Environmental Educators of North Carolina (EENC) is North Carolina’s affiliate of the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE), an integrated network of professionals in the field of environmental education with membership throughout North America and in more than 55 countries.

EENC's mission is to promote excellence in professional development and facilitate networking opportunities, inspiring educators to create an environmentally literate citizenry.

EENC’s vision is to connect diverse professionals and organizations to each other and to high quality environmental education materials and programs, demonstrating leadership in North Carolina and beyond.

EENC is an entirely volunteer run, membership-based organization. To meet the needs of smaller groups throughout the state, North Carolina is organized into three sections -- Western, Central, and Eastern. Committee, section meetings, and retreats occur throughout the year and culminate at the statewide annual conference.

In 2010, EENC celebrated 20 years of working to promote environmental education in North Carolina.
2010 Board of Directors

Officers
President: Shelby Gull Laird
President-Elect: Tom Shepherd, High Point Parks and Recreation
Past President: Dee Rudolph, New Hanover County Parks and Recreation
Secretary: Lara Overby, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools
Treasurer: Sandra Weitzel, NC Division of Soil and Water Conservation

Section Coordinators
Central Section: Mickey Jo Sorrell, Morehead Planetarium & Science Center
Eastern Section: Pat Curley, Onslow County Schools
Western Section: Kelly Hoke, NC State Parks

Committee Chair/Co-chairs
Communication: Elizabeth Burke, Mud Pie Planet
Education: Blair Ogburn, Balsam Mountain Trust
Membership: Keith Bamberger, NC Division of Air Quality / Sarah Fuller, Randolph County Schools
Partnership: Sean Higgins, North Carolina State Parks
Policy: Diane Silver, NC Cooperative Extension
Resource Development: Sandy Ruble, NC Cooperative Extension

The Year in Review—2010 Highlights

Regional Meetings
The Central Section held its annual Green Crafting Party on December 5th at Blue Jay Point. This much anticipated event brings holiday cheer and networking together as members create gifts made from items saved from the landfill.

NAAEE Conference
Winning the bid to host North American Association for Environmental Education’s 40th annual conference in 2008 meant lots of preparation for this international conference in 2010. EENC set the bar for host-state organizations by starting the planning process
early. Lois Nixon, 2007 EENC President, continues to serve as State Co-chair. We were busy all year continuing to plan to make the NAAEE Conference in 2011 the best they've ever seen.

Advocating for Environmental Education
EENC continued to keep up-to-date on No Child Left Inside legislation (NCLI). Members were encouraged through emails and presentations to contact legislators in support of legislation that was on Congress’ agenda. EENC provided information to North Carolina citizens regarding NCLI through a number of presentations. Members and other organizations interested in both state and national No Child Left Inside legislation received email updates.

As an advocate for the profession of environmental education, EENC worked diligently to keep the Office of Environmental Education (OEE) intact and not have it cut from the state budget. As a co-founder of the NC Environmental Education Certification Program, EENC wanted to ensure the ability of this office to continue to administer the program. In addition to OEE’s many responsibilities, we also understand the credibility a state-run environmental education office brings to the profession of environmental education. EENC sent letters, emails, and made phone calls to state legislators. We provided current information and talking points on our website and encouraged EENC members and members of the DENR managed EE-listserve to contact their legislators of the General Assembly to keep OEE funding.

Forming and Enhancing Partnerships
A goal for EENC in 2010 was to continue communication and collaboration with the North Carolina Office of Environmental Education (OEE). A result of this goal is that EENC now provides input on major OEE working groups including the Environmental Education Advisory Council, the Environmental Education Certification Advisory and Working/Review Committees, and the North Carolina Environmental Literacy Plan committee. OEE is also invited to EENC board meetings as a courtesy. EENC continues to help in the development of the state Environmental Literacy Plan (ELP). EENC also began working with the North Carolina Children and Nature group (NC CAN!). EENC co-sponsored a NC Children’s Outdoor Bill of Rights with this group.

