



# MAACE Messages

Issue III

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## Fall Conference on Tap



Colors of Learning: The Red, White and Blues of Adult Education is this year's theme for our annual MAACE fall conference. The conference committee and MAACE board are excited to have you join us in Butte, America on October 21 and 22, 2004. A pre-conference reception to welcome all attendees will be held from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. on Wednesday night the 20<sup>th</sup> with a no-host bar and hoer de oeuvres.

Adult Education programs rely heavily on legislation, and as this is an election year, we chose to have the Lt. Governor Candidates speak on Thursday morning. We hope this discussion will provide you with some insight of the candidates' stance on the important issues of this year's election.

Butte is known for its unique and colorful history. On Thursday during lunch, "Curly" (Jim) Harrington will provide us with some of that interesting history. Jim has a "history" of his own in Butte where he taught high school and college level history courses. One of his areas of expertise is labor practices. Jim promises to entertain and enlighten us with his presentation.

Daniel Huraaksh McMannis ([www.heartmentors.com](http://www.heartmentors.com)) is an educator, trainer and emotion coach. He conducts interactive workshops and seminars on Emotional and Attitudinal Self-Empowerment. Visit his website and you will see an example of Dan's philosophy and holistic approach. This mentoring philosophy is coming to the forefront of adult education and MAACE wants to provide you with the most up to date information and knowledge so that your classroom and program can be more effective than ever. Dan will present a four-hour workshop Thursday afternoon.

Other venues for Thursday afternoon include workshops and informative discussions relating to Irlen Syndrome and reading and math round tables. This will be an opportunity for teachers to share their teaching strategies and ideas. Linda Gardner, a programmer from the Office of Public Instruction, will host a workshop to answer questions and demonstrate ways to use the information collected by Montana SIMS.

Friday's luncheon will feature Michele L. Deck, an engaging, practical and enjoyable speaker. Some MAACE members attended Michelle's two-day presentation at the Summer Institute of 2003 and recommended that we ask her for a return engagement. Be it destiny or coincidence, Michele is scheduled to speak in Montana and took our offer to visit Butte. She will be presenting "Teaching Television Generation Learners" which focuses on many of the students in your classrooms. Michele will provide our closing address on Friday and you won't want to miss it!

Another highlight of our conference will be the break-out sessions on Friday. We have eight different round table discussions and presentations. The conference committee designed these to focus on specific areas of instruction and programs relevant to adult education in Montana.

We greatly encourage you to take the time to attend the conference. The committee and board have worked hard to ensure that this will not be a waste of your time but a worthwhile "retreat" to strengthen and enhance your teaching and programming abilities. We'll see you in BUTTE!

Kathy Jackson, MAACE board member, attended Michele Deck's presentation on Teaching Television Generation Learners. Kathy provided the following comments...“(Michele Deck) was an excellent presenter who gave me many great ideas for managing my classroom and reviewing my curriculum. The good thing about her presentation was that she targeted the TV generation, which is a good proportion of those we serve. She talked about the short attention spans of the population we serve while giving us strategies and ideas on how to teach and review concepts with them.”

# A Newcomer's Tale: The 2004 MPAEA Conference

I am Victoria Clark. I work as a GED instructor for the Literacy Volunteers of the Bitterroot and as the director of adult education for the public schools in Darby. I am relatively new to both jobs—a little over one year as a GED instructor and just completing my third year as the local adult education coordinator. Attending the Mountain Plains Adult Education Association Conference in Bozeman this past April was a real education for me.

I spent the first 10 years of my professional life as a field archaeologist in the American Southwest. After a decade of digging, so to speak, I had a change of heart and returned to school to earn a secondary teaching certificate. Upon completion of certification, I found myself dropping out of the work force entirely to stay home with my two young daughters. Now, as the girls grow older and our bank accounts grow smaller, I have reentered the world of work under the umbrella of adult education. I have minimal experience with the profession and have been wondering what happens outside the confines of Ravalli County concerning the teaching of adults. ***The MPAEA Conference answered a number of my questions, provided fodder for new queries, and confirmed that adult education does indeed extend beyond the county line.***

Foremost, attending the conference awakened me to the fact that adult education is a field unto itself, complete with academics crunching numbers, political advocates chasing funding, and practitioners putting research and dollars to work, all for the benefit of those who missed out the first time around. I was not sure what to expect of the conference, as my prior experience at professional meetings had made me

somewhat wary of them. However, I found the MPAEA Conference to be both inspirational and informational. The group orientation, lunches, and dinners were full of camaraderie, encouraging a sense of belonging. I saw firsthand how adult educators are part of a state, regional, and even national network of professionals focused on helping people better themselves. Listening to the award presentations was particularly moving and uplifting, reminding the audience of the great rewards of the job.

From an informational standpoint, the conference sessions were most enlightening. I was reminded to be wary of pedagogy (*Beyond Teaching*). I learned tricks for teaching long division and fractions (*Method to Your Mathness*). I was encouraged to employ music lyrics to teach the parts of speech (*Revisiting English Language Fundamentals*). I was exposed to new descriptive labels such as "blurred hearing" and "racing mind" to characterize learners (*Memory Tools for Forgetful Adults*).

The list of novelties goes on. By the end of the conference, I realized how little I knew about the specifics of teaching adults. However, I did not leave in despair. Rather, I left with a notebook full of instructional ideas and with the understanding that there were many tools, techniques, and people to assist me in my newfound line-of-work.

Now, with the fall fast approaching, I am looking ahead to the new school year. I am thinking about how I can put my new skills to use. I know now there are resources - literature, websites, individuals - to which I can turn when I am struggling with a student. Thank you MAACE for providing me with the opportunity to attend the MPAEA 2004 Conference.

