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Useful Communications and News



UCN Vice President/Communications Steve Fargan meets The Cat in the Hat at the Pacific Regional Leadership Conference held in February in Boise, Idaho. (See pages 3-5 for Articles on the Conference.)

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UCN Election Results

Here are the preliminary UCN election results:
(Results will be official when the UCN Executive Board accepts them at the April 11, 2008 UCN meeting.)

UCN President - Gaylea Manning

UCN Vice-President/Treasurer - Jennifer Tartan

UCN Vice-President/Communications - Steve Fargan

NSEA Board, Region A - John Kiley

Representative Assembly Delegate Region A - Gaylea Manning

Representative Assembly Delegate Region B - Steve Fargan

Representative Assembly Delegate Region C - Curtis Ferlisi

UCN would like to thank all of the candidates who ran and also thank all of the members who voted in the election.

New Salary Schedule and Other Benefits for Humboldt County Teachers

After ten months of negotiations, three mediation meetings and just two weeks away from arbitration, the HCEA settled their contract disputes. One of the changes that members will see is an added Step 25 to the salary schedule. There was also an increase of 4% to the salary schedule for 2007-2008 and a 2% salary increase for the 2008-2009 school year. In addition, teachers will be paid \$25.00 and hour for up to ten hours for work performed to ready their work area at the beginning of each school year. The association was also able to clean up some language and stand firm against contract language changes that the district wanted. The association was also successful in negotiating language for a sick leave bank.

HCEA and HCSSO Develop a Sick Leave Bank for Humboldt County Employees

As part of negotiations this year, the Humboldt County Education Association and the Humboldt County Support Staff Organization met with Humboldt County School District to develop a sick leave bank for their employees. They quickly were able to frame what their sick leave bank would look like and iron out all the details. The committee is anxious to bring it to their respective members for ratification in April. "We feel that we have designed extra added insurance for our members by developing the sick leave bank," Nancy Heredia, HCEA President explained.

2008 Pacific Regional Conference

By Steve Fargan, UCN Vice President/Communications

I attended the NEA Pacific Regional Leadership Conference in Boise, Idaho, the weekend of February 15-17, 2006.

On Friday night I thoroughly enjoyed listening to the keynote speaker, NEA President, Reg Weaver, with his motivational speaking style, addressing all of those in attendance and getting us off to a great start.

On Saturday I attended three sessions. Two sessions were held Saturday morning and one session was held Saturday afternoon.

The first session I attended on Saturday morning was "Campaign 2008: We Elect to Impact the Future." This session had two presenters from NEA, John Outcalt and Mary Jane Cobb. I was impressed with the amount of effort and the attention to detail that NEA is putting forth in the upcoming Presidential, Congressional, and Gubernatorial races.

"ESEA Update: Will "No Child Left Behind" be Left Behind?" was the second morning session I attended. This session had three presenters, Theresa Montaño, NEA Director, Higher Education, California, Joel Packer, director, NEA Education Policy and Practice, and Becky Pringle, chair, NEA ESEA Advisory Committee. They went over the efforts put forth by NEA concerning the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the reasons why it may not be done until after the 2008 election, and addressed questions and concerns from the members in attendance.

Saturday afternoon I attended "Using Read Across America as a Member Organizing Tool." This session had three presenters, Janice Auld, NEA Board of Directors, California, Anita Merina, NEA Public Relations, and Karle Warren, NEA Board of Directors, Washington. This session was full of great ideas, resources and participants sharing activities they have had success in. We also received many Dr. Seuss items. I used and shared many of these during my Read Across America school visits in Lyon County on Monday, March 3rd.

On Sunday morning I attended the NEA Legislative Hearing. During this hearing I submitted the following request:

I would appreciate hearing back from NEA about the effects of the Obey/Porter Act (requiring "scientific" research-based reading programs in Title I schools.) I am greatly concerned when the companies (i.e. Success For All, etc.) receive federal funding to provide research on the effectiveness and selection of programs while they ALSO sell these programs that are often paid for with federal funds. This is a conflict of interest that needs to be addressed.

I also met and had discussions with many other teachers from the eight states of the Pacific Region throughout the weekend.

