



# Inkwell

**Eau Claire Association of Educators**



[www.ecteachers.org](http://www.ecteachers.org)  
 Volume 2010-2011  
 Issue 6

*Affiliated with Wisconsin Education Association Council and National Education Association*

## POVERTY

**Ron "Duff" Martin, ECAE President**

What works with kids in poverty? How can we help children who come from poverty excel and realize their full potential?

Growing up as probably one of my hometown community's poorest families has me wondering these days about all the wonderful professional development opportunities focused on children and poverty, the discussion of SAGE, free and reduced lunches, providing transportation to kids to attend Charter schools, etc. I wonder – are those who discuss these issues and present these issues really getting it? Do they know what it means to live in poverty?

I often times share with the kids I teach my story of growing up and having been raised in a single parent impoverished home is like. Do people really get what it means to live in poverty? Do they understand the culture of poverty and the family dynamics of those who live in poverty? I do.

Yes, I grew up in poverty. When I was a kid I didn't really know that. I knew my family was different from other kids' family in my class, but I wasn't exactly sure why. Poverty is an interesting thing – I think most families try to hide the fact that they are poor. We did. But looking back now I know we were poor. I remember being huddled around the opened kitchen stove door to keep warm during the coldest of winter days because the wood stove had gone out. I remember our first family car—an old stock-car that uncle Bob fixed up for us after my parents divorced. I remember standing in line at the village hall waiting for the free peanut butter, cheese, butter, and milk. I remember wearing ill fitting clothes to school because that's all we had. I remember not having to pay for school lunch like the other kids had to. I remember not being able to purchase books from the Scholastic Book Club even though I wanted to. I remember turning in field trip permission slips with no money but still being able to go on the trips. I remember the summer months having only one meal a day. I remember Christmas morning with very few presents wrapped under the tree.

At the time – I guess I thought it was normal. Why would I have thought any differently? So how did I make it through those tough times? How did I eventually end up graduating high school and college? Well....I can believe it was because of the teachers in my school.

I remember them clearly – Mrs. Hennessy, Mr. Hagen, Ms. Smiley, and others who encouraged me and allowed me to see beyond Minong, beyond poverty, beyond everything I knew. It wasn't the free and reduced lunches I received; it wasn't a college coach inspiring me to go on to college; it wasn't any of the things that we professionals believe are important in working with children of poverty. It was quite simply put – someone cared!

It wasn't all of my teachers – it was some. I grew up in a school system that had small classes, sometimes 15 in a class; after all I graduated in a class of 26! Because the classes were small, teachers like Mrs. Hennessy and Mr. Hagen developed relationships with their students—relationships that inspired many of us to think beyond what we knew and were comfortable with. I can't imagine being in a class of 25 or 26 and receive the kind of attention I received. It simply wouldn't have been possible.

I wasn't a trouble maker in school. I tried my best, worked hard, and wasn't a problem to teachers. If I had been in a class of 25 or 26 there is no doubt in my mind that I would have been lost – left behind because the attention almost always goes to the child that is the loudest or naughtiest in large classes (at least it seems that way). I wonder where I would be today; would I follow in the footsteps of other family members and not realize my full potential?

[Poverty....continued on page 2](#)



### Building Representative Meeting

**February 16, 2011  
4:30—6:00 PM**

**American Legion  
Water Street**

#### Inside This Issue:

Article	Page
<b>President's Message</b>	<b>1 - 2</b>
<b>Odds and Ends</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Congrats Ron "Duff" Martin</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>ECAE &amp; WEAC Scholarship</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Your Union</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Teacher Treatment</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Sue Fulkerson's Article</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Manz Teachers' Favorite Books</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Bargain Blitz</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Ideas for Feb.</b>	<b>6</b>

I have and I will continue to advocate for smaller class sizes. I believe so much of what we can do for kids who are in poverty have to do with developing positive relationships with their teachers. SAGE works because of that very idea. SAGE should be expanded to upper grades and eventually middle school and some day in the high school as well. Post secondary readiness standards must start in the early ages and it begins with smaller class sizes and teacher to student ratios to be around 15 to 18.



