Award, Outstanding Service to Environmental Education by an Individual, Outstanding Service to Environmental Education by an Organization, and PK-16 Formal Educator of the Year Award. To submit a nomination, go to the [State EE Awards website](#).

Submissions are due by January 22, 2017.



The 2016 Outstanding Service to EE by an Organization Award was given to the Richmond Hill Schools Field Studies Programs.

PETEY GIROUX DRAGONFLY GRANTS FOR EE AND THE ARTS

EEA is pleased to offer mini-grants to current EEA members for up to \$1,000 for environmental education/performing and visual arts projects in honor of environmental educator, Petey Giroux (1945-2008). In presenting these grants, we honor Petey's life of service and her legacy of environmental education through the arts. Petey brought much joy and enthusiasm to her work and was a master at using the power of the performing and visual arts to support her teaching. In presenting these grants, we honor Petey's life of service and her legacy of environmental education through the arts. For more information on Petey Giroux, please go to www.eealliance.org/petey-giroux.

Any Georgia educator of K-12th grade students, including those in public and private schools, home schools, scout troops, religious groups, community organizations, 4-H Clubs, etc., is eligible to apply. For more information and to apply, please visit the [Dragonfly Grant webpage](#). **Proposals are due by January 22, 2017.**

2016 MONARCHS ACROSS GEORGIA SERVICE AWARD

Do you know someone in Georgia who deserves to be recognized for their service and dedication to monarch education, conservation, and/or habitat restoration? Nominate them for the 2016 Monarchs Across Georgia Service Awards! Schools, educational institutions, individual teachers, non-governmental and governmental organizations, for profit and not-for-profit entities, parents, principals, and community volunteers are all eligible to apply. [Submit a nomination online](#) by February 10, 2017.

Award and grant recipients will be announced at the [2017 SEEA Conference](#), March 3-5, 2017, at the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center in Buford.

RESTORING PEACE

Six Ways Nature in Our Lives Can Reduce the Violence in Our World

by Richard Louv | Aug 2, 2015 | Columns by Richard Louv, [The New Nature Movement](#)

One potential tool for reducing human violence is seldom mentioned. Let me say right off that I don't pretend that nature is a paragon of peace. Writer Herman Melville once challenged the idea of nature as "the grand cure," as he put it, and asked "who froze to death my teamster on the prairie?" The violence of nature is a fact, but this is also true: by assaulting nature, we raise the odds that we will assault each other. By bringing nature into our lives, we invite humility.

"In our studies, people with less access to nature show relatively poor attention or cognitive function, poor management of major life issues, poor impulse control," says Frances Kuo, a professor at the University of Illinois, adding that humans



living in a neighborhood stripped of nature undergo patterns of social, psychological, and physical breakdown similar to those observed in animals deprived of their natural habitat. "In animals, what you see is increased aggression, disrupted parenting patterns, and disrupted social hierarchies."

On the other hand, in some settings the natural world does have the power to heal human hearts and prevent violence. That statement isn't based on modern Romanticism, but on a growing body of mainly correlative scientific evidence, with a tight focus on the impact of nearby nature.

Here are six reasons why meaningful relationships with nature may — in concert with other approaches — bolster mental health and civility, and reduce human violence in our world.

1. Green exercise improves psychological health.

"There is growing . . . empirical evidence to show that exposure to nature brings substantial mental health benefits," according to "Green Exercise and Green Care," a report by researchers at the University of

Essex. "Our findings suggest that priority should be given to developing the use of green exercise as a therapeutic intervention." Among the benefits: improvement of psychological well-being; generation of physical health benefits by reducing blood pressure and burning calories; and the building of social networks.

2. In some cases, greening neighborhoods may help reduce domestic violence.

In a Chicago public housing development, researchers compared the lives of women living in apartment buildings with no greenery outside to those who lived in identical buildings—but with trees and greenery immediately outside. Those living near the trees exhibited fewer aggressive and violent acts against their partners. They have also shown that play areas in urban neighborhoods with more trees have fewer incidences of violence, possibly because the trees draw a higher proportion of responsible adults.

3. Natural playgrounds may decrease bullying.

In Sweden, Australia, Canada and the U.S., researchers have observed that when children played in an environment dominated by play structures rather than natural elements, they established their social hierarchy through physical competence; after an open grassy area was planted with shrubs, children engaged in more fantasy play, and their social standing became based less on physical abilities and more on language skills, creativity and inventiveness. Such play also provided greater opportunities for boys and girls to play together in egalitarian ways. And children are more likely to include children of other races and backgrounds in their play.

