

# NEWSLETTER

## NORTHWEST MISSOURI SCHOOL COUNSELORS ASSOCIATION



## COUNSELORS HELPING COUNSELORS

SEPTEMBER 2006

### PRESIDENTIAL PERSPECTIVE

#### *"Counselors . . . The Essential Piece"*

By Jennifer Grossman,  
NWMSCA President

The beginning of a new school year is always an exciting time. New staff members with whom to become acquainted, new students to welcome and enroll in your district, new office supplies to grab up before they are gone. The tasks that you couldn't get away from fast enough in May and June are now being viewed again with a fresh perspective - - or, for me, on a new flat screen computer monitor! Yippie! Everything old is new again!

When I enroll a new student, I try to talk about the transition in terms of an opportunity for a fresh start. "Just think," I tell them, "you're in a new school, with new teachers, and the chance to make new friends. You can re-invent yourself, if you want!" I like to approach each school year this way. All of the problematic tasks that arose or situations that did not run smoothly, I add to my list titled "Things to Do Better Next Year." I keep it clipped in the back of my planner to reference when I cannot remember what ingenious solution had occurred to me as I grumbled and groaned through the mess of the situation I had gotten myself into. One

of my favorite quotes is "If you're not getting better, you're getting worse." This yearly cycle of trial, error and resolution helps keep me motivated during the challenging times and appreciative of the lighter moments in this profession. And though the school year is only a few weeks old, I have to confess that I already have several items on my list for next year!

This year's NWMSCA theme, "Counselors . . . The Essential Piece" plays upon the idea that our work in education can be compared to a jigsaw puzzle. The pieces must fit together accordingly to ensure a quality education for each of our students. The school counselor's role in working with students and their social, emotional, and vocation needs is an essential piece of the educational process.

I hope that you view your membership in NWMSCA and MSCA as an "essential piece" of your professional development as a school counselor. I look forward to seeing everyone at the Fall Meeting!



Jennifer Grossman

## Administrator Appreciation Breakfast Held

By Kim Hill,  
Advocacy Committee

The fourth annual Administrator Appreciation Breakfast took place on August 8 at Missouri Western State University. Thirty administrators and twenty counselors from the Northwest Missouri region enjoyed a delicious breakfast provided by the university and had the opportunity to hear from Dr. Bragg Stanley, Director of Guidance and Placement, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

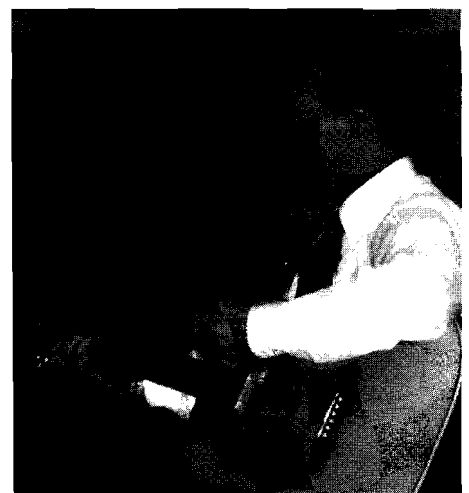
In his usual energetic and enthusiastic manner, Dr. Stanley presented the program entitled, "The Administrator's Role in Supporting Their School's Comprehensive Guidance Program: Top Ten Suggestions (Plus Two)". His practical suggestions underscored the message that professional school counselors, when supported administratively and provided the time and resources to fully implement a Comprehensive Guidance Program, are an

"essential piece" in the effort to promote academic achievement.

Some suggestions offered to administrators:

1. Understand the nature of the Comprehensive Guidance Program (CGP) and the role it plays in supporting academic achievement.
2. Allow the guidance staff to implement the program so that 100% of their time is spent in delivering the comprehensive guidance program.
3. Support the evaluation efforts of school counselors to help them demonstrate impact on students and to help them improve their programs: Program + Personnel = Results.

Dr. Stanley has graciously made this power point including the rest of the 12 suggestions available to school counselors or administrators. If interested, contact Sandy White or Kim Hill. The presentation includes



Dr. Bragg Stanley shows off his talents while informing and entertaining administrators and counselors.

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# Fall Conference Update

## Changing to Meet the Needs of Our Growing Association

Each year, the MSCA Program Committee meets in December to review the evaluations of the previous conference and begin planning the conference for next year. An important part of that process involves look-

ing at existing practices and determining what changes or improvements will better meet the needs of conference attendees. As a result, several changes will be implemented during the 2006 MSCA Fall Conference. Three big

## Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide for Schools and Communities

U.S. Dept. of Education, Aug. 2004

### Preparing Your School for a Crisis

Taking action now can save lives, prevent injury, and minimize property damage in the moments of a crisis. If you do not have a crisis plan in place, it is time to develop one. If you have one, review, practice, and update your plan. This brochure is designed to assist schools and communities in either situation. Although every school's needs and circumstances are different, these checklists provide general guidance that can be adapted as appropriate to each district's or school's circumstances.

