

The Nugget – December, 2009

News from the Nevada County
Superintendent of Schools Office

NEWS & NOTES

Imaginarium facility temporarily closes, but programs continue in community

During its temporary closure (due to state earthquake safety issues), the Imaginarium will continue to offer various programs that can be conducted at school sites or other appropriate locations.

Already, Operations Manager Helena Heinzelman and Directory Judy Nielsen have “hit the road” making on-site school visits. They have taught the magnetism and electricity workshops for 4th and 5th grades, and astronomy-related activities for 3rd through 8th grades (satisfies 3rd/5th/8th grade curricula), in conjunction with the Imaginarium's celebration of the International Year of Astronomy.

These in-school, hands-on workshops can be set up in a school multi-purpose room or classroom. Each of six station stops is timed and has a hands-on activity. These workshops are popular with students and a great way to learn the science curricula.

Teachers who have booked field trips at the Imaginarium in 2010 will be contacted by Heinzelman to discuss various optional activities outside the museum building. In addition to the current programs, others will be developed.

Educators are encouraged to frequently check the Imaginarium's web site (www.imaginariumnc.org) or call the information line (478-6415) and business office (478-6400 ext. 231) to get the latest information on programs. The web site's "Educators" tab will be continuously updated as newly designed programs fall into place.

"We sincerely believe that with change comes opportunity," Nielsen said. "Thank you for your understanding and continued support during this exciting time. We at the Imaginarium love serving the children of Nevada County."

6th annual Nevada County Reads will focus on Japanese–American themes

The Nevada County Reads Committee has chosen the novel “Snow Falling on Cedars” by David Guterson as the 2010 book selection.

Now in its 6th year, Nevada County Reads is a countywide literary event involving schools, libraries, book reading groups, bookstores and the general public. It principally encourages reading and discussion of quality books. Students, teachers and other community members are encouraged to read and discuss “Snow Falling On Cedars,” which is geared for high schoolers and adults. The novel is a compelling account of a murder trial on an island in Puget Sound. It also deals with racial prejudice toward Japanese–Americans post World War II.

In conjunction with this Asian–American story, Nevada County Reads also encourages middle school students to read “Farewell To Manzanar,” an acclaimed memoir of the World War II internment camp experience written by Jeanne and James Houston. A book selection for elementary students will be announced

soon.

The Community Asian Theatre of the Sierra will stage an adaptation of the “Snow Falling On Cedars” for student audiences. (See story on Page 4.) NCSoS workshops for teachers related to Asian paper craft also are TBA.

The Nevada County Reads Committee encourages the community to consider purchasing the books for students as holiday gifts.

Nevada County Reads events will begin with a “Kick-Off” event Feb. 24 and continue through April.

Brain Buster Challenge is Feb. 6

Bitney College Prep High School is pleased to once again host the 4th annual Brain Buster Challenge Saturday, Feb. 6, 2010, at the Bitney College Prep campus. All county middle school programs have been invited to participate.

This unique event will pit 10 enthusiastic

teams of five middle school students in a friendly, fun, academic and problem solving competition. Spirit, teamwork, and sportsmanship form the nucleus of the event. Last year Seven Hills walked away with the winning trophy for the second straight year, while the “Smarticles” from Pleasant Valley School captured the Spirit Award.

Nevada County Superintendent of Schools Holly Hermansen will present the first place trophy to the winning team. All participants will be provided snacks, a T-shirt, and a “goodie bag.” Many local merchants participate in donating prizes and gifts.

Only 10 teams may participate. To sign up or get more info, call Principal Bruce Herring at 477-1235.

Bitney College Prep High School is at 135 Joerschke Drive in Grass Valley.

Student art show at Rood Center starts Feb. 24

Nevada County's largest student art exhibition, “Young At Art,” returns to the Rood Center March through May 2010. Teachers, art

instructors, art docents and others are invited to begin installing artwork on the Rood Center walls at 8 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 24.

Due to limited space and increasing participation, schools are encouraged to display student art Feb. 24–26, though some space may be available afterward. The Rood Center is open to the public from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. No space may be reserved and no art may be installed before 8 a.m. Feb. 24.

All public and private Nevada County schools may participate. Paintings, drawings, photography, collage and other two dimensional work may be hung on walls with staples, tacks and small nails. Informational flyers explaining the participation guidelines will be sent to schools and art docents soon.