Membership
EENC had over 258 members in 2010, including 12 organizational members. EENC made many changes in 2010 in order to better serve our membership. In order to make information easier for our members to obtain, EENC hired a web master who created an updated look and a web site redesign. We look forward towards having a working member database on the website for better networking and support. We unveiled a new newsletter design at the beginning of 2010. In addition, we reconfigured our membership records for more accessibility as EENC designs an online directory.
Conference summary & agenda

EENC celebrated its 20th anniversary as an organization at the Annual Meeting and Conference in Blowing Rock, NC. The “EE Blow-out in Blowing Rock” was held October 8th-10th, 2010 at the Blowing Rock Conference Center. Over 60 participants attended all or part of the weekend event. The site featured; indoor and outdoor meeting spaces, a dining hall, comfortable rooms with private baths, and best of all, a stunning view of Grandfather Mountain in fall color display. The BRCC staff worked closely (even rising above expectations) with conference planners to meet EENC request for low impact meals and accommodations. Every effort to reduce, recycle and compost was made to fit the conference according to professional EE principles and standards. Our hats are off to Blowing Rock Conference Center staff and directors.

The conference committee focused its planning on the goal of preparing EENC members for hosting the North American Association for Environmental Education Annual Conference in 2011. Presentations, discussion groups, field experiences and concurrent sessions were selected by the committee based upon three strands; Fulfilling NC EE Certification requirements, Advanced understandings in Natural History, and Encouraging a multi-disciplinary approach to EE. In an effort to draw upon the resources and talents within the EENC membership, keynote speakers were selected from a pool of “members only” applicants. The full conference schedule included: four preconference workshops, five field experiences, seven concurrent sessions, two discussion groups and four keynote addresses.

Friday night keynote address came from Mr. Bill Hilton Jr. of Hilton Pond Nature Preserve. In a lively presentation called Operation Ruby-throat, Bill shared his research findings and discussed how natural history is incorporated into his environmental education classes and programs. The Saturday night “Blow-out” became one of the highlights of the conference. Three keynote speakers were spaced between silent
auction bidding opportunities and refreshments. Dr. Brad Daniel of Montreat College and two of his graduate students presented a multimedia timeline of the Environmental Education movement. Themed music and fade-in/fade-out images took participants from Silent Spring to photos of the EENC conference taken earlier in the day. The second speaker of the evening was Dr. Kathy Matthews of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Her research on aquatic turtles and devotion to the advancement of teaching led to the development of a unique high school level EE program. Four of her high school students got their first taste of public speaking as they spoke 5 minutes each about their experience. Gauging the future by these four, it is indeed bright. To cap off the evening, Kathy Bull of North Carolina Children and Nature Coalition presented “The Ecology of Hope: Reconnecting Children to the Natural World” and updated the status of the North Carolina Children’s Outdoor Bill of Rights.

Overall, the 2010 EENC Annual Conference was a success. The revenue generate during the conference will, in a small way, go to the expenses EENC will incur in planning and hosting the 2011 NAAEE Annual Conference in Raleigh.

Conference Agenda
Friday, October 10, 2010
EE Certification Criteria I Workshops
Methods of Teaching Environmental Education
Friday 9:00—4:00 and Sunday 8:00—12:00 pm
   The Early Years: Discovering the Natural World with PLT and WILD
   Friday 9:00 - 4:00 and Saturday 2:00 - 6:00 pm.
Food, Land and People
   Friday 9:00—4:00 and Saturday Fieldtrip 2:00—5:30
Additional Workshops
   TOOLS for Environmental Educators
Meet in Upper Shuford Hall  
Friday 9:00—3:30  
EE Certification Criteria II—Experiential Workshops  
    Canoe the New River with Adventure Sport of Boone  
    Friday 10:00—3:00  
    Moses Cone Memorial Park and Manor House  
    Friday 9:30—1:30  
    High Country Ecology and Conservation  
    Friday 10:00—2:30

Following Dinner, representatives from EENC, NC’s Office Of Environmental Education, and NAAEE, I summarized significant EE news including: No Child Left Inside Legislation, EE Certification, NC Environmental Education Plan, Children’s Outdoor Bill of Rights, 2011 NAAEE Annual Conference. 
Friday Night Keynote Speaker— Bill Hilton Jr. of Hilton Pond Center “Operation RubyThroat”

