

(Continued from previous page)

utopian fantasy? A plain, nice world where everybody gets along and can shop all they want at a local mall, even in Haiti and Yemen and Bangladesh and Tibet, no less Peoria, Illinois, and do so without reference to the non-renewable resource carrying capacity of this tiny planet? Do we have some nostalgic quasi-religious view of the American Dream that does not take into account global realities – a bizarre belief in the invisible hand of capitalism for Americans that exempts us from life-style self examination and global citizenship?

What do we mean by tomorrow's possibilities? Coming home from Austin I read that we are on the cusp of 3D flat-panel TV's in our homes where we can see the awesome threat of a 350 pound lineman charging a quarterback, or the topographical relief of the Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders bouncing their way in front of us. But the author went on to say that after that will come the holographic home theater where we will not be watching "Dancing with the Stars." They will be dancing around us. And what potential does this have for video games and cell phones and iPods to which many youths are committing hours every day? Are these tomorrow's possibilities for which we want to prepare our students today?

It sounds like I'm a Luddite, anti-progress, anti-technology. Absolutely not! But I've rarely, if ever, been to an educational conference where we talk about penultimate teleological issues. What is life all about on this tiny planet? It seems that the history of the philosophy of education, going back as far as the axial age of the 5th century B.C.E., grappled with these challenging questions. Do the interdependent systems of nature that make life possible have no advocates? Where are the rigors of bio-ethics, social ethics, philosophy, history, anthropology, political science, literature, and all the arts? Where are the sacrificial investments in the super teachers and coaches in these areas, other than math and science? Are there no deep life-lessons to be gained from the liberal arts (excuse that naughty "L" word) and the humanities?

Of course we can retreat by saying we don't want to steal from the ultimate sacred provinces of parenting and religion. We've been through the pain of being viciously attacked for "values based education." But I contend that a quality, well rounded education in the great humanities (without fancy red herring labels or euphemisms) is the last bulwark against the heartless commodification of our youth into becoming breathless automatons in the sad last dance of a mind-weakened consumer society educated to technological literacy without mind and soul.

Can the new Ed-technologies become effective tools for a broad and liberating education? I think so. But I sure need to learn more. As a digital stone-age immigrant in a loin cloth I now see the theme of my personal conference in Austin as: **Creating the Lost Possibilities of Yesterday Today.**

February 8 AESD Meeting Highlights

The February 8 AESD Executive Board meeting was held at the WSSDA offices following the WASA/WSSDA Conference.

President Brad Gingerich, ESD 123, facilitated the meeting, which began with an AESD Network update, including assured and statewide services, communications, staffing and data processing information.

Marcia Fromhold, AESD Legislative Liaison, brought an update, and Twyla Barnes, ESD 112, assisted by Karen Schwartzrock, ESD 112 Human Services, highlighted the upcoming 2010 AESD Conference

scheduled April 22-24 in Vancouver. President Brad asked for suggestions for the President's Award during the conference.

Larry MacGuffie from North Central ESD was appointed to the AESD accreditation committee.

Charlie Staadecker, who had proposed inclusion of an area on the AESD website to share entrepreneurial ideas, brought an update on the project, indicating it has taken the shape of a forum. The forum was demonstrated by Dr. Rich McBride from NCESD. See the article below for more information.



Shown at the AESD Executive Board meeting are (l-r): Superintendent Mike Dunn, ESD 101, Karen Schwartzrock, Superintendent Twyla Barnes, Board member Bill Baumann, ESD 112; AESD Legislative Liaison Marcia Fromhold; and Don Gant, ESD 105 Board.

The AESD Forum

Something new has been added to the AESD website www.aesd-wa.org. AESD Executive Board members are experimenting with a Discussion Forum, which will officially be rolled out to all ESD Board members in April.

This forum will offer an opportunity to discuss current topics, share ideas and post informative articles. For a preview, go to the AESD website, locate and click "AESD Forum" in right-hand menu, and click on discussion topic to see comments. To actually participate in the forum, you will need to register. If you have questions, please contact Eldene Wall at eldenew@ncesd.org or call 509.665.2629.

