

NEWSLETTER

Mountain Plains Adult Education Association

ARIZONA COLORADO IDAHO MONTANA NEVADA NEW MEXICO UTAH WYOMING

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President's Message – Kelsee Miller



Happy Spring, and if you're in the Rockies, then I mean, happy spring, summer, winter, fall, and construction zone!

A big thank you and congratulations to the UAACCE for the wonderful 66th annual MPAEA conference they hosted in Salt Lake City in April! The five different keynote speakers provided relevant information to every adult educator in the room. Dr. Troy Justesen provided his unique perspective on the state of adult education in America. As he said, we are more than just educators.

Dr. Brenda J. Burrell and Robyn A. Rennick enlightened us as to their specialties and how we can better reach our individual students. For those of you who missed the Awards Banquet with the entertainment of Lark and Spur and keynote Dr. Sandy Petersen, it was quite a dinner and a show that many are still talking about! Dr. Petersen's speech about lifelong learning was something everyone in the room could relate to and her humorous perspectives kept us on the edge of our seats! Dr. Laura Hunter gave a great presentation about technology and some of the expectations of the next generation in the classroom. Thankfully, MPAEA provides an annual conference of sustainable and systemic training every year to keep us informed of current technological developments!



Passing of the Gavel – Myna to Kelsee

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I also want to personally thank the past MPAEA Executive Board members who have helped me with their guidance in the past couple of years: Myna Frestedt, Detlef Johl, Lou Workman, and Teri Zutter.

Larry Wickham: A Tribute

Submitted by *Karen Mills*

If you have not heard about Larry Wickham, I am saddened to share with you that he passed away on April 9, 2008 after a courageous battle with cancer. As a long time professional and personal friend, I have been asked to provide a tribute to this remarkable man.

From the professional perspective, providing a summary of the many astonishing and lasting accomplishments is the easier of the dual roles our friendship shared. The scope of Larry's influence was more extensive than most of us might have imagined. Larry was the author and facilitator of a program entitled "Boy Scout Merit Badge Pow Wow," which over the past 30 years has helped more than 50,000 Eastern Idaho Boy Scouts with merit badge completion. This May, for the first time in 25 years, someone *other* than Larry Wickham will host Ricks College/BYU-Idaho Elderhostel – a program which has served over 15,000 attendees. Then, there's the Mountain Plains Adult Education Association. While Larry wasn't the "father" of this organization, I believe he was not only the epitome of its philosophy but also, the greatest ambassador and strongest leader MPAEA has or will have (and besides, he provided the encouragement that allowed me to "climb the wall" at the Ricks College outdoor center). Larry served the Association in a variety of positions, to include President, for more than 30 years (nearly half his life!).

From a personal vantage, did you ever see Larry without a smile? I didn't. Did you ever hear Larry say anything disparaging? I didn't. Did you ever know him to shy away from something new or a little challenging? I didn't. Have you ever known someone who was so giving, that personal inconvenience was never a consideration? I have.

As my final tribute to an exceptional and selfless man, a devoted husband, father and grandfather,

and a dear friend, I want to share a very personal story known by only a few. Larry and I met through our respective participation in MPAEA – so many years ago that suffice it to say, my children were very young! Due to my changing responsibilities with Rio Salado, I became less and less active in MPAEA; however, Larry and I continued to be connected through updates on the "latest with each other's family." Then, in 1997, I shared some bittersweet (for my husband and me) news with Larry. Our daughter was going to be married, in January of 1998, in the Mesa LDS Temple – a ceremony that my husband and I would not be able to participate in because we were not members of the Church.

Without hesitation, Larry, and another long-time friend from MPAEA, Ron Campbell, called to tell me that they would consider it an honor to represent my husband and me at the ceremony, if that was something we would like them to do. Without a thought about treacherous road conditions (they drove from Idaho to Phoenix in early January) or time away from their own families, they were here! I will never find the words to truly express the feelings that their presence at my daughter's wedding meant to us...both Larry and Ron looked beyond the differences in our religion and through the bonds of our friendship, turned a difficult situation into the celebration it was meant to be.

While Larry will be missed, his spirit lives on in all of us who were touched by his sense of humor, his graciousness, his sincerity, his "can do" attitude and his joy for living – and we should rejoice in his final reward for a life that was lived so very well.

