



# NEWS & VIEWS

## Extra Special Teacher Needed for BEA Award

**B**EA members, YOU know who THEY are. YOU see them almost every day and YOU witness the positive impact THEY have on students and colleagues. YOU see those extra special teachers, classroom aides, secretaries, counselors, school volunteers, PTA presidents, principals, deans, librarians, and others who are doing their job and more so well. Now is the time to let them know their dedication has not gone unnoticed. Nominate that special person for an Award.



The five categories of recognition include: *Teacher of the Year, Teacher in the Community, Friend of Education, Exemplary Administrator, and Exemplary Associate.* Nomination forms give full descriptions of the criteria for each category. Call the BEA office at 248-9812 for a form or download the BEA Awards nomination form from the website, [www.beabillings.org](http://www.beabillings.org)

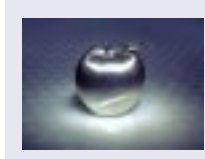
Nominations must be submitted by March 24, 2005 and only BEA members may make nominations.

## Encourage teachers to fill positions

The annual BEA election will be held this spring on April 19, 2005. BEA members will vote for candidates to fill the Elementary Director, the Middle School Director and a Director-at-Large seats on the BEA Board of Directors. These are two year terms which begin June 2005. Also, ten seats for BEA delegates to MEA-MFT Representative Assembly will be elected. These are 3-year terms to begin with the MEA-MFT RA in 2006. BEA members interested in running for any of these positions should call the BEA office at 248-9812 after March 1 to request a self-nomination form. Nominations will be accepted until March 31. A nominating meeting will be held on March 29 at the BEA office at 4:30 p.m. Members interested in nominating a fellow member or themselves as a candidate are encouraged to attend.



## Chance for Billings Community to Nominate



Each year the greater Billings community is asked to nominate teachers and specialists who best reflect a commitment to excellence in education. Nominees can be selected from any Billings school or outlying school which 'feeds' into the Billings schools. The *Golden Apple*

Selection Committee will choose two elementary teachers, one specialist, one middle school and one high school teacher. *Golden Apples* are awarded to the five recipients at the *Educator Appreciation Awards Banquet* on April 26, along with a \$500 cash prize.

The nomination deadline is March 24. Nomination forms have been distributed to all Billings Public Schools, parochial schools and outlying schools including Blue Creek, Elysian, Independent, Lockwood, Canyon Creek, and Elder Grove. The *Golden Apple* nomination form is also available to download from the BEA website, [www.beabillings.org](http://www.beabillings.org)

## Apply for '05 MEA-MFT Meetings NOW

**Cathy Warner**  
1232 E. 6th Ave.,  
Helena, MT 59601  
#1-800-398-0826  
Fax: 406-443-5081  
cwarner@mea-mft.org

Cathy Warner, *Assistant Executive Director of MEA-MFT*, needs teachers to present at the *Educators' Conference* in Missoula this next October 20 - 21. Submit your application electronically. To complete the on-line form, go to [www.mea-mft.org](http://www.mea-mft.org) and click on "Educators' Conference" under *Other Info*. If you have questions, direct them to Warner.

## Important Info / Important Dates

- Retirement notification must be given *before* March 1 to receive 105% of benefits.
- BEA Karen Cox Scholarship Applications due—March 1.
- Education Foundation Classroom Grants due—March 11
- Little Delegate Assembly —March 24.
- BEA Awards Nominations—March 24.
- Submit Golden Apple Nominations to the Lincoln Center by —March 24.
- BEA Nomination Meeting is at the BEA office— March 29.
- Submit candidacy forms for BEA Board/ MEA-MFT RA Delegates — March 31.
- BEA Annual Election —April 19.
- Educator Appreciation Awards Banquet —April 26.



# NEA voices Concerns— Audet praises Education



Allan Audet  
BEA President

## NEA Conference

**B**EA members who attended the *Pacific Regional Leadership Conference* in Portland were exposed to high energy speeches from the leadership of the NEA. President Reg Weaver, Secretary-Treasure Lily Eskelsen and Vice President Dennis Van Roekel gave speeches about the state of public education in the United States. Even though each speaker has a different style, their messages were very clear and somewhat unsettling.

## No Child Left Behind

It is apparent the NEA staff is struggling with the political view in Washington D.C. that does not support public education. NEA's efforts, though immense, are falling on deaf ears as they try to influence the leadership and gain funding for the mandates of *No Child Left Behind*. Across the nation, in large states and small, movements are encouraging the privatization of public schools through vouchers, promoting the establishment of charter and private schools, along with merit pay schemes. In the press, the common message is: all public schools are failing—even when we know otherwise. Montana is an excellent example of how well public schools are doing with our consistently high test scores and graduation rates. Educators need to promote the excellence they are achieving by emphasizing student accomplishments, which are many.