Continued on page 8

Restoring Peace... Continued from page 7

4. Other species help children develop empathy.

We've known for decades that children and the elderly are calmed when domestic pets are introduced in therapy, or included in rehabilitative or residential care. We also know that children can learn empathy by caring for pets. Some mental-health practitioners are taking the next step: using pets and natural environments as part of their therapy sessions. Cherie L. Spehar, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Play Therapist, who has served as executive director of The Child Abuse Prevention Center in Raleigh, N.C., recommends to therapists, "Bring nature play into your sessions, as it is a resource rich in opportunities for practicing kindness. Introduce them to every form of life and teach respect for it."

5. Greater biodiversity in cities can increase social and family bonding.

Scientists at the University of Sheffield in the U.K. report that the more species that live in a park, the greater the psychological benefits to human beings. "Our research shows that maintaining biodiversity levels is important . . . not only for conservation, but also to enhance the quality of life for city residents," said Richard Fuller of the Department of Animal and Plant Science at Sheffield.

In related work, researchers at the University of Rochester, in New York, report that exposure to the natural environment leads people to nurture close relationships with fellow human beings, to value community, and to be more generous with money. By contrast, the more intensely people in the study focused on "artificial elements," the higher they rated wealth and fame. One of the researchers, Richard M. Ryan, noted, "[We've] found nature brings out more social feelings, more value for community and close relationships. People are more caring when they're around nature."

6. More nature in our lives can offset the dangerous psychological impact of climate change.

Professor Glenn Albrecht, director of the Institute of Sustainability and Technology Policy at Murdoch University in Australia, has coined a term specific to mental health: solastalgia, which he defines as "the pain experienced when there is recognition that the place where one resides and that one loves is under immediate assault." Albrecht asks: Could people's mental health be harmed by an array of shifts, including subtle changes of climate?

If he's right in suggesting this is so, and if climate change occurs at the rate that some scientists believe it will, and if human beings continue to crowd into de-natured cities, then solastalgia will, he believes, contribute to a quickening spiral of mental illness.

We are not powerless in the face of planetary or societal challenges. Granted, we will not be able to prevent every violent tragedy, but we can surely make our lives greener and gentler. And that positive influence may ripple outward in ways we cannot immediately measure or see.

"Simply getting people together, outside, working in a caring capacity with nature, perhaps even intergenerationally, may be as important as the healing of nature itself," suggests Rick Kool, a professor in the School of Environment and Sustainability at Royal Roads University in Victoria, British Columbia. "Perhaps, in trying to 'heal the world' through restoration, we end up healing ourselves."

To read the original blog post, please go to the [Children & Nature Network website](#). To learn about the research cited here, please see [C&NN's Research Center](#).

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Children explore during a night hike at the [Dunwoody Nature Center](#).

Photo credit: Jackie Sherry

FRESH FACES, FRESH IDEAS

Getting to Know Our Newer Members

by Sonya Wood Mahler
Cobb County Water System
EEA Member Services Chair

The Fresh Face of Berkeley Boone, [State Botanical Garden of Georgia](#)

Students of all ages are regular visitors to the State Botanical Garden in Athens, Georgia. Nearly every weekday of the school year, they converge on the Garden where Berkeley Boone, the Children's Program Manager, helps them learn about a variety of topics. From tropical rainforests and the edible treats we get from them to the ecosystems found in our backyards, the students learn a lot at the Garden. Berkeley also works on festivals and family events, helps to run the summer day camps that the Garden offers, and leads special sensory field trips for pre-K students.

Finding EEA

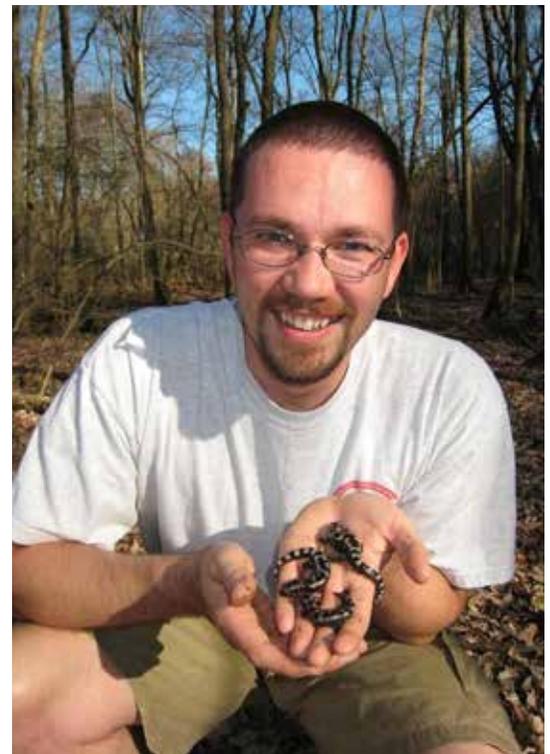
Berkeley joined EEA in early 2015, just in time for the conference in March.

