

# The Review

Winter 2013

## FLY Celebrates, Meets with Governor

By Shelly Maes, Manager of Member Services, [shelly.maes@swsc.org](mailto:shelly.maes@swsc.org)

On Wednesday, November 8th, over 70 board members and superintendents from the 25 flexible learning year (FLY) schools gathered in Tracy to celebrate the successes of the FLY consortium. Keith Kottke, superintendent at Springfield Public Schools, welcomed the group and highlighted some of the big accomplishments of the consortium, including the development of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), creation of new teacher mentoring programs, and the high quality staff development that has been offered to teachers in all districts. Following a dinner, the attendees were treated to Show and Tell time by teachers from three school districts in the FLY consortium.

Teachers Sherri Seifert and Deb Reinarts from Sleepy Eye Public Schools talked about the Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) that are in place in the area of science as a result of the FLY. Science teachers across many school districts have worked together to develop teaching grids on the essential learning standards for biology, to identify key benchmarks as a focus for teaching, and to develop activities and assessments all schools could implement.

Jamie Steffl and Amanda Mathiowetz from Redwood Area Schools spoke about how membership in the art cross district PLC has created a much more purposeful student learning experience. A wiki was created where many things are shared—lessons, learning targets and teaching gems for student engagement and learning.

Melany Wellnitz from Luverne Public Schools spoke to the group about the benefits of the high quality professional development (the nationally known speakers) brought in for staff development days for all consortium staff. Wellnitz was a self-proclaimed homework checking and grading machine and felt that if the students completed the homework, they understood what she was teaching them. As a result of the professional development, she changed her ways for the 2012-13 school year and is no longer grading homework (and she notes that the kids are still doing it!). She now has 10 extra minutes in each class to reteach, provide more hands on instruction, and to take time to make sure individual students are really getting it.

On Friday, October 12th, the FLY Superintendents met with Governor Mark Dayton at the SW/WC Service Cooperative in Marshall. The group spent over an hour highlighting the many successes of the 25 school district consortium and answering questions from the Governor. All felt the meeting went well and were very appreciative of the Governor's time that afternoon.



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*The Review*, a publication of  
the SW/WC SC, is published  
three times per year.  
Editor: Shelly Maes

## News from the Executive Director

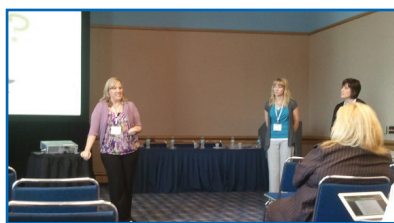
By Cliff Carmody, Executive Director, [cliff.carmody@swsc.org](mailto:cliff.carmody@swsc.org)

Welcome to the winter edition of the SW/WC Service Cooperative Review!

Professional, personable, highly skilled and educated are all adjectives that describe the staff and consultants at SW/WC SC! We are extremely proud of the individual and collective success of the staff who serve our members. Here are some recent staff highlights:

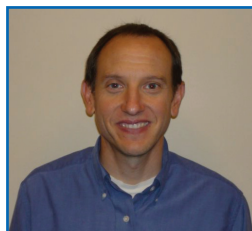


**Jackie Budden, Mary Margaret-Mathers, and Tammy Stahl** were selected to pres-



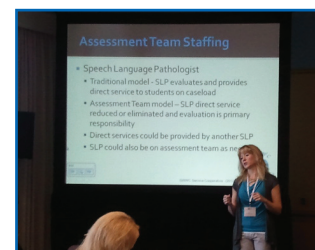
ent at the national Association of Educational Service Agencies this past December. Sharing their expertise on a national stage is a great honor and

demonstrates the level of skill they have achieved; competence that is shared every single day as they work with our school districts.

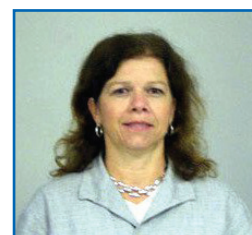


**Garry Wickerd**, is now

Dr. Garry Wickerd! Garry received his doctoral degree recently demonstrating his commitment to furthering his knowledge and skills. Dr. Wickerd joins a number of other staff at SW/WC SC who have a doctoral degree. SW/WC SC has a significant number of staff with advanced degrees; not only because of the requirements for licensure, but also because of the highly motivated staff who work on behalf of our members. This is a huge accomplishment and very sincere congratulations go out to Garry!



I have tried hard to make a point to share staff successes at the SW/WC SC Board meetings. Every day someone is going "above and beyond" to provide high quality service! At the January meeting, I shared the work of **Marilyn Labat** who was recognized by MSBA in a letter stating how nice it was to work with her on a recent conference we hosted for them. This is a great example of the kind of people working for our agency.



A few examples, but there are many more to share! Too often, I don't take the time to highlight staff accomplishments or say thank you for the work they do every day! Today, I want to acknowledge all of the staff at SW/WC SC and say thank you for their commitment to serve our members!

# Risk Management Services

## If You Haven't Been Vaccinated, It's Not Too Late! BCBS FluStop Program

By Kari Bailey, Health Cost Management Coordinator; kari.bailey@swsc.org



FluStop helps employers provide seasonal flu shots to employees at the workplace. (If you're an individual member, please call the customer service number on the back of your member ID card to learn where you can get a flu shot.)

### Why host a clinic?

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), an annual seasonal flu vaccine is the best way to reduce the chances that you will get seasonal flu and lessen the chance that you will spread it to others. A 2011 survey showed the workplace as the second most common place of vaccination (behind a doctor's office) for adults 18-64 years old. The CDC recommends everyone 6 months and older get vaccinated each year to provide the best protection against influenza throughout the flu season.

