

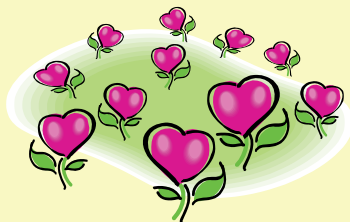
Please join us for our
March Faculty Rep Meetings

Tuesday, March 29
4:15 PM, Top Shelf Cantina,
1976 W. Southern Ave.
(Dobson/Southern)

Wednesday, March 30
4:15 PM, Mi Amigo's
6465 E. Southern Ave.
(Power/Southern)

Please RSVP by **Monday, March 28**
to 833-8400 or via email to
heather.tanner@arizonaeca.org.

*We welcome ALL members to join us
at either meeting and hope to see you
there!*



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Rite of Passage

By Kirk Hinsey, MEA President

Spring is one of my favorite times of the year. Growing up in Colorado, it meant the end to most of the snowfall. It meant warmer weather and a time to be outside more and time to plant a garden. It was also a time of baby animals on the small farm. Little chicks, ducks, baby goats, and puppies were very familiar to spring. My rabbits didn't seem to do so well, but that's another story.

How do these childhood memories translate to my life today in education? I guess I look to the time after spring break as that time of renewal. This year, nationally, has put the spotlight on some of our core values. We have been challenged like no other time. Apparently, being public employees, we have been a cause of the recession. We have been living high on the hog at the taxpayers' expense. We are bankrupting states with our benefits and so that must stop. I do have concerns and issues with those comments. I certainly have not made it to easy street. I struggle month to month to make it work, as I know many of my colleagues do.

But those challenges and negativity are the shoveling of snow that I did constantly, the freezing mornings to go milk the goats, and breaking the ice to give the huskies fresh water. With coming of spring, there is a chance for an easier life. There is a time to reinvent oneself. There is a time to lose those 20 pounds before swimsuit season. There is a chance to grow.

Spring in the schools is a time of testing (for good or bad, that's the reality), a time to expand and **enrich** the curriculum, a time to do what you entered the profession to do. There are new lessons and units that meet the standards, but are more enriching. Isn't that what quality teaching should be about?

It is a time of new energy. As educators, we know the end of the year is fast approaching and the end of May will be here before we know it. But there is so much each one of us has to offer our students. Their learning is first and foremost, but **inspiring** them through our actions and being excellent role models is also important. It is a time for us to show by example.

I look forward to the great work we all have in store. The renewed energy to teach the best we can and plant those seeds of knowledge into our students. Thank you for all you do for your students and your profession, **where members make it happen.**

We Are All in this Together
Advocacy and Awareness

By Mike Weaver, Interim AEA Organizational Consultant

As Mesa Public Schools copes with the challenge of providing a quality education to students while adapting to restrictive regulations, invasive legislation and decreased funding, we need to pull together to ensure fair and equitable treatment for all. Increased emphasis on evaluations and their use to determine RIF scores may be creating circumstances that cause you concern. If evaluations or other actions taken by administrators are not accurate representations of you or your professional activities then you should consider taking the appropriate steps to address them.

The first step is **self reflection**. After the initial emotion of receiving a negative evaluation, direction or discipline of some kind, let your emotions settle down. Take a few moments to examine the documentation and compare it to your behavior to decide where the truth lies. Then begin to **document** actions and events relevant to the situation. Put these in chronological order so they can be compared to other versions of the situation. Since policy is nearly always involved, **gather** the appropriate documents. If it involves an evaluation then the two relevant documents are **MPS Policy GCN - Evaluation of Professional Staff** (www.mpsaz.org/policy_download/files/mpspolicy.pdf) and the MPS booklet “*EVALUATION Guidelines for the Improvement of Student Achievement*”. Matters related to discipline must follow policies found in **MPS Policy GCPD - Disciplinary Action: Professional Staff**.

Employees have the right to representation under the **Working Conditions and Benefits for Certificated Employees Agreement** between the Mesa Education Association and the MPS Governing board. This is stated in **Article 9 - Due Process Procedures and Employee Rights, Section I - Rights Relating to Disciplinary Matters**, which can be found in your MEA Handbook as well as on the MEA Website under “Member Resources” (http://mesateachers.org/uploads/MEA10-11_WEBSITE.pdf). Take the time to do this research and to document your situation.

