

News Release

Foley Mountain Interpreter Wins “WIN Award”

December 24, 2013 — Rebecca Whitman, Foley Mountain Interpreter and Site Supervisor, was recently honoured with the 2013 Watershed Interpreters’ Network (WIN) Award. On December 5 at the “Rekindle the Spark” conference held in Orangeville Ontario, educators from Ontario’s 32 Conservation Authorities gathered at a gala event to recognize Mrs. Whitman’s dedication to helping teachers and students access exceptional outdoor education programs.

Rebecca is incredibly enthusiastic and creative when it comes to her outdoor education programs,” says Kristy Giles, RVCA Conservation Lands Manager. “We are very proud of her creative solutions that overcome barriers and provide high quality programs.”

Mrs. Whitman takes her role as an outdoor educator very seriously and is always looking for ways to improve the Foley Mountain experience for students as well as teachers. If there’s a challenge, she looks for a solution. When dollars were tight for smaller rural schools to get busing to Foley Mountain, she pursued special funding that helped secure the transportation costs to get them there. When more space was needed, Rebecca assisted in an initiative that helped relocate a heritage barn to serve as a new, solar-powered outdoor learning centre that is now the envy of Eastern Ontario. When the old programming needed a new approach, she sought funding for GPS units, snowshoes, interpretive signs and more to improve the outdoor experience. When phone bookings became cumbersome and difficult for clients, Rebecca turned to a quick and efficient online booking option — helping teachers connect with Foley Mountain services with the click of a mouse!

“Just recently, Rebecca has integrated tablets into her programming. This high technology woos students outdoors to take advantage of low technology experiences like snowshoeing, track identification and outdoor survival skills,” says Giles. “Rebecca firmly believes that when the fun comes first, the learning comes naturally. Anyone who has experienced time with her knows this for certain.”

On average Foley Mountain welcomes approximately 17,000 guests annually to the site, 4,000 are students participating in full and half day education programs and camps.

Mrs. Whitman grew up in Metcalfe Ontario and obtained her teaching degree at Lakehead University. She is a busy mother of two young children and lives with her husband, Jeff, on Foley Mountain.

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More information:

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