



# THE REVIEW

MAY 2008

## A NEW WEBSITE FOR THE SW/WC SERVICE COOPERATIVE BY SHELLY MAES, MANAGER OF MEMBER SERVICES

Visit us June 2nd at [www.swsc.org](http://www.swsc.org), and you will find a brand new look!! For the past several months, we have been working on a new website for the agency through SchoolWires. We are very excited about the new site...and believe you will be able to find the information you need more quickly and efficiently!

### A few highlights to this website:

**Programs and Services:** This is the best part of our website. Here you will find over 50 different programs and services offered through the agency. It is neatly organized and very thorough. For example, if you want to find autism information, just click on autism. If you want to learn more about occupational therapy services, you click on that. If you want to learn more about one of our special education service centers, just click on the name! It is very easy!

**Calendar:** A color-coded master calendar shows all of the various trainings, meetings, etc. by department/division. For those of you who want to see all that is going on, this is the place to visit. For those who just want to know what is going on with a specific program or department, you can visit that program's specific calendar. For example, to see what upcoming meetings are set for Risk Management, you can visit their section and view the "Risk Management Calendar". This is handy for those people who don't want to sort through all the various meetings and just want to see those for a particular program.

**Workshops:** As always, there will be an easy way to register for our various workshops, conferences, and seminars.

**News:** We will continue to post SW/WC SC news....and local/state/national news affecting education. This is also the "one stop shop" to find all the different newsletters from the various programs in the agency.



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## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

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Planning, planning, and planning can best describe the spring activities in our offices right now! Not so different than the spring planting going on, we hope to harvest the “fruits of our labor” in the coming months as we plan to build on our efforts to provide high quality programs and services for our members!



May is budget time and we have been working hard at preparing the 2008-2009 budgets.

Our budgets follow a fairly extensive process. From the setting of fees in December to the presentation of the preliminary budgets to the Board of Directors in May, a lot of planning is done to maintain our fiscal integrity. This year is no exception as we will present about a \$21 million budget to the Board. A new line item to this year's budget is an allocation to help offset start up costs for new and innovative projects. We want to support ideas that enhance our shared services belief and model of service delivery. We are excited about this investment and look forward to implementing some innovative projects in 2008-09.

We also did some strategic planning this spring. Dr. Bruce Miles of Big River Consulting, Inc. led nearly 100 individuals through a strategic planning process. The purpose of this strategic planning process was to re-focus our vision, priorities, and goals for the next 3-5 years. With the help of member leaders, staff, staff leaders, and the Board of Directors, a lot of good work was done to help “set the tone” for the coming years. Be looking for additional information from the strategic planning session in upcoming communication from our office.

We are also in the midst of planning our summer and early-fall trainings and workshops. Be sure to check out our website for summer workshop activities. There are also a number of early-fall, “back to school” workshops on the calendar for your own summer planning!

Spring is also the time to be planning for summer vacations! In this fast paced, hectic world we live in, please schedule some time off to relax and enjoy the sun! The summer weather has to be better than the spring weather, so plan to take some time off and enjoy you!

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## 2008 MNTAAB—TOP 10 QUESTIONS

### 2008 MNTAAB - Top 10 Questions

**1. What is the MNTAAB pool program? The MNTAAB pool is:**

- A tool designed to meet the temporary cash flow needs of Districts of all sizes.
- A low cost, easy and reliable way to access cash funds with minimal administrative effort.
- A program that offers Districts a safe and flexible reinvestment of cash at competitive interest rates.

**2. Our June 30, 2007 audit showed an adequate fund balance. Why should I consider borrowing for cash flow needs?**

Remember, cash flow and fund balance are two entirely different things. Your District may have a large fund balance at the end of the school year, but may encounter cash flow problems sometime during the school year.

**3. Why should I participate in the pool rather than borrow on my own?**

Borrowing costs for participating school districts are reduced since expenses of issuance are shared. Reinvestment options are also enhanced through the pool versus borrowing individually. Due to the streamlined process, school boards need only take a single action. Nearly all the necessary documentation is available for signature at that time, eliminating the need to track down signatures during popular summer vacation months. MSBA and the Regional Service Cooperatives, sponsors of the MNTAAB pool program, benefit as well by your participation.

**4. Am I limited in how much I can borrow?**

Yes, borrowing limits are determined by a formula based on the largest amount the District will be short of cash during the fiscal year plus fiscal 2007/2008 expenditures in the General Fund (Fund 01) and other Operating Funds (Funds 02 and 04). Borrowings ranged from \$54,944 up to \$10,493,771 in the 2007 pool.

**5. What type of action is required of the School Board?**

School Boards will be required to adopt a resolution, which will be provided to you by the MNTAAB pool attorneys. On the day of sale, on or about August 7, two signatures will be required via fax to sign additional documentation. Either the Board Chair or Clerk as well as the Superintendent or Business Manager should be available by fax to sign. Typically this documentation is a single page.

**6. How much cash will it cost me to borrow?**

When compared to an individual borrowing issuance, costs are lower due to how the pool program is structured and the number of both large and small Districts that are participating. Fees include legal fees, printing costs, trustee/paying agents fees, County Auditor certificates, the transaction costs to issue the Certificates and the underwriter's commissions to remarket the Certificates.

**7. How did the pool perform last year?**

In 2007 the pool had 47 participating Districts with a total borrowing amount of nearly \$64 million. The yield on the Certificates was 3.64% while the GIC (Guaranteed Investment Contract) participants received a 4.79% return on their investments.

**8. When will I receive my money by participating in the 2008 pool and when will I have to pay it back?**

You will receive your money on or about August 21, 2008 and it is anticipated that they will be due September 1, 2009.

Continued on next page



Continued from page 3

### 9. What do I do with my money if I do not need it right away?

The District can choose to invest the proceeds in the following ways;

- The MNTAAB Guaranteed Investment Contract (GIC) is a fixed rate investment.
- The MSDLAFLiquid Asset Fund is a variable rate investment.
- The District's local financial institutions, typically banks, offer both variable and fixed rate instruments.

### 10. How do I sign up?

Simply complete the application packet materials (hard copy or electronic), including a cash flow projection and return the application to Springsted Incorporated by the deadlines included in the application materials.

All Districts will be receiving an application packet by mail in late April. If you are interested in receiving the application material electronically, please email Alicia Gage at [agage@springsted.com](mailto:agage@springsted.com) or call her at 1-800-236-3033, ext. 3064.

Or you may contact a Springsted Client Representative:

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### Question:

A family member has diabetes; do you know how they can find a good clinic?

### Answer:

Yes, the Minnesota Community Measurement group has just created a new diabetes measurement on their website at: [www.mnhealthcare.org](http://www.mnhealthcare.org) Go to this website and click on D-5 which provides information on the five diabetes optimal treatment goals and ranking of Minnesota medical clinics. The goals are:

1. Hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c) level less than 7%
2. Blood Pressure less than 130/80 mmHg
3. LDL-C less than 100mg/dl
4. Daily aspirin use for patients 41-75
5. Documented as tobacco-free in medical record



Dan Weir, Consultant

You can then click on View and Compare Diabetes care in area clinics. To find out how clinics in your area are addressing the five diabetes optimal treatment goals, you can type in the clinic



name, city, zip code, county or address or click on view all to obtain a ranking of the clinics with the percentage of each Clinic's patients that achieved the D-5 goals.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

### 10 WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR MEDICAL COSTS

To anyone who just completed “year end enrollment” in their employer’s health insurance plan, and anyone who’s paying for their own medical insurance, it’s clear that costs are only going up. According to the National Coalition on Health Care, Americans spend \$6,700 per person annually on health care.

So it makes sense to try to cut costs wherever you can without putting your health at risk. Here are 10 ways to reduce your medical costs while keeping yourself healthy.

