

NEWSLETTER

Mountain Plains Adult Education Association

ARIZONA . COLORADO . IDAHO . MONTANA . NEVADA . NEW MEXICO . UTAH . WYOMING

Volume 56, Issue 1

Winter Newsletter, January 1998

Notes from the President . . .

I received a catalyst in the mail the other day. At first, I didn't recognize it for what it was; I thought it was only a new gray MPAEA board member binder. The old binder was in bad shape and needed to be replaced. The grimy cover and scotch-taped corners attested to its many years of service. I put the new binder aside for a few days and concentrated on other projects.

The new binder called me in the middle of the night. It called me in the middle of meetings. It called me on Saturday afternoon in the middle of folding laundry. Finally I answered. "Okay," I said, "I have an hour today and an hour tomorrow, and I will invoke the project management method known informally as "Get it Started." When the reserved hour came, I found out that, instead of a new gray notebook, I had been sent a catalyst.

The dictionary says that a catalyst is "something that precipitates a change without being changed by the process," and that is what happened when I started transferring information from the old book to the new book. Decisions had to be made. Was the information worth keeping? Did it contain something new or important? Was it in the right place within the binder? If not, where should it be? As I started looking and thinking, I saw connections between people and events which were not previously apparent. I got excited all over again about MPAEA and the possibilities for connections it offers its members.

When I was finished, I still had a gray MPAEA board member binder full of papers. The catalyst itself had not



significantly changed or been destroyed, yet the final outcome was different from the original, both physically and in the response it elicited from me. I felt a renewal of purpose and an itch to go on to the second phase of project management, informally known as "Keep it Going." The catalyst worked.

I hope you recognize the catalysts you encounter and let them renew your purpose and commitment to the project in your life. And I hope MPAEA is a catalyst for you too.

*Wilda Theobald, MPAEA President,
1997-98*

inside...

Mountain Plains Adult Education Association Board of Directors
MPAEA Scholarships
MPAEA Annual Conference
News from State Affiliates

Page 2
Page 3, 6
Pages 4-5
Pages 8-10

MPAEA Governing Board

President

Wilda Theobald, Phoenix, Arizona
(602)271-3280

President-Elect

Lenora Plothow, Orem, Utah
(801)222-8009

Past-President

Jean Fleming, Denver, Colorado
(303)337-0166

Secretary

Kathy Vickerman, Pocatello, Idaho
(208)236-4545

Treasurer

Gary Wixom, Orem, Utah
(801)222-8372

MPAEA JOURNAL EDITOR

Dr. Michael Tomlin
University of Idaho
Boise
800 Park Blvd.
Boise, Idaho
208.334.2999

mtomlin@uidaho.edu

Board of Directors

Arizona

Harry Dennis
602.274.1624
Blair Liddicoat
602.517.8108

Colorado

Ray Peterson
303.866.6651
Patricia Thorpe
303.778-1191

Idaho

Chuck Humphrey
208.236.3640

Montana

Yvonne Hauwiler
406.585.1522
Nancy Reynolds
406.233.2500

Nevada

Beverly Klausner
702.799.8653
Steve Knight
702.246.6246

New Mexico

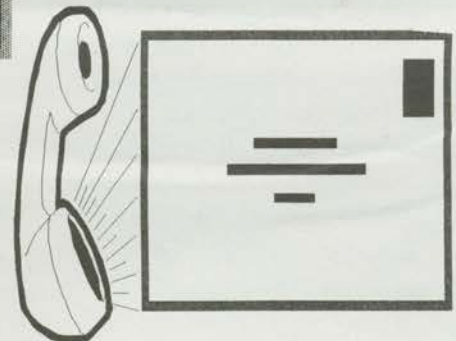
Marilyn Matthews
505.599.0270
Marilyn Jackson
505.392.5499

Utah

Susanne Makishi
801.627.8378
Lou Workman
801.797.2171

Wyoming

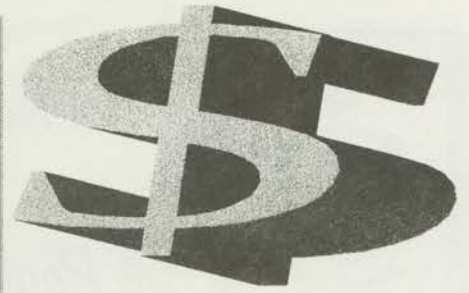
John Tollakson
307.674.6446
Jim Fassler
307.856.8651



SUGGESTIONS OR QUESTIONS?

