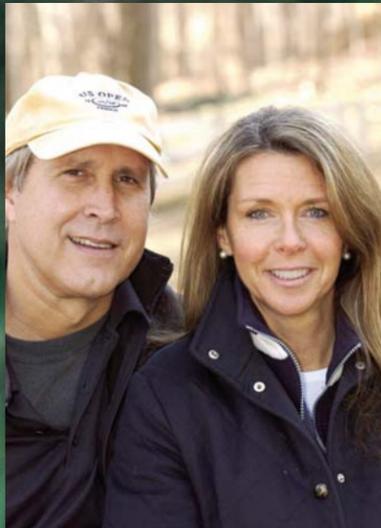




ENVIRONMENTAL CONNECTIONS

In 1988, Jayni Chase sensed a need for a type of connectivity that would contribute to environmental learning. She sought a way to link the efforts of leaders of environmental change with teachers who needed resources and materials to integrate environmental curriculum in the classroom. As a result she founded the Center for Environmental Education, (CEE) a non-profit educational resource center. It acts as a networking center among educators, students,

environmentalists, foundations and sources of high quality environmental education materials. The Center library has close to 1,000 teacher-reviewed environmental education curricula titles, and



Jayni Chase and Husband Chevy

over 8,000 periodicals, books and videos.

In 1998 the Centre moved its operations to the Antioch New England Institute in New Hampshire. The move opened the way for a substantial increase in its inventory of educational resources as well as expanding its network of partners.

From the launching vision of one individual, the Center now has an international profile. Its templates have been used by Taiwan to implement an environmental action program at 400 Taiwanese schools. In France, the City of Lyon has approached the CEE for support in the development of tools for teaching sustainability.

Chase views all this as a work in progress. In an interview with Landscapes, she talks about the need to build "an environmentally literate citizenry" To do that, Chase believes there needs to be another kind of connectivity whereby individuals understand how their actions affect the environment. She describes it as a "cradle to grave" awareness of consumer choices involving questions like "where does this product come from, am I using it properly and what happens to it when I'm finished."

Although Chase thinks that broadly-based environmental literacy is some years away, she is encouraged by what she describes as "pockets of learning in society." However, far from being pessimistic, she describes herself as "energized" by the scope of the challenge. She places a lot of hope in the "kids we've been reaching since 1990."

When asked what kind of impact she would like to see the CEE having 10 years from now, Jayni Chase focuses her vision at the school level. She would hope to see as many schools as possible doing three things: using the environment in an integrating context across

the curriculum, running energy-efficient buildings and working with their communities. The last point involves giving students what she calls "a sense of place." It means having students ask questions like "what is this community about and how are we treating it?"

In the meantime, Jayni Chase defines a great day at the CEE as one where there are a lot of hits on the web site and a large number of teachers are matched with resources. "There are a lot of great days," she says.

Her experience in connecting teachers and learning resources recently resulted in an invitation to her to share that expertise. She has joined the Board of Advisors of the Earth Day Network to help formulate a strategic plan for outreach to the thousands of teachers involved in Earth Day events.