Everyday Work in Environmental Education

In the past, Berkeley has been a Naturalist at the Blue Ridge Outdoor Education Center and Sandy Creek Nature Center, an Education Specialist and Animal Curator at the Savannah River Ecology Lab, and the Zoo Director for Bear Hollow Zoo. He was also a Wildlife Interpretive Specialist for the GA Department of Natural Resources. EE has always been a big part of Berkeley's life. He realized early on that he liked teaching others about nature. He has been leading educational presentations and exhibits using live animals, mainly reptiles, and amphibians for over twenty-five years.

Favorite Thing about being an Environmental Educator

Berkeley relishes the opportunity to introduce kids to animals and the outdoors and to help them understand that there is no need to fear those things. Rolling over a log with a three year old and looking at the dirt beneath is incredibly rewarding. Often, as adults, we forget that sense of freshness about the natural world that kids have. Berkeley loves being able to bring some of that wonder back and witness the connections made when children and adults get to meet a live animal up close. Live animals provide an interaction and a response that photos or videos cannot. Interpreting science and making it understandable for the general public is also very important to Berkeley.



Three marbled salamanders found on one of Berkeley's forays into the woods.



Doing some research and development work with giraffes at a zoo.

His EE Story

Berkeley was taking a group of children hiking in the north Georgia mountains. They had stopped for a break and were getting ready to hike again, when one of the boys in the group began screaming at the top of his lungs that "a snake was going to kill them all!" Berkeley wasn't sure what he was talking about, but the boy was able to gesture to a large, beautiful black and gold timber rattlesnake that had crawled onto the trail behind them. It was a great moment. Berkeley was able to gather the children around and show them how this snake was not bothering them at all. It never even rattled, and instead just turned and slowly crawled back into the bushes at the side of the trail.

Continued on page 10



Berkeley holding a captive pine snake at one of his exhibits.

Fresh Faces... Continued from page 9

Another time, Berkeley was doing a presentation with a live opossum that was pacing back and forth, sniffing away. Berkeley explained how they are opportunistic in their feeding, and listed a few items they would eat. A boy raised his hand and asked if they ate katydids. "Sure," he replied, "When they find them." The boy pointed to the wall at the back of the room and asked, "Would it eat that one?" Sure enough, there was a katydid clinging to the wall. The boy scrambled up a chair, grabbed it, and brought it to Berkeley triumphantly. Berkeley put it in on the table near the opossum, and within moments its little nose was twitching. Suddenly, it whipped around, grabbed the katydid, and stuffed it in its mouth, chewing furiously. The kids went wild! They thought it was the coolest thing.

Favorite Outdoor Place in Georgia

Berkeley enjoys Mikell Camp and Conference Center in the mountains of Toccoa very much. He grew up going there for summer camps and regular visits, as well as working there for several years. As for wild places, Pigeon Mountain and the Okefenokee Swamp are favorites, but he also enjoys a good wander in the woods at a spot right around the corner from his house. He believes there is

always something interesting to see when you are outdoors. You just have to let yourself look for it.

Fresh Air Therapy

Berkeley is a herpetologist, so he enjoys going out into the woods, swamps, and creeks to look for reptiles and amphibians. He is a photographer as well, so he likes to document what he finds. He has a huge collection of natural history books and is a lover of all things Australian (he plays the didgeridoo!). Berkeley likes drawing and sketching and has experience with scientific illustration. He likes playing volleyball and exploring outside with his daughter. Any place he can go on a daily walkabout or a bike ride and find some cool plants or animals is a place he will travel.

Fresh Ideas

As a new member, Berkeley is still learning about all the resources available through EEA. He suggests that more frequent communication to new members about the opportunities and benefits that are available would be helpful.