Saturday, October 9  
Concurrent Sessions— 9:00 to 12:00 pm —50 to 90 minute sessions  
    Planning and Leading Organized Night Hikes  
    Brad Daniel, Montreat College  
    Programming with Play,  
    Jessica Hoffmire, North Carolina Zoo  
    Improving the Effectiveness of Outreach Materials through Document Design and Writing Style  
    Abigail Ferrance-Wu, City of Durham, Storm water Services  
    "Where the Wild Things Are" Encouraging Outdoor Exploration  
    Dottie Shuman, Montreat College  
    Creating Virtual Tours to Reach a Tech-Savvy Generation  
    Rebecca Dunstan, Wake County Environmental Program Coordinator  
    NC Big Sweep in the Classroom  
    Jennifer Brooks, North Carolina Big Sweep  
    Ann Walter-Fromson, Professor of Psychology, Greensboro College

Discussion Groups—9:00 to 12:00 pm—50 to 90 minute sessions  
    The NC Environmental Literacy Plan: A Work in Progress  
    Sarah Yelton, North Carolina Office of Environmental Education  
    The implementation of Supplemental EE Programs by Middle Grade Teachers
Patrick Curley, Environmental Educators of North Carolina

Field Experiences
Grandfather Mountain Field Experience - 2:30 – 5:00 pm
Organic Farm Field Experience - 2:30 – 5:00 pm

The Saturday Night Blow-out – 6:30 pm until …
Featuring 3 keynote speakers present between bidding on silent and live auction items and glasses of wine, soft drinks, and snacks.

Brad Daniel, Professor of Outdoor Education and Environmental Studies, Montreat College, “Where have we been? Where are we going?: A multimedia history of environmental ideas, organizations and issues”
Catherine Matthews, Professor, Science Education & Environmental Education, UNC- Greensboro, “How Education in and about our Local Environment has Prepared us to Face Global Environmental Challenges “
Kathy Bull, Director External Affairs/Chair NCCAN!, North Carolina Children and Nature Coalition, “The Ecology of Hope: Reconnecting Children to the Natural World “

Sunday, October 10
Criteria I Workshops Conclude
8:00—12:00 Conclusion of Methods of Teaching Environmental Education
Spirituality and Environmental Education
9:00—10:00 am After check-out everyone is invited to a special conference send off honoring Mother Earth at the outdoor chapel with outstanding views of Grandfather Mountain and fall colors.
Annual Awards

October 10, Environmental Educators of North Carolina’ Annual Conference, Blowing Rock Conference Center: The Environmental Educators of North Carolina recognized four individuals and two organizations for their commitment to environmental education and the Environmental Educators of North Carolina.

**Environmental Educator of the Year:** Elizabeth Baird, Director of education at the NC Museum of Natural History. Ms. Baird engages students and teachers across the state and around the world with unique and innovative science experiences. One of her most notable accomplishments is the creation of the Take a Child Outside week. The annual event inspires and facilitates thousands of parents, organizations, clubs, schools, and other groups to help children everywhere gain a better appreciation of the environment where they live.

**Outstanding Partnership Award:** The Office of Environmental Education and Public Affairs (OEEPA) received the award in recognition for its long standing work in partnering with EENC to raise the perception of environmental education as a whole and by providing the EENC members with support and leadership.

**Melva Fager Okun Life Achievement Award:** Diane Silver

Diane Silver lives each of these attributes every day. Specifically Ms. Silver coordinated the 2007 EENC Annual Conference in Arden, North Carolina. She was actively involved in leading EENC’s efforts to advocate for preservation of the Office of Environmental Education, and has been following the progress of the No Child Left
Inside legislation on the national level and educating those in North Carolina about its progress. She also serves on the North American Association of Environmental Educators’ as the Chair of the Arts and Culture Committee. In addition to her specific work as an EENC Board Member she is a lifetime member, continually encourages others to take the work of EENC into their communities, and leads all members by example.