Conference Comment: "Outstanding and meaningful" *Mary Zoscinski*

How Integrated Advising Works in an Outreach Site

Submitted by *Patty Pedersen*, Student Services Coordinator, Carbon County Higher Education Center, Rawlins, WY.

As the Student Services Coordinator (SSC) of Carbon County Higher Education Center, the largest part of my job is advising students in the Rawlins outreach site of Western Wyoming Community College.

As I work on my Masters of Academic Advising degree from Kansas State University, I recently connected the concept of integrated advising (Gordon, 2000) to the SSC position. Combining advising with career counseling made me think about the integration of services an outreach advisor provides to students.

To help you think about how integrated advising might work within your environment, here is a brief description of meeting with a new student.

In a one-hour meeting, the following is covered.

1. If the student is unsure of their career goal, an appointment is made for them to take an online or paper/pencil career evaluation.
2. In discussing the basic academic program requirements, if the student does not have the required ACT scores to qualify for freshman level classes, an appointment is made for the Compass exam.
3. The FAFSA and financial aid information is reviewed. The student is given a paper copy of the FAFSA worksheet to take home and complete.
4. I review the other student services available to the student, such as ADA needs, counseling, career coaching, and tutoring.
5. The student completes the online application to WWCC, requests their high school or GED transcript, and applies for a PIN for the FAFSA.

In one visit to the outreach site, the student has interacted with the departments of admission, registration and records, financial aid, career services, student development and academic advising – a truly integrated service. Teaching the student to make the connection between their goals, academic needs, and life style is the most exciting part of delivering integrated advising.

Gordon, V. N. (2000). *Academic advising: a comprehensive handbook*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Mark Your Calendars

The Nevada Conference Committee is busy planning the 67th annual MPAEA conference in Las Vegas on March 1 – 4, 2009: Lifelong Learning – It's More Than Luck!

For more info keep checking their website <http://www.nvadulted.org/>

Reminder

The American Association of Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) will be hosting their annual conference in Denver, CO on November 10 – 14, 2008! Hope to see you there! <http://www.aaace.org/>

News from Nevada



Submitted by Sharyn Yanoshak

The Web site for the newly formed Nevada Adult Educators organization (NAE) is up and running at www.nvadulted.org.

NAE is offering free membership to Nevadans for the 2008-2009 academic year. Visit the Web site or contact Membership Chair Cynthia Pierrott, cynthia.pierrott@csn.edu, 702/651-4296.

NAE will host the 2009 MPAEA conference March 1-4 in Las Vegas. The Call for Presenters is posted on the Web site and is due September 15. Program Chair is Kathy Biagi, kabiagi@clan.lib.nv.us, 775/684-3341.

Nevada is also hosting the annual GED Administrators' Conference in Sparks July 14-17. Eight scholarships will be awarded to GED graduates. Contact Adult Education Director Mary Katherine Moen, mkmoen@doe.nv.gov, 775/687-7289 for more information.



News from Wyoming

Building Partnerships for Wyoming: A Statewide Conference on Non-Credit Programming - Sponsored by the UW Outreach School

Submitted by: Rebecca Eskelson

What a wonderful conference this was! Being held at the UW Outreach School in "Windy Casper," given our cold winter and spring, the dates of April 3 & 4 were beautiful, sunny conference days.

This conference was designed for professionals in the dynamic fields within non-credit programming, workforce development, professional education, extension and enrichment community services. A wonderful turnout of professionals was noted as almost 40 participants and facilitators from across the state attended. This interactive conference allowed for networking and discussion of possibilities for collaboration among those in attendance. Many thoughts, ideas, promotional materials, and experiences along with a sense of humor thrown in, were taken home with each attendee.

One of the outcomes of this conference was the creation of a statewide Task Force. The ideas generated from the conference will be looked at by this Task Force, they will in turn decide on the next steps, along with setting goals, to ensure this network of non-credit programming continues.

Conference Comment: “This is one of the BEST conferences I’ve attended in years!” *Myna Freesteed*

News from Utah

The 2008 MPAEA Conference – “Endless Possibilities” was a resounding success, thanks in no small part to all of you who attended the conference! We’d especially like to thank the conference committee from the Utah



Association for Adult, Community, and Continuing Education – Scott Greenwell (chair), Connie Vincent, Judy Tukuafu,

Tom Borg, Sandi Grant, John Kent, and Nate Southerland. A special thanks goes to Connie and her crew with Utah Valley State College’s Conferences & Workshops for all of their hard work in preparing for and advertising the conference.