Become a Certified Environmental Educator with ATEEG

Whether you're new to the field of environmental education or simply looking to reinvigorate your current teaching, [Advanced Training for Environmental Education in Georgia \(ATEEG\)](#) can provide the foundation, resources, and network to take your career to the next level. Open to formal and non-formal educators across the state, the program helps participants of all backgrounds better measure the success of their programs, expand their knowledge of instructional techniques, and get to know other educators working in the field.

A nationally-accredited professional certification program based on the [North American Association for Environmental Education \(NAAEE\)](#) Guidelines for Excellence, ATEEG certification consists of three core courses, 30 hours of specialization workshops, and an independent study. Each participant is matched with a professional mentor to guide them through the process of designing, implementing, and evaluating their final project. Participants have three years from the start of their first core course to complete the requirements for certification. Register for these upcoming courses and learn more at www.eealliance.org/ateeg.

Core Course 2 (Fostering Learning) - March 31 - April 2, 2017 at Charlie Elliot Wildlife Center - Increase understanding of how to implement environmental education programs that foster learning. **Register by March 16.**

Core Course 3 (Assessment and Evaluation) - June 9-11, 2017 at Charlie Elliot Wildlife Center - Increase skills and knowledge associated with program evaluation including identifying outcomes, data collection methods, and data analysis and interpretation. **Register by May 25.**

2016 Outdoor Learning Symposium

A LOOK BACK

The Outdoor Learning Symposium, held on Friday, October 14, 2016, brought just over 120 environmental educators from across the state together for an amazing day of networking and sharing lessons, ideas, and encouragement for taking students outside. EEA would like to thank everyone who contributed to making the 2016 Outdoor Learning Symposium a great success! Thank you to the Council of Outdoor Learning for organizing, the wonderful presenters and exhibitors, all of the volunteers who helped leading up to and during the Symposium, and the Southwest Atlanta Christian Academy for hosting the event. Thank you also to our generous lunch sponsors: The Turnip Truck, Empire State South, Makan Restaurant & Bar, Wrecking Bar Brew Pub, Nuts for Pate, and Ms. Kay from the Southwest Atlanta Christian Academy.

Save the date for the 2017 Outdoor Learning Symposium! OLS 2017 will take place on Friday, October 20, 2017 at the Southwest Atlanta Christian Academy.

Did you enjoy OLS and want to take part in making next year's Symposium a success? Contact the Council of Outdoor Learning and help plan OLS 2017: cool@eealliance.org.



Patrice Francis (Principal of Southwest Atlanta Christian Academy and our gracious hostess) and **Darryl Haddock** (EE Director at the West Atlanta Watershed Alliance)



Roxanne Lopez's students observing the snake shed she brought back to her classroom from the Outdoor Learning Symposium.

"As a teacher, I get a lot of information thrown at me from all directions. It is very nice to be able to sit and listen to new information and ask questions. That is why I enjoyed coming to the Environmental Education Alliance Outdoor Learning Symposium. I got to meet "NOT" the standard education professional. I got to meet people that think physically outside the school "box".

I was able to listen to concepts of teaching biology and geology together as a unit for elementary children. I got to hold snakes and understand the number of species we have in Georgia. I asked how to get a snake skin for my students, and Greg Greer of Mr. Greg's Reptile Roadshow gave two he had there at the symposium for my kids. Wow, the students loved them. Hands-on experiences are what these kids need. Thank you so much for letting me come."

- Roxanne Lopez, Argyle Elementary School, Smyrna



Determining species variety within a small section of grass during the "Utilizing Citizen Science as a Curriculum" session, led by Lynda Jenkins and Tracey Everson Muise.

Continued on page 12

OLS... Continued from page 11



Ranger Jerry Hightower, Council of Outdoor Learning committee chair, welcoming everyone to the Symposium.

"I was able to attend the Outdoor Learning Symposium on a scholarship and I'm so glad that I applied! Not only did I get to see Southwest Atlanta Christian Academy's outdoor garden area, I got to walk through their greenhouse and take notes to help with my school's problem of accessing water. I attended Project WET, which gave helpful information about the value of becoming certified. I also attended Math Lessons and Science Labs for the Garden. Sharon McCullough and Ashley Potter were so knowledgeable; they gave us examples of lessons with hands-on stations to explore and a list of resources that were ready to use. I also felt their ideas were very credible since they had started after school clubs at their school, integrated outdoor learning with their curriculum, and involved the community in their project.



An assassin bug found during a schoolyard sweep-netting search.

Daniel Lee gave valuable information on how to reinforce learning with student-produced videos. Even though the session was for older students, I felt that he gave many beginning camera techniques that could be adapted for elementary students."

