

# SWEEP: Get all the Dirt

"Nothing Under the Rug"

NEWSLETTER OF THE VERMONT STATEWIDE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS • WINTER 2005

## Vermont Hosts Successful NEEEA 2004 Conference!

Nicole Ballinger

A chilly October weekend greeted more than 200 environmental educators, students and others who gathered at the Bread Loaf Campus of Middlebury College for the 38th Annual New England Environmental Education Alliance Conference (NEEEA). The conference, titled "Opening Doors:



Colleen Cowell, Betsy Rosenbluth, and Mayor Peter Clavelle of Burlington present the keynote address.

Collaboration Strengthens Our Voice to Build Sustainable Communities," was held from October 15-17, 2004. Vermont SWEEP and Middlebury College hosted the conference. Participants were on hand from every New England state.

The conference kicked off with field trips to local sustainability initiatives, including farm and wind energy tours. Other trips connected participants with skilled ecologists, such as Alcott Smith, a renowned old-growth forest expert. Several attendees braved a brisk, wet day to paddle Otter Creek with Matt Witten, a Lake Champlain ecology expert.

The evening was capped off with an inspiring performance of The End of the World Show by the Association of Vermont Recyclers acting troupe. The talented student actors demonstrated that "opening doors" often means speaking the language of your audience—in this case teenagers.

Burlington Mayor Peter Clavelle, Legacy Project Director Betsy Rosenbluth, and Champlain School teacher Colleen Cowell

presented an engaging keynote address about Burlington's sustainability initiatives and school collaborations. More than 30 workshops featured other New England region programs which have "opened doors" and fostered sustainability.

NEEEA '04 "walked the talk" by incorporating locally grown foods into conference meals. A

highlight was a fabulous lunch prepared by Alison Forrest of Huntington Elementary school. Lunch also featured the annual NEEEA award ceremony — our own Barry King won the Nonformal Educator award! Keeping Track was given the Maria Pirie Program award, accepted by founder Susan Morse. Other awardees were: Cynthia Faughnan, Michael Quinn and Rick Schlutz, from Hartford (VT) Middle School - Formal Educator (K-12) and Cindy Thomashow from Antioch - the Formal Educator (university/adult). Congratulations to all!

SWEEP thanks all who attended for making this a terrific event. We'd especially like to congratulate the co-chairs, Linda Wellings of Shelburne Farms and Marcia Whitney of VINS for their excellent work. And to all who bid on silent auction items — you raised a record \$1600 for future NEEEA conference scholarships!

"Hearing what the kids are doing, the mayor and city of Burlington, the farmers of Vermont—all these people doing EE and living the message is so powerful."

Conference Attendee

Read and see more about the conference on page 2.





## NOTE from the CHAIR

It is the time of year for reflecting on the past twelve months. Being somewhat of a goal oriented person I like to have all this reflecting and thanking wrapped up in time for the New Year — only to start the lists anew. I give myself a head start and begin at Thanksgiving and roll “things I am thankful for” into the mix. With 2005 upon us, here are a couple of things I have been thinking about and am thankful for:

- The extraordinary Vermont EE community and our supporters that came together to pull off a stellar NEEEA conference in October at Middlebury’s Breadloaf Campus! And our friendly neighbors from around New England who joined us for learning, sharing, celebrating, eating local foods, and collaborating to make this world a better place.
- The powerhouse SWEEP board and members (veteran and new alike) that have been out all year educating Vermont’s citizens about: the beautiful landscape that surrounds us, being good stewards, sustainability, and instilling wonder in us all.

THANK each and every one of you! Warm wishes for 2005!

Cheers,  
Jen

### Vermont StateWide Environmental Education Programs (SWEET)

is a coalition of individuals and organizations promoting environmental education in Vermont since 1975. SWEET’s purpose is to foster environmental appreciation and understanding to enable people to make responsible decisions affecting the environment. For membership information, see p.11.

NEWSLETTER EDITING:

Barry King

NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION:

Holly Brough

### “SWEET:

**Get all the Dirt”** is produced twice a year. We welcome your contributions! Contact Editor Barry King at <kinglet@together.net>



*Breadloaf’s gorgeous foliage surrounded the NEEEA Conference 2004.*

## NEEEA 2004 Conference

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### THANKS!!