In addition to good food, lots of cheesecake, entertainment from the award-winning musical group Lark & Spur, and a “sweet” light show at the Clark Planetarium, the 300 conference participants enjoyed a total of three pre-conference sessions, five keynote addresses, and 64 breakout sessions featuring a variety of local

and national speakers. Highlights included the following:

- *Dr. Troy Justesen*, Assistant Secretary of Education over the Office of Adult and Vocational Education, gave a keynote address outlining the federal perspective on adult education.
- *Dr. Brenda Burrell*, Minority Graduation Specialist for the Utah State Office of Education, shared important insights for working with diverse students.
- *Robyn Rennick*, president of the National Association for Adults with Special Learning Needs (NAASLN), delivered a keynote address on building education programs that are responsive to those with special needs,
- *Dr. Sandy Petersen*, president of Petersen and Associates Consulting, entertained attendees at the awards banquets with lessons learned from her life.
- *Dr. Laura Hunter*, Director of Instructional Services for the Utah Education Network, presented the closing keynote on working with students in the digital age.

In addition, awards were presented to a variety of individuals by both the Mountain Plains Adult Education Association and the Utah Association for Adult, Community, and Continuing Education. Award recipients from Utah were:

- *Scott Greenwell* – MPAEA Award of Excellence
- *Herb Clark* – Lay Leader of the Year
- *Rep. Kory M. Holdaway* – Legislator of the Year
- *Jamie Paskins* – Adult Educator of the Year
- *Sylvia Morales* – Adult Learner of the Year

We hope you enjoyed the 2008 MPAEA Conference and your stay with us in Salt Lake City, and we look forward to next year’s conference in Las Vegas, NV.

Finally, Utah is gearing up for the annual fall UAACCE conference, which will be held November 6-7, 2008 at Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah. We invite all MPAEA members to consider attending and presenting at our fall conference. You can find conference details and submission information by visiting www.uaacce.org.

Conference Comment: "This is the best opportunity to interact with professionals from other states." Patricia Thorpe

News from Montana



Submitted by Suzette Fox

MAACE Vision Statement

MAACE promotes learning as a lifelong process through advocacy, professional development and collaboration among local, state, tribal and national organizations.

Professional Development and MT LINKS

Montana professional development continues through the weekly "Reading is the Bridge" (RIB) update using the MT LINC's site. Norene Peterson's PowerPoint will explain more about the history of MT LINK and how it has developed:

<http://www.nwlincs.org/mtlincs/mpaea/MTLINCS08.ppt>

Montana Association for Adult and Community Education (MAACE) Conference Update

The Annual MAACE Business meeting, Awards Ceremony, and Installation of new Board Members will be held **September 16, 2008**, in Helena, Montana, in conjunction with the Data Quality Institute. The MAACE Board will be developing a new strategic plan around advocacy for Adult Basic Literacy Education at the local, state, and national levels. Please contact one of your Board Members to offer ideas and/or volunteer to assist with this task: <http://www.nwlincs.org/mtlincs/maaceboard/2007board.pdf>

Resume and Cover Letter Resources

Two sample resumes, a sample cover letter, and directions on how to create these documents are posted at the following site under the heading: **MPAEA '08 Conference Follow-up:**

<http://www.nwlincs.org/mtlincs/teachertutor.htm>

Contact Suzette Fox for more information: foxs@billings.k12.mt.us

News from Colorado



Submitted by Jolene Goerend and Katrina Wert

Spotlight on the Work Intensive Skills Camp

In 2006, the Colorado Refugee English as a Second Language (CRESL) program at Emily Griffith Opportunity School in Denver, Colorado, implemented an innovative hands-on program for students to develop job skills and English comprehension. The Work Intensive Skills Camp (WISC) is a four-week program that combines vocabulary instruction, skill development and work culture awareness for multi-level English learners.

"This is a very important training program," said WISC participant Jamal Ahmed. "We use the words we will need at work and we learn how to work in the U.S.A."

Participants are referred to WISC by their case manager. During the first two weeks, students review work vocabulary and culture, including the importance of being on time, in uniform, requesting time off, teamwork and being safe. Classes center on six career tracks, such as cashier. After two weeks of instruction, the students practice their new skills in different departments around the school in a sheltered environment with an instructional mentor. Immediate feedback on daily evaluations allows for rapid skills improvement. Following this week, the students prepare and serve tea and baked goods to Opportunity School staff.

