



MAACE Messages

Issue II

Volume III

June 2003

MAACE Board

President Norene Peterson
Billings Public Schools
petersonnh@billings.k12.mt.us
247-3720

President Elect Donna Bakke
Missoula Public Schools
dbakke@mcps.k12.mt.us
542-4015

Past President Yvonne Hauwiler
Bozeman Public Schools
yhauwiler@bozeman.k12.mt.us
522-6012

Treasurer Margie Sylvester
Havre Public Schools
sylvester@havre.k12.mt.us
265-4356 ext. 33

Executive Secretary Kristin Bay
kristinbay@centurytel.net
752-9087

Eastern Board
Pat McLinden
Dawson Community College
pmclinden@yahoo.com
377-7600

Kathy Jackson
Billings Public Schools
jacksonk@billings.k12.mt.us
247-3721

Jerry Guay
Hardin Public Schools
theguays@earthlink.net
665-6459

Western Board
Dixie Stark
LVA Bitterroot County
lvabitroot@aol.com
363-2900

Cathy Smyers
Missoula Public Schools
csmyers@mcps.k12.mt.us
542-4015

Paula Arneson
Butte LVA
lvabulit@in-tch.com
723-7905

Ex Officio Becky Bird, OPI
bbird@state.mt.us
444-4443

Ex Officio Gloria Gregg, MSU
ggregg@montana.edu
994-1858

ABLE Summer Institute offers teaching solutions

By Kristin Bay

"Bring your best challenges," says Michele Deck, who will speak at the upcoming MAACE ABLE Summer Institute, and she'll do her best to provide solutions. Deck will spend two days on teaching the television generation and handling unhappy learners.

Deck, from New Orleans, travels extensively working with educators and trainers on how to work more effectively with learners. As a nursing educator, she discovered teaching life-saving skills in a game show format greatly improved the students' recall. "I was a rogue," she said; "we decided to break the mold."

Finding creative ways to teach the same information carried over into professional training. "Many people are looking for practical solutions to really imposing problems," said Deck.

One of the problems is that television has shaped people's attention spans into shorter and shorter segments according to Deck. She will provide a list of ways to keep students' attention so you can pick what works for you. She said she wants to give people ideas that they can go use the same day and "ideas that don't take a budget."

Part of the problem is also a generational one. Generation X needs more physical involvement to be engaged so Deck suggested one idea: "controlled stretch breaks." Rather than stopping the learning activity, she said, a controlled stretch break incorporates standing up into the flow of the class. For example, everyone stands and tells the person next to them three things they learned in the last five minutes and then sits down. Not only does that provide review, but also the instructor knows when everyone is done because they are seated again.

Deck's second day will address the "lions, tigers and bears" in your classes and meetings. These creatures may include the unhappy learner who is forced to take your class or the argumentative individual in your staff meeting. Either way, Deck said she will present a "buffet" of ideas of how to deal with these individuals.

Most importantly, she said she will model her advice on how to involve learners and deal with the difficult students (not that there will be any at this institute!).

"If I say you need to involve people, I need to involve them," she said.

The third and fourth days of the summer institute will feature experts on teaching social studies and low-level reading. Dr. Jim Hauwiler from MSU will spend Wednesday on teaching the range of social studies areas generally included in GED, ESL and adult learning programs. On Thursday, Dr. Rhea Ashmore, from UM-Missoula, will talk about strategies for teaching the low-level reader. If you missed the registration deadline, contact Kristin Bay(406-752-9087) right away to see if there is still space. Two college credits and/or renewal units are available.



Montanans Cowboy Up at MPAEA 2003

The Montana crew took time out at the Reno conference for a photo opportunity. The 2004 MPAEA conference, *Voyage of Discovery – The Journey of Adult Learning*, will be in Bozeman so plan to take advantage of all the opportunities offered at this great regional conference.

COABE Offered National Experience

Twenty-two adult educators from Montana had the opportunity to take the Oregon Trail to a quality, national conference in Portland. To participate in a national conference of this magnitude (1259 registered) is truly a happening that I, Mike Joyce (Billings ABE Counselor), hope everyone can experience in their professional lives.