- Amy Mock, Mason Elementary School, Duluth



Advanced Training for Environmental Education in Georgia activity demonstration.

"The Outdoor Learning Symposium provided networking opportunities and resources on outreach programs. As president of an environmental club, I am able to take ideas from the workshops held and see how I can use them in my community. There are many ways people learn and this event helped me decide how to approach environmental education with a variety of learners. Connecting with EE people, guest speakers, and fun games were all highlights of the symposium!"

- Ariel Blanton, Clayton State University, Morrow



Always great to see old friends and meet new ones at OLS!



Drew Lanham, Alumni Distinguished Professor of Wildlife Ecology at Clemson University, leading the "Head to Hand to Heart" session.

CORNER STONES

Celebrating 25 Years of EEA

by Sonya Wood Mahler

Cobb County Water System, EEA Member Services Chair

Monica Kilpatrick of [Georgia Project WET](#) and her husband Phil were married at the Atlanta Botanical Garden 19 years ago. They have two fun, adventurous, creative, teenage girls (Olivia, 13 and Ava, 15). Monica is active in her community and loves to travel (from camping to laid-back luxury). She enjoys spending free time (when she can find it!) with her friends and family on various adventures in Atlanta and beyond.

How long have you been involved in environmental education?

Whew – it is true that time flies when you are having fun! I have been doing environmental education for over 23 years now. I started my EE career at Cochran Mill Nature Center in 1993. As a recent transplant to Georgia, I had a lot to learn about the flora and fauna of the southeast. In 1999, I joined the Georgia Project WET team at the Environmental Protection Division. After having my first child in 2001, I transitioned from full to part-time.

What kind of EE work do you do day to day and what have you done in the past?

I coordinate all aspects of the Project WET and River of Words programs in Georgia, along with my colleague, Jo Adang. As a certification program for K-12 educators, Project WET workshops are conducted throughout the state, and Jo and I provide water education materials and resources to formal and non-formal educators. We also manage the Georgia River of Words program, an annual art and poetry contest with the theme of “watersheds.” Thousands of students enter each year, and through our partnership with the Georgia Center for the Book, the winning pieces are featured on a traveling exhibit that is displayed throughout the state library system and to schools, conferences, and state buildings.

I am the current chair of the Project

WET Foundation's Coordinator Council and serve on the WET Conference Planning Committee. The Coordinator Council is made up of seven coordinators from across the country representing their region to guide the work of the Project WET Foundation. WET committees work on publications, standards correlations, website/portal design, conference planning, research, evaluation, and the newsletter.

As the Education Coordinator, then Executive Director at Cochran Mill, I wore many hats. As a small nonprofit with a staff of just a few, my daily responsibilities included everything from leading field trip and camp programs to processing payroll to wildlife rehabilitation duties and beyond. You name it, our small staff did it!



When did you first become involved with EEA?

I was introduced to EEA in 1993 by Buddy Spencer, one of its founding members and (at the time) a board member of both EEA and Cochran Mill Nature Center. I joined the EEA Board of Directors in 1995.

What roles have you taken in your service to EEA?

I was on the EEA Executive Committee as Treasurer from 1995 to 2002. I have served on the EEA Advisory Council from the creation of the Advisory Board/Council to the present.

Continued on page 14



Cornerstones... Continued from page 13

I joined the EEA Board and served as treasurer during the time that the budget was minimal and EEA's non-profit status was new. I watched the organization grow from just a few board members and volunteers to hosting dozens at the annual conferences and the outdoor classroom symposiums. I served on the conference planning committee for a few years and attended the first "Georgia Project for Excellence in Environmental Education" courses (which preceded ATEEG) through the partnership between UGA and EEA.

What is a fond memory you have of the early years of EEA?

I have many fond memories. Getting together to plan, execute, and enjoy the conferences are some of my favorites. We traveled everywhere from the mountains to the coast and many places in between. We would stay up late planning then get up early to work. There was never a dull moment, and most were filled with laughter (and lots of costumes). The conferences were like a family reunion in a sense, as many of us were only able to see each other a few times a year. I miss many of those who have moved on, but I've enjoyed meeting many new members along the way.



Monica at the 2016 Project WET Conference.

What would you like to share about the history of EEA and its members?

I developed some great friendships and learned more from EEA members than I ever could have in a classroom. It has always been a very welcoming environment where all are encouraged to share, learn, and jump in to be a part of the action. Its members are from various backgrounds with various interests, but all have a passion for EE that is infectious.