If you would like additional, more detailed information on how to prepare your school or district for a crisis, you can order a free copy of *Practical Information on Crisis Planning: A Guide for Schools and Communities*, from which these checklists have been taken, on the U.S. Department of Education Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools' emergency preparedness website: [www.ed.gov/emergencyplan](http://www.ed.gov/emergencyplan). This website contains many other crisis planning resources as well.

### Additional websites

- [www.ed.gov/emergencyplan](http://www.ed.gov/emergencyplan)
- <http://www.ready.gov/>
- [www.fema.gov/kids/](http://www.fema.gov/kids/)
- [www.redcross.org/services/disaster](http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster)
- [www.nasponline.org](http://www.nasponline.org)

### Mitigation and Prevention

The goal of mitigation is to decrease the need for response as opposed to simply increasing response capability.

- Connect with community emergency responders to identify local hazards.
- Review the last safety audit to examine school buildings and grounds.
- Determine who is responsible for overseeing violence prevention strategies in your school.
- Encourage staff to provide input and feedback during the crisis planning process.
- Review incident data.
- Determine major problems in your school with regard to student crime and violence.
- Assess how the school addresses these problems.
- Conduct an assessment to determine how these problems—as well as others—may impact your vulnerability to certain crises.

### Preparedness

Good planning will facilitate a rapid, coordinated, effective response when a crisis occurs.

• Determine what crisis plans exist in the district, school, and community.

• Identify all stakeholders involved in crisis planning.

• Develop procedures for communicating with staff, students, families, and the media.

• Establish procedures to account for students during a crisis.

• Gather information about the school facility, such as maps and the location of utility shutoffs.

• Identify the necessary equipment that needs to be assembled to assist staff in a crisis.

### Response

A crisis is the time to follow the crisis plan and make use of your preparations.

• Determine if a crisis is occurring.

• Identify the type of crisis that is occurring and determine the appropriate response.

• Activate the incident management system.

• Ascertain whether an evacuation, reverse evacuation, lockdown, or shelter-in-place needs to be implemented.

• Maintain communication among all relevant staff at officially designated locations.

• Establish what information needs to be communicated to staff, students, families, and the community.

• Monitor how emergency first aid is being administered to the injured.

• Decide if more equipment and supplies are needed.

### Recovery

During recovery, return to learning and restore the infrastructure as quickly as possible.

• Strive to return to learning as quickly as possible.

• Restore the physical plant, as well as the school community.

• Monitor how staff are assessing students for the emotional impact of the crisis.

• Identify what follow up interventions are available to students, staff, and first responders.

• Conduct debriefings with staff and first responders.

• Assess curricular activities that address the crisis.

• Allocate appropriate time for recovery.

• Plan how anniversaries of events will be commemorated.

• Capture "lessons learned" and incorporate them into revisions and trainings.

**Article submitted by Theresa Tommey, Critical Incident Response**

changes include:

• **Sunday Night Networking:** This was initiated years ago to give members a chance to meet counselors from their district and throughout the state, and a "light snack" was provided. With the growth of our conference, it has become increasingly difficult for the districts to continue to provide the food for this event. Beginning this year, districts will provide cookies, chips, and soft drinks only. Tan-Tar-A will have sandwiches available for purchase in the exhibit hall.

• **Tuesday Morning Breakfast:** We will continue to provide the continental breakfast on Tuesday morning, but this year it will be in Salon C, with tables and chairs available for members to use while eating this meal.

• **Breakout Sessions:** To better meet the needs of attendees, the number of sessions has increased.

## See You at Tan-Tar-A!

By Linda Crowder,  
Government Relations

An awesome opportunity awaits **YOU** at Tan-Tar-A this fall: The 58th Annual Missouri School Counselor Association Fall Conference. The theme this year is "School Counselors . . . The Essential Piece" with a jig-saw puzzle logo.

Many of us from the northwest region consider the MSCA Fall Conference an essential piece in our professional development. You will bring home so much . . . in your mind and in your heart as well as in the manila folders that you will take so you can organize the materials you will receive as you get them (just a little bit of advice from one who has come back to school with piles of great stuff that is very hard to locate when you could use it). In addition, this conference is just plain fun! Meet the neatest people in the world: school counselors! Take home bags of pens, pencils, CANDY, note pads, all manner of do-dads from the vendors!

I requisition cash to take with me in order to purchase materials at conference prices. I don't always get it but I always try! Are there any downsides, you ask? Oh, maybe waiting for the shuttle in the deepest darkness out in the "Estates" when it is really, really cold is less than pleasant. However, that problem can be easily avoided by becoming an officer. Officers get to stay in the main building!