Educationally yours,

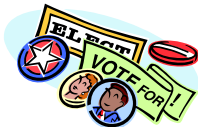
*Ronald G. Martin*

Ron "Duff" Martin

## Odds & Ends

### ECAE Elections!

The following positions are up for election in 2011: Vice President, Public Relations Chair, and High School Representative. Each position is a three year position beginning June 1, 2011. Complete job descriptions and increment pay is available upon request. If you are interested in a position you should submit your name to Pat Geraghty ([pgeraghty@ecasd.k12.wi.us](mailto:pgeraghty@ecasd.k12.wi.us)) by April 15, 2011. The ballot will be presented to the BRs at the April 20<sup>th</sup> BR meeting. Nominations will be accepted from the floor. Ballots will be mailed to BRs the week of April 25 and will need to be returned to Pat Geraghty by May 5, 2011.



### WEAC Representative Assembly and NEA Representative Assembly Call for Delegates!

Are you interested in serving ECAE as a delegate to the Wisconsin Education Association Council or the National Education Association Representative Assemblies? Both are an incredible learning experience and you will walk away with a better understanding of our how our union works on a larger scale. Your expenses are covered by ECAE. We can elect up to 18 delegates to the WEAC RA and up to 3 delegates to the NEA RA (maybe more because it is closer)! The WEAC RA is April 29-May 1 in Madison. The NEA RA is June 30 - July 5, 2011 in Chicago, IL. If you are interested in attending/participating, please let Duff know ASAP. You can email him at [martin@weac.org](mailto:martin@weac.org).

On the ballot for the WEAC RA (so far): Brent Bergstrom, Janet Krause, Emilee Planert, Ron Martin, Lynn Verdon, Pamela Larson, Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Nick Sirek, and Phil Hurlburt! Doesn't that look like a fun group to participate with?? NEA RA Delegates: Brent Bergstrom and Chris Hambuch-Boyle, hmmm....another fun group!!



Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Ron Martin, and Brent Bergstrom engaged in the 2010 WEAC Representative Assembly



Kathy Peterson enjoying the WEAC RA

## CONGRATULATIONS! ECAE Executive Board Endorses ECAE President, Ron "Duff" Martin for NEA Director Seat 4

At the January Executive Board meeting it was an unanimous vote (with one abstaining vote) to support Duff in his bid for a NEA Director position. Wisconsin elects five educators who are WEAC members in good standing to the NEA Board of Directors.



## ECAE & WEAC Scholarships Available!

If you have child who is graduating from high school this May, here is some information in regards to our ECAE scholarship and the WEAC scholarship. Requirements as well as applications can be downloaded:

- ◆ **WEAC Scholarship Application**  
<http://www.weac.org/Libraries/PDF/ScholarshipApplication0910.sflb.ashx>
- ◆ **WEAC Scholarship Information/Criteria**  
<http://www.weac.org/libraries/pdf/scholarshipguidelines.sflb.ashx>
- ◆ **ECAE Scholarship Information**  
<http://ecteachers.org/scholarship.php>
- ◆ **ECAE Scholarship Application**  
<http://ecteachers.org/downloads/ScholarshipApplication.pdf>



2010 ECAE Scholarship Recipients

# NOTICE:

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

## YOUR UNION

WEAC represents 98,000 educators—across the state of Wisconsin. The teacher's union is not separate from its members, they are one in the same. So when the union is attacked, you're being attacked.

### Why do you need the union?

The union gives voice to educators to advocate for public policy issues that matter to you. By uniting educators, our voices combine to advocate for issues that matter to us, students, schools, and our community.

Take for instance, an educator's perspective on the needs of his/her students. Educators know that students benefit from smaller class size, a wide variety of opportunities, adequate supplies and up-to-date technology. Consider 4-year-old kindergarten—our members care about early education opportunities because they know if students get off to a good start, students will do better throughout all of their schooling.

