

NEWS & VIEWS

Join the Nation's Largest Reading Celebration



Dr. Seuss's birthday, March 2, is the day to celebrate reading in schools across the nation. Originally created as a one-day event to celebrate the joy of reading, NEA's Read Across America has grown into a nationwide program that promotes reading not only on March 2 but *every day*.

If you are ready to make this year's Read Across America an exciting, educational event, the BEA is ready to help by providing Read Across America stickers, posters, bookmarks and certificates of participation. BEA Building Representatives will receive a flyer/order form for these items for each school. Teachers must

tell their Building Representative how many stickers, bookmarks and certificates they will need. Each school will receive up to three posters. Order forms must be returned to the BEA office by February 3.

The 2006 Read Across America Resource Kit is available to members from the NEA website, www.nea.org/readacross. You'll also find information and links to a variety of reading resources and a literacy calendar to keep you up-to-date. Members may order a copy of the kit, or download the resource kit's contents.



Apply for 2006 BEA Karen Cox Scholarship NOW

The BEA Karen Cox Scholarships are awarded to at least three recipients each spring. Eligibility for the scholarship is limited to:

- ✓ Students with a parent who has been a BEA member for five continuous years
- ✓ Students with a parent who is retired from the Billings Public Schools and was a BEA member for five years prior to retirement or,
- ✓ Seniors who have attended a Billings Public High School for at least two years and whose parent is not eligible for BEA membership.



Scholarship applications are at the counselors' offices at Senior High, West High, Skyview High and the Career Center. The application is also available on the BEA web site, www.beabillings.org. The deadline for completed applications accompanied by all required documentation is **March 7, 2006**. Scholarship recipients are announced in May and scholarship funds are awarded the following January.



Eleven BEA members achieve NBC

Last month the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) announced 7,289 teachers earned their profession's top recognition by achieving National Board Certification. Nation-wide 47,503 teachers have been certified by NBPTS since the start of the National Board Certification (NBC) program in the 1993/94 school year. This year Montana has 14 new National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) to add to the 40 Montana teachers who have already achieved the highest credential in the teaching profession.

The certification process forces teachers to analyze their work. Teachers spend over 200 hours on the assessment process over several months. The process consists of a two-part assessment: a portfolio of materials to demonstrate how candidates' teaching meets National Board standards and an Assessment Center experience where candidates respond to computer prompts about subject matter and classroom situations—based on the standards developed for their field.

NEA, MEA-MFT, and BEA earnestly support National Board Certification and consider it to be a valuable professional development option for experienced teachers.

Several incentives, support programs, and scholarships are available to teachers in School District 2 seeking National Board Certification.

- ✓ In 2005 the Montana legislature allocated \$60,000 to support \$3,000 stipends for 20 teachers who achieve National Board Certification.
- ✓ The state of Montana has signed the NASDTEC Interstate Contract and will award their highest level certificate to teachers who obtain National Board Certification in an area corresponding to that certificate.
- ✓ The Montana Professional Teaching Foundation has developed NBC scholarships to encourage and offset some of the costs to Montana teachers seeking certification.
- ✓ The Billings Public Schools pay an annual \$2,000 stipend to NBCTs employed in the district for the 10-year life of the certificate.

Jacqueline McDonald
Karen Rice
Linda Jones
Diana Mysse
Kathryn Pfaffinger
Judith J. Rigler
Susan Daly
Linda Boyer
Kim Busch
Jeff Meide
Mari Jane Omer

2005 School District 2 National
Board
Certified Teachers



For more info:
Erik Burke
1232 E. 6th Avenue
Helena, MT 59601
406-442-4250



School Funding!

What does it mean for Billings?



The special Legislative Session provided two forms of funding: on-going and one time money. With the one time money, specific guidelines have been identified as where money can be spent, but clarification concerning the on-going funds and how they can be spent is expected from the state soon.

