

Wisconsin Environmental Science Teacher Network Newsletter March 2008

Greetings! This electronic newsletter is sent four times per year from the Wisconsin Environmental Science Teacher Network. The Network helps ES teachers connect with one another, with resources, and with professional development opportunities. Please contact me with any questions or visit our web site for more information: www.uwsp.edu/wcee/envsci.

~ Sunshine Buchholz, Network Coordinator (sbuchhol@uwsp.edu)

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News

1) Wisconsin Environmental Science Course Framework under Development

With the help of dedicated teachers in Wisconsin, a new environmental science course framework is being developed. The framework will provide a consistent foundation from which environmental science courses in Wisconsin are taught, aid new teachers in developing environmental science courses, provide veteran environmental science teachers with new ideas, and facilitate the sharing of ideas and resources between educators. The framework identifies themes, topics, and concepts for a year-long high school environmental science course with suggestions on adapting the material for shorter courses.

The framework will first be shared with participants of the environmental science gathering on August 19, 2008 (see events below). The completed framework will be available online and educators will be encouraged to exchange resources such as labs, activities, and assessment ideas that support the framework and invigorate their courses. Watch for updates on the development of this excellent resource.

2) Beloit Memorial Environmental Club – Green Aspirations for the School Roof

The student run Environmental Club at Beloit Memorial High School has been working hard to secure a Green Grid green roof for their school building. Plans for the project include a pond, an outdoor classroom, and pathways for viewing the green grids. The ambitious group has developed an action plan, worked to increase community support, and is writing grants to secure needed funding for the project. If you want to learn more about this ambitious project visit the club's web site at: <http://bmhsgreenroof.weebly.com/index.html>.

To learn about other school environmental clubs in Wisconsin visit:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/wcee/envsci/clubs.htm>

Events

3) Exciting Environmental Science Event – Tuesday, August 19, 2008

Do not miss the first gathering of the Wisconsin Environmental Science Teacher Network this summer in Stevens Point. This day-long event will celebrate environmental science education, provide networking opportunities, and promote the sharing of ideas and resources. Keynote speakers include George Meyer, executive director of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, and Elizabeth Burmaster, state superintendent, (invited). Concurrent sessions highlight environmental science resources, student action projects, teaching local issues, and systems thinking. The new Wisconsin Environmental Science Course Framework will be unveiled and educators will be able to exchange resources to enhance their courses.

The evening prior to the event includes an environmental science geocaching activity and a campfire social open to all for no charge. Inexpensive lodging and meals are available. Earn one graduate credit for attending the entire event. For up-to-date event information visit: www.uwsp.edu/wcee/summit. This will be the largest gathering ever held exclusively for environmental science teachers in Wisconsin.

4) Environmental Science at WSST Convention – March 13-15, 2008

Network with other environmental science teachers at the Wisconsin Society of Science Teachers convention in Lake Geneva March 13-15. Convention web site: <http://www.mrstenessen.com/WSST08/scienceindex.htm>.

There are many great environmental science sessions including: **Environmental Science Resources You Don't Want to Miss!** Sunshine Buchholz, Wisconsin Environmental Science Teacher Network Coordinator, and several environmental science teachers are presenting Friday from 11:30 am-12:20 pm. You'll receive ready to use classroom activities with handouts, preview the new environmental science course framework, and receive information about the 2008 Environmental Science Teacher Summit.

Environmental Science Social: Join environmental science teachers for a networking social Friday evening 30 minutes prior to the banquet. Look for the sign!

Exhibit Hall: Visit with the Network coordinator at the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education (WCEE) exhibit. Thursday: 4:00-7:00 pm and Friday: 8:00 am - 4:00 pm

Resources and Opportunities

5) Intriguing Article for Your Waste Unit

The World's Rubbish Dump: A Garbage Tip That Stretches From Hawaii to Japan

A "plastic soup" of waste floating in the Pacific Ocean is growing at an alarming rate and now covers an area twice the size of the continental United States, scientists have said. The vast expanse of debris - in effect the world's largest rubbish dump - is held in place by swirling underwater currents. This drifting "soup" stretches from about 500 nautical miles off the Californian coast, across the northern Pacific, past Hawaii and almost as far as Japan. Full Article: <http://www.commondreams.org/archive/2008/02/05/6856/>

6) Water – A World Wide Panorama

This site from the University of California, Berkeley provides remarkable 360 degree views of rivers, lakes, and oceans throughout the world (a kind of on-the-ground Google Earth for water). Click on each dot from the world map and it will bring up one or more panoramas that can be enlarged to full screen size (requires Quick Time plug in). <http://geoimages.berkeley.edu/worldwidepanorama/wwp605/index.html>

7) HippoCampus – Multimedia Course Enhancements

High-quality, multimedia content for high school environmental science and AP environmental science courses. Browse by topic to find videos and simulations such as energy flow, population, and microclimate or find resources aligned with specific environmental science textbooks. <http://hippocampus.org/>

8) The Story of Stuff

From its extraction through sale, use and disposal, all the stuff in our lives affects communities at home and abroad, yet most of this is hidden from view. The Story of Stuff is a 20-minute, fast-paced, fact-filled look at

the underside of our production and consumption patterns. The Story of Stuff exposes the connections between a huge number of environmental and social issues, and calls us together to create a more sustainable and just world. It'll teach you something, it'll make you laugh, and it just may change the way you look at all the stuff in your life forever. <http://www.storyofstuff.com/>

9) Ecology/Environmental Science Teaching Award

Nomination Deadline: March 15, 2008

This National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT) award will be given to a secondary school teacher who has successfully developed and demonstrated an innovative approach in the teaching of ecology/environmental science and has carried his/her commitment to the environment into the community. Sponsored by Vernier Software & Technology, the award includes \$1,000 toward travel expenses to the NABT Professional Development Conference, \$500 of Vernier equipment, and a one-year complimentary NABT membership. More information: <http://www.nabt.org/sites/S1/index.php?p=290>

10) Offering Environmental Science for the First Time or Looking for a New Program?

The GEODE Initiative at Northwestern University is pleased to offer a free professional development opportunity to a limited number of high school environmental science teachers. This opportunity is available to schools that adopt Investigations in Environmental Science, a new inquiry-based environmental science textbook, and will be implementing it for the first time in 2008-09. The professional development is being offered as part of a research study on professional development sponsored by the National Science Foundation and led by researchers at the University of Michigan.

Teachers selected for the study will receive 48 hours of professional development (valued at \$2000) and a stipend at the completion of each year of the study (total of \$1500 over two years). Accepted teachers and their principals must have purchased (or commit to purchasing) the instructional materials, must commit to participating fully in the summer and academic year professional development workshops, and must commit to participating in the study, including classroom data collection, for two years.

- * For more information about this opportunity, visit: <http://www.geode.northwestern.edu/investigations/>
- * Or contact: Beth Kubitskey, Eastern Michigan University: 734-487-8798 or e-mail iopd-info@umich.edu
- * For information about purchasing Investigations in Environmental Science, contact Its About Time Publishers at <http://www.its-about-time.com/htmls/investines/inves.html> or (888) 698-8463.

This email was generated by the Wisconsin Environmental Science Teacher Network at UW-Stevens Point.

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