There was a wide array of sessions from which to choose. Topics included presenters from across the nation who shared knowledge in the traditional areas including ABE, GED, Workplace training, ESL instruction, numeracy applications, and learning disabilities. There was an equal number of presentations in “non-traditional” areas of instruction including social justice issues, learning style applications, “at-risk” youth issues, innovative technology applications, in the areas of online and distance learning programs, and research into motivation techniques. All of these topics had real relevance for adult educators whether they were from large, metropolitan areas or small, rural settings.

I particularly enjoyed the special sessions that they arranged at the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry. If ever you have the opportunity to visit this facility, it is a totally worthwhile adventure. I toured a submarine, visited the exhibit halls and watched a breathtaking “omni max” presentation in the theatre on the Lewis and Clark discovery.

Of course, the real value of any conference, whether it is local, regional or national, is the opportunity to interact with peers and professionals who are experiencing the same frustrations and celebrations that you are. There was a lot of time devoted to assessment and national performance standards along with the challenges surrounding these issues.

My overall perspective is that this was a great conference filled with excitement, challenge and useful information for all. Again, I would urge that all of you take the opportunity to share in a national conference experience.

NAEHS Chapters

It is now less than a year before Montana hosts the MPAEA conference in Bozeman next spring. One of the objectives of the Mountain Plains organization is to honor outstanding students by starting local chapters of the National Adult Education Honor Society (NAEHS). This year at the MPAEA conference, Nevada and Arizona honored outstanding students through NAEHS. It is a simple process to start a chapter. There is an application form available at the NAEHS website. The application fee is \$50. After that, it costs the organization \$12 for each student recognition award. According to the website, an organization is supposed to recognize ten students each year. In my conversations with staff at NAEHS, I have learned that there is some flexibility in that guideline. There is also the possibility of starting regional chapters. This item will come up for discussion at the MAACE board meeting this summer. Please check out the NAEHS website and if you have questions or comments, contact me, and let me know what you think. If we start a chapter now, we will be able to recognize and honor outstanding students at the MPAEA conference next April. The NAEHS website address is: www.naehs.org. Call me at 542-4105 or email dbakke@mcps.k12.mt.us. – Donna Bakke, MAACE President-Elect

News on LINCS

Remember that you can find all sorts of useful information on the Northwest LINCS webpage. Want information on the MAACE Summer Institute? Or legislative news that impacts ABLE? Or ideas for teaching? Check out www.nwlincs.org and click on Montana!

LINCS Pilot Project

The Billings Adult Education Center is involved with a special pilot project that links instruction and technology through the current LINCS project with NIFL. The purpose of the project is to develop and integrate Internet-based curriculum into the center’s existing curriculum, develop cross-curricular lessons using Internet technology, publish this curriculum on LINCS, and train other

ABLE sites on its use. It is meant to serve both rural and urban populations of Montana, tapping into the Internet and distance learning.

The subject areas to be developed include language arts, mathematics, science, and GED preparation. Kathie Daviau is the project coordinator with the Billings Adult Education Center’s staff assisting her. Plans are being made to visit individual sites this summer to share this information

Corrections Educators Swap Ideas

Montana State Prison was honored to be awarded a mini-grant from MAACE to hold a corrections educators conference. The successful conference was held at Fairmont Hot Springs on March 21 and attracted 31 correction educators and program managers. The conference called “Educators Swap” gave correctional educators from various programs an opportunity to exchange ideas on issues facing correctional education. The main focus of the conference was to establish a correctional network, discuss the idea of establishing a professional organization, study the possibility of collaborative grant writing, identify directions in correctional education, examine recruitment and retention of correctional teachers and exchange ideas of correctional education practices. Jack Powers, Chief of Education and Habilitative Services served as moderator and was assisted by MSP teacher Don Berryman, ABE Specialist Becky Bird, DOC grant writer Nancy Knight and special guest David Strong, Adult Education Services Director.