**Outstanding Service Award**: Libby Wilcox, Office of Environmental Education

Ms. Wilcox has managed the N.C. Environmental Education Certification program for many years and has been instrumental in developing the skills of hundreds of certified educators and in developing high-quality environmental educational programs. The Outstanding Service Award recognizes an active member who has served in several key leadership roles making a significant contribution to further the mission of EENC. This individual has given many hours of dedicated service to help shape EENC into a viable statewide professional organization.

**Outstanding Newcomer Award**: Blair Ogburn, Balsam Mountain Trust

Ms. Ogburn serves on the EENC Board as the Education Chair and is being recognized for creating new outreach and education displays for EENC. The Outstanding Newcomer Award was established to recognize a member of five years or less who has made significant contributions to EENC during his or her short time with EENC.
Exceptional Environmental Education Center: Evergreen Community Charter School

The Exceptional Environmental Education Center award recognizes Evergreen Community Charter School for its commitment to creating an environmentally literate student body and encouraging the students to educate the general public through using recognized practices in environmental education which support the mission of EENC.

Each year EENC publically recognizes environmental educators, EENC members, organizations, and partners for their valuable contributions to environmental literacy, the field of environmental education, the EENC organization, and environmental well-being of North Carolina. EENC's mission is to promote excellence in professional development and facilitate networking opportunities, inspiring educators to create an environmentally literate citizenry. Environmental education is a learning process that increases people's knowledge and awareness about the environment and associated challenges, develops the necessary skills and expertise to address the challenges, and fosters attitudes, motivations, and commitments to make informed decisions and take responsible action.
Treasurer’s Report

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Budget Balance: Income - Expenses (Contingency) (755.47)
2010 Board of Directors Meetings
For each meeting, a brief overview of the major topics is listed below. To obtain the agenda or minutes of any meeting, please email our secretary.

January 16th, Piedmont Environmental Center, High Point, NC
Transition meeting between 2009 and 2010 board members; annual strategic plan review; preliminary conference planning; budget planning and approval.

June 11th-June 13th, Blowing Rock Conference Center, Blowing Rock, NC
Reviewed the strategic plan for EENC, including discussion of all older strategic plans to complete a draft plan for 2011. Discuss Conference planning for 2010 conference, sample meals, etc.

December 4th, Agape Center for Environmental Education, near Fuquay-Varina, NC
2010 conference wrap-up; conference policies; 2011 NAAEE conference planning report; budget wrap-up; membership updates.

The EENC Board also held monthly phone conferences approximately monthly in 2010 to cover topic between meetings.

Helping Hands
Help support environmental educators and the work they do by making a contribution to EENC or becoming actively involved in the organization. Monetary donations are essential for both running the organization and its annual conference. Donations can be made online on our website through Google checkout.
EENC would like to thank our sponsors for the 2010 annual conference.

Scholarship sponsor
Progress Energy - $5000

Day Sponsor - $100
Lois Nixon
Sandy Ruble

Supporters - < $100
Stephanie Avett
Ira McGee
Marti Kane
Ann Walter-Fromson
Brad Daniel

In-kind Support (>=$500)
Blowing Rock Conference Center – Meeting space and reduced fees for breakfasts and lunches. $500
Grand Father Mountain – Admission fees waived for Field experience -$520

We would also like to thank the numerous members and organizations who donated items for the silent and live auctions. With your help, we raised nearly $1,400.

EENC would like to thank the following organizations for donating their support and staff time for their employees to sit on the Board of Directors.

- Agape Center for EE
- Balsam Mountain Trust
- High Point Parks and Recreation
- Morehead Planetarium & Science Center
- Mud Pie Planet
- NC Aquarium at Fort Fisher
- NC Coastal Federation
- NC Cooperative Extension Service
- NC Division of Parks and Recreation
- NC Division of Soil and Water Conservation
- Onslow County Schools
- Randolph County Schools
- Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System

Would you like to help in other ways? Donate your time by becoming more involved with the organization. EENC is an all-volunteer organization run by environmental educators for environmental educators. Take ownership of your professional organization by participating in conference or section event planning, serving on EENC’s Board of Directors or joining one of six standing committees: Communications, Education, Membership, Partnership, Policy, and Resource Development. Please visit our website to contact section coordinators or committee chairs to volunteer your time and expertise.