



THE MONTANA PROFESSIONAL TEACHING FOUNDATION

December 2008 Newsletter

Promoting Great Teaching in Montana

Dear Friend:

As 2008 comes to a close, we are celebrating a big year at the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation.

We have a record number of Montana teachers working toward National Board Certification this year. We had the biggest turnout ever for our Montana Teacher of the Year celebration. Our Montana Educator Forum challenged participants as never before to think about and plan for the future of education in Montana.

Each year, with your help, the foundation makes a bigger difference to teachers and school children across Montana.

What was just a dream 12 years ago has grown into a thriving enterprise. It all adds up to better educational opportunities for Montana's children. We could not do it without your help.

Many thanks to all our supporters! And happy holidays.

*Eric Feaver, Chair
Montana Professional
Teaching Foundation*



MONTANA
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TEACHING
FOUNDATION
1232 E 6th Ave
Helena, MT 59601
406.447.1479
Eric Feaver, Chair
Banner photos:
Nathan Ham/NEA

Preserving democracy, teaching citizenship

Sally Broughton named '09 Montana Teacher of the Year

A few years ago, Sally Broughton's sixth-grade students discovered something startling: Their community in southwest Montana stands in the path of an old earthen dam that could fail with no warning.



Montana Teacher of the Year Sally Broughton consults with a Project Citizen student on his display.

"The kids went door to door and found that nobody knew they lived below a dam," Broughton said. "People didn't know which way to drive to avoid the water" in case of a flood.

So the students developed an action plan for Hyalite Dam and took their case to the county commission.

In the end, the commission obtained a grant to implement exactly what the students asked for: a warning device at the dam, a brochure showing citizens the evacuation plan, a reverse 911 system to alert

families in the path of the water, and a warning siren at the firehouse.

"To think 11- and 12-year-olds can do that!" Broughton beamed. "All you have to do is show kids how to participate in democracy. That is my goal, my passion, my mission as a teacher."

Broughton teaches grades 6-8 social studies and language arts at Monforton School, a small rural school near Bozeman. This fall, she won the highest honor a Montana teacher can



Sally Broughton

(Continued on page 2)

Teacher of the Year Finalists

In addition to Sally Broughton, finalists in the 2009 Montana Teacher of the Year event include Karen Spencer, a high school chemistry teacher in Great Falls, and Frank LaLiberty, a science and agriculture mechanics teacher in Cascade. All three finalists were honored at a gala celebration October 16 in Missoula. Congratulations to all of these outstanding



Karen Spencer



Frank LaLiberty

Silent Auction nets \$3,000

The Montana Professional Teaching Foundation held its annual silent auction following the Montana Teacher of the Year Celebration, October 16, 2008 in Missoula.

The auction benefits both MPTF's Karen Cox Memorial Grant Program and The Montana Learning Center. Mark your calendar for next year's auction: October 15, 2009 in Billings. The auction takes place in conjunction with the MEA-MFT Educators' Conference.

Montana Professional Teaching Foundation Board of Directors

Chair: Eric Feaver (*President, MEA-MFT*)

Vice Chair: Larry Nielsen (*Vice President, MEA-MFT*)

Denise Juneau (*Superintendent of Public Instruction*)

Sally Broughton (*2009 Montana Teacher of the Year*)

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Teacher of the Year (continued)

receive when she was named 2009 Montana Teacher of the Year. "It really hasn't sunk in yet," Broughton said. "My feet haven't touched the ground."

The Montana Teacher of the Year program, sponsored and administered by the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation, annually honors a teacher who exemplifies the best in the teaching profession.

Project Citizen: Broughton teaches civics through a program called Project Citizen. At the start of every school year, her students choose a community problem that needs solving. Throughout the year, they gather information, examine solutions, develop an action plan, and present their plan to the appropriate decision-makers.

Their accomplishments are impressive: a bike helmet policy, a safe path to school, a community playground, public restrooms in downtown Bozeman, a competitive track program, and the warning system for Hyalite Dam, to name just a handful. "Each of these ideas was selected, researched, and presented by the students," Broughton said.

"They learn how to take action on an issue that is bothering them, to participate, not just sit and complain. If people don't participate, we won't have a democracy."

Awards and honors: Among many other honors, Broughton received the American Civic Education Teacher Award this year. Her language arts students have had essays and poems published in national and regional publications. In April, the National Learn and Serve Corporation selected her class to receive the Spirit of Service Award in April 2008 for "Operation Save The Playground," a project aimed at bringing fitness and recreation to the community.

