2017
Midwest Environmental Education Conference

Live in the NOW, with Focus on the FUTURE

October 11-14, 2017
Q Center - St. Charles, IL.

MEEConference.org

/EnvironEdofIL  @EnvironEdofIL
## Conference at a Glance

### Wednesday, October 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8am–5pm</td>
<td>Pre-Conference Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Project Learning Tree® Advanced Facilitator Training at Hickory Knolls Discovery Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>4pm</td>
<td>Conference Check-in at the Q Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>6–7pm</td>
<td>DINNER</td>
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<tr>
<td>7–8:30pm</td>
<td>Exhibit Hall Social</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30–9:30pm</td>
<td>Opening Speaker: Dr. Bob Carter</td>
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### Thursday, October 12

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:30–8:30am</td>
<td>BREAKFAST</td>
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<tr>
<td>7am–7pm</td>
<td>Conference Check-In Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30–11am</td>
<td>Nourishment Hub Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>9am–6pm</td>
<td>Exhibit Hall Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>8–10:15am</td>
<td>Concurrent Sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30–11am</td>
<td>Exhibit Hall Kick-off</td>
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<tr>
<td>11am–12pm</td>
<td>Concurrent Sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:15–1:15pm</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:15–2:15pm</td>
<td>Roundtable Sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>2–5pm</td>
<td>Nourishment Hub Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:30–4:45pm</td>
<td>Concurrent Sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>5–6pm</td>
<td>Exhibit Hall Wrap Up</td>
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<td>6–8pm</td>
<td>DINNER</td>
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<tr>
<td>8–10pm</td>
<td>Movie Night: Viewing of Green Fire and Land Ethics Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>8am–12pm</td>
<td>Redhawk: Drop-In Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>9–11:30am</td>
<td>Morning Off-Site Sessions</td>
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<td>• Tour Historic Fabyan Villa and Japanese Tea Gardens</td>
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<tr>
<td>8am–5pm</td>
<td>Full Day Off-Site Sessions</td>
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<td>• From Seed Sandbox to Nature Preschool: Our Early Childhood Journey</td>
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### Saturday, October 14

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<tr>
<td>7–11am</td>
<td>Conference Check-In Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:30–11am</td>
<td>Nourishment Hub Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>9–10am</td>
<td>Regional Speaker: Rachel Larimore</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:15–11:15am</td>
<td>Concurrent Sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:15–1:15pm</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:15–3:30pm</td>
<td>Concurrent Sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>2–4pm</td>
<td>Nourishment Hub Open</td>
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<tr>
<td>4pm</td>
<td>Conference Check-Out from the Q Center</td>
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*Live in the NOW, with Focus on the FUTURE*

Graphic design donated by Pam Leiter
Join us!

In this ever-changing world with increasing global focus, how do your local environmental education efforts play a role and make a positive impact?

Explore topics that stem from your backyard and grow far beyond as you make connections though the all-inclusive experience of MEEC 2017.

Embrace the opportunity to engage with captivating speakers, diverse concurrent sessions, exhilarating off-site field studies, impactful workshops, a host of exhibits and lively social gatherings!

MEEC 2017 strives to connect you to people, places and opportunities that are relevant now and long into the future.

Sponsors

The 2017 MEEC would not be possible without its generous sponsors:

**Microscope:**
($5,000 - $7,499)
- Illinois Environmental Education Advancement Consortium

**Magnifying Glass:**
($1,000 - $2,499)
- Champaign County Forest Preserve District
- Illinois Arborist Association
- Illinois Project WILD
- Conserve School

**Loupe Magnifier:**
($2,500 - $4,999)
- Chicago Botanic Garden
- Illinois Project Learning Tree
- VDM Consulting Group

**Glasses:**
(Up to $999)
- Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
- Illinois Humanities Council
- Spring Valley Nature Center
- Boone County Conservation District
- St. Charles Park District

Thank you!
Letter from the Steering Committee

Hello and welcome!

