



# WEA TODAY

www.weatoday.org

March 2008 Issue



Washoe Education Association Monthly Newsletter



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## Mark Your Calendar

### March 10-14th

Spring Break Schools Closed

### March 26th

Membership Committee  
WEA Office 4:30 p.m.

### April 2nd

Rep Council

### April 4th

Nominations Due for the  
WEA Awards Banquet

Nominations Due for WEA  
Scholarships

## Testing Irregularities

It's testing time again, which unfortunately means that there will be testing irregularities. If you find yourself in a testing situation, you are entitled to representation at the meeting with your principal and the district representatives. We strongly urge you to contact us either by e-mail or phone to get us involved in the situation. You have rights in these meetings that we will ensure are protected.

## Pacific Regional Leadership Conference

*Ken Buhrmann / WEA President*

This year the Pacific Regional Leadership Conference was held in Boise, Idaho, from February 15 – 17, 2008. Twelve members of the Washoe Education Association attended the conference, a great experience for all. Boise, a wonderful, small city, gave all of us a warm welcome. At a “pre” conference February 13-15, entitled “Minority Leadership Training,” a number of our members felt that the issues addressed were of extreme importance to not only minorities in our association but to all members no matter what ethnic background. One attendee, Bernice Servilican, made this observation about the Minority Seminar: “I had the opportunity to attend the Minority Leadership Training and was rejuvenated by the power of working together to help students be successful in a world where technology seems to be winning out over humanistic, daily interaction with people of all ages. With NCLB harnessing us to test, test, test, it was refreshing to see that teachers still work tirelessly to meet all the demands of their profession. It just made me proud to be a teacher when I saw my colleagues and their enthusiasm.”

During the main Pacific conference, the WEA team attended numerous leadership trainings and meetings focused on current educational issues and political trends in the nation and region. The theme of the conference this year was “Impacting the Next 20 Years in Education.”

Many of the seminars centered on member leadership, advocacy, and the upcoming political season. NEA and WEA are, of course, champions of public education. With this in mind we realize that we must play a major role in the election year. We as members of the teacher association, have to make sure that education issues are part of the national debate as candidates vie for congressional seats and the White House.

Also, the conference addressed the issues of leadership and bringing in the new and younger members of the association to become more active in those leadership roles. Involving all members is important to the success and the continued strength of the local, state, and national association.

So what makes an effective leader? Many elements are involved in answering this question. An effective leader must be able to communicate, organize, build consensus, and network. We in the association have many voices, but we need to remember that we speak to the public with one mighty voice, powerful and filled with conviction. “Public education is a basic right for every child!” We know, believe, and must strongly advocate this message to everyone. This is what a leader does. And that is what was re-enforced at the Pacific Regional conference. It was stressed that all of us have it within our own power to be a leader and to be an effective voice for our profession and for public education.

*Continued on page 2*

# Future Educators Association

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Laura Scull / NVHS Senior

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The Future Educators Association (FEA) is a club designed for students who are interested in teaching. Whether they want to teach elementary, high school or, special education all students are welcome. The purpose is for these students to develop skills that can be carried on with them to college. FEA is a nation wide club throughout the high schools of America (and internationally). There is an annual teacher and future teachers conference held in February which offers many opportunities for scholarship in a variety of fields which go hand-in-hand with education. Some of the competitions include speech & debate, essay writing – even one with scrap-booking where the events we have done are highlighted.

The members of the NVHS club meet each week on Tuesday and Wednesday during break to pick a feature teacher of the week and then congratulate them with a card and a gift. Most of the time the educator picked is from a random draw from the teachers who have filled out the “about me” paper

## Leadership Conference

*Continued from page 1*

The feelings at the conference are reflected in the comments from a number of WEA members who attended. Linda Enteles stated: “The opportunity to have some time with educators from other states... and sharing experiences was of great importance. It is not often that time can be dedicated to a one-on-one conversation with those from all over and in the same professional field.” Dawn Miller felt the discussions on Campaign 2008 were very enlightening. She also attended a presentation on initiative petitions

(given out at the beginning of the year). The presents usually coincide with the interests of the teacher. We also submit an announcement congratulating the teacher who has been selected. It is a way to honor our staff and make sure they get the recognition they deserve.