Wilda Theobald
MPAEA President
Phone (602)271-3280

UP TO \$1000 AVAILABLE FOR INNOVATION IN THE MOUNTAIN PLAINS REGION



The purpose of MPAEA's Scholarship for Innovation is to foster innovative approaches to adult education and develop new models which have potential for replication in other adult and continuing education programs in the Mountain Plains area (AZ, CO, ID, MT, NM, NV, UT, WY). To be eligible for the innovative scholarship, the organization, institution or person submitting the application must either have held MPAEA membership since at least the 1997 MPAEA Annual Conference or be sponsored by a member with that status.

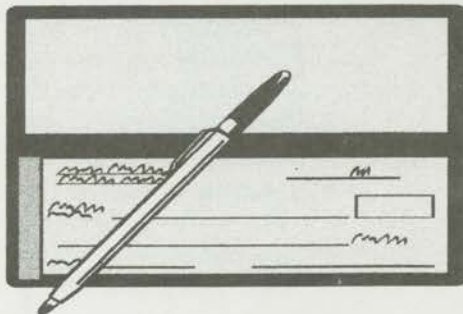
Anyone interested in applying for the innovative scholarship may choose one of three ways to submit the application:

- 1 Mail three copies of the complete application (*see address*) to the address below.
- 2 Fax one copy of the application to the number listed below and follow-up with mailing 2 copies to the address listed.
- 3 E-mail one copy of the application to the e-mail address listed below and follow-up by mailing 3 copies to the address below.

The initial application must be received no later than **March 6, 1998**, to allow time for the Scholarship for Innovation Committee to review the applications. The successful recipient will be notified prior to the MPAEA 1998 Annual Conference scheduled to be held in Beaver Creek, Colorado, April 29 through May 2, 1998.

For additional application forms and/or information, please contact:

**Beverly Klausner
Adult Education Programs
2701 East St. Louis
Las Vegas, NV 89104
(702)799-8653
(702)799-8608 (fax)
ZTWH54A@prodigy.com**



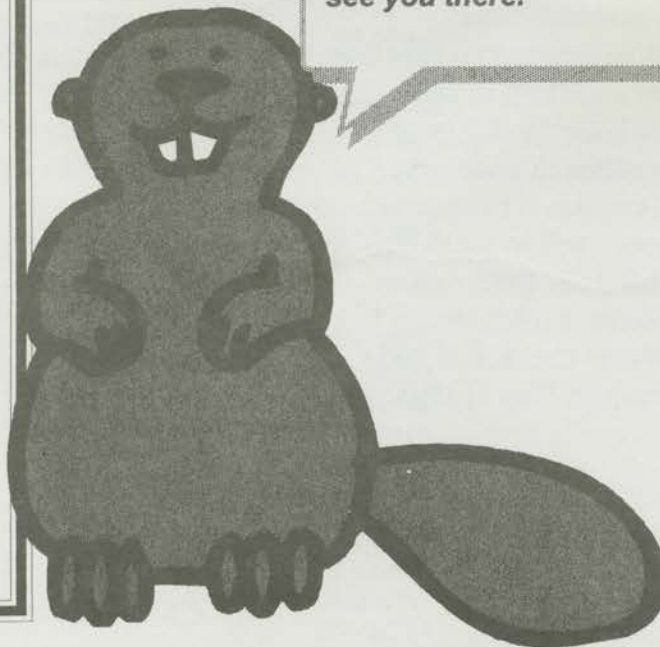


*The Rendezvous at Beaver
Creek:
A Renewal of Mind, Body,
and Spirit"*

April 29 - May 2, 1998
Hyatt Regency Beaver Creek
In the Vail Valley, Colorado

Questions and Registration:
Ray Peterson
(303)866-6651
Peterson_R@cde.state.co.us

Mark your calendars to
attend the 56th Annual
MPAEA Regional
Conference today — I'll
see you there!



CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Wednesday, April 29

- 3 - 9 pm Registration
- 4-6 pm Board Meetings
- 6 - 9 pm Colorado Reception

Thursday, April 30

- 7:30-5 Registration
- 7:30-8:30 Continental Breakfast
- 8:30 am Opening Session:
Dr. Jerold Apps
- 10-12 Concurrent Sessions
- 12-1:30 Luncheon &
Business Meeting
- 1:40-5 Concurrent Sessions

Friday, May 1

- 7:30-8:30 Continental Breakfast
- 8:40-9:30 Concurrent Session
- 10-12 General Session:
Dr. Terrence Deal
- 1:30-3:30 General Session:
Dr. Terrence Deal
- 4-5:30 Concurrent Sessions
- 6 pm Reception
- 7 pm Dinner

Saturday, May 2

- 8-9 am Continental Breakfast
- 9-11 Concurrent Sessions
- 11-12 Closing General Session

Leadership and the Meaning of Life

by

Lee Bolman and Terry Deal

The following is reprinted with the permission of the Institute for the Management of Lifelong Education. The original article, comprised of excerpts from Bolman and Deal's book Leading with Soul, first appeared in the MLE Alumni Bulletin, Vol.8, No. 2. June

Terry Deal will speak about *Leading with Soul* on Friday, May 1st at the Annual MPAEA Conference in Beaver Creek, Colorado

**D
r
.
T
e
r
r
y
D
e
a
l**

Soul. The word often sounds strange to modern ears. Terms like heart and spirit seem almost as exotic. We rarely think or talk about where we came from or what we are here to do. We need to, otherwise, we deaden our souls, stunt our spirits, and live our lives halfheartedly. This book is about the journey to hope, faith, and heart. It is a guide to the path that leads from where we are to where we dream of being.

Leading with Soul updates an ancient literary form. It is organized around conversations between a beleaguered leader and a wise sage, and it tells a story. Over the centuries, basic moral lessons have often been expressed through stories. Spiritual leaders of all traditions and faiths have taught and learned through example and dialogue. Christian and Sufi parables, Zen koans, the Jewish Haggadah, Taoist allegories, Hindu legends, and Native American tale are but a few examples. This legacy of wisdom, accumulated over many centuries, has provided much of the inspiration and ideas that infuse spirituality as a way to make sense of perplexing riddles that technical knowledge cannot decode. In matters of ethics and spirit there may be nothing more practical than a good fable.

If we do not listen to the spirit within us,

our deepest longings go unfulfilled. Self-doubt and cynicism eclipse confidence and hope. Our faith in technology's ability to cure our problems is waning. Technology continues to march ahead, yet chronic social and economic problems get worse . . . Our rational trajectory has failed to solve deepening problems in the workplace.

Many people hope that leadership will put us on a more promising path. But what kind of leadership? Here consensus evaporates. Two images dominate: one of the heroic champion with extraordinary stature and vision, the other of the policy wonk, the skilled analyst who solves pressing problems with information, programs, and policies. But both images miss the essence of leadership. Both emphasize the hands and heads of leaders, neglecting deeper and more enduring elements of courage, spirit, and hope.

Perhaps we lost our way when we forgot that the heart of leadership lies in the hearts of leaders. We fooled ourselves, thinking that sheer bravado or sophisticated analytic techniques could respond to our deepest concerns. We lost touch with a most precious human gift—our spirit.

To recapture spirit, we need to relearn

how to lead with soul. How to breathe new zest and buoyancy into life. How to reinvigorate the family as a sanctuary where people can grow, develop, and find love. How to reinfuse the workplace with vigor and elan. *Leading with soul* returns us to ancient spiritual basics—reclaiming the enduring human capacity that gives our lives passion and purpose.

Heart, hope, and faith, rooted in soul and spirit, are necessary for today's managers to become tomorrow's leaders, for today's sterile bureaucracies to become tomorrow's communities of meaning, and for our society to rediscover its ethical and spiritual center. *Leading with soul* requires giving gifts from the heart that breathe spirit and passion into your life and organization. Join us on a spiritual quest to look inward. Seek new sources of vigor, meaning and hope to enrich your life and leave a legacy for those who come after you.

MPAEA SCHOLARSHIPS 1998-99

MPAEA Memorial Scholarship

The Mountain Plains Adult Education Association offers up to \$1,000 annually to a graduate student enrolled in a graduate degree program in adult education or closely related field, in a college or university located in one of the eight Mountain Plains member states. The primary intent of this scholarship is for tuition, books and school-related expenses. The recipient and two alternates will be notified prior to receiving the award at the annual MPAEA Conference.