We are thrilled to have your participation in the 2017 Midwest Environmental Education Conference (MEEC) - Live in the Now, with Focus on the Future!

MEEC is becoming more important than ever. Feeling inspired, making connections, gaining priceless knowledge, and reinforcing the importance of our commitment to the field of EE is just the beginning. We are dedicated to providing you with an impactful conference experience full of passion, professionalism, expertise, and diversity.

We look forward to visiting with you and hearing about your EE adventures! Let's rally together and be the movement that Lives in the Now, with Focus on the Future.

Sincerely,
2017 MEEC Steering Committee
Jennifer VanDerMolen
Laura McCoy
Jame Holt

Conference Strands

Nature Niche:
Find your connection to global issues. This niche focuses on the hard facts and scientific research behind your programs with topics from global warming to the local pond.

Native Niche:
Issues in environmental and cultural interpretation exist in your own backyard. This niche focuses on interpretation skills and techniques and methods for promoting local advocacy.

Neighborhood Niche:
Look to your community to grow your public programming and relevance. This niche focuses on creating partnerships through volunteer programs, stewardship, grant writing, and reaching out to community organizations.

Nurture Niche:
Integrate your educational programs. This niche focuses on current trends in formal education from NGSS and STEM to nature preschools and school outreach programs.

Nourishment Niche:
Explore the science behind what you eat. This niche focuses on facts about GMOs, the farm to table movement, organic farming, schoolyard gardens and soil science.
Pre-Conference Workshop

All Project Learning Tree M.O.R.E. (Making Outreach Relevant to Educators) Advanced Facilitator Training
Wednesday, Oct. 11
8:00am-5:00pm
Hickory Knolls Discovery Center, St. Charles, IL

All current PLT Facilitators, from any state, are invited to this unique opportunity for advanced Facilitator professional development. Explore and improve your content knowledge and facilitation skills related to the national Project Learning Tree program in relation to both formal and non-formal education settings. Participants will have the opportunity to attend a variety of both small-group and general session trainings throughout the day instructed by visiting State PLT Coordinators and national staff.

Session topics will include:
• Creating Outcomes-Based Agendas
• Adhering to and Selecting Activities for Outcomes-Based Agendas
• 5+ Guiding Principles of Professional Development
• PLT correlations to NGSS (IL Standards for Science) & CCSS
• Introduction to Professional Teaching Standards
• National PLT Materials & Marketing Update (including activity modeling and overviews of Early Childhood GreenSchools; Sharing Nature with Families; SE Forests and Climate Change & New Online PLT Units)
• STEM in Early Childhood
• Interpretive Techniques in Teacher Professional Development

And, of course, we are hosting a multi-state networking luncheon and mixer! Plan to join fellow state PLT Facilitators and enjoy the benefits of receiving expert professional development thanks to your service as a PLT Facilitator.

Maximum participants: 30
Fee: $25

Special Recognition to the American Forest Foundation Model Programs Initiative Grant & the Illinois Arborist Association for sponsorship of this event.

Exhibit Hall

Exhibiting at the 2017 Midwest Environmental Education Conference provides exposure to 200 industry professionals ready to engage, share and network!

Exhibiting at the 2017 MEEC will provide your business or organization the opportunity to interact with environmental educators, natural resource specialists, agency administrators, professors, classroom teachers, university students, and professionals from nature centers, zoos, museums, universities, and schools from across the the Midwest. Show off your expertise and immerse yourself in the industry’s best at the Exhibit Hall socials. Participate in the Exhibit Hall Scavenger Hunt to enter to win raffle prizes and view nature art from Bridges Montessori Academy.

Visit http://meeconference.org/call-for-exhibitors/ for more information.
Opening Speaker: Dr. Bob Carter

Wednesday, Oct. 11
8:30-9:30pm
Dr. Bob Carter, Owner of Heartland Interpretation & Education

Dr. Bob Carter has been active in the fields of environmental and outdoor education and heritage interpretation for the past three decades. He spent 22 of those years at Northern Illinois University (NIU) teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in environmental education, outdoor education, interpretation, and museum studies. For the last several of those years he also served as Curator of NIU's Blackwell History of Education Museum and Research Collections.