#### At the Doctor’s Office

1. Ask for generic drugs. Generic drugs are cheaper than name brands. Busy doctors forget about alternatives, so don’t hesitate to ask. Check out Blue Cross and Blue Shield’s list of top prescription drugs and their generic equivalents. For pain medicine, find out if there’s an over-the-counter instead.
2. Avoid unnecessary tests and visits. If you move or change doctors, take copies of test results with you. Always talk to your doctor first, but some follow-up visits and tests are unnecessary-like annual EKGs. Call instead.
3. Barter for services. You could trade plumbing, legal advice, or tax preparation, etc. in exchange for medical services. A hospital in Brooklyn has a program that barter for medical care. Craigslist also has ads offering bartered medical services.
4. Get free samples. Doctors, dentists, and optometrists get tons of samples from manufacturers hoping to increase brand awareness. Ask your doctor for some instead of paying for prescriptions.
5. Negotiate. Some hospitals waive or reduce certain fees. Others will reduce the bill in exchange for cash up-front. Be sure you ask for explanations of costs if you don’t understand them. You wouldn’t overpay for something at Target, so don’t do it at the doctor’s office.

#### At Home

1. Outsource common tests. Independent labs can screen for cancer, run drug tests, and analyze blood and urine. Some even offer secure online access to your medical information. Check out myMedLab, PrivateMD, and PrivateLabTesting.
2. Seek tax breaks. You can deduct expenses if the itemized total is more than 7.5% of your adjusted gross income. This includes expenses from acupuncture, artificial teeth, hearing aids, eye surgery, psychiatric care, and even weight-loss programs. Read the IRS’s Publication 502 for more information on tax breaks and which medical expenses are deductible.
3. Fill prescriptions online. This is the cheapest option for people who take drugs daily. Make sure any company you use is FDA approved, has a physical address, privacy policy, and a secure Web site. They should also be a fully-licensed pharmacy or should fulfill orders from a fully-licensed pharmacy. Check out FrugalMed, MedBasket, and DrugsPark.

#### In the Future

1. Review your insurance plan. Meet with a professional if necessary. Don’t focus solely on the monthly premium-consider the total cost, including out-of-pocket expenses. If you can afford a higher deductible, lowering premiums will offer immediate savings. A younger person in good health might consider switching to a Health Savings Account (HSA). HSAs allow you to pay for current health expenses while saving for future medical expenses, tax-free.
2. Live a healthier lifestyle. Ok, we had to say it. Fulfill your new year’s resolutions to exercise more, eliminate stress, stop smoking, get plenty of sleep, get regular check-ups, drink 8 glasses of water per day, avoid red meat, and eat lots of organic fruits, vegetables and fish. You’ll lower your health care costs, and possibly your life insurance costs. So, it’s a smart financial decision to invest in good health.

### Where does my premium go?

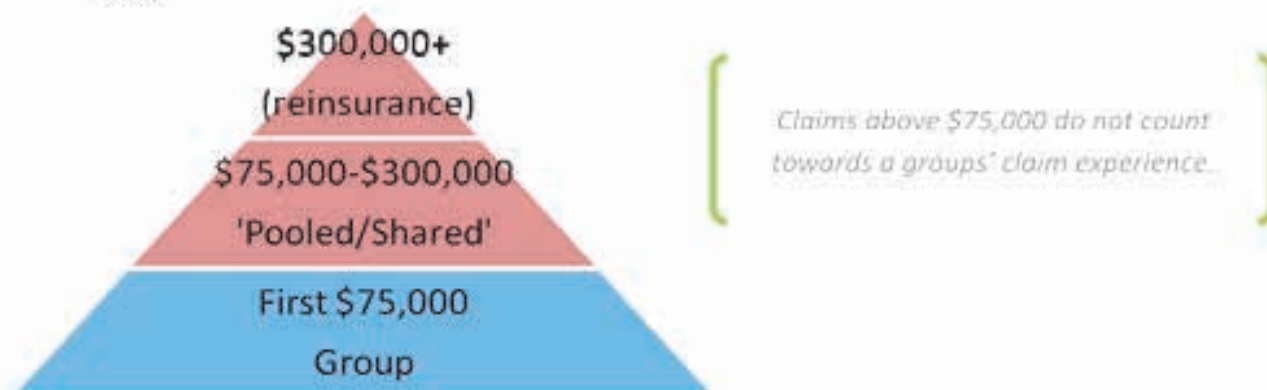
Healthcare Expenses, Inpatient, Outpatient, Professional, Drugs	Pooling High Cases \$75,000 - \$300,000	Stop Loss >\$300,000	Admin Fee (Avg. Exp)
89.4%	3.9%	1.6%	5.1%
To pay anticipated Claims = 93.3%		Pooling Benefits/Advantage = 6.7%	



### What is my annual risk of participating in the insurance pool?

Your annual premium is the only risk a group has when participating in our pool. Individual claims are paid in the following manner:

- Claims up to \$75,000 – Claims counts against the group's claims experience. (Cost: 89.4% of premiums)
- Claims between \$75,000 and \$300,000 – Claims are 'pooled' by all pool members. (Cost: 3.9%)
- Claims over \$300,000 – Claims are paid by the pool's purchase of reinsurance (Stop-Loss). (Cost: 1.6%)



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# **BUILDING RTI CAPACITY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**JUNE 24TH & 25TH, 2008—ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY**

Not sure how RTI fits into your middle or high school programs? Want to stay on the leading edge of RTI research? Send your school teams to the Response to Intervention at the Secondary Level Summer Conference. This conference brings together regional representation within Minnesota for your schools and buildings to network. There will be representation from MDE, the North Central Regional Resource Center, and the newly founded National RTI Center located in Washington, D.C.

The purpose of the two day conference is to train your school teams on middle and high school intervention strategies focused on the academic and behavioral portions of the three tiered RTI model. There are unique challenges for today's high schools and this conference will bring you the most recent, innovative research and best practices to help improve your middle and high school RTI initiative.

For more information and to register, visit the Resource Training and Solutions website. They have the conference flyer located on their website- [www.resourcetraining.com](http://www.resourcetraining.com). Click on the RTI Conference Brochure link under Special Announcements. Or, contact Meg Litts at [meg.litts@swsc.org](mailto:meg.litts@swsc.org).



# **OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the School Improvement and Curriculum/Assessment/Instruction Departments is to be a valuable partner with our member districts in their efforts to provide quality education by:

- Recognizing and responding to local needs of member schools and districts
- Building effective relationships with administration and teaching staff
- Building capacity and creating sustainability for a continuous school improvement process
- Working collaboratively with other SW/WC SC programs and staff



## SCHOOL UPDATES...

### WHAT'S NEW IN THE SLEEPY EYE SCHOOL ART DEPARTMENT?

*SUBMITTED BY MARY VANROEKEL*

The basic design elements and principles remain the same. The students continue to explore art and design concepts along with Art History through the use of many mediums. From the traditional drawing, painting, printmaking and other 2-dimensional techniques as well as the use of plaster, clay, wire, fiber, etc. for 3-dimensional work to the use of ever changing technology the opportunities for applying the elements and principles of design are endless.

What is new this year is the art club that has brought junior high and high school students together for open studio times every Tuesday after school and every Friday before school. These young artists are allowed freedom to explore their favorite mediums under the guidance of Mary Van Roekel, Art Instructor and Judy Surprenant, Social Worker.

Along with art students from Springfield and New Ulm, Sleepy Eye art students had the opportunity to experience the Minneapolis Institute of Art. A CRIC (Cottonwood River Integration Collaborative) grant provided the funding for this wonderful day of learning about the Japanese Culture and their Art as we toured this special exhibit. The students also enjoyed the awesomeness of seeing masterpiece art in reality rather than through slides or prints.