### How to set up a clinic

For information on how to choose a provider and schedule a clinic for your Minnesota-based members, see the list of participating providers and tips for a successful clinic on our website. If you have employees that live outside of Minnesota and want to schedule an onsite FluStop clinic, please contact us at [flustop@bluecrossmn.com](mailto:flustop@bluecrossmn.com). Refer to our FAQ for answers to your questions. [https://www.bluecrossmn.com/Page/mn/en\\_US/health-support-flu-stop](https://www.bluecrossmn.com/Page/mn/en_US/health-support-flu-stop).

## Influenza and Stomach Flu: What's the Difference?

By Deb Hermann, Marshall Public Schools

### Influenza - Upper **Respiratory Virus**

Influenza or "the flu" is caused by viruses in the RESPIRATORY tract. This is an airborne/direct contact virus. Cough into your shoulder or use a Kleenex.

Symptoms may include:

- o Rapid onset of fever (over 100.0)
- o Chills
- o Non-productive cough
- o Extreme exhaustion/tiredness/weakness
- o Sore Throat
- o Runny Nose
- o Headache
- o Body aches



### Stomach flu - **Gastrointestinal Virus**

Influenza or "stomach flu" is caused by viruses in the GASTROINTESTINAL tract

Symptoms of the stomach flu may include:

- o Diarrhea - there may be blood or mucus in the stool
- o Nausea
- o Stomach pain
- o Vomiting
- o Fever



# Special Education Services

## A Journey in Service Design Thinking

By Dr. Mary Palmer, Senior Director of Special Education Services, [mary.palmer@swsc.org](mailto:mary.palmer@swsc.org)



This past fall the SW/WC Service Cooperative received notice that the funding for the Low Incidence Projects may receive a 10% cut in funding for the 2012-13 school year. To date, we have not yet received final confirmation of the proposed cuts. As a result of these possible cuts, five staff members from SW/WC Service Cooperative have been reviewing the current funding practices and programming aspects of the low incidence projects. The staff members include Cliff Carmody, Executive Director; Tammy Stahl, Director of Special Education; Karin Marquardt, Vision Specialist; Garry Wickerd, Autism and Behavior Specialist; and myself.

It was at this same time that several service cooperatives from Minnesota decided to ask Dr. Susan Leddick to assist them in designing or redesigning various projects each of the service cooperatives were initially developing or projects that were in need of revamping. Dr. Leddick is a consultant in organization design and improvement and President and Senior Consultant for PKR, Inc. What makes her skills unique is that she is one of a handful of consultants in the United States who pioneered the translation of quality management methods from business to education.

We believed that Dr. Leddick had the know how to assist us in determining if the Low Incidence Projects in their current capacity were still viable, effective and efficient. Throughout this current year, we have had the opportunity to work directly with Dr. Leddick on a “redesign” of the low incidence projects which we hope to have ready for staff and our member districts to view in early spring. Our work has used the practices and processes of service design thinking.

The first question we had was, “What is service design thinking?” According to Marc Stickdorn and Jakob Schneider, 2010, who are two pioneers in service design thinking, if you would ask ten people what service design thinking was, you would get eleven different answers – at least. It is an interdisciplinary approach that combines different methods and tools from various disciplines. They go on to say it is an evolving approach with several definitions. According to Richard Buchanan, 2001, that is one of the greatest strengths about service design thinking. He says that because those involved in the process have not settled on a single definition it challenges us to continue to make inquiries about designing products and services and that those fields in which definition is a settled matter tend to be lethargic, dying or dead fields.

According to Stefan Moritz, 2005, service design helps innovate or improve services to make them more useful, usable, and desirable for clients as well as effective for organizations. It is a new holistic, multidisciplinary, integrative field. Birgit Mager, 2009, says service design aims to ensure service interfaces are useful, usable and desirable from the client’s point of view and effective, efficient and distinctive from the supplier’s point of view. Thirty-one Volts Service Design, 2008, defines it as when you have two coffee shops right next to each other and each sells the exact same coffee at the exact same price, service design is what makes you walk into one and not the other.

In 2010 Mark Stickdorn said since there is not a single definition, there are five principles to guide people that outline the way of thinking required to design services. The five principles include:

1. User-Centered – the services should be experienced through the eyes of the customer.
2. Co-Creative – all stakeholders should be included in the process.
3. Sequencing – services should be visualized as a sequence of interrelated actions.
4. Evidencing – services that are intangible should be visualized by physical artifacts.
5. Holistic – the entire environment of the service should be considered.

As part of the work we are doing with the assistance and guidance of Dr. Leddick, we have learned various methods and tools to use in the process of redesigning the low incidence services. One method relating to sequencing involved determining the touchpoints. Service design thinking requires us to deconstruct the service process we are studying into single touchpoints and interactions during the pre-service period, service period, and post service period. The purpose of this activity was to see how the service is delivered at various phases during the delivery and to whom it impacts. This activity was quite an eye-opener for our team in that we discovered what we thought was an easily accessible part of our cooperative website was in fact not easily accessible and in some cases not accessible at all.

(Continued on page 5)



## Service Design Thinking (continued from page 4)

Another tool we have explored and used is Personas. A user persona required us to look at the stakeholders and force ourselves into the life of a typical stakeholder so as to investigate and describe his or her personal and business situation as it currently relates to the low incidence services and how it will relate in the future. We created three personas to help us better understand the needs, views, and interactions the stakeholders of the low incidence services have. The three personas included a superintendent from a small school district, a parent of a student with ASD from one of the member districts, and a special education teacher in one of our districts. This activity was an eye-opener in that it let us be submerged into their world and gain a deeper understanding of their needs.

