



News & Views

◆ Billings Education Association ◆ 510 North 29th Street ◆ Billings, MT 59101 ◆ 1-406-248-9812 ◆

December 2003 Edition Vol 40, No. 4

ER&D—a great experience!

It's not too late to register for the next *Foundations of Effective Teaching I* class! It's a great opportunity to earn college, graduate or step-up credits and leave with valuable resources for your classes at school. The session begins January 26, 2004.

The *Foundations of Effective Teaching I* is a basic course from the AFT's Educational Research and Dissemination (ER&D) Program and presents proven practices from research on:

- Effective classroom and group management
- Effective use of learning time
- Questioning and feedback skills
- Homework assignments and
- Interactive direct instruction strategy



The classes consist of a 10 week / 20 hour course and will be held at the BEA office (510 N. 29th St., across from the Lincoln Center) on Mondays from 4:30 - 6:30 p.m.

To register, contact Community Education at 247-3700 or register at Room 107 at the Lincoln Center.

Get Ready!

Dr. Seuss's *100th Birthday* is right around the corner and so is NEA's *Read Across America*. Now is the time to plan your school's celebration.

The BEA will send order forms to the BEA Building Representatives and teachers may obtain bookmarks and certificates of participation for each school's *Read Across America Celebration* on March 2, 2004. (Unfortunately, posters, stickers, and tattoos will not be available.)

BEA members can request the 2004 Resource Kit which is filled with even more ideas, posters, and activity sheets. Requests for bookmarks and certificates must be mailed to the BEA Office by January 20. Celebrate Dr. Seuss!



TREMENDOUS TEACHER

Three teachers qualify for NBC

Eric Feaver, President of MEA-MFT, recently announced that three teachers from Billings have earned their *National Board Certification*. The scholars include **Carol Annin, Kristeen Keup, and Carolyn Thayer**. Congratulations!

Retirement Workshop scheduled

All certified staff, teachers and administrators who are interested in their pension under the *TEACHER RETIREMENT SYSTEM, (TRS)*, are invited to attend a special *MEA-MFT* workshop. The meetings will start at 4 p.m. and end at 8 p.m. on Thursday, January 22 at the Lincoln Center Board Room.

Get the latest word on *NEA Long Term Care & Member Benefits*. Learn more about the *MEA-MFT Retired Program*, get the current information concerning your social security benefits, and walk through the *TRS* benefits and procedures with the *TRS* staff. The meetings will be very informative for anyone considering retirement within the next few years.



The schedule will proceed as follows:

- 4:00 Welcome from the BEA & MEA-MFT Retired!**
- 4:10 NEA Member Benefits and AFT Plus —Membership Pays!**
- 4:25 NEA's A+ Auto & Home Insurance**
Michelle Anderson, A+California Casualty
- 4:40 Basics of Pre-Retirement Financial Planning**
Ken Althoff, *NEA Valuebuilder Program*
- 5:00 Why You Should Consider Long Term Care**
Orley Sinkler, *NEA LTC*
- 5:20 Social Security & Medicare in the 21st Century—It's Your Future!**
Jan Soelter, *Social Security Administration*
- 6:10 Finger Food provided at the BEA Office by MEA-MFT Retired!**
- 6:30 Your Defined Benefit Pension: TRS Benefits & Procedures**
Janet Cooper, TRS staff
- 7:45 Session ends**



RETIREMENT REMINDER

Teachers, who are planning to retire soon, should be aware of these *Severance Notification* deadlines. If an educator is retiring, he or she must submit their notification by the following dates to receive the percentage listed below of their service credit and sick leave credit.



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

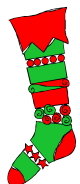


HOLIDAY Treats

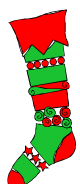


BEA President
Allan Audet

Grievance Update

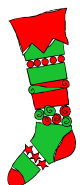
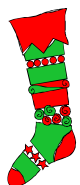


Currently we have one outstanding grievance which deals with Department Chair and Area Coordinator stipend issues. It has been discovered that many teachers are being instructed to perform duties that are identified under the guidelines of Department Chair and Area Coordinator, without receiving the stipend. It is the intent of the grievance to resolve the issue by either having the designated teachers receive the appropriate stipend or have the duties carried out by the administrator. The language in our Master Agreement identifies that it is at the District's discretion whether a person is appointed as a chairperson of a department. This, in no way, suggests that duties can be added to job descriptions and be required by staff to complete without any compensation if a department chair is not appointed. The grievance is at *Level I* which means the District has seven days to meet with the BEA. They then need to respond in writing, within five days following the meeting.



