

Spring 2015

KEEC Legacy

A newsletter of the Kentucky Environmental Education Council

In This Issue

- [Pre-Order your "Let's Go Outside" specialty license plate today and support environmental education in Kentucky](#)
- [Congratulations to the 2014-15 graduates of the Professional Environmental Educator Certification course](#)
- [Kentucky Green & Healthy Schools and KY NEED Summit was held on April 23](#)
- [KGHS and Green Ribbon Schools were recognized in Earth Day celebration with First Lady Jane Beshear](#)
- [Kentucky Environmental Literacy Plan implementation continues thanks to grant secured by KAAE](#)
- [Welcome to our newest Council Member, Billie Hardin](#)
- [Horace Brown was re-elected Chairman of the Kentucky Environmental Education Council; Cheryl Messenger was elected Vice Chair](#)
- [Executive Director Elizabeth Schmitz received the 2015 Earth Day Recognition Award from the Kentucky Environmental Quality Commission](#)
- [KEEC staff member Michelle Shane accepted a new position with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture](#)
- [Post your environmental education events and resources on EEinKentucky.org](#)
- [Follow KEEC and KAAE on Facebook and Twitter](#)

Pre-Order your "Let's Go Outside" specialty license plate today and support environmental education in Kentucky



Now you can sign up for a beautiful new license plate and show your support for the outdoors and environmental education in Kentucky! KEEC has created a "Let's Go Outside" license plate that will be available to put on your car as soon as we get 900 applications. The applications are available at keec.ky.gov/LetsGoOutside, and can be submitted to KEEC with a \$25 check that will be credited toward your future registration for the plate.

First Lady Jane Beshear unveiled the plate in a ceremony on the State Capitol lawn on Wednesday, June 10. With children playing on the grass behind her, she talked about the importance of going outside for Kentuckians' health and their connection to the environment. KEEC Executive Director Elizabeth Schmitz followed to discuss the KEEC programs that will be supported by the "Let's Go Outside" plate, including the Professional Environmental Educator Certification course, the Kentucky Green & Health Schools program, and future programs that will encourage Kentuckians to go outside. To view video highlights of the event and the full text of Elizabeth's speech, see the right sidebar at keec.ky.gov/LetsGoOutside.

Not only will the plates provide financial support to KEEC, they will be mobile advertisements for EE in Kentucky. We hope that each of you, in addition to applying for yourselves, will share this plate with your friends and family and encourage them to apply. Visit our [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) page for an easily shareable announcement with a picture of the plate. Thanks to all of you who have already shared the announcement, and thanks to all who will apply!

Congratulations to the 2014-15 graduates of the Professional Environmental Educator Certification course

Twenty new graduates of the Professional Environmental Educator Certification course received their certificates from KEEC in a ceremony at the State Capitol rotunda on May 29. The graduates completed 4 in-person workshops at state parks and the Louisville Zoo, along with project certifications, an environmental literacy exam, a debate and paper on an environmental issue, and an environmental education unit of study.

The new graduates are Jamie Avery, Jennifer Beach, Emily Casey, Sarah Cummins, Ginny Delaney, Emily DeMoor, Tyrone Gentry, Suzanne Ince, Olivia Kaiser, Robin Magruder, Rex McBride, Carrie Mook, Kelly Rexroat, Rosie Santos, Kara Sayles, Jared Smith, Laurie Thomas, Russ Turpin, Chad Von Gruenigen, and Danny Woolums. Congratulations to all of them for their outstanding work!

KEEC thanks Toyota Motor Manufacturing of Kentucky and the Louisville Zoo for their generous support of the 2014-15 course.

We expect that the Professional Environmental Educator Certification course will be offered next beginning in Fall 2016. For more information about the course, visit keec.ky.gov/EECertification. To sign up for the waiting list to receive information about the next course, email Wesley.Bullock@ky.gov.