May 21 the Art Club will be sponsoring an Art Show that will feature the student work from all of the Graphic Design and Art Classes as well as the individual art from those Art Club students not currently enrolled in Art. The art will be on display at the Spring Choir Concert.

The Arts provide a means for student expression in a creative and beautiful way. We are fortunate to have a school district that supports the arts.

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### CORE KNOWLEDGE EXTRAVAGANZA

*SUBMITTED BY JENNIFER GRIEBEL FROM ECHO CHARTER SCHOOL*

The last ten years the staff at ECHO Charter School have been implementing a sequence of curriculum called Core Knowledge. This is a rigorous curriculum developed by E.D. Hirsch. Core Knowledge tries to develop cultural literacy in a way that is systematic but leaves room for creativity for both teacher and student. This curriculum eliminates the gaps and repetition that characterize a curriculum in which textbooks and programs are selected more or less at random.

We use the curriculum because it specifically states what needs to be taught in each grade from K-8. The scope and sequence lists the stories that need to be learned to teach reading, what math our students should know, and what places and people culturally literate children/adults should know about in our world. In addition, it gives us a format for teaching art, drama, and music.

There are about 750 schools across the nation that use the Core Knowledge curriculum. Most of them are academies or private schools. Of those 750 schools, only 40 have the distinct honor of being an Official Core Knowledge school. ECHO is one of those 40, nationwide, that has received this honor. Our teachers and staff have worked diligently to meet all the requirements needed to become an official school.

This spring our students put on a spectacular spring concert called Core Knowledge Extravaganza. The night consisted of songs from our American heritage. All of the songs came from the Core Knowledge curriculum and were familiar to all age groups. This was a wonderful way to showcase the knowledge our children are acquiring everyday at our school!

If you would like information about this curriculum please visit: [www.coreknowledge.org](http://www.coreknowledge.org).



## AROUND THE WORLD WITH FRIENDS

SUBMITTED BY GWEN ROSSBACH, HEATHER KLOECKL, AND  
DANIELLE REWITZER

Three kindergarten classes from Sleepy Eye Elementary invited two kindergarten classes from Jefferson Elementary in New Ulm to a day of friendship and fun on Friday, February 8th. The morning activities included a visit to four different continents. In Antarctica the children enjoyed making penguins and making magic snow. The trip to South America included making festive tissue paper flowers and learning about the rain forest. The African adventure included making African drums and playing with the safari set.



The final destination included Asia where they made Chinese lanterns and good luck charms. The classes enjoyed a picnic style lunch in the classrooms followed by a video, gross motor playtime in the gym, and a variety of centers in the classroom. We enjoyed making new friends and learning about places around the world. This opportunity was made possible by a grant from the Cottonwood River Integration Collaborative. We are looking forward to meeting our friends again in New Ulm for more friendship activities. We will end the year bowling together at Concordia Lanes.



## CANBY ELEMENTARY TAKES OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIP TO SCIENCE MUSEUM OF MINNESOTA

SUBMITTED BY SANDI ARNDT

On March 6 & 7, the Canby Elementary fifth and sixth grade students took part in a unique overnight field trip to the Science Museum of Minnesota. Canby Elementary was selected to take part in this experience through a grant provided by Flint Hills Resources. The grant paid for the entire trip including charter bus transportation, museum admission fees, t-shirts, and meals for all of the students and chaperones. Canby Elementary fifth grade teacher, Lisa Hansen, also provided on on-line blog (digital diary) of the trip on the Canby Elementary website. She had a lot of great help from the fourth and fifth grade students to complete the blog and the parents enjoyed reading about how the trip was progressing. You can check out their blog at <http://teacherweb.com/MN/CanbyPublicSchool/CES/>.

The students and staff loaded charter busses at noon on a snowy March day and arrived in St. Paul ahead of schedule. After unloading the busses, checking in, storing the gear, and taking a group picture, the students were off to explore the museum. Throughout the two-day experience, the students explored the museum, participated in science workshops and presentations, saw a film on "The Alps" in the Omni Theater, were welcomed by Senator Kubly, and camped out on the floor of the Human Body room. They learned much about the Science Museum and were kept extremely busy the whole time! The students had a wonderful time during this experience and the Science Museum staff was excellent with the students. Some of the comments from the students included: "Totally awesome! We wish we could do it again!" "It is the best field trip I've ever had!"



## COMMUNICATION – IT'S ABOUT ACCESS

*BY KATHY LEEDOM, SUPERINTENDENT OF THE WILLMAR PUBLIC SCHOOLS*

It was a Sunday in June, 1960, and we were in our family grocery store with the lights off but the welcome mat out for several migrant families who had the day off and needed access to a grocery store to get groceries for the week. Stores could not open on Sunday in Appleton, Minnesota during those years; however, my dad felt that it was important to meet these folks on their terms and work with them. “Buenos Dias, Senor and Senorita Garza!” we learned at an early age as we helped them find their groceries and experience our Miller’s Fairway store. In fact, one family was so grateful that they invited our family to their home on the property of the farmer for whom they did field work. We brought our turquoise and white record player, and we all danced as we were served Kool-Aid with fruit cocktail in the bottom of the glass. I will never forget that experience where we communicated the best we could using the universal tools of non-verbal expressions to have a great time together.

I learned then and there that we need to accept people where they are at any given time in their lives and do the best we can to offer customer service and friendship across any boundaries that may exist. That childhood lesson still holds true for me today as we work as a school district to meet the needs of our families that are just now learning English as they are gaining access to follow the “American Dream” for their children and families.

Doing everything we can as a school to communicate with parents and families is an essential part of providing access to American education. Parents have the right to understand how their children are doing in school and to have the important information they need in order to be involved as parents in the education of their children. Translating policies, individualized education plans, disciplinary actions, report cards, and meeting notices are just a few examples of the duty we have to provide our parents with access to this vital information. Furthermore, providing interpreters to make sure school registration goes smoothly and that parent-teacher conferences are meaningful is yet another example of what we must do to engage all of our parents in our schools.

Is this communication to ensure access easy? No. Is the process costly? Yes. In fact, sometimes it is even challenging to find people who are able to provide timely and accurate oral and written translations and interpreting services. Nevertheless, the bottom line is that it is all about access and making every effort to provide that access.

While in Willmar I have certainly learned how to make remarks to groups through an interpreter. A couple of weeks ago I had a double-decker experience at a parent meeting for English Language Learners while extending greetings and making comments to a huge room full of parents, and we passed the microphone to the Spanish interpreter and then on to the Somali interpreter. (When there is a longer pause in one’s remarks while interpreting is taking place, I have found that I must really be careful to keep track of when the pause took place so that remarks may resume in an uninterrupted way.) Our parents were taking in every word as they were updated on our programs and services for their children.

As I drove home that night after the meeting, I reflected on how far we had come as a district in providing this kind of access to parents through communication. As a superintendent I realized that this personal communication journey started 48 years ago in the aisles of Miller’s Fairway where only the lights from the front store windows illuminated the shopping aisles on those Sunday afternoons. I’m glad that Dad bent the rules about serving our customers on their terms so that I could learn this lesson about communication and access at an early age.