For more info, contact show coordinator Paul Harrar at 478–6400 ext. 212.

Educators' 'Homework' to exhibit creativity

Current and recently-retired Nevada County school staff are invited to showcase

their creativity during the semi-annual exhibition “Homework: Recent Art By Nevada County Educators.” The show will take place March 1–June 3, 2010 at the Nevada County Superintendent of Schools Office.

The show will feature paintings, drawings, photography and mixed media two dimensional work. The show aims to honor the artistic efforts of teachers who struggle to create work in their limited spare time, but whose creativity also enhances their teaching practice.

“We have some very skilled painters, photographers and sculptors within the ranks of our school teachers. This is an opportunity for them to showcase their talent, and for the public to appreciate a different facet of educators they know in other ways,” said the show's curator, Paul Harrar, school arts liaison at the Nevada County Superintendent of Schools Office.

Informational flyers will be sent to schools soon. For more information, contact Paul at 478-6400 ext. 212.

Saluting New Readers excites students to read

Looking for a new way to motivate K–5 students to read? The local program “Saluting New Readers” videotapes students reading their favorite books and creates a TV show that makes kids the stars. The low-cost program, offered by local volunteer videographer Jerry Martin, has come to numerous Nevada County classrooms in the last decade. Last year it won a national award from the National Retired Teachers Association.

SNR is a two-hour, in-class program that requires no scripts, rehearsals, sets, costumes or special equipment. After practicing reading for several weeks prior to taping, students read for the camera then view themselves on TV.

The program creates intrinsic motivation to read and builds children's self-esteem.

For more information, contact Jerry at 477-6282 or check out the web site www.saluting-new-readers.org to read local teachers' testimonials and FAQ.

Australian performance for schools at GV Center

Crane Culture Theater and the local AirAligned aerial dance group invite schools to a performance of its new production “Enora and the Black Crane” at the Center for Performing Arts in Grass Valley. This Australian aboriginal tale focuses on cultural connections with nature, and the laws that govern this particular culture. The consequences of a teenager's actions have a profound effect on him and his family.

School programs are now being booked for the following dates: Dec. 8 and 10; Jan. 7, 14, 16, 19, and 23

This one-hour program features a narrated dance performance, which integrates evocative masks, costumes and a puppet along with indigenous music. AirAligned performs dramatic creative movement on ropes. The play can be preceded by a brief discussion of the threatened Sandhill crane which winters in the Sacramento Valley.

The program is aligned with the state's

art standards that explore common themes from different cultures, differences among art of cultures, and how art depicts people.

The price per program is \$5-\$6 per person (depending on the group size) with a maximum attendance of 275. For information and bookings, call Bruce Forman at 916-536-0550 or email Bruce at <beforman@yahoo.com>.

Holiday 'Miracle' matinees staged at Nevada Theatre

LeGacy Productions will present 10 a.m. student matinees of the play "Miracle on 34th Street" at the historic Nevada Theatre in Nevada City through thru Dec. 27.

Classes and small groups of students are invited to attend various student matinees. A small number of seats are available Dec. 3, 7, 9, and 16. A larger number of seats are available at student matinees Dec. 8 and 10, and 15 and 17.

The 1 hour 45 minute Christmas classic is adapted from the novel and Oscar winning

1947 movie. Events surrounding the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade has everyone wondering, "Is there a Santa Claus?" and whether a special little girl whose lack of faith in imagination can be turned around. The play has a big cast of adults and youths, music and much humor for kids of all ages.

"Miracle on 34th Street" also plays at 7 p.m. Thursdays and 8 p.m. Saturday and Sunday evenings with a special 2 pm matinee performance on Dec. 24. There is no show that evening or on Christmas Day.

The cost for student matinees is \$10 per person. For reservations or more information call 530-913 2826.

CATS announces spring student matinee of play

Community Asian Theatre of the Sierra (CATS) invites students in grade 7 and up to attend a special matinee performance of its annual theatrical production at the Nevada Theatre. The stage adaptation of David Guterson's award-winning and best-selling novel "Snow Falling On Cedars" will be

presented at 10 a.m. Thursday April 1.
(General public performances are March 17–
April 10.)

The two-hour play features drama, suspense, romance and history as a small, quiet, Pacific Northwest community becomes embroiled in controversy surrounding a murder trial and a biracial romance. Racial prejudice toward Japanese-Americans post World War II complicates efforts to find the truth of who murdered a well-respected local fisherman. The bitterness of the town's Japanese-Americans who were incarcerated in internment camps during the war is heightened by the murder trial of a Japanese-American defendant.