North Valleys is trying to recruit more members into the club. At this time there are only six active members (excluding our advisors Mr. West and Ms. Anderson). The ideal number of students would be at least ten. All current members are seniors who will be going to college next year. The idea of working with the other schools has been discussed.

FEA has been trying to come up with fund-raising ideas to go to Tennessee, but it is too late in the year to be able to attend this year’s conference – hopefully next year’s participants will be able to attend. Participating in the conference would be very beneficial for any student who plans to one day have a degree in education. Since this is the beginning of the second year for the club at North Valleys, the members have all been very enthusiastic about the possibilities.

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and said, “...petitions are the way many of our colleagues received increased funding. All I can say is, ‘Get Ready!’” Perhaps it is best summed up by Bernice Servilican when she stated: “When we stay in our classrooms all the time, it is very difficult to network with other teachers and leaders throughout the country. Pacific Regional has allowed me to meet other teachers who are dealing with similar issues and share the same struggles – how to motivate students, prevent professional burn-out, how to advocate for members....”

We know the club will be around for years. There is always a need for teachers and there are always of people who want to join this very important profession.

## Transfers Well Underway

As we go to print, the high need schools have experienced their exclusive transfer period as well as the time for Brown teachers who want to “opt out” of the year-round school. For those Brown teachers who have not received a transfer, they will be placed as an overage on March 18th.

The exclusive transfer period for all schools will begin on March 20th and will continue until April 2. Please refer to the transfer article in the negotiated agreement. The negotiated agreement on the website has the current language since it was not changed in the last bargaining session.

If more than three candidates apply for a transfer, at least three people MUST be interviewed. If an employee is not selected there should be a notification to the candidate. An employee not selected may request the reasons for non-selection.

At the conclusion of this transfer period (where only current employees may be interviewed) and there still are overage teachers in schools, the overage procedure begins. In the schools with overage teachers, volunteers are requested first (once the updated needs list is available). Overage teachers will be placed on April 22nd. On April 28th new hires may be offered employment.

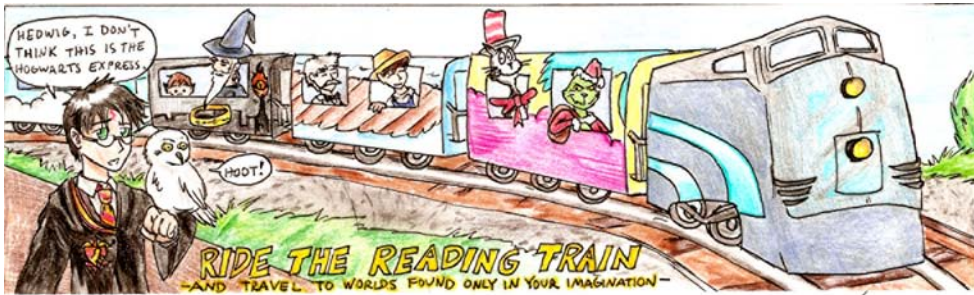
High Need schools will be able to interview and hire outside applicants beginning on March 19th.

If you have any questions about your current situation, please feel free to call any of us in the WEA office.



# ANNUAL BOOKMARK CONTEST A GREAT SUCCESS!

Teachers And Community Together Project



The 2008 bookmark contest has concluded and we received an overwhelming number of entries. The judges had a very difficult time choosing the winners...the bookmarks demonstrated such creativity from our students.

