



# Inkwell

Eau Claire Association of Educators



www.ecteachers.org  
Volume 2009-2010  
Issue 6

Affiliated with Wisconsin Education Association Council and National Education Association

## You Are Inspiration!

Ron "Duff" Martin, ECAE President

**A** teacher emailed me this morning and asked me to send out a little inspiration today. With all the chaos of the post holiday season, endless shoveling, end of the semester, additional requirements of the teacher—and the list goes on—I think a little inspiration would do us all some good.

A friend of mine recommended that I read *The Go-Giver* by Bob Burg. So, over the holiday break that's what I did, I read! We look back on the year and wonder, "Was my journey in 2009 what I hoped it would be? Was it successful? Did I make a difference to someone other than myself?" So, as you judge the past year and gather your strength to make it through the rest of this school year, I hope the words I share from Bob Burg remind you of what is truly important:

*"Your true worth is determined by how much more you give in value than take in payment. Your income is determined by how many you have served and how well you served them. Your influence is determined by how abundantly you place other people's interests first. And lastly, the most valuable gift you have to offer this year is yourself."*

So with that, I hope you can look back on 2009 with fond memories, knowing that the success you experienced had more to do with those you cared for, made a difference to, and put their interests above your own, and less to do with the money you made or accolades you received. From what I have witnessed being your ECAE President, you are all some of the "richest" and most "successful" people I know.

I am proud to be a member of this association and to be connected to all of you—you don't need inspiration, **you are inspiration.**

Enjoy,

Ron "Duff" Martin, President  
ECAE



### Important Dates:

- 02/01 BOE Meeting
- 02/03 ECAE Exec. Board Meeting
- 02/14 Valentine's Day
- 02/15 President's Day All Schools Closed
- 02/16 Staff Development. Schools closed.
- 02/15 BOE Meeting
- 02/17 BR Meeting



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### Coretta Scott

Pairing powerful language with unforgettable images, author and playwright Ntozake Shange and illustrator Kadir Nelson team up to tell the story of the Civil Rights Movement through one of its most elegant champions.

Harper Collins, [www.harpercollins.com](http://www.harpercollins.com)



## NEA's Read Across America—Building a Nation of Readers

### February is Black History Month

Carole Galloy

**T**ip of the Month: Make literacy the cornerstone of your Black History Month celebration. Celebrate the 2010 National African American Read-In by holding reading events at your school, library, church, or community center. Go to [www.ncte.org/action/aari/packetinfo](http://www.ncte.org/action/aari/packetinfo).

**Link of the Month:** Read Across America partner SchoolTube offers students and educators an outlet for their creativity. Create your own reading videos to share with friends and colleagues around the country at [www.schooltube.com](http://www.schooltube.com).

**Activity of the Month:** If you love writing, don't forget to share your work through the National Gallery of Writing, a new Web site from the National Council of Teachers of English. You can post your own work, create a local gallery, or read the work of writers from all walks of life. Go to [www.galleryofwriting.org](http://www.galleryofwriting.org).

### February Literacy Dates:

February 21-22—African American Read-In  
[www.ncte.org/action/aari/packetinfo](http://www.ncte.org/action/aari/packetinfo)

Read Across America  
[www.nea.org/readacross](http://www.nea.org/readacross)

## Take the Pledge

Carole Galloy

**A**t the NEA Regional Conference in Minneapolis on January 24 and 25, The Cat in the Hat was on hand to encourage every caring adult to take the pledge to read with a child on March 2, NEA's 13th annual Read Across America Day.

These are some ideas to help celebrate Read Across America: invite a retired teacher to read to students, make a video of kids reading and post it on SchoolTube, have a book character parade, take a field trip to the L.E. Phillips Library, add a link to Read Across America to your personal web page, go to the pledge page at [www.nea.org/readacross](http://www.nea.org/readacross) to see what's going on around the country, and most importantly—read with a child on March 2, 2010 Read Across America day and all through the month of March.



## Income Tax Information—ECAE Dues for 2009

Phil Hurlburt

**Full Time Employees = \$648— Half Time Employees = \$329**  
**\$20 is estimated for PAC, so this amount cannot be claimed on income taxes.**

## Non-Renewal Deadline Is Coming!

Duff Martin

**F**or a number of teachers, March 1 may have a special meaning. Wisconsin Statute (118.22) requires that any Board of Education that is considering the non-renewal of any teacher's contract must notify that teacher at least fifteen (15) days prior to march 15. This means the Board has until the last day of February to let a teacher know if he/she is being considered for non-renewal. This is called the Preliminary Notice of Non-Renewal and must be in writing. Please notify "Duff" Martin at [martinr@weac.org](mailto:martinr@weac.org) or 835-1916 if you receive such notice.