It is a sad day when a school is classified as “failing.” One student, on one given day, can score one point below passing and the entire school is deemed “failing,” regardless of the high achievement levels of the other students.



## Challenges

- ☞ State Funding Formula Hurts Public Schools
- ☞ State Funding Formula Violates the State Constitution
- ☞ Public School Spending Has Declined
- ☞ Teacher Salaries Have Plummeted in Montana Since Mid-1980s
- ☞ Schools Need Major Repairs
- ☞ Steep Spending Gap Between Districts



TAKING A BREAK  
BETWEEN MEETINGS...

The Montana delegation smiles for the camera. On February 16-20, the BEA sent a delegation of 10 educators to attend NEA Pacific Regional Leadership Conference in Portland, Oregon. Pictured above is part of the Montana delegation including BEA delegates: Allan Audet, Mike Joyce, Kate McAuliffe, Juline Kosmicki, Diane Welhaven, & Kathy Rumph. (BEA delegates Tania Klein, Gaye Kopczynski, Adriene Loveridge, and Marcia Beaumont are not pictured.)

## Charter Schools

Montana is, again, being targeted for charter schools this legislative session. This week Republican leadership used one of their 12 silver bullets to blast HB456, Kooperman's Montana Charter Schools Act, out of the House Education Committee.

### Charter School Exemptions:

- All school law
- School accreditation
- Teacher certification
- Teacher tenure
- Collectively bargained agreements

HB456 allows any governmental entity, private organization, or private person who finds a sponsor to start a charter school.

Amazingly, charter schools are free from the restrictive guidelines public schools must adhere to, but yet receive education funding. Fortunately, when this bill was heard on the House floor this week the measure was voted down.

## Good News For Montana Public Schools



- Reading Scores Are Among the Nation's Best
- Math Scores Are Among the Nation's Best
- Best in the Nation in Science
- ACT Scores Are Among the Nation's Best
- Public School Students Outperform Private
- SAT Scores Are Rising
- More Public Schools Than Private Schools
- Offer AP
- AP Scores Are Among the Nation's Best
- Among Best in the Nation in Students Going on to College
- College Entrance Exams Are Among the Nation's Best

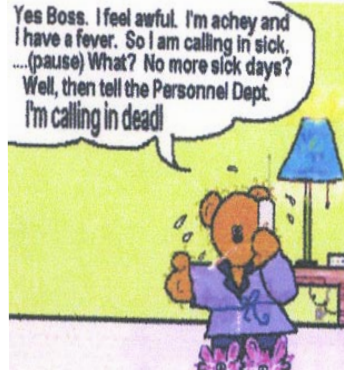
*Sick Leave Donations Article VIII, Section 2.*

# Know Your Master Agreement



Every school year there are several requests for sick leave donations and hundreds are collected to help fellow colleagues. The requests for the donations need to be approved by the School District and the Association. The Master Agreement does identify the steps to the process as clarified below:

- 👉 The Superintendent and *BEA* President or their designees will review the requests for the donation of days.
- 👉 The agreement allows a teacher to donate a maximum of two days to another teacher; donations can be made in 1/2 day increments.
- 👉 All sick leave must be exhausted by recipient before they are eligible to receive donated days.
- 👉 Sick leave can only be donated to individuals who have a personal illness or an illness in the immediate family.
- 👉 To initiate the donation process, contact the President of the *BEA*.
- 👉 The *BEA* will maintain the records of donations, usage and credits.
- 👉 Donated days shall be used in the order of date of receipt.
- 👉 Donated days, not needed, will remain with the donor.



## Orchard's plan of improvement reaps \$\$\$\$\$



Congratulations Orchard Elementary teachers for making *Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)* for four years in a row! As a reward, the school received \$25,000 from the Federal Government. This money is a reward for the teachers who worked to improve academic achievement. Through their hard work and dedication, the staff helped the students make a significant improvement and meet *AYP* standards.

Four years ago, Orchard faced sanctions for not making *AYP*. The scores were not where they needed to be. The teachers implemented supports for their students to make dramatic increases in reading and math.

Orchard has made the grade every year since. Now the hard work of teachers and students is being rewarded. The \$25,000 will be a perk for making immense progress.

### Win a free lunch for your staff

## Be a HERO—Donate Blood with a Friend



Donating blood is safe, it's simple, and it saves lives. Most donors find it a painless and heart-warming experience. The *BEA* is sponsoring its *2nd Annual BEA Blood Drive* from February 21 through March 5. Find a donor buddy at your school now and call United Blood Services to make an appointment to donate. Remember to identify your school when donating. The school with the highest percentage of donations



wins a **FREE LUNCH!**

Donors must be 17 or older, weigh at least 110 pounds, have not donated in the past eight weeks, are not currently taking antibiotics, and feel healthy the day of donation. If you have questions about your eligibility to donate blood, please contact United Blood Services. Donors cannot get **AIDS** or any infectious disease by donating blood.