Coming Events

AESD Conference	April 22-24, 2010—Vancouver
AESD Board meeting	April 22, 2010, during AESD Conference.
AESD Board Meeting	June 29, 2010, during WASA/AWSP Summer Conference



AESD Dispatch*

*Dispatch: "The sending of a message with promptness and efficiency."

Winter 2010



www.aesd-wa.org

A Message from the AESD President

Happy New Year to Everyone!

This year has already started fast and the legislature is in session. I was just watching some junior high kids and I was again struck by the responsibility we have to make sure that they have the opportunity to have a quality education. The legislature has an extremely tough job to try to balance the state's budget. I think our current goal is to make sure that they remember that education must be fairly funded and equal quality available to all kids. We know that there will be cuts, so ESDs must also continue to work hard to provide what the teachers and school districts need.

We are still working on our network plan, so we are continuing to try to improve on how we provide services. I really appreciate all of the work that all of our employees do in providing cost effective services to everyone we serve. At this point we don't know what our budget is going to be, but we will do everything we can to meet all of our customers' needs. We encourage new ideas and ways to operate. Our job is to provide the best that we can so that all kids have the opportunity to learn and learn the same things.



President Brad Gingerich
ESD 123

~Brad Gingerich, ESD 123
AESD President



Puget Sound ESD Board representative for the AESD Executive Board, Charlie Staadecker, and PSESD Superintendent Monte Bridges.



NCESD Board member Larry MacGuffie is shown on the right at the AESD Executive Board meeting. Shown in the background are Superintendent Jane Gutting from ESD 105; President Brad Gingerich, and Superintendent Bruce Hawkins from ESD 123; Superintendent Walt Bigby, ESD 114, and Superintendent Bill Keim from ESD 113.

News from Washington State ESDs

Supt. Jane Gutting to leave ESD 105 in June



Dr. Jane Gutting will conclude an 11-year legacy of successful leadership at ESD 105 when she leaves the agency at the end of June.

Jane has helped guide significant growth in services at ESD 105 since becoming superintendent on July 1, 1999. She has been active in establishing large-scale curriculum improvement networks with the superintendents of the region's school districts, and was instrumental in helping Yakima be selected by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Thrive By Five Washington for one of their two statewide early learning demonstration projects. She has also helped expand instructional support for schools in the arts, science, literacy, and math. Last year, Jane was selected by Gov. Christine Gregoire to serve on the state's Quality Education Council.

"One of my most significant accomplishments here is hiring a highly qualified and passionate staff that has collaborated with school and community partners to improve the academic achievement and health and safety of the students in our region," she said.

Jane joined ESD 105 in 1987 as curriculum coordinator, later serving as director of Interagency Programs during 1991-1994, and assistant superintendent of Educational Services during 1994-1999. She took an 18-month leave during 1997-1998 to become the associate superintendent for Learning and Teaching with OSPI in Olympia, where she developed a wealth of statewide contacts that she has been able to use in initiating programs to benefit schools throughout ESD 105 and on a statewide basis with Washington's AESD.

In announcing her departure last November, Jane said she was looking at the next phase of the agency's work during the years ahead and felt the time was appropriate for a transition in the organization's leadership, adding that she had accomplished the goals she had set when she became superintendent. The ESD 105 Board of Directors anticipates a new superintendent will be selected by the end of March.

"Yakima is my home, so I plan to stay here," said Gutting, who will take a six-month break before deciding her next career step. "And I'm ready to find out what's in store for me for the next stage of my life."

~David Goebner
ESD 105 Public Information Officer

2010 AESD Conference



Come to Vancouver for the 2010 AESD Conference! The ESD 112 staff and Board of Directors are looking forward to hosting the AESD 2010 Conference in Vancouver, Washington April 22-24! This year's conference theme – *CONNECT. Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* represents the coming together of past, present and future endeavors; it signifies the opportunity to connect with other board members and ESD staff; and it represents the focus and connection of the AESD network.