Our hope is that by the end of this process, we will have a redesign of the low incidence programs that will better serve our member districts in an efficient and effective way. It is also our hope that those of us who have had this unique opportunity to participate in this process will be able to help others within our organization utilize the service design methods and tools when either developing a new endeavor or studying a current one to see if we can make it better for our member districts. It has been an interesting journey to date as service design thinking really makes one step outside of his/her current comfort zone and look at unique possibilities. It is an ever evolving endeavor that helps those of us involved in the process continue to grow and question why we do things the way we do and to see if perhaps there might be a better way to do something that will be of benefit to the stakeholders.

## BLC Celebrates 10 Years

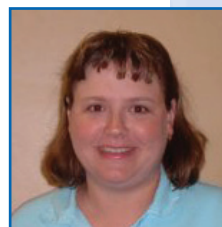
*By Susie Terhaar, Site Coordinator, [susie.terhaar@swsc.org](mailto:susie.terhaar@swsc.org)*

“The Belview Learning Center is going to make a difference.” —Quote from *The Redwood Gazette*, September 18, 2003.

The start of the 2012-13 school year marked the beginning of the 10th year serving students for the Belview Learning Center (BLC). What initially began as an idea to utilize the empty school building in the small town of Belview has grown to a thriving program serving students experiencing special educational needs and behavior and mental health issues.

**From Humble Beginnings...** An idea was proposed in the spring of 2003 to place a day treatment center in the former Belview School building. The hope was to provide an educational setting which could offer mental health services and serve as a transition stop for middle school and high school students returning to their homes from residential placements. Just a few short months later, the BLC opened its doors with five employees and seven students. Many people and organizations came together to make the day treatment program a reality. The Redwood County Collaborative provided valuable start-up funds and oversight for the program. Several area counties – including Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Redwood, Renville and Yellow Medicine – also provided their support and start-up funds. SW/WC Service Cooperative was contracted as fiscal host for BLC, and Greater Minnesota Family Services provided mental health services when the program began. The Community of Belview supported the program from the beginning, providing everything from snow removal and lawn maintenance to monetary donations to volunteers for various projects.

*(Continued on page 6)*



Belview Learning Center students and staff celebrate the holiday with a family-style meal in December.

## Protect your ears. You can damage your hearing & gain an unwanted friend, tinnitus!

By Sharyce Baartman, Audiologist, [sharyce.baartman@swsc.org](mailto:sharyce.baartman@swsc.org)



### What is tinnitus and what causes it?

Tinnitus is the medical term for the perception of sound in one or both ears or in the head when no external sound is present. It is often referred to as ringing in the ears, although some people hear hissing, roaring, whistling, chirping or clicking. Tinnitus can be intermittent or constant and its perceived volume can range from subtle to shattering. The exact physiological cause or causes of tinnitus are not known. There are, however, several likely sources, all of which are known to trigger or worsen tinnitus.

- Noise exposure - Exposure to loud noises can damage and even destroy hair cells, called cilia, in the inner ear. Once damaged, these hair cells cannot be renewed or replaced. Noise is the leading cause of tinnitus and our world has gotten progressively noisier. Noise is in abundance not only in recreational situations like concerts and sporting events, but many face extreme noise on-the-job. Firefighters are one of the many emergency service personnel at risk for developing tinnitus.
- Head and neck trauma - Physical trauma to the head and neck can induce tinnitus.
- Certain disorders, such as hypo- or hyperthyroidism, Meniere's disease, Lyme disease, fibromyalgia, and thoracic outlet syndrome, can have tinnitus as a symptom. When tinnitus is a symptom of another disorder, treating the disorder can help alleviate the tinnitus.
- Certain types of tumors
- Wax build-up
- Jaw misalignment
- Cardiovascular disease
- Ototoxicity - Some medications are ototoxic, that is, the medications are toxic to the ear. Other medications will produce tinnitus as a side effect without damaging the inner ear.
- Pulsatile tinnitus - Rare type of tinnitus that sounds like a rhythmic pulsing in the ear, typically in time with one's heartbeat. This kind of tinnitus can be caused by abnormal blood flow in arteries or veins close to the inner ear, brain tumors or irregularities in brain structure.

### How many people have tinnitus?

50 million people in the United States experience tinnitus to some degree. 16 million have it severe enough to seek medical attention and about 2 million are so debilitated that they cannot function.

### Can anything be done to treat and manage my tinnitus now while we all wait and hope for a cure?

Yes, there are tinnitus management strategies that are available to tinnitus sufferers. One of the most effective forms of therapy for tinnitus patients is what's called sound therapy. However, it is important to note that these options do not work for everyone and do not work to the same degree for each patient.

## Belview Learning Center (continued from page 5)

**Continued Growth...** The BLC has expanded over the years in response to the needs of the area school districts. As enrollment numbers increased, additional education and mental health staff was added. In the fall of 2006, the program expanded to include elementary students, thus making BLC a facility serving K-12 students. In February 2011, a behavior program was added to serve students experiencing educational and behavioral issues. Today, the BLC has 14 employees and serves 17 students in the therapeutic program and 9 students in the behavior program.

