

THE

VOICE

The Nebraska *voice* ♦ September 2012

96 SEASONS *of* MEMBERSHIP

Bill Carlin Wouldn't Take the Field
Without NSEA

My
Deals

The Real Deal App
For Saving Cash!

- A Sweet Auto Buy for NSEA Members
- State Board Approves Accountability Plan

Upcoming Assignments

Oct. 19-20

NSEA's 2012 Advocacy Conference

■ **What:** The latest news for negotiators. With a new bargaining law in effect, this is a must for local association negotiators.

■ **Details:** Set for Grand Island. Watch www.nsea.org for details, or check with your UniServ director at 1-800-742-0047.

Oct. 5-6

SEAN Fall Conference & Outreach to Teach

■ **What:** Members of the Student Education Association of Nebraska meet for seminars on Friday, with Outreach to Teach — a makeover of the grounds and buildings of the Cedar Bluffs Public Schools — on Saturday.

■ **Details:** Friday night seminars at Midland College. Check with your UniServ director at 1-800-742-0047.

Nov. 6

General Election

■ **What:** Winners of the May Primary Elections square off. Remember to vote, and to consider a candidate's education platform when casting your ballot!

It's Blue Cross Scholarship Time!

Blue Cross Blue Shield Application Process Open

There's an easy way to lessen the cost of the classwork you take this fall as you work to improve your teaching skills and knowledge base: apply for a scholarship through the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska Professional Development Fund.



The competitive scholarships are awarded three times each year, and the next deadline, for the fall term, is Saturday, Oct. 6. All applications must be made through the NSEA website. Applicants will receive an e-mail confirming receipt of the application (if you do not receive an e-mail, call NSEA).

Scholarships may be used to pursue an advanced degree, seek additional teaching endorsements or to take coursework for certification requirements. Stipends may cover up to 50 percent of the cost of a single, three-hour college course. Each applicant may apply for scholarship dollars for no more than three hours of coursework. Books and supplies are not covered.

To apply, NSEA members must complete the application form on the NSEA website. The form will be posted on the NSEA website through the Saturday,

Oct. 6, deadline.

Scholarship winners will be notified by Nov. 1. The goal is to award stipends to the largest number of members from each of NSEA's seven governance districts. To be eligible, NSEA members must be covered by either single or family Blue Cross/Blue Shield health care.

Previous applicants, successful or not, may re-apply. However, applicants may be scholarship recipients in only two of the three scholarship cycles during a school year.

Winners must provide evidence of completion of coursework at an accredited post-secondary institution before they receive the scholarship funds. All courses must be taken for credit.

Since 1986, 4,704 NSEA members have shared more than \$610,000 in scholarship dollars, thanks to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska.

The scholarship program does not affect Blue Cross and Blue Shield premiums. To apply, go to the NSEA website at:

www.nsea.org

For details, contact Sally Bodtke at 1-800-742-0047 or via e-mail at:

sally.bodtke@nsea.org

On the Cover:

Bill Carlin has taught at Adams Central for 32 years, and coached three sports each year. That's 96 seasons in total, and NSEA has been with him every step of the way. Find out why he believes in NSEA on

Page 14.



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First Day Butterflies



**NSEA President
Nancy Fulton**

“
From that
first day
forward,
you will work
day and night
to make
certain that
every child
in your charge
has every
opportunity
to learn and
progress.”

As a classroom teacher, I always looked forward to the time of year when I would connect with colleagues old and new, greet my new students and meet their parents. Even as a veteran teacher, I had trouble sleeping that night before the first day of school. I would venture to say that every teacher and student, from kindergarten to college, experiences some level of opening-day butterflies.

For most of you, those butterflies should have fluttered away by now. It has been several weeks since that first day, and school day routines and curriculum progressions have taken over. From that first day forward, you will work day and night to make certain that every child in your charge has every opportunity to learn and progress.

Where does that commitment originate? Why does your collective commitment and compassion remain steadfast in the face of so many assaults on public education? “How,” I was asked recently, “can public school teachers and education support professionals remain so committed when it appears that they have been tagged as failures by the media, by politicians and by education reformers.”

First, I believe those assertions to be false. The demagogues who promote the American public school system as a failure either have not set foot in a public school in years, or blatantly ignore the facts in order to promote a political agenda. Our system is not perfect, but it is quite good and getting better all the time.

Second, to answer the question: I believe our educators and staff at the K-12, community college, state college and university levels remain committed to public education because they believe in providing opportunities for children, and they have an inherent belief that public schools offer the best opportunity for all, from that first day of school forward.

Held Accountable

Educators also collectively believe that they should be accountable for student learning. That said, ensuring student success in this fast-changing world requires more from everyone. Politicians, school boards and administrators must ensure that schools receive adequate and equitable funding. Educators, parents, students, education

associations and elected officials must share accountability. That is why critical collaboration must continue among all stakeholders.