Conference registration packets have been mailed to each ESD. You can also visit the official conference website www.aesd2010.org to view the outstanding array of speakers and special sessions being planned. The website also includes information about exciting places to visit during your stay in Vancouver. This year's special event is a reception at the Pearson Air Museum, located on the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site. We are especially pleased to welcome our keynote presenter David Lawrence, former publisher of the Miami Herald who will highlight the critical educational components that must be in place for today's students to be successful in an increasingly global, virtual and fast-changing future.

"As always, the conference will provide a variety of other important and timely sessions that help guide the important work we do in our districts and communities," said ESD 112 Board President Darlene Stickel. "It is a tremendous honor to be part of an exciting exchange of knowledge and networking that will occur," she added.

should create an aboriginal didgeridoo band, or for want of authentic instruments, we could use Jews-harps or hair combs wrapped in tissue paper. I wouldn't mind renting the film *One Million B.C.* featuring Raquel Welch in the prime of her youthful development to see how we're supposed to act.)

It was quite evident that the presenters were mostly 30>40 years younger than me, right in that transition zone between "native" and "immigrant." Could I catch up as an educational leader wanting to bring the future possibilities back to today's students? Or am I a passive decision maker overwhelmed by the techno-babble of a new digital world in which I have little working knowledge or part?

The presenters were competent and interesting as a whole. But one problem I found was that there were a number of Ed-tech professionals attending each session, and the Q&A sessions afterwards were filled with specialized language that left some stone age board members wanting to pull their loin cloths over their heads. Now that's a frightful thought. Perhaps we need a session or two to which Ed-tech professionals are committed to silence, with the intent of bringing some of us stone age people up to the present possibilities, no less the future. Maybe then we can put on our pants.

The WEB 2.0 Bonanza: Webinars, Podcasts, Vodcasts, Skype, Wikis, Wii games, Vidyo, asynchronous and synchronous distant learning, Apex learning, OdysseyWare, Metacafe, YouTube, Myspace, Digg, Furl, Twitter, iPods, Del.icio.us, Blogger, RSS, Social Bookmarking, etc., etc., etc. What is all this? The list goes on and on. It seems that with the dot.com bust happening in the 1990s all the unemployed geeks went out to create programs for the WEB 2.0. There are dozens, some of them targeted to a specific user group, others globalized for general use. But what in heaven's name is WEB 2.0?

Generally in the past, the WWW (World-Wide-Web) has been used for gathering information or sending email while sitting calmly with a cup of coffee in front of a screen. Many of us are passive viewers. But the boom in WEB 2.0 technologies and software is driving new collaborative interactions, changing the way we share opinions, information, and ideas. It is highly interactive, creating communities of knowledge, learning and action over distances. It can be in real-time streaming or delayed packages to be responded to in a timely fashion. There seems to be fad software that comes and goes, others take root and spread, yet others die still-born. But this interactive phenomenon is growing exponentially like a pandemic plague. In 2008, around our planet, an average of 40 thousand people was signing up to the WEB every hour. It is as if the whole world will be eventually connected in some fashion.

President Obama's political campaign recognized this. It is playing havoc in China and Iran and Belarus and Somalia with influence among the digital-native youths tempted by libertarian ideas in Western post-modern culture. It is also used quite effectively by acquisitive commercial interests targeting the peer fads of youth. Similarly, nefarious radical movements scheming to avenge their anger at modernity are tapping into the emotional needs of disenfranchised youths in poverty searching to find purpose in life. But in a positive vein, we heard that kids in the declining mono-economy of auto-based Michigan are now taking Chinese lessons directly from China so they can be career-marketable in a global economy. The dramatic examples of the power of the WEB are growing with each conference.

