

The *Nugget*

News from the Nevada County Superintendent of Schools office

September/October 2010

Holly Hermansen, Superintendent



The NUGGET to go ON-LINE

Publication of the *Nugget* is moving into the 21st century, taking a maiden journey into cyber-space. This is the final edition of the *Nugget* that will be printed and distributed to all education employees. The November issue of the *Nugget* will be sent electronically to office secretaries. Distribution methods will originate from that point. Secretaries will be requested to send the *Nugget* out electronically and to make limited copies for lunch/break rooms and for distribution to those employees who do not have access to the internet. The *Nugget* will also be archived on the NCSOS website at www.nevco.k12.ca.us. We hope you continue to utilize the *Nugget*, as the NCSOS believes it is a valuable tool to further awareness and opportunities in Nevada County's educational community.

News & Notes ...

Welcome Back to School

By Holly Hermansen

Nevada County Supt. of Schools



Welcome back to the 2010-2011 school year! There is no doubt that, as educators, we are facing significant challenges during these difficult years. There is an element of uncertainty and fear in not knowing how long the difficult fiscal issues will continue to impact our schools, our communities, and our personal lives. As I look back to last year at this time, we were talking about how educators were returning to work after the summer break to possibly one of the worst budget crisis in history. I'm sorry to have to write the second newsletter in a row with the same news. And with no state budget as of this writing, it looks like we are in for another long year of challenges in this area.

There is some good news though. Staff and students in Nevada County have come back to school reenergized, positive and enthusiastic. Every time I have a conversation with a teacher, administrator, parent or student and ask them how the start to the school year has been, they reply unanimously that it has been great. Despite the difficulties and uncertainties, we remain positive and excited about the year to come.

More good news: We recently received the results of a parent survey that was completed as part of our Safe Schools / Healthy Students initiative. The results show that the majority of parents understand the importance of their child attending school everyday, that they are highly involved in school

activities, and that their students feel safe at school. The survey has given us some valuable information to review and analyze in moving forward to improve parent involvement, school safety and culture, and student success.

The Phi Delta Kappa Gallup Poll recently released a report on "What Americans Said About Public Schools". Included in that report is the following:

- Americans value teachers. They believe they do a good job of educating children and recognize teachers are essential to our society and our future. Improving the quality of teachers should be a top national priority.
- The funding crisis is one of the top problems facing schools today.
- Americans believe a college education is necessary. A higher percentage than ever believe their children will go to college.

The entire report can be found at www.pdkpoll.org.

As always, in spite of the difficulties and challenges, educators, parents, and students have returned to the new school year with enthusiasm, excitement, and determination. That is why I have so much passion and respect for the business we are in - The education of our children. Have a wonderful year.

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Lori Davis
Nevada County
Teacher of the Year

2010-11 Teacher of the Year

Congratulations to the six school districts and each of their Teacher of the Year selections who participated in the Nevada County Teacher of the Year program for 2010-2011. The educational arena will honor these teachers with special recognition at the annual ACSA/NCSBA dinner on October 7.

Every district Teacher of the Year is a star. This year these rays of light are Robin Jacobson – Chicago Park School District; Camille Haughey – Deer Creek/NCSOS; Catherine Jones – Pleasant Valley School District; Veronica Ten Eyck – Ready Springs School District; Carolyn Cramer – Clear Creek School District; and, Grass Valley School District Teacher of the Year Lori Davis, who has been named as the Nevada County Teacher of the Year.

Nevada County Teacher of the Year Lori Davis has been with Grass Valley Charter School since its inception in 1994, which gave her the privilege of exploring school models and designs as the school developed its identity. Expeditionary Learning became the model for Grass Valley Charter. Long-term, meaningful expeditions and projects are a focus, along with adventure and service to the community. Lori has learned that “empowering teachers to do great things, accomplishes great things.” She has also reached the place in her teaching that she knows it is important to help other teachers. The following is a compilation of inspiring excerpts from Lori’s application. “Active and engaging learning expeditions are designed around California State Standards in Science and Social Studies. I am happy to see an emphasis on a student’s character returning to the educational arena. I believe that building a strong foundation of good character traits and values is equally, if not more important, than building a strong academic foundation. With creativity and freedom from their school district to try new and innovative