**Unique Opportunities for Students...** Over the years, BLC has provided many unique opportunities for students. Students have had the option to be part of a summer mental health program, which focuses on social skills and maintains the continuity of therapy during the summer months. Students have also visited with residents at Parkview Nursing Home and have dined with Senior Citizens when BLC shared their cafeteria with the Belview Senior Dining Program. Most recently, the students have experienced a traditional holiday meal at Thanksgiving and Christmas. All of the students and staff gather around one long table in the cafeteria and feast on a wonderful meal prepared by the BLC Food Service Manager. This family-style sit down meal is truly an event some of the students have never experienced.

Over a hundred students from dozens of school districts have attended the BLC over the past ten years, and YES, the program has made a difference in the lives of these students and their families. The BLC administration and staff will continue to look for innovative ways to meet the needs of the students and the area school districts as we look forward to the next ten years.

# Teaching and Learning Services

## School Crisis Response Team Receives SWIF Grant

By Shelly Maes, Manager of Member Services, [shelly.maes@swsc.org](mailto:shelly.maes@swsc.org)

The SW/WC School Crisis Response Team has been awarded a \$4,000 grant from the Southwest Minnesota Initiative Foundation. This grant award will allow the team to conduct training with Dr. Dan Casey for newly recruited team members. The Team is a voluntary partnership between school districts in southwest and west central Minnesota and the SW/WC Service Cooperative. The entities will work together to lessen the impact of traumatic stress for schools and districts. The partnership helps ensure schools have coordinated, on-site support provided to those affected by traumatic events. The team works with crisis teams and the crisis plan already in place by school districts, but team members are specially trained by standards set by the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF) to respond to school crisis. The team began in January of 2011 when 34 people, representative of the 18 county region, were trained by Dr. Casey. A second training was held in October of 2011 to train additional team members, and a third training is scheduled to be held on February 1, 2013, to further expand our team and maximize the support we can offer to member districts. The team is comprised of trained individuals who are either mental health professionals or licensed support team members from the SW/WC Service Cooperative region. The team provides support to students and staff in schools and districts through the facilitation of debriefings, defusing and Crisis Management Briefings. All trained members follow the protocol of the CISM (Critical Incident Stress Management) model. For more information about the team, contact Jen Mahan-Deitte at [jen.mahandeitte@swsc.org](mailto:jen.mahandeitte@swsc.org) or Brian Skogen at [brian.skogen@canbylancers.org](mailto:brian.skogen@canbylancers.org) or visit [www.swsc.org/cism](http://www.swsc.org/cism).

## Another Option for an End-of-Year Field Trip – Send Students to the Science & Nature Conference!

By Sue Gorecki, Student Activities Coordinator, [sue.gorecki@swsc.org](mailto:sue.gorecki@swsc.org)

Looking for options for an end-of year field trip for your students? If so, consider sending them to the 19th Annual Science & Nature Conference on May 15, 2013. This conference is for students in grades K-8 with strands for K-2, 3-5, and 6-8. In addition to the keynote presentation by Lonnie Dupre, polar explorer and author, students attend three hands-on classes. Students select classes they are interested in attending from the wide variety of classes related to science, nature and technology offered by 30+ presenters.

Topics include kitchen chemistry, nature's nightlife, mysteries of Egypt, science magic, conservation exploration, zoo careers, all about animals, aviation, strange creatures of Minnesota, rocket blast off, geocaching, grossology, stargazing, cryogenics, a world on thin ice, and planetarium shows on flight adventures and myths and misconceptions about astronomy plus many more!

If your field trips are already set for this year, consider sending interested students to the conference. We appreciate any assistance you provide in getting information to parents so they can register their child on their own if your school is not participating. Watch for brochures in the mail around February 20 and also check our website around that date: [www.swsc.org/studentactivities](http://www.swsc.org/studentactivities), then click on Science & Nature.

Our Conference for Young Writers was held on January 10 with eight districts sending from 30 to 119 students and five more districts sending between 20 to 30 students. We appreciate everyone's support of the student conferences (districts and parents) as without that participation we wouldn't be able to continue to provide these conferences. The more participants we have, the more presenters we contract with which results in a wider variety of classes. Our largest Science & Nature Conference drew 1425 participants!

Early Bird Registration Deadline – March 27

Final Registration Deadline – April 3.



If you have questions  
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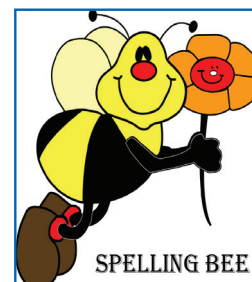




## Several Levels of Spelling Bees

By Sue Gorecki, Student Activities Coordinator, [sue.gorecki@swsc.org](mailto:sue.gorecki@swsc.org)

Schools are presently busy holding spelling bees. There could be several levels – classroom, school, and district bees, depending on the size of the district. All local bees need to be completed by January 30 with regional participants registered with the SW/WC Service Cooperative by that date also. The Regional Spelling Bee will be held on February 12, 2013 at the Redwood Area Community Center in Redwood Falls. If needed, the snow date is February 13.



The top four students from the Regional Spelling Bee will advance to the Multi-Region State Spelling Bee on February 26, 2013 in Fergus Falls. These students will compete with students from four other service cooperatives for a chance to advance to the National Spelling Bee in Washington, DC. Good luck to all students at the Regional Spelling Bee and also to the students who will represent the SW/WC Service Cooperative area on February 26.