We would like to thank the generous sponsors of the 2004 New England Environmental Education Alliance (NEEEA) Conference:

- Acorn Naturalists
- Biomass Energy Resource Center
- Climb High
- Gardener’s Supply
- Horizon Organic
- Karhu
- Katherine Monstream
- Mad River Glen
- Middlebury College
- Organic Valley
- Otter Creek Brewing, Inc.
- Phish
- Seventh Generation
- Smuggler’s Notch
- Solar Works
- Stowe
- Taylor and Francis, Ltd.
- Vermont Department of Public Service
- Vermont Renewable Energy Labs / Green Mountain Electromagnetics
- Washington Electric Cooperative

*Conference attendees learning about Vermont’s old growth forests with naturalist Alcott Smith (center).*

## Pruning Party Raises Money and Volunteers for School Trees

Ginger Anderson

They say charity begins at home. Perhaps for some schools, charity for the environment also begins at the school. Care of trees on school grounds can be complicated. Town tree boards or volunteers may not tend trees on local school campuses assuming that the school custodial staff, parent-teacher organizations or students will mulch, prune and water school trees. Most small schools lack the proper equipment, and the staff rarely has the knowledge to care for trees and shrubs on school grounds until they become a hazard to be removed.

Berlin Elementary School received a grant through the Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Program (U&CF Program) for landscape planning. It was apparent that pruning of the numerous shrubs and trees on the grounds was an immediate need. So, the school threw a pruning party on a Saturday in November of 2004.

The goal of “party” was two-fold; train students, staff and townspeople to prune trees and shrubs using the school’s abundant vegetation for practice with the expectation that at least some of the participants might volunteer in the future to help maintain the school’s woody plants, AND raise funds for other pieces of the landscape plan and/or to match the grant with cash and in-kind services. This may be the first time a school used a pruning workshop as fundraiser, but the reasonable request for a \$10 donation raised over \$200 (comparable, we’re told to some bake sales they’ve had). Workshop participants gained skills they can use in their own backyards. Attendees were enthusiastic about the training, while the school grounds looked noticeably improved, leaving the organizers to wonder if they could design a community “Mulch-a-Thon” to continue the tree care efforts in Berlin.

Contact the VT Urban and Community Forestry program at 802-241-3673 for information on tree care.

## The Eco-Bus

Zachary Carson, UVM, Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources



I am studying environmental education and sustainability through ecological design and am working on a project to promote alternative energies for a healthier planet. I am interested in techniques to allow humans to live more lightly on the earth, especially renewable and recycled resources as viable alternatives to fossil fuel. Recently, several technologies have been developed that could drastically reduce the amount of fossil fuels burned by automobiles. These new fuel sources are gaining popularity due to increased gas prices and increased awareness of alternative fuel options.

For my project, I am converting a 24-foot diesel engine bus, donated by SMART and

the CTAA, into a classroom/motor home. Its engine will run on waste vegetable oil from local restaurants. The bus will use photovoltaic panels to run multi-media equipment for presentations. A rainwater catchment system will capture rain and snowmelt for use in cooking and washing. The outside of the vehicle will be painted with a mural. I will create a website to track the project’s progress, providing links to alternative energy information and suppliers, and connecting people with similar passions.

This winter, I will take the bus around Vermont, hosting teach-ins and workshops about alternative fuels, environmental problems related to continued fossil fuel use, and promoting simple, sound and sustainable techniques for living. Over the summer, the bus and I will tour the U.S. Professionals from educational institutions and organizations are involved to create a proper audience and a syllabus. Vermont institutions involved in helping with the syllabus and/or publicity are: SWEEP, ECHO, Hulbert Outdoor Center, Sterling College, and the Bonnyvale Environmental Education Center. Chelsea

*continued on bottom of next page*



## The Language of Conservation

The Nature Conservancy and the Trust for Public Land contracted Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin and Associates to conduct research regarding the public's perception of conservation language so the organizations could speak about conservation issues in ways that resonate best. The study is meant for groups doing land conservation but is applicable for environmental educators who want to improve the effectiveness of their message. The "rules" that follow were widely circulated in an email. I will excerpt it heavily below. If you'd like the full message, contact me at [kinglest@together.net](mailto:kinglest@together.net).

- DO talk about water FIRST, foremost, and often. Water cannot be stressed enough, and it really doesn't matter how you say it. Buying land to: protect drinking water quality; improve the water quality in our lakes, streams and rivers; protect lakes, rivers and streams; and protect watersheds all rated high with those polled. Clean air and clean water are consistently seen as "needs" rather than "wants."
- DO link land conservation to preservation of "working farms." Most Americans say that protecting "working farms and ranches" is a very important reason for their state or local community to buy land and protect it from development. More voters are concerned about this than about the loss of open space, natural areas, or scenic vistas. It is on par with concern about pollution of rivers, lakes and streams. The word "working" must ALWAYS precede farms. Voters value preserving small, family farms. "Working landscapes" does not mean anything to respondents.
- DO evoke protecting wildlife, although the phrase "wildlife habitat" speaks mostly to activists. There is a strong sense that animals are voiceless and need someone to look out for their needs. DO NOT use "endangered species" as interchangeable with wildlife — voters view them differently. They know examples where environmental regulations held up important projects to protect "obscure and unimportant" species.
- DO say "natural areas" rather than "open space". "Natural landscapes" and "undeveloped land" don't work as well.
- DO NOT use the threat of "sprawl". Although voters react very negatively to the word "sprawl" only liberal audiences feel it is a reason for protecting land from development. Instead, use "poorly planned growth." Growth messages that are put into the local context and use specific statistics (e.g., one million more people likely to move to the area in the next twenty years) generated a strong response. DO stress "planning" in terms of growth. And DO NOT allow your effort to be positioned as anti-growth. Voters feel growth is inevitable and want growth that is well-planned, responsible and does not negatively impact their overall quality of life.
- DO talk about yourselves as "conservationists" — not "environmentalists." This bears repeating. Voters are more likely to view themselves as "conservationists" than environmentalists. In the focus groups, there was skepticism about the agendas of some "environmental groups" who engage in land preservation.