Educators know that the condition of their school is important to student learning, so the union has taken positions on issues such as safety and modernizing schools. The union advocates for referendums to help upgrade and make our schools the best they can be for the young people we work with! The union also advocates for parent and community involvement—because research shows that these factors have a tremendous impact on student learning.



"When I talk about the long hours, for example, what I mean is that, over the course of four years, my school's administration steadily expanded the workload and workday while barely adjusting salaries. More and more major decisions were made behind closed doors, and more and more teachers felt micromanaged rather than supported. One afternoon this spring, when my often apathetic 10th-graders were walking eagerly around the room as part of a writing assignment, an administrator came in and ordered me to get the class 'seated and silent.' It took everything I had to hold back my tears of frustration."

*Sarah Fine was a teacher, department chair and instructional coach at a Cesar Chavez Public School*

The attack on unions will only get worse and you should be prepared to handle the attack against unions.

### To those who say, the union does more to hurt our public schools than help our public schools succeed, we say:

- ◆ Through the union, Wisconsin educators lead the way to make schools better. We ask tough questions of policy makers, so they think through the impact their decisions have on students and schools. We encourage funding for the programs our students need.
- ◆ Our union unites 98,000 educators who are committed to their students and quality public schools throughout Wisconsin. Through the union, these educators are the voice for supporting what works in our schools and fixing what doesn't. These are the front line educators united to move educator forward.
- ◆ Our union embraces change and legislation designed to improve schools.

### To those who say that unions have had their place in time and are no longer needed, we say: I think today's educators need to have a voice in policy issues—so I see unions as having a vital role.

- ◆ The union is a comprehensive way to hear from the educators who are actually working in our schools and classrooms. Their voices matter in discussions about public education.
- ◆ Common sense tells us that if you want to change the public education system, you should engage the front-line workers for their ideas. Because educators have ideas, their union is a venue to bring them forward.
- ◆ Historically, our union has advocated for measures to protect children and educators, including child labor laws and fair labor practices, like paying men and women the same for the same work. As a voice for workers, unions help keep Wisconsin moving forward—not backwards.

### To those who say that teachers' unions make it hard to fire bad teachers, we say: Let's be clear. Overall, we have great teachers in Wisconsin.

- ◆ The union supports education excellence and believes educators should be held to a high standard.
- ◆ When there is an educator struggling, we believe that person should get the support needed to improve, and if s/he doesn't improve, we believe s/he should leave the profession.
- ◆ The way to determine effective educators is to conduct fair and thorough evaluations of their work, and our members welcome that. That's why we're part of the state superintendent's design team for a new evaluation system, along with superintendents and school boards.



## FEBRUARY TRIVIA

♥ Alexander Graham Bell applied for his patent on the telephone, on Valentine's Day, 1876.

♥ In Wales, love spoons of wood were carved and given as gifts on February 14th. Hearts, keys and keyholes formed the favorite theme of decorations on the spoons, which together symbolized- "You unlock my heart!"

♥ On February 14, 1779, the natives of Hawaii murdered Captain James Cook the great English explorer and navigator.

♥ Some people believed that if a woman saw a robin flying overhead on Valentine's Day, it meant she would marry a sailor and if she saw a sparrow, she would marry a poor man and be very happy. If she saw a goldfinch, she would marry a very rich person.

♥ In the middle Ages, people believed that the first unmarried person of the opposite sex you met on the morning of St. Valentine's Day would become your spouse.

♥ February Trivia from <http://www.everythingvalentinesday.com/valentines->



## How Do Successful School Systems Treat Teachers? [Sabrina Stevens Shupe](#)

The recent release of two important reports led me to ask this question.

The [National Education Policy Center](#) shared a [brief](#) that reviews available research on several different aspects of teacher evaluation and makes recommendations for a comprehensive approach to teacher evaluation. If different measures, like observation (by peers and principals), teacher self-reports, student surveys, classroom artifacts, portfolios and value-added assessment are used, then the weaknesses of one measure can be offset by the strengths of another.