“Dr. Bob,” as many friends, colleagues, and students call him, received his B.A. in Environmental Studies from Northeastern Illinois University, his M.S. in Outdoor Teacher Education, and his doctorate in Adult and Higher Education from Northern Illinois University. Dr. Carter is a long-time advocate for programs such as Project WILD, Project WET, and Project Learning Tree (PLT), and has served as a member of the PLT Advisory Council for the Environmental Education Association of Illinois (EEAI). In 2014 he was given an Outstanding Educator award by Project learning Tree for his continual promotion of PLT materials with his student teachers at NIU. He is also a winner of EEAI’s highest award, the Malcolm D. Swan Award for outstanding service and contribution to the field of environmental education in Illinois.

Although retired from academia since June 2016, Dr. Bob continues his involvement in environmental education as a Consulting Editor for the Journal of Environmental Education, a member of the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) EE Certification Advisory Board, and as a trainer for NAAEE’s Guidelines for Excellence. He is also the current director of the National Association for Interpretation (NAI) Heartland Region, is a Certified Interpretive Trainer, and contributes a quarterly column to NAI’s Legacy magazine. He considers himself an “itinerant historian” of EE, publishing on the topic and even creating a first person interpretive character named “Environmental Ed.”

Regional Speaker: Rachel Larimore

Saturday, Oct. 14
9:00-10:00am
Rachel A. Larimore, Director of Education, Chippewa Nature Center, Midland, MI

Native Illinois farm girl, Rachel Larimore, has been highly respected for her lifelong dedication to environmental education. Focusing on early childhood connections over the past decade, Rachel has been the keystone for Chippewa Nature Center’s nature preschool and kindergarten. From Rachel’s childhood days of hunting moles to protect her dad’s crops and building forts along the river, to her high school experiences in adventure camp, she shaped her goal “to teach others about the wonders of the outdoors in order to inspire and motivate them to protect the natural world.”

She happily lives out her goal through her work, writing, and academic pursuits each day. Rachel’s achievements feature a phenomenal list of certifications and trainings, publications, awards and education.
Special Guest: Sal Redhawk

Sal “Redhawk” Camacho, lifelong resident of Illinois and descendent of the Zapatecan and Chichimecan, has been recognized for his long career and passion for cultural and historical interpretation.

Redhawk’s efforts and accomplishments have been noted by the American Indian Center in Chicago and the tribal historians of the Forest Band of Pottawatomi. In 1976, Redhawk re-enacted the fur trade by canoeing 28- to 34-foot Montreal canoes over Lake Superior, carrying cast iron gifts to Old Fort William in Thunder Bay Canada during the Bicentennial. He has participated in many re-enactments since 2000 sharing his knowledge with thousands.

Redhawk’s efforts continue with the construction of an American Indian village in Yorkville, Illinois and a wigwam at the Little Red School House in Willow Springs, Illinois. His dedication has led to elementary to collegiate and public programs at various libraries, forest preserve districts, historical societies, and museums throughout Illinois.

Redhawk continues his education with assistance from the elders at White Earth Ojibwe and Mille Lacs Ojibwe Reservations in Minnesota as well as Potawatomi elders in Wisconsin.

Drop-In Workshop
Friday, Oct. 13
8:00am-12:00pm
Q Center parking lot

Enjoy a portrayal of a Potawatomi Indian from the late 18th and early 19th century with period clothing, tools and weapons as performed by Sal “Redhawk” Camacho of Elgin, Illinois.

Explore Redhawk's mobile longhome used for cultural and historical interpretation—creating a link from the present to the past. “Educating visitors about Native Americans is important because portrayals of American Indians are often inaccurate,” says Redhawk, who has the blessing of the elders of the Potawatomi Nation.