"She shows us all that being an active citizen is more than merely being vocal," said Monforton Superintendent Lynne Scalia. "It means understanding all sides of an issue, working for change at the policy level, creating solutions, and then garnering support for that change. This is real and powerful work."

As Montana Teacher of the Year, Sally Broughton will serve as a spokesperson for the teaching profession and represent the state in the 2009 National Teacher of the Year event.



From left: Teacher of the Year finalists Frank LaLiberty and Karen Spencer, MPTF Chair Eric Feaver, 2009 Teacher of the Year Sally Broughton, and 2008 Teacher of the Year Steve Gardiner at MPTF's Teacher of the Year Celebration October 16 in Missoula.

'Scrambling' for schools

The fifth annual MPTF golf scramble took place August 2, 2008, at the scenic Bill Roberts Golf Course in Helena (known as "Billy Bob" to locals). "Fore Kids & Education" hosted nearly 70 golfers from around the state, raising a record \$11,000 for the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation and its programs.

Next year's scramble will take place July 30, 2009, in Helena. Mark your calendar, and start recruiting your team! If you would like to be on the mailing list for the golf tournament, please contact Cathy Warner at the MPTF office (406.447.1479).



2008 Educator Forum

Nobody knows more about what goes on in Montana's classrooms than Montana teachers. Yet too often, policy decisions are made by people who haven't been in the classroom since they were students themselves. That's why, each year, the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation sponsors the Montana Educator Forum. This one-day event brings classroom teachers together with parents, policy makers, higher education faculty, and others to talk about hot-button topics in education and develop solutions to problems facing our schools.

Over 130 Montana educators attended the 12th annual Montana Educator Forum in Helena September 28. With the theme "Educating Montana for a Profoundly Different Future," the forum featured keynote speaker Gary Marx, president of the Center for Public Outreach and author of two books on preparing schools for the future.

Marx engaged his audience in a thought-provoking discussion of current trends such as the aging of society, diversity changes, economic challenges, and generational shifts, and their impact on students and their learning environment.

He then helped participants identify current issues affecting Montana's educational system and discussed how to prioritize these issues to create a plan for the future. "You are a brain trust," Marx said of the forum participants.

Nominate for math & science awards

Do you know a great Montana science or math teacher, teaching in grades 7-12, with five or more years of professional teaching experience? Do you think this teacher should get some special recognition? How about a \$10,000 award and all-expense-paid trip to Washington, DC?

If so, take a few minutes to nominate that person for the 2009 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST). The Montana Professional Teaching Foundation administers this program in Montana.

To learn more, visit www.mea-mft.org/paemst.htm. The deadline for nominations is April 1, 2009.

Remember, whether a teacher pursues the award or not, it is always a nice recognition to be nominated!

Our mission

The Montana Professional Teaching Foundation (MPTF) was created by MEA-MFT in 1996 to promote excellence in teaching and learning in Montana. We do this through our **five programs**:

1. Montana Teacher of the Year
2. National Board Certification scholarships and assistance
3. Montana Educator Forum
4. Karen Cox Memorial Grant Program (providing classroom supply grants for teachers)

5. Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics & Science Teaching

We are continually expanding our programs to improve teaching and learning in the Big Sky state. The foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization; donations are tax deductible.

How you can help?

Let us count the ways

There are many ways to support the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation's mission.

- 1. Use your Albertson's card.** The Montana Professional Teaching Foundation participates in the Albertson's grocery stores Community Partners program.

When you sign up your Albertson's card, MPTF earns up to 4 percent of your Preferred Savings Card eligible purchases.

You can e-mail your card number to Cathy Warner (cwarner@mea-mft.org) or register online at www.albertsons.com (click on "In the Community" and then the "Community Partners" logo).

- 2. Recycle your cell phone.** You can help the environment and the Foundation by donating your inactive cell phones to the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation. Send them to Cathy Warner or drop them off at foundation headquarters, 1232 E 6th Ave, Helena, MT 59601.

- 3. Make a donation.** You'll find a tear-off donation form on page 6.

MONTANA PROFESSIONAL TEACHING FOUNDATION

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Including those who wish to remain anonymous.

To our donors: You deserve to be properly recognized, and we strive for 100 percent accuracy. If we have made an error, please contact the foundation at 406.447.1479 with corrections.

