



NEWS & VIEWS

BEA Sponsors Scholarship Fund Raffle

Is the month of February lucky? The *BEA* is making sure it is by sponsoring a raffle to raise money for the *BEA Karen Cox Scholarship Fund*. Winning tickets will be drawn at the *BEA* office each Monday in February. Every ticket has two chances to win—first in the weekly drawing and then in the *Grand Prize* drawing on February 28 with all raffle tickets purchased during the month tumbling in the raffle drum.



BEA Building Representatives and *BEA* Board members will be selling the raffle tickets from February 1 through February 24. The tickets are \$1 each or participants may purchase six tickets for \$5. All proceeds go to the *BEA Karen Cox Scholarship Fund*.

Raffle Prizes will be announced soon!

- Week #1 Prizes will be drawn Feb. 7**
- Week #2 Prizes will be drawn Feb. 14**
- Week #3 Prizes will be drawn Feb. 21**
- Week #4 Prizes will be drawn Feb. 28**
- GRAND PRIZE will be drawn Feb. 28**

BEA Awards Cox Scholarships

This month the *BEA* Karen Cox Scholarship Fund awarded \$400 to each of the 2004 *Scholarship* recipients:

- Jennifer Havens**, *Skyview High* graduate and daughter of Michael and JoAnne Havens;
- Margaret McCulloch**, *West High* graduate and daughter of Ann and Scott C. McCulloch;
- and **Dorian Jackman**, *Senior High* graduate and son of Dean and Rebecca Jackman.

Each year the Scholarship Committee awards at least three scholarships. Applications and qualification details are available at the *BEA* office, the counselors' offices at West High, Senior High, Skyview High and the Career Center or by downloading an application from the *BEA* website, www.beaillings.org. The application deadline is March 1, 2005.



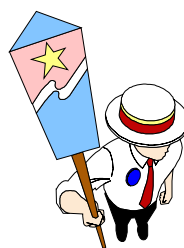
Keep informed during 2005 Session

With the Montana Supreme Court upholding the *Sherlock Decision*, crucial education funding bills will be the centerpiece of the 2005 legislative session. Watching these bills and tracking their progress through the Capitol is easy to do.

To find the bills that are pertinent to our membership, go to <http://mea-mft.org/bills.htm> or email *MEA-MFT* President Eric Feaver at efeaver@mea-mft.org and ask to be placed on the *Legislative Contact* list to receive email updates on session events and bill status. Three bills to watch are:

- SB152** Define 'quality' (Defines a basic system of free quality public elementary and secondary schools.
- HB 124** K12 SHIP (Creates a state-funded health insurance program for school personnel.)
- HB 111** Educator Entitlement (Creates and funds a new entitlement funding formula based upon staff not students.)

Contact your legislator, make your voice heard. You can write, email, or call your legislator; let them know your position. Legislators are interested in hearing the opinions of their constituents.



To email a Legislator:

- Go to www.mea-mft.org
- Click on "Legislative Action"
- Click on "Contacting Legislators"
- Everything you need is there!
- Click on "online message form"

To call and leave a phone message: Dial 1-406-444-4800

Not sure of your House District or Senate District? Not a problem. Registered voters in Yellowstone County can find this information on <http://www.co.yellowstone.mt.us/elections/>. Click on "Polling Place and Precinct Information", enter your name and birth date on the "Registered Voter Lookup", and a screen will appear with this information—and much more.

The *BEA* has a more detailed information sheet to help teachers contact the House or the Senate. Call the office at 248-9812 to request it.



Speech Regarding the Censorship of Extra-Curricular Films in School District #2

Emily F. Paulson January 2005



Allan Audet
BEA
President

I am an adult. I can vote, I can smoke, I can go to federal prison, and I can die for my country ... but I can't watch *Forrest Gump*? If the proposed school censorship policy goes into effect, this just might be the case.

How many of us can honestly say that a movie about our lives would be rated *G* or *PG*? Does this make us immoral people whose stories have no value? Does this mean that we have nothing to teach others?