Butte LVA director appointed to board

Paula Arneson, Butte LVA director, recently accepted an appointment to the MAACE Board. Arneson will fill the vacancy left by Donna Bakke who is now the MAACE president-elect. Thanks Paula for contributing to your peers and the future of the Association!

LEGISLATIVE NEWS & BLUES

Well, folks, the state legislature finally hammered out a budget for the biennium. The education budget that was passed left our \$250,000 of state funding intact. However, we were not fortunate enough to escape the cutbacks that have affected the Department of Health and Human Services. We have been receiving about \$90,000 annually from DPHHS to help serve TANF clients. Those dollars were cut from the DPHHS budget.

The funding bill for education, SB424, has one complication. This bill, now signed into law, will restrict school districts from using state funds to pay benefits/employment taxes of employees who are federally funded. ABLE sites that are part of a local school district will feel the crunch from this legislation if they used state funds to pay the employment taxes or benefits of ABE teachers paid with AEFLA dollars.

On the federal level, the house may take action this week on H.R. 1261. Over the past few weeks I have heard and read many variations of the reauthorization of AEFLA (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act). For one thing, the new legislation is called the Workforce Reinvestment and Adult Education Act of 2003. Notice the emphasis is on workforce, not on education. There is talk of block granting the education and training funds to the states and talk of monies being skimmed from the adult education budget to pay for No Child Left Behind. Again, the most important thing you can do, as an adult educator is stay

informed. Norene Peterson has sent out many messages with information about the reauthorization. Read them, go to the websites, and then call your senators and representatives. You need to be active in this arena. I've read the testimony given by Assistant Education Secretary Carol D'Amico on March 4, 2003. It will give anyone who reads it some insight into what the current administration wants from this piece of legislation. You can find the testimony at this website: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OVAE/AdultEd/aetest030303.doc>.

If you cannot find information or have any questions, email me, and I will let you know where you can find additional information. Recently, there was a call out for people to contact Senator Baucus. He was said to be holding a key vote for Carl Perkins reauthorization.

As an organization, MAACE can also make a difference. At the summer Board meeting, the Board will be discussing potential strategies we might use for legislative communication purposes, i.e. email, phone trees, etc. Just because Montana legislators have gone home does not mean our job is done. We must continue marketing our programs, not just during the legislative session. We must continue to seek advocates. Please let me know if you have any ideas that may help us out. We can make a difference, one phone call or letter at a time.

Donna Bakke, MAACE Legislative Committee Chair

President's Corner

If a man does not know to which port he is sailing, no wind is favorable. Seneca, 64 AD

Data collection seems to be the current buzz. Everyone wants statistical accountability whether it is the K-12 system or Adult Basic and Literacy Education. In reality, this can be a good thing, for the more current and correct our data is, the better we can validate the best practices we provide in ABLE.

Recently, I was able to participate in an NRS training to "help state and local literacy program personnel learn to use data to guide them in making information-driven decisions about program management and improvement." Did I learn anything new? Actually, it just confirmed what I had already felt. Data collection is only good when we analyze it and use it to effect change – not for the sake of change, of course, but for the sake of program improvement. However, in order to do this, we must be confident that our data is accurate. So that is where we are in Montana. We are tweaking our data collection system so that we can gather accurate information.

That is where MAACE is also. MAACE is an umbrella, which attempts to meet the various needs of its membership. We poll the members to see what needs they have. Once we have that data, we provide professional development activities that meet those needs. Recently, correctional educators were able to have a mini-conference with the help of a MAACE mini-grant. Other educators were able to receive ESL training while some will soon be sharing Internet sites for the classroom. And yet others will be able to participate in the Summer Institute that will provide information for teaching the TV generational learner, teaching social studies, and teaching reading.

Besides having the opportunity to attend the NRS training, I was also able to attend the MPAEA conference in Reno, Nevada. During this time I have done a lot of reflecting about MAACE and its role for Montana especially after my listening to the keynote speaker at MPAEA, Dr. Mary Montle Bacon. Just what is our vision as an organization?