The overall Grand Prize

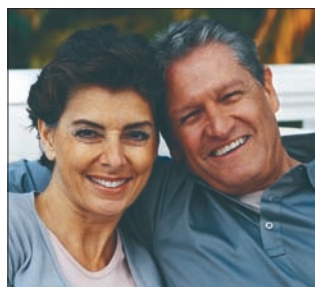
Winner was Talena Pearson from North Valleys High School. The individual grade level winners are:

Kindergarten – Sarah Gray, Towles ES  
 First Grade – Christian Martinez Garcia, Duncan ES  
 Second Grade – Jana Bridgman, Pleasant Valley ES  
 Third Grade – Erin Moyer, Pleasant Valley ES  
 Fourth Grade – Brenda Najera, Allen ES  
 Fifth Grade – Ryan LeBard, Dodson ES  
 Sixth Grade – Julio Lopez Tores, Allen ES

Seventh – Ricky Olguin, Pine MS  
 Eighth – Jessica Blavenshein, Billingshurst MS  
 Ninth – Susana Jaramillo, Wooster HS  
 Tenth – Rebecca Judd, Wooster HS  
 Eleventh – Matt Magee, Wooster HS  
 Twelfth – Caitlin Durkin, Wooster HS  
 Computer Generated – Kody Eckert, Billingshurst MS

Congratulations to all of the winners. Each grade level winner received their bookmark framed, a celebration in their classroom with treats and a \$25 gift certificate from Barnes & Noble. The grade prize winner received a \$50 gift certificate from Barnes & Noble and a classroom celebration!

## We're helping make members' lives better—from the first day—right through retirement.



The life you want is the life you can have, thanks to the buying power of the Association's 3.2 million members. NEA Member Benefits gives you the resources to make informed decisions, along with exclusive money-saving programs and services to meet your diverse needs.

Visit [neamb.com/betterlife](http://neamb.com/betterlife) or call 1-800-637-4636 to find out how we can help you achieve your goals.

**HELPING MAKE MEMBERS' LIVES BETTER<sup>SM</sup>**



Insurance Financial Services Investments Consumer Discount Consumer Awareness

COMK2007

## REPRESENTATION TRAINING

Have you ever been in a position of needing representation at a meeting with your administrator, school police? Has a member ever asked you to attend a meeting with them? Do you know what to do? How to ask questions? What rights do you have?

Well, do we have the workshop for you! A short 2 hour workshop is scheduled for Monday, March 24th at the WEA Office. We will cover all of the processes that one needs to know when confronted with potential meetings with administrators and/or school police or detectives.

You must pre-register in order to reserve your seat by calling Chelsea Wesnousky at 828-3026. A light dinner will be served.

## Counselor's Connection -

### *Building Resilience in our Youth*

*Mary Hausauer/School Counselor*

Laura lived in a run-down camper in a small trailer park in southeast Reno. Every day she meticulously wrote essays, computed math problems, and designed science projects on a wooden board she draped over her lap on bed. She had never met her father and her mother struggled with multiple disabilities, making it very difficult to have food or money for school

## Contract Corner... *Evaluations - April 1st*

*Elaine Lancaster/UniServ Director*

Your evaluations need to be discussed and signed by April 1st. If you are on a minor evaluation, one domain is being evaluated, with a minimum of one formal observation (30 minutes in length) plus one additional source of data, such as an IEP meeting, parent conference, department meeting, PLC meeting and frequent walk-throughs. A major evaluation is based on two domains with a minimum of two formal observations, plus one other source of data. Probationary teachers need to have all level one's or better to achieve post probationary status.

Your written evaluation must be drafted by an administrator and a copy personally and confidentially delivered to you prior to the final evaluation meeting. It must include a narrative which provides a description of observation data, along with recommendations and commendations. By no later than April 1st, the evaluation should be reviewed and signed in a FACE-TO-FACE conference with the administrator. If you have concerns about the evaluation, sign it and check response to follow and contact our office for assistance. Signing your evaluation does not necessarily mean you agree with the contents, but that you received it.

supplies. She ranked number five in her graduating class. Donna lost her mother when she was in elementary school. Her father remarried and the family moved to Reno. She dropped out of high school when she was a junior and has been struggling with a major drug problem.