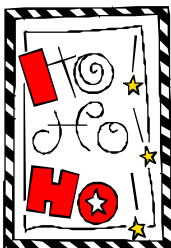
2003-2006 Master Agreement

The new Master Agreement for the years 2003-2006 is being printed and should be available very shortly. All changes have been made and approved by the BEA and the District. The Master Agreement will include pay matrixes for the years 2003-2006, along with the stipend amounts being identified for those years. Read through the Master Agreement and note the changes that have been made in the following articles: *Article X, Insurance Proposal, Article VII, Compensation, Article VI, School Day, and Article XIII School Year*. The extra pay committee is continuing to look at addressing stipend issues with a longevity schedule a top priority.



What has *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) done?

The first noticeable change this year is the increased number of in-service sessions that occur on a regular basis. Accountability seems to be the focus, whether it is in testing requirements or making sure the curriculum emphasis is directed toward what is going to be tested. There also seems to be a feeling of panic across the District that everything has to be done today. This is creating an exhausted staff who have to question *How Much is Enough?* Grants have taken on a life of their own in the areas of reading, math, technology and other areas. We realize that training is good for everyone and, if done correctly, will improve the achievement of the students but how we reach the final goal is important.



“Early Out Days” Discussed

Training takes time, which is in short supply these days, but I am encouraged by a proposal at a recent School Community Meeting. The District suggested having six “early out days” in the elementary schools during the 2004-2005 school year. I am hopeful that this will help alleviate some of the concerns of this year. The proposed “early out time” is to be used for meeting varied issues such as: *The 5 Year Plan, NCLB, Montana State Standards, Curriculum Development, Assessment Requirements, School Improvement Planning, Effective Schools Planning, and Full Staff Involvement*. This proposal is in the early stages and still has to be approved by the School Board.

PDC wants Ideas for PIR Days

Teachers also have the opportunity to contribute ideas to the five regularly scheduled PIR days by participating on the new *Professional Development Committee* or letting the committee know their suggestions for quality professional development. Don't sit back. Have your needs met, be proactive and let the committee know your concerns. Working together, we can have professional development that is meaningful. Karen Cox, chair of the PDC, can be emailed at coxk@billings.k12.mt.us

2004 NEA Pacific Region Leadership Conference —Great Public Schools—

The NEA Pacific Regional Leadership Conference (PRCL) will be held February 20-22 in Billings, Montana. It offers an opportunity for Billings educators to see education in action.

This conference is designed for K-12 teachers, education support professionals, higher education members, students, and retired members. Information and forms will be posted at <http://www.owl.org>, but visitors must register the first time they access this NEA member-only site.

The 2004 theme is "Work That Matters: Great Public Schools." The PRLC Planning Committee has created a conference that supports the Great Public Schools initiative and focuses on building growing membership, expanding member communication and education, and building grassroots and organizational infrastructure to support issue based organizing. States are sending state board members and veteran leaders of the conference, but they also encourage the participation of newly elected leaders and new members.

The sessions will address the following issues:

- ✓ The status of "No Child Left Behind" legislation
- ✓ Overview of NEA structure and resources
- ✓ Strategies for community engagement to improve learning in high priority schools
- ✓ Organizing the next generation of education employees
- ✓ The impact of the "No Child Left Behind" legislation on ESP
- ✓ Organizing new units in higher education.

The NEA Pacific Regional Leadership Conference is open to all interested NEA members. The 2004 conference registration fee is \$150. Those interested in attending should contact Allan Audet, BEA President, at the BEA Office 248-9812 or email audetbea@aol.com. Registrations should be postmarked by Friday, January 9, 2004.

The conference will also highlight *Minority & Women's Leadership Training* programs. The NEA PRLC will be preceded by the NEA Regional Minority Leadership Training (MLT) February 18-20, 2004.

