

OUTDOORS

2009 FALL NEWSLETTER



A New Leaf

Greetings and Happy Fall COEEA members:

We have had a busy beginning to our fall season this year. As you may know, Connecticut was host to the New England Environmental Education Association (NEEEA) conference this September. Held at the Incarnation Center in Ivoryton, the conference featured workshops on many outdoor and environmental education topics, as well as performances by award-winning musician Joseph Fire Crow and Circus for a Fragile Planet.

COEEA also held its annual meeting in Ivoryton and elected the new board members into office (please see below for a look at our new board). This new board slate represents a change to the way that COEEA had been doing business. In an effort to streamline, COEEA has reformatted the board structure, changing it from a 20-plus member board to a 10 person slate. This will hopefully allow us to focus on needed areas of growth and to accomplish more tasks, such as obtaining our non-profit status.

In 2010 and beyond, we hope to bring you, the COEEA member, more of what you need. We are currently looking to revamp our member benefits for both individuals and organizations. We have a renewed dedication to our goal of supporting educators and educational organizations in their promotion of environmental education throughout the State of Connecticut. We will also be changing the format of our newsletter. Instead of a larger quarterly publication, we will be bringing you smaller, more timely newsletter blasts 8-10 times throughout the year. This will allow us to deliver the most current information on grants, programs and topics in the environmental education field.

We hope that all of our COEEA members are excited about the changes that will be seen in the coming year. Keep your eyes out for new initiatives and new ways that COEEA can help environmental and outdoor educators do their job.

On behalf of the COEEA board, I would like to wish all members and their families a safe, happy and nature-filled holiday season. Please stay tuned as the new changes go into effect as 2010 comes our way.

lisa monachelli

Communications Chair

**Connecticut Outdoor & Environmental
Education Association, Inc.**

CONTENTS:

**Turning Over a
New Leaf**
Page 1

New Board Members
Page 2-3

Upcoming Events
Pages 3

**Education Resources
& Opportunities**
Pages 4-5

Grant Opportunities
Page 6

**News From Around
The State**
Pages 7-8

Mission

*To support Connecticut's
outdoor and environmental
educators as they promote
responsible environmental
stewardship.*

Outdoors

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Education Association, Inc.*

www.coeea.org

WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD!

At the COEEA annual meeting, held at the 2009 NEEEA conference in Ivoryton, Connecticut, the new board members for the 2009-2011 term were elected in. Congratulations to our new team!

President: Becky Newman

Becky Newman is the Museum Program Manager and co-Director of Summer Camp for Earthplace, the Nature Discovery Center, in Westport, CT. Becky has been on the COEEA board for 3 years and has previously served as the Communications Chair. Becky is a beekeeper and is also on the board of the Backyard Beekeepers Association (BYBA). She has been in the field on environmental education for over 10 years and has also worked for the Taconic Outdoor Education Center, L.G. Cook 4-H camp and the New Canaan Nature Center.

Past-President: Lori Paradis Brant

Lori Paradis Brant has been on the COEEA board for many years and previously served as its President for the last 4 years. Lori is the Education Director for the Connecticut Forest and Park Association and is the state co-coordinator for Project Learning Tree. Lori also chairs the Education & Outreach Committee for the CT Forestlands Council, and serves on the CT Urban Forestry Council. Lori has been in the field of environmental education for over 15 years and has previously enjoyed employment with the CT DEP, Stepping Stones Museum for Children, Bauer Farm Park, Connecticut Audubon Society, and the Long Island Sound Taskforce. Lori has been recognized as an Outdoor Educator and Board Member of the Year by COEEA.

Secretary: Kristen Allore

Kristen Allore is the Program Director at New Pond Farm in West Redding, Connecticut. Kristen has served as Secretary of the COEEA board for many years and was recently elected to her 4th term. Kristen has been in the field of environmental education for over 10 years and served as the Education Director for Save the Sound before working at New Pond Farm.

Treasurer: Grace Jacobson

Grace Jacobson has served on the COEEA board for the past 2 years, previously as a county representative.

Membership: Marakit Salcedo

Marakit Salcedo is a new to COEEA, coming to the board with over 15 years of experience in human resources in the financial services, pharmaceutical and consumer packaged goods industry. Marakit holds a MBA in Organization Behavior and Human Resource Management and has worked as an HR director for American Express, HSBC Bank, and Heineken USA. She also currently serves as an environmental education volunteer at Earthplace in Westport.

Communications: Lisa Monachelli

Lisa Monachelli has served on the COEEA board for over 4 years, previously as the Natural History and Environmental Interpretation Chair. Lisa is the Program Coordinator for Animal Embassy in Stamford, CT. She has been in the field of environmental education for 15 years and has previously worked for CT DEP, Maine Audubon, City of New Haven Parks and Recreation and the New Canaan Nature Center. Lisa was also recognized as the 2009 Connecticut Outdoor Educator of the Year.