2008 Karen Cox Memorial Grant Awards



The late Karen Cox

Billings teacher Karen Cox, one of Montana's great educators, lost her life doing what she loved: working to improve public education. The Montana Professional Teaching Foundation created the Karen Cox Memorial Grant Awards in her honor.

The grant program is not intended to replace school funding. Rather, it is meant to assist educators who selflessly reach into their own pockets to pay for classroom supplies. Recipients of the 2008 Karen Cox awards are listed below:

Shelley Brown, 1st and 2nd grade teacher, Moore Public School, Moore, MT. Brown's grant will support a project she designed to give students a hands-on experience combining math, social studies, English, and science skills.

Brown's students run a small greenhouse business called Little Greenthumbs' Greenhouse. Through this venture, her students learn to count money and give

change. They learn the scientific process of how plants grow and the human relations process of relating to community members as consumers and themselves as producers. "It teaches them to be good citizens," says Brown, "and it brings in community members from surrounding areas to be a part of our school." With the money they earn, Brown's students have purchased an American flag for the local city park, donated to libraries, and bought supplies for a poverty-level overseas school.

With her \$500 grant, Brown plans to add some finishing touches to the greenhouse built by her husband and students' parents, including a solar-powered fan for the roof.

Jamie Garvey, 1st grade teacher, West Elementary School, Laurel, MT. Garvey will use her \$500 grant to buy a document camera for her classroom. These cameras open up "a whole new world for their children," she says. "They can show graphic or thought organizers on the screen ready for students to fill out. Hands-on counters for math can be shown and manipulated for students to see. In science, bones, bugs, rocks, etc. can be classified, sorted, described, regrouped, and compared. The possibilities are endless."

National Board Certification

National Board Certification is the highest level of professional certification a U.S. teacher can earn. When Montana teachers undergo the certification process, they improve their own teaching while sharing their discoveries with other teachers around the state. Students all around Montana benefit as a result.

National Board Certification is a rigorous and costly process that takes up to nine months, presenting a major hurdle to many Montana teachers. The Montana Professional Teaching Foundation helps remove this hurdle by providing technical assistance and subsidy scholarships to Montana applicants.

Congratulations to the following teachers who have achieved National Board Certification for 2007-08:

- Erin Augustine, Billings: Exceptional Needs Specialist/Early Childhood through Young Adulthood
- Daniel Bartsch, Billings: Science/Adolescence & Young Adulthood
- Autumn Gottschlich, Kalispell: English Language Arts/Early Adolescence
- Gwen Hoppe, Missoula: Art/Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood
- Deborah Kelley, Billings: World Languages/Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood
- Kerrie More, Kalispell: Library Media/Early Childhood through Young Adulthood
- Lora Pederson, Billings: Literacy, Reading-Language Arts/Early & Middle Childhood
- Christy Peebles, Kalispell: World Languages/Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood
- Shannin Preshinger, Helena: English Language Arts/Early Adolescence
- Shelly Stanton, Billings: Career & Technical Education/Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood
- Cindy Welch, Billings: Generalist/Middle Childhood

Thank you, Qwest and State Farm!

Qwest Foundation recently gave a generous grant of \$10,000 to support the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation math and science recognition programs. This funding will help the MPTF promote excellence in math and science teaching.

State Farm Insurance Companies donated \$3,000 to the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation's National Board Certification program, to help MPTF's growing efforts to provide direct candidate support for Montana's National Board Certification candidates. State Farm's support will help thousands of Montana children by improving teaching in Montana.

Many thanks to Qwest and State Farm.

These contributions are in addition to significant ongoing donations from Blue Cross Blue Shield, Montana Universal School Trust (MUST), and MEA-MFT.

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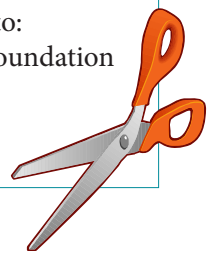
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THANK YOU!



Planned giving

As you think about special gifts for family and friends, please remember the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation. It's easy to donate a planned gift to the MPTF permanent endowment.

Montana taxpayers who make a qualifying gift to the MPTF endowment may be able to take a 40 percent credit against their Montana income tax liability.

Businesses can make an outright gift (as opposed to a planned gift) and may be eligible for a 20 percent credit on their Montana taxes.

For more information on planned gifts, call Cathy Warner at the MPTF office (406.447.1479).