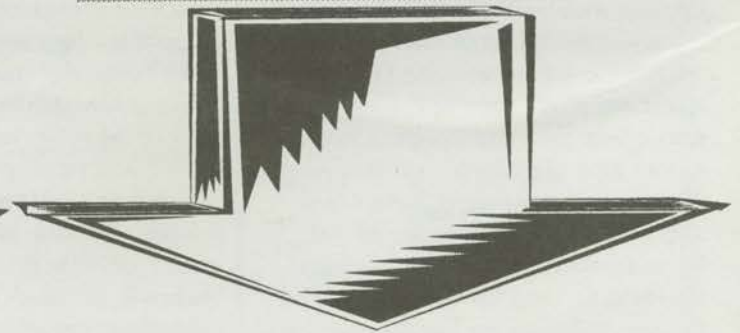
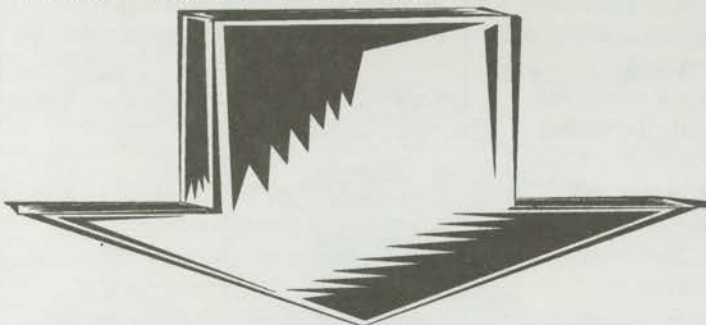
Contact Nancy Reynolds, Miles Community College, (406)233-2500, for Application Form

Deadline: February 28, 1998

MPAEA Professional Development Scholarship

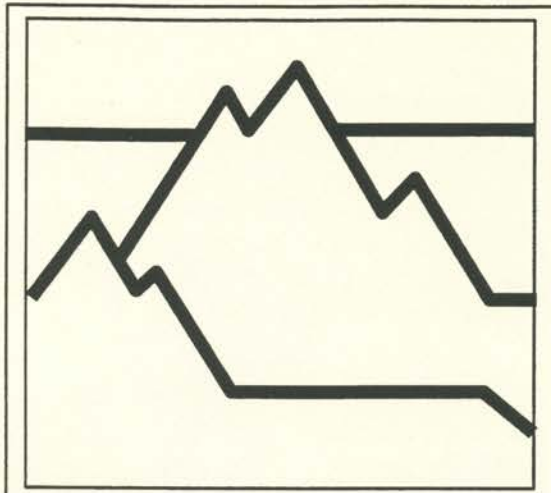
This scholarship provides up to \$500 to one recipient from each member state in the Association to be used for conferences or other staff development activities. In most instances this stipend will be used to defray expenses to the annual MPAEA Conference, although other functions related to lifelong learning may be designated for consideration by the Professional Development Committee. One alternate from each state will be chosen also. This scholarship may be used at any time during the year through the 1999 MPAEA Conference. Applicants must be current members of MPAEA or join at the time of submitting the scholarship application.

*Contact Nancy Reynolds, Miles Community College, (406)233-2500 for Application Form
Deadline: February 28, 1998*



**For applications or further information on these opportunities,
contact one of the MPAEA board members from your state or:**

**Nancy Reynolds
Miles Community College
2715 Dickinson
Miles City, MT 59301
(406)233.2500
reynoldsn@po.mcc.cc.mt.us**



**MOUNTAIN PLAINS
ADULT EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION**

LEGISLETTER

MPAEA

Editor: Dr. Ray Peterson (CO)

February, 1998

FEDERAL LEGISLATION BOOSTS LITERACY FUNDING

Describing this year's congressional Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill as the best treatment of American education in more than a generation, President Clinton signed it into law on November 13, 1997. This bill significantly increases, via several programs, literacy funding from what it was last year. Last year congress also approved substantial increases for education.

Overall, the Department of Education's budget increase over the 1997 level was \$3.1B or nearly 12%. It also provides for some new programs.

The greatest expansion is the \$22M increase for the Even Start Family Literacy program, bringing that program up to \$124M. Adult basic education state grants not only continued the \$93M increased they were appropriated last year, but were given \$5M more for a total of nearly \$345M.

Pell grants were increased as well. A 24% increase, to \$1.4B, was budgeted. The bill additionally increases the maximum grant to \$3,000 and raises the number of recipients by 220,000.