## COOPERATIVE PURCHASING

The SW/WC SC Cooperative Purchasing Program is dedicated to combining the collective purchasing power of our members in order to receive the best value in goods and services. By working cooperatively, on a regional and statewide level, each of our members will benefit by purchasing goods and services at a lower cost than if individually purchasing those same things. When choosing vendors, the Cooperative Purchasing program focuses on quality, service, support, as well as competitive pricing. The goal of our program is to have our members receive the best long-term value possible. Consider the Cooperative Purchasing Staff your district’s personal shopper. Call Debra Foley, Sales/Marketing Associate, [debra.foley@swsc.org](mailto:debra.foley@swsc.org) or 507-537-2279

## 2007 MINNESOTA QUALITY AWARD RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED



*Pictured (left to right)*

**Harry Weilage**— Director of Community Services, **Mary Kay Thomas**—Middle School Principal, **Lisa Swope**—Middle School Teacher, **Jeff Chapman**—School Board Chairman, **Klint Willert**—Superintendent, **Kelly Konietzki**—Kindergarten Teacher, **Marcia Ivers**—High School Teacher, **Bruce Lamprecht**—Director of Business Services, **La Oeltjenbruns**—Superintendent's Assistant, **Tricia Stelter**—Administrative Support

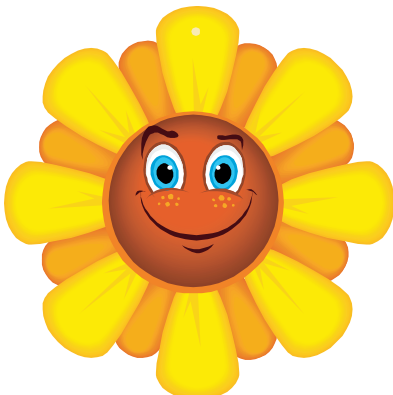
The Minnesota Council for Quality, Minneapolis, recently announced the recipients of the 2007 Minnesota Quality Award. Nine organizations received recognition this year at three different levels: Achievement, Advancement, and Commitment Level. Marshall Public Schools (Marshall) was one of four schools recognized at the Commitment Level.

“Minnesota is a great place to live and work,” says Brian Lassiter, president of the Minnesota Council for Quality. “With these nine organizations – and many others – on the journey to excellence, we can all take comfort in knowing that good just isn’t good enough.”

Founded in 1991, the primary objective of the Minnesota Quality Award is to help organizations improve their performance results. The Award also serves to recognize performance excellence throughout the state. The Minnesota Quality Award is given at four levels – Excellence (the top Award), Achievement, Advancement, and Commitment – and is the culmination of a rigorous assessment process that uses the “Criteria for Performance Excellence” of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. Since 1991, 97 organizations have received Minnesota Quality Award recognition at various levels (a full list is at [http://www.councilforquality.org/assess\\_org\\_award.cfm](http://www.councilforquality.org/assess_org_award.cfm)).

Organizations that participate in the process receive comprehensive feedback that outlines their strengths and improvement opportunities in dozens of organizational processes including: leadership; strategic planning; customer and market focus; measurement, information, and knowledge management; workforce focus; process management; and results. This feedback is typically used by senior leaders for organizational learning, planning, and improvement.

Marshall Public Schools District 413 serves about 2000 students in Marshall and other communities in Southwest Minnesota. Marshall operates four schools and has a vision “to work as one in the pursuit of excellence.” For more information, contact La Oeltjenbruns at 507-929-2601 or visit <http://www.swmn.org>



# Enjoy

# Your

# Summer!!



## 24 HIGH SCHOOLS ATTENDED 4<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CULINARY SKILLS CHALLENGE MARCH 26<sup>TH</sup> AT SMSU

On March 26, 2008, approximately 300 students in grades 9-12 from 24 high schools throughout Minnesota cooked, baked, designed, garnished and learned new culinary trends and techniques at the 4th annual Culinary Skills Challenge at Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU). Areas of competition included:

- Baking
- Culinary (Cooking teams)
- Cake Decorating – basic and advanced levels
- Garnishing
- Place Setting
- Menu Design



Keynote Marjorie Johnson & Culinary Event Coordinator Mary Lou Blasing

Michael Cheng, Associate Professor of the Hospitality Management Program and the Director of the Culinology Program at Southwest Minnesota State University, once again served as the host for this year's competition, which is funded in part by the SW Minnesota Carl Perkins/Tech Prep Projects at the SW/WC Service Cooperative.



Cedar Mountain HS Cake Decorating Competitor

Thanks go out to the event host, Southwest Minnesota State University, as well as the significant sponsors for this year's event: the Minnesota Beef Council, Minnesota Pork Board, Hy-Vee Marshall, Aramark, the Hospitality Minnesota Education Foundation and the SW/WC Service Cooperative.

In addition to Culinary Skills Challenge, SMSU also hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Student Invitational for ProStart. This is Minnesota's State competition where successful students competing in Culinary and Management competitions advance to the national competition this April in San Diego.

Along with the competitions, several interactive sessions were available for students to attend. Sue Fritz of Hy-Vee in Marshall had students try some basic techniques in cake decorating; Cheryl McConaughy from Lucky Dreamer Herb Farm of Lynd tested students' senses and knowledge of herbs. Other presenters included: Chef Bryan Schouten of Brackett's Crossing Country Club in Lakeville sponsored by the MN Pork Board, Marilyn Nickel, president of the MN Cattlewomen's Association; Chef Rosalee Busker from Le Cordon Bleu, Katie Baier of Avera Marshall Hy-Vee, Chef Shawn Zephier of the Marshall Golf Club, and Kay and Annette Fernholz from Earthrise Farms of Madison, MN.



1st Place Cake Decorating Level II Competitor from Pipestone Area HS

Another highlight of the day was having **Marjorie Johnson**, the "Blue Ribbon Baker" from Robbinsdale, Minnesota, as the Keynote Presenter. Marjorie has been a frequent guest on *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*, *The View*, and various other national and local television programs. She has won over 2000 blue ribbons at the Minnesota State Fair for her baking!

Marjorie demonstrated the making of one of her signature pie recipes, with the assistance of Southwest Minnesota State University President, Dr. David Danahar. Earlier in the day, Marjorie sold and signed her new cookbook at her booth in the vendor area.

The entire RA Facility at SMSU was filled with competitions, interactive sessions and displays throughout the day and culminated with the student competition awards ceremony at 3:00 p.m. For information regarding next year's Culinary Skills Challenge, check the website: [www.lifetimeoflearning.com](http://www.lifetimeoflearning.com) or contact Mary Lou Blasing at the SW/WC Service Cooperative in Marshall at 507-537-2273.



Le Cordon Bleu Presentation Chef's Session



## SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA TECHNICAL SKILLS CHALLENGE

Eighty persons attended the 6th Annual Southwest Minnesota Technical Skills Challenge that was held on April 30, 2008 at the Minnesota West Community & Technical College campus in Granite Falls. Students in grades 9-12 from eight high schools throughout SW MN participated in the following technical competition areas:

- Accounting
- Digital Photography
- Graphic Design
- Public Service Announcement – Video
- Pick-A-Path Web Story



Students competed as individuals and teams, depending on the competition. Instructors from post secondary training programs at Minnesota West and industry professionals developed the challenges for each competition. Minnesota West teachers, SW/WC Service Cooperative staff, and industry representatives from Pioneer Public Television, Prairie's Edge Casino Marketing and Graphic Design Dept., and Frozen in Time Photography Studio were involved in the judging process.

Competition activities included:

- taking a written test on various concepts of accounting as well as presentation based on analysis of a fictitious company's financial records
- creating a suite of digital photos on the topic "Transportation" and creatively displaying them
- utilizing a variety of graphic design tools to create marketing materials for a fictitious business and presenting it to the judges
- writing, video taping and editing a 60-second public service announcement for a local business
- a collaborative team of general education and special education students, who developed an interactive story using Microsoft PowerPoint software to inspire young readers

Award medals were given to 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place finishers within each competition area.

This event was organized by the SW MN Carl Perkins/Tech Prep Consortium at the SW/WC Service Cooperative in Marshall.

Planning is underway for next year's Technical Skills Challenge. Check [www.lifetimeoflearning.com](http://www.lifetimeoflearning.com) for information on location, new format and dates.