## JH Knowledge Bowl Competitions Held

By Sue Gorecki, Student Activities Coordinator, [sue.gorecki@swsc.org](mailto:sue.gorecki@swsc.org)

102 teams from 37 districts participated in the Junior High Knowledge Bowl Program. Region 6 schools included: ACGC, Benson, BOLD, Canby, Central MN Christian, Community Christian, Dawson-Boyd, Glencoe-Silver Lake, Holy Trinity, Hutchinson, Lac qui Parle Valley, Lester Prairie, MACCRAY, Montevideo, New Century Academy, New London-Spicer, Ortonville, Willmar, and Yellow Medicine East. Region 8 schools included: Adrian, Cedar Mountain, Fulda, Hills-Beaver Creek, Holy Redeemer, Jackson County Central, Lakeview, Luverne, Marshall, Marshall Area Christian, Minneota, Murray County Central, Pipestone Area, Redwood Area, Tracy, Wabasso, Westbrook-Walnut Grove, and Windom.

Two sub-regional events were held with the schools placing in the top half advancing to the regional competition. Pictured are the top three teams from each event.



1st –  
Willmar #1

Jan. 9th  
Regional



2nd –  
Ortonville  
#1



3rd – Willmar #2

### Jan. 4th Sub-Regional



1st – Ortonville #1



2nd – Willmar #2



3rd – Canby #1

### Jan. 6th Sub-Regional



1st – Marshall #2



2nd – Fulda #1



3rd – Marshall #1

## Schools Preparing to Host Authors and Illustrators

By Sue Gorecki, Student Activities Coordinator, [sue.gorecki@swsc.org](mailto:sue.gorecki@swsc.org)

Twenty-two schools are preparing to host an author or illustrator during upcoming residencies in April. The presenters are Nancy Carlson, Rick Chrustowski, and Nancy Loewen. This program has been very popular with schools and student participation in this program has been from 3500 to 6200 students per year. This is a great opportunity for students to meet published authors and professional illustrators and learn about the process involved in getting a book to print.

Comments from last year's evaluations show why this is such a popular program:

"She did a wonderful job with both groups of kids. Engaging, energetic and fun! The kids loved her, especially when she read to them!"

"The consensus of the staff was that the presenter was among the best we ever had through the SW/WC Service Cooperative program. He did a great job being patient with kids who got a little silly and incorporating the silliness into the presentation. The students loved him and learned a lot about the process of writing in their time with him. The presenter made writing come alive for kids. His own inspiring story made it 'real' for students. They loved the interactive story creation activity. They left wanting more."

If you aren't already participating in this program, plan to do so next year. Contact me to make sure you get information on the program for 2013-2014.



Scan this QR Code to read more about ALL of our Student Activities

## Students Enjoy Trying Different Kinds of Art

By Sue Gorecki, Student Activities Coordinator, [sue.gorecki@swsc.org](mailto:sue.gorecki@swsc.org)

The "Southwest Minnesota Arts & Humanities Council" Conference for Young Artists was held on November 7 with 1,000+ participants. This was the largest Young Artists conference during the nineteen years that the event has been held! In addition to the keynote presentation by Katie McKy, students attended three hands-on classes that featured many different types of art. In one of the classes - Lights, Camera, Action - presented by Tim Bakken and other staff from Pioneer TV, students learned what goes into being on TV from scripting to lighting to running equipment to learning about digital media basics. Here is the link to view the video clips created during the class: <http://www.pioneer.org/youngartist.php>. The accompanying photographs show the students in action at the conference.

Nature's Art



Wheel Thrown Pottery



A Magnet for your Locker



Lights, Camera, Action!



The Legend of the Rainstick

## Senior High Knowledge Bowl Registration Deadlines Approaching

By Sue Gorecki, Student Activities Coordinator, [sue.gorecki@swsc.org](mailto:sue.gorecki@swsc.org)

The early bird registration deadline for Senior High Knowledge Bowl (SHKB) is February 1 with the final registration deadline on February 8. If your school is interested in starting a senior high program or you've changed coaches, please contact me to make sure you get the information you need.

Local school districts host invitationals prior to the sub-regional and regional events hosted by the SW/WC Service Cooperative. Most Region 6 invitationals are held on Saturdays with Region 8 invitationals held on Monday evenings. The schedule of competitions is listed below by region:

### Sub-Regionals

#### Region 6

March 1, 2013 - Canby - MN West

March 4, 2013 - Clara City - MACCRAY Public School

#### Region 8

March 8 - Jackson - MN West

March 12 - Marshall - SMSU

### Regionals

Region 6: March 18, 2013 - Clara City - MACCRAY Public School

Region 8: March 14, 2013 - Marshall - SMSU

State Competition - April 11-12, 2013 - Brainerd - Cragun's

Three teams from Region 6 and three teams from Region 8 advance to the state event.



## Imaginations Running Wild

By Jenny Kirk, Marshall Independent, Reprinted with Permission

The Southwest Minnesota State University campus was crawling with creativity Thursday as more than 800 students, presenters and parents came together for the 21st Annual Conference for Young Writers. The next budding author may have been among them. The SW/WC Service Cooperative conference featured 20 presenters, including keynote speaker Jonathan Friesen, who kicked off the event with an inspirational presentation.

"He made such a connection with everyone," said event volunteer Tom Hoff, career and technical project coordinator at the SW/WC Service Cooperative. "It was a very powerful presentation. When you're speaking to third-graders all the way up to adults, that's tough. But he did a great job." Friesen is an award-winning author and international speaker and storyteller who, because of Tourette Syndrome, was angry and ostracized as a teen. He's the author of five young adult novels. "I always said I'd never write or speak because speaking, you might look at me and mock my twitches, which were very pronounced when I was young, and writing, I couldn't keep my hand on the page," Friesen said. "Now, all I do is speak and write, and I get to travel the country. It went from a curse to a blessing."