## President's Corner

Greetings!

How exciting this is for me to be writing my last president's message! Now don't get me wrong – I am definitely glad I had the opportunity to serve as president of MAACE. However, at times the learning curve was steep. So just what things did I learn during my term?

I learned...

- for every headache I had, MAACE friends swiftly emerged with aspirin.
- for every frown I saw, MAACE friends readily appeared with smiles.
- for every grumble I heard, MAACE friends loudly laughed above the noise.
- for every time I fell, MAACE friends gently lifted me to my feet.
- and for every time I choked, MAACE friends quickly extended hands of support.

I learned that MAACE is a volunteer organization that is administering a grant. This can not be done by one person; it must be an organizational effort. The MAACE Board must work closely with both its members and state leadership in order to provide quality and timely professional development.

So here is my last, best, and final offer to all of you! Take time to share your talent with MAACE. Volunteer your leadership skills. You won't regret your experience!

*Norene Peterson, MAACE President*

## What's new with MPAEA...

*By Nancy Kessler, Livingston*

MAACE members are encouraged to stand up and take a well-deserved bow for the incredible success of last April's Mountain Plains Adult Education Association 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference in Bozeman.

Not only did we have excellent attendance and exceptional speakers, breakout sessions, receptions, entertainment, accommodations and food, we also raised more than \$3,500 for MAACE and \$9,900 for MPAEA. These funds will help both organizations continue to serve members by providing more and better professional development opportunities, scholarship funds and leadership in the fields of Adult Basic Literacy and Adult Community Education. Thanks again to our fearless leader, Gloria Gregg, and everyone else who worked on a committee or contributed in some way to our successful venture.

But there's no resting on our laurels for the MPAEA board. (Your Montana representatives are Dixie Stark, [lvabitroot@aol.com](mailto:lvabitroot@aol.com), and Nancy Kessler, [adulsted@livingston.k12.mt.us](mailto:adulsted@livingston.k12.mt.us)). At the July 2004 board meeting, we were deep into planning for the 63rd annual conference in Jackson Hole. We learned a lot from the professional excellence demonstrated by the Montana crew, and the Wyoming committee is building on our efforts to

provide another high-quality conference.

MPAEA is again organizing college credit for attendees, at a reasonable additional cost. Credit will be available from Idaho State University, Utah State University and the University of Wyoming. And we're exploring the possibility of granting state level continuing education credits such as OPI renewal units.

MPAEA scholarships of up to \$500 will be awarded to two Montana members on a competitive basis to help pay for the Jackson Hole conference, and MAACE will award up to five \$600 scholarships for out-of-state professional development opportunities.

We're hoping to get as many Montanans as possible to Wyoming, since it's fairly close (well, closer than New Mexico...). Additionally, many MAACE members joined MPAEA in 2004, and we want to encourage you to retain your affiliation and strengthen our regional dedication to ABLE & ACE programs. (Remember that squeaky wheel?)

Please mark your calendars now, and plan to attend!

***MPAEA 63rd Annual Conference  
April 14-16, 2005  
Snow King Resort  
Jackson, WY***

And while you're at it, give a little thought to who in your community has promoted and supported your programs and all of adult learning, and nominate some of them for awards to be announced at the next conference.

Those awards include the following: Award of Merit, Award of Excellence, Legislator of the Year, Educator of the Year, Lay Leader of the Year and Learner of the Year.

Finally, another issue the MPAEA board examined was the move toward more on-line information delivery. In an effort to save time and money, we plan to post the quarterly newsletter and information on the Journal of Adult Education at the MPAEA website: [www.mpaea.org](http://www.mpaea.org). And with two new and technology-skilled communications directors, we hope to have an updated website very soon. Check it out!

## Scholarship Information

Scholarship information has been sent by our faithful treasurer, Margie Sylvester. The deadline for applications is September 27, 2004. Twenty-two (22) scholarships may be awarded for the MAACE conference in Butte. They will may not exceed \$350. Five additional scholarships will be rewarded for other professional development opportunities both in and out of state. These awards must not exceed \$600. For more information, please contact Margie Sylvester, MAACE Treasurer, PO Box 307, Peru, NE 68421, or [margiesylvester@yahoo.com](mailto:margiesylvester@yahoo.com), or go to <http://www.nwlines.org/mtlines/maace.htm>.

## The Squeaky Wheel...

*By Nancy Kessler, Livingston*



In these times of tightening budgets and increasing demands for tax dollars, who gets funded, and for how much, often depends on how many times a legislator hears about the need.

That's why MAACE once again is encouraging ALL people who want adequate funding for Adult Basic and Literacy Education and Adult Community Education programs to get in touch with current legislators and local legislative candidates NOW to

encourage their support for these incredibly important and valuable programs.

Not only is it important for those of us working in the field to tell candidates that our votes will be determined by their support for ABLE & ACE, but also we need to get our friends and neighbors to send the same message!

Not sure how to get in touch with your candidates? It's easy on-line – go to the Montana Secretary of State website at <http://sos.state.mt.us>, select "Candidate Information" and find your House District candidates. Also check "Official Election Results" to see who won the primaries in your district and who will be on the November ballot.

And if you have another minute, check out "Ballot Measures" to see the eight constitutional amendments and initiatives that you'll be voting on this fall as well.

Remember, "the squeaky wheel gets the grease," and the funding!



# **2004 Fall Conference**

## **October 21 and 22, 2004**

### **Butte, Montana**

- **Excellent Keynote Speakers**
- **Relevant Round Table Discussions**
- **More Information Inside**

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