The greatest stories are always controversial; that is not to say that the controversial stories are always the greatest. Controversial stories require us to justify our morality; they delve into the deepest recess of our internal and external worlds.

If this district policy goes into effect, every Shakespearean movie depicting a play would most likely be cut from the curriculum. Yet, can anyone deny the value of learning his works? Can anyone say watching Shakespeare is unnecessary to education, or that Shakespeare himself was a depraved and sick man whose work should not be forced on the minds of children? Shakespeare is bursting with sex (or allusions thereto), violence, and his own poetic form of profanity that is more beautiful than all of our modern speech. Who here can deny that Shakespeare captured the essence of what it is to be human?

Humanity is violent, sexual, profane, and beautiful.

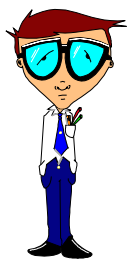
Art reflects society, not the other way around. We cannot blame film-makers and artists for showing our own corruptions. Oscar Wilde said, "The books that the world calls 'immoral' are books that show the world its own shame."

For every time your child hears the *f-word* in a film, he or she will hear it fifty times in the hallways at school. Eliminating movies that contain profanity will do nothing to lessen the frequency of profanities in a child's life, I assure you. I know, because I am a high school student. It is naive to think that the blanket censorship of school materials will somehow shield children from profanity, sex, and violence. It's all around us, in Billings, in America, in the world.

We are the generation that feels the societal ramifications of the Columbine massacre. On September 11, 2001, while we were in school, supposed to be learning, we watched the twin towers

crash down over and over again. And you think we can't handle the *f-word*? Give us a little credit here. Justice Potter Stewart said, "Censorship reflects a society's lack of confidence in itself. It is the hallmark of an authoritarian regime..."

High school students can legally watch a *PG-13* movie. Seniors can legally watch a *Rated-R* movie, or even an *NC-17* movie, should we so choose. We need to drop the pretense that we are being exposed to things in school that we could not otherwise be exposed to. Every high school student, even those who know their parents disapprove, watches movies that are rated *R* and *PG-13*. As Michael de Montaigne said, "To forbid us anything is to make us have a mind for it."



We are now faced with the idea of a "captive audience"; the students are at the mercy of the teacher. Sometimes, that's how it should be. Mark Twain said, "Censorship is 'telling a man he can't have a steak just because a baby can't chew it.'" If a student finds a film offensive, is it not better that the student arrive at that morality than be prevented from making the choice? One cannot become moral until one is aware that immorality exists. Morality cannot be shaped until a person witnesses a wrong, and recognizes it as such. To truly establish our morals, we must decide for ourselves what is right and what is wrong. Taking away movies that depict things that might be described as immoral also takes away the opportunity of the student to decide. "This is wrong," John F. Kennedy said. "We are not afraid to entrust the American people with unpleasant facts, foreign ideas, alien philosophies, and competitive values. For a nation that is afraid to let its people judge the truth and falsehood in an open market is a nation that is afraid of its people."



I am not saying that movies should be allowed regardless of content, but this is overkill. Movies ought to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Permission slips and alternative assignments are both solutions. The truth is that most of us can't bear to pay attention to a *G* or *PG* movie long enough to actually learn anything. Movies that were perhaps not made explicitly for education still manage to hold our interest and sometimes gain our empathy.

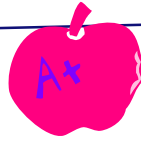
Under this policy, we would not be able to view, among many others, "*Schindler's List*", "*Mississippi Burning*", "*The Accused*", "*Amistad*", "*Pleasantville*", "*Dances with Wolves*", "*Saving Private Ryan*", "*Ali*", "*Amadeus*", or "*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*". We might, however, be able to watch "*The Land Before Time XI*", "*What's New Scooby Doo?*", "*Daycare Duckie*", "*Gumby*", "*The Elf Who Didn't Believe*", or anything featuring Alvin and the Chipmunks. Though many of these *G* movies have a thinly-veiled moral lesson, is that patronizing morality worth your child's time?