One final note: the most economical way to pay for the conference registration is to take advantage of the Early Bird Discount and to pay by check (no credit cards accepted) Study your registration form for details.

If you don't have a registration form, visit [www.schoolweb.missouri.edu/MSCA](http://www.schoolweb.missouri.edu/MSCA) or e-mail [msca@socket.net](mailto:msca@socket.net) or call 1-800-763-6722 or fax 1-800-264-6722.

# Don't Be Afraid "Join the Group"!

**By Edd Green,  
Co-chair Technology**

Slowly but surely the NWMSCA group hosted by Yahoo is growing in membership. Although, I have very limited technical computer abilities whatsoever, I did create this internet message group a couple of years ago so that our membership could better communicate with each other and ultimately help the students that we serve.

Group advantages include:

A) We can find each other. By keeping your data updated in the database section fellow members can quickly find you even if you get a new phone number, or switch residences. This can be very important in case of a school emergency. Even if you don't have an up-to-date NWMSCA directory in hand, you can find people as long as you can get to the internet. (We plan to have the new critical incident teams listed for the new school year uploaded soon.)

B) You can post a question on the board which will go out to the entire membership. This is an excellent way to get opinions of fellow counselors, or to give everyone a "heads up" on a possible situation.

C) You can send a discrete message to only one person, by accessing their e-mail address in the database section.

D) Links, Links, Links! We have set up files by level so members can add links which could benefit everyone. Members are encouraged to add to the links sections.

E) I have set up the file section so that members can upload files, forms, brochures, notices, etc. for everyone to use. We don't have to reinvent the wheel. If it works, steal,

I mean utilize it for your own professional use. This will save time, and helps everyone involved.

F) The group has a calendar feature for your own personal use.

Have I convinced you yet? The important thing to remember is that the hardest part of the whole process seems to be joining-but really it's not hard. Because Yahoo hosts this site, they do require you set up a free yahoo ID (not e-mail) account in order to join a "group". When applying to the group, you should link the group to your professional (school) e-mail account. (You will however need to use your Yahoo ID name and password every time you want to access the group).

Only members of NWMSCA can join, so do not be afraid to put your real name/school in the database section. This is important so if a fellow counselor needs to get a hold of you, they see a name and not *lotusflower 22*. As the moderator, I must ok everyone who joins the group and I only

approve current association members and emeritus members.

As opposed to the NWMSCA website that my fellow technology chair Joyce Cox is working on, the Yahoo group is meant only for 'us'. I truly believe that with enough 'critical mass' this can be a very important and efficient tool for all of us. If you need assistance in joining the group, please do not hesitate to call me. I will even 'walk you through it while we are on the phone. So let's go! If you don't have a yahoo ID or password, go to Yahoo.com and get one.

Once you have an account go back to Yahoo's main page and click on the tab labeled "Group", then type NWMSCA in the search box. This will take you to our group (you can see the main page, but you won't be able to access any pages). To start the process click on the blue "Join the Group" box in the upper right hand section. Good luck and see you on the GROUP. Edd Green, Cameron HS, ([egreen@cameron.k12.mo.us](mailto:egreen@cameron.k12.mo.us)) 816-632-2129.

## New Counselor Mentoring Program

**By Dr. Shelly Hiatt**

New school counselors in Missouri are now able to participate in a structured mentoring opportunity designed especially for the beginning school counselor. The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MODESE), the Missouri School Counselor Association, and each district counselor association in Missouri have collaborated to develop a mentoring program for all first and second year school counselors who want to participate.

The Missouri Center for Career Education developed this structured mentoring program, tailored by developing new counselors. Missouri School Counselor Association's mentoring chair, Dr. Marci Winston-Dowdy has coordinated the training of all district mentor chairs. Kay Cameron and Shelly Hiatt serve as mentor co-chairs in the Northwest District and will coordinate the mentor program in the Northwest District.

New counselors (protégés) interested in the program will work with an experienced mentor. Mentors and protégés will participate in a workshop that addresses: the power of mentoring, the developmental stages of the first year counselor, a review of structured activities that the mentor will guide the protégés to complete during the school year, and a work time for mentors and protégés to plan their year. Each protégé, with the guidance of their mentor will complete a mentoring plan, and six typical experiences required of school counselors as the school year progresses.

MODESE will pay mentors a stipend for their work, and mileage for the mentor/protégé visit will also be reimbursed. To date, twenty-one Northwest mentor/protégé pairs have been identified to participate in the program. An initial meeting date is soon to be announced, but it is not too late to become involved. If you are interested in participating as a mentor or protégé contact: Shelly Hiatt at [hiatt@nwmissouri.edu](mailto:hiatt@nwmissouri.edu) or Kay Cameron at [camerok@mail.savannah.k12.mo.us](mailto:camerok@mail.savannah.k12.mo.us).