Could this WEB 2.0 networking phenomena be a budding revolution that has some likenesses to the Gutenberg revolution in the 15th century? Could it be that the worlds of cultural and political hierarchies are being threatened, the sacred boundaries of isolated tribal identities, mores and beliefs being messed up, and unfamiliar syncretic associations being negotiated and formed? Could this be threatening to the little red schoolhouse culture geared to perpetuate the tradition of preparing kids for the industrial revolution of the 19th century that stays within our national interests? Or is something pulsating in our educational cocoons, ready to burst out into a fledgling global civilization? Or are these temporary toys soon to be forgotten with the emergence of new toys soon to be forgotten, but we stone-agers wistfully wanting to return to education more or less the way it was just after World War II? Interesting questions.

But, in the mean time, among the many WEB 2.0 programs out there, what programs work with stability, efficacy and ease for public schools? Is there a kind of "Consumer's Report" for school districts that evaluate these? Is it left up to the hobby interests of local Ed-technophiles? Or to commissioned guys with underground connections to corporate pushers? Is there an expanded place for ESDs to be centers of evaluation? And what about us digital stone-agers shuffling around in our loin cloths trying to figure out our fiduciary responsibility in all this techno-mayhem? **Are Digitally-Migrating Teachers caught with their Pants Down?** This was one of the questions brought up in several sessions, of course stated differently. Who prepares teachers to select, integrate and use efficiently this plethora of software? And can they use the technology well that runs the software? What if the mechanics break down? Can they still teach without the crutches of all the whiz-bang programming?

I attended an amazing session sponsored by the Promethean Corporation. With great speed and dexterity the presenter (who appeared to have done this demonstration many times before) showed us a digital lesson by using a touch sensitive "white board" and classroom voting system that linked formative assessment to Bloom's Taxonomy of learning domains: a) knowledge, b) comprehension, c) application, d) analysis, e) synthesis, and f) evaluation. It was breath-taking – sort of like an evangelistic meeting where after being exposed to the poverty of one's former life and the riches of the new way, you rushed to the altar, flopped down on your knees and confessed, "The old ways are gone! I believe, I believe! The White Board is what I need. Sell it to me, please!"

I'm sure my old tough 9th grade English teacher who was 5'2" in literary muscle in all directions and believed that young minds should learn to diagram sentences and read the Great Books to cram a bit of literary nobility into their empty minds would have been impressed. Wouldn't Richard III's desperate cry "My horse, my horse, my kingdom for a horse" make so much more impact with a "white board" voting analysis than hearing old Miss Dow, sweating like a possessed Margaret Rutherford staggering around the front of the room in mesmeric absorption and identity with the old bard, bellowing the desperate cry of the pitiful Shakespearean King soon to be ruthlessly dispatched. Of course the Promethean presenter would retort that the good teacher could still do that, even with the "white board." But I can still hauntingly hear Miss Dow's bellow.

Now I'm not against "white boards." It looks like fun. I think they're good. I was impressed with Bloom's Taxonomy and the ability of technology to clarify that progression. The journey from knowledge to performance to critical evaluation is so important in quality education. But there appears to be a climate of fear, reluctance and ignorance among many "dark age" teachers to such innovative tools. Who can nurse them to adequacy, if not proficiency with these new teaching tools? It seems to me this requires not a one-shot workshop any more than a football coach teaching his offense the new Wildcat formation can do it in one sitting seminar lecture. Do ESDs have an increasing role to play here beyond what they already do?

What's Missing in the Quest to Bring Home to Today's Students the Reality of Future Possibilities? When I see a theme like this at our conference, I ask what kind of future possibilities are we trying to create in the present for the student? Is it an apocalyptic End Game? An ideological

News from Washington State ESDs

(continued)

entire NWESD team is to be commended for making this possible—as a step toward even more efficient service to member districts! It is truly a Happy New Year in the NWESD region!

We will be approaching the Superintendents' Advisory Committee (SAC) for advice related to specific services the NWESD might provide with a significant portion of its remaining reserve. The NWESD Board believes that it is time to make use of all available resources to support member districts as they face such economic challenges.