Arizona Colorado Idaho Montana Nevada New Mexico Utah Wyoming

**The Mountain Plains Adult Education Association
56th Annual Regional Conference**



***“The Rendezvous at Beaver Creek:
A Renewal of Mind, Body, and
Spirit”***



***April 29 - May 2, 1998
Hyatt Regency Beaver Creek
In the Vail Valley of Colorado***

Featured Speakers

Terrence E. Deal: “Leading With Soul”

Terry Deal, professor at Peabody College of Vanderbilt University, is an internationally known writer, speaker, and consultant on organization, leadership, change, culture, and symbolism. He has written seventeen books including Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership (1991, 1997) and Leading with Soul: An Uncommon Journey of Spirit (1995), both co-authored with Lee Bolman. Terry Deal is scheduled for a special four-hour keynote presentation on Friday, May 1st.

Jerold W. Apps: “Teaching from the Heart”

Jerry Apps, Professor Emeritus of Adult And Continuing Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is a prolific writer and well-known speaker and educational consultant on lifelong learning. His numerous books include Mastering the Teaching of Adults (1991), Leadership for the Emerging Age (1994) and Teaching from the Heart (1996). Jerry Apps is scheduled as the Keynote Speaker at the Opening General Session on Thursday, April 30th.

Conference Setting

In 1997, the Hyatt Regency Beaver Creek was rated 20th on Conde Nast’s “Readers Choice Awards” for top resorts in North America. In 1996, the Hyatt ranked 85th in the world on this same list. Very special rates for the 1998 MPAEA Conference of \$75 and \$85 will be honored through April 17th..

Conference Registration

The “Eager Beaver” registration rate for the full conference with meals is \$149 for MPAEA members and \$169 for non-members. This rate is in effect through February 28th. Regular rates are \$179 and \$199. Full registration includes three continental breakfasts, one lunch, one dinner and all breaks. Special one-day and no-meal options are also available. Non-members may join MPAEA for \$20 and receive the member rate for the conference.

Conference registration forms are available from:

Diana Sherry at sherryd@boulder.lib.co.us
Ray Peterson at (303) 866-6651, Peterson_R@cde.state.co.us

In partnership with the following associations:

Colorado Association for Continuing Adult Education; Colorado Association for Community Educators; Colorado Association for Developmental Education; Colorado Reading and Language Association; Colorado Alliance for Lifelong Learning; Colorado Council of the International Reading Association.

Additional conference sponsors:

Office of Adult Education, Colorado Department of Education; Colorado Community College and Occupational Education System; Office of the Governor; Storage Technology; Contemporary Books

It's Time Already!!!

Time to think about nominees for president-elect and for members of the board of directors for next year! Nominate yourself! Nominate a friend! Nominate a colleague! But nominate someone! MPAEA is fortunate to have so many qualified and committed members who are willing and able to serve in leadership positions. Just contact your current board members with your nominees!

Jean Fleming, Past President, Colorado
Jim Fassler, Board Member, Wyoming
Marilyn Jackson, Board Member, New Mexico

Time to Say Goodbye . . .

On Thanksgiving Day, Malcolm Knowles died quickly and painlessly of a cerebral hemorrhage at the age of 84 years old. Knowles was Professor Emeritus of Adult and Community College Education at North Carolina State University and a former member of Mountain Plains Adult Education Association. He was known worldwide for his leadership, scholarship, learning facilitation, educational consulting, and training workshops. During his long and distinguished career in adult education, he authored over 230 articles and 18 books. He is best known for the use of androgogy, methods of teaching adults.

Time for a Change . . .

Phyllis "Teddi" Safman, the disappearing past-president of MPAEA, is on the move again. She will leave the Utah State Board of Regents as the Assistant Commissioner for Academic Affairs to become the Vice-President for Accreditation services for the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA—as in CHEApet) in Washington, D.C.

Among her bag of tricks will be distance education, particularly the development of criteria for quality assurance. The move is exciting and loaded with risks. However, the old goat is in need of a change. This position was offered without application, surprising the socks off Teddi who ruminated over the decision for most of the summer. Teddi asks that when you are in D.C., please stop by One Dupont circle to say hello and whatever else you deem important. She wishes us well as we continue to carry forth the mission of MPAEA, an outstanding organization.

Submitted by Teddi Safman
 Best wishes and success, Teddi!

*Timing is everything
 Notes from the President . . .*

Timing is everything. If I leave for work at 8:10 am, I get to the office at 8:55 am; if I leave at 8:30 am, I get there at 9 am. I'm later than I want to be either way, but with the second alternative I can get an extra load of clothes from the washer to the dryer and be ahead by that much later on in the day. I remember

days when getting to work early was possible, and I know they will come again, but now is not the time.