Redhawk encourages attendees to discuss cultural and historical interpretation, learn about the Potawatomi ways and ask any questions they may have.

Come and go anytime during this open workshop.
Entertainment

Exhibit Hall Social
Wednesday, Oct. 11
7:00-8:30pm
Fox Valley Ballroom, Q Center
Start 2017 MEEC opening night off right and with EE experts! Be the first to explore and discover midwest’s industry’s finest. Learn more, network more, and beat the crowds!

Exhibit Hall Kick-Off
Thursday, Oct. 12
10:30-11:00am
Fox Valley Ballroom, Q Center
Grab a delicious snack at the Q Center Nourishment Hub and meet us in the Exhibit Hall for games and prizes! Network and learn from the best as you collect answers in the Exhibit Hall Scavenger Hunt. Finish the hunt and enter to win raffle prizes! Winners will be announced at the Exhibit Hall Wrap-Up on Thursday.

Exhibit Hall Wrap-Up
Thursday, Oct. 12
5:00-6:00pm
Fox Valley Ballroom, Q Center
End the afternoon with the industry’s best at the Exhibit Hall Wrap Up. Mix and mingle while finishing your Exhibit Hall Scavenger Hunt to enter to win raffle prizes. Winners will be announced shortly before 6:00pm.

Movie Night
Thursday, Oct. 12
7:45-10:00pm
Fox Valley Ballroom, Q Center
Kick back and relax with the classic combo of popcorn a movie! Join us in viewing Green Fire: Aldo Leopold and a Land Ethic for Our Time and conclude with a group discussion. Doors open at 7:45pm. Grab your movie treat and seat for the movie’s 8:00pm start time!

Nature Costume Ball
Friday, Oct. 13
8:00-11:00pm
Fox Valley Ballroom, Q Center
Calling all forest fairies, moss men, and furry creatures! Stir things up at MEEC 2017 at the Nature Costume Ball featuring local cover band Tricky Mission. Smile for the photo booth, jazz it up for the costume contest, and dance the night away! Try your luck and support MEEC by participating in the silent auction, raffles and more!
Off-Site Sessions on Friday, Oct 13

Full Day
From Seed Sandbox to Nature Preschool: Our Early Childhood Journey
Friday, Oct. 13
8:00am-5:00pm
Chicago Botanic Garden, Glencoe, IL
Come learn about the first year of the Garden’s Nature Preschool: our successes, challenges, and lessons learned. Review the curriculum and best practices we applied in our program, participate in nature-play-based activities that worked really well with our students, and hear stories of their learning and how we documented it. Take away lessons and ideas to incorporate more nature in your own setting. Lunch is provided.
Maximum participants: 30
Fee: $50

Half Day
Tour Historic Fabyan Villa and Japanese Tea Gardens
Friday, Oct. 13
9:00-11:30am
Fabyan Villa Museum & Japanese Gardens, Geneva, IL
The Villa, re-designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1907, is home to many artifacts originally collected by George and Nelle Fabyan for their private museum. This is a unique opportunity to learn about a successful partnership between a preservation group and a forest preserve.
Maximum participants: 20
Fee: $25

Explore Nature
Friday, Oct. 13
1:00-4:00pm
Crabtree Nature Center, Barrington Hills, IL
Visit Crabtree Nature Center to learn about building a playscape from the forest floor up. We will discuss funding, volunteers, successes and challenges. While there, we will have the opportunity to hike through a restored prairie and take a look through the nature center.
Maximum participants: 30
Fee: $15

Fox River Canoeing
Friday, Oct. 13
1:00-5:00pm
Fox River, Jon Duerr Forest Preserve
Fox River is home to a myriad of species of fish, turtles, birds and other aquatic area life and is an important ecological resource. Join St. Charles Park District staff on a three hour canoe trip that begins at Jon Duerr Forest Preserve and end at Pottawatomie Park.
Maximum participants: 12
Fee: $25
Conference Registration

