

RRU ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION PROGRAM NEWS



February 2008

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



A new Executive Director amongst us...

Jim Robertson (2005 cohort), living in Red Deer AB, wrote:

"I'm back at work full-time as of this week. I'm now the Executive Director of the Waskasoo Environmental Education Society. Our non-profit split into two on January 1, with the Museum going its own way, and my nature centre, historic site (Fort Normandeau - a Riel Rebellion site), & city-wide programs under the newly-formed WEES."

Jim's comment about being back to work relates to a minor horse-riding accident last fall that left him in a world of plaster and braces. Clearly, he had failed to see this news item:

September 23, 2007

Study finds horseback riding more dangerous than motorbikes, skiing, and football

Clinical team recommends helmet and vest use to reduce risk of major traumas

In a study published in the American Journal of Surgery, a team of trauma surgeons and an occupational therapist from the University of Calgary/Calgary Health Region recommends that everyone who rides horses should wear helmets and vests to prevent major, life-altering injuries.

Speaking and getting published

Neal Klassen, MA (2005 cohort), wrote from the Okanagan Valley:

"I just wanted to let you know that I'll present my Parks Thesis findings at the British Columbia Water and Waste Association's annual conference in Whistler in April. Also, I'm, getting married on August 8: 08/08/08."

He then went on to say:

"The November issue of *Environmental Science and Engineering*, which includes an article I wrote based on my thesis, is available online: <http://www.esemag.com/> Just click on the November 2007 Issue and look for the article: *Water Conservation Planning for BC's Municipal Parks*.

It's nice to see that MA after my name."

Congratulations on all of this, Neal, and especially on your up-coming marriage! Clearly, you were able to get more done over the past few years than simply writing your thesis!



Sharina in the Arctic

Sharina Dodsworth (2007 cohort) wrote in early December:

Just wanted to update you on what I've been up to for the past week.

For work, a colleague and I flew to chilly, chilly Iqaluit last week, enroute to Pangnirtung and Qikiqtarjuaq to deliver a school workshop program on climate change to students in grades 2 all the way up to grade 12!

This is a workshop program I developed and delivered in Igloodik and Rankin Inlet last winter, and after putting the program through the ADDIE ringer with Milt this Fall, was totally excited to re-launch the program in Qik and Pang this time around. In an hour and a half to 90 minutes, the hands-on, interactive workshop exposes youth to climate change basics and provides an environment for dialogue and a way for youth to share with us and with each other some of the changes they are

seeing in their own communities due to changing climate. We leave every student with a compact fluorescent lightbulb (compliments of GE Canada, one of our sponsors), which we have calculated to reduce diesel fuel consumption by just over 100 litres over the course of the bulb's lifetime. Given the expensive cost of electricity and heat from diesel fuel generators in the north, these lightbulbs, and energy efficiency practises in general stand to save people a lot of money!

Qikitarjuaq is a town of about 500 people. A very TINY and remote place. Flying in is just incredible... you see this expanse of rock, snow-covered fjords, icebergs popping up out of the sea ice, and then this tiny little settlement... it's crazy to imagine how people can actually live in a place like that! When we arrived at the airport, which is simply a little shack next to the airstrip, we were greeted by the school principal, who seriously cannot be more than a couple years older than me, if that. He's a guy from London, Ontario and it turns out that most of the staff at the school were qallunaq (white people) from either Newfoundland or Ontario. This was different from Pangnirtung, where most of the teachers were Inuk. So on the way to the co-op where we were staying, the principal pointed out polar bear tracks in the snow - this just a few houses down from the co-op! We were really hoping to see a polar bear while in Qik - but part of me sort of is glad that we didn't have any scary encounters. The locals are actually pretty scared of polar bears, especially the kids... so there was definitely a recognizable tension around the mention of them, given the fact that one had been visiting lately. Wild!

Pangnirtung was absolutely beautiful - and slightly larger than Qik at 1,300 people. We stayed with an elderly woman there - Hannah - who took such great care of us, and worked so hard at speaking in English, when it was clearly a struggle. I was so glad we stayed with her and her foster kids rather than the super-expensive hotel. I really learned a lot about the town, and the Inuit way of life (much the same as ours, only with Inuktitut radio and ulus). Plus we got a couple of amazing meals - caribou stew, bannock and baked arctic ... soooo good.

A scholarship from the BC Working Group on Sustainability Education...

Garry Cotter (2006 cohort) wrote from Squamish:

“Just a quick thank you for your recent letters of support for my application for the "walking-the-talk" research scholarship through the BC Working Group on Sustainability Education. The committee liked my area of study looking at motivating factors that contribute to the high level of commitment among youth who volunteer at North Vancouver School District's Environmental Learning Center (NVOS).

I was notified today that I will be receiving a \$7,500.00 research scholarship from the BC Working Group on Sustainability Education.

Garry also has taken part in a joint project that links secondary schools in BC, Mexico and California, engaging students in projects looking at environmental and sustainability issues. He travelled with a group of students from Squamish to California in January to take part in this collaborative project.

Cleared to convocate in June...

Our congratulations to these students who have completed their theses and are ready to walk across the stage at the June convocation.

Jill Viccars: “The Sage-Ing Boom: Motivation, Inspiration, And Hope”

Tara Stuckey: “ Understanding Information Requirements Of Stakeholders Within Alberta’s Synergy Groups: A Needs Analysis”

Shelagh Smith: “Dancing our niche: Learning from and partnering with more-than-human nature Towards ecological sustainability”

Craigh Hyslop: ”Sustainable Tourism: Understanding Development Goals For Rock Climbing Businesses In Krabi Province, Thailand”

Nadine Lefort: “Fostering Connections: Teachers’ Responses To Affective Professional Development”

Amy McPhee: “Group Development At The Edge Of Chaos: A Case Study Of Leadership And Connection To Nature In A Wilderness Leadership

Training Program”

Daniel Arbour: “Private Land Donation: The Heron Rocks Story”

And then there are the babies...

We hope to see **Helene Fluery** (2006 cohort) at this summer’s final residency, as she informs us that she should be having her first child in July... there has been a huge outpouring of support from her cohort, with folks already working on a baby-sitting schedule! Congratulations and best wishes to you, Helene!!

And our congratulations go out to **Mike Klassen** (2007 cohort) on the birth of his second son, River Jon Frederick Klassen on 16 February. This picture of his older son, Timber, holding newborn River, is just too cute!



Renewing Hope: Pathways of Religious Environmentalism

Rick will be attending this conference at Yale University Divinity School at the end of February. For more information, see http://www.yale.edu/divinity/news/071128_news_renewing.shtml