



The Voice

Interim Newsletter—March 2008

Speaking Out for Wyoming's Children

Letter from your WECA President:

Dear Early Childhood Professionals and Friends of the Young Child,

We are excited to begin the 2008 year. There is much taking place within your organization, and I am proud, honored, and enthusiastic as I begin my tenure as president.

- One of the first things you will notice is that NAEYC will be customizing both our Newsletter and our Web Site. The first issue of our "New Look" for **The Voice** is scheduled to come out in May. We didn't want you to think we weren't around and had forgotten you, hence the interim newsletter at this time. In the technological age we will be sending the newsletter via email on a quarterly basis. If you don't have email, we'll provide you with a hard copy. We are hoping that between posting it on our Web Site and emailing that we can cut the production and mailing costs and improve the quality at the same time.
- You will note that in the article concerning our strategic plan, we will be working with committees all over the state to keep members connected, expanding leadership and service roles and helping our members grow and learn.
- Our annual Fall Conference is scheduled for **October 3-4** at the Casper College campus. Yes, we are moving back to the college after several years at the Parkway. Watch the web—www.wyeca.org for upcoming theme, call for proposals and keynote speakers. We will be having specific workshops geared to groups within a "Track" format, much like NAEYC. People will still be free to attend whatever experience they desire, but presentations will be more specific with age and topic.
- We will try a new means of reaching our members, and other interested parties with a Spring/Summer Training hosted by Region 7, but broadcast via WEN across the state. More information in the next newsletter and on the web as it comes together.
- **Please**, go on NAEYC using your NAEYC membership number and your first name and update your membership information so you aren't lost.

I am looking forward to meeting and working with many of you throughout the year. Your dedication and commitment to the children of Wyoming is commendable.

Sincerely,

Peggy Marie Smith, President

Affiliate Council Updates

The Affiliate Council of the National Association for the Education of Young Children met on Saturday November 10 2007 in Chicago during the NAEYC national conference. We heard reports from the National Governing Board, Mark Ginsberg the Executive Director of NAEYC, Kim Means who oversees the Accreditation Department, and Gwen Simmons the Director of Affiliate Relations.

Our main business was to discuss and give feedback in 3 areas. The first was the new and improved membership categories. The timeline for the roll out from now is as follows; January – categories and discounts were to be determined. By May 1 – state benefits and dues amounts are to be determined. During the summer of 2008 marketing materials will be developed. And in the Fall of 2008 the changes will be implemented.

The Affiliate Council representatives were asked to begin a discussion around three questions submitted by the Latino Leadership Initiative. Representatives were asked to take the same question back to their respective states for further dialogue. The questions were as follows;

- What type of strategies do you use to develop leadership in your Affiliate?
 - What challenges and opportunities have you identified for the development of Latino and other communities leadership?
- What technical assistance would your Affiliate need to recruit, develop and retain leadership from Latino and other communities?

Finally we were asked to discuss and give feedback on the revision of NAEYC Position Statement on Developmentally Appropriate Practice.

The Affiliate Council meeting is always a great opportunity for all states to gather and share ideas. We will meet again in June. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or thoughts BCarlin@tetonhospital.org.

Betsy Carlin—WECA Past President and Wyoming's Affiliate Council Representative

WECA Board Members Visit Senator Barrasso

“WECA board members, Betsy Carlin and Ann Robinson visited with U.S. Senator John Barrasso (pictured to the right) while they were in Washington, D.C. attending the NAEYC Public Policy Forum on February 12-13, 2008. The pair also visited with U.S. Senator Mike Enzi and staff from U.S. Rep. Barbara Cubin’s office. The purpose of the visits were to encourage the Wyoming congressional delegation to support legislation that will provide increased funding for Head Start and for the Child Care Development Block Grants”



Student Chapter News—Lissana Follari

Our local branch of WECA, the Sheridan Early Childhood Association, has been meeting and offering STARS trainings over the past year. We continue to plan out our WOYC events for 2008. They include: A 4 page newspaper insert highlighting advocacy messages and important issues relating to young children, celebrating children as artists, spotlighting our new college ECE teacher education programs, and promoting the WYOC festivities; a banner hanging across Main St all week; a craft project booth at the YMCA Healthy Kids Day 4/12; children’s art work on the theme of “what makes me special” displayed in downtown businesses all week; artists reception and art work viewing 4/16; and the 2nd annual Children’s Literacy Festival 4/19 at Sheridan College including a play of Giles Andrea’s Giraffes Can’t Dance, 6 classrooms of art projects and games, fire truck visit, and lots of fun and games indoors and out!

Treasurer’s Take...

WECA is funded through membership fees and our annual fall conference. We also depend a great deal on grant funding to allow us to bring in nationally known speakers for our annual conferences. If any of you are aware of, or would be interested in helping us contact, any foundations or corporate sponsorships in your area, we would be very interested in hearing from you.

As well as partially funding the conference, our budget allows for a Spring training. Since the annual conference is in Casper every fall, we plan our Spring trainings in the other regions around the state, this year being in Cheyenne.

Teresa Williams, Treasurer

News From Around the State

Northeast Region #1—Barbara Burrough—No News

Big Horn Region #2—Debi Dawe- BHB continues to strive for quality early childhood care and education. Both Cody and Powell offer monthly trainings open to all area providers and the general public. Many in the area are looking at ideas for WOYC. Cody hopes to partner with a few groups and offer a special evening at the Public with stories, crafts and a free book for all. It is an exciting time for Cody as a new economic development group had formed and they actually understand the importance of early childhood education and care. I have met with them, another open meeting will happen as soon as dates can be arranged with DFS licensing, CCF and providers. (March) This will be an exciting time for Cody and area providers should attend this meeting. You will be notified. I want to encourage EVERYONE to mark dates of WECA Oct. 3-4 & S & C Aug. 1 & 2 Conferences both have awesome people coming to town a real not want to miss conference held by both. THINK SPRING!