Student matinee tickets are \$12. Early reservations are strongly encouraged. One student matinee date (March 26) has already sold out. To reserve seats, contact Lisa Moon at 273-6362 or <chanmoon@pacbell.net>.

MIM offers free in-school music presentations

Music in the Mountains is offering to

bring live music to your school and classroom. Two free programs are currently available, with some restrictions on dates. The programs are:

- Young Musicians in the Classroom, a 20–30 minute in-class presentation by a finalist of the annual MIM Young Musicians Competition. This student will give a brief performance, instrument demo, and talk about their instrument and interest in music. It includes a Q&A with students. This is geared for grades K–4. Individual teachers may request this program by contacting Mark Vance, MIM Education Coordinator, 265–6173, or e-mail him at [<markvance51@hotmail.com>](mailto:markvance51@hotmail.com)

- Young Composers in the Classroom, a 20–30 minute in-class presentation by a student composer involved in the MIM Young Composers Program. The student will present and discuss a pre-recorded “classical” composition he/she wrote under the study of local professional composers. The Young Composer will discuss his/her artistic process, inspirations and chosen instrument. Some Young Composers may be able to show a DVD of professional musicians performing their

composition. This is geared for grades 3–8. Classroom must have a CD player.

To request this program, contact Mark Vance at 265–6173, or e-mail him at <markvance51@hotmail.com>

Note: A third program, the popular Music Live concert by professional musicians, will be presented in the spring, with availability to be announced. This year’s ensemble is a woodwind quintet, the Foothill Chamber Winds.

Music Live is a 35–40 minute “informance” program featuring short classical selections, instrument demonstrations and an audience Q&A. Some selections are from the Brummitt–Taylor Classical Listening Program. The presentation is generally made as a multi-class school assembly.

For more info, call Paul Harrar at 478–6400 ext. 212.

NCTV names new chief

Paul Minicucci has been named the new

executive director of Nevada County Television (NCTV) following the departure of Michael Lamarca.

Minicucci has a wealth of experience in arts and digital media both at the state and local level. He comes to NCTV most recently from the California Digital Arts Studio Partnership, a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to helping students and teachers to develop digital media skills from filmmaking to web development.

Prior to that, Minicucci served as deputy director for the California Arts Council and as principal consultant to the Joint Legislative Committee on the Arts, and has been a high school theater and media teacher and a research professor at Virginia Tech. Minicucci has a BA degree from UCLA and an MFA from UC Davis. He is also playwright with 10 of his works having been produced at the professional, academic and community theater level in Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Raphael and Boston.

“I believe we are already well into the digital age and with that comes an expansion of the role for community access television.

We will need to find new ways to fulfill our mission as the hub of Nevada County's digital village.” Minicucci said.

Quilt Guild offers free in-class education program

The local Pine Tree Quilt Guild offers several free, in-class educational programs for students. The programs can inspire creative projects or tie into other curricula such as history-social studies.

The “Trunk Show” includes a presentation on the art and history of quilts and quilting. Students have an opportunity to view and touch many quilts. The length and content of this presentation varies depending on the grade level.

The “Traveling Quilt Book Library” contains books on quilts and quilting for children to read, plus some lesson ideas for teachers. It may be borrowed by teachers for up to two weeks.

“Hands On Help” provides teachers with volunteers to assist with a quilt-making

project related to art, math, social studies or other curricula.

Finally, “The Road To California” is a 20-minute live performance (in class) about quilts and the westward movement. It is geared for grades 3–5.

For more information or scheduling, call Margaret Boothby at 273–0186.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Classroom ‘Clicker’ technology training

Teachers can learn how to get instant feedback from students during guided instruction at a Classroom Performance Systems (CPS) “clicker training” workshop presented by Digital Edge Learning. The workshop takes place from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Dec. 10 at the Nevada County Superintendent of Schools Annex (formerly the Charter Co-op office) at 117 New Mohawk Road, Suite F, Nevada City.

The CPS clicker allows teachers to assess student understanding instantly. Teachers may ask students a question, wait for students to respond with a hand-held clicker, and immediately observe the results tallied on a digital whiteboard or computer.