ONGOING FUNDING

Quality Educator Entitlement

\$2000 per fulltime equivalent educator as reported to *OPI* for accreditation purposes. This includes members who hold a certificate or license and who provide services to students. Revenue from this entitlement goes to the general fund.

Elementary General Fund — \$1,490,827
High School General Fund — \$796,110

At-Risk Student Payment

Funds are distributed based upon same formula as distribution of *Title I* funds. On or before September 15, 2010, *OPI* needs to report to the governor and legislature on the change of progress of the “at risk population” using 2006 baseline data on test scores, dropout and graduation rates.

Elementary Budget —\$355,253
High School Budget —\$64,123

American Indian Achievement Gap Payment

\$200 will be provided for each American Indian enrolled in the District. This funding will be put into the general fund. *OPI* needs to report to the governor and legislature on the change of progress of the American Indian students using 2006 baseline data on test scores, dropout and graduation rates.

Elementary General Fund—\$160,600
High School General Fund—\$70,400

Indian Education For All

Funding will be based upon *ANB* in the District. \$20.40 will be paid for each *ANB* as calculated for each fiscal year. This funding will be deposited into the District’s general fund.

Elementary General Fund—\$199,940
High School General Fund—\$119,075



ONE TIME FUNDING

Building Maintenance and Weatherization

Money received will be required to be deposited into the miscellaneous programs fund. Payments will be made at \$1000 per district and \$153 per *ANB*.

Elementary Fund: \$1,500,553
High School Fund: \$894,061

Indian Education For All

Moneys are distributed on an *ANB* formula at \$47.50 per student. Funding will have to be placed in miscellaneous programs fund.

Elementary Fund: \$46,5547
High School Fund: \$277,257

School Building Study

Approximately \$2.5 million has been allocated for the state to complete a facility condition and needs assessment.

Energy Cost Relief

Money received from this allocation has to be placed in the miscellaneous programs fund. Funding is calculated on *ANB* numbers at \$6.85 per student.

Elementary Fund - \$134, 274
High School Fund—\$79,967





Teachers win Awards

Skyview High School teacher **Kirk Woosley** received the Polette/Armstrong Professional Development Award for commitment to technology education. The award is given to only one technology educator in the state and includes a \$1,000 grant.

Four Billings teachers were recently named as recipients of the state Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teachers. The award winners are **Jenny Combs** and **Jacquie McDonald** of Senior High, **Shirley Greene** of Lewis and Clark Middle School, and **Tom Staley** of Skyview High School.

The four teachers will be included in a final judging process to determine the award winners for a week-long trip to Washington D.C. and \$10,000.

Raffle raises \$3500



On December 19, the last winning tickets were drawn concluding the fundraising event for the *BEA* Karen Cox Scholarship program. The prize winners are listed below but the real winners are the students who

will be awarded scholarships to offset college costs.

The raffle was a successful fundraising event due to the efforts of all who sold tickets and all who donated prizes. The *BEA* thanks all the *BEA* Building Representatives and Board of Directors, Phil Cox, and Wendy Eubank for selling tickets and getting them to the office on time. *BEA* also wants to thank all the local business people and stores who donated the great prizes and the members who obtained the prize donations.



Thank You Local Businesses

for your Prize Donations!

Prize Winners

Nov. 29 - Week #1 Drawing

- 1st Place - Erica Hartman, Senior Academy
- 2nd Place - Lori Arthur, Riverside
- 3rd Place - Carol Fortune, McKinley
- 4th Place - Mary Holtz, Senior High

Dec. 5 - Week #2 Drawing

- 1st Place - Rae Koch, Meadowlark
- 2nd Place - Judy Walker, Newman
- 3rd Place - Mary Beth Krogh
- 4th Place - Jane Manley, Skyview

Dec. 12 -Week #3 Drawing

- 1st Place - Ed Workman
- 2nd Place - Charlie Bokum, Poly Drive
- 3rd Place - Linda Espeseth, Washington
- 4th Place - Margie Franklin, Rimrock