Professional Development: Kate Reamer

Kate Reamer joined the COEEA board in September 2009, coming to us from a board position on the Rhode Island Environmental Education Association.

Continued on the next page.

New COEEA Board Members, continued

Affiliates and Partners: Sue Quincy

Sue Quincy has served on the COEEA board since in many capacities over the last decade, including Conference Chair and Past President. Sue is an Environmental Analyst II at the CT DEP's Kellogg Environmental Center in Derby and the state coordinator for the national curricula Project Food Land and People and Project WET. She also serves on the national FLP steering committee and the publications review board for WET. Sue has been in environmental education for over 25 years. Prior to the DEP, she was employed at Flanders Nature Center in Woodbury and taught high school science in Illinois. Sue has been a member of the Junior League of Greater Waterbury for 18 years, serving in many capacities including President and Legislative liaison.

NEEEA Member-at-Large: Russ Miller

Russ Miller has served on the COEEA board for the past year and serves as a bridge between COEEA and the New England Environmental Education Association. Russ is the Director of the Meigs Point Nature Center at the Connecticut DEP's Hammonasset Beach State Park in Madison, CT. Russ has been with the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection in the field of environmental education for over 20 years.

Nominating Chair: Nicky Moriarty

Nicky Moriarty has been a COEEA board member for the last 4 years, previously as the Hartford County representative. Nicky has been in the field of environmental education for over 5 years and currently works as a preschool teacher for Educational Playcare. Nicky has previously been an educator at the Lutz Children's Museum in Manchester and the Rogers Williams Zoo in Providence, RI.

UPCOMING EVENTS

New Exhibition: Eat or Be Eaten: Animal Survival Strategies

(November 21, 2009 - November 28, 2010)

Bruce Museum, 1 Museum Drive, Greenwich, CT, www.brucemuseum.org

The fascinating and sometimes bizarre adaptations of predators and prey in the natural world is the focus of the year-long exhibition ***Eat or Be Eaten: Animal Survival Strategies***. In the complex web of life, animals have evolved a variety of strategies that help them find food and avoid becoming someone else's meal in the struggle for survival. Specimens of insects, shells, fish, reptiles, mammals, and birds from the Bruce Museum collection illustrate how animals detect, capture and consume prey while minimizing risk from predators. The show is supported by Anne and Fred Elser, the Elizabeth Elser Doolittle Charitable Trusts, a Committee of Honor under the leadership of Richard and Debra Kolman, and the Charles M. and Deborah G. Royce Exhibition Fund.

When Good Pets go Bad —presented by Animal Embassy

Friday, January 22

5:30 - 6:30 pm Ages 3-6

7:00 - 8:30 pm Ages 6 +

With exotic animals, what seems like a good idea in the beginning can turn wrong quickly. Join Animal Embassy naturalists to discover why good pets can turn bad and how we can avoid making mistakes when choosing a pet. Program will be held at the Stamford Museum and Nature Center. For information or to register, please call 203.322.1646 ext. 6521 or visit www.stamfordmuseum.org.

EDUCATION RESOURCES and OPPORTUNITIES

Climate Change Resources & Professional Development Opportunities

[Earth Gauge Climate Facts](http://www.earthgauge.net/fact_sheets/climate_fact_sheets): www.earthgauge.net/fact_sheets/climate_fact_sheets

Take advantage of the opportunity to receive weekly climate facts by adding the Earth Gauge Climate Facts Widget to your Web site. You can also explore fact sheets on a variety of climate topics.

[Will Steger Foundation Climate Change Curriculum](http://www.classroomearth.org/node/875#): www.classroomearth.org/node/875#

This resource includes lesson plans that are experiential, correlated to national standards and available free for download. Their Global Warming 101 curriculum and new Citizen Climate curriculum help students understand the science and social issues of climate change.

[U.S. Global Change Research Program](http://www.classroomearth.org/node/869): www.classroomearth.org/node/869

This program provides two climate change resources for educators. The Climate Literacy: Essential Principles of Climate Sciences guide presents basic information on Earth's climate, the impacts of climate change and approaches for adapting and mitigating change. The Wildlife and Wildlands Toolkit provides info about the impact of climate change on the flora and fauna of public lands across the US.

[Climate Change Investigations](http://www.classroomearth.org/node/725): www.classroomearth.org/node/725

This free, multi-disciplinary, hands-on curriculum from The Keystone Center encompasses many subject areas including biology, earth science, chemistry, physics and ecology as well as language arts, math and social studies.

[Energy Audit Toolkit](http://www.classroomearth.org/node/498): www.classroomearth.org/node/498

This toolkit, created by Cool Schools Challenge, has students perform energy audits of their schools in order to identify areas where they can reduce their energy consumption.