I appreciate the opportunity I was given in being able to attend the NEA Pacific Regional Leadership Conference. I would be happy to share more details about the conference with interested teachers.

2008 Pacific Regional Conference

By Lori Sundblad, Lyon County Education Association, Association Representative

I had a wild time in touring Boise, the conference of course. I met many people and had many interesting conversations. One meeting session I attended was, "Can't We All Just Get Along? Understanding the Generations," by Kimberly Anderson. Most of her information was from William Strauss's work.

We began with a discussion about text messaging. What is the world coming to...? No actually we discussed the various forms of text messaging which have been around for years; personalized license plates and a book by William Steig (1961) "C D B!" were two good examples. This messaging isn't new, just a different form!

In case you are wondering what generation you are from, I will give you a brief breakdown: Baby Boomers (1943-1960), Generation X (1961-1981) and Millennial (1982-?). There are many others but this ought to cover most of us! Boomers are craft idealists, individualists that resist authoritarianism. Boomers may complain about their jobs, but consider dissatisfaction as part of the deal. Work is a life mission. The educational endowments boomers are known for are accountability, zero tolerance in schools and small learning communities.

Meanwhile Xers see work as a means to a life mission. They do not waste time complaining, but start sending out their resumes! They adapt to changes in culture, family and society. Xers want you to tell me what you want and I will get you there my way. This group's educational endowments are school choice, home schooling, multimedia technologies and multicultural melting pots. They are skeptics that are comfortable with change!

Last but not least is millennial generation who are beginning to join the work force. They are from the most child-centric time in our history. As a result they display a great deal of self-confidence. They like to work collaboratively, creatively, promote values and protect and enhance children. Work is discovery or nothing! They prefer instantaneous feedback. They have no educational endowments yet—give them time!

I think I could have looked over the varying views of the generations for a much longer period than an hour and a half but they kicked me out of the room! We all are working together in the workforce, understanding the various generations and their thinking could be invaluable. History creates generations because younger people are shaped by events; generations create history because older people direct the course of events! We are all in this together, arrgghh.

2008 Pacific Regional Conference

By Val Friskey, Lyon County Education Association Vice President

As usual, there were a lot of excellent speakers at the Pacific Regional in Boise this year. One of the keynote speakers on Saturday was Dr. Donna Beegle, a National Poverty Expert from experience and research.

Here are a few of the facts she shared with us. Although some progress has been made in lessening the educational barriers of race, gender, geography and religion, according to research from 1993, poverty is the one barrier that has not even been partially overcome.

Often students of poverty believe that outsiders perceived poverty to be their fault. They often felt that elementary and high school teachers didn't care. Most had not had any teachers who had protected them or reached out to them. The children felt their teachers "didn't know what to do with kids like them."

Mentor support early in life was linked with those who were more likely to obtain a college degree. Some suggestions given besides mentors were:

1. Rethink homework assignments. Asking a single mom with a sixth grade education and three children to spend an hour reading or helping with homework is unrealistic.
2. Suspend judgment of parent behavior.

Submit an article for the next UCN Newsletter

Are you an aspiring novelist, writer of short stories, or do you just have a message to get out? Please submit an article for the next UCN Newsletter.

Submit your articles to:

Steve Fargan
UCN Newsletter Editor
3675 Slate Road
Wellington, NV 89444

Or

Email: contact@ucn-nv.org

Upcoming Events

NSEA Human Civil Rights Awards Banquet

Thursday, April 10, 2008

Peppermill Hotel, Reno, NV

NSEA Minority Leadership Training/Diversity Conference

Friday, April 11, 2008

Peppermill Hotel, Reno, NV

UCN Meeting

Friday, April 11, 2008, 4:30 P.M.

Peppermill Hotel, Reno, NV

NSEA Delegate Assembly

Friday, April 11 - Sunday April 13, 2008

Peppermill Hotel, Reno, NV

NEA Representative Assembly

Tuesday, July 1 - Saturday July 5, 2008

Washington DC

UCN Meeting

Wednesday, July 30

Minden, NV

WEA/UCN Summer Leadership Conference

Wednesday, July 30, Thursday, July 31, and Friday August 1, 2008

Minden, NV