Kentucky Green & Healthy Schools and KY NEED Summit was held on April 23

Students and teachers from across the Commonwealth gathered on April 23 in Frankfort to be recognized for their completion of projects to improve the health and environmental impact of their schools. The Kentucky Green & Healthy Schools (KGHS) and Kentucky National Energy Education Development (KY NEED) Youth Summit was both an exhibit hall where students displayed and discussed their projects and a ceremony where the following awards were given:

- Leslie Meredith of West Hardin Middle School received the KGHS Teacher of the Year Award for her outstanding work with the program.
- Pikeville High School and West Hardin Middle School again accomplished the Model Kentucky Green and Healthy School status, the highest level in the program. Model schools serve as mentors to other KGHS schools, and continue their school improvement projects above and beyond the required nine categories.
- Four schools achieved KGHS status, the second highest level in the program, and will receive a KGHS Flag. They include Kit Carson Elementary School of Madison County, Morton Middle School of Fayette County, and Portland Elementary School and Virginia Chance School of Jefferson County.
- Additionally, Dishman-McGinnis Elementary School of Warren County will be receiving the KGHS Flag award as a school built to achieve environmental sustainability. It is the last school that will receive a flag under this category, because the built KGHS school qualification has been discontinued to allow the program to focus on engaging students in using the school buildings and grounds as a learning laboratory.
- One school, Sayre School of Fayette County, will receive a bamboo plaque to honor their completion of three categories and achieving the School In Progress award status.

There are nine project categories in the KGHS program: Energy, Green Spaces, Hazardous Chemicals, Health & Safety, Indoor Air Quality, Instructional Leadership, Solid Waste, Transportation, and Water Quality. As schools complete projects in each category, they are recognized with certificates, banners, flags, and finally a plaque.

For more information about participating in the KGHS program, visit greenschools.ky.gov.

KGHS and Green Ribbon Schools were recognized in Earth Day celebration with First Lady Jane Beshear

KEEC partnered with the Energy and Environment Cabinet to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Earth Day on April 9 at the History Center in Frankfort. KEEC Executive Director Elizabeth Schmitz spoke about the Kentucky Green & Healthy Schools program. First Lady Jane Beshear also spoke, and she recognized several Kentucky Green and Healthy Schools award-winners, along with Kentucky schools that have been recognized as Green Ribbon Schools by the US Department of Education:

- Bryan Station Middle School, Fayette Co.
- Royal Spring Middles School, Scott Co.
- Western Kentucky University

If you are interested in applying for your school to become a Green Ribbon School, check back later this year for application information at education.ky.gov/districts/fac/pages/green-ribbon-schools-application-process.aspx.

Kentucky Environmental Literacy Plan implementation continues thanks to grant secured by KAAE

The Kentucky Association for Environmental Education has recently secured a grant to continue implementation of the Kentucky Environmental Literacy Plan. The plan is part of a national initiative toward environmental literacy in which 46 states are taking part. Kentucky became one of the first states to adopt an environmental literacy plan when in 2011 the Board of Education voted to support the Kentucky Environmental Literacy Plan in conjunction with the implementation of Kentucky's new science standards. Kentucky's plan will be implemented at the local level by schools and school districts with the help of the Kentucky Department of Education and KEEC. The Implementation Advisory Team, composed of K-12 education stakeholders, met on June 3 to strategize next steps in the process. If you are interested in the work of the Implementation Advisory Team, please contact KEEC for more information.

You can find a copy of the Kentucky Environmental Literacy Plan at keec.ky.gov/Publications/Pages/KELP.aspx.

Welcome to our newest Council Member, Billie Hardin

KEEC is thrilled to welcome our newest Council Member, Billie Hardin. Billie is the Sustainability Project Manager for the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS). She directs and supports the 16 KCTCS Colleges and the KCTCS System Office in establishing sustainable development strategies and the KCTCS Center for Environmental and Sustainability Education and Workforce Training. Billie's work with sustainability and energy efficiency correlates with her role as a liaison to the White House and the U.S. Department of Energy for the Better Buildings Challenge, an initiative of the Obama Administration to reduce energy consumption across the U.S. 20 percent by 2020. Currently, Billie is President of the Kentucky Association for Environmental Education; Secretary of the Kentucky Chapter of the US Green Building Council Advocacy Committee; an appointed member of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education Advisory Council; and a liaison to the Kentucky University Partnership for Environmental Education (KUPEE).