Donors must show identification upon arrival to donate blood. Some types of identification include: driver's license, *UBS* donor card, social security card, security badge (picture and donor's name) and/or passport.

Make an appointment today!



**United Blood Services**

1444 Grand Ave.  
For an appointment: Call 869-3051  
Walk-Ins Welcome

*UBS* Hours  
Mon. & Tues. 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
Wed. 8:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Thurs. 7:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Fri. 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Sat. 8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

# Thank You Successful Raffle

The fundraising raffle for the *BEA Karen Cox Scholarship* is going strong with the fourth weekly and Grand Prize drawings on February 28. All proceeds from the raffle go to the *BEA Karen Cox Scholarship Fund*. Over \$3200 has been raised from ticket sales so far. Over \$1700 in donations have also been received.



The *BEA* thanks all the people and businesses for their generous donations. Another special thanks go to *BEA* Building Representatives, *BEA* Board, and Phil Cox for the extra work needed to sell tickets and the extra trips to the *BEA* office to deliver tickets. Thanks!

### Raffle Donors

- 👉 *Shaun Seedhouse of Thrivent Financial*
- 👉 *Cellular Plus*
- 👉 *Gainan's*
- 👉 *Cherchie's*
- 👉 *Rock Pile*
- 👉 *Touch of Santa Fe*
- 👉 *Tiny's*
- 👉 *Bead Retreat – Shirley Greene*
- 👉 *Time Out Sports*
- 👉 *Linda Lemire Massages*
- 👉 *Crystal Creations – Curt Prchal*
- 👉 *Lou Taubert*
- 👉 *Pampered Chef*
- 👉 *Yellowstone Beauty Supply/ Mary Kay*

--- Kris Mitzman

- 👉 *Red Robin*
- 👉 *Caramel Cookie Waffle*
- 👉 *Bead Depot*
- 👉 *1st Interstate Bank*
- 👉 *Poly Food Basket*
- 👉 *Poet's Street Market*
- 👉 *Mustard Seed*
- 👉 *Four Seas Restaurant*
- 👉 *Yellowstone Teachers' Credit Union*
- 👉 *Silpada Jewelry*
- 👉 *EBMS*
- 👉 *Great Harvest Bread*
- 👉 *Riddle's Jewelry*
- 👉 *Joan Sleeth*
- 👉 *Billings Hotel*
- 👉 *Genesis Salon*

## Thank You

## Thank You

# Los Angeles—Here we Come!



Five teachers will represent the Billings Education Association at the annual NEA Representative Assembly in Los Angeles this July. Representatives include Jeff Greenfield, Diane Welhaven, Joan Sleeth, Julie Seedhouse, and Karen Tanner. Allan Audet will also attend the meeting as a state delegate for MEA-MFT.



## February / March CALENDAR

- March 1** BEA Scholarship Application Deadline
- March 2** Celebrate *Read Across America*
- March 9** BEA Board of Directors
- March 11** *Education Foundation* Classroom Grants Deadline
- March 15** Representative Council
- March 24** *Little Delegate Assembly*  
BEA Awards Nomination Deadline  
Golden Apple Nomination Deadline  
Mill Levy/School Trustee Deadline
- March 25** Good Friday/No School
- March 27** Easter Sunday
- March 29** Nomination Meeting
- March 31** Nominations close for *BEA Board/ MEA-MFT RA* Delegates
- April 19** BEA Annual Election
- April 26** *Educator Appreciation Awards Banquet*

## Scholarship Raffle

### Week #1 Winners

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place **Jeff Greenfield**, Senior
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place **Liz Cooper**
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place **Tom Abfalter**, Riverside
- 4<sup>th</sup> Place **Patricia Svec**, Eagle Cliffs



### Week #2 Winners

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place **Catherine Blee**, Senior
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place **Mike Joyce**, Adult Ed
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place **Lorrie Wolverton**, Eagle Cliffs
- 4<sup>th</sup> Place **Connie Arnold**, Poly Drive

### Week #3 Winners

- 1<sup>st</sup> Place **Lyn McKinney**, Senior
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place **Deb Goodell**, Meadowlark
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place **Pat Schindele**
- 4<sup>th</sup> Place **Kelly Fritz**, Riverside



## 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.

<b>Before March 1</b>	<b>105%</b>
<b>After March 1</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>After April 1</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>After Last day of School</b>	<b>90%</b>



"I'd say your best bet is in Las Vegas."

## 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.



As she turns the raffle drum at the ER&D Class, June Jeziorski picks winners for the BEA/Cox raffle.

In the picture below, Jeziorski congratulates Jeff Greenfield after he wins 1<sup>st</sup> Place in the Week #1 drawing.



**Official Publication**  
**Billings Education Association**  
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Billings, MT 59101  
248-9812

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