Wind River Region #3—Chandra Nettles—No news

Southwest Region #4—Tammy Wentz- I am working on getting in contact with members from this area. I am putting together some plans for week of the young child and so far have the Child Developmental Center onboard with me. Details are still in the planning stages. I also have some information about a great 1 day conference that will be held in Cheyenne October 22. It is Lisa Murphy the “Ooey Goey Lady”. My staff and I saw her for a brief workshop at NAEYC National Conference in Chicago November 2007. She is awesome to see and her philosophy is how I have always wanted my classroom to be. I now have the opportunity to make my entire preschool this child focused. As more information gets to me I would like to get it available to all the early childhood professionals in this area. It would be so great if we could get a solid base in our profession on board with delivering services that are in the form of the best practices for children and not just teaching to standardized testing.

Northeast Region #5—Andrea Sears— Parents put their children in childcare and preschools for many reasons. One of those important reasons is socialization. With the long waiting lists in North Eastern Region it may be difficult to get your child in a childcare or preschool. MOPS and MOMS are two groups that meet regularly in Wyoming that may be able to help you with this need. MOPS stands for Mothers of Preschoolers. While childcare is provided for a small fee, the mothers get to visit, have snacks, do a craft together, and have a short devotional. If this sounds like a group that you are interested in trying you can find a group in your area at www.mops.org MOMS group is another club that has chapters across the nation. The mothers at MOMS clubs also get to visit, have snacks, do crafts together, and childcare is provided at a small fee. If this group interests you, you can visit www.momsclub.org to find a group near you.

Strategic Planning for WECA's Future

In December of 2003 the Wyoming Early Childhood Association submitted its first ever 3 year strategic plan to the National Association for the Education of Young Children. As an organization we have worked to reach the lofty goals set by the original strategic plan and although we may have missed the mark in a few areas we have seen great growth during the last 3 years. The leadership of WECA as well as its members should be proud of the work we have done annually to strengthen our organization.

During the past 6 months the leadership of WECA has once again been working on developing a new strategic plan. With some experience under our belts we have been able to set goals that we feel are not only attainable but will support our mission of being **committed to be the voice that advocates for unity, provides professional development, and supports the early care and education community to enrich the lives of children.**

The leaders of WECA through feedback from our collaborative partners and our members determined 4 critical needs/priorities.

- Better use of technology to compensate for the distance issues in the state.
- A variety of levels of involvement and opportunity for growth through short-term activities and committees.
- Communication and activities blended to meet the various generational values of members.
- Answer the question: "What is in it for me?"

By identifying these priorities we were then able to set goals in 7 different program area; Advocacy, Communication, Leadership Development, Membership Development, Public Relations, Regional Program Services, and Technology. During each of the next 3 years we will work to accomplish annual targets which will allow us to achieve the goals set in the plan. At the end of each year we will review the progress we have made and tweak any area that is not supporting our mission.

Now that we have designed and submitted the plan to NAEYC it is time to get working. We will be putting together 7 committees to work on each program area. We would invite any WECA members interested in serving on one of the committees to contact us at WECA@wyoming.com. If you would like to see the WECA Strategic Plan in full check it out on our website www.wyeca.org. Please feel free to contact the WECA Leadership with any questions or ideas!

News From Around the State (Continued)

East Central Region #6—Kencis Kleinschmidt—No News

Eastern Plains Region # 7—Scott Moncrief A meeting was held on February 14 with several Cheyenne area providers. Topics of discussion included the regional spring training and ways for WECA to reach more providers. I plan to travel to the northern part of the Eastern Plains region to receive feedback on how to make WECA more valuable to providers in that area.

Southeast Region #8—CaSandra Clark

WECA Sponsored Spring/Summer Training

Under the direction of VP of Programs Cleta Booth and Eastern Plains Regional Representative Scott Moncrief, there will be opportunity for WECA-sponsored training. A planning meeting was held with representatives of many groups within the Eastern Plains Region, as they will be host for our first-ever training hosted in one region, but available via WEN across the state. Watch for flyers, news on the web, and information from your local representatives as it comes together.

Accreditation News: As of September 2007 the following statistics have been made public about ECH programs moving through and achieving NAEYC Accreditation.

Programs in the Process:

1. *Enrollment/Self-Study = 7,845*
2. *Application/Self-Assessment = 3,360*
3. *Becoming A Candidate = 1,678*
4. **Accredited the First year = 645**

Wyoming currently has 13 programs accredited under the new system and several more in the process!

Call the WECA Accreditation Chair if you are interested in learning more @ 307-262-2103.

Interested in becoming an assessor for NAEYC? Here is some information that may help!

**Week of the Young Child
April 13—19, 2008
"Bring Communities Together
for Children
Children Bring Communities
Together"**

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www.wyeca.org

Wyoming Early Childhood Association Board

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Big Horn	Debi Dawe
Wind River	Chandra Nettles
Southwest	Tammy Wentz
Northeast	Andrea Sears
East Central	Kencis Kleinschmidt
Eastern Plains	Scott Moncrief
Southeast	Cassandra Clark

Accreditation Chair	Claire Venn
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