Meanwhile, the much-anticipated [PISA](#) rankings came out, revealing that America is (still) in the "middle of the pack" of international rankings of 15-year-old performance in reading, science and math. Putting anxious hand-wringing and [concerns](#) about representativeness and meaning aside, if we take the rankings at face value, then there is merit in examining how more successful school systems work, and learning from what makes them so successful.

One of the key things that such systems have in common is that they take teaching seriously. Drawing from research summarized in Linda Darling-Hammond's *The Flat World and Education*, common features of the teacher experience in places like the Scandinavian nations, Singapore, South Korea, Japan and Hong Kong include:

- **Between three and four years of high-quality teacher education, typically funded at government expense.** Pre-service teacher education programs in these places tend to include courses in content-specific pedagogy to develop teachers' knowledge of how their discipline works and empower them to help learners deal with certain types of conceptual issues unique to their field, research projects where teachers write theses on teaching practice and other issues in the schools, and at least one year of training within a school setting. Like the rest of the teaching and learning system, teacher education programs are regularly evaluated and updated, *with teachers playing a central role in the process.*
- **Extensive mentoring and meaningful ongoing professional development.** Teachers in these systems spend their first years working closely with veteran teachers, who often receive special training on how to be good mentors. New and veteran teachers alike spend a considerable amount of time engaging in professional learning, which is often embedded within the generous amounts of time (between 15-25 hours a week!) they have for collaborative planning. They frequently do action research projects with their colleagues and present their learning to other teachers through publications or at conferences. Release time for observations in other teachers' classrooms is also common, after which teachers take time to critique each other and offer feedback.
- **Leadership development.** Teachers are given the opportunity to develop curriculum and assessments, mentor and coach teachers, and offer professional development. The strongest teachers are recruited to become principals, who are trained to serve as instructional leaders.
- **Professional pay and status.** Teachers are paid comparably to members of other professions, and teaching itself is highly honored. Some governments make special efforts to recruit their best students into the teaching profession, which simultaneously boosts the strength of the teaching corps and the prestige of the profession as a whole.

Recognizing that "teaching is the profession that makes all other professions possible," other nations devote considerable time and resources into teaching. Note, too, that all of these investments are based on two key assumptions:

- That teachers should teach, develop and evaluate *each other* (and that every facet of education -- from teacher training to school leadership -- should be informed and led by professional educators).
- That teachers will stay in teaching until they retire, thereby allowing them to continue the cycle of developing other teachers and leading schools, and making such extensive investments worthwhile.

Though we have examples of strong teacher education, induction and professional development programs here, there is no large-scale effort to coordinate and/or duplicate these programs to ensure that *every single teacher* benefits from them. Here, it is more often the case that:

- Teachers must forgo income (and more often, go into debt) in order to participate in high-quality, in-depth teacher preparation programs, or skip such preparation and go directly into the classroom (typically the neediest ones) with little to no training.
- Mentoring is spotty.
- Professional development is shallow and often disconnected from any given teacher's specific needs as a practitioner.
- Teachers have relatively little built-in time (three to five hours a week) to plan at *all*, let alone collaboratively.
- Teachers are increasingly observed, evaluated and led by school leaders who are not well-trained, experienced educators.
- Teachers are underpaid relative to other professions with similar levels of education.

Unlike our international peers, Americans don't consider teaching a prestigious profession or even much of a profession at all ("Those who can, do, those who can't, teach"). We don't invest in teachers or teaching, we only nominally (if at all) involve teachers in the process of making major decisions about education, and we've even become shockingly comfortable with the idea of teaching being a disposable job -- something people do for a couple of years before moving on to something else (...better? ...More important?).

And our national conversation about improving the quality of teaching focuses primarily on "getting rid of bad teachers." Instead of doing what's necessary to develop and keep good teachers, like improving teacher education and induction programs, implementing comprehensive evaluation systems and embedding teachers in supportive, well-resourced school communities, America glorifies whomever seems the most willing to fire people.