Puget Sound ESD Leadership Academy

Puget Sound ESD's big news is that our Educare Early Learning Center will open in a month – the last week of February 2010! The center will serve as a hub for one of the two Thrive by Five Washington communities, and will offer full-day, year-round Educare services to 32 infants and toddlers and 102 preschool children from income-eligible families. The Center was built through a public-private partnership of funders and stakeholders.

Educare is a nationally recognized, research-based birth-to-five program that incorporates critical quality elements of effective early learning.

As a "Center of Excellence," the Center will be devoted to early learning best practices, family support innovation and the professional development of child care and early learning professionals as well as informal care providers.

Our Grand Opening Celebration will take place March 27 in the afternoon. Plans include an opening ceremony featuring dignitaries and funders, followed by an open house. There will be activities for children and tours for the community, with language interpreters helping to make it a special day for everyone. Please wish us a nice dry day in March!

More information on the Educare Center can be found at www.psesd.org under Quick Links.

~Joan Tritchler
PSESD Communications

Some Random Thoughts on Attending the 2009 AESA Conference



~By Donn Ring, ESD 114 Board

Getting There: On a beautiful sunny morning, our delegation of Jean Wasson, Katie Proteau, Karen Sorger, Donn & Lynn Ring, and Walt Bigby met at SeaTac Airport. Our Alaska Airline flight was uneventful until we approached Austin where lowering clouds gave us a bumpy landing. We were a tough-weathered team from the Northwest looking for southern sunshine, but were welcomed instead by raw blustery rain – so much like home in January. In a couple of days the weather cleared, but the temperature dipped in the morning to 17 degrees. There was a weather forecast of possibly 1 or 2 inches of snow in two days, which alarmed a lot of Austin folk who had not seen snow since 1983, but the storm dipped further south and slammed into Houston.

"ESAs: Creating Tomorrow's Possibilities Today:" This was the theme of the conference. The introduction to the conference program said: *We are educational leaders who bring 21st century strategies and philosophies to 21st century classrooms.*

I'm not sure what this means. Sounds good. I always get a kick out of the adventuresome or futuristic themes each year with which we are propelled into the conference, as if we might plant terra-formed satellite learning modules on Mars in which all the students through digitized telepathic projection achieve maximum test scores in math and science, or something like that. But as I looked across the plenary session it seemed there was a preponderance of gray heads that looked more like the aging children of the 30s, 40s, and 50s trying to figure out what the 21st century was all about.

I have an ear-worm of Patty Page singing *Tra-la-la twiddle-de-de-de there's peace and good will, to wake up in the morning on the Mockingbird Hill* in 2-3 waltz time. How can I be a leader who brings 21st century strategies and philosophies

to the 21st century classroom? And what the heck are "tomorrow's possibilities?" — especially when I can't figure out today the prescription drug rules that go along with my Medicare. But I determined to bravely plunge into the future with this conference in the hope of engaging philosophies and strategies that would arm me for my leadership role in creating tomorrow's possibilities today.

Plunging into the 21st Century: I looked for all those sessions that would speed up my education and equip me to grasp the future for today. I stayed away from subjects like governance policies, financial planning services, purchasing co-operatives, self-auditing, Federal relationships, data driven decision making, superintendent evaluation, etc. Now, I have no doubt that these practical processes are essential skills necessary to maintain institutional sustainability and smooth the process of bringing the future possibilities back home to today's students. No one can even entertain an imminently realized distant destination if the vehicle to get you there and back is broken. This is really important stuff. We need such tool-kit sessions. But I wanted something cutting edge, adventurous, romantic, that would time-travel the future possibilities back to me.

Wandering through the Ed-Tech Maze: So I decided to follow a technology theme through the whole conference. And, boy, was there a lot of Ed-tech related sessions. I was thrilled. I remember making a simple crystal radio with my dad, and even though, by that time, New York City had powerful 50,000 watt radio stations, how thrilled I was to hear a thin crackle of a program from WOR on my tiny 25 cent speaker. This was my field! Bring it on!