Dec. 19 -Week #4 Drawing

- 1st Place -Cindy Wardrip, Senior
- 2nd Place - Mrs. M. Hurd
- 3rd Place -Michael Oliver
- 4th Place -Jane Manley, Skyview

GRAND PRIZE WINNER

John Miller, West

Free Aerospace Education Seminar

For more information call Major Steven C. Heffel, CAP Beartooth Composite Squadron Aerospace Education Officer Billings, MT 406-652-7268

Teachers are invited to attend a free two-hour Aerospace Education Seminar conducted by Major Kaye Ebel during the 2006 Air Patrol State Conference in Billings at the Holiday Inn Grand Montana on Saturday, April 29, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. There is no charge for the seminar but lunch at the conference is \$10.

Since 2004 teachers that are Aerospace Education Members (*AEMs*) of Civil Air Patrol teachers conduct the Aerospace Education Excellence (*AEX*) Program for the students at their schools and can now earn one hour of graduate

credit from Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado. In 2004, eight Montana teachers at five Montana Schools successfully completed Civil Air Patrol's *AEX* Program. Call Captain Paul Tweden, at 252-2578, to reserve a spot at the Aerospace Education Seminar and/or for the conference lunch.

Your big Chance to represent membership



Each summer over 9,000 delegates from across the nation gather to debate issues that impact American public education, elect top officers, and set policy for the 2.7 million-member Association. This year the NEA RA Delegate meeting will take place in Orlando, Florida on June 30 through July 5. As in years past, the Billings Education Association will send a delegation to represent its membership. Officers of the *BEA* Board of Directors make up part of that delegation, but the rest are elected by the membership each year. *BEA* members interested in representing *BEA* in Florida this year must submit a self-nomination by January 31, 2006. The election will be held on February 21, 2006. For more information or to receive a self-nomination form call the *BEA* office at 248-9812 or email Shauna at shaunabea1@aol.com. A photograph and a biography must accompany the nomination form.



Memorial Grant Recipients

On December 12 teachers learned that Christmas had come early. The Montana Professional Teaching Foundation announced its 2005 Karen Cox Memorial Grant winners and \$4,600 was awarded to 12 of the 21 applicants.

2005 Grant Winners

- Carol Metzler, Eagle Cliffs Elementary and Big Sky Elementary, Billings
- Pam Meier, Boulder Elementary, Billings
- Kathleen Martinell, Lima Public Schools, Lima
- Dan Erickson, Poly Drive Elementary, Billings
- Nancy Linnell, Potomac School, Bonner
- Anna Hansen-Lane, Elrod Elementary, Kalispell
- Kelli Delaney, Poly Drive Elementary, Billings
- J.S. Joyce, Central Heights School, Billings
- Nancy Pedersen, Washington Middle School, Glendive
- Juline Kosmicki, Sandstone School, Billings
- Patrick Kenney, Ponderosa Elementary, Billings
- Alice Nation, Billings Senior High School, Billings



Grant monies will be used to purchase books, musical instruments, digital cameras, texts to begin building a library of materials for Spanish, Latin, French and German languages, and supplies and funding experiments for the upcoming 2006 Deaconess Science Expo and 2006 Missoula State Science Fair.



License Renewal Reminder

As of January 1, Montana educators, whose licenses expire June 30, 2006, can renew their licenses.

Options for renewing still include online or paper application. However, official documents (i.e. official transcripts, official grade reports or

original renewal unit certificates) cannot be submitted electronically. They must be mailed or hand delivered to *OPI* in order for the renewal to take effect. Educators with expiring licenses have until August 31, 2006, to earn renewal credits (college credit or renewal units, as appropriate). Educators taking courses in the Summer of 2006 should check with the university to be sure that the actual course grades will be posted to the summer transcript. Courses posted to the Fall 2006 transcript cannot be accepted for renewal of a license expiring June 30, 2006.

For more information, contact Elizabeth Keller OPI, (406)444-3150.

Member Benefits Showcase

Do your New Year's resolutions include making a will or becoming debt-free? Do you know your membership can help you attain those goals?