The idea of banning *R* and *PG-13* movies from School District 2 is an insult to its students. Eugene O'Neill said that, "Censorship of anything, at any time, in any place, on whatever pretense, has always been and always will be the last resort of the boob and the bigot."

If parents are so insecure to think that seeing a *rated-R* movie will completely disintegrate the child's morality, they must take another look at what they themselves have taught their children.

In recent weeks School District 2 has been faced with pending mandates of *NCLB* and determining the definition of "highly qualified." Montana schools have been front page news since the report of *AYP* test results. Academic freedom is also under attack. The first 2005 *January Education Committee* meeting witnessed some of the brightest students in the District. They understand and appreciate the excellent education they receive from the teachers in District #2. I have had several requests to print a paper that Emily Paulson, a *Senior High* student, presented at the *Education Committee* meeting. The paper exemplifies the excellence of our educational staff.

Allan Audet



Elementary (K-6) Additional Activity Assignments:

Know Your Master Agreement

As we move into the second semester and spring approaches, keep in mind your contractual rights when being assigned additional activities outside of the normal workday. Elementary (K-6) teachers have language that specifically addresses this concern.

- Teachers who accept an ongoing or comprehensive assignment throughout the school year are exempt from having to participate in any additional activities outside of the normal workday.
- Examples of comprehensive activities include SQPT, Student Referral Team, Technology Committee and any other committees that meet on a regular or scheduled basis.
- Teachers who do not participate on a comprehensive committee can be asked to participate in two additional activities such as school social events.

Any participation by teachers is on a volunteer basis and, only if there are not enough volunteers, can the building administrator assign duties to the teaching staff.

See Article VI-School Day, Section 3 of Master Agreement for contract language.

APPLY for a Grant—NOW!

Need \$\$ for materials or books for your classroom? Need \$\$ to go to a conference or class? Have a great idea for a project but no \$\$ to do it?



APPLY for a classroom grant of scholarship from the *Education Foundation* now! All SD2 personnel with computers should have the application form and guidelines by email. For more information, call the *Education Foundation* (Billings Public Schools) at 245-4133 or email Anne Cole at colea@billings.k12.mt.us. The deadline is March 11.

GYCLC AFL-CIO offers Emma Lohrlein Scholarship

The Greater Yellowstone Central Labor Council (GYCLC) AFL-CIO has made applications for the Emma Lohrlein Scholarship available at the BEA office. For the last several years, two \$250 scholarships have been awarded. This year's awards will be made in May 2005.



A son, daughter, or stepchild of a *union member* or a member of the *Montana Family Union* is eligible to apply for the scholarship.

Applicants must reside within the jurisdiction of the GYCLC (Big Horn, Carbon, Golden Valley, Musselshell, Petroleum, Stillwater, Treasure, Wheatland, and Yellowstone counties) and must plan to attend a college or vocational school in Montana or the George Meany Institute.

Applications are also available at West, Senior, Skyview, and Career Center counselors' offices. The application deadline is March 15, 2005.

Give blood. Be a hero.

The BEA is sponsoring its second *Annual Blood Drive* from February 21 to March 5 at the new *United Blood Services* building at 1444



Grand Avenue. Call UBS donor coordinator, Roberta Frigon, at 869-3051 to schedule an appointment. Identify yourself as a BEA donor from your school, the school with the highest percentage of donors will win a free lunch for the entire faculty. Anyone at your school can be counted—teachers, parents, students (17 or older), support staff, administrators, friends & family. Find a donor buddy and do it together! Veteran donors find someone at your school who has never donated and encourage them to go with you. The one reason people do not donate is because **NO ONE HAS EVER ASKED**.

The whole process takes about an hour. That includes registration, a mini-physical and medical history and refreshments. Donors go through a pre-screening process to assure they are healthy and eligible to donate.