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*"Ecobus" continued from previous page.*

Green Publishing's books on alternative energies will be promoted on the tour. Neoteric Inc., supplier and producer of engine conversion parts has provided discounts in support of this project.

After more people are informed about the impact we have on the earth, and learn ways to reduce it, I think people will become more conscious of everyday decisions. It may

be something as large as converting their cars to run on vegetable oil or as small as replacing their house lights with energy efficient bulbs. As conscious living gains popularity and moves towards the mainstream, our politics and economy will follow, creating a revolution in the minds of those concerned and a healthier earth for everyone.



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## UPDATES

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### **Vermont Earth Institute (VEI) assists Piermont Village School to Create a “Farmers and Eaters” Unit**

A new interdisciplinary unit, “Farmers and Eaters”, is being piloted by the 1st/2nd and 7th/8th grade combined classes at the Piermont Village School in Piermont, New Hampshire. Designed by teachers Brenda Bianchi, Lydia Hill and principal Nancy Sandell with assistance from VEI’s Barbara Duncan, students are focusing on answering three key questions:

1. What is farming like in Piermont;
2. Where does our food come from; and
3. How do our basic needs and wants affect what we eat?

The month-long unit includes the history of farming in Piermont and an examination of where the food produced in Piermont goes. Students learn about how genetics are used in farming, how nutrients get into their food, the implications of organic farming, and the ethical questions that farmers face. Students visit farms and a food processing plant.

The school kicked off the new unit with a lunch of locally produced foods: cheeseburgers, corn, oven fries, pickles, and salad, much of it donated by the community. The 7/8th graders made the pickles from local cucumbers, using cider vinegar produced in Washington, VT. Ms. Sandell discovered that the milk from Piermont’s dairy farms goes to the Hood Dairy which is the school’s milk supplier. The school honored the eight producers at the lunch, many of whom joined their children or grandchildren at lunch.

VEI works with teachers to help them develop units of study around sustainable living. Topics include fostering a sustainable community (e.g. by buying or eating locally), energy use, transportation issues, waste reduction, media literacy, and measuring and reducing our ecological footprint. VEI school partnerships are possible in part through a grant from the Josephine Bay Paul and C. Michael Paul Foundation.

### **Celebrating 40 Years:**

#### ***A Historical Perspective of the Green Mountain Audubon Center***

In this 40th anniversary year of the Green Mountain Audubon Center, more than 10,000 children, families and adults will visit the Center, each of them making their own personal connection with the natural world. These are experiences that may not have been possible had it not been for the generosity of one individual, Christine Hires. For it is with Mrs. Hires that the story of the Green Mountain Audubon Center in Huntington begins.

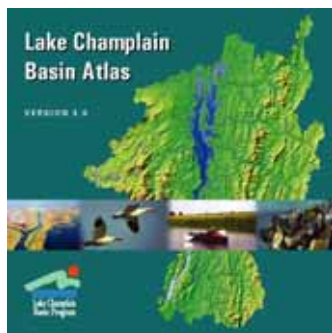
In 1940 Christine Hires traveled from her home near Philadelphia to Vermont on vacation. In hand was money to purchase a new mink coat. She ended up with much more however when she purchased a retired farm on Sherman Hollow Road in Huntington instead. The home would serve as a peaceful summer getaway for many years. In time however, she decided to give up this summer retreat but wanted the property to remain in its natural state and to be shared with others. She contacted a number of people and groups,

including John Merchant, then the director of Vermont’s 4-H program and a member of the new Green Mountain Audubon Society. Merchant thought maybe Audubon would be interested in the property for a nature center. GMAS’ founder put the idea to a membership vote and it met an overwhelming approval. The house and property was deeded to the GMAS, creating the Green Mountain Audubon Nature Center. and in September 1964 the first open house was held there. Christine Hires was on hand that weekend to visit with members of the Society and the more than 100 others in attendance.