During the presentation, Friesen said he wanted to let the kids know just how important their own stories were. Even more than that, he said he wanted to talk to the students about humanity in general. "We all have two core needs," Friesen said. "The first is: does anyone see us? The second one is: does anyone like what they see? It begins when we're young, as a 5-year-old saying 'Daddy, look at me. Mommy, look at me,' until we're 80 and we wonder if our kids are going to call or come see us today. Those two messages are so universal, and if you put them into your main character in your story, there's no one who is unable to connect with you. They're instant connectors."

(Continued on page 11)





## Imaginations Running Wild (continued from page 10)

There's much more to being an author than just writing, Friesen said, and to bring passion to your work, it helps to understand those core needs. "How many people do we see on a daily basis that are all asking the same thing?" he said. "We all have the same questions: how can we, as human beings, go through life exhibiting and exuding the answer, 'I see you and I like what I see.' So that's what I was trying to give them this morning."

While event organizers Andrea Anderson and Sue Gorecki do the "heavy lifting" to get ready for the conference, Hoff said, all three of them had the opportunity to view Friesen's YouTube video beforehand. "We knew he was going to hit a home run here," Hoff said.

Twenty-eight different school districts were represented at the conference Thursday, including eight districts that brought 30 or more students and five schools that brought 20 or more, organizers said.

Canby fourth-grader Jayla Hulzebos said she had an educational and enjoyable experience while she was at Gail Wood's "Seven Secrets to a Super Story" session. "I really like writing," Hulzebos said. "Me and my friends like writing stories and we thought it would be cool to go to this. (Wood) really helped me with getting ideas for stories and this paper will help me if I'm stuck on something." With strong projection and confidence, Hulzebos read aloud her newly-written dialogue between two characters. "That's a great springboard for a story," said Wood, who also encouraged the students to read their stories to friends, on the bus or wherever.

Students attended three different sessions throughout the day. While some students sat in a circle in a darkened room, talking about bone-rattling story writing with author Terri DeGezelle, others let their "imagination run like the wind" with author Michael Cotter. Murray Country Central students Macy Posthuma, Michelle Zenk and Ashley Hellewell attended Sonya Vierstraete's "Winter Wonderland of Snow Folks" session. "We're best friends," Posthuma said, putting an arm around Zenk. "We're signed up for the exact same ones," Zenk said. Along with Hellewell, a fourth-grader, the two fifth-graders created a snow character out of various sizes of marshmallows, pipe cleaners and edible accessories. "Her name is Angela," Posthuma said. Zenk named her snow character "Lily," while Hellewell referred to her creation as "Snowball." After finishing with the snow people, Vierstraete showed a small portion of a movie that was based on Raymond Briggs' book "The Snowman." Then she read from the book, leaving off shortly after the snowman came to life. "Think about what could happen next," Vierstraete said. Students were given paper and markers and directed to continue on with the story. Markers were used, students realized, because you can't erase with them. "It doesn't have to be perfect," Vierstraete said. "It's okay to misspell words if you're unsure, too. This is just the first draft in the process." When they were finished putting their imaginative thoughts to paper, students shared the stories with those sitting nearby.

"I love to write," E.C.H.O. Charter School fifth-grader Maddie Slettedahl said. "My favorite is writing scary stories." Slettedahl read her story to Brianne Barstad, a fourth-grader from Lincoln HI in Ivanhoe, and to Marshall fifth-grader Kary Devlieger. "I like to write funny stuff the best," Barstad said. Like the others, Devlieger said she also enjoyed creative writing. "I made up this character called Kaptain Awesome," she said. "I make up stories about her and draw her."



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507-537-2258

# Administrative Services

## MCCC 10-11 Data Deadline

By Barb Raske, Student/MARSS Specialist, [barb.raske@swsc.org](mailto:barb.raske@swsc.org)

Districts should be working on submitting their MCCC data for 10-11 now. The index file and calendar setup need to be the first steps in this process. The third and fourth steps are the staff file and the student file to follow. The deadline has been extended to February 15 to complete the 10-11 data. If your district is in the beginning stages of indexing your courses taught to students for the 10-11 year and need help, you can email the address below for assistance.

There are also documents and webEx tutorials that can be downloaded or watched at any time at the following link:  
<https://education.state.mn.us/MDE/SchSup/DataSubLogin/MCCC/index.html>

If districts have 10-11 MCCC completed they may start on 11-12 data for grades 9-12. In the near future MDE will be requesting districts to submit K-8 data.

Email address to contact for help/assistance: [mde.mccc@state.mn.us](mailto:mde.mccc@state.mn.us)



## Food Service Webinar Information

By Shareen Neumann, Sales and Marketing Specialist, [shareen.neumann@swsc.org](mailto:shareen.neumann@swsc.org)

How do you determine whether your school needs to bid your food service purchases? What bid law requirements are imposed by MDE Food and Nutrition Service and/or the USDA? Not in compliance, what are the repercussions?

Cooperative Purchasing recently hosted a webinar addressing these questions and more for our member districts. The webinar explained the food service procurement process as well as how a school can determine if MDE and/or USDA requires them to competitively bid their food service purchases, and if so, how they should go about it and what are the important dates they need to keep in mind.

If you would like more information or have any questions about the Food Service Procurement Process, please contact me at 507-537-2279 or by email.