2010-2011 ACADEMIC TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

Geography: October 7 (Union Hill School)
Spelling: October 28 (Miners Foundry)
Writing: January 12 (Miners Foundry)
Math-Grades 5/6: January 26 (Miners Foundry)
Math-Grades 7/8: January 27 (Miners Foundry)
Speech: March 10: (Calvary Bible Church)
Speech Topic: “The Best Event in American History”
Contact: Bonnie Smart 470-8510 ext. 204

approaches to teaching and learning, teachers can change a trend of bored and apathetic learning environments to have a state full of motivated, enthusiastic learners. The key is in building a curriculum that teaches the standards through relevant project work that is meaningful and purposeful. When students are involved in real-life data collection, problem solving, service to their community/world, or in becoming active citizens, not only do they want to learn, they are motivated to work with others, cooperate, and work on multiple-drafts to produce quality work. I truly wish that more schools would embrace project-based learning. I believe test scores would rise; student apathy – diminish. Teachers are resourceful. Teachers know how to solve problems. Teachers know how to collaborate and put their heads together. After all, we are teachers.”

Lori’s application has been submitted to the California Department of Education for consideration as the 2010-2011 California Teacher of the Year.

Safe Schools Healthy Students (SSHS) Update

By Marina Bernheimer
Project Director

This is a partial overview of the Safe Schools Healthy Students (SSHS) curriculum component being implemented county-wide. The Nugget updates will highlight other aspects of the SSHS on a monthly basis.

The SSHS grant was funded in July 2009 and after a year-long planning period, we’re thrilled to begin implementing programs and curriculum throughout Western Nevada County. Many school districts are implementing SSHS-funded curriculum, including *Second Step*, *Steps To Respect* and *The Olweus Anti-Bullying Program*. These evidence-based programs focus on teaching empathy to students, anger

management, and resiliency; all of which contribute to classroom atmospheres that harbor fewer behavior problems and challenges, allowing teachers more time to focus on academic achievement.

Backed by research, the *Second Step* program is loved by teachers and kids worldwide because it’s fun and it works. Scripted lesson cards and DVDs lead to thought-provoking role plays, engrossing discussions, and positive results in the classroom. This program feels like play, but builds critical social and school-readiness skills that help young children achieve more and get along better with others. Child-friendly photo-lesson cards contain complete lesson scripts with ideas for group discussions, skill practice, and other activities.

The *Second Step* program for Grades 1–5 helps students develop strong bonds to school, solve problems without anger, and treat others with compassion. These social skills support academics and form the foundation for happy, healthy kids who are ready to learn and succeed.

The research-based *Steps To Respect* program teaches elementary students to recognize, refuse, and report bullying, be assertive, and build friendships. In fact, a recent nationwide study found that the program led to a 31 percent decline in bullying and a 70 percent cut in destructive bystander behavior.

Steps to Respect lessons can help kids feel safe and supported by the adults around them so that they can build stronger bonds to school and focus on academic achievement. And the program supports staff too, with school-wide policies and training. Now everyone can work together to build a safe environment free from bullying.

We are thrilled to offer training and curriculum to local schools to implement the *Olweus Bullying*

Prevention Program. Even with a school's best efforts, bullying can affect the safety and wellbeing of the entire student population. In order to stop bullying, it needs to be addressed at every level of a student's experience. That's why the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* is a whole-school program aimed at preventing or reducing bullying throughout a school setting.

The *Olweus Bullying Prevention*

Program is designed to improve peer relations and make schools safer, more positive places for students to learn and develop. Goals of the program include:

- Reducing existing bullying problems among students
- Preventing new bullying problems
- Achieving better peer relations at school

Schools across the country and around the world have experienced positive results from the *Olweus Bullying*

Prevention Program. And now, local teachers and schools in Nevada County are working with Safe Schools Healthy Students to implement this exciting, award-winning program in our local schools. We look forward to working with many of you as we implement these and other evidence-based programs for the next three years in support of students and families in Nevada County.

Trainings • Field Trips • Opportunities for All

Trainings

First Countywide 4th Grade Math Collaboration



This year a series of 4th grade math collaboration sessions have been coordinated by NCSOS and a countywide committee. The goal is to have every 4th grade

math teacher in the county attend, to be a true success for all. This year's 4th grade collaboration is just the beginning of our goal that will enable every elementary math teacher in the county to be informed and feel confident about effective practices at their grade level. At the culmination of each grade level series, teachers will be refreshed with new tools and understanding.

