



MEA UPDATE

Millard Education Association

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Volume 6 Number 3

May 2008

MEA SELECTS NEW OFFICERS

Molly Erickson will take over as MEA President on August 1st. Mike Foyt, Norris, will serve as vice-president for next year. Becky Scherbring will replace Mike for the one year remaining as Elementary Board of Director.

For the 2008 – 2009 school year, Sherryl Shannon, North High, and Matt Heys, West High, will serve as the high school directors. Erin Shirmang-Ward, Andersen, and Angie Ralph, Central, will serve as the middle school directors. Becky Scherbring, Cottonwood, Sherry Havranek, Reagan, and Tom Whisinnand, Reagan, will represent the elementary teachers, with Marilyn Yeck, Cody, serving as the director at large.

MEA REPRESENTS YOU

Twenty-one delegates to the Nebraska State Education Association annual meeting April 25 – 26 represented MEA members. The two-day event was highlighted by the re-election of Jess Wolf as president and Nancy Fulton as Vice-President.

Delegates representing MEA were: Reynee Shanahan, Sandi Hansen, Courtney Dowling, Tony Levy, Molly Erickson, Angie Ralph, Paul Schulte, Barb Sheppard, Tom Whisinnand, Katie McGinness, Marilyn Yeck, Paul Gable, Melissa Brendel, Becky Scherbring, Cindy Hamm, Kathy Gibbs, Heidi Gough, Sherry Havranek, Erin Shirmang-Ward, Alexis Freshman, and Meagan Rama.

Six MEA members were elected to represent members at the NEA national convention in Washington D.C. this summer. The six elected

members are: Sandi Hansen, Barb Sheppard, Tom Whisinnand, Melissa Brendel, Paul Schulte and Kathy Gibbs. MEA policy requires that the President (Tony Levy) and Vice- President (Molly Erickson) attend as well.

This six-day event is a whirlwind of activities. Meetings begin at 6:30 each morning and conclude around 6:00 each evening. There have been years where the convention goes late into the night.

MEA MEMBERSHIP FOR NEXT YEAR

If you wish to continue your MEA membership for the 2008 – 2009 school year, **you do not need to do anything**, your membership is continuous.

If you know of a Millard teacher or school nurse that has never joined, but would like to become a member, have them contact the MEA office (731-0400) for information on how to join.

However, if you wish to discontinue your membership, **you must put your request in writing with a valid signature and mail it to the MEA office (school mail is ok) no later than June 1, 2008.**

FINAL PROCOM MEETING

The joint MEA, District ProCom meeting will take place on May 20th. Topics for this meeting are: Reading Adoption, Budget, ELO Tests and PLC.

The teacher members of ProCom this year are: Charles Gould, Erin Shirmang-Ward, Jim Mercer, Lynne Elwood, Matthew Heys, Molly Erickson,

Reynee Shanahan, Sherry Havranek and Tony Levy.

EDITORIAL

Or

Tony on his soapbox again

I have a strong feeling that over the next few years; education in Nebraska will take on a different look. This look will be driven by state and national politics. State funding for schools will continue to be used as a political tool. Additional revenue demands from unfunded state and national mandates will drain away local control of its budget and spending needs specific to Millard Public Schools. These specific needs may impact class size, teacher salaries and health care costs.

As Millard teachers we sometimes forget what it is like to be a teacher outside the metro area. Are you aware that there are first year teachers in Nebraska that earn less than \$24,000 per year? Do you know that there are twenty-five and thirty year career teachers, with a master's degree, in Nebraska, that earn less \$40,000 per year?

Statistics like these are an embarrassment to me. They are I hope to you, to our state legislators and especially to our governor, who puts the blame on low Nebraska teachers' salaries in the laps of local school boards, while at the same time he will not lift spending lids and tax caps that handcuff local school districts. As taxpayers, you must be willing to communicate to our political leaders the demand for appropriate and sustained public education funding. States surrounding Nebraska have been enlightened to increase support for public education and teacher salaries. Nebraska on the other hand, continues to use public education as the means to balance budgets and lower taxes.

Watch Your Mail on Aug 1!

Notice to all NSEA members: Watch your mailbox on and around Aug. 1. That's the date your 2008-

09 NSEA membership materials are scheduled to arrive!

Included in the polybag will be your NSEA desk calendar and member services guide; your NSEA pocket calendar; your NSEA room card; and your NEA liability policy. If you fail to receive the polybag, contact the MEA office at 731-0400. Your current NSEA membership/access card is good until December 2009. A new card will be mailed to you in December.

Speaking of your NSEA membership/access card, here is an interesting story from NSEA.

In her first year of teaching at Hall Elementary School in Papillion last year, Tammie Donohoe recalls being told that there were wonderful, money-saving benefits available through her NSEA membership. It wasn't until she investigated more fully, however, that she realized the real scope of the savings her Association membership provided.