What about this organization makes you most proud?

Its grass roots history, the passion of its members, the friendships I've made along the way, and the accomplishments EEA volunteers have made in our field.

NATUREPLAY FILM SCREENING

JOIN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATORS and education advocates for a film screening on Saturday, January 28, 2017 at The Garden School of Marietta, 4010 Canton Road, Marietta. [NaturePlay](#) is a beautiful and thought-provoking documentary that contrasts the current U.S. educational culture of high-stakes testing and nature deprivation with the Scandinavian model of ample outdoor exploration and higher academic performance. Doors open at 1:30pm with complimentary refreshments and an opportunity to browse information about local nature centers, schools, and other organizations that participate in environmental education. The film starts at 2pm and will be followed by a lively discussion with local experts in environmental education. Tickets are \$6 for EEA members (and their guests) and \$10 for non-members. Tickets must be purchased in advance. [Click here](#) for event details and to buy tickets.



JOIN THE EEA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EACH WINTER, the Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia accepts nominations to its [Board of Directors](#). This open process helps the Nomination Committee accomplish its mission to promote cultural, geographical, and organizational diversity in EEA's leadership.

For Term beginning July 1, 2017, we are specifically seeking chairs/co-chairs for the following committees: Fundraising, Advanced Training for Environmental Education in Georgia (ATEEG), Monarchs Across Georgia (MAG), Website and Database Management (WDB), Regional Director South Ga, Regional Director Central Ga.

The application for Board terms beginning July 1, 2017 is now open. You must be a current member of EEA to apply. Visit the [Board Nomination page](#) of EEA's website for more information and to submit a nomination. **Nominations are due April 15, 2017.**

Questions about the board nomination process? Contact the [Nominations Committee Chairs](#).

Celebrate 25 Years with EEA at the SEEA Conference

Since 1992, the Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia has served as the professional education and networking association for environmental educators throughout the state, and we will be celebrating our 25th anniversary during the 2016-17 year. From a small group of dedicated members 25 years ago, EEA has grown to a statewide organization, supporting environmental educators through conferences, workshops, grants, networking, and so much more.

Join us in celebrating our 25th anniversary at the upcoming [Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance Conference!](#) The event takes place Friday, March 3 to Sunday, March 5, 2017 at the Gwinnett Environmental & Heritage Center in Buford. Even if you cannot attend the entire conference, please join us for an evening of fun and networking at the Friday or Saturday night socials! Enjoy drinks, pizza, an ice cream bar, and games at our Friday night social. On Saturday, we will be serving heavy hors d'oeuvres alongside a silent auction, book signing, and



photo booth. The cost is \$30 per social. Purchase special event only tickets [here](#).

Save the date! You can also join EEA at our upcoming [Park Paddlers Member Event](#), April 8-9, 2017. Kayak the Okefenokee Swamp to historic Billy's Landing and back in Stephen C. Foster State Park (look for alligators, black bears, and wood storks) and on a tidal river through salt marsh and past sandbars in Crooked River State Park (look for dolphins and fiddler crabs).

Do you value the work EEA has done over the last 25 years? Please consider making a donation so that we can continue our meaningful work of supporting Georgia's environmental educators and creating a statewide culture of environmental literacy and stewardship. Make your donation at www.eealliance.org/donation.



Find us on Facebook and Twitter for pictures, program updates, upcoming events, articles of interest, grant opportunities, and more!



Shop at Kroger and Amazon, Earn Money for EEA!

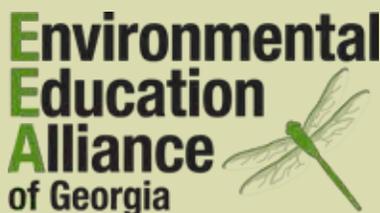
You can now support EEA by shopping at Kroger and on Amazon. Help EEA earn up to \$8000 per quarter by signing up for both of these programs below:

[Register your Kroger Plus Card](#)

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Search for "Environmental Educational Alliance Inc."

We'd love to hear from you! For comments and article suggestions or submissions, please email news@eealliance.org.



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www.EEAlliance.org

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The Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia's mission is to promote communication and enrichment among professionals in the field of environmental education through partnerships, initiatives, and access to knowledge and experiences.

For board member bios, roles and committees, and contact information, visit the Board of Directors page of the EEA website: www.eealliance.org/board-of-directors.