In the final week, the students job shadow at a local hotel. For three days, three hours each day, the students wear a uniform and "shadow" a

worker in one of three areas: laundry, dish washing or housekeeping (alternative placements have been made for students at higher levels of English comprehension). From that point forward, each student's case manager employment specialist helps the student apply, interview and secure a job.

Conference Comment: "This was a great conference . . . the breakout sessions were really valuable to me." *Joyce Corcoran*

In its first year of operation, WISC has successfully served more than 120 students.

WISC instructors attribute the success to several factors, including practical application of language skills. In addition, students develop support circles during class times in which they talk to each other about their experiences and ask specific questions about English phrases they heard and didn't understand or wish they knew how to say. "It's exciting to see students develop the skills they actually need on the job," said instructor Kim Hosp. "The partnership and communication between teachers, HR personnel at the hotels and agency case managers makes that possible."

News from Arizona

The importance of building partnerships was emphasized at the one-day conference held at the El Pueblo Regional Center on Friday, April 11, 2008. There was a lot of excitement and anticipation as 39 partners from all over the state gathered to attend the "LET'S AALL TALC: *Building Partnerships for a Healthy Economy*" This is a pioneering event that brought together community partners whose main goal was to improve the quality of life and education of our students.

Arizona Association for Lifelong Learning (AALL) and the Tucson Area Literacy Coalition (TALC) sponsored this one-day conference that focused on the role literacy plays in developing and maintaining a healthy economy. Educators, administrators, community members, policy makers, workforce professionals, students, teachers, and business leaders attended this event. Community partners included

AmeriCorps, Pima Community, College Enrollment Services, Rio Salado College Adult Basic Education, Arizona Public Media KUAT 6, Pima County Interfaith Council, Workforce Development, PCC, Social Venture Partners, Build-up Purpose, Altrusa International Arizona Association for Lifelong Learning, Tucson Area Literacy Coalition, Pima Community College, and the Arizona Department of Education.

One of the most touching moments of the conference was when participants were asked to talk about partnerships that worked and really improved the lives of our students. There was a tremendous amount of energy at the conference as the voices of partners and students joined together to find ways of building a better future.

Conference "Newbee" Observations



"As a new MPAEA member and first time conference attendee, I have enjoyed the conference. I was amazed at the variety of specialization in adult education and how different some areas are from my little niche in Eastern Idaho Technical College's ABE program. At the same time, the goals are the same - challenge learners and provide valuable learning opportunities.

Some highlights:

- data, data, data-Washington needs the data to provide funding
- if a student isn't learning, change how YOU are presenting!
- choose sessions carefully
- take timeout to talk about what you have learned"

- *Monica Dudenhoeffer*

"I attended the MPAEA conference that was held the end of April in Salt Lake City, Utah. I felt that the conference was very well done. The variety and quality of presenters was fantastic, especially the keynote speakers. The breakout session topics appealed to a wide range of interests and programs. I took many valuable

ideas and tools away with me from most of the sessions that I attended. The facilities, food, entertainment, etc. were all great as well. The conference also provided opportunities to network with people from other programs across the country. I look forward to attending the conference next year. Thanks!"

Ilene Stolworthy

Conference Comment: "Very fun and informative . . . Wow!" Jerry Keniston

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Professional Development Scholarships

The following are this year's Professional Development Scholarship recipients. Each recipient used the \$500 to attend the MPAEA Conference in Salt Lake City in April.

- Arizona - *Shannon Newman*
- Colorado - *Scott Baker*

- Nevada - *Kathleen Jameson*

This year's Memorial Scholarship for Graduate Studies recipient is *Elizabeth Erichsen*. She will use the \$1000 to complete her doctoral studies at the University of Wyoming in Adult & Post Secondary Education. Congratulations to all recipients!

Awards Galore!

The following *Awards of Excellence* were presented at April's Conference:

- Arizona – *Henry "Hank" Temes*
- Colorado – *Betty Carson*
- Idaho – *Wilma Doyle*
- Montana – *Detlef Johl*
- Nevada – *Linda Bogle*
- Wyoming – *Pamela Clark*
- Utah – *Scott Greenwell*

Lay Leader of the Year – *Herbert E. Clark*

And the Award of Merit goes to: *Lily Beth Brazones*.

Congratulations to all!

