

# WHITESIDE REGIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION



## Educational Highlights

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April 2000

Newsletter No. 8 Volume 55

### Calendar Of Events

#### April

- 2 Daylight savings time begins; set clocks ahead one hour.
- 6 Gifted Level II Training - ROE - 8 a.m. to noon
- 9-15 National Library Week
- 9-15 National Volunteers' Week
- 10 PBL/Multi-Media Training, ROE - 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- 10 VIP Review Panel meeting ROE - 3:30 p.m.
- 12 County Tech. Coord. mtg. ROE - 1- 3 p.m.
- 13 Gifted Level II Training - ROE - 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- 13 CONTIG Math Contest 6:30 p.m., Southside School
- 21 Good Friday - ROE closed
- 23 Easter Sunday
- 25 PBL/Multi-Media Training, ROE, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m

### CONTIG

The Whiteside County CONTIG Math Contest will be held Thursday, April 13, 6:30 p.m. at Southside School in Morrison. Good luck to all participants.

### Spelling Bee

The Whiteside County Spelling Bee was held on Saturday, March 25 at Morrison Jr. High School. After 10 rounds of competition, Jaya Kalra, eighth grader at Challand Middle School, was declared the winner; Cara Kaufman, an eighth grader at Fulton Middle School was declared runner-up. For first place Jaya Kalra won an expense-paid trip to the National finals of the Scripps Howard Spelling Bee to be held May 28 - June 2 in Washington, D.C. She was also awarded the Samuel Louis Sugarman Award, \$100 Series EE U.S. Savings Bond; Merriam Webster's Third International Dictionary and its Addenda; \$50 gift certificate and DK Merriam-Webster's Children's Dictionary from Dorling Kindersley; and a Corel Word Perfect Office 2000. As runner-up, Cara Kaufman earned Merriam Webster's Third International Dictionary and its Addenda. Third place went to Nicole McLain, an eighth grader at Tampico Middle School who earned a Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. In fourth place was Rebecca Saunders, an eighth grader at Challand Middle School, who was awarded Compton's Dictionary and Thesaurus. Jaden Pack, a sixth grader at Christ Lutheran School, finished in fifth place and was awarded a gift certificate from Scripps Howard News Service.

A special thanks to Helen Blomberg, pronouncer; Pam Erby, Karen Voss, and Tim Slavin, judges; and the Morrison School district for the use of their facilities. Local sponsors of the Bee included our office, the Whiteside County Bar Association, the Whiteside County Bankers' Federation, and the Daily Gazette. Thanks to all who helped or contributed in any way and good luck to Jaya in D.C.!

### What's Inside

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## **Four Illinois Student Scholarships Available**

**The** Illinois Association of County Officials (IACO) with the support of Fidler & Chambers Company, is announcing the availability of four Illinois student scholarships. Two \$1,000 scholarships to any Illinois four year college or university and two \$500 scholarships applicable to any Illinois community college. Any Illinois high school senior who will graduate in the spring of 2000 and plans to enter college in the fall of 2000 are eligible to apply. Application deadline is April 18. For more information or an application, contact this office.

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## **Newsflash!**

**The** Regional Office has just received information that the monies for Title II (Eisenhower monies) have been released and grant applications are in the mail. Be watching this newsletter for further information on how Whiteside County will offer professional development during the summer months. Those *Lego* workshops may be back again!

## **Gifted Education: Level II**

**The** last two sessions of Level II of the Gifted Training are scheduled for Thursday, April 6 and 13. Seven participants are completing the training to receive the certificate of completion which is one of the two possible documentations for salary reimbursement. Joanne Rompel is the instructor who is presenting the areas of program administration, staff development, program evaluation, advocacy, and curriculum modifications for the gifted. Each participant will be completing a unit of curriculum which has been adapted for the gifted students in his class. Special attention is being given to address the needs of the gifted student in the regular classroom setting.

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## **Writing Rubric Workshops - A Success**

**O**n March 14, 24 elementary teachers and 6 middle/high school teachers were introduced to the rubric for the writing portion of the ISAT. Sharon Vaughan of Mendota presented the rubric, its application at multiple grade levels, and strategies to assist students to write more clearly and hence, to improve scores. The comprehension of the rubric and what constitutes a "Meets and Exceeds" and "Below Standards" at each level was the basis of the workshop, so daily writing assignments may be scored with the same rubric as the ISAT. Good writing is good writing, whether on the ISAT or in the classroom on a daily assignment. To quote one of the participants: "This is the best writing workshop I have ever attended. I understand the rubric now, and I can apply it to my classes. I can't wait to share it with the other teachers in my building."