## Webpage Update

**By Joyce Cox, Technology**

The new website for Northwest Missouri School Counselors Association is now "under construction." The website is being built with the hope that fellow counselors will be able to easily access meeting dates, membership forms, and newsletters. Links to NWMSCA Governing Board members' e-mail addresses will be made available to assist counselors with specific questions. A link to the NWMSCA Yahoo news group will also be provided on the new home page.

Missouri School counselors Association (MSCA) is ready to provide a link from the State home page to the NWMSCA webpage as soon as it is ready to be posted.

Northwest Missouri counselors are encourage to share their digital photos to enhance the "beauty" of the our new website. Counselors who have information and/or pictures that they would like to share should e-mail Joyce Cox at [jcox@chillicotheschools.org](mailto:jcox@chillicotheschools.org).

## Breakfast

(Continued from Page 1)

suggestions for Superintendents and Central Office Support.

Advocacy Co-chairs, Joni Rost, Sandy White, and Kim Hill would like to say a big thank you to all who made this event a success including Missouri Western State University, Dr. Bragg Stanley, DESE, and the following area businesses who provided door prizes: Stillwaters, Beautyfirst, Boudreaux's Restaurant, Subway, Comfort Suites, Days Inn, Goldstar Home Mortgage, Rich Hill Allstate Insurance Agency, M & I Bank, and the Plattsburg Country Club.

Congratulations to the lucky administrators who won overnight stays, gift certificates to fine dining, free rounds of golf, home/office décor and beauty products. More importantly, hats off to the excellent Northwest Missouri administrators and counselors who consistently make the extra effort to help students dream, achieve and shine.

# 2006 MoACTE Conference: Another Success

By Sandy White, Multi-Level VP

The week of July 23-27 saw all educational divisions that are career educators in some fashion or other, including Counselors, converging on Springfield, MO, for the annual MoACTE conference. While the counseling division saw a reduction in numbers for this year, the breakout sessions, speakers and other activities were well attended and full of information, activities and fun.

Those who have attended for the past several years know that the three divisions of MSCA (Missouri School Counselor Association), MSNA (Missouri Special Needs Association) and MACS (Missouri Association for Career Services) have shared breakout sessions, meetings areas, and in some instances housing locations. Through the years as a combined group we have been under one roof at Quality Inn. Then the meetings moved to a local high school, then to a middle school far removed from the rest of the convention. For the past three years we have all been fortunate to stay, and hold meetings at, the Oasis Inn. In addition, each year we have been privileged to observe the improvements the Inn has made until the near finished project this year with a new Inn entrance, new lobby, new meeting

rooms, and a new restaurant. Employees of all aspects that treated us like royalty, making the stay that much more enjoyable.

The conference began Monday afternoon with registration and a visit to the Trade Center to view all the exhibitors' wares and make contacts regarding those items of individual interest. Tuesday was the actual opening of the conference, kicked off with an all-division general session and keynote speaker at the Expo Center. Each division then traveled to their own meeting locations for their opening sessions. Our three divisions were entertained by, and received valuable information from, Dave Leedy - "Super Hero" and master storyteller who transformed himself before his audience in order to emphasize the miraculous power within each of us to overcome the hardships and handicaps that keep us from our goals. Each division then broke into their own sessions. Wednesday was the meat of the conference, with a full day of valuable breakout sessions that addressed a wide variety of issues and information to take back to our school districts. The conference ended for our divisions on Thursday morning by opening with keynote speaker Kim Ratz, who showed us how to turn "lemons into lemonade through song, examples and personal experiences." The group attended a potpourri of 30 minute carousel sessions that were each offered twice prior to the end of the session. The final activity of the morning was a drawing for \$100 cash, which was provided by MSCA this year. The winner was Patty Halter.

A big THANK YOU to: Ozark Tech Prep Consortium, Sullivan University, Linn Technical College, Rankin Technical College and Lincoln Technical College for their support in providing lunches, refreshments or socials. These were much appreciated and provided an opportunity for the different divisions to network and learn from each other.

It is the sincere hope of MSCA that more counselors will see this as a beneficial (as well as very economical) conference to attend and our numbers will increase in the coming years.

## Upcoming Events

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6:** NWMSCA Fall Meeting at MWSU – Registration/Breakfast - 8:00 a.m.; Business Meeting - 9:00 a.m.

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11:** Governing Board Meeting - 5:00 p.m. at Barbosa's Castillo

**NOVEMBER 5-7:** MSCA Fall Conference at Tan-Tar-A \*Early bird registration deadline is October 6

**NOVEMBER 17:**

Articles due to newsletter editor: Laura Shelton - sheltol@mail.savannah.k12.mo.us

This newsletter sponsored by:

**Northwest Missouri State University**

Maryville, Missouri