[Climate Change: Fitting the Pieces Together Online Course](http://www.classroomearth.org/node/874): www.classroomearth.org/node/874

This free, two-hour online course provides educators with the background information and resources they need to address some of the main concerns students have about climate change: Is climate change real, how do we know and how will it affect me? These basic questions form the outline of the course, which discusses the evidence for climate change, the scientific methods used to study climate, certainties and uncertainties in climate data and climate model predictions.

[Climate Discovery Online Courses](http://www.classroomearth.org/node/855): <http://www.classroomearth.org/node/855>

The National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) offers online climate change courses for educators. Course fees are \$225, plus additional fees for credit. Deadline: 01/01/2010

[Facing the Future Workshops and Online Courses](http://www.classroomearth.org/node/855): www.classroomearth.org/node/855

Workshops on climate change, global issues and sustainability are offered throughout the United States. Courses on the same topics are offered online with an option for credit. Course fees are \$115.

Visit **[www.ClassroomEarth](http://www.classroomearth.org)** for additional climate change resources including climate videos, carbon footprint calculators and more! Classroom Earth is a program of the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) which can be found at **www.neefusa.org**

Reprinted from Classroom Earth Newsletter October 2009

Website Profiles: [Freecycle.org](http://freecycle.org) and [Freeuse.org](http://freeuse.org)

Both of these websites are similar, with goals is to reduce waste by connecting people who would otherwise throw away unwanted items with others seeking those same items. These are great resources for educators who have big ideas and a small budget (which is just about all of us!). Freecycle has about 40 different groups in Connecticut (Freeuse- just two at the time of printing) which makes it very easy to find and recycle items in your local area. Participants can choose to just check out the websites or can get e-mails with updated posts sent to their inbox. Educators that have used these sites pass on this tip: mention in your replies for materials that you are a teacher or that you work for a non-profit. Often this will move you to the top of the list! Happy recycling!

Free Educational Materials from EPA

TEACHERS: The Environmental Protection Agency has a plethora of free materials that have gotten two thumbs up from educators. You can order most of them from the National Service Center for Environmental Publications (NSCEP), an environmental publications service run by US EPA. Visit www.epa.gov/teachers/order-publications.htm for links to these materials.

Ranging from coloring books to posters to teaching kits, these materials cover topics relating to water and wetlands, recycling, air quality, pesticides and health. Your tax dollars at work so take advantage!!!

Eco-Pros.com features a wide variety of teacher resources

This website is pretty large and has a lot of features. One of the best is the teacher resources section which provides almost 100 links to different organizations and curriculum units. Some, like eelink and NASA, are probably familiar to most educators. Some, like one that features experiments on triboluminescence, will be new to many and are worth a look. Visit www.eco-pros.com/teacher.htm to get started.

Who Doesn't Love Free??

With the economy not in the strongest shape and school budget cuts everywhere, it is even harder for teachers to get the materials they need. Here are some sites that will help teachers get free stuff! Some offers on some sites have strings but most are pretty straight forward.

www.scattercreek.com/~zimba/freeforteachers.htm
www.freakyfreddies.com/teacher.htm
freebies.about.com/od/teacherfreebies/Teacher_Freebies.htm
www.coolfreebielinks.com/Teachers_Freebies/index.html
scienceinquirer.wikispaces.com/freestuff
free.ed.gov/

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

For more information on each opportunity please visit the accompanying website. Good luck!

NEA Foundation Green Grants

www.neafoundation.org

Public school educators can apply for individual grants worth up to \$5,000 for the development and implementation of ideas, techniques and approaches for teaching "green" concepts. **Deadline: 2/1/10.**

Toshiba America Foundation

www.toshiba.com/tafpub/jsp/about/Howapply.jsp

This Foundation promotes quality science and mathematics education in U.S. K-12 schools by supporting programs that improve teaching and learning in science and mathematics.

Deadline 2/1/10.

Irwin Porter Foundation

www.iapfoundation.org

This Foundation funds EE programs that show evidence that the creator thinks "outside the box." The quality, innovation, thoughtfulness and effectiveness of the project are all considered in determining the winners of this grant. Amounts range from \$500 - \$30,000. **Deadline 2/1/10.**

Captain Planet Foundation

captainplanetfoundation.org

The Captain Planet Foundation accepts applications four times each year for funding projects that help students better grasp environmental issues. Range from \$250 -\$2,500. **Deadlines: 12/31/09 and 3/31/10.**

America the Beautiful Fund

www.america-the-beautiful.org/free-seeds/index.php

The America the Beautiful Fund offers grants for free seeds to groups striving to beautify our world through gardening. Use seeds for a school garden, restoration project or schoolyard habitat. Grants of 100 to 1,000 seed packets are offered on a basis of availability and need.