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## **Education To Careers Mini-grants are Offered**

**A**ll public school teachers of kindergarten and first grade, second and third grade, middle school language arts and social studies, high school foreign language and home economics were targeted for mini-grants for Education To Careers curriculum development. ETC is not a program or curriculum; it is the final step in presenting any curriculum by making the application to real life and/or a career of that concept or unit of study. It responds to the student question, "Why do we have to learn this stuff?" Nine individuals will be developing 1 - 5 career or real-life applications to be based on curriculum that is already being taught. Each activity will be reproduced into a booklet and distributed to all schools in Whiteside County in late May.

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## SERVICES

- **Laminating** - If you would like to laminate your school materials, etc., stop by and use the laminating machine. Cost is \$.50 per foot. If you would like our office to do the laminating for you, the cost is \$1.00 per foot.

- **Ellison Letter Machine** - You may use the Ellison letter machine either at the office for \$2 per use or off-site for \$10 per day with you picking up the machine and returning it.

- **Consultations** - If you have questions pertaining to: (1) school improvement, assessment, quality assurance, REI, gifted, please contact Betty Clementz; (2) scientific literacy, please contact Paul Cannon; (3) Adm. Academy, please contact Bob Marinangeli; and (4) technology, retired professional service core, contact Gary Steinert. Although Bob and Paul are not in the office on a full-time basis, we will be sure to get your questions answered. Please do not hesitate to call if you have questions.

- **Even Start Family Education Program** - Even Start is an individualized, home-based family education program that brings parents and children together in learning. If you know of a family that has a parent who wants to work towards a GED or improve English as a Second Language skills, has a child between birth and seven years of age, and lives in Whiteside County, please give the office a call and ask to talk to Mary Gospodarczyk.

## ALFY

Alfy.com is a teacher portal filled with resources for you. The site is divided into three sections: Teach, Learn, and Communicate (TLC).

Listed under "Teach" are thematic units, lesson plans, lesson builders, ALFY's Library, and Brain Teasers. The thematic units are correlated to the Illinois Learning Standards. Much of the site is focused on K-3 learning. There are units for the four basic core areas as well as early childhood units and kindergarten units such as the 100th Day of School.

Additionally, ALFY has an agreement with the Make a Wish Foundation whereby ALFY will donate \$50 when a district adds them as a link under teacher resources and will donate \$20 when an elementary building adds them as well. Not only can you find wonderful resources, you can help a great cause!

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## Unfilled Teaching Positions

Home Ec.(Clothing and Foods) and P.E. Teacher - River Bend CUSD #2. IL Certification 9-12. Contact Jerry Klooster, prin., Fulton H.S., 1207 12th Street, Fulton, IL 61252, 815/589-3511.

High School Principal - Morrison CUSD #6. IL Certification. Contact Larry Eggleston, supt., 643 Genesee Avenue, Morrison, IL 61270, 815/772-2064.

High School Science (primarily Biology) Teacher - Morrison CUSD #6. IL Certification. Contact Steve Fager, prin., 643 Genesee Avenue, Morrison, IL 61270, 815/772-4071.

Superintendent/Principal - East Coloma School District No. 12, IL Certification. Contact Carl Sartwell, supt., 1602 Dixon Avenue, Rock Falls, IL 61071, 815/625-4400.

Prophetstown-Lyndon-Tampico CUSD #3 has the following teacher vacancies:

Chemistry/Physics

Vocal/Instrumental Music

Guidance

Special Education

IL Certification. Contact LeRoy Hooks, supt., 310 Riverside Drive, Prophetstown, IL 61277, 815/537-5101.

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## Arts Resource Grants

The Illinois Arts Council will offer selected schools the option to apply for Arts Resource grants ranging from \$500 - \$4,000 for the year of 2000 - 2001. These grants will be used to support projects that provide new professional development opportunities for their teachers and to help schools meet the state's standards and local school improvement plans for the fine arts. Funded schools will partner with artists as their consultants to support activities that develop new curriculum and/or revise existing curriculum, implement teacher training initiatives in the arts, or create performance assessment strategies for the fine arts.

Contact the IAC at (312) 814-6765 for further information and/or the Intent to Apply form which must be returned no later than May 1. Schools that qualify to apply for the actual funding will be notified by July 15; schools that do not qualify will be provided information about other arts education funding available.

## Poster Contest for Economics

The Illinois Council on Economic Education is sponsoring a poster contest, for students in grades 1 - 8, based on the theme: "A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words". A \$50 savings bond will be given to each of 12 state winners whose entries will advance to a regional competition. Deadline to submit posters is **April 30**. Call 815/753-0356 to request a brochure with rules and guidelines.