Sac. Co. Office of Edu. Director of Math Instruction Pat Duckhorn and the planning committee will facilitate the first 4th grade collaboration that focuses on multiplication and division. This session is scheduled for **October 14, 12:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.** one-half day substitute expenditures may be billed to NCSOS. Although there is no fee, it is necessary to register on-line at www.nevco.k12.ca.us. For more information call Judy at (530) 478-6400 ext. 208.

CPR & First Aid Training for 2010

The Nevada County Superintendent of Schools office offers training for MEDIC FIRST AID BasicPlus CPR, AED, and First AID. The Medic First Aid Infant and Child Supplement can be included following Adult CPR/First Aid that deals specifically with the treatment

of life-threatening events involving children.

To pre-register call 478-6400 x201. The \$30 fee must be prepaid to confirm your reservation. Additional information: www.nevco.k12.ca.us/teachers.

Upcoming class dates for 2010:

October 30	Saturday 9 - 1
November 6	Saturday 9 - 1
November 11	Thursday 3 - 7
December 18	Saturday 9 - 1

4th-5th-6th grade Science Olympiad

It's time to start planning the Nevada County Science Olympiad. Each school will have a minimum of one team with each team consisting of 12 students. There are a total of 16 events at the Olympiad with such competitions as A is for Anatomy, Mystery Architecture, Rock Hound, Zowie Metrics, and much, much more.

The first coaches meeting is November 3, 4:00 p.m. at the Pleasant Ridge School District office. All curious parties are encouraged to attend this informative meeting as an orientation to the program. The 4th-5th-6th grade Science Olympiad is scheduled for Saturday, May 7, 2011. For more information contact PRSD Superintendent Britta Skavdahl at (530) 268-2800.

Special Education Parents Advisory Committee (SEPAC) 2010-11 Video Presentation Series

The inspiring DVD by Dr. Libby Kumin 'What Did You Say? A Guide to Speech Intelligibility in People with Down Syndrome' looks at the importance of speech intelligibility and what makes clear speech challenging for people with Down Syndrome. Nevada County Speech Pathologist Rolf Keltner will present the video at NCSOS on Tuesday, Oct. 5, from

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., with an informal discussion to follow. This video series is designed for parents of students in Nevada County. RSVP: Randy McKean, 265-0611 x203 or email randy.cm@nevco.k12.ca.us.

The next video presentation is November 2 – *Getting Organized Work Habits*.

Field Trips

Tsi-Akim Maidu Indian Tribe Indigenous Peoples Day

Nevada County's local indigenous tribe, the Tsi-Akim (pronounced chi-ah-cum) Maidu, hosts an Indigenous Peoples Day event to coincide with Columbus Day. The event, designed for student field trips, affords an opportunity to learn about the origins, culture, and traditions of local and other indigenous tribes in an inspirational learning environment. The morning will include traditional language, dance, music, storytelling, and food.

This event takes place Monday, October 11, 10 a.m. – noon, Miner's Foundry Cultural Center. Although there is no charge to attend, teachers need to sign up by calling Stacy Prater-Vigil at 272-5994 ext.7.

www.indigenouspeoplesdays.org.

The Mud Hut at As.If Studios

The Mud Hut, formerly operated by NCSOS, is now a community ceramics center at As.If Studios, and provides a variety of classes for students and teachers, from 'Fire up the Fun' and 'Kids Clay for Home School students' to 'Practical Classroom Ceramics for Teachers'. For more information contact long time Mud Hut teachers: Denise Wey 477-7842 /

www.denisewey.com or Claudia Jeffers at 477-0128 / cjeffers@netshel.net.

50th Anniversary of Pulitzer Prize winning "To Kill a Mockingbird"

LeGacy Productions is proud to present Harper Lee's "To Kill a Mockingbird" at the historic Nevada Theatre October 8th – November 7th.

Director Tim O'Connor crafts this Pulitzer Prize winning novel and academy award winning 1962 film into a full impact drama that is renowned for its warmth and humor, despite dealing with the serious issues of racial injustice and the destruction of innocence. Prejudice and class distinction emerge as enemies of justice and truth as eight-year old "Scout" Finch tells of life in a small Alabama town where her father is a lawyer. The narrator's father, Atticus Finch, serves as a moral hero and a model of integrity.

Student matinees are scheduled for Oct. 15, 28 & 29 at 10 a.m. Tickets are \$10. The show has an optional Q/A session following. On the CDE site, the content of the novel applies to English-Language Arts/Writing & Hist./Social Science and appears on the CDE recommended reading list for 9-12 grade: sensitive subject matter.