## Lakeshore Field Trip to Ice Age Trail

**W**hen the fourth grade students from Lakeshore Elementary School went on a field trip to the Ice Age Trail, Max's mom, Margie Craemer, agreed to come along to help chaperone. Little did she know how involved she would become. She conquered her fear of holding snakes and here's the proof. Cheers for Margie!

**Susan Bonk**



## Ten Ways You Can Cut Health Care Costs

**W**hile reforming our nation's ailing health care system remains a national priority, those efforts are likely to flat line unless spending is brought under control. Serious reform and belt tightening can't happen without new policies from Washington, but individual responsibility and action can both set an example and make a contribution. Here are ten suggestions for helping curb unnecessary health care expenses:

**Develop a good, working relationship with your primary care physician.** A primary care doctor who knows you, your medical history, and your circumstances stands a much better chance than a relative stranger of making decisions and giving you advice that will keep you healthy, out of the hospital, and in no need of specialized medical care. She or he can take care of you in context.

**Use emergency care only for emergencies.** Call your doctor or his/her service and try to get some advice over the phone, or, better yet, in person. Emergency care is outrageously expensive.

**Get—and stick with—the program.** Most of American health care these days is devoted to treating chronic conditions—like arthritis, diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure. Taking medications as prescribed, getting regular check-ups, and adhering to lifestyle changes can keep those diseases under control at relatively modest cost.

**Check with your primary care doctor first.** Medical care is increasingly specialized, but as much as possible; you should let your primary care physician coordinate that care. If she or he doesn't know what's going on, it can lead to wasteful—and possibly harmful—over testing and duplication of treatments.

**Ignore the drug ads.** New drugs may have a real advantage over older ones, but the virtues of the old standbys, which don't have big ad budgets behind them, often get overlooked. Older drugs are frequently just as effective (if not more so) and safer—and almost certainly cheaper.

**Go generic.** Most insurers have higher co-pays for brand-name drugs, so using generic medications can mean a cost savings both for you and for the health care system.

**Fight inertia.** If you're taking a medication, discuss with your physician how long you've been taking it, whether it's working, and if it isn't, not taking it anymore. Get some instructions about signs if the drug is working, and see the doctor if it's not.

**Question the need for expensive tests.** Don't push to get new, expensive tests just because you think new is better. And if a doctor orders an expensive test, like an MRI or CT scan, you can ask why it's necessary and how it will make a difference. The number of imaging tests being done in the United States has exploded and by some reckonings, almost a third of them are unnecessary.

**Use good judgment.** Often it's critically important to get medical care straightaway. Prompt treatment of a heart attack or stroke can save your life or prevent devastating disability. But people frequently get tests and treatments for aches, pains, and other discomforts that might have gone away on their own. If you are feeling sick, by all means get evaluated, but if your doctor suggests the test of time, take the test.

**Stay healthy.** Not needing health care is perhaps the surest way of spending less money on it, both yours and society's. So don't smoke, eat a good diet, and exercise.



**MOTHER, SON ARE BOARD CERTIFIED IN SAME YEAR**

This school year, Eau Claire educator Nick Sirek became a National Board Certified Teacher in his first year of eligibility. At the same time his mother, Rice Lake teacher Deb Sirek, gained her certification, and for her it was during a time close to retirement.

While at different spots on their career paths, both were granted certification in their first try, and both did it for the same reason: personal motivation.

The process to become a National Board Certified Teacher shows that dedication for the teaching profession and the desire to be the best you can be for our state's students shows no regard for how young you are or how long you've been teaching.

**WEAC Direct**  
[www.weac.org](http://www.weac.org)

**HELPING VICTIMS OF THE HAITI EARTHQUAKE**

Many of you are collecting supplies and raising money to help the victims of the Haiti earthquake. What is your school or classroom doing? Let us know what you are doing by emailing [cgalloy@ecasd.k12.wi.us](mailto:cgalloy@ecasd.k12.wi.us) or go to the WEAC Facebook Page at <http://www.facebook.com/myweac> to share your activities so others can get ideas for ways they can help.



**n**ostalgia is a powerful and often faulty lens. It can distort and makes the view seem at times softer and at times harsher than, in fact, it ever was.

I've been indulging myself in nostalgia these days as it occurs to me that **my first 4th graders turn forty this year**. Coincidentally, I turn thirty-nine. Go figure.