As teachers, we have all had our share of students like Laura and Donna. What makes one student so resilient while another falls apart? The greatest threats to children are those adversities that undermine the human protective systems for development. Most research on resilience confirms the crucial importance of adult action in the lives of resilient children. Dr. John Taylor, the keynote speaker at this month's Nevada School Counselor Association's State Conference, stressed the importance of the teacher's role in helping students through encouragement to build resilience. He stated: "Each student has the need for belonging and autonomy- to have a voice and a choice. They also need to feel safe, respected, and competent."

Taylor emphasized the importance of teachers using "super strokes" which are statements and actions that enhance the child's experience in self-direction and self-confidence. These include the following:

**Gratitude:** "I am grateful for what you did. Thank you."

**Sharing a skill:** "Are there any other students you can help in math now?"

**Self-determination:** "I would like you to do this; you choose how and when."

**Acknowledge Effort:** "I can see a lot of effort went into this." "I'm glad you tried."

**Emphasize Strength:** "Your correct answers are circled in red."

**Label the Act:** "You thoroughly cleaned your work station."

**Tell Me about It:** "Tell me about this project. I'm interested in hearing how you felt about your paper."

**Social Impact:** "You really helped Susan by doing that."

Robert Brooks, Ph.D on the faculty at Harvard Medical School has also researched how a significant adult, often a teacher, can foster resilience in his or her students. In his article, "How Can Teachers Foster Self Esteem in Children?" he stresses the importance of the teacher having a positive mindset which includes these features: "If students are demonstrating self defeating behaviors (bullying, not trying, acting like the class clown...) we need to recognize these self defeating behaviors as coping strategies to mask their vulnerability. Each child possesses "islands of competence" or areas of strength that must be identified and reinforced by educators. We must actively invite students to be involved in their education." Both Taylor and Brooks emphasize the importance of stressing that students learn from, but should not feel defeated by, their mistakes.

Dr. Taylor, in his book *Encouraging the Discouraged Child*, outlines this theme by using the idea "Mistakes are Delicate"-the acronym Delicate stands for the following:

D-Decreasing ("Look how far you've come!")

E-Expected ("That's why pencils have erasers.")

L-Learning Tools ("What can you learn from this experience for the next time?")

I-Incompletions ("You didn't run out of talent; you just ran out of time.")

C-Caused (Let's see what's giving you trouble here.)

A-Accidental ("Mistakes are just accidents")

T-Temporary ("This doesn't mean that you can't do it better later.")

E-Effort Proofs ("Mistakes are benchmarks on the path of effort.")

For further information about Dr. Taylor's suggestions for educators, check out the website [www.ADD-Plus.com](http://www.ADD-Plus.com).

# Nurse's Notes

Sharon G Freier / RN

New Research Indicates that Children as Young as 11 are Engaging in Sexual Activity and that Dating Violence and Abuse are Part of Their Relationships

A new survey reports that a surprising number of young adolescents are experiencing significant levels of dating violence and abuse. One in five children between the ages of 11 and 14 (20%) say their friends are victims of dating violence and nearly half of all tweens in relationships say they know friends who are verbally abused. The survey on Tween and Teen dating relationships, conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited (TRU) and commissioned by Liz Claiborne Inc. and the National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline, explores how relationships among young adolescents are fueling high levels of dating violence and abuse. In response to the concerns about teen dating violence and abuse across the United States, the incoming president of the National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG), Rhode Island Attorney General Patrick C. Lynch, said that he will introduce a resolution at NAAG's June meeting that will call for the inclusion of curricula on teen dating violence in schools in every state. To read the entire survey, please visit [http://www.loveisnotabuse.com/surveyresults\\_2008tweens\\_mstr.htm](http://www.loveisnotabuse.com/surveyresults_2008tweens_mstr.htm).