## StarNet Programs Available

Programs recorded from StarNet include professional development which are 1-2 hours in length and student enrichment; student enrichment programs are each 25 minutes on a specified topic. All programs are available for teachers to use in their classrooms. Submit a Request to View form to the attention of Betty Clementz at the Regional Office. Any program may be requested in advance of the broadcast, and you will be contacted when the tape is ready for pick-up from the office. Tapes from September - March are also available, as are the tapes of programs from the 1997-1998 school year. The programs taped during March are:

### Professional Development

*Best Practices Part 4: Alternative Education*

*Brain-Compatible Classrooms*

*Transitioning From Pre-Service to In-Service: Part 7 Professional Development*

*Tech Time: Pictures and Imaging Technology*

*Apples Magazine: The Autism Puzzle*

*Reading Reconsidered*

*The GED, You and Me*

*Signals of Distress*

*The Neurobiology of Self-Esteem, Impulsivity and Aggression*

*Tech Zone: Technology on a Budget*

### Student Enrichment: Elementary/Middle School

*Creative Dramatics Part 3*

*Fast Forward*

*Careers & College*

*Creative Dramatics: Part 4*

*Coastal Ecology X-Pedition*

*Cat Paws: Simon Says Science*

*Proportionality: Modeling the Future (NASA)*

*Healthy Rainbow: How To Eat Your Veggies*

*Green Spaces in Odd Places*

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### **New Website Helps Teachers Find Learning Resources**

**T**he Gateway to Educational Materials (**GEM**) can be located at [www.thegateway.org](http://www.thegateway.org) where teachers will be able to type in a topic, grade level, and other information on a search screen that then retrieves lessons, instructional units, and other free educational materials on that topic at that grade level. GEM lets teachers, as well as students and parents, search instructional materials of more than 140 federal, state, university, non-profit, and commercial organizations. Currently, there are more than 7,000 items with hundreds of new resources being added and new consortium members joining each month.

“**GEM** is more than a web site,” said Linda Roberts, special advisor for technology to U.S. Secretary of Education Riley. “It is a solution that was developed by a consortium of organizations that got together and said, ‘Let’s find a way to make it easier for teachers to find lesson ideas across all our websites with one simple search.’”

### **Aurora University Classes in Whiteside County**

**P**lans are progressing for offering two classes in Whiteside County for three hours of graduate credit. Both will be offered after July 1 so credits will apply to continuing professional development credit units for certification.

**OEDC 6334**, Art for the Elementary Classroom Teacher, is designed for teachers of the elementary and middle school, both art instructors as well as regular classroom teachers. The request for this class was an outgrowth of the fine arts conference, Meeting The Challenge X, which was held at Sauk Valley Community College in January. Stan Karnoscak, one of the presenters at that conference, will be the instructor. If you wish information sent directly to you, please contact our office.

**OEDS 5214**, Gifted Curriculum Advanced, is designed for teachers who wish to increase their skills in modifying the curriculum to meet the needs of students who are identified as gifted. This class is designed for both regular classroom teachers and teachers of only gifted students. The prerequisite is that the registrant has completed both Level I and Level II of the gifted training offered through regional offices of education. If you wish information sent directly to you about this class, please contact our office.

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### **Time Magazine Offers College Planning to Middle Scholars**

**T**ime Magazine is offering a reprint of their *InTime* student magazine issue, “Thinking About College? It’s Never Too Soon” to middle school classes. This issue deals with starting to plan for life on campus and offers ideas to parents on where to find financial assistance. For a copy, call 800-MERRILL, extension 4064 or access it through the magazine’s website at <[www.Time.com/teach](http://www.Time.com/teach)>.

### **Grant Information on Website**

**T**he Illinois Federal Clearinghouse is a new State of Illinois website that provides detailed information on private, state, and national foundations. Many of these grants make funds available to schools. Check it out at [www.state.il.us/fedclear/](http://www.state.il.us/fedclear/)

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## **SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY CORNER**

**Paul Cannon**

**NIH Curriculum Supplements Series:** Each year three new curriculum supplements are published that bring modern medical research findings from the National Institutes of Health into classrooms across the United States. The three units released in 1999 are for use in high school science classrooms. These units comply with the National Science Education Standards and contain up-to-date scientific data. Each is well organized for integration into a broader curriculum and includes five inquiry-based activities that may be used in sequence or individually; a key for using the supplement in conjunction with major textbooks; extensive background materials for teachers, a list of additional resources, a glossary, references and copy masters; and an interactive CD-ROM with engaging resources such as video scenarios, simulations, animations, and databases. There are units on Cell Biology and Cancer, emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, NIH institute, and curriculum developers such as BSCS. And, the best part...these resources are absolutely free.