President *Kelsee Miller* presents *Dr. Pamela Clark* with Award of Excellence for Wyoming



Conference Comment: "The speakers were excellent, carefully chosen, and NOT boring at all."
Lily Beth Brazones

MPAEA Journal of Adult Education

The MPAEA Journal of Adult Education is a refereed journal intended to serve as a voice for the translation of theory to practice for the membership of the Mountain Plains Adult Education Association (MPAEA). The Editors

of the *MPAEA Journal of Adult Education* encourage the submission of clearly written research articles, technique manuscripts, and book reviews which have the potential of stimulating thought, discussion, and inquiry.

The criteria for evaluating each manuscript will be based upon:

- (a) potential contribution to the improvement and/or understanding of practice,
- (b) clarity of purpose,
- (c) logical relationship to conceptual base,
- (d) writing style,
- (e) general scholarship,
- (f) strength of conclusions,
- (g) implications for practice,
- (h) adherence to submission guidelines.

Those interested in submitting manuscripts to the Journal should send four copies of the article to: *Dr. Gary Conti* / Oklahoma State University / 206 Willard Hall / Stillwater, OK 74078 / (405) 744-9192

Article Categories for the Journal

MPAEA Journal of Adult Education accepts submissions in the following categories:

Research Articles. Discuss concepts, theory, and research findings of particular interest and significance to adult education professionals. Maximum length: 3500 words including abstract, figures, and references.

Technique Articles. Describe examples of innovative practice and procedures in relationship to recognized principles of adult education research and practice. Maximum length: 1000 words including abstract, figures, and references.

Book Reviews. Describe the content of a book, evaluate the book's success in accomplishing the intended purpose, and give a recommendation based on the book's relevance and benefits to adult education professionals. Maximum length: 1000 words. Do not include an abstract.

Letters to the Editors. Readers are invited to submit letters, rebuttals, and comments related to published articles or ideas reflected in the *MPAEA Journal of Adult Education*. Letters should be no longer than one typewritten page.

For submission guidelines, contact the Journal editors, your state's MPAEA board members, or send inquiry to your newsletter editor.

Beyond How-To Civics: Education for Adult Learners

Submitted by *Cynthia Peters*



The Traditional Civics Class

Did your experience of learning civics in the classroom go something like this: a drawing on the board with the 3 branches of government and

discussions about what happens among professional politicians, how a bill becomes a law, or perhaps, how to lobby your elected official? Mine too! The problem with such an approach is that it uncritically presumes that we have a democracy, and we just need to fill learners up with the knowledge they need to vote, follow rules, and navigate government. This kind of civics education relegates politics to a narrow realm and assigns citizens isolated (rather than collective) and passive (rather than participatory) roles in civic life. Politics is more about what *governments* do while citizens act merely as spectators. Voting while important, involves limited and isolated moments of popular involvement (and not for everyone).

It wasn't until I became involved in a high school club where we learned about "Roe v. Wade" and marched in Washington, D.C., while chucking tennis balls marked with pro-choice messages at the White House that political participation felt meaningful to me. The more I became involved in such activities, the more I began to feel skeptical that democracy was a done deal. I realized that to effectively influence decision-making processes, I needed to do more than merely understand how my government works and then dutifully vote every couple of years. I needed a civics class that honored the democratic principle of encouraging each person to bring his or her full intelligence, creativity and skepticism to analyze the efficacy of what we've got and imagine how it might work better. I needed a civics class that opened up space to debate, deconstruct, and analyze taken-for-

granted assumptions about the meanings of democracy. I needed a civics class that moved beyond reinforcing the rules of the existing political and economic system—a system that I had begun to experience as being broken and serving primarily to keep the rich, rich, the poor, poor and those in power, powerful.

The First Challenge: Unpacking the Concept of Democracy

As an ABE teacher, I have thought a lot about how to teach civics in a way that models the kind of democratic participation and critical thinking we need to be a truly functional democracy. For me this has meant being conscious of the ways that different notions of democracy bring different beliefs regarding the knowledge, skills, and values needed by citizens for democracy to thrive and, therefore, significantly different implications for civics curricula. While as teachers we may feel that we can stay above the political, whether we're aware of it or not our pedagogical choices presuppose a particular framework of society which does direct us.