Teachers planning to attend should bring the following: a laptop computer with CPS software (go to www.eistruction.com to download); Examview CDs from their curricula; a teacher's edition and/or existing test or student homework assignment.

Additionally, participants will discuss and brainstorm ways to facilitate on-line technology collaboration for teachers of Nevada County. This might take the form of a blog for collaboration and sharing.

To register for the training, contact Julie at <Julie@digitaledgelearning.com>. To purchase a set of clickers, contact Yvonne@digitaledgelearning.com>. To obtain a set of loaner clickers, contact Julie at <Julie@digitaledgelearning.com>. For specific training questions, contact Raquel at Raquel@digitaledgelearning.com>.

For training location directions call 470-

8510 ext. 201 or ext. 210.

Free fitness classes for teachers

Nevada Joint Union High School District in partnership with Schools Insurance Group is again offering free fitness classes to school employees.

Stop by a class after work and enjoy a work out with a certified instructor. If you are working on stretching and building core strength, try the yoga class offered on Monday and Wednesdays from 4:15–5:15 p.m. in the Nevada Union MPR/cafeteria. Please bring a mat and water.

If you are looking to do a program that includes cardio, strength training, and balance, try the Full Body Workout class on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4–5 p.m. at NU in the MPR/cafeteria. Please bring a mat, small weights, and water. At Bear River, the Full Body Workout is held on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:30–4:30 p.m.

All fitness levels are welcome. Please contact Amy Gonnella at 273–4431 ext. 2035

if you have any questions.

Dec. 8 workshop on astronomy and beginning telescope use

A simple introduction to telescopes will be offered at a workshop Dec. 8 at the NCSoS Fellersen Room. Workshop hours are 3:30–5:30 p.m.

The “Galileo Telescope Workshop” is geared for teachers, but anyone is invited to attend to get a simple introduction to astronomy and telescopes. Participants will learn about Galileo, do hands-on experiments with lenses, and assemble a telescope modeled after the original created by Galileo.

The cost is \$30 and includes your telescope to take home. Space is limited to eight participants. To register, or for more info, call 478–6400 ext. 231.

Transition to kindergarten workshop

The California Preschool Instructional Network (CPIN) will present a “Transition to

Kindergarten” workshop for preschool providers and kindergarten teachers on Jan. 27. The workshop takes place at 6 p.m. at the NCSOS Houser Room. The fee is \$10, which includes dinner and resource materials.

CPIN staff will focus on the “best practices” regarding the issues around young children transitioning from pre-school to kindergarten. In addition to best practices, participants may share their own successes and concerns regarding the transitioning from preschool to kindergarten.

Please look at the NCSOS website (www.nevco.k12.ca.us) for registration information. You also may contact Stan Miller at 478-6400 ext. 205 for more info.

First Aid and CPR training continues

First aid and CPR training continues at the NCSoS through 2010. This program, designed and approved by the American Heart Association, is recommended for coaches, physical education teachers, classroom teachers, administrators, instructional aides and secretaries.

Remaining 2009 dates are Thursday, Dec. 10 and Saturday Dec. 19.

Thursday classes in 2010 are Jan. 28, March 18, April 29, May 27, June 17, July 8, Aug. 28, Sept. 9, Nov. 11 and Dec. 2. Saturday classes in 2010 are Jan. 30, Feb. 20, March 6, April 24, May 15, June 26, July 17, Aug. 19, Sept. 18, Oct. 30, Nov. 20 and Dec. 18.

Thursday classes are 3 to 7 p.m.; Saturday classes are 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The cost is \$30. Reimbursement receipts are available. Pre-register by e-mailing Nikki Johnson at <njohnson@nevco.k12.ca.us>

Special ed video training series continues

The Nevada County SELPA Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC) continues its video training program geared for parents. Videos are screened in the NCSoS Houser Room.

The series continues with the following:

- Jan. 25 (9:30–11:30 a.m.): “School to

Work –Transition for Students with Special Needs” with Beth Moore from Nevada Union High School.

- Feb. 23 (9:30–11:30 a.m. and 6:30–8:30 p.m.): “Autism and Me” and “Asperger's Syndrome” videos.

- March 22 (9:30–11:30 a.m. and 6:30–8:30 p.m.): “Learning Disabilities and Self Esteem” video.

Flyers for each video series event will be distributed to schools. To RSVP, or for more info, contact Randy McKean 265–0611 ext. 203.