## CDC Study Warns of Deaths Due to the "Choking Game"

At least 82 youth have died as a result of playing what has been called "the choking game," according to a study released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. The choking game involves intentionally trying to choke oneself or another in an effort to obtain a brief euphoric state or "high". Death or serious injury can result if strangulation is prolonged. Eighty-seven percent of these deaths were among males, and most fatalities occurred among those 11 years to 16 years old; the average age was 13, the report said. Choking game deaths were identified in 31 states. For the full MMWR, please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5706a1.htm>.

For more information about CDC's work in injury and violence prevention, please visit [www.cdc.gov/injury](http://www.cdc.gov/injury).

## CDC Study Estimates 7,000 Pediatric Emergency Department Visits Linked to Cough and Cold Medication

An estimated 7,000 children ages 11 and younger are treated in hospital emergency departments each year because of cough and cold medications, according to a study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This study found that children ages two to five accounted for 64 percent of all adverse drug events from cough and cold medications, and nearly 80 percent of the events for this age group were from unsupervised ingestions. Among all age groups, 93 percent of the children did not require hospital admission, however, one-fourth needed additional treatment to eliminate the medicine from their bodies. The study was published by the American Academy of Pediatrics journal, *Pediatrics*. To read the abstract of this study, please visit <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/peds.2007-3638v3>.

## Teens, Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drugs

National studies and published reports indicate that the abuse of prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) drugs to get high is a growing concern—particularly among teens—in the United States. In fact, more young people ages 12-17 abuse prescription drugs than any illicit drug except marijuana—more than cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine combined. Prescription drugs provide benefits when used as directed under the care of a health provider. But when abused, they can be just as dangerous as illicit drugs.

Though overall teen drug use is down significantly nationwide in recent years, there are troubling signs that teens view abusing prescription and OTC drugs as safer than using street drugs. Of even more concern is that many parents may not be addressing the dangers with their teens, though they can have an immediate impact on curbing the supply by cutting off the access to prescription drugs in their own home and by talking to their teen about the risks of drug use.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

More teens abuse prescription drugs than any illicit drug except marijuana.

The majority of teens who abuse prescription drugs get them easily and for free, primarily from friends and relatives.

Teens are also abusing some over-the-counter (OTC) cough and cold remedies to get high, which is especially troubling given teens' easy access to these products.

Many parents are not aware of teen prescription drug abuse. Teens say their parents are not discussing these dangers with them, even though research shows that parental disapproval is a powerful way to keep teens from using drugs.

Parents are in a unique position to immediately reduce teen access to prescription drugs because they are found in the home.

Teens are abusing prescription drugs because many believe the myth that these drugs provide a "safe" high and they are easily available.

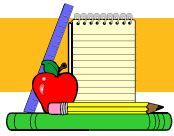
There has been a dramatic increase in the number of poisonings and even deaths associated with the abuse of prescription and OTC drugs.

The prescription drugs most commonly abused by teens are painkillers, prescribed to treat pain; depressants, such as sleeping pills or anti-anxiety drugs; and stimulants, mainly prescribed to treat attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Some teens use prescription and OTC drugs with alcohol or other drugs, which could lead to dangerous drug interactions and other serious medical consequences.

The term "abuse" of prescription drugs is defined in this report as use without medical supervision for the intentional purpose of getting high, or for some reason other than for which the drug was intended, regardless of prescription status. It also includes the use of a drug without a prescription, such as using someone else's painkiller. It does NOT include unintentional misuse, such as missing doses or not taking with food as recommended on the actual prescription.