MPAEA finds itself in a similar position right now. After several years of membership growth, financial expansion and stable leadership, we are in a period of regrouping to face the future. We have to face some serious issues, and we have to push for solutions a little harder than we have been used to for the past couple of years. What are some of these issues?

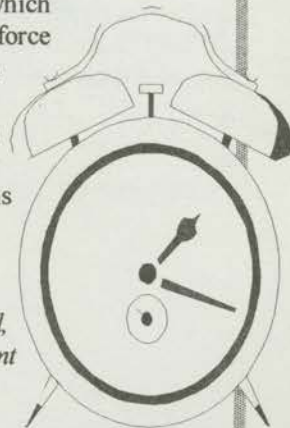
Membership is down. The amount is not alarming and the loss can be explained, but it doesn't have to be down at all. Right now it stands at about 80. Don't be afraid to talk to others about MPAEA.

We have a healthy balance in our treasury. Why is this an issue? Because we have to decide how to use it wisely for the benefit of our current membership while safeguarding it for future members. Please get in touch with one of your board members or officers to share your opinion.

Some of the leadership within MPAEA is changing. The President always changes, but, MPAEA had two stabilizing forces on our Board of Directors: Karen Mills as Secretary and Larry Wickham as Treasurer. Both positions have resigned in the last couple of years and the new officers are still growing into their positions.

It is the conversations around these and other issues which keep us vital as a force in adult education even after more than 50 years. So what time is it for MPAEA? It seems to me that it's time to face the business at hand

Wilda Theobald,
 MPAEA President



News from



Those who attended the summer board meeting from Arizona agreed it was time well spent. A lot was accomplished there, and more progress is now under way as a result of those proceedings. The Innovation Scholarship criteria and application have been revised; the Constitution is being reviewed for update; the Professional Development and Memorial Scholarships are being fine tuned; and our new board member from Arizona, Blair Liddicoat, is researching possible MPAEA investment opportunities. These are only a few of the current undertakings resulting from the gathering in Beaver Creek. It should prove to be a productive year for MPAEA!

The Arizona Association for Life Learning (AALL) had its second annual SUMMER CAMP on August 9, 1997. This year's theme was "A Walk through Arizona's Cultures," which explored the history of our state's Hispanics, African-Americans, Japanese Internees and the Hohokam Native American Culture.

This year's Arizona Adult Education Conference, September 24-27, kicked offed with a whimsical roast for Dr. Gary Eyre who retired as Deputy Associate

Superintendent, Arizona Department of Education. Gary, crowned "king" for the evening, reigned supreme from the dais, enjoying a series of skits and banter provided by longtime friends and associates. For the well-wishers looking on, however, the mood was bittersweet. Beneath their laughter lay the sense of loss this occasion portended. Dr. Eyre has indeed been a vanguard in adult education in Arizona, bringing innovation and advocacy to its mission for lifelong learning. He will be greatly missed and his efforts long remembered.

The conference itself was a colossal success. Speakers included our State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Lisa Graham-Keegan and Carolyn Warner, a past Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction, now President of Corporate Education Consulting, Inc. Both brought inspiring messages and motivation to appreciative conferees. The theme of the conference was ADULT LEARNING PREPARING FOR THE NEW CENTURY. In addition to pre-conference sessions, foodfests, diverse breakout topics and board

meetings, another popular attraction was the "wacky web room." Banks of computers on either side of the room provided ample stations for websurfer wannabes, and a cadre of experienced volunteers were on hand to demonstrate the use of various search engines and websites.

Be assured that the 1998 MPAEA Conference in Beaver Creek, Colorado, was gleefully heralded at the above-mentioned affairs, as well as state newsletters and other publications. Even now word has spread in Arizona about the beauty of Beaver Creek and all the amenities of its Hyatt Resort. Yes, "they will come!"

One last item: it was pointed out at the board meeting of the Arizona Association for Lifelong Learning (AALL) that Arizona has several MPAEA members who are not affiliated with the state association. If you have not already done so, please consider joining AALL. Both organizations need your participation and both welcome you.