For example, for some, democracy is related to liberal ideas about protections of individual rights such as the right to private property; for others, democracy is about equality of opportunity. For many, democracy can be found in free markets while for others, civil society is the site of democratic activity. Likewise, the definition of a good citizen changes according to the framework invoked by a particular version of democracy. For some, good citizens volunteer; for some they participate in campaigns. Yet for others, they question the existing system. [See 3 types of citizens chart.] I'd like to think that the pedagogical choices I make are based upon a conscious weighing of the various conceptions of democracy and reflect a broad understanding of such meanings, foremost ones that view people as active, skeptical and questioning participants in creating a more just world.

Is Participation Enough?

The idea of participatory democracy certainly sounds good. It helps us move beyond an individualistic liberal understanding of democracy taught in the traditional civics class and pushes us to create effective venues for citizens to act collectively for the common good.

In such a democracy, citizens are directly involved in decision-making and individual improvement is connected to the public good.

By focusing on the workings of institutions outside of the central government, such as community organizations, unions, and workplaces, curricula for participatory democracy prepare learners for more varied methods of participation. This type of civic education aims to develop learners' civic sense so that they can recognize the difference between their self-interest and that which is best for the public good; focus on problem-solving, whereby learners draw on civic values for interpretation and exercising of judgment; and teach the skills of civic action required for exerting influence in public affairs, such as public speaking, research, cooperative work, bargaining, and negotiating.

While adding important ideas to the traditional civics curriculum, curricula for a participatory democracy, like the "classical" version of civics education, assumes we have a well functioning democracy; we just need more involvement in it. One might wonder, however, what difference more participation makes if the fundamental operations of our political system remain unchanged. For example, without addressing the huge influence of wealth on people's ability to run for office, set the political agenda or lobby elected officials, our political system will continue to shut out the very people upon whose voices a well functioning democracy depends.

From Civics as Procedure to Civics as Critical Reflection & Questioning

A critical approach to civics education would move away from treating learners as empty receptacles to be filled with information and procedures and instead draw upon learners' vast experiences and knowledge to help them examine how their personal experiences and problems are often structurally produced and connected to broader forces.

Procedural understanding of democracy, however, has been reinforced to the point that it is perceived as almost natural. Traditional civics teachers ask learners to buy into the idea that democracy is out there somewhere quietly working to protect their rights. Problems that people encounter then appear to be the result of

individual misfortune rather than systematic inequalities or deficiencies. Facilitating critical reflection by comparing individuals' experiences with the ideological beliefs about society that individuals are taught to believe, reveals inconsistencies that help learners to question the extent to which we have a democracy.

For example, in one of my classes, in which the majority of students was in and out of lockup or had friends who were, learners expressed frustration at their own and their friends' inability to vote due to past arrests. In response to student interest in this issue, I presented a chart displaying voter felony disenfranchisement laws in the fifty states. The conversation moved from individual stories and experiences of disempowerment to looking at the issue as a systemic problem that results from a government that students said doesn't recognize the notion of rehabilitation and second chances. Had half the class not gotten locked up or encountered severe personal crises the next week, we would have looked in more depth at the organizing forces and structures that shape the students' individual experiences. Such an activity would have allowed learners to move between their experiences and the lens through which they view their experiences (assumptions about the political system and democracy), so that they may assess and possibly adapt their interpretations and their frameworks for understanding the world around them. There's no irony in the fact that the people whose stories most fly in the face of the idea that we live in a functional democracy are most often (literally) locked up, locked out of public debate, or in some other way (through poor educations, impoverished living conditions, or demeaning work) kept from making their voices heard.

As ABE teachers, we have the opportunity to entertain conceptions of democracy that go beyond mastering procedure or increasing levels of participation. We have an opportunity, in other words, to provide a space for debate, conflict, reflection, questioning and visioning, and a chance to grow and change in our thinking as we hear from one another and learn about various conceptions of democracy. If we avoid this opportunity because it feels too controversial, and we decide that a more neutral approach would be to stay with the tried and true

curricular approaches to civics, we're not actually being apolitical. Rather, we're choosing to leave things as they are – indeed a political choice!

So do we have a democracy? And what is democracy? Is it maximizing numbers of participants? Voting? Running for office? Civil disobedience? Discussion? Creating better systems when the current ones fail us? Does it require certain conditions such as the redistribution of wealth? Is it a given thing? Is it a process? Who participates? Let's discuss it!

For more thought-provoking articles, check out [The Change Agent](http://www.nelrc.org/changeagent/toc.htm) at <http://www.nelrc.org/changeagent/toc.htm>



Colorado Award of Excellence Recipient *Betty Carlson*

Have a pleasant and relaxing summer!



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