## Nominate a Deserving Teacher!

By Shelly Maes, Manager of Member Services, [shelly.maes@swsc.org](mailto:shelly.maes@swsc.org)

The WEM Outstanding Educator Awards Program was created in support of teachers and their important role in helping all students achieve academically and seeks to bring recognition to the often “unsung heroes” who meet the challenges of teaching in a variety of settings. Synergy & Leadership Exchange, in partnership with the Minnesota Service Cooperatives, administers the award program. Teachers from MN public or non-public schools and educational institutions are eligible.

Nomination Deadline February 11th

Go to: [www.synergyexchange.org/Celebrate/WEM.aspx](http://www.synergyexchange.org/Celebrate/WEM.aspx)

### Previous Statewide Winners from our region (since 1999):

Tom Appel, Mountain Lake	Nate Henry, Pipestone
Mark Schliesman, MCC	Adeline Miller, Tracy
Jeff Voss, JCC	Kathleen Stalnaker, MACCRAY
Laura Bidne, JCC	Monica Villars, Willmar
Vicky Harris, GSL	Debi Pack, Marshall
Shirley Harrison, Luverne	Cheryl Retrum, MACCRAY

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## Tech Conference is Around the Corner

By Josh Sumption, Manager of Information Technology, [josh.sumption@swsc.org](mailto:josh.sumption@swsc.org)

We'll be "Flipping" at **This is IT<sup>2</sup>**, the 7th Annual SW/WC Service Cooperative Technology Conference on March 14 and 15, 2013! Flipping classrooms while transforming pedagogy



through the use of technology that is. This year's conference will feature keynote speaker Kari Arfstrom, a high school graduate from Willmar, Kari has had a distinguished career in working with K-12 educational priorities in Washington D.C. and is now the Executive Director of the Flipped Learning Network. The conference will also feature a panel discussion on flipped learning with panel members from schools throughout the Service Cooperative during our new Focus Sessions which will highlight our featured speakers.

**This is IT<sup>2</sup>** 2013 will feature over 50 sessions and workshops throughout the Pre-Conference on Thursday, March 14 from 4:00 to 7:00 PM and our main conference on Friday, March 15 from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM. Sessions will range from our keynote focus of flipped learning to the latest in social media, Web 2.0, digital safety, and technical sessions covering some of the latest innovations from the Silicon Valley and Redmond. Conference registration will be open in mid-February at which time the full details will be shared through our website, social media streams and Email distribution lists. You can also visit [www.swsc.org/techconf2013](http://www.swsc.org/techconf2013) to stay up to date on the latest developments as well as find some "flipped" resources to prepare for the conference!

## What is Aerohive?

Our relationship with Aerohive Networks continues to get stronger as Aerohive continues to be the industry leader in wireless technologies. Aerohive's strong focus and commitment to education really shows in both their affordability, scalability and ease of deployment. We now have 17 member school districts deployed with Aerohive Networks ranging from just a couple access points to create hotspots for mobile labs to complete wireless saturation to support 1 to 1 initiatives. With Aerohive, starting small does not limit you down the road, and best of all, through the SW/WC SC's Aerohive centralized management system, Hive Manager, schools have little to no startup costs apart from buying access points. See what all of the BUZZ is about and visit Aerohive in their **This is IT<sup>2</sup>** Conference Exhibit hall booth on March 15. You can also contact the following members of our IT Staff for information and pricing: Mike Carter at 507-537-2266 or Josh Sumption at 507-537-2265.



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Kari Arfstrom

[www.swsc.org/techconf2013](http://www.swsc.org/techconf2013)

Check it out!



## YME High School

By Al Reszel, Program Coordinator

In November we kicked off a new “Building Bridges - After School Program” with our recently obtained 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant. This 4-year grant will allow our District to offer a group of our 6th through 12th grade students an excellent after school opportunity to improve their academics, make connections with other students and faculty, and develop 21st Century life skills. The student activities are currently meeting after school Monday through Thursday, one Saturday a month and four weeks during the summer.

Some of our activities have included: Making homemade pizza, iPad movie making, Gingerbread Houses, Amazing Race, and a field trip to St. Cloud to see the play “A Christmas Carol”.

Upcoming activities planned include Fishing, Canoeing, Photography, Field trip to the Science Museum, Wii Tournament, and Bowling, just to name a few.

Student participation and engagement has been excellent and we look forward to an exciting winter and spring program.



## Peace Poster Contest Winner at MCC

By Mark Schleisman, MCC sixth grade teacher, Hadley Lions Peace Poster Chair

MCC sixth grader, Courtney Schmitz, won a Peace Poster Contest recently. She first won at the local level and then went on to hold the banner announcing that she was the District winner. Her poster has been sent onto the Multiple District contest. No results from that yet. The Peace Poster Contest has been sponsored by the Hadley Lions in cooperation with the MCC Schools for over 15 years.



## Youth Football Enjoying Inaugural Season

By Mike Freitag, Coach

Students in grades 4, 5 and 6 have been practicing and playing tackle football this fall thanks to a new program offered through Cedar Mountain Community Education. The boys have been practicing on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and have been playing games -vs- other area schools on Saturday mornings. Players are learning basic football fundamentals such as blocking & tackling and valuable teamwork skills. In all, 41 boys have taken to the gridiron this fall with 18 sixth graders and 23 fourth and fifth graders rounding out the roster. The young Cougars are part of the Little Six Youth Football Conference which is run by Tracy-Milroy. Other area schools

that the Cougars have played this fall include the following:

Wabasso, Tracy-Milroy, RTR, RRC, Redwood Valley, SESM, St. James, Minneota, and Murray County Central. The Cougars are coached by Head Coach Mike Freitag and assistant coaches Adam Kerkhoff, Dwane Jemmings, Bob Reynolds, Doug Mathio-wetz, Shawn Schmidt, Jason Schacher and Chad Nelsen.



