

channels news from the outdoor school winter 2009

Chan·nels n.pl. 1. the beds of a stream or river 2. means of communication or expression 3. pathways or directions of thought or action <new channels of exploration>

With great pleasure we bring you the second edition of Channels, a newsletter for friends of the Outdoor School. 2009 brings exciting opportunities for strengthening relationships and forging new partnerships, and extending our efforts to empower new generations of environmental stewards. A New Year and progress of the North Shore Credit Union Environmental Learning Centre is going strong. In this issue we provide an update on the campus revitalization, welcome new faces, and recognize remarkable alumni achievements. Several social events are in the works to celebrate our 40th birthday, and we continue to put out the call to reconnect with our valued Outdoor School alumni and friends.



Capilano University joins leadership team

We are delighted to welcome Casey Dorin, Dean, Howe Sound and Tourism Programs at Capilano University, to the Outdoor School Advisory Committee. Casey is responsible for the Tourism and Outdoor Recreation department and all educational activities from Lions Bay to Mount Currie. Capilano University is currently working with the North Vancouver School District and a number of community members and businesses to position Squamish as an internationally preferred learning destination. Casey joins an exceptional group of educators and community leaders that will help guide the campus revitalization and the new provincial focus of the Outdoor School.

A Natural Place to Meet

Squamish Chamber of Commerce business members enjoyed a sold-out February luncheon in the natural setting of the Outdoor School conference center. Chef Enrick Gagnon and his team are ushering in a new culinary era at the Outdoor School that highlights fresh, local food as a central component of a healthy learning environment for all ages. In addition to providing unique experiences to learners at the Outdoor school, our beautiful campus hosts visitors from around the region and internationally for special events, retreats, conferences, seminars, and workshops. The private rental of the Outdoor School campus supports children's programs and on-site facility improvements. For facility rental information please contact mindy@nvsd44.bc.ca



"I would like to thank you for teaching us all the main things of the forest, for teaching us about how hard it is to be a salmon... it is something I will remember for a long time." Lisa (grade 4)

A Sustainable Campus



The masterplan for the Outdoor School, developed by Larry McFarland Architects and guided by the Outdoor School Steering and Advisory Committees, is near completion. Creating a masterplan and establishing overall guidelines in accordance with the vision for the revitalization of the Outdoor School site provided an opportunity to collectively develop a strategic and organized approach to integrated campus planning. The project committee teams used their imaginations to envision a more workable, more livable and more sustainable campus— one that will carry the Outdoor School's teaching, research and services into the future as a recognized provincial Centre of Excellence for environmental education. The concept plan for the new campus sought to achieve several goals including footprint consolidation, space-efficiency, and multi-purpose, flexible learning spaces able to accommodate a variety of groups. Using a phased-in approach, the proposed facilities are visionary in their functionality, incorporating best practices in sustainable building design and green technology, while meeting programmatic and economic goals. Site development is conducted in ongoing consultation with our many partners - the Nature Conservancy of Canada, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, biologists, river-dynamics engineers and other host community and professional experts – who share our vision that the site and its habitats, be returned, over time, to a condition closer to its original natural state.

The campus masterplan goes beyond walls of the built facilities, and extends to the boundaries of the site and beyond, and supports the Outdoor School's aspiration to reconnect learners of all ages and abilities to the landscapes and communities in which they live, work and play.



DGS Construction joins ELC Project Team

We are pleased to welcome DGS Construction to the learning centre project team to oversee and manage construction of the North Shore Credit Union Environmental Learning Centre. Established in 1983, DGS brings to the project an extensive school portfolio, as well as experience in green building projects achieving LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold and Silver certification. As an integral member of the project team, DGS is committed to sustainable and environmentally conscious construction that will minimize impact on the site and leave a legacy facility for future generations.

