

At the EDGE of Summer

The article was written by the students of the Summer EDGE and SAD 37 credit recovery course.

—Editor

At the start of summer school, the kids walking into the classroom are like ducklings walking alone without their moms. But the 2011 Summer EDGE Program is helping kids at Narragagus High School in Harrington with a credit recovery course to help make up missed credits. The two classes that you can take to help make up the credit are English or science.

Before we went out on the water, we did an English lesson. This is a good way to put our thoughts to work, and then we ventured out to the water for our science lesson—collecting data about different invasive species. It's always fun, especially if it's your first experience out on the water in a kayak; you will need to be an intrepid student, and not only that, but you get to see different locations near your own home and new species in the water or on land.

The views are amazing, but make sure you bring an extra change of clothes—because we have lots of water fights—and sun block. You should even pack a lunch, but don't worry if you don't bring one; they will pack a lunch for you.

The science component of the course was done in conjunction with Vital Signs and the Gulf of Maine Research Institute, and in the science portion we learned about invasive and native species. We studied how the invasive species can be dangerous to our native species. The invasive species can completely ruin our native species if they get out of hand.

We learned how to identify native and invasive species by providing evidence that supports our findings. The invasive species can be like bullies cruelly pushing our environment around. When we found our first native species (spatterdock), it was really exciting because it was our very first assignment.

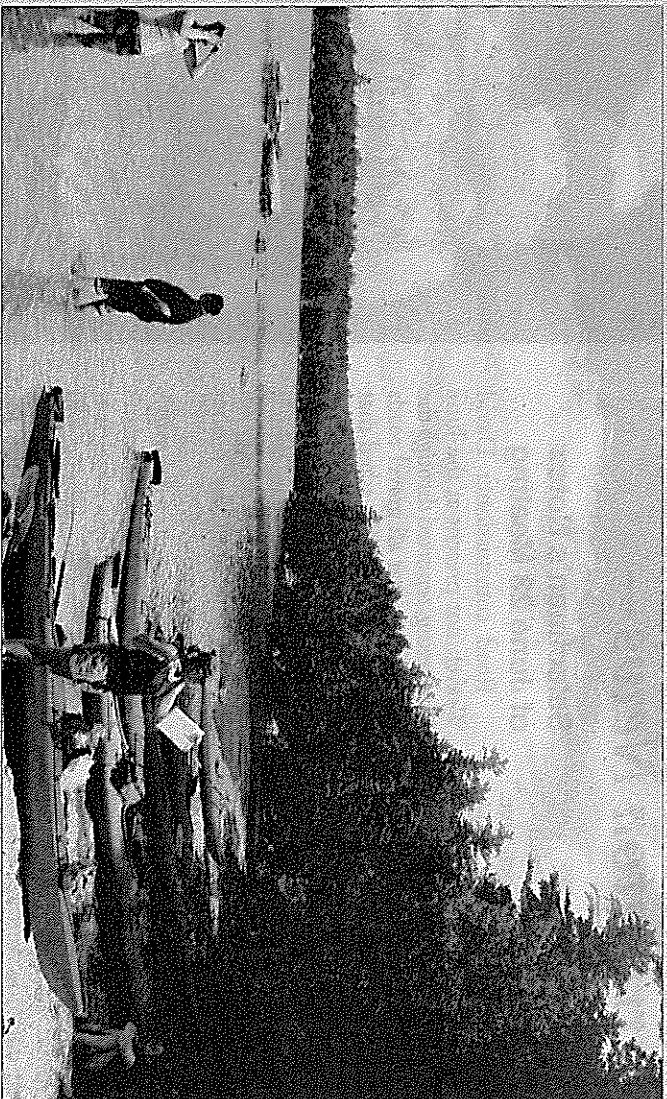
The English component of the course is made up mostly of reading, discussing and writing responses to challenging quotes from famous authors. We also studied and applied figurative language and a few other ways to control the expression of our thoughts through grammar. Although we have to memorize two quotes to present orally, research the authors, and use figurative language and our own photography to explain and unpack the quotes, the overall experience of summer school isn't too bad.

Still, making kids go to summer school is like taking a bone away from a dog; however, the dynamic equilibrium between science and English is healthy for our minds.

The outdoor component of the course included kayaking in Tunk Lake, Pleasant River, Long Pond and other locations each day and collecting information on living organisms such as cat-tails and other various plants. It was a lot of fun at times, and it was also a great experience that helped us grow as people. We found a copious number of cat-tails in the Narragagus River. It

was also great fun trying to sneak up and catch the turtles in the Narragagus River. The mud at Pleasant River was as thick and glossy as pudding.

After learning to work with other people, the EDGE credit recovery course was rewarding. Also, kayaking was very entertaining, and trying to find the invasive or native species of plants and animals on our travels was challenging. At the end of the day, we'd always have learned a thing or two about the area in which we live and even a little about ourselves. It may have been hard at times, but those hardships built character. Granted, it was as fun as watching paint dry at times, but it was still a great experience.



KAYAKING on Washington County lakes was one of the many activities enjoyed by participants in the Summer EDGE and SAD 37 Credit Recovery course.