AFT Plus Credit Counseling & Debt Management



The credit counseling program helps members become debt-free, learn new money management skills and save for the future. Experienced credit counselors help develop a plan of action to follow—just sound advice that will help stop collection agencies from controlling

your financial life.

You can get a FREE credit counseling session to financial recovery with Money Management International (MMI), budget analysis and advice. Your free session covers:

- \$ Complete financial review and budget analysis
- \$ Assistance in budgeting or advice on sources of additional income
- \$ Advice on how to work with creditors
- \$ A written Action Plan that summarizes your financial situation, provides a budget and timeline for reaching goals, and restates action items
- \$ Referral to a social service organization in your area, if appropriate
- \$ Referral to Union Plus Legal Service or Union Plus Mortgage Assistance program, if appropriate

If you need additional assistance to eliminate debt, your counselor will develop a customized Debt Management Plan (DMP) and you will receive a 33% union-member discount on the set-up fee for a DMP.



In short, a DMP allows you to make one simple monthly payment to MMI, and authorizes MMI to pay each of your creditors on your behalf based on the terms negotiated with them.

MMI also works with creditors to stop collection, waive or reduce interest charges, and eliminate finance charge or late fees, wherever possible.

For more information go to: www.unionplus.org/creditcounseling or call 877/833-1745.


Is a Lawyer Needed to Make a Will?



We've all been told we should write a will. That's pretty good advice. If you don't make a will, state law will determine who gets your property. It may not be whom you would have chosen and a judge may decide who will raise your children. In your will, you can make these decisions yourself.

You may feel a little uneasy about the process of making a will. After all, a will is an important legal document — but if you're like most people, you won't need a lawyer. With good self-help materials, it is easy to make a will. Don't, however, rule out consulting with a lawyer. In some situations a lawyer's services are warranted. You don't necessarily have to turn over the whole project.

You may just want to ask some questions and finish it yourself.

 Nolo is the leading publisher for legal self-help publications, software, and forms. NEA members can get substantial discounts. Link to Nolo from the NEA Member Benefits site, www.neamb.com and Nolo will apply the discount.



- Jan. 16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day/PIR Day
- Jan. 17 Representative Council
- Jan. 31 NEA RA Delegate nomination deadline
- Feb. 3 Read Across America order deadline
- Feb. 8 BEA Board of Directors
- Feb. 10 & 13 Billings Public School Vacation Days
- Feb. 21 Representative Council/NEA RA Delegate Election
- Feb. 28 Retirement Notification Deadline for 105% Severance
- March 2 NEA's Read Across America Celebration
- March 7 BEA Karen Cox Scholarship Applications due

"One Class at a Time" Helps Teachers

First Interstate Bank and KTVQ television have teamed up to bring local schools, faculty and students in Eastern Montana and Northern Wyoming an exciting opportunity. In an attempt to help highlight the efforts in the classroom and to meet school's specific needs, the team brings you a program called "One Class at a Time."

Teachers and students are invited to tell about their specific classroom project or need on an entry form which may be accessed by the link below. Then, each week, a representative from First Interstate Bank and a reporter and photographer from KTVQ will visit the winning classroom and present them with a \$250 award to help that class attain their specific goals. Each Monday KTVQ will feature the winning class on the 5:30 p.m. and 10 p.m. news.

One "Class at a Time" is limited to schools located in counties in the KTVQ television viewing area.

Please click on the link below to access the "One Class at a Time" entry form: **To Get Application On-Line go to:**

<http://www.firstinterstatebank.com/community.html#Oneclass>



— Severance Notification Deadlines —

- Notification before March 1: 105% *
 - Notification after March 1: 100% *
 - Notification after April 1: 95% *
 - Notification after the last day of school: 90% *
- * % of Service Credit & Sick Leave Credit to be received

Classifieds

NEED your house interior repainted?

Call for that exterior job too!

Big or Small—Dave Barnett & Mike Cantrell can do the job!

Call 656-7767 or 628-7122.



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