Opening night, October 8, is a benefit performance for Grass Valley Schools Foundation. 100% of ticket and concession sales go directly to the foundation. Tickets are \$20.

Remaining performances are Fridays & Saturdays at 8 p.m., Thursdays October 14 & November 4 at 7 p.m., Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. on October 24, 31, and November 7. Tickets for all shows are \$18/advance and \$20/door. For reservations: (530) 268-5419 or on-line at www.legacypresents.com.

Opportunities for All

Art Docent Program 2010-2011

The Art Docent Program, coordinated county-wide by the NCSOS office, runs September 27 - June 10. Teachers and docents work with each other and share ideas so that docents have the opportunity to coordinate art projects with classroom lessons. Art docents should be notified to hold the date of November 9 for a hands-on

workshop, where they will enhance their knowledge of age appropriate art projects for your classroom. The workshop runs 9 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. for grades K-2 and noon – 2:30 p.m. for grades 3-6. For further information contact Judy Nielsen at 478-6400 x208 or judy@nevco.k12.ca.us.

Teacher's Appreciation Day at the Book Seller

Librarians, teachers, and school staff are invited to participate in the Book Seller's annual Teacher's Appreciation Day, Wednesday, October 27, 2010 from 9:30 a.m. – 7 p.m. All items in the store will be 20% off for school and personal purchases. For more information call 272-2131.

Earth Encounters: NCLT Fall Camp

The Nevada County Land Trust (NCLT) conducts a fall nature camp that explores Earth by using environmental and cultural education stations, wildlife watch, meadow adventures, games and music. Camp runs October 19-20-21. The program utilizes junior stewards, ages 13 to 18. Any interested youth are invited to apply on-line at www.nevadacountylandtrust.org. For further information contact Stacy Prater-Vigil at 272-5994 ext.7.

8th Annual EcoKids at Burton Homestead

EcoKids is an ecology-oriented fair. Stations are required to be hands-on activities for kids. All of the favorites will be there: the interactive nature sculpture, Audubon bird houses, the Dexter cow and calf, Water Ecology with Friends of Deer Creek, 4H presentations, Children's Haute Trash, and much more.

This year EcoKids takes place Sunday, November 7th at Burton Homestead (moved from the Imaginarium of Nevada County), noon – 4 p.m., \$1/kids and \$5/adults. For more information call Stacy Prater-Vigil, Nevada County Land Trust at 272-5994 ext.7 or Marge Kaiser, SNDEI at 265-6649.

KVMR Celtic Festival – YOUTH ARTS PROGRAM

This fall KVMR is launching its Youth Arts Program (YAP) as part of the 14th annual Celtic Festival. Workshops are with world-class artists in music, theatre, and dance.

The program is free and open to youth ages 10-18. Workshops will take place on

pre-festival day Friday, October 1. Youth who come to a workshop can purchase a \$5 (regular price \$17) one-day ticket to the festival day of their choice.

For more information or to pre-register online go to www.kvmr.org. Click on Celtic Festival - Youth Arts Program.

MUSIC in the MOUNTAINS presents...

Young Composers

The Young Composers program started Saturday, September 18. Late applicants are welcome to apply. This collaborative program between Music in the Mountains (MIM) and the Nevada County Composers Cooperative works with middle school thru college level students throughout the school year, with teachers Mark Vance and Jerry Grant. The program culminates with a concert featuring student works performed by professional musicians during the MIM Summer Festival. To have students apply go to: musicinthemountains.org.

Music Live

Since 2007 Music in the Mountains (MIM) has presented *Music Live*, bringing live classical music performances to Nevada County's K-8 schools, free of charge. A professional quintet provides 'Informances' (performing, demonstrating, and teaching) in school assemblies. *Music Live* is offered January thru May and is coordinated, in part, by the NCSOS office. For scheduling opportunities contact Judy Nielsen at 478-6400 x208.

Peers Performing 4 Peers

Music in the Mountains *Young Musicians* goes directly into Nevada County K-6 classrooms to perform January thru May, free of charge. The program consists of a live performance and question/answer period. The classroom environment allows students to interact with the young performers. Students seeing, hearing, and interacting with performing peers is an empowering event. To schedule a classroom visit call Mark Vance at 265-6173.