### Accounting Analysis

1st Place

Tracy Chapman—Murray County Central  
Chris Petersen—Murray County Central



### Accounting Concepts

1st Place—Mallory Fultz, Tracy

2nd Place—Eric Lanoue—Tracy

3rd Place—Lindsey Daniels—Tracy

Continued on page 14

Continued from page 13

## TECHNICAL SKILLS CHALLENGE



### Graphic Design

1st—Tyler Ayers, Dustin Hatfield,  
Pat Rients, JCC  
2nd—Matt Reiner—Springfield  
3rd—Jason Cook, Alan Jones, Luke  
Nelson—JCC



### Pick a Path Webstory

1st—Eric Jandl, Michael Nettik—  
Pipestone  
2nd—Jennifer Haddock, Cody  
Schulz—Pipestone



### PSA Video (team)

1st—Mason Makram, Adam Lofthus,  
Grant Lofthus—Luverne  
2nd—Nick Wettchreck, Jase Bly,  
MCC  
3rd—Dan Carlson, MCC



### Digital Photography

1st—Yannick Elens—Worthington  
2nd—Eric Lanoue—Worthington  
3rd—Lindsey Daniels—Worthington



Support For Student Activities  
Comes Through The Southwest  
Student Enrichment Fund.

## VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE [WWW.SWSC.ORG](http://WWW.SWSC.ORG)



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## THE CHILDREN'S AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR PROGRAM



### AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS PARTICIPATE IN SESSIONS WITH AUTHORS AND ILLUSTRATORS

*SUBMITTED BY SUE GORECKI, STUDENT ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR*

Thirty elementary schools participated in the Children's Author & Illustrator Program during the weeks of April 14-18 and April 28 – May 2. Students enjoyed learning details about the process of writing books – with the many drafts, specific number of words and pages, etc. They were also shown copies of mock-ups of thumbnail sketches of the illustrations.

Some comments received from participants included "the author stressed that everyone is unique in their writing and artwork and that you need to keep trying and believe in yourself." Another commented "wonderful presentation – marvelous power point to enhance what was talked about. It was very interesting and students of all ages loved it."



Last year, approximately 5,000 students participated in this program. If you were not part of the program this year but are interested for next year, contact Sue Gorecki ([sue.gorecki@swsc.org](mailto:sue.gorecki@swsc.org) or 507-537-2258) or Andrea Anderson ([andrea.anderson@swsc.org](mailto:andrea.anderson@swsc.org) or 507-537-2257). Brochures for next year's program will be ready in September and will be posted on our website: [www.swsc.org](http://www.swsc.org)



**Joni Oeltjenbruns**  
Author & Illustrator



**Lynne Jonell**  
Author & Illustrator



**Jim Postier**  
Illustrator



## CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards Ceremony for the Creating Spaces Writing Contest was held on Sunday, April 20. Approximately 100 students, teachers, parents, siblings and grandparents gathered to honor the winners of the creative writing contest. Students in grades 3-12 were eligible to submit entries in the following categories: Fiction, Poetry, and Creative Non-Fiction. Students could enter on their own or through a classroom assignment.

Vincent Wixon, a poet from Ashland, Oregon, was the keynote speaker and encouraged the students to keep writing. He listed a wide variety of topics, noting that you can write about anything.

All winning students (1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> place) received a medal, a certificate and a copy of the anthology that contained all the winning entries. In addition, the 1<sup>st</sup> place finishers at the grade 11-12 level received a \$2,000 scholarship to SMSU. The 1<sup>st</sup> place finishers in the other grade levels received a gift certificate to Bound to Read Bookstore. A reception followed the awards presentation.

The contest was established as a partnership between SMSU's English Department and the SW/WC Service Cooperative's Student Activities Program to encourage a love of language and writing for all students and as a way to recognize the talented young writers in southwest and west central Minnesota.

For a listing of winners by level and category or to see more photos, check our website at [www.swsc.org](http://www.swsc.org) Next year's brochure will be available in September.



**1st place Winners**



**2nd Place Winners**



**3rd place Winners**



**Matt Stensland-Bos  
with Keynote Speaker,  
Vincent Wixon**

## RESOURCE LIBRARY NOTES

*Submitted by Mary Weber, Coordinator*

The weather has been interesting this year, especially recently when the calendar indicates this is spring. In this edition of the newsletter, I want to highlight some new resources. We put together some bibliographies you can request from us. One is a list of new materials for the last five years; another is a list of the Reading Rainbow video titles and descriptions; a list of our autism resources; and finally a list of social skills resources. Participating district staff members can request copies of any bibliography. They will be put on the SW/WC Service Cooperative website over the summer as well.

I will be preparing orders for new materials after July 1. If you have certain materials you wish me to consider for purchase, just mail or email the particulars to Montevideo. Staff recommendations are given priority consideration. I always keep a file for potential purchases.

In the next week I will be sending out the Science PAC, Planetarium, Science Kits (Wolf, Loon, etc.), Baby Think It Over Dolls, and GPS units reservation letters. Descriptions of all the Science PACs are on the SW/WC Service Coop website ([www.swsc.org](http://www.swsc.org)). If you need additional copies, please contact me. These materials can provide excellent reinforcement to your elementary science curriculum.

We wish you a successful completion to this year, an enjoyable summer holiday, and an energized return to your students next fall!



## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

### BUSY PERIOD FOR SENIOR HIGH KNOWLEDGE BOWL TEAMS

*SUBMITTED BY SUE GORECKI, STUDENT ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR*



The Senior High Knowledge Bowl program is now concluded for another year. Four sub-regional events were held with 117 teams from 39 districts participating. The top three teams from each event are listed below:

#### Region 6

##### February 29 – Granite Falls

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Glencoe-Silver Lake #1
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – BOLD #1
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Hutchinson #1

##### March 7 – Canby

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Lac qui Parle Valley #1
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Dawson-Boyd #1
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Canby #1

#### Region 8

##### March 7 – Jackson

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Redwood Valley #1
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Redwood Valley #2
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Jackson County Central #1

##### March 12 – Marshall

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Marshall #3
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Tracy #1
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Murray County Central #1

Approximately one-half of the teams participating at the sub-regional level advanced to the regional events held on March 12 in Marshall and March 19 in Pipestone. The top three teams from Region 6 and the top four teams from Region 8 advanced to the state competition:

Region 6: Glencoe-Silver Lake #1, Lac qui Parle Valley #1, and Montevideo #1

Region 8: Marshall #3, Tracy #1, Murray County Central #1, and Redwood Valley #1

A Spring Meeting for coaches was held on May 6 to set dates for next year. A Fall Meeting for coaches will be held in September. If you are interested in starting a new Knowledge Bowl Program – either Junior or Senior High – please contact Sue at [sue.gorecki@swsc.org](mailto:sue.gorecki@swsc.org) or 507-537-2257 to be added to the list of contacts to receive information on Knowledge Bowl for 2008-2009.

### REGION WELL REPRESENTED AT STATE KNOWLEDGE BOWL EVENT

Competition was intense during the State Knowledge Bowl event held on April 17-18 at Cragun's. The top forty-eight senior high teams, out of nearly 800 across the state, were divided into tiers by school size. They competed in a written round on Thursday evening and five oral rounds on Friday. The State Champions were: A Division – St. John's Prep and AA Division – Eden Prairie.

Schools from our area placed as follows:

#### A Division

- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Lac qui Parle Valley
- 5<sup>th</sup> – Redwood Valley
- 11<sup>th</sup> – Tracy
- 18<sup>th</sup> – Montevideo
- 20<sup>th</sup> – Murray County Central

#### AA Division

- 8<sup>th</sup> – Glencoe-Silver Lake
- 18<sup>th</sup> – Marshall

Congratulations to all of our teams for doing a great job of representing their district and our area! Knowledge Bowl is sponsored by the eleven Service Cooperatives around the state.