Forty years have passed since this important event in the conservation history of Vermont. Over the course of the upcoming year, Audubon Vermont is recognizing the many people who have made contributions to the Center while at the same time looking to the future, thereby continuing the conservation legacy that was begun by Mrs. Christine Hires.



## Updated Lake Champlain Basin Atlas CD ROM Available



Visit the Lake Champlain Basin Program website at [www.lcbp.org](http://www.lcbp.org) to explore the online Atlas. A CD ROM version may be purchased for \$5.00 from LCBP. For more information, call 800/468-5227 or email [lcbp@lcbp.org](mailto:lcbp@lcbp.org).

The Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) has released a new version of its popular Lake Champlain Basin Atlas CD ROM and website. Updated for 2004, the Atlas contains more than 40 full-color maps, articles, photographs, and a glossary. It is recommended for anyone curious about the Lake, including students and educators.

The Atlas has been extensively updated with current information on watershed issues, such as zebra mussels, blue-green algae, Eurasian water milfoil, and phosphorus. The Atlas also explores the nature of the Basin, such as its climate, geology, plants and animals, and wetlands. Maps of the region's rich cultural heritage and recreation opportunities are detailed in a people and economy section. A new "Students and Educators" section contains a scavenger hunt to the Atlas and blank maps for students to create personalized maps of Lake Champlain and its watershed. Many additional information resources such as website links, fact sheets, and LCBP publications are available as well.



## Champlain Connection Debuts

A new series about Lake Champlain region issues debuted in October. Champlain Connection, airing on WPTZ News Channel 5, builds on the successful Champlain 2000 news series which aired its final episode in September. The series explores what makes the Lake Champlain region special—from history to the environment to people working together to make a difference.

As part of the new series, News Channel 5 anchor Thom Hallock will visit area middle schools to speak about "5 Things You Can Do to Save the Lake." He will also incorporate related study topics such as history, natural resources, geography or journalism that may be part of the classes' current curriculum. Champlain Connection is a partnership among WPTZ, the Lake Champlain Basin Program, and Calkins Realty. It airs on the 6 o'clock news on Mondays. Visit [www.lcbp.org](http://www.lcbp.org) or [www.thechamplainchannel.com](http://www.thechamplainchannel.com) for more information.

## Healthy Children, Healthy Planet Discussion Course

This fall Vermont Earth Institute joined parent organization the Northwest Earth Institute (NWEI) in piloting a new discussion course "Healthy Children, Healthy Planet." There were two test groups in Charlotte and Middlebury and one in Norwich. When the NWEI conducted a survey to determine topics of interest for new discussion courses, guidance for raising children was number one. According to Bonnie Christie, a VEI board member and volunteer, "The format is thoughtful. It recognizes that the challenges are immense — cultural pressures, advertising and the media, over-scheduling, disconnect with nature, preponderance of passive technology. So, to prevent up-front discouragement, chapters alternate between identifying problem areas and offering 'antidote' practices to try in our daily lives."

The free, nine-session course is for groups of 8-12 people — anyone who interacts with kids — parents, teachers, youth leaders, social workers. A course anthology (\$16) of some of the best writings on these topics serves as the

basis for discussion. The discussion course is self-facilitated with start-up assistance from a VEI volunteer.

Other VEI discussion courses include Voluntary Simplicity, Choices for Sustainable Living, Globalization and Its Critics, Deep Ecology and Discovering a Sense of Place. For more information contact Barbara Duncan at (603) 643-0328 or [vei@valley.net](mailto:vei@valley.net) or [www.vtearthinstitute.org/programs](http://www.vtearthinstitute.org/programs).

## VT Envirothon '05

The VT Envirothon is up and readying for 2005's event. This annual program for high school students culminates in a one-day event on May 11 at Shelburne Farms. This year's current issue for the oral presentations is "Managing Cultural Resources." Vermont's winners will head to Missouri in July for the Canon North American Envirothon. For more information or to participate, contact Barry King at [kinglet@together.net](mailto:kinglet@together.net) or 802/388-4082.

## NEEEA Marketing Workshop a Big Success!

Paula Coughlin, CT Representative to the NEEEA Board

On November 19th, twenty environmental educators, including three from Vermont, gathered for a NEEEA administrators' workshop, "Non-Profit Marketing on a Tight Budget." Presenter Andy Robinson specializes in working with non-profit groups in marketing and fundraising techniques. He reminded us that marketing begins with a high quality product, work that is valued by the community. The most effective marketing tool is personal, one to one contact: "the message is the messenger." We were challenged to think clearly about the goals of our organizations as well as the various audiences we want to reach. Nature centers and conservation groups need to have a clear, credible message and a plan to deliver that message. When we each shared information about our organization, it was apparent that human interest stories are very effective communication tools. We need to get the word out about the good work we are doing. It's important to develop a relationship with the news media. News hooks that interest readers are often centered around conflicts (and resolutions), human interest, kids, animals, and celebrities. At the end of the day, we took away valuable new marketing skills. The NEEEA Board may invite Andy Robinson for a return visit, as many of us expressed interest in a fundraising workshop. See [andyfund@earthlink.net](mailto:andyfund@earthlink.net) for information about Andy's workshops and books.