Full Registration Fees

Early Bird Rate: $775 (by August 18) ($175 for EEAI Registration; $200 per night for room and board at Q Center)
Regular Rate: $900 (after August 18) ($300 for EEAI Registration; $200 per night for room and board at Q Center)

Includes:
• Standard hotel room at Q Center from Wednesday, Oct. 11 to Saturday, Oct. 14 (you must complete a separate registration for your room and board at the Q Center)
• Parking at the Q Center
• The following meals:
  • Wednesday: dinner
  • Thursday: breakfast, lunch, dinner and nourishment hubs in morning and afternoon
  • Friday: breakfast, lunch, dinner and nourishment hubs in morning and afternoon
  • Saturday: breakfast, lunch, dinner and nourishment hubs in morning and afternoon

Daily Rate: $170/day ($75 for EEAI Registration; $95 for Q Center)
• Includes lunch and parking only
• Dinner at the Q Center is available for an additional $35 or visit the Q Center's Brick Stone Bistro for walk up counter service

Registration fees above include room/board at the Q Center. However, you must register and pay separately for the conference and room/board.

How to Register:
1. Register and pay the base price for the conference online at
   https://www.gifttool.com/registrar/ShowEventDetails?ID=2264&EID=22344
2. Follow the instructions at the end of your online registration to register and pay for your lodging at the Q Center ($200 per night).

For more information visit http://meeconference.org/register/.

Registration deadline: September 19, 2017.

Cancellation and Refund Policy
Registration fees will be refunded, minus an $80 administration fee, if the cancellation is received in writing no later than September 19, 2017. After that date, registration fees are non-refundable. Any refunds will only be mailed via check after the conference is over. Substitutions are allowed. To request a cancellation or to make a change, email Stacey Clementz at eeaiconference@gmail.com.

Limited Scholarships are Available
2017 MEEC is for everyone! The Environmental Education Association of Illinois is dedicated to following their mission to provide professional development and assist with funding for trainings, workshops, and projects. Scholarships are a reimbursement, and you must register and pay for the conference and three nights of room/board at the Q Center up front. Scholarship money will be awarded after the conference, upon proof of attendance. We welcome you to apply at http://meeconference.org/apply-for-scholarship.
Lodging

Q Center Lodging Information
The Q Center will exclusively provide lodging accommodations for 2017 MEEC registrations. Fees include meals at the Q Tower, parking, a standard hotel room, and endless amenities in a professional setting in the woods!
https://register.qcenter.com/home.asp?EventID=1407&r=1

Directions
Q Center - A Dolce Conference Center
1405 N 5th Avenue
St. Charles, IL 60174


Call the Q Center directly at 630-377-3100 for transportation services from surrounding airports or train stations.

Silent Auction Donations
Support 2017 MEEC with the donation of an auction item. Local goodies, handmade crafts, give-away treasures, or hot ticket items… Let’s raise money for environmental education! 2017 MEEC has already collected Chicago’s finest-themed baskets, Chicago sports-themed baskets, a Blue Ridge/Allegheny Mountain vacation package, and more! Bring your donations to the Q Center and drop them off at the check-in table when you arrive. Thank you!

IL State Board of Education Clock Hours
ISBE Approved PD Credit Hours provided by Lewis and Clark Community College

ISBE Approved PD Credit Hours will be provided at the conference. Please indicate on the registration form if you would like to receive credit hours.

In order for Illinois teachers to receive credit hours you must bring your IEIN Number to the conference, no exceptions.

Teachers from a state other than Illinois will receive an evidence of completion that they can file with their state board of education to request PD hours; no entity in Illinois can award credit to teachers from other states because each state’s system is different.

 Volunteer
Support 2017 MEEC by being involved in its success! Be part of the MEEC Team and volunteer to help with the exhibit hall, auctions, special events, on-site or off-site sessions, registration or logistics. Please visit http://meeconference.org/volunteer/ to help make the 2017 MEEC even better!