Rather than guaranteeing teacher quality *before* teachers take responsibility for students, we're growing a system where we put teachers in the classroom, then try to figure out if they're good enough *after* the fact. This experiment-and-punish approach is remarkably cruel to both teachers and students, **especially the neediest** ones -- who are often subjected to strings of over-worked, under-supported, and under-trained instructors year after year. If we really want to build a world-class school system, why waste time and money on [witch hunts](#) and [magic bullets](#)? Why not emulate world-class school systems?

### **Non-renewal Deadline Is Coming!**

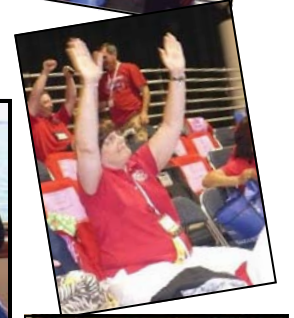
For a number of teachers, March 1 may have a special meaning. Wisconsin Statute (118.22) requires that any Board of Education that is considering the non-renewal of any teacher's contract must notify that teacher at least fifteen (15) days prior to March 15. This means the Board has until the last day 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 [martin@weac.org](mailto:martin@weac.org) or 835-1916 if you receive such notice.

**NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSMBLY  
FROM A DELEGATES PERSPECTIVE (Sue Fulkerson)**

Why take a week out of our well earned summer vacation to travel as a delegate, representing the Eau Claire Association of Educators and attend the National Education Association Representative Assembly? It's not because I could get up at 4:00 a.m., get picked up in a van, and begin attending meetings at 6:00 a.m. It's not because we could sit for eight to 10 hours in a convention center, perfectly climate controlled at a brisk 60° temperature. It's not even because we had volumes of reading to do each night in preparation for voting on the day's business. It's simply because there is nothing else I have ever done that's given me a better perspective on what it means to be a teacher in the state of Wisconsin and, more specifically, in the Eau Claire school district.

Since this was my third year as a delegate, I finally felt as if every move that was made in our state daily meetings or in our national daily meetings did not need to be explained to me. In other words, I guess I caught on. There's always comfort in knowing what you're doing, at least a minimal level. As I look back at the last few decades of my teaching career, I realize that few school years went by without my having to prepare to deliver new curriculum, or work with a new population of learners with specific exceptional needs, or help to bring new colleagues into our teaching team. And yet, sitting in a convention center with 15,000 teachers can be intimidating, *unless* you're lucky enough to be from a place that is highly respected and commands the attention of a very vocal crowd. Never having considered myself particularly politically active, I can't say I ever understood the democratic process until I attended NEA's representative assemblies. Just watching how this organization that I have paid dues to every year of my career helps individuals, states, and regions of the country, achieve necessary reform is powerful. I've learned that NEA has my back, and every one of yours'. I'm part of something bigger—much bigger—and it matters. Our shared purpose in doing our very best to educate every child who comes through our classroom doors is evident in absolutely every minute of the Representative Assembly. It's humbling. And it's very satisfying that my voice, one out of 15, 000, was heard.

Serving as a delegate and representing our union is important work. Since the representative assemblies have to be located in large metropolitan areas, it is very possible to turn this experience into a working vacation in order to include your family. I had never been to San Diego before (this year's site), and very much enjoyed many of the wonderful attractions in the area. ECAE does provide the lion's share of the financial obligation of being a delegate, so one might consider this as an exciting opportunity to see a part of the country that you might not have had a chance to see. It won't be long before next year's delegates are elected. Please look at your calendar for availability during the first week in July of 2011. It might be the very best professional experience of your life. I guarantee you will meet other phenomenal educators and learn how lucky we are to be doing what we do where we do it.