I will not comment individually on the 5 Ed-tech related sessions I attended, since there was considerable overlap. I'll just make some general observations by mashing them all together.

The Reality of Age Specific Sedimentation: We were informed that young people under 25 years of age are *digital-world natives*, over 25 we are *digital-world immigrants*. If we could remember black and white TV we are from the *dark ages*; and if we could remember when AM radio dominated we are from the near *stone age-world* of electronic technology. Well! I thought I'd go back to the hotel room and use a hand towel for a loin cloth, rent a didgeridoo – since Austin is the music capital of the South – and squat in front of the presenters. (Since I'm the youngest board member in Olympic ESD, perhaps we



June Sine
ESD 101 Board

NEW ESD June Sine named to NEWESD 101 Board

NEWESD 101 is pleased to introduce June Sine as its newest board member. The Spokane Valley resident took her seat in January, following her election in Director District 3, serving the Cusick, East Valley, Newport, Orchard Prairie, Riverside and Selkirk districts, along with portions of the Mead and Spokane districts.

Sine has a strong background in K-12, coming to NEWESD 101 after 18 years on the East Valley School District Board. There, she held numerous leadership positions, including board president, vice president and legislative representative.

She also has been an active member of WSSDA, serving six years on its board directors and chairing the Finance Subcommittee. Her WSSDA assignments also have included the Resolutions Committee, Search Committee, Annual Conference Planning Committee, Health and Nutrition Task Force, Federal Relations Network and OSPI Facilities Advisory Board. She is a 1999 graduate of the WSSDA Leadership class.

Outside of education, she has served as president of the Girl Scouts Inland Empire Board. Welcome, June.

~Steve Witter, ESD 101
Executive Director
Telecommunications
Public Affairs, Grants



ESD 105 has begun construction of their new multi-purpose facility.

ESD 105 starts work on new facility

Groundbreaking began in January on a new building anticipated to open this July that will significantly expand the services and staffing needs at ESD 105.

The upcoming facility is being built on what had been the agency's parking lot at the corner of Yakima's 2nd Avenue and Walnut Street. The new, two-story structure will include a multi-purpose room more than twice the size of the largest meeting room at the ESD 105 Conference Center, as well as relocated offices for several of the agency's departments.

Manufacturing on the modules for the new building began in November by Guerdon Enterprises in Boise, Idaho. Those modules will be transported to Yakima and set up during March.

The finished structure will be directly south of the ESD 105 Conference Center that opened in 1992. The exterior will echo the red brick

design features of the 1926 former Union Pacific Railroad terminal that ESD 105 acquired in 1977 as its main facility (located at the opposite side of the agency's 2nd Avenue property).

At 32,046 square feet, the new building will more than double the agency's existing service space. Anticipated construction cost of the new addition is \$3,844,128.

"We have had a space deficit for some time," says ESD 105 chief financial officer Dave Curry, noting that the agency started looking at a facilities expansion back in 2005, and that rented facilities have had to be used for some staff. "We're building this to grow, as well, so we can expand our services. This should satisfy our space needs for 2020 and beyond."

~David Goebner
Public Information Officer
ESD 105

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AESD Executive Board

- ESD 101 - Robert Bauer bauerke@inlandnet.com
- ESD 105 - Maggie Perez texcmexpm@msn.com
- ESD 112 - Bill Baumann, Past-President baumann@pacifier.com
- ESD 113 - Howard Coble hcoble48@msn.com
- ESD 114 - Katie Proteau LeMatoupro@aol.com
- ESD 121 - Charlie Staadecker info@staadeckerrealestate.com
- ESD 123 - Brad Gingerich, President bradlisagingerich@msn.com
- ESD 171 - Larry MacGuffie lmacguffie@homenetmv.net
- ESD 189 - Merle Kirkley merleke@chberesford.com



AESD
221 College Street N.E.,
Olympia, WA 98516-5313
www.aesd-wa.org

See the AESD Website www.aesd-wa.org for the calendar of events and other AESD information.