Submitted by Harry Dennis



News from



COLORADO'S BUSINESS COMMISSION ON ADULT BASIC LEARNING

To the applause of Colorado adult educators, Governor Romer, earlier this year, appointed a 23 member Business Commission of Adult Basic Learning. Its charge was to assure the development of a better prepared future and incumbent workforce, as well as healthier families and communities, through a long-term plan to finance and promote adult basic education.

The Commission, which met over a six-month period and will continue over the 1998 legislative session, was funded in part by a \$1000 contribution from MPAEA. They are adamant on what adult basic education means for economic development, development of young children and the quality of life in all of Colorado's communities.

They understand the unpredictable nature of funding in our state. They looked at the links between the success and failure of the K-12 system and the educational level of children's parents. They examined the economic ramifications of an undereducated citizenry to the global competitiveness of Colorado. They weighed the direct connection between adult undereducation and the alarming increase in prison populations. And, they determined that if welfare reform is to be successful, adult basic

education options must be available and required aspects of benefit reform.

The commission formulated eight recommendations, according to Commission Staff Director Michelle Berry. The most important of which are:

- 1) every individual, regardless of age, should receive free basic education as long as they are working to achieve a high school diploma or its equivalency;
 - 2) establish a strategy of recruitment and retention of adult basic education educators;
 - 3) provide through the Colorado legislature funding for adult basic education programs.
- Now thanks to sponsorship by the Chair of the Senate Education committee, a bill is moving through the legislature which will for the first time, if passed, put state money into the Adult Literacy program. . . \$1 million.

Ray E. Peterson, Ed.D.
Literacy and Library Diversity
State Library and Office of Adult
Education
Colorado Department of Education
Denver 80203
303-866-6651 FAX 303-866-6940

Mark that calendar!



Join your colleagues in Colorado
for the 56th Annual MPAEA Conference

News from



Idaho adult educators are busy with early planning for the 1999 MPAEA annual conference! It will be held at the Red Lion - soon to be renamed the Doubletree - Riverside Hotel in Boise, April 28-May 1, 1999. Kathy Vickerman, Marge Slotten, and Chuck Humphrey traveled to Boise and signed a contract with the Red Lion. More details in future newsletters; Idahoans can hardly wait to "show off" our capital city!

The Idaho Lifelong Learning Association held its 6th Annual Conference at the Sun Valley Lodge in October. For the second year, the conference was cosponsored by

the Treasure Valley and Southeastern Idaho Chapters of the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD). Last year, 125 adult educators and trainers attended. The theme for this year's event was "Learning Techniques for a Lifetime". Nancy Seamons and Lois Akers were the co-chairs of the conference.

Dr. Darrel Hammon, MPAEA member and adult basic education coordinator at Eastern Idaho Technical College in Idaho Falls, has accepted a position as academic outreach coordinator at Lewis-Clark State College in Lewiston. Darrel is currently

president of the Idaho Lifelong Learning Association (ILLA), and has been a regular presenter at MPAEA conferences. We're counting on him to increase membership from Idaho's "panhandle" (northern) region in both MPAEA and ILLA!

Submitted by Dr. Chuck Humphrey

The Word from Wyoming!!

There is movement in Wyoming to merge two associations concerned with lifelong learning.

The Wyoming Lifelong Learning Association - WLLA (formerly the Wyoming Adult Continuing Community Education Association - WACCEA) and the

Wyoming Alliance for Literacy - WAL are exploring the possibility of joining forces under the WLLA banner. This merger is still in the talking stage, but some definite steps are being taken to see if this might be a positive "marriage."

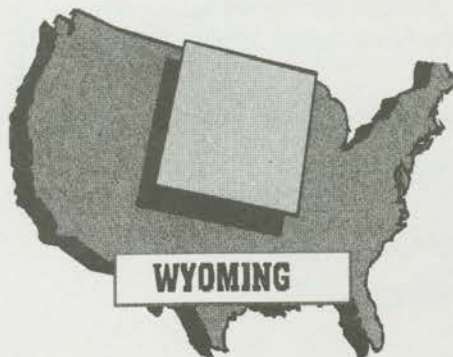
At the last meeting of the WLLA Board of Directors, two officers of WAL were appointed as Ex-officio members of the WLLA Board with the right to vote.

The merger would have some benefits to the members of both associations. One being that several persons are members of both associations and it would cut costs to belong to just one association. Second, the total

membership should be increased thus generating some additional revenue for the single association. Third, increased membership and revenue within one association should allow the membership to experience an "enhanced" state conference each year. Fourth, with the development of a single association -- the members WLLA and WAL would share in the benefits of the utilization of "state training monies."