**1st Runner Up  
Lac qui Parle Valley**

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

### STUDENTS SPELL THEIR WAY TO VICTORY

*SUBMITTED BY SUE GORECKI, STUDENT ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR*

The Regional Spelling Bee was held on February 19 in Redwood Falls. Thirty-nine students from thirty-one districts participated in a written test and three preliminary oral rounds in the morning. The written tests were corrected and the scores added from the preliminary rounds to determine the top eighteen students that advanced to the afternoon's spell down. Congratulations to the top four students that advanced to the Multi-Region State Spelling Bee:

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Sung Yoon Jung (grade 5) – Marshall Middle School
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Nathan Landwehr (grade 7) – Worthington Middle School
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Cassie Gilland (grade 8) – Renville County West Elementary School – Sacred Heart
- 4<sup>th</sup> – Jonathan Nelson (grade 6) – Wabasso Public School



It's interesting to note that there was one finalist from each grade level!

The four students participated in the Multi-Region State Spelling Bee on March 11 in St. Cloud. The winning word was "tortuosity" (*the quality or state of being torturous; something winding or twisted*). The winner of that competition, Catherine Cajocar of Holy Spirit Catholic School in Rochester, will compete in the National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C. on May 29-30.

**Forum Communications** is the official newspaper sponsor of the Multi-Region State Spelling Bee. The Service Cooperatives are very grateful to **Forum Communications** for providing this opportunity and including the schools in our service area. Their sponsorship included the Regional Spelling Bees for the following Service Cooperatives: Lakes Country Service Cooperative in Fergus Falls, Northeast Service Cooperative in Mountain Iron, Northwest Service Cooperative in Thief River Falls, Resource Training & Solutions in St. Cloud, Southeast Service Cooperative in Rochester, and the Southwest/West Central Service Cooperative in Marshall.



Regional Spelling Bee Winners

Additionally, Minnesota Timberwolves was a sponsor of the Multi-Region State Spelling Bee. They also provided free and discounted tickets to Regional and State participants of the Bee.

### FIRST REGIONAL CHESS TOURNAMENT HELD

*SUBMITTED BY SUE GORECKI, STUDENT ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR*

SW/WC Service Cooperative sponsored its first-ever Regional Chess Tournament on February 2 in Marshall. The competition was open to students in grades K-12. The tournament allowed elementary and middle school divisions to finish five rounds and the high school division to complete four Game/30 rounds. Tiebreakers were determined by Five-Minute (Blitz) rounds at the end of the competition. Special thanks to Steve Harder of Mountain Lake for serving as the Tournament Director.



A listing of winners for the various sections is on our website: [www.swsc.org](http://www.swsc.org). Also check out the photographs in the Photo Gallery.



## LOW INCIDENCE

### THE POHI\* GUY COLUMN

*This article was submitted by Darwin Dyce, Physical and Health Disability Consultant.*

\*POHI (an older acronym). The recent is P/HD which has reason but no rhyme.

**Dear POHI Guy,**

As I write this letter my husband is brooding over the occasional chore lists I make for him. He maintains that he doesn't need "the list" to get things done. My sister agrees that such lists are necessary to keep order in the home. How can I help him see that these lists are for the good of the whole family?

**Signed...Just Asking**

**Dear "Just Asking"**

If you have a problem with your husband's reaction to your endless lists, perhaps you should seek his perspective. You talk about maintaining order in your home but it sounds like you want to keep giving orders in the home. By the way "just asking" I recognize this topic and will speak to you when I get home, that is, if you don't mind me adding it to my list.

**Signed...POHI Guy**

Isn't it great that life's events spur opportunities which segue into what we are up to at work? One does have to admit the value of lists. In some way lists are like outlines, which have saved the day at more than one meeting I've been to. We've all been at staff meetings and dare I include IEP meetings that did not have a clear agenda or utilize an outline. At such meetings perhaps you've experienced discussions that cover a wide range of topics but never quite get to what needs to be covered. Before you know it an hour or more goes by and the main task of the meeting is yet to be done.

Sometimes the job of a special education teacher is overwhelming. There is little time to: plan for the students in your room, do the necessary paperwork, keep up on best practice teaching techniques, manage paraprofessionals, and make it to the bathroom before you develop a bladder infection or worse. I have heard the job described as performing triage, calling up images of a MASH unit.

Given the many demands on our time, it may well be that the use of outlines at our IEP meetings could improve communication and use of time. Outlines aren't a magic solution to "fix" the many complex needs identified with our students and families, but to coin a phrase from the medical field: outlines will certainly "do no harm". Some teams have been using outlines consistently. There are many versions out there. Below are some examples. The first example is organized from the perspective of a student already being served and conducting their student-led IEP meeting. 1-Welcome and introductions, 2- My ideas for my future, 3- Present level of performance including my strengths (and how it relates to current and future IEP goals), 4-Progress on goals, 5- New goals, 6-Transition activities (who needs to do what), 7-Adaptations, 8-Service Plan, and 9-Other items added to the agenda.

A more detailed outline sample can be found in the New Teacher Manual provided to all new SW/WC Service Cooperative special education staff. Below is a sketch of outline headings included in that meeting agenda guide. This example includes options for a student just entering the special education system. 1-Introductions and Structure of Meeting (include agenda additions), 2- Background Information, 3-Present Levels of Performance, 4-Assessment Information, 5-Placement and Services Decisions (Information includes but is not limited to: student strengths, interests, educational needs which will drive goals and objectives, transition planning, participation in statewide testing, identification of services, etc.), and 6-Closure (clarify questions, check for parental understanding, establish key contact person for parents and other team members, etc.)

Clearly special educators have a huge amount of information to obtain and manage. It is not likely that the amount of paper work and meetings will be decreasing anytime soon. We can, however, use meeting outlines as a starting point to help Individual Education Planning teams communicate more effectively and efficiently. Many teachers have developed their own practical outline formats and have seen the benefits.

Oh, and guys, just because you use an outline for IEP meetings don't think your wife will quit the list thing. Simply remind her that you were planning to do "the list" but got busy with other important matters.

## WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU MEET BLIND PERSONS

1. Identify yourself upon entering the room or in public, so they won't wonder who you are.
2. Tell them when you leave their presence, so they won't be embarrassed by talking to air.
3. Look directly at them when you speak, so they can follow your voice with their eyes and face you.
4. Offer your elbow for guidance in walking, but accept their declining any assistance that is not needed or wanted.
5. Allow them the personal pride of payment with their own money by the feel of the coins and the folding system for bills.
6. Refrain from speaking to them in a louder or slower manner, since they rarely are hard of hearing or understand only a foreign language.
7. Discourage others from talking to them through you and allow them the dignity of speaking for themselves.
8. Don't make them self-conscious by avoiding the use of the words Look, See, Blind, etc.

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### We'd like to express our appreciation to all who attended the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Special Education Day of Excellence Conference – March 10, 2008

Keynote Presentation: **The Magic of Your Potential**, Tim Piccirillo, Motivational Speaker

Participant comments about this powerful session:

*"The people who succeed the most are the people who fail the most."*

*"Don't give up on any kid!" "Have confidence in yourself and the children you work with."*

*"Encourage kids to ask questions." "This has motivated me to make a difference with kids I work with."*

The conference ended with a combination of 35 presenters, 20 vendors and service agencies; more than 37 breakout sessions; and over 220 participants. **It was an excellent conference, with a *fantastic* attendance and lots of excitement. We look forward to seeing each of you next year.**

**Tentative 2009 Date: March 16th**



## NOMINATE YOUR STUDENTS AS ACADEMIC ALL-STARS!

*It is time to nominate your students as Academic-All Stars! Minnesota's teachers, principals, and academic challenge coordinators have an opportunity to provide testimony to the outstanding teaching and learning taking place in our schools through the selection of 2008 student "Academic All-Stars."*

All Minnesota K-12 teachers, principals and academic challenge coordinators are invited to designate their students as "Academic All-Stars," who are then eligible to attend the 2008 Gathering of Champions. This free annual celebration and recognition of student excellence is sponsored by the Center for Academic Excellence and its educational partners. Visit: [www.mncae.org](http://www.mncae.org) – click on "Gathering of Champions" to register your students!