## Hulbert Outdoor Center an "Environmental Partner"

Hulbert Outdoor Center and Aloha Foundation have been designated as an "Environmental Partner" by the Vermont Business Environmental Partnership, a collaboration of the Environmental Assistance Division of the VT Agency of Natural Resources and the VT Small Business Development Center. HOC met a set of core environmental standards and six elective standards. HOC was awarded with a certificate by The Commissioner of the VT Department of Environmental Conservation in August.

## Natural Communities Quests

*Valley Quest II: 75 MORE Treasure Hunts in the Upper Valley* arrived on New England bookstore shelves in mid-summer. Published by Vital Communities, the book contains the work of more than 50 school and community groups from VT and NH. A highlight of *Valley Quest II* is a series of eight Natural Communities Quests. Created with support from the Wellborn Ecology Fund, each Natural Community Quest unfolds on site—the story of a particular natural community. For example: an old field (in The Kestrel Quest), a vernal pool (in Sally's Salamander Meander), and an alder swamp (in The Chaffee Sanctuary Quest). Each Quest includes directions to the site, a site overview, clues, a map, a hidden treasure box, and a Quest site species checklist. Here's one clue from the Kestrel Quest:



*Can you see the boundaries of the old field?  
Where the land is plowed or cut back year after year?  
But in the old field, see young trees seeding in:  
willow, pine, and aspen.  
This field is a community, ripe with seed  
And with insects, too: both are food for other species.  
Who feeds on these two? Look: are they in your view?*

As a companion to the *Natural Communities Quests*, Valley Quest will publish a Natural Communities Quest curriculum unit this spring. The 10-lesson unit will help school and community groups study, map and share their special places. To view the entire Kestrel Quest, or to learn more about Valley Quest, please visit [www.vitalcommunities.org](http://www.vitalcommunities.org).

## Positive Change Begins with Personal Choice

Association of Vermont Recyclers (AVR) consults and educates youth, schools and communities in solid and toxic waste reduction. Our programs use theater, interactive workshops and service learning. We reach 12,000+ people per year. AVR Services include:

- Youth and Adult Education
- Youth Environmental Coalition
- School Technical Assistance
- Public Outreach
- Publications



## Guide for Volunteer Surface Water Monitors

**T**he Vermont Water Quality Division has undertaken an ambitious project this winter to develop a Guide for Volunteer Surface Water Monitors. This Guide will walk groups and organizations through the steps of designing an appropriate monitoring program for lakes, streams, rivers and wetlands. It will include worksheets to simplify the answering of essential questions (the why, what, where, how, and when to monitor) that can often seem tedious and intimidating. It emphasizes the importance of planning program details, establishing and following appropriate Quality Assurance/Quality Control procedures, and interacting with the group or agency that will use the data volunteer monitors collect.



This Guide is also significant in that it celebrates and highlights past and ongoing efforts of volunteer monitors and their programs in Vermont. The Water Quality Division is grateful to past and current volunteers and hopes to refresh their enthusiasm and inspire new groups to develop programs. Volunteer monitors will also find a wealth of Vermont-specific resources in this Guide, as well as resources from national groups and organizations such as the U.S. EPA, USGS and the River Network that are involved in volunteer monitoring. This book is expected to be completed and printed by summer 2005. For more information, please contact either Amy Picotte or Linda Boudette in the Water Quality Division, 802-241-3777.

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## SWEEP PEOPLE

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*Barry King receives the Vermont Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence from Mark Snelling, Chair of the Governor's Council of Environmental Advisors and Wibs McClain, Secretary of the Agency of Natural Resources.*

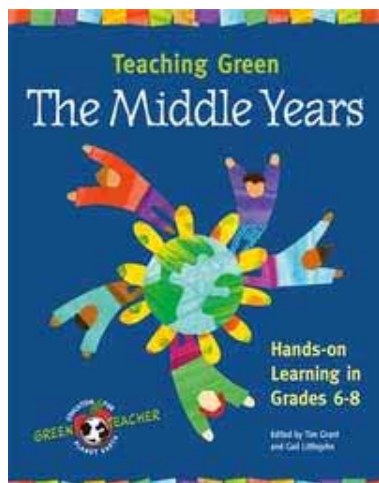
**Erin Croom** has joined the staff of AVR as Education Coordinator. Before AVR, Erin worked with Shelburne Farms, the Intervale Foundation, NOFA-VT and Food Works. Erin can be reached at [recycle\\_edc@adelphia.net](mailto:recycle_edc@adelphia.net) or 802/229-1833.