## Red Rock Central Updates

### A Little C-P and R, By: MaKayla Meier

Thanks to an AgStar grant, this year's Red Rock Central sophomores will have the chance to become trained in CPR and first aid. One of Red Rock's school board members works closely with AgStar and recommended this program for our school. The RRC principal, Mr. Goetstouwers, along with one of the physical education/health teachers, Mr. Bartholomaeus, filled out an application to explain the use of the grant, which was accepted and a sum of \$2,200 was given to the school.

AgStar Financial Services is a cooperative, owned by client-stockholders. The AgStar Fund for Rural America was created to extend the organization's commitment to the agricultural community. This special grant program has helped Red Rock Central obtain CPR/first aid teaching equipment for students in the school.

### Stop Bullying, By: Katie Pederson

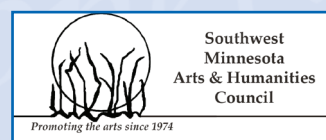
Let's talk about bullying. It really doesn't seem like a huge factor in our community, does it? Or do you just choose to ignore it? Camfel Productions challenged the students to think about their behavior on Monday, October 8th. To most of the people around here, it may not seem like there is any bullying going on at all. There is that sarcastic, "Pssh, nice hair today," that no one takes seriously. However, there are some people that do not quite understand that it is just a joke. There is also cyberbullying. No one admits to it, and online, there are ways to remain anonymous. It seems like everyone is on some type of social network, and cyberbullying is just as bad as verbal bullying. According to the National Child Safety Council, 42% of kids have been bullied online, and 58% of them never told their parents.

October is National Bullying Prevention month, and to help impact students of Red Rock Central, Camfel Productions brought a very effective movie to help the students understand that bullying is serious business. Many students definitely get the feel of the message due to the currentness of the presentation. It was a huge, three-screen projection in the auditorium with the latest music and movies all incorporated to help students relate to what it was saying. Students say, "It definitely gets the message across...it was very insightful. Hopefully kids keep up the positive attitude that they had when they first walked out of the auditorium." For an even greater impact, everyone in school wore orange on Wednesday, October 10th because it was Unity Day.

### RRC Receives SMAHC Grant, By: Chloe Arfsten

Every year, for the past thirty-eight years, Red Rock Central has hosted a jazz festival in the spring. The jazz festival is a time when jazz bands from schools around the area come together to perform for clinicians and better their skills in jazz music. In order to host the Lamberton Jazz Festival each year, RRC needs a large amount of money, but thanks to the Southwest Minnesota Arts and Humanities Council (SMAHC), it is more affordable to do so.

Hosting any large scale event, such as a jazz festival with many people involved, will generally cost a substantial sum of money; however, because of SMAHC's Arts in the Schools Grant Program, RRC will be hosting the 39th Annual Jazz Festival on Tuesday, March 26, 2013, with a bit more money. Each year, RRC applies for this grant in order to help pay for the clinicians. The clinicians are invited to help lead and mentor the jazz students in multiple group sessions. They also perform a concert for the students and other spectators at the end of the day. RRC was given \$2,500 this year and appreciates SMAHC for aiding the 39th Annual Jazz Festival!



# Professional Development

To register for any of these workshops, visit [www.swsc.org/workshops](http://www.swsc.org/workshops).  
Please check back often as workshops are frequently added.

*February-April*

- 2/1 Get "SETT" to Understand - Worthington
- 2/4 Distance Learning Meeting - Marshall and ITV
- 2/5 TIES Student User Group Meeting - Marshall
- 2/6 Regional 3rd Party Billing Informational Meeting - Marshall
- 2/6 Welding Training - Marshall
- 2/7 Technology Coordinator Workshop - Marshall
- 2/7 Flipped Classroom Series - Marshall
- 2/7 CPI ASD Refresher - Redwood Falls
- 2/8 MDE Principal & Teacher Evaluation Regional Meeting #2 - Marshall
- 2/8 DCD Networking - Marshall
- 2/11 iLearn Series Workshop #2 - Marshall
- 2/13 504 Planning - Principal Network Session #3 - Marshall
- 2/14 Google Apps in Classroom - Marshall
- 2/20 10th Annual School Law Seminar for School Administrators - Marshall
- 2/21 Effective Strategies for Responding to Bullying - Redwood Falls
- 2/25 Functional Behavior Assessment - Redwood Falls
- 3/5 New Superintendent Workshop - Marshall
- 3/6 Educator Growth & Evaluation Professional Development - Marshall
- 3/8 DCD Networking - Willmar
- 3/14 Technology Conference Pre Sessions - Marshall
- 3/15 Annual Technology Conference - Marshall
- 3/16 Renew Your License - Marshall
- 3/19 K-8 Math RtI Implementation - Marshall
- 3/19 30th Annual School Business Staff Conference - Marshall
- 3/23 iLearn Series Workshop #3 - Marshall
- 4/2 MDE Principal & Teacher Evaluation Meeting #3 - Marshall
- 4/4 SLP Practical Therapy Techniques - Redwood Falls
- 4/11 School Pool Annual Membership Meeting - Marshall
- 4/12 iLearn Series Workshop #4 - Marshall
- 4/25 Technology Coordinator Workshop - Marshall



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