



Kentucky's Outdoor Classroom Newsletter

Volume 1, No. 1

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Welcome

to the first issue of what is hoped to be a long and evolving newsletter concerning the outdoor classrooms found in Kentucky.

It is hoped that the newsletter will be a product of your input and suggestions. There are several objectives that will be the "guiding force" to determine the information that will be found in future issues:

1. Promote the development and use of outdoor classrooms.....
2. Share information about available resources and resource personnel for help with outdoor classrooms.....
3. Provide a means for communication between all interested parties.....

WHAT IS AN OUT DOOR CLASSROOM?

Sometimes we use terms and don't fully recognize the total meaning of the terms or phrases. The same can be said about the "true" definition of the outdoor classrooms that we use. Here are two that were found among some literature.

An outdoor classroom is

Uany area outside your classroom that is effectively used by the students and teachers as a place for learning.

Uany place outside the classroom that can provide students with a unique learning experience.

With these two definitions, it can be seen that every and any school can have an outdoor classroom. Hopefully this newsletter will help those that have a developed outdoor classroom make improvements. For those schools and individuals that are attempting to get established, see that any addition to the "formal" classroom will provide students a new learning experience.

Educational programs of the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service serve all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability, or national origin.
UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY, KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY, U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, AND KENTUCKY COUNTIES, COOPERATION

WHAT BENEFITS ARE DERIVED FROM THE OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

To the students:

- U develop interest in the environment..
- U connects them to the environment..
- U instills environmental responsibility..
- U improve students class performance..
- U develop leadership skills due to planning.

To the teachers:

- U use a variety of experiences..
- U team work, build on others teachings..
- U great resource for all subjects..
- U teachers and students learn together.

To the community:

- U students will “connect” to the real world..
- U develop into responsible citizens..
- U school and outdoor classroom will become a focal point for the community involving planning, development and care.



SMALL GRANTS AVAILABLE

Jane Wilson of the Environmental Education Council would like to inform you that there are small grants/stipends available for teachers that would like to make on-site visits to established outdoor classrooms. The stipends consist of some “gas money” and monies for a substitute. Monies are limited. *Please contact Jane Wilson at 502.564.5937.*

E-MAILS

If you would like to get this newsletter and other time sensitive information faster, provide us your e-mail address. You can also share information, ideas and successes regarding your outdoor classrooms and/or experiences with outdoor classrooms, just by e-mailing to us at the address below.
ltaylor@ca.uky.edu

A NOTE FROM A NON-FORMAL TEACHER TO A FORMAL TEACHER

Many resource professionals keep a wide array of hands-on activities “in tow” for classroom presentations but many of the programs that are presented would be much easier, and I would assume, much more rewarding for the class, if some of the “expected outcomes” for the class were provided to the presenter.

Provide what some of the challenges are for the class such as math, science, English or even social studies. Resource people can then gear the days events toward a recent assignment or a future class event.

Resource people would also like to come away from the days event feeling a sense of success. This can be accomplished for both the resource person and the class if there is a connection between the studies that they are doing and the “special event” that the resource person has just presented.

Spend some time with the resource person before the event. See if they have a particular event that they can bring to the school that would be as exciting for the students as it should be to the resource person. *Use them to the fullest!*

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION RESOURCES

The list of resources for environmental education is endless, but sometimes it is necessary to find the beginning of the "loop". As the issues of this newsletter are generated, an attempt will be made to suggest a few "resources" that you may not be familiar with.

The Kentucky Environmental Education Council

...a tremendous array of resource materials for outdoor classrooms.

Contact: Jane Wilson

Phone 502.564.5937 or 1.800.882.5271

Website www.state.ky.us/agencies/envired

EPA's Office of Environmental Education

...lots of avenues concerning environmental education

WebSite www.epa.gov/enviroed

U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service

...often provide assistance to schools developing outdoor classrooms, provide information about your County Conservation District.

Phone 606.224.7350

County Cooperative Extension Service

... often provide information and assistance with outdoor classrooms

contact: your County Cooperative Extension Service

Food, Land and People

Many of you are aware of the outdoor classroom activities that are derived from the programs, ***Project Learning Tree***, ***Project Wild and Aquatic***, and ***Project Wet***. There is a new program recently introduced to Kentucky called ***Food, Land and People***. This program helps to become better informed as to the vital role of agriculture and natural resources in our daily lives. The training methods and objectives of ***Food, Land and People*** are similar to the other activity based resource programs.

Contact: Rayetta Boone, Kentucky Division of Agriculture

Phone 502.564.4696

*Doing a "search" on the web for outdoor classrooms? If you have a computer that is linked to the "Web", go to any of the "search engines", and type in **outdoor classroom**. A wealth of information will appear.*

UPCOMING MEETINGS/WORKSHOPS

Food Land and People facilitator training workshop February 19-21, 1999, Princeton, KY. Contact Eastern Kentucky Environmental Educators (EKEE) meeting, **KERA**, "**Understanding the Lingo**" will be held March 2nd in Quicksand, KY. For info. Contact Laurie Taylor (see below)

North American Association for Environmental Education annual meeting will be held in Cincinnati, Ohio on August 26-30, 1999. Title "**Linking Environmental Education and Education Reform**" This will be a great opportunity to attend the national meeting.

THE PRESENT MAILING LIST

The goal of the newsletter is to get everyone on a mailing list that has involvement or interest in outdoor classrooms. Presently we are making mailings to the Cooperative Extension Service, Conservation Districts, and schools that are involved in classrooms. Please feel free to clip the mailer from the back page and send it back if you are not receiving this newsletter or know someone that wants to be involved.

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