### Who Should I Designate as an Academic All-Star?

We recommend you consider the top 2-5% of your students from the following three categories:

- Students who are consistent top academic performers
- Students who have shown significant improvement in achievement or have overcome barriers to academic achievement
- Students who are local, regional, or state champions in an Academic League challenge. The names of Academic League challenges are found in the *Reach for the Stars* catalogue, which is available online at [www.mncae.org](http://www.mncae.org) – click on "Reach for the Stars".

**Please Note:** Students do not need to attend the Gathering of Champions event to be designated as "Academic All-Stars." Nominating students establishes their status, provides an opportunity for recognition, and generates an invitation for the Gathering of Champions that you can print for students and their families. (An electronic "Certificate of Recognition" will be available for school officials to distribute this spring for those unable to attend in August.)

### How Do I Nominate Students?

- *Nominate your students online today – [www.mncae.org](http://www.mncae.org) – click on Gathering of Champions.* The nomination deadline is June 27.
- *After you submit your nomination, you will see a link for a PDF flyer. Please print this flyer and distribute it to the students you have named as Academic All-Stars.* This is the student's invitation to the Gathering of Champions, and provides details about the event, including how to pre-register for the show of their choice.

### When and Where Will the Gathering of Champions Take Place?

- **August 1, 2008 – Great Room in Nickelodeon Universe®—Mall of America.**
- Ten hourly recognition ceremonies begin at 9 a.m., with the last ceremony at 6 p.m.
- Students and guests may **pre-register** at [www.mncae.org](http://www.mncae.org) – click on events - **to reserve space** at the ceremony of their choice. Reservations are accepted until July 25, 2008.

### Why Should My Students Participate?

They have worked hard, and so have you! It is a chance to recognize your students' accomplishments at a statewide level, coupled with the opportunity for them to celebrate with family, friends and peers! Nominators are also invited to attend the Gathering of Champions – please register and attend.

**Academic All-Stars** attending the event will receive\*:

- A certificate of achievement and congratulations on stage from dignitaries
- Commemorative items and prizes honoring their selection as an "Academic All-Star"
- Discount coupons for rides in Nickelodeon Universe®, food at EATS Marketplace, Moose Mountain Adventure Golf, and Underwater Adventures Aquarium.
- Special Guest Star Program discounts at 50 retailers, restaurants and entertainment venues in the Mall of America.
- The opportunity to purchase a commemorative Academic All-Star T-shirt

\*Details subject to change —updates will be posted at: [www.mncae.org](http://www.mncae.org) – click "Gathering of Champions".

### For More Information:

Please contact the Center for Academic Excellence at: [cae@mncae.org](mailto:cae@mncae.org), 507-389-2461.

*Thank you for nominating students as "Academic All-Stars" and for supporting the Gathering of Champions!*

## 25 YEARS OF SERVICE RECOGNITION

The 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the School Business Conference was held March 13-14 at SMSU. The following people were recognized for their 25 plus years of service.

Mary Swenson	Ivanhoe/Hendricks	25 years of service	Denise Hoek	SW/WC	25 years of service
Connie Olson	Hills/Beaver Creek	25 years of service	Sue Buysse	SW/WC	27 years of service
Dorothy Schultz	Montevideo	26 years of service	Barb Raske	SW/WC	28 years of service
Tammy Sauder	Montevideo	26 years of service	Fran Stassen	SW/WC	28 years of service
Lori Grant	RTR	27 years of service	Luther Heller	SW/WC	36 years of service
Lavonne Jungas	Mountain Lake	27 years of service			
Donna Luhring	Hutchinson	27 years of service			
Mary Stone	Canby	27 years of service			
Russ Widman	Westbrook/Walnut Grove	27 years of service			
Lou Anne Burg	Region V, Mankato	28 years of service			
Betty Hill	Heron Lake/Okabena	28 years of service			
Sheri Martin	GFW	28 years of service			
Irene Quiring	Mountain Lake	28 years of service			
Barb Thue	Benson	28 years of service			
Wilma Bengston	Hills/Beaver Creek	29 years of service			
Gail Erickson	Mountain Lake	29 years of service			
Judy Huisman	Ellsworth	29 years of service			
Sherri Lyons	Windom	29 years of service			
Patricia Probst	Worthington	29 years of service			
Robert Tews	Cedar Mountain	29 years of service			
Karen Wasmund	Worthington	29 years of service			
Linda Wilkens	MACCRAY	29 years of service			
Sharon Peterson	Hendricks	31 years of service			
Carolyn Wendt	Springfield	31 years of service			
Charlene Steensma	Murray County Central	32 years of service			
Sue Fairchild	Canby	33 years of service			
James Hoffbeck	Jackson County Central	35 years of service			
Pat Sommervold	Tracy	35 years of service			
Brenda Frank	GFW	36 years of service			
Connie Olson	Hills/Beaver Creek	36 years of service			
Sherry Norby	Montevideo	36 years of service			
Marlene Mann	Luverne	41 years of service			
Connie Dallmann	ACGC	42 years of service			
Marion Weber	Red Rock Central	49 years of service			

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## Honeywell in partnership with SW/WC Service Cooperative

### Honeywell Instant Alert

*The Rapid, Effective Way to Connect Schools and Parents*

The Honeywell Instant Alert System is a notification and communication service designed specifically for schools.

School officials use Instant Alert to deliver a message to parents and guardians by phone (voicemail or text message), email, pager or PDA.

The messages can be for both routine notifications, such as teacher conference announcements and attendance reporting, and emergency notifications such as weather related announcements and school lockdowns.



Schedules can change, buses run late,  
emergencies occur...  
communicate better  
with Honeywell Instant Alert!



#### Advantages of Honeywell Instant Alert:

- Improve communications
- Save time and resources
- Improve safety and reduce risk by increasing preparedness and data privacy
- No hardware, software or phone lines need to be added
- Parents control the message delivery by choosing how they would like to receive messages
- Unlimited messaging

**SW/WC members receive significant savings on Honeywell Instant Alert.**  
Price per seat is \$2.30. A seat is defined as the total enrollment plus faculty.  
Contact Danielle or Deb for more information.

Honeywell Contact:  
Danielle Ritter  
612-802-4090  
danielle.ritter@honeywell.com

**Honeywell**

SW/WC Contact:  
Deb Foley  
888-739-3289  
debra.foley@swsc.org

## SIGNING LIVE WITH ITV

BY MELINDA WINTER, AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTOR

The SW/WC Service Cooperative focuses on broadening high school students' course selection by utilizing Interactive Television. Interactive Television, or ITV, helps expand the availability of foreign language and other possible options otherwise unavailable to students. One of the foreign language options provided is American Sign Language—arguably the third most widely used language in the United States today.

Currently, we are in the 10th year of offering an American Sign Language (ASL) course through Interactive Television (ITV). It started with one class and has grown to six class periods covering multiple school districts throughout south-west Minnesota. Currently students are from the Adrian, Canby, Edgerton, Fulda, Luverne, Marshall, Mountain Lake, and Springfield School Districts.

The ASL course focuses on learning the language and culture of the Deaf community. In addition, the class provides a holistic view by teaching subject matter that supports the primary focus. The students develop an understanding of the types, degrees, and causes of hearing loss, the functions of assistive devices used by people who are deaf or hard of hearing and the types of educational programs and support services available. Time is also spent discussing the different opportunities available for students interested in a career using American Sign Language.



Extensive care is given to turn an individual telemedia classroom environment into a community classroom. Creating a feeling of camaraderie between the teacher and the sites helps keep that sense of connection high school students need. Students get to practice signing with the peers in their room along with students from other districts. They practice culture techniques including attention getting behaviors, facial expressions, and other visual cues often overlooked by hearing individuals.