Editor, Eldene Wall, North Central ESD ~ eldenew@ncesd.org

News from Washington State ESDs



Diana Goldy
ESD 113 Board



Harry Carthum
ESD 113 Board

 **ESD 113 Board welcomes two new members**

ESD 113 has two new board members, Diana Goldy and Harry Carthum. Diana defeated long-time board member John Gott in the recent board elections, and Harry was appointed to fill the unexpired term resulting from the death of Marvin Lam.

Diana served for 10 years on the Mary M. Knight School Board. She and her three grown children all attended Mary M. Knight School.

"I will represent the concerns of our area schools and, in particular, the concerns of the small, rural school districts," Diana said. "I want to be a positive influence as our state's education reform continues its evolution toward academic success for all students." She is also a board member of the Mason County Community Network and a member of the Readiness to Learn Consortium. She has served on the Mason Transit board and spent many years as an officer of her school's parent-teacher organization. She attended Western Washington University and currently is the office manager for Green Diamond Resource Company in Shelton.

Harry served six years as superintendent of the Griffin School District. His forty-year career in education includes experience as a teacher, director of pupil services for the Grays Harbor Pupil Services Cooperative in Aberdeen, director of student services and private education for OSPI, and facilities planning consultant for the Willapa Valley School District.

"I am a firm believer in the value of public schools, and I am committed to continuing my support for the work of our educational community," Harry said. "For more than thirty years I have worked closely with ESD staff, and I appreciate the importance of the services they provide."

Harry is a past board member of the Washington Association of School Administrators and of the Washington Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. He has presented at numerous seminars and workshops and is vice president of the Westport/Grayland Chamber of Commerce. He received a master's degree from Central Washington University and a doctorate in educational leadership from Seattle University.

~Judy McDaniel
ESD 113 Communications



ESD 123 Parent Educator / Site Liaison teaches free citizenship classes

Can you name the current Chief Justice of the United States – *without* Googling the answer? How about the territory the United States bought from France in 1803? Do you remember that one? Sure, we all memorized those facts during History and Government classes at one point or another; but what if your ability to live in this country depended on your knowledge of these facts? Would they mean something more to you then? For students in the Washington Parent Information and Resource Center (WA-PIRC) citizenship classes, these questions and their correct answers hold the key to one of the greatest privileges so many of us take for granted.

Erika Alvarez, Parent Educator / Site Liaison for the WA-PIRC Program at ESD 123 in Pasco, is beginning her second year teaching citizenship classes in both Pasco and Prosser. After a needs assessment indicated a high response for individuals requesting citizenship classes, WA-PIRC teamed up with the Mid-Columbia Library in Pasco to offer the only free citizenship classes in the region. The next eight week session begins at the Pasco Library on January 11, 2010, by which time Alvarez hopes that another former student of hers will have joined the other 5 who have become proud U.S. citizens since last year.

For Alvarez, however, the hour-and-a-half classes are more than bilingual study sessions meant to memorize answers to a test. She teaches her students that what really makes a person a good citizen is being good to one's society.

"I'm not just giving them the answers," Alvarez said. "I want them to understand the 'why' behind the answers." In order to provide the answers and translate the "why" behind these from English into Spanish, however, Alvarez had to do quite a bit of studying, too. "In order to teach this class, I really had to brush up on my history," Alvarez laughed. "These questions are not easy!"

Students in Alvarez's citizenship class utilize a workbook, handouts, videos, and other resources provided to them free of charge through the WA-PIRC program to

study for the U.S. Citizenship Exam. At the end of the eight week program, a lawyer visits the class (pro-bono) and walks students through the citizenship interview process, while answering any questions they might have.