SWEEP Board member and NEEEA rep **Lidie Whittier Robbins** gave birth to Brynne Hayden Robbins in July. Lidie has been working from home and will start back at her office for the Northern Forest Center in January. SWEEP's wonderful newsletter designer, **Holly Brough** reports "Our new daughter Anna (born October 2nd) has lots and lots of

hair and her sister Clara loves her!"  
 Congratulations Lidie and Holly! **Josh Cabell**

has been hired as the Director of the High Pond Audubon Camps, Audubon Vermont's summer residential program. His experiences include Big Creek Outdoor Education Center in Montana and Shelburne Farms. Green Mountain Audubon Center Teacher Naturalist **Kim Guertin** recently became the first nationally certified Audubon Teacher Naturalist in the country! She completed a week-long training, developed a number of detailed lesson plans and demonstrated an understanding of Audubon's teaching philosophy and knowledge of local natural history and environmental issues. Congratulations! **Barry King** was the recipient of the Vermont Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence and Pollution Prevention in the Education and Outreach category. **Nicole Conte's** husband, Matt Stevens, is going to be deployed to Iraq with the Army National Guard. He'll be in Mississippi for several months and then will head overseas for a year or so. Matt is a Physicians' Assistant and medic. His job will be the day-to-day health care of 500 soldiers, triage/lifesaving care for wounded soldiers and supervisor of the other 30 medics. We wish him all the best and send our love and support to him, Nicole and Faye.

## BOOK REVIEW



### Teaching Green: The Middle Years *Hands-on Learning in Grades 6-8*

edited by Tim Grant and Gail Littlejohn, New Society Publishers,  
Gabriola Island, British Columbia, Canada, 2004.

240 pgs.,  
8 1/2" x 11",  
\$22.95 single  
copy; dis-  
counts for  
larger orders.

Reviewed by  
Barry King

This book, edited by folks at *Green Teacher* magazine, is a wonderful compilation of ideas and activities sent in to *Green Teacher* over the last ten years. It is not a cohesive curriculum nor is it a guide like *Project Wild* or *PLT* with units written around a unifying theme, in a similar voice with a consistent format. This is both a strength and weakness of the book.


The variety of voices, approaches and styles allows the contributors' enthusiasm for their subject matter to shine through. The contributors themselves are a diverse lot — classroom teachers, college professors, environmental educators and nonprofit personnel. Some of the activities are for a specified length of time like a class period or a week; others are open-ended or are designed as semester- or year-long. The combination of so many differing methods and writing styles does give the book a somewhat hodge-podge feel although the editors have tried to organize the units into 5 overarching themes such as Learning About Ecosystems and Living Sustainably. There is no unifying format for the lesson plans except an initial section giving subject area, key concepts, skills, location, time and materials. Some of the units include reference sections and ideas for extension; it's too bad they don't all contain this information. The book also contains a glossary, an index and an index by subject area.


The lesson plans run the gamut from the very simple and obvious (act out the water cycle) to far more involved units and concepts such as designing a sustainable food system. There are simulation games, programs that bring in the arts and hands-muddy projects that get the kids into their communities learn-

ing and giving back. The units I liked best were those written by practicing middle school teachers. These seemed to be the most exciting, relevant and age-appropriate ones and included some very stimulating, self-designed curricula that could easily be adapted to other schools and regions.

Two Vermont practitioners contributed to the book. Jimmy Karlan from Antioch NE has a unit in the Learning About Ecosystems section called "The Biosphere Challenge: Developing Ecological Literacy." Former SWEEP board member Barbara Duncan of the VT Earth Institute contributed a unit called "Living Within Earth's Means" in the Examining Values section.

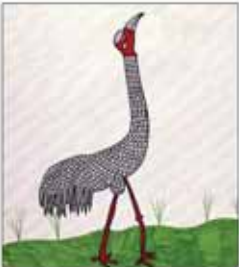
Note: Jen Cirillo has a limited number of *Green Teacher* magazines and books for sale, including *Teaching Green*. If you are interested, contact her at: [jcirillo@ShelburneFarms.org](mailto:jcirillo@ShelburneFarms.org). You can check out the *Green Teacher* on-line at [www.greenteacher.com](http://www.greenteacher.com).





## Kids Art Exhibit

Celebrate National  
Audubon Society's Centennial and  
Audubon Adventures' 20th Anniversary!




Draw, paint, and create a picture of a bird found in your community. Your artwork could be featured in Audubon's national online gallery!