For further information about the individual units, and how to order the material you can go the following website <<http://science-education.nih.gov/supplements>>.

**Challenger Center's Window on the Universe:** Challenger Center's Window on the Universe is a community-based program which is taking selected communities across the country on a fantastic journey through the universe. Through innovative programming, Window Communities will become empowered to develop a lasting collaboration between schools, businesses, families, and other local resources.

Funded by grants from NASA's Human Exploration and Development of Space Enterprise and Office of Space Science, Window will use human space flight and the space sciences, within a multidisciplinary (cross-curricular) context to engage entire communities. Challenger Center will provide a variety of resources to each community. K-12 educators will receive hands-on training on educational activities, students will be able to meet and talk with Visiting Researchers in their classrooms, and entire families can learn together what it is like to be a researcher on the space frontier. Visit their website at <<http://www.challenger.org/wotu>>.

Another program with a similar name...Windows to the Universe...is a NASA sponsored space science initiative from the University of Michigan which provides web resources to students, teachers, and the public. Visit them at <<http://www.windows.umich.edu>>.

**Teacher of the Year:** The Illinois teacher of the year is Kevin Murphy, a physics and astronomy teacher in Lyons Township High School. Kevin teaches grades 11 and 12 and has been teaching for 13 years. He is now scheduling speaking engagements around the state. To hear him speak in your schools, either at an inservice meeting or at a conference/workshop, at no cost to your district, call Kathy at Lyons Township High School, **708-579/6409**.

**Science Junction:** This website is hosted by North Carolina State University. The Teacher Terminal of Science Junction contains nine different lesson plans. At the moment, lessons are only available in life sciences and earth and space, and several deal with the ecosystem of North Carolina. However, the lessons are good, easy to follow, and informative. The Geological Exploration lesson is particularly interrogating, drawing students into the world of geologic mapping and investigation. Visit them at <<http://www.ncsu.edu/sciencejunction/>>.

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**Starlab Training:** I am in the process of setting up a summer training session for NEW users of the STARLAB. This is a great resource for teaching astronomy and helping students meet the space standards in the Illinois State Learning Standards. In order to check out this resource from the Regional Office, you must go through a training on its use. In addition to the lab itself, there will be some new computer resources to go along with the lab next fall.

The training will focus on set-up procedures, use and care of the lab, some astronomy training, use of supplemental software, and the take-down and packing procedures.

If you are interested in being a part of this training, please contact Paul Cannon at the Regional Office at 625-1495. The training most likely will occur in early August.

**Email Around the World:** Are you looking for a way to involve the Internet in your classroom? Here is a simple project that allows your classroom walls to expand enough to include the whole world. In this activity, students strengthen geography skills, compare and contrast different cultures and environments, and develop their communication skills by sending and receiving a minimum of 100 email messages to the participants of their choice. Each message should include information about your school, directions for locating your school on a map, the ages of your students, and some unique trivia about your community. These messages serve as a brief introduction of your school or classroom and should be no longer than 200 words. As you receive messages from other schools, you can post them in a visible location and attach a length of yarn from the message to a map. There are numerous services that are available to link classes together. Using your favorite search engine and typing in "KeyPals" should give you plenty of opportunities to connect. One such site is found at <<http://www.mighty-media.com/keypals/>>.

**Safety in the Science Classroom:** Are you familiar with all the requirements for a safe science classroom? The National Science Education Standards, inquiry-based science, is demanding greater safety awareness among science teachers regarding applicable laws, codes, professional standards, and practices. The number of accidents, resulting law suits, and associated costs surrounding science accidents are increasing. It is becoming increasingly apparent that science teachers and supervisors need additional training relative to safety and that written science safety policies must be implemented in order to identify and address these safety needs.

Below are some useful websites that can provide you with publications, news, and on-line resources. It would be worth your time to check out these sites!

<http://www.osha.gov>

<http://www.acs.org>

<http://www.nsta.org>

<http://www.nfpa.org>

### **NSCHOOL.COM**

Are you looking for some kind of software that will allow you to communicate with teachers, students, parents, administrators, and specified groups? Would it be great to have it for free?

<nschool.com> is one provider of this service. It allows administrators, teachers, and families to communicate via the web. The web page will be customized to reflect your school's culture and identity. It is a secure site where teachers can post assignments and/or calendars, host chat rooms, and other functions. Administrators could hold virtual meetings. Individual groups, such as Mrs. Smith's 4th grade or the football team, could be notified of meetings or schedule changes with a single e-mail. And, it's free. They even handle the end of the year rollover problems.

For more information, contact Paul Cannon at 625-1495.

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After 4:30 p.m. by Appointment