Once you have self examined and if you believe you need further assistance then it is time to contact an Association representative. Several options are available to you. You may contact your MEA Faculty Representative on your campus. This may resolve the situation right there at the site level. This often can be the quickest and best solution. If the Faculty Representative is unavailable, or for some other reason you prefer not to contact a building level representative, then contact the MEA Office at 833-8400 for assistance. Please be prepared to describe the issue and leave detailed contact information, phone and e-mail, including good times to reach you.

We are here to help you through your issues. We hope your year is going well and as you come up on a well deserved break please take some time to recharge the batteries for the last quarter of the year so you finish strong! Thank you for all you do every day!

Spring is here...what better time to Go Green with the MEA Record?

If you would like to **GO GREEN**, fill out and return the form below, or visit our website at www.mesateachers.org and click on the *MEA Record* link. **Remember, we are NOT allowed to send MEA communications via the District e-mail system.** You must provide a **PERSONAL email address** (Yahoo, Gmail, Cox, Hotmail, etc.) to receive the MEA Record electronically.



Please send me the *MEA Record* via e-mail! I DO NOT want a paper copy each month.

Please send me the *MEA Record* via e-mail! I would also like a paper copy each month.

Name _____ School/Site _____

PERSONAL e-mail address _____



MEA Record
1032 E. University Dr., Mesa, AZ 85203
(480) 833-8400 (Office) (480) 834-6890 (Fax)
www.mesateachers.org

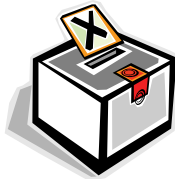
MEA Election Information

If you (or someone you know) are interested in running for MEA President, Vice President, Secretary, or one of the Odd-Numbered Region Director spots, please be sure to submit your nomination to Heather at the MEA Office prior to 5 PM on Friday, March 25.

Nominations will close at the March Faculty Rep meetings on March 29 and 30.

A special edition of the MEA Record will be distributed with the ballots. Voting will be from Monday, April 4 through Wednesday, April 13, with ballots due back to the MEA Office by Friday, April 15.

Election Results will be announced at the April All Member Meetings on April 26 and 27.



Dues Information for Tax Purposes

In spite of the Tax Reform Act of 1986 which severely limited some of the deductions American taxpayers have historically enjoyed, many MEA members will still be able to deduct their Association dues as a business expense.



If you were a full time MEA member with payroll deduction last year, the amount you can deduct is **\$544.76**.

If you were **not** a full time member with payroll deduction last year, or if you have any other questions, please call the MEA Office at 480-833-8400, ext. 100 and we will assist you in doing a personal calculation.

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MEA Calendar of Events **March - April 2011**



Monday, March 28: *Meet and Confer*, 4 PM, MPS Boardroom

Tuesday, March 29: *West Side Faculty Rep Meeting*, 4:15 PM, Top Shelf Mexican Cantina, 1976 W. Southern Ave. (Dobson/Southern) *Open to all members*

Wednesday, March 30: *East Side Faculty Rep Meeting*, 4:15 PM, Mi Amigo's, 6465 E. Southern Rd. (Southern/Power) *Open to all members*

Thursday, March 31: *MEA Special Ed Forum*, 4 PM, Student Services Building (Ocotillo Room) ***Open to MEA Special Education Members ONLY***

Monday, April 4: *Meet and Confer*, 4 PM, MPS Boardroom

Tuesday, April 5: *MEA Executive Board*, 4:30 PM, MEA Office

Thursday, April 7: *MEA Superintendent's Forum*, 4 PM, Holiday Inn, 1600 S. Country Club

Tuesday, April 18: *MEA Executive Board*, 4:30 PM, MEA Office

Tuesday, April 26: *West Side All Member Meeting*, 4:15 PM, Top Shelf Mexican Cantina, 1976 W. Southern Ave. (Dobson/Southern) *Open to all members*

Wednesday, April 27: *East Side All Member Meeting*, 4:15 PM, Mi Amigo's, 6465 E. Southern Rd. (Southern/Power) *Open to all members*

Friday, April 29 - Saturday, April 30: *AEA Delegate Assembly*, Phoenix-Mesa Marriott Hotel

The MEA Calendar is also available online at
www.mesateachers.org/calendar.html