Alvarez said that the lawyers, such as Jonathan Shaklee from Jakeman & Shaklee, PLLC, and Carlos Villarreal from Roach Law Offices, LLP, have been of immeasurable benefit to her and her students. Their free consultation to the students and readiness to assist has helped to make the program the success that it is. Either during or after the citizenship courses, students are encouraged to attend a "New American Event" coordinated by law professionals. The event provides individuals with a free legal consultation and assistance in completing their citizenship application packet. Candidates who submit their Application for Naturalization, along with a payment of \$675, are given a date to take their citizenship exam – the same 100 question exam that the average American cannot pass.

According to Alvarez and her colleague, Micaela Bernal-Deluna, who also will be teaching citizenship classes soon, the two greatest barriers for students passing the exam are money and self-confidence. Bernal-Deluna, another Parent Educator / Site Liaison for WA-PIRC, said that their lack of self-confidence is just as crippling for the students as their difficult financial situations and their low levels of education. Alvarez and Bernal spend a great deal of time building their students' confidence to take the exam.

Understandably, confidence is a difficult thing to muster up when English is not the student's first language, and the daunting questions ahead require students to read and write in a language they may still be learning to master. Yet, those individuals attending the WA-PIRC citizenship classes already have much of which to be proud.

"They're setting a good example and being a true role model for their kids," Bernal-Deluna said.

The self confidence and pride that accompanies becoming a U.S. citizen is both a privilege and a power that Alvarez stresses to her students. She emphasizes that the greatest opportunity citizenship

affords is the right to vote. This right is an opportunity that provides a sense of pride and community for each individual.

It is easy to see the personal pride Alvarez takes in her students. Each of the 5 students who have passed the citizenship exam have spoken to her and shared their triumph with her.

"You've got to admire them for doing this," Alvarez beamed. "It's so inspiring and rewarding, and a real honor to be included in their celebration."

The citizenship classes offered through WA-PIRC in partnership with the Mid-Columbia Library will begin again January 11 at the Pasco Library. Alvarez hopes that additional classes will be available soon in Basin City, Othello, Connell, and Walla Walla. Those interested in attending the Pasco citizenship classes are encouraged to register at the Pasco Library at 1320 West Hopkins Street. Erika Alvarez may be contacted at 509.544.5772 or at calvarez@esd123.org.

~Molly Green
ESD 123 Desktop Publisher



North Central ESD Board hosts Regional Legislative Meeting following WASA/WSSDA Legislative Conference

The NCESD Board hosted a regional legislative meeting February 8 following the February 7-8 WASA/WSSDA Legislative Conference. This gave superintendents and board members an excellent opportunity to visit with area legislators.

Administrators and board members have been very pleased with the success of the legislative meetings held following the conference the past four years. This single combined meeting with legislators, instead of the usual multiple appointments and meetings, has been convenient, efficient and effective. Participants have expressed their appreciation and feel the meetings have been worthwhile.

Senator Linda Evans Parlette extended a special invitation this year to hold the regional meeting in the Senate



Senator Parlette (left) visits with board member Carrie Sorensen from Cascade School District in Leavenworth.

Republican Caucus Room. Several legislators who serve the districts in our region attended this special meeting, including Senator Parlette and Representative Mike Armstrong from the 12th district and legislative aides from the 7th and 13th districts.

This meeting afforded an excellent opportunity to visit with our legislators and enlist their support for our important educational issues. This support is invaluable during this year of budget challenges.

~Eldene Wall
NCESD Public Relations



NWESD 189: Anacortes facility debt-free

The NWESD is very pleased to have recently retired all debt related to its Anacortes facility! Upon the recommendation of the superintendents' Executive Committee, the Board elected to pay off all debt six and a half years early.

As a result, member district fees related to the facility "cost center" account will be reduced by 45% —retroactively applied beginning last August. Thereby benefiting member districts through reduced fees—returning funds to them.

The necessary funds were grown over the past several years. Primarily through 1) the reduced cost of the Anacortes facility compared to the projected cost of the addition for which the original bonds were sold, 2) six years of rental income for a wing within the facility, 3) indirect fees from significant grants, and 4) effective cost containment/management. The