Open to ages:

- 8-10
- 11-13
- 14-17

Selected entries will be chosen locally to be featured on Audubon's national web site at [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org). Entries are due by March 11<sup>th</sup>. Call 434-3068 or visit us at the Green Mountain Audubon Center for the complete list of rules and entry requirements.





## RESOURCES

Population Connection's Education Program has a newly designed website, [www.populationeducation.org](http://www.populationeducation.org), with free hands-on activities that address population dynamics, environmental issues, global inequities and community well-being. The activities are linked to national content standards for ten different subject areas. An on-line store has a range of Population Connection's products including teaching kits, CD-ROMs (including new version of middle school curriculum, *People and the Planet: Lessons for a Sustainable Future*), videos, DVDs, wall charts, posters, newsletters and more. Along with curriculum to download (in PDF format), the site offers information on Population Connection's teacher education workshops available for professional development programs and pre-service courses.

**This Land Is Your Land** is a free, activity-based youth curriculum on land use issues developed by MSU Extension's United Growth for Kent County project. It was developed to provide teaching materials almost anyone can use with young people and was designed so they can contribute solutions to current land use issues and participate in making sound decisions now and in the future. <http://web4.msue.msu.edu/msuewc/kent/yourland/>

Results of the Report Card on Environmental Education in Washington State show students involved in environmental education score higher on standardized tests, than do students with more conventional schooling. Full report: <http://wa.audubon.org/new/audubon/userdocuments/EEReportCard.pdf>

United Nations Environmental Programme Network provides a "global portal to authoritative environmental information

based on themes and regions." Some Thematic Portals include Climate Change, Freshwater, Mountains, and Urban environment. <http://www.unep.net/>

**The Global Amphibian Assessment** searchable database provides threat category assessment, ecology and other information on the world's 5,743 known species of frogs, toads, salamanders and caecilians. <http://www.globalamphibians.org>

World Wildlife Fund latest education module: **Smart Consumers: An Educator's Guide to Exploring Consumer Issues and the Environment** includes 14 hands-on activities, a Community Action Guide, and a colorful Your Stuff, Your Planet poster. [www.worldwildlife.org/windows/consumers.cfm](http://www.worldwildlife.org/windows/consumers.cfm)

"A Potential Natural Treatment for Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder: Evidence from a National Study" shows that hands-on structured outdoor activities improve behavior and produces positive results for students with ADHD. Nature Helps Fight ADHD. <http://my.webmd.com/content/article/93/102307.htm>

**Gristmill Forum** New forum from *Grist Magazine* features "leafy green" commentary posted throughout the day, on breaking news, discourses on ideas, and links to other information across the web. <http://gristmill.grist.org/>

**Minnesota Report Card on Environmental Literacy** Over 80% of Minnesota adults consider the environment when voting. *The Second Minnesota Report Card 2004*, documents the results of the second statewide survey concerning environmental literacy of adults in Minnesota. This report card examines changes in the intervening period since the *2002 Minnesota Report Card*,

with results also compared to the national and Pennsylvania report cards. The Second Report Card addresses adults' knowledge about, attitudes toward, and behaviors related to the environment, with an emphasis on water issues. [www.seek.state.mn.us/eemn\\_b.cfm](http://www.seek.state.mn.us/eemn_b.cfm)

**Pollution Pipe: Street to Stream** Two-page [pdf] for students in Grades 6-12 on non-point sources of pollution found in runoff and the effects of development on watersheds. Shows the relationship between urban development and impervious ground cover created by streets, parking lots, and roofs. Provides a list of pollutants found in runoff, as well as some steps that can be taken to prevent water pollution. From the Center for Global Environmental Education <http://cgee.hamline.edu/watershed/action/background/Pipe.pdf>

**Watershed Action: Educate the Public** for Grades 6-12 teachers to plan activities for students to protect and clean up watershed environments. Instructions are provided, and links to related information are provided for teachers and students. From the Center for Global Environmental Education [http://cgee.hamline.edu/watershed/action/projects/public\\_ed.htm](http://cgee.hamline.edu/watershed/action/projects/public_ed.htm)

**Engaging People in Sustainability** This new international publication by the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication provides case studies from around the globe of how others in the field have put the concepts of Education for Sustainability into action. It is framed around five key themes essential to developing a successful program in this area. Will soon be available to download [pdf] from [www.aries.mq.edu.au/news.htm](http://www.aries.mq.edu.au/news.htm) or order hardcopy can now by emailing: [info@books.iucn.org](mailto:info@books.iucn.org)



# OPPORTUNITIES

**Igniting Creative Energy Challenge.** DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 19. Educational competition designed to encourage students in K-12 to learn more about energy and the environment. Entries must reflect the theme, "Igniting Creative Energy", and demonstrate an understanding of what people can do to make a difference in their home, school, or community. <http://www.ignitingcreativeenergy.org/>