Will the merger come to pass? At this time the answer is unknown. The possibilities, however, are most interesting as well as challenging.

Submitted by John Tollakson



News from

We're all winners . . .

A TRIP TO CINCINNATI

Arizona was recently honored when one of its GED students received American Association of Adult and Continuing Education Outstanding Learner Award. She was a student of the Rio Salado College Adult Education Program and was introduced by Blair Liddicoat of the Board. Her personal story follows.

Ninety-six hours on a Greyhound bus gave me a lot of time to think. Where had I come from? Where will this lead?

WHERE HAD I COME FROM?

Yes, I was traveling with my friend, Brenda, from Phoenix, but I had come from Oklahoma cotton fields fifty years ago. The Greyhound rolled across the plains, I remembered how my parents and we children worked long hours in the fields to survive. We had formal education--not by choice, but by necessity. My thoughts turned to my own children. I wanted better for my children! A divorce forced me to face this challenge alone. Although my lack of education had trapped me in a low-income sewing job for 23 years, my minimum-wage work enabled me to do better for my children. All of them completed high school. I saw to that!

HOW DID I GET THERE? I

recalled the day the sewing factory closed. I was devastated! No job, no education, and--I thought--no hope! However, I met a fine man

who encouraged me to go to school. That's when I went to Rio Salado College's GED class at the Maricopa Skill Center. More than 2300 hours later, I attained my GED graduation. In reviewing that period of my life, I remember the obstacles I had overcome to achieve my goal. It wasn't easy. Learning was very hard for me because I didn't have any of the basics. When I entered classes, my reading was at a third grade level, but the teachers knew I was sincere about getting an education, so they encouraged me not to lose interest. I have a sister who lives in Detroit, Michigan. She received her school equivalency diploma in 1995 at age 72. Her experience taught me that learning is an ongoing process; one is never too old. I knew if she could do it, I could, too. My husband told me I would have to "burn the midnight oil" in order to succeed. And I remembered what my teacher, Marie Olsen, told me, "Never give up a dream!" I needed all that good example and advice, especially when my husband became terminally ill. He was a great inspiration to me. He encouraged and supported me and even visited the Learning Center after his chemotherapy treatments. He was present when I was inducted into the National Adult Education Honor Society in a private ceremony in our home so that he could witness it; it was a great honor. In October, 1997, I was chosen as the Outstanding Adult Learner by AAACE. The award would be

presented in Cincinnati on November 12, 1997. As the bus neared Cincinnati, my thoughts turned to the award I was soon to accept. Winning this award was a great accomplishment for me. The experience has changed my view about what I can achieve if I apply myself. The trip itself was very educational and exciting. I planned to attend some of the sessions at the AAACE Conference. Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off the goal. I was determined to succeed because I know how life was when I was uneducated and able to get only a minimum-wage job. So no longer did I want to succeed for myself, but also for the loved ones in my life.

WHERE WILL THIS LEAD?

Although the return bus trip found my friend Brenda and me snowbound in Albuquerque, I am hopeful this is not a predictor of the future! I am currently employed part-time by Rio Salado College as an aide. I now suffer with glaucoma, and I know it will be difficult to accomplish all I would like in terms of employment; but my main goal has always been to be an inspiration to others. And to do that, I first must believe in myself. Quite, a trip--and it isn't over yet!

By Sophronia Cuspard-Samuel



MPAEA Membership Application

Please select desired membership, detach form and return with dues to:

Gary Wixom, Treasurer
Mountain Plains Adult Education Association
Utah Valley State College
462 West Chokecherry Cr.
Orem, UT 84058

Membership applying for: (Please check one)

Individual

- Individuals \$20
- Libraries \$20

Institutional

- Colleges & Universities \$45
- State Education Agencies
- Public Schools, Corporate \$45

Membership Information

Application Date _____

Name _____

Employing Institution _____

Department or Title _____

Address _____

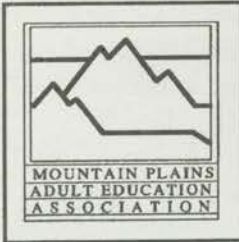
City/State/Zip _____

Business Phone _____

Residence Phone _____

Make checks payable to:

Mountain Plains Adult Education Association
All membership dues are tax deductible



MPAEA Newsletter

 Utah Valley State College
800 West 1200 South
Orem, UT 84058

Non Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Utah Valley State College