Blood donors save lives. Each donation can be separated into different components: red blood cells, plasma, platelets, and cryoprecipitate. There is no substitute for blood; it is the "gift of life" that only human beings can give one another.

Contact *United Blood Services* for more information on donor qualifications.



Thanks from United Way

"Through the generous gift of \$20,800 from School District #2 employees, United Way is able to continue its investment in building a healthy, caring community for all of us. Your generosity and caring spirit will have a lasting effect on the lives of the needy and the hopes of our community.

Thank you teachers for helping us in our efforts to reach out like never before. Remember, there is no end to the success we can achieve when we work together." To learn more, call Debbie West at 252-3839, Ext. 14.



NEA Launches Web Site

NEA is creating a new site, www.nea.org, called *NEA Interactive*. The new site includes resources for teachers and education support professionals, as well as for parents, the press, and the public.

NEA members will also be able to take advantage of member-only discounts ranging from online professional development to long distance service discounts and other special offers. Visit www.nea.org and see why the *National Education Association* is the voice for public education.

For more information, contact: **Rick Geier**, NEA Information Technology Services, rgeier@nea.org (202) 822-7184

Teaching Resources

- ✓ Online Professional Development
- ✓ The Latest Information on NCLB
- ✓ IDEA Tools
- ✓ NEA's Read Across America Updates
- ✓ NEA Professional Library
- ✓ Job Placement Services





Rocky needs instructors for summer camps

Rocky Mountain College *OutReach* needs instructors to offer fun and exciting educational camps in creative writing, reading, science, music, math, theater, and computer fields. Most of the camps are 4-5 days and are directed towards K-8 grades. Instructors can offer half-day camps or full day camps for a week, depending on the program. All expenses must be covered in the camp fee with a minimum enrollment. *RMC* compensates instructors for their time and efforts at the end of each month.

If there is any interest within School District 2, contact *RMC OutReach* at 657-1040 or 657-1149. During the summer of 2004, over 850 youth participated in 30 camps ranging from improvisational jazz and drama camps, to art, dinosaurs, rocketry, computer science and multiple sports camps. Expert instructors, many of whom are professional educators widely recognized in their respective fields of study, lead *RMC OutReach* camps. Youth attending *RMC OutReach* camps receive valuable instruction in an engaging and fun atmosphere where they will meet new friends and explore their chosen interests.



January / February CALENDAR

February 1	Deadline for <i>NEA RA Delegate</i> Nominations
February 1-24	Buy Raffle Tickets
February 7	Week #1 Raffle Drawing
February 9	<i>BEA</i> Board of Directors
February 11	Vacation Day
February 14	Week #2 Raffle Drawing
February 15	Representative Council/ <i>NEA RA Delegate</i> Election
February 21	Week #3 Raffle Drawing
February 28	Week #4 Raffle Drawing/ Grand Prize Drawing
March 1	<i>Scholarship</i> Applications Due
March 2	Read Across America Day!



Retirement Notification Deadlines



Teachers planning to retire this year should keep in mind the following *Severance Notification* deadlines. Staff must submit a notification by the following dates to receive the listed percentage of benefits.

✓	Before March 1	105%
✓	After March 1	100%
✓	After April 1	95%
✓	After Last day of School	90%



MORE INFO . . .

2005 Legislature



When an issue is close to a vote in committee or on the House or Senate floor, telephone messages make a **HUGE** difference. Do **NOT** underestimate the importance of phone calls. Bills live and bills die regularly depending on phone calls—or worse phone calls **NOT** made.

To find, read, and even download bills:

Click on “**2005 LAWS**” on the “**Legislative Action**” webpage. Then click on “**Look Up Bill Information.**”

If you want to find tons of useful information, enter a bill’s type and number or search for a bill. Then read the current bill text and track the bill’s progress.

For info: <http://mea-mft.org/bills.htm>.

Senator or Representative (full name)
c/o Montana Senate or Montana House
PO Box 200500 or 200400
Helena, MT 59620
Dear Senator or Representative (last name):



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