Dr. Bacon reminded us that as educators we need goals and visions that represent our core values. It is true that she was speaking in reference to our jobs as educators and to the obstacles our students encounter. However, I believe that we can extend her presentation to the obstacles that an organization may face in a changing society. To do that, we members of MAACE must first redefine its purpose, as Dr. Bacon suggests, before we can broadcast the organization's beliefs. Have we done that as an organization? Lately, the MAACE Board has been discussing the organization's mission statement. It is definitely time for us to review our mission in order to understand our journey as an organization. Only then can we move forward and truly meet the needs of MAACE members.

So are your needs being met? If not, it is imperative that you voice your opinion. Contact any of the Board members about your concerns and/or needs. Become an active member of your association.

Norene Peterson, MAACE President

Montanans Cowboy Up at MPAEA 2003

From the looks of the picture on page one, you can see we had quite a group of Montanans at the MPAEA conference. Yvonne Hauwiler invited everyone to her room for a Montana get-together on Thursday evening. It was a welcome respite after sitting and listening all day.

The theme of this year's MPAEA conference, held in Reno, Nevada, was, "Cowboy Up! Bustin' the Frontier of Lifelong Learning." Many people donned cowboy hats and got in the spirit of things, including Yvonne, the MPAEA president.

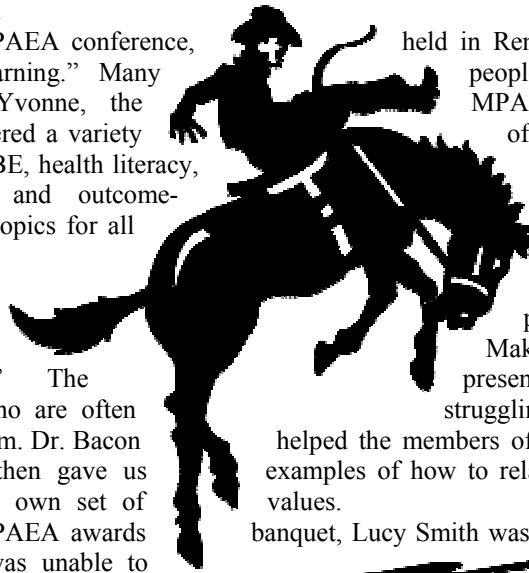
The conference sessions covered a variety of topics including technology in the classroom, family literacy in ABE, health literacy, learning differences and difficulties, competency-based education, and outcome-based certification. From math to mentoring, there were enough topics for all the participants to come away with new ideas and knowledge.

Dr. Mary Montle Bacon was the featured keynote speaker Thursday. After lunch, Dr. Bacon presented an enlightening speech titled, "Them That Gots the Gold the Challenging Student." The presentation focused on obstacles facing the students we serve, students who are often struggling to learn educational and societal systems that seem foreign to them. Dr. Bacon helped the members of the audience realize we have all faced some challenges in life and then gave us examples of how to relate to our students from where they are operating instead of from our own set of values.

On Friday evening at the MPAEA awards banquet, Lucy Smith was honored as the Outstanding Teacher for the state of Montana. Lucy was unable to attend the conference and Dixie Stark accepted the award on her behalf. Dixie had the highest praise for Lucy. She continues to be an inspiration for all educators in Montana and throughout the region.

The conference ended on Saturday with a wonderful brunch and some great gifts from the state of Montana. The MAACE board and MPAEA 2004 conference planning committee purchased a beautiful throw that featured a picture of the Lewis and Clark expedition, two books on Lewis and Clark, and a dinner for two at the Grantree Inn in Bozeman. All of these items were given away at the brunch Saturday. Dixie Stark and Gloria Gregg organized this promotion to entice adult educators to attend MPAEA next spring.

The Reno delegates did a great job of pulling together quality speakers and presenters. We were treated to good food, a great deal of information to take home and absorb, and snow on Friday evening to remind us that spring is a season of change.



MAACE
P.O. Box 10724
Kalispell, MT 59901