Every site is visited each semester to keep that student teacher connection and give the instructor a chance to work with the students as a group to better focus on cultural aspects of the language. Once a year, the instructor organizes a field experience to immerse the students in ASL and interact with Deaf individuals. Past experiences have included spending a day at the Minnesota Academy for the Deaf, hosting a Silent Immersion Day, touring Communications Services for the Deaf in Sioux Falls, SD and seeing performances by deaf performers. Pictured above is this year's students at the Washington Pavilion in Sioux Falls, SD at a performance by the Deaf Tour Troupe Rathskellar.

For more information about the ASL course and other ITV courses offered feel free to contact Josh Sumption at: [josh.sumption@swsc.org](mailto:josh.sumption@swsc.org)

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## ONLINE COURSE CATALOG FOR 2008-2009 SCHOOL YEAR

### Language Arts

#### **60's Literature and Writing Workshop**

Toni Bladholm, Marshall Public Schools

#### **English 11 A & B**

Tish Rops, Pipestone Area Schools

#### **Information Literacy**

Diana Veenstra, Springfield Public Schools

#### **AP Literature and Composition**

Andrea Hoyum, Pipestone Area Schools

### Science

#### **Biology**

Jennifer Roolings, Jackson County Central

#### **AP Biology**

Amanda Meyer, Springfield Public School

#### **Physics**

Rick Bennett, Cedar Mountain Schools

#### **Animal Science**

Christina Learn, Cedar Mountain Schools

#### **Human Anatomy and Physiology**

Christopher Naymann, Round Lake Brewster

### Math

#### **Algebra I**

Steve Condon, Jackson County Central

#### **Personal Finance**

Kaia Bergeson, Yellow Medicine East

#### **Accounting**

Donna Krueger, Comfre Public Schools

### Social Studies

#### **Teen and Family Issues**

Kaia Bergeson, Yellow Medicine East

#### **Economics**

Darlys Listul, Yellow Medicine East

#### **American Government**

Brian Longerbone, Comfrey Public Schools

#### **World Geography A & B**

Jackie Hess, Pipestone Area Schools

### Computer Education

#### **Web Authoring**

Brenda Kellen, Marshall Public Schools

#### **Introduction to Computer Science Using Visual Basic.net**

Marcia Ivers, Marshall Public School

### Business

#### **Agriculture Sales and Promotion**

Laura Bidne, Jackson County Central

#### **Personal Money Management**

Jan Timmerman, Marshall Public Schools

### Foreign Language

#### **French I**

Amy Lorang, Pipestone Area Schools

Listed here are the courses and instructors for online courses offered for the coming school year. The cost for online courses are \$350.00/student/semester, ITV connection fee of \$475 per course, and \$300/student/semester.

## UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### MAY 2008

5/20/08— Windows Movie Maker, Marshall, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
5/21/08— SMARTBoard Training, Marshall, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
5/23/08— Copy Right Policies in Education, Marshall, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
5/26/08 thru 6/06/08—Advanced Moodle, ONLINE CLASS

### JUNE 2008

6/4/08—Strategic Instruction Model: Interference, Redwood Falls, 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
6/4/08—Strategic Instruction Model: Self-Questioning, Redwood Falls, 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.  
6/9/08—Transition/Goal Writing, Willmar, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
6/9/08—Accelerated Math Workshop, Marshall, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
6/10/08—Accelerated Reading Workshop, Marshall, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
6/10/08—Transition/Goal Writing, Slayton, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
6/11/08—Moodle 101 (3 day training), Marshall, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
6/11/08—SIM: Fundamentals of Sentence Writing, Key Largo, Slayton, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
6/12/08—UFARS/SMART Finance Year End Workshops, Marshall, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
6/12/08—SIM: Paraphrasing, Willmar, 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
6/12/08—SIM: Self-Questioning, Willmar, 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.  
6/17/08—Beginners Guide to PowerPoint 2007 for Education, Marshall, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
6/18/08—(In)Formative Assessment—Day 1, Marshall, 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
6/19/08—(In)Formative Assessment—Day 2, Marshall, 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
6/25/08—Technology Integration, Marshall, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
6/26/08—Open Source Programs for Educators, Marshall, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
6/30/08—WebQuests, Marshall, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

### JULY 2008

7/8/08—Digital Photography, Marshall, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
7/8/08—Digital Storytelling, Marshall, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
7/14/08—Advanced PowerPoint 2007 for Educators, Marshall, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
7/24/08—Edusim, Marshall, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.



## UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## AUGUST 2008

- 8/7/08—New Superintendent and New Principal Workshop, Marshall, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
 8/11/08—CPI Refresher for ASD, Granite Falls, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
 8/12/08—Paraprofessional Conference, Willmar, 8:30 a.m. to 3:10 p.m.  
 8/12/08—Paraprofessional Conference, Pipestone, 9:00 a.m. to 3:20 p.m.  
 8/13/08—Initial CPI, Granite Falls, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
 8/14/08—CPI for ASD II—Advanced, Granite Falls, 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
 8/18/08—1st Annual Back to School Workshop, Marshall, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
 8/18/08—CPI Full Training, Pipestone Area Schools, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
 8/19/08—2nd Annual Special Ed Opener, Lamberton, 9:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.  
 8/20/08—Internet Safety, Marshall, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
 8/20/08—2008 Fall Extravaganza, Granite Falls, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
 8/20/08—SIM: Instruction Model Enhancement, Pipestone, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
 8/21/08—CPI Refresher—The Power of Listening, Pipestone, 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.  
 8/21/08—CPI Refresher—How to Excel at Verbal Intervention, Pipestone, 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
 8/21/08—ASD I: Applications of Nonviolent Crisis Training, Pipestone, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
 8/22/08—ASD II: Applications of Nonviolent Crisis Training, Pipestone, 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
 8/25/08—CPI Training Refresher, Jackson, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
 8/25/08—CPI Training, Jackson, 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
 8/27/08—Teaching and Learning Conference, Marshall, 7:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
 8/28/08—CPI Refresher for the ASD Student, Windom, 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.



## SEPTEMBER—OCTOBER 2008

- 9/11/08—New Special Education Teacher Workshop, Pipestone, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.  
 9/30/08—Power Limited Technician Continuing Education, Marshall, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
 10/2/08—ELL Leadership Institute, Redwood Falls, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
 10/24/08—ELL Leadership Institute, Willmar, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**To register for any of these workshops, please visit our website at [www.swsc.org](http://www.swsc.org), click on Workshops, find the workshop you are interested in, and complete the registration information. If you have any questions about the registration process, please contact Dawn Christensen at [dawn.christensen@swsc.org](mailto:dawn.christensen@swsc.org) or 507-537-2278.**



## Student Activities

April ~ 2008

### Dates set for Student Conferences for 2008-2009

Add the dates for the student conferences to your school calendar. You may want to add the early bird and final deadlines also so registrations are submitted in a timely manner.



Keynote by: Danielle Daniel  
Date: Oct. 10, 2008  
Grade Level: Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup>  
Early Bird Deadline: Sept. 15  
Final Registration Deadline: Sept. 22



Keynote by: To Be Announced  
Date: Jan. 6, 2009 (Snow Date - Jan. 7)  
Grade Level: Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup>  
Early Bird Deadline: Dec. 2  
Final Registration Deadline: Dec. 9



Keynote by: To Be Announced  
Date: May 12, 2009  
Grade Level: 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>  
Early Bird Deadline: Apr. 7  
Final Registration Deadline: Apr. 14

Brochures and registration forms are posted on our website: [www.swsc.org](http://www.swsc.org) approximately six weeks prior to the conference. Please check for updates throughout the year. If you have questions about any of the student activities, please contact us:

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***Please share this information  
with all elementary and middle school staff!***

**Thank you!**