## THE EDUCATORS TOOLBOX – Start Something

By: Laurie Johns

Are you tired of looking all over the place to find great ideas? Do you have something fantastic to share with fellow educators? Now is your chance to shine! Every Educator has their own tool box - a bag of tricks, a list of special sites full of great information, helpful hints etc. Here's your opportunity to share that "Good Stuff" with fellow educators within Washoe County through this regular article entitled "The Educator's Tool Box". I am looking for ideas from YOU - pre-K to high school, to special education to update and add to the tool box monthly. We will be working collaboratively to create a tool box for educators by educators.

**Some things to get us all started:**

### *Special Education:*

**LDONLINE** – [www.ldonline.com](http://www.ldonline.com)  
great resource for parents, teachers of children with all kinds of learning

## NEA BEGINS CELL PHONE RECYCLING PROGRAM

NEA has joined with forces Sprint and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children to produce tools for adults to help kids connect safely. You may access this tool system by logging onto [www.bnetsavvy.org](http://www.bnetsavvy.org).

This tool has received rave reviews in keeping children safe. There are great articles being produced every two months. In order to keep this network up and running the companies participating are recycling cell phones.

Ken Buhrmann will be collecting your old cell phone throughout the year and shipping them to NEA. The proceeds from the recycled phones will assist in providing this great project.

Just send your phone to the WEA office through inter-school mail.

disabilities. Provides various stories and updates on things in that field for children with learning disabilities, parents of children with learning disabilities and teachers of students with learning disabilities.

**Wright's Law** – [www.wrightslaw.com](http://www.wrightslaw.com)  
great resource for parents and teachers of children with disabilities. It covers various special education "law" related topics, court cases, updates with the law, IEP hot topics, etc.

**EDHELPER**– [www.edhelper.com](http://www.edhelper.com)  
great site that provides teachers K–12 with worksheets, games, stories themed units, pictures etc. on all content areas including test taking strategies and also materials for students with special needs. There's a small, reasonable, annual fee charged for membership but that allows you unlimited access to the site.

This is just the beginning! Please **HELP ME KEEP THIS PROJECT GOING!**

Send any ideas to Laurie Johns at [twschues2000@yahoo.com](mailto:twschues2000@yahoo.com)

1. On the subject line please write "tool box"

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

James Callender at RTI  
Karen Schottel at Stead  
Raymond Hirschman at Reed  
Stacey Ting-Senini at Booth  
Shawna Baker at Risley  
Sharon Kennedy at Incline MS  
Ryan Wahrenbrock at Corbett  
Laurie Shaw at Greenbrae  
Leslie Pratt at Beasley  
Shawnette Andries at Juniper  
Richard Hollis at Reed  
Chevonne Sutter at Desert Heights  
Dean Pereos at Reed  
Patrick Bailey at Hug

2. When leaving the tip please be sure to include the website/ book name/ information/ etc. and why it's a valuable resource to you (what's so awesome about it!)

3. State the grade level it's useful for (elementary, high school, special education, etc.)

4. Also include your name, grade level and school you work at so you can receive credit for providing the information.



WASHOE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

**1890 Donald Street, Suite A  
Reno, Nevada 89502  
828-9282 Fax: 828-6748**

Ken Buhrmann President  
Dana Galvin Vice-President  
Virginia Doran Executive Director  
Elaine Lancaster UniServ Director



Susan Pittman Publication Design  
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WEA Today is published nine times per year to inform, educate and entertain the members of Washoe Education Association. We urge readers to write letters to the editor on matters of concern. Letters should be mailed to WEA Today Editor at 1890 Donald Street, Reno, NV. 89502. All letters must be signed and include phone number; however, anonymity will be granted if deemed necessary. We reserve the right to edit for length or libelous comments. It would be appreciated if letters were typed, but neatly handwritten copies are accepted.

### **Advertising**

Size and rate information is available by contacting the Editor at (775) 828-9282. Acceptance of advertising is at the sole discretion of WEA and staff. We reserve the right to refuse advertising not deemed appropriate for this publication.