NEA Plans 2004 Representative Assembly

BEA members interested in attending the annual Representative Assembly in Washington, D.C. from July 2-7 should note the following details.

Delegates will be elected to represent the BEA at the NEA Representative Assembly.

Applicants must call BEA President Allan Audet at 248-9812 to receive a Nomination Form.

Interested BEA members must complete a Nomination Form, write a biography, and provide a photo.

All information must be submitted to the BEA Office by February 2. The election will be held on February 17.



IT'S TIME!

High School Seniors must Apply Soon



BEA members should be aware that their high school seniors are eligible for BEA scholarships. Each applicant must have a good academic status and must attend one of the public schools or the Career Center. Scholarship applications must be returned by March 1 and they will be available in the high schools and the Career Center after January 15. The winners will be announced in May, 2004. Scholarship checks will be awarded in January, 2005. The following rules apply.

- ✦ **The BEA Scholarship Committee awards at least three scholarships per year. The amount of the scholarships will vary according to the current interest rates.**
- ✦ **Applicants must have a 3.0 GPA and must pursue training at a post-secondary training institution.**
- ✦ **Added requirements for candidates include:**
 - a. Candidate's parents should be BEA members in good standing for five continuous years.
 - b. If candidates' parents have retired from the Billings Public School system, they must have been BEA members in good standing for five years, prior to retirement.
 - c. Seniors who have attended a Billings Public high school for at least two years and whose parents are not eligible for BEA membership.
- ✦ **Candidates must also provide the following information:**
 - a. A completed application form.
 - b. An official high school transcript.
 - c. A personal essay, (one page), discussing educational goals, strengths and weaknesses, motivation, and financial plans to meet those educational goals.
 - d. Two letters from BEA members who are acquainted with the students.
A third letter must come from an individual (not a relative) outside of the school.



Scholarship Information

- ✓ Completed applications due March 1.
- ✓ Mail applications to BEA Office at 510 No. 29th St., Billings, Montana 59101
- ✓ For more info: Call BEA President Allan Audet at 248-9812



December—January 2003-04 Calendar

Season's Greetings



- Dec. 22** Christmas Break
- Jan. 5** Back to School!
- Jan. 5** Announce Representatives Assembly Election
- Jan. 14** BEA Board of Directors
- Jan. 20** Rep. Council/Read Across America Orders Due
- Jan. 22** MEA-MFT Retirement Workshop
- Jan. 23-24** MEA-MFT Board of Directors
- Jan. 26** ER&D "Foundations of Effective Teaching I" Begins
- Jan. 28** School Nurses Day

HOLIDAY
memories

Billings supports Teachers' Conference

Thank you, Billings, for providing a warm welcome to all of the educators attending the 2003 MEA-MFT Educators' Conference in October! Over 3,000 Montana teachers and other school professionals enjoyed the Billings community's exceptional hospitality while attending two days of professional workshops. Our conference remains one of the largest educational conferences in the northwest United States and, as in the past, Billings proved to be an exemplary host city.

I would like to express special thanks to the MSU-B College of Education, Creative Monograms, Archie Cochrane Ford and all of the other Billings businesses, community members, and volunteers who made the conference such a success.

Eric Feaver, President
MEA-MFT
Helena

\$3000 Profit Fair makes Scholarships Happen!

The 28th Annual BEA Christmas Fair was a huge success! Over 90 tables of hand-crafted merchandise filled the Holiday Inn Trade Center on November 30. Admission was free, Christmas music played in the background, and friends and colleagues got a chance to visit and choose from a profusion of shopping delights.

The fair scholarship raffle raised over \$3000 for the *BEA Scholarship Fund*. Thank you to all who attended and participated in this year's event!

Raffle winners included the following individuals:

First Place Winner

Steve Wilson — Career Center
\$250 worth of groceries & \$100 cash

Second Place Winner

Shannon Dumold
\$150 worth of groceries

Third Place Winner

Nolan Krieger
\$75 worth of groceries



Classifieds

For Sale: Beautiful Burlington House solid oak dining set. Table seats 12 and includes 6 chairs, China and server. Asking \$1800. For more information, call 245-7122 or 247-2472.

New BEA Website!

BEA WEBSITE: www.beabillings.org.

- Now you can download the *BEA News and Views* from our website.

News & Views

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