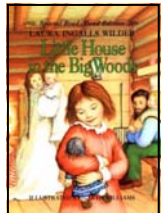

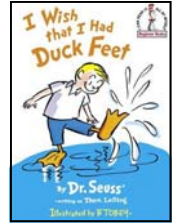

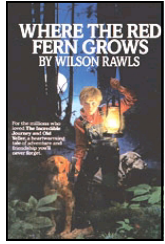

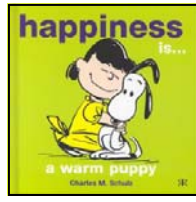

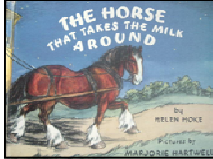

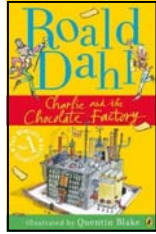



Members of ECAE at the San Diego 2009 RA. Enjoying supper on the boat: Chris Hambuch-Boyle, Kathy Peterson, Ron Martin Sue Fulkerson, and Bama Grice (Milwaukee)



**The 2011 NEA Representative Assembly**  
 June 30-July 5  
 Chicago, Illinois  
 Interested: Contact Duff at 835-1916 or email at martin@weac.org

**In celebration of next month's NEA Read Across America, Inkwell reporters went to Manz Elementary and asked teachers what was your favorite book as a child or young person?**

<p><b>Heather Lews</b> 5th Grade Teacher</p> <p><b>Favorite Book: <u>Little House in the Big Woods</u></b> by Laura Ingalls Wilder</p>  	<p><b>LeaAnn Richie</b> Kindergarten Teacher</p> <p><b>Favorite Book: <u>I Wish That I Had Duck Feet</u></b> by Theo LeSieg</p>  	<p><b>Brian Wiltgen</b> 5th Grade Teacher</p> <p><b>Favorite Book: <u>Where the Red Fern Grows</u></b> By Wilson Rawls</p>  	<p><b>Steve Winters</b> 4th Grade Teacher</p> <p><b>Favorite Book: <u>Happiness is a Warm Puppy</u></b> by Charles Schulz</p>  	<p><b>Sue Smith</b> Kindergarten Teacher</p> <p><b>Favorite Book: <u>The Horse that Takes the Milk Around</u></b> by Helen Hoke</p>  	<p><b>Eric Gonyea</b> 5th Grade Teacher</p> <p><b>Favorite Book: <u>Charlie and the Chocolate Factory</u></b> by Roald Dahl</p>  
--	---	--	--	---	---

Cleaning closets or garages?  
Looking for a bargain?

# BARGAIN BLITZ

List your items in the  
Inkwell Bargain Blitz!

Deadline for submitting your ads is the **20th of each month**. Sorry, no personal ads.  
Send items to Shirl Ruesch at: [sruesch@ecasd.k12.wi.us](mailto:sruesch@ecasd.k12.wi.us) Please e-mail me when ad has been fulfilled. Thanks.

**Sell:** Is your son or daughter starting band next year? Don't miss out on this great deal: a saxophone in excellent condition. \$300. For more information contact Laura Nicolet  
[lnicolet@ecasd.k12.wi.us](mailto:lnicolet@ecasd.k12.wi.us)

**Want to buy:** Rosetta Stone software Spanish (Latino)  
Bill Simon [wsimon@ecasd.k12.wi.us](mailto:wsimon@ecasd.k12.wi.us)  
715-852-5295.

**Sell:** Kenmore Electric Range, ceramic cook top, white, deluxe model, like new. \$275.00 Call 715-834-0516 anytime.  
[jlepak@ecasd.k12.wi.us](mailto:jlepak@ecasd.k12.wi.us)

**Sell:** 2006 Eclipse GT, red, 72,000mi., 3.8L, 6cyl, auto Loaded plus leather, sunroof, am/fm/cd Ex. Cond., one owner. \$10,200 [drone@ecasd.k12.wi.us](mailto:drone@ecasd.k12.wi.us) or 715-835-9318.