"We've been buying a pizza at a local pizza shop every Friday night for the past year. I found out I could have been getting that pizza for half price — about \$9 a week savings," said Donohoe.

Her family found more savings on cell phone service. "We're a family of five using Sprint. My husband called, and now we're saving another \$29 a month, that's nearly \$350 a year," said Donohoe. "My goal was to recoup my dues with these savings, and I'm doing that."

NSEA members who use their NSEA Access Card can save hundreds of dollars each year on dining, hotels, movies, golf, clothing, travel and other items at locations across the state and nation.

All you have to do is log on to NSEA's Web site and click on the Access card Web site to begin saving cash!

ELL INSTITUTE

NSEA's Ethnic and Minority Affairs Committee will host the English Language Learners/Minority Community Outreach Institute in Lincoln from June 4-6.

The institute will teach members to work collaboratively with ethnic minority communities.

The objective is to help improve the quality of their schools, using methods found to be effective in closing achievement gaps.

NSEA members or teams from any Title I school are eligible to attend. Teams can include any school employee or community member. At least one team member must be an NSEA member. NSEA members, not in a Title I building, are eligible to attend if space is available.

NSEA will provide lodging and meals. If you are interested, contact Duane Obermier at 1-800-742-0047.

NSEA NEW LEADER INSTITUTE

Katie McGinness, Deb Van Fleet and Tyler Hottovy, MEA members, will be attending the NSEA's New Leader Institute in Lincoln this June. The Institute will provide hands-on training in leadership and communication skills. Attendees will learn about NSEA programs and how these programs assist NSEA members. The Institute will culminate with a graduation luncheon at the Governor's mansion.

MEA RETIREMENT CELEBRATION

Forty-one MEA members will retire at the end of this school year. Their combined years of teaching are well over 1000 years! This amazing amount of experience will be missed by MPS. Our members that are retiring are: Patricia Ashbacher, Glenda Bachmann, Virginia Baye, Karen Bender, Don Bosworth, Deborah Brannan, Vicki Brown, Karen

Butler, Joyce Clark, Jean Devoy, Bill Eidam, Karen Ellis, Rickie Engel, Janis Fischer, Twyla Gerdes, Pamela Hall, Steven Hanks, Betty Hansen, Craig Holz, Nancy Howe, Jerrill Johnson, Barbara Killham, Janice Kloke, Tony Levy, Elizabeth Lyons, Mary McGinnis Johnson, Arno Neben, Dennis Owens, Patricia Petersen, Sharron Rader, Jeannene Rossitto, Anne Shaughnessy, Gretchen Skar, Donna Slosson, Susan Stalnaker, Connie Tiller, Mary Trenerry, Roberta Vainiunas, Diane Weier, Jeanne Weiner, and Nancy Wiederholt.

The following awards were presented at the MEA President's Dinner on May 4th:

Rookie of the Year:

Brooke Pecoraro, Millard West



MEA Service Award:

Mike Foyt, Norris



MEA Friend of Education Award:
Jean Stothert, Millard Board of Ed.



MEA Building Rep Award:
Reynee Shanahan, Ezra
Reynee was unable to attend the dinner.

Retiring members enjoying the MEA Retirement Dinner



END OF THE YEAR EVALUATIONS

Final evaluations should be coming out soon. If you disagree with something in the final report, you have the right to attach a written response. Be sure to sign the document and check the “I do not concur and I have a right to respond in writing” box.

Notify the MEA office so we can assist you with your written response. We can look at your final evaluation with a neutral eye and assist you with your response.

TAKE GRADUATE CLASSES!

The quickest way to earn the “big bucks” as a Millard teacher is to collect as many graduate hours as permitted by our contract. Be sure to get any graduate class pre-approved and be sure to submit your final transcript to the board office no later than January 10, 2009 for course work completed prior to the start of the 2008-2009 school year.

A FANTASTIC GROUP OF MEMBERS

I would like to take a few inches of space to thank all of you for making my job as your president very rewarding. I have learned so much about what makes a great educator from all of you. Your dedication to your students is beyond compare.

When I started teaching in Millard, I noticed teachers were deeply engaged. The climate in the building was one of family. It is true that not all family members get along, especially the ones that gave us wedgies, but most families have a sense of pride, and protect each other from negative outside forces. There was, “back in the day”, a pride to be a Millard teacher. This still exists today. We are in this together. We make lifelong friends, have a sense of pride for our students, and we have a professional organization that makes sure we are protected.

I know that you will continue to make Millard Public Schools and the Millard Education Association the “standard” for the state and the nation.

Again, thank you for all you do for the kids of the Millard Public Schools.



Have a great summer!