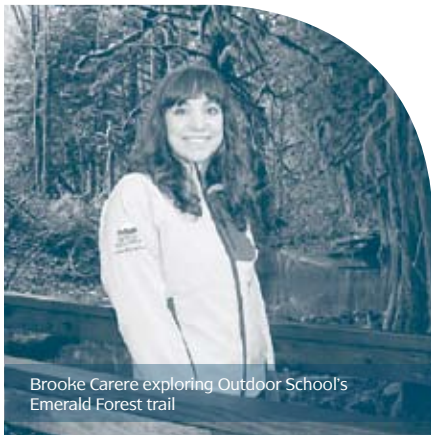


Lonsdale School lives on in the new Environmental Learning Centre

Original heavy timber framing materials salvaged from the Lonsdale School will be reused in the construction of the North Shore Credit Union Environmental Learning Centre. The timbers will be planed down to 2"x12" and used as exposed rafters supporting the roof of the Centre. The salvaged wood will also be used in smaller sizes in the wall construction.

Some of the timber may be used to construct a feature piece of furniture or millwork, to showcase the beautiful first-growth fir. This is just one of the examples of the environmentally-friendly features that will be showcased in the new gateway centre, representing a commitment to apply in-practice the Outdoor School's teachings.

Sea to Sky Corridor gets Climate Action Facilitator



Brooke Carerer exploring Outdoor School's Emerald Forest trail

A warm corridor welcome to Brooke Carerer, Climate Action Facilitator for the Sea to Sky. Brooke is working with the Youth Climate Leadership Alliance (YCLA) a division of the provincial Ministry of the Environment. The objectives of the YCLA are:

- promote climate change curriculum to K-12
- connect high school students with local stewardship programs
- identify and work with stewardship projects on climate change
- assist with the BC Government's Trees for Tomorrow initiative

"I believe that the YCLA and the Outdoor School are both working towards the same objective - engaging youth in outdoor experiences to create strong, confident individuals, with intrinsic connections to our natural environment, and promoting sustainable lifestyles," says Brooke. The Outdoor School looks forward to partnering with the Ministry of the Environment and the Youth Climate Leadership Alliance in support of the stewardship programs in our region and throughout the province.

"Weaving our Futures – A Celebration of Collaborative Leadership"



From left to right:
Cathy Jenkins, Bernadette Billy (front row)
Kate Keogh, Colleen & Victor Elderton (back row)

Outdoor School administrators and friends participated in "Weaving our Futures – A Celebration of Collaborative Leadership" at the Squamish Lilwat Cultural Centre on January 16, 2009. Key topics at the Whistler Forum for Dialogue event were Learning and Leading with First Nations, and Women in Leadership: Wisdom for the Balancing Act.

Guest speakers included Dr. Jo-Ann Archibald, the associate dean of Indigenous Education at the University of British Columbia; Marlane Christensen, president of the Industry Council for Aboriginal Business; Kim Brooks, department head of Squamish Nation Health Services; and leaders from the Minerva Foundation Combining Our Strengths program, a partnership of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Women in British Columbia.

Spotlight on Alumni

From Cheakamus Coho to Arctic Char - a learning journey



My name is Analise Saely and I am an alumna of the Outdoor School, both as a student and as a counsellor. My exposure to environmental education and cultural experiences through Outdoor School and the Big House program helped me when preparing to deliver science based workshops to youth in Nunavut through ACTUA programs this past summer. The goal of the ACTUA programs was to bring science, both the western and traditional ecological knowledge to the forefront of kids' minds for a week in the summer. I focused on ecology, with lessons like "Blubber Mitts", where students put their hands into bags of lard and then into icy cold water to learn about Arctic marine mammal adaptation. A highlight of the summer took place during an on-the-land camp in Rankin Inlet, just off Hudson's Bay. After a long hike on the tundra learning GPS technology, students then had a lesson on Inukshuk technology, which as was pointed out, is useful when the GPS runs out of batteries! The awe and wonder I felt as a student at Outdoor School was passed onto the students in Nunavut and I was able to recapture my own sense of awe while learning from the children and elders in communities around the North.

Submitted by Analise Saely. Analise currently works for the Government of Canada as an Environmental Assessment Trainer, Operational Aboriginal Policy, at the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency in Vancouver.



North Vancouver Outdoor School Alumni and volunteers at Open House 2008

Outdoor School Open House

**Save the date:
Sunday, June 7, 2009**

A Great Day for Learning

Every year the Outdoor School opens its doors to the community for a full day of hands-on family fun and natural experiences.

This year the Outdoor School turns 40! Come join Outdoor School staff, alumni, and friends as we celebrate forty years and forward.

For more information on how you can get involved contact:

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