**Sell:** Ranch home on prime lot in Hoyem Acres behind Sherman Elementary School. Built in 2004 - 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 3 car garage, open concept, vaulted ceilings in kitchen and living room, fenced in yard, basement is in the process of being finished. \$179,900 2216 Vesterheim St. Email [bethduellman@hotmail.com](mailto:bethduellman@hotmail.com) or call 715-577-6923.

**Day Care:** Southside off Cummings Ave. Full-time or Part-time openings available. For more information please contact Kelly at 715-379-1750 or at [nkquade@yahoo.com](mailto:nkquade@yahoo.com) Drop-ins welcomed also.

**Sell:** "I don't want to work; I just want to bang on the drums all day." Now's your chance, the kids are off to college and I'm reclaiming the space. Full-size drum set, barely used \$200.00, will e-mail photos if interested. E-mail [snicolai@ecasd.k12.wi.us](mailto:snicolai@ecasd.k12.wi.us) or call 715-552-5391.

**Looking to buy** – P90X DVD exercise program. Contact Jim Jeffries at [jjeffries@ecasd.k12.wi.us](mailto:jjeffries@ecasd.k12.wi.us)

**Sell:** Bench upholstered in floral/berry print with 3 matching pillows, \$75. Round end table with quartz top, \$50.00. White plant table, \$25. Glider rocker with blue fabric and matching ottoman, \$100.00. Call 835-3180 and ask for Kathy Campbell.

**Want for free:** Need men's ties for a craft project. Need not be in perfect condition. Contact [phawkenson@ecasd.k12.wi.us](mailto:phawkenson@ecasd.k12.wi.us) at South Middle School.

**House Sitting Wanted:** Do you need responsible house sitters this winter or spring? My daughter and her family are relocating across country and are looking for a temporary home this winter/spring. In exchange for a place to stay, they would love to ease your mind and take care of your home, pets, and plants, while you are away. If interested please call Ken Sullivan at 715-834-6675.

**Want:** Two more people to be on the ECAE and WEAC scholarship committee. We will look at the entries after spring break. If interested contact [sruesch@ecasd.k12.wi.us](mailto:sruesch@ecasd.k12.wi.us). Thanks.

## Tip of the Month

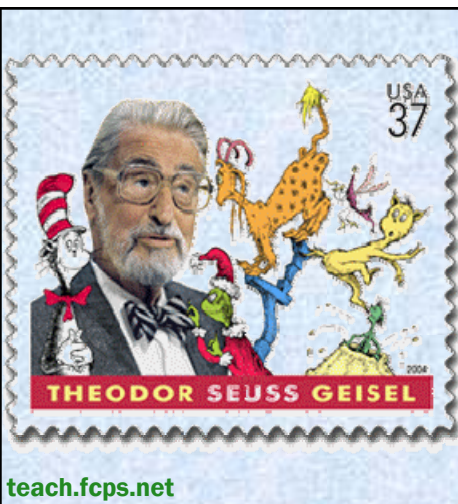
Use reader's theater to bring your books to life. Ask student to stage their own dramatic readings of their favorite stories.

## Link of the Month

Ready to look inside the mind of your favorite authors? Check out the author interviews compiled by Reading Rockets. You'll find many of your favorites. Go to [www.readingrockets.org](http://www.readingrockets.org).

## Activity of the Month:

If your class is ready for its 15 minutes of fame, why not create a video for the Read Across America Channel on Schooltube? Go to [www.schooltube.com](http://www.schooltube.com) to view past videos or create your own. ([from nea.org/readacross](http://from.nea.org/readacross))



## Calendar Dates:

**Feb. 3** Chinese New Year  
**Feb. 6-7** African American Read-In  
**Feb. 12** Lincoln's Birthday  
**Feb. 14** Valentine's Day  
**Feb. 21** Presidents' Day  
**Feb. 22** Washington's Birthday  
**March 2** NEA's Read Across America Day

([from nea.org/readacross](http://from.nea.org/readacross))