President's Environmental Youth Award

www.epa.gov/PEYA

Since 1971, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has annually sponsored the President's Environmental Youth Awards. The awards program recognizes forward-thinking youth with outstanding ideas about the environment and how to sustain it. All applicants receive a signed certificate by the President honoring them for their efforts. **Deadline: 12/31/09.**

NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE

Western Connecticut Nature Center Directors Group Meets

By Gio Ogno, Director of the Old Quarry Nature Center

While serving as the COEEA Litchfield representative I decided to visit every nature center in my area. I found directors three miles from each other who'd never met. Everyone was working alone, solving the same problems alone – and starving for contact and exchange of ideas.

In October 2008, this awareness became a movement. We identified potential candidates and issues – and before long had a list of 25+ covering all of Western CT down to Rye NY. We also began to realize that what defined us, what we had in common, was our common environment, ecosystems, and geology.

Our first meeting, a confidential, roundtable discussion of concerns with only executive directors, was at White Memorial Conservation Center in Litchfield. Out of over 100 concerns, one emerged: what do we do for our community which would merit their involvement and support?

In the October 2009 meeting, participants brought laptops to show each other our websites and to exchange our successes and failures in how we come across to the community.

Our major focus lately, though is the economy: how it's impacting program revenues and community support, how we can handle better our expenses.

In forming the Western CT directors group and in realizing what unites us is ecology and geology, we've reached out to other eco groups and nature centers in New York.

A future issue we anticipate is the falloff in school groups using nature centers for field trips. To help explore and remedy this, recently I met the President of the Connecticut Science Supervisors Association who's now in charge of the science curriculum in Danbury. He is very interested in furthering this work of coordination, frank exchange, sharing, mutual help, and joint action. *For more information on the Western CT directors group, please contact Gio Agno at gioogno@aol.com.*



by Leslie Lewis, WalkCT Director

ence of public health issues created by the sedentary lifestyle of too many Americans. This is coupled with a growing disconnect between our society and the land. We at the Connecticut Forest & Park Association believe we have a singular opportunity to address these concerns.

With an exceptional trail system, remarkable natural resources and a high density population, Connecticut is in a unique position to take a leadership role nationwide in reclaiming the public health. The Connecticut Forest & Park Association is introducing WalkCT, an initiative that will bring the outdoors to the feet of every household in the state.

Our vision is of a state where urban, suburban and rural populations take to sidewalks, parks, trails and greenways in a sweeping community venture to take charge of individual health and happiness. We envision a place where every citizen, regardless of means, can experience a sense of ownership and connection with the land. We hope that WalkCT will serve as a model health program that will spark the beginning of a sea change in the national health. A start-up grant from the Connecticut Department of Public Health is helping us to put these plans into action.

There is no central, dedicated "clearinghouse" where the average citizen can go to find information on the types of trails (and other walking routes) available to the public, their locations, allowable uses, and points of special interest. WalkCT will gather this information into one place, providing people with a comprehensive, easy to use website listing walking (and cycline, riding, blading, etc) opportunities. Links to other organizations and lists of resources will be included. The site will include tips on safety and getting started for the "wary walker." A link to Facebook will be available for people to post thoughts about their favorite walking places.

If all of this sounds positive to you, you might ask where COEEA members fit into the picture. If you are involved with developing/managing trails in your town, or if you are interested in getting other walking opportunities in your community listed on WalkCT, you can register them on-line. You can go to www.walkct.org, then click on register your location/event at the bottom of the page. If you are not the actual trail sponsor (maybe it's the Park and Rec or Land Trust folks), encourage them to sign up. In addition we will be looking for unique projects, great trails, and interesting individuals to profile in our articles.

WalkCT staff have unique experience in trail advocacy, development, and maintenance that can be shared with communities around Connecticut through technical assistance and other education/outreach efforts. Our goal is to locate a trail or walking opportunity within 15 minutes of every home in the state and to link these trails to every city.

Another important target group will be families with children. Connecticut's child obesity rate is at 15 percent and climbing every year. Through our Family Rambles, we introduce adults and kids to the joys of outdoor activity in a safe and fun way. Volunteer guides are given training in outdoor education, interpretation, and first aid. They choose the locations and types of walks they prefer to do. If you are interested in becoming a family guide, information is available on-line at www.ctwoodlands/volunteer.

If your organization is interested in WalkCT and would like to hear more about it, staff are available for presentations. We ask that you invite other potentially interested parties in your town (planners, health department, economic development/chambers of commerce, park and rec), and particularly your mayors and selectmen to attend. For more information contact me at llewis@ctwoodlands.org, or call CFPA at 860 346-2372. We can help you get started on the path to healthier, happier communities.

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c/o Lisa Monachelli
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