**Award for young eco-heroes.** DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 28. Action for Nature seeks applications from students from around the world 8 to 16 years old for its 2005 International Young Eco-Hero Awards Program. Program recognizes the individuals who have carried out environmental action projects. Projects must concern environmental action, advocacy, environmental health, research, or protection of the natural world. Cash prizes up to \$500. For guidelines and application: <http://www.actionfornature.org/co-hero/index.html>

**Applied Environmental Education Program Evaluation**  
Online Course  
FEBRUARY 21 - APRIL 29, 2005 through the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. The course is designed to assist environmental educators and natural resource professionals in evaluating their education programs. Participants have the opportunity to apply skills in designing evaluation tools such as questionnaires, observation forms, and interview and focus group guides. Participants may, if they choose, obtain three undergraduate or graduate credits from the University of Wisconsin.  
Contact Angela Arkin: 715/346-3854 or [Angela.Arkin@uwsp.edu](mailto:Angela.Arkin@uwsp.edu) to request a registration form. <http://www.uwsp.edu/natres/rwilke/eetap/> [www.eetap.org/html/online\\_ee\\_courses.php](http://www.eetap.org/html/online_ee_courses.php)

**Fundamentals of Environmental Education**  
Online course  
FEBRUARY 7 - APRIL 15, 2005 developed by the Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP) in collaboration with national EE experts. Available for 3 credits or at reduced cost for no credits. Provides educators (formal and non-formal) with the knowledge and skills necessary to incorporate quality environmental education into their instruction.  
For more information, please visit the website or contact Angela Arkin at [Angela.Arkin@uwsp.edu](mailto:Angela.Arkin@uwsp.edu) for a registration form. <http://www.uwsp.edu/natres/rwilke/eetap/> [www.eetap.org/html/online\\_ee\\_courses.php](http://www.eetap.org/html/online_ee_courses.php)



## Get Swept Away!

Vermont StateWide Environmental Education Programs (Vermont SWEEP) is a coalition of individuals and organizations promoting environmental education in VT.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \$40     Individual: \$15

Please make check payable to SWEEP and mail to: SWEEP, 9 Bailey Ave., Montpelier, VT 05602. Thanks!

### MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Twice-annual membership meetings; periodic development workshops & conferences
- Representation to the six-state New England Environmental Education Alliance (NEEEA)
- Inclusion in SWEEP's Directory, which lists members' environmental education services and is distributed to VT teachers and educators
- SWEEP's newsletter

**SAVE  
the DATE**  
**NEXT  
SWEEP  
MEETING:**  
**April 28.**  
**Place TBA**

## CALENDAR

**MARCH 9**  
**Massachusetts**  
**Environmental Education**  
**Society Annual Conference**  
"Earth, Wind, Fire, Water:  
Exploring the Elements of  
Education"

College of the Holy Cross, Hogan  
Campus Center in Worcester, MA.  
**\$75. Registration deadline:**  
**1/22/05.**  
*www.massmees.org/conf.html or*  
*Pam Landry: 508-792-7270*  
*ext.110*

**JANUARY 15,**  
**FEBRUARY 20 & MARCH 6**  
**Winter Wildlife Adventures!**  
**The Art, Science & Anatomy of**  
**Wildlife Tracking**  
**10:00 AM - 3:00 PM;**  
Southern VT Natural History  
Museum, Marlboro, VT.

**\$50 per workshop (includes**  
**cost of brunch & snowshoes)**  
**BEEC & SVNHM member dis-**  
**count: \$35. Instructors Lynn**  
**Levine and George Leoniak.**  
*Pre-registration required:*  
*802/464-5494. For information or*  
*scholarship funds, call Lynn*  
*Levine 802/254-4717*

**FEBRUARY 12 - 23**  
**Annual NOFA-VT Winter**  
**Conference "Community**  
**Relationships with the Land for**  
**a Broader Social Change"**  
Vermont Technical College in  
Randolph.  
Peter Forbes, keynote; work-  
shops for gardeners, commer-  
cial growers, dairy farmers and  
consumers; children's confer-  
ence for ages 6-13; day-long  
farmers market with educational

materials, organic products,  
crafts. *Contact NOFA-VT:*  
*802/434-4122 or info@nofavt.org.*

**APRIL 28**  
**Save the Date - Next SWEEP**  
**meeting.** Place - t.b.a.

**OCTOBER 25-29**  
**The 34th Annual**  
**NAAEE Conference**  
Albuquerque, NM  
Call for Presentation Proposals  
will be posted on the NAAEE  
website in early  
2005.  
<http://naaee.org>



## Vermont SWEEP

Statewide Environmental Education Programs

**9 Bailey Avenue**  
**Montpelier, VT 05602**