I have all their pictures hanging on the wall. They are gorgeous ten-year olds and it is quite impossible that they have pot bellies and graying temples and children in college. They will always be ten.

Likewise, my experiences teaching in the suburbs of Salt Lake City are frozen. Like the blood drive my 6th graders organized complete with our press releases written in curly cursive with every word spelled correctly.

The Mountain Man Rendezvous with tall tales of buffalo hunts and music on animal skin and wood and bone. The medieval fair with fair maidens in cone hats and tattered humble peasants who had to wait on swaggering obnoxious knights and the discussions of how our republic, based on equal rights, differed from a feudal system based on inherited family privilege.

The Shakespeare plays my friend, Sue, produced with kids who never before had turned in a written assignment on time, but **who turned in perfectly delivered lines of Hamlet on opening night**, covered in inner torment, (her inner torment at rehearsals, covered in Tums).

I know it wasn't all quaint Norman Rockwell calendar pages. But it was good stuff. We did some really very good stuff to make our lessons come to life for our babies. **We taught. The parents thanked us. The principal supported us.**

I didn't know that would all come to an end in so many ways.

My friend with the Shakespeare plays told me a few months ago **she didn't want to be a teacher anymore**. She said she had just left a faculty meeting where the principal had informed them that this year would focus only on The Bubble Kids.

I had to ask her, "**What's a Bubble Kid?**"

They're the kids who didn't quite hit the cut score on the No Child Left tests the previous year. Or those that just barely hit it. The goal was to get off the Adequate Yearly Progress Shame List where her school had been placed because not enough of their students had hit the cut score.

The school has a high transient population of low-income immigrant families. I've been there. They are beautiful children. Many resettled from Southeast Asia where they were never permitted to attend school before. **They want to learn.**

But **learning now is limited to hitting a cut score on a standardized test**. There are no more Shakespeare plays. No blood drives. No pen pals. No school chorus. No art fair. No recess.

They eliminated anything that wasn't on the test. Of course, that meant eliminating opportunities to learn teamwork on science fair projects and have open discussions where they could debate different points of view. **Creative answers are punished on standardized tests**. Wouldn't want to handicap them with higher level thinking skills.

No. Time to take it to another level. Teachers and aides would be given special instruction in how to drill for the tests, special practice tests, scripted lessons that were purchased at great expense and specifically aligned to the test. And now a Bubble Kid strategy.

They were told not to "worry" about the high-scoring students. (They were bound to pass the tests.) Not to "worry" about the low-scoring students. (They might be able to make some progress toward the cut score, but hitting it would be a long shot, so it wouldn't count.)

Studies on testing strategies showed it was most fruitful to concentrate all efforts on the precious little Bubble Kids. The low-hanging fruit.

I told her story to another friend who said, "We're all being given the same lecture. My principal said the same thing to us." He smiled at me and said, "But my principal added a little something."

He told me that his principal had read the memo from the district office on Bubble Kids to the faculty. Then he put the paper down and said, "Ok, then. We'll be giving the tests. We'll do the best we can."

**"But I'll be damned if we'll let some test get in the way of us giving all our kids a good education."**

And so we will. We will all be damned if we—teachers, support staff, principals, superintendents, school boards, governors or presidents—let anything get in the way of giving every blessed child what he or she needs to be prepared to live the lives they deserve to live after they leave our schools. **I'll be damned if I stop teaching.**

**NOTE from the editor: To view Lily's speech in it's entirety, go to her website <http://lilysblackboard.org/> Also, soon the video of her speech will be available at her site. Her delivery makes an enormous impact.**

## ECAE Elections

<u>Position</u>	<u>Current Office Holder</u>
ECAE President	Ron Duff Martin
Treasurer	Phil Hurlburt
Middle School Representative	Sue Fulkerson

**ECAE Representatives** (17) to WEAC Representative Assembly: Green Bay, April 23-25, 2010

**ECAE Representatives** (3) to NEA Representative Assembly: New Orleans, LA, July 1-6, 2010

Please email ECAE if you are interested in running for these offices or if you would like more information:  
Carol Miller (millerc@weac.org)

## Election Timeline

- Monday, February 15th**.....Nominations for WEAC and NEA Representatives are due
- Wednesday, February 17th**...Vote on NEA and WEAC Representatives at BR meeting
- Thursday, April 15th**.....Nominations for ECAE officer positions due to Carol Miller
- Wednesday, April 21st** .....Ballot for Spring 2010 Election set at BR meeting
- Monday, May 3rd** .....Ballots go to members for voting (paper ballot)
- Monday, May 17th** .....Election results announced

## NEA Regional Conference, January 22-24, 2010

**Carole Galloy**

**T**he NEA Midwest Regional Conference was held in Minneapolis. I attended seminars on working with the community, Read Across America and heard an inspiring speech from NEA Vice President, Lily Eskelsen. We also had a wonderful social time at dinner on Saturday evening. This was a great opportunity to meet new colleagues and catch up with friends from around the region.



