

RRU ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION PROGRAM NEWS



December 2007

With the arrival of a few recent emails, I thought I'd take a moment and put out another issue of the MEEC news!



Our first student moving towards the PhD...

Tai Munro, MA, a member of our second (2004) cohort, has recently been accepted into a PhD program in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. Tai will begin her studies in the fall, 2008.

This is really a wonderful thing for Tai, and really shows that my adage of "memory is short and pain goes away" is really true! :-))

Tai is the first of the MAEEC grads to begin work on a doctorate, and I know she won't be the last. But, speaking as the Program Head, it is really wonderful to see this happen. And I have to note that our fine thesis supervisors really help to initiate graduate students into the craft of research, and in this case, we also have to congratulate **Dr. Catherine O'Brien** of Cape Breton University, for the work she did with Tai as the MA thesis was developed and completed.

Congratulations, Tai!



Funding secured for youth leadership program

Nadine Raynolds, MA (2004 cohort), wrote from the Kootenay region of BC today:

"As you know, I have been working over the last year to research, create a concept, secure partnerships and fundraise to develop and implement a bioregional youth leadership education program. This concept stems from my thesis research, which was another full year of hard work. And the idea has been a growing conversation ever since I started working with Pembina many years ago.

Well today I found out that we have received full funding to go ahead. We had been waiting on this for a few months now and I must admit I was getting discouraged and starting to write the idea off. A wonderful turn in tides.

We have secured all the funding we need to develop the program and run a pilot semester in spring 2009- hopefully here in the Kootenays! I will be working with Pembina in partnership with Pearson College, and will be the program director for this exciting new project. A new and challenging job for me. We are raising a toast over at our place tonight."

As it happened, I had lunch on 6 Dec. with Ruth Whyte, the woman Nadine is working with at Pearson College. Ruth was so excited about getting the funding, and the money is not chicken feed: this is a very significant grant for a pilot program! Ruth, Nadine and their group did an amazing job of proposing a very innovative program to engage young adults just out of high school. For more information on Nadine's research, you can contact her at nadiner@pembina.org



MEEC grad spending time with author Richard Louv

Confidential sources tell me that **Lisa Vitols, MA** (2004 cohort), was seen dining in the company of Richard Louv, author of the wildly popular book *Last child in the woods: Saving our children from nature deficit disorder*, at a recent

event sponsored by Scouts Canada, in Vancouver. Apparently, Rich is always looking for new idea and phrases to describe the things that he's working with, and if we see the word a lot of the word 'resilience' in his upcoming book, we know where it comes from: from Lisa!

Taking a crack at the SSHRC!

Four members of the 2007 cohort took the challenge of applying for a prestigious SSHRC Masters grant. This is a tough challenge to do at the same time that they were also involved in their first distance course, and prior to any research methods courses. I was very impressed with the quality of thought, and very impressed too with the energy and integrity with which these learners, **Kathryn Fullerton, Laura Magrath, Dorothy Kelker, and Rebecca Henn**, applied themselves to this difficult task.

My congratulations to you all for applying... we'll know in the new year who, if any, will receive an award.

A time of Holidays...

The massive MAEEC bureaucracy at RRU, housed in the fortified basement bunker under the Grant Block, will be taking a well-deserved break later this month. Both Rick and Angela send their greetings to



Chanukah



Christmas



Eid Al-Adha

you all, and to your families, for this season.



MEEC Associate Faculty member looks north

Dr. Elin Kelsey has been awarded a writer-in residence grant at the Pierre Berton House in Dawson City Yukon, for this coming summer.

"The program was inspired by author Pierre Berton and carried on by the Berton House Writers' Retreat Society. It is now owned and operated by the Writers' Trust of Canada. Over 30 writers have been able to enjoy and experience Berton House since its inception in 1996."

We'll work out how she'll continue to teach with us during the first residency this coming summer, but we might not see Andy, Kip and Esme as they might stay in the land of the midnight sun and, in their free time, do some moiling for gold.

Elin writes:

"Thanks for asking about Berton House. <<http://bertonhouse.ca/>>. They select four Canadian writers a year from all genres. I will be using the time to write the first book in a series of hopeful books about the environment for kids for my Canadian publisher, Maple Tree Press. The book uses the concept of ecological footprints and will be based on first-person interviews with leading scientists and ecological economists. I am planning to also use the residency to build on the Hope and Environment for Youth writing project I am developing with RRU, Mountain Equipment Coop and Environment Canada. The project will be kicked off at the TUNZA –UNEP International Children's Conference on the Environment <http://www.unep.org/tunza/children/events/icc_2008/> which will be held in Stavanger, Norway in June 2008. I have been asked to lead a children's open space on hope and environment for at least 200 kids aged 10-14 years from as many as 100 countries. My goal through these initiatives is to continue our common desire to provide kids with a more hopeful, yet honest, perspectives on the environment, and to raise the profile of "hope and environment for youth" in both national and international agendas. Here's a piece I wrote on the topic that expands on the original ideas from our paper <<http://www.worldchanging.com/archives/007636.html>>"