Billie was appointed on April 17, 2015, and will serve a term concurrent with the rest of the Council Members through October 2018.

Horace Brown was re-elected Chairman of the Kentucky Environmental Education Council; Cheryl Messenger was elected Vice Chair

Horace Brown, chairman of the Kentucky Environmental Education Council since 1996, was re-elected chairman at the quarterly meeting of the Council in April. Horace has been a member of the Council since it first assembled in 1994. He is the founder and owner of Brown & Associates, an engineering and surveying consulting firm in Shelbyville. He has also served on the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund Board since 1994, and was appointed to the Land Stewardship and Conservation Task Force by Governor Beshear in 2008. Prior to his KEEC service, Horace was on the Kentucky Environmental Quality Commission for 15 years beginning in 1980, and served as the Commission's Chairman from 1981-1995. He has been a tireless advocate for environmental education in Kentucky, and we are proud to have him as our council chairman for another four years.

Cheryl Messenger, member of the Council since 2007, was elected Vice Chair. Cheryl is the Environmental Education Coordinator at Mammoth Cave National Park. She is a recipient of the Kentucky Association for Environmental Education (KAEE) Individual Excellence in Environmental Education Award, as well as the National Park Service Regional Freeman Tilden Award for Excellence in Interpretation and Education. Cheryl completed the inaugural Professional Environmental Educator Certification course and has been an active member of its Certification Advisory Committee. She received the Master Environmental Educator designation in 2013. Cheryl has contributed greatly to the success of the KEEC in recent years, and we congratulate her on her election as Vice Chair.

Executive Director Elizabeth Schmitz received the 2015 Earth Day Recognition Award from the Kentucky Environmental Quality Commission

In a ceremony at Berry Hill Mansion on April 10, KEEC Executive Director Elizabeth Schmitz was recognized by Kentucky Environmental Quality Commission for her positive impact on Kentucky's environment. The EQC cited her energy and environmental education installation at the Capitol Education Center, developed under the direction of First Lady Jane Beshear, which reaches over 60,000 people each year. Also mentioned were Elizabeth's support and leadership in the development of Bowling Green's first producer only farmers market and her continued sponsorship of a community supported agriculture pickup at her home. Congratulations, Elizabeth!

KEEC staff member Michelle Shane accepted a new position with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture

Michelle Shane, KEEC staff member and coordinator of the Kentucky Green & Healthy Schools program, has accepted a new position in the Kentucky Department of Agriculture Division of Value-Added Plant Production. She is now a Program Specialist for Organics and Industrial Hemp.

Before coming to work for KEEC, Michelle completed the 2012-13 Professional Environmental Educator Certification course. She worked with KEEC from April 2013 through May 2015 coordinating the KGHS program and taking on many other responsibilities.

Congratulations on your new job, Michelle! We appreciate all of the hard work you contributed to KEEC.

Post your environmental education events and resources on EEinKentucky.org

EEinKentucky.org is the place to go for environmental education events and resources in Kentucky. Post your upcoming events, grant opportunities, and job openings, and search what others have posted. Events are listed on the homepage calendar. Use the "News" menu to find other resources. For help with using the site, contact Elizabeth.Schmitz@ky.gov.

Follow KEEC and KAEE on Facebook and Twitter

The Kentucky Environmental Education Council (KEEC) is an agency of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Keep up with the latest news from KEEC—follow us on Facebook (facebook.com/kyeecouncil) and Twitter (twitter.com/kyeecouncil).

The Kentucky Association for Environmental Education (KAEE) is Kentucky's statewide nonprofit organization for environmental education. Learn more about KAEE at facebook.com/KY4EnvEd and twitter.com/KY4EnvEd.

Kentucky Environmental Education Council

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