## ECAE Legislative Banquet

**Chris Hambuch-Boyle**

**T**his year's Legislative Dinner will be held on March 8th at the Best Western Tail Lodge in Eau Claire starting at 5:30 p.m. Save the Date! There are seventy (70) reserved spots available for ECAE, and the meal is free to ECAE members. We have invited our area legislators as well as state elected officials and U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan—we hope maybe his buddy, President Obama, will tag along. Email Carol Miller at millerc@weac.org if you would like a spot reserved for you.

**NOTICE:** Please send your home emails to Carol Miller at: [millerc@weac.org](mailto:millerc@weac.org)

Cleaning closets or garages?  
Looking for a bargain?

## BARGAIN BLITZ

List your items in the  
Inkwell Bargain Blitz!

Deadline for submitting materials is the 20th of each month. Sorry, no personal ads.  
Send items to Carole Galloy at: [cgalloy@ecasd.k12.wi.us](mailto:cgalloy@ecasd.k12.wi.us)

**SELL:** 1403 Highland Ave. 3 BD/2 BA East Hill home, Move in ready! Updates include finished basement, 2 car garage, kitchen and bathroom 2010, stucco exterior, hardwood floors, built-ins, and more! \$139,900. Call Ron at 829-4091 for a showing.

**Calling All Photographers!**  
**Take photos of teachers**  
**in classrooms for the Inkwell and our website.**  
Send to:  
[cgalloy@ecasd.k12.wi.us](mailto:cgalloy@ecasd.k12.wi.us)

### Chippewa Valley Montessori School Artist of the Month Open House! Wednesday, March 3, 6:00-8:00pm

Well known Kinetic Sculptor Jeffrey Zachmann will be displaying his kinetic sculptures and mingling with visitors during the Chippewa Valley Montessori School Open House. Everyone is welcome! Open House 6:00 to 8:00 pm, school tours 6:00 to 7:00 pm. Visit Jeffrey's website for movies of the amazing moving sculptures on [www.zachmann.com/](http://www.zachmann.com/). For more information contact Melissa Kleven, 715.852.6956.

## 2010 WEAC Regional Winter Conference

March 5-6, 2010  
The Plaza Hotel & Suites  
Wausau, Wisconsin  
Contact Duff for more information  
[martind@weac.org](mailto:martind@weac.org)

## Calling All Artists! School Poster Contest!

- ◆ For the first time ever, ECAE is proud to sponsor a poster contest for students in grades Prek-12!
- ◆ Students are encouraged to draw, color, or paint a picture of their school.
- ◆ The school name must appear somewhere on the front of the poster, as well as the student's name.
- ◆ Poster size should be at least 12" x 18" and can be on paper, tag board or other suitable flat surface.
- ◆ Each school will select a winning entry to permanently hang at the Eau Claire Association of Educators/WEAC Office on 2004 Highland Avenue, Suite L, Eau Claire, WI.
- ◆ Winning posters will not be returned but will remain the property of ECASD.
- ◆ Contest deadline is February 12, 2010. Please submit all posters to your building representative!

## ECAE Fundraiser For Student Scholarships

**ECAE is raising scholarship money through the publication of our own cookbook.**

Before the cookbooks can be published, we need at least 200 recipes from our members. Recipe Categories include: Appetizers & Beverages, Soups & Salads, Vegetables & Side Dishes, Main Dishes, Breads & Rolls, Desserts, Cookies & Candy, This & That.

Please type your recipe in a Word Document and send it as an attachment to Carole Galloy [cgalloy@ecasd.k12.wi.us](mailto:cgalloy@ecasd.k12.wi.us). Please include your name, your school, title of the recipe, the ingredients, and directions.

Or you can access a recipe form on our website [www.ecteachers.org](http://www.ecteachers.org) Print it, fill it out, and send to Carole Galloy at South M.S. through district mail.

**The schools with the most percentage of recipes submitted will receive a treat for your staff!**

Anyone willing to serve on the Cookbook Fundraising Committee please contact Carole Galloy [cgalloy@ecasd.k12.wi.us](mailto:cgalloy@ecasd.k12.wi.us)