The 2012 Phi Delta Kappa (PDK)/Gallup poll of the Public’s Attitudes Toward the Public Schools found that a lack of funding is the biggest challenge facing schools. Funding is more troubling than lack of discipline; overcrowding; and gang violence and drugs – which topped the list in past years. Adequate funding would allow key foundational student learning elements to be reached: smaller class size, early childhood education, up-to-date textbooks, current technology, and a well-rounded curriculum.

Improved Readiness

The poll also found three of four Americans have maintained confidence and trust in public school teachers. Americans continue to respect and admire teachers, despite the media bashing. Poll respondents used words like these to describe the educator who had the strongest influence on them: caring, compassionate, motivating, knowledgeable, hardworking and demanding.

Americans want high standards for teachers, from their first day in a teacher preparation program to their last day before retirement. They want teachers to improve the readiness of young people for the rigors of college and a career. Three out of four surveyed said entrance requirements into teacher prep programs should be as rigorous as or more selective than engineering, business, pre-law and pre-medicine. Further, 67 percent of respondents believe that teachers would be more effective if college education preparatory programs were more rigorous.

This is the bottom line: the PDK poll shows that the time is ripe for our Association to take the lead, to define good teaching and to influence teacher preparation, training, evaluations, support and responsibility. Our beliefs are generally in line with the majority of Americans. If we reach out, engage and work with the public on these issues, we will gain widespread support for ensuring that public education remains strong and viable, for every child’s first day forward.

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Now you can save with the new My Deals Mobile Application on your iPhone, iPad, iPod Touch and Android devices. The newly unveiled benefit of joining NSEA can save you more than the cost of membership each year.

More than 100,000 merchants now accept the Access mobile savings when you show the coupon on your phone at check out. That list includes hundreds of Nebraska retail and dining sites, from Subway, Applebee's and Papa Murphy's to AMC Theaters, Aeropostle, Hertz, Office Depot, Direct TV, Kmart and more. The mobile app includes these features:

- It's easy to search by category and create a user-favorites list for future use.
- Find your favorite merchants using the GPS location or maps feature.
- Keep track of how much you save with the savings tracker.

Once you've registered the application, you're activated and ready to start saving!

Don't forget to log in to the NSEA website for another way to save through the Access program. Go to the NSEA website and look for the membership card

How to Acquire the My Deals App

To get your member deals wherever you go, follow these steps:

- Visit the iTunes Store or Android Market and download the My Deals Mobile application.
- Register on the application. The registration process has two dialogue boxes for registration numbers. The first number – 8589 – is for all NSEA members. The second dialogue box requires your personal 10-digit NSEA identification number.

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icon at the lower right-hand corner of the page. Click on the icon, then enter your NSEA membership number.

From there, you simply search for the merchant discounts you want, in the location you want, by typing in the city or ZIP code. Once you pull up a specific merchant offer, just follow the easy redemption instructions and receive your exclusive savings.

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Floor discussion: Nebraska delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly John Heineman, left, and Leann Widhalm, center, talk strategy with Vermont delegate Stephen Owen on the floor of the assembly hall in Washington, D.C., in July. Heineman, Lincoln, is on the NEA Board of Directors; Widhalm, of Norfolk, is the NSEA vice president.

Public Schools & the American Dream

Teachers 'Make Dreams a Reality' NEA Delegates Told

NEA's 2012 Representative Assembly may be remembered as much for the message delivered as for any action taken by members: the American Dream is reached through public education.

NEA Executive Director John Stocks noted that NEA's "social justice patriots" have secured opportunity and opened doors for millions of Americans.

NEA President Dennis Van Roekel reminded members that "we educate America" and that with education comes opportunity.

Vice President Joe Biden said teachers "make dreams a reality."

All three spoke at the Representative Assembly in July – a gathering of more than 9,000 members that included more than 100 NSEA delegates. The annual Assembly is the world's largest democratically-organized meeting.

Van Roekel said public education makes America strong.

"Studying history and civics help students become good citizens. Public education is the vehicle to teach American values

and ideals – values like a just society, democracy, and equal opportunity.

"And in a nation where equal opportunity is one of our most deeply held values, education is the key that opens the door to economic opportunity, for people from all backgrounds.

His parents did not doubt that he could someday become vice president of the United States, said Biden. Public education made the opportunity possible.

"No group of professionals can make that possible other than the educators of this great country," he said. "You know better than anyone that our success in the 21st century depends on our ability to educate all children. And that starts with the women and men in our nation's schools."

America's DNA is embedded with an abiding faith that the American Dream is not only real, but a belief that there are many Americans who are willing to ensure that it is truly accessible to all, said Stocks.

"I have tremendous faith that we, as a nation, will continue to progress because of the social justice patriots who valiantly

fight every day to make America live up to its promise,” said Stocks. “Social justice patriots challenge our present in order to forge a better future for all of us.”

NEA members, as social justice patriots, have a long history of doing what’s right for America, said Stocks. For instance, educators, through NEA, sought funds for the education of freed slaves and their children after the Civil War. NEA members spoke out against the ill treatment of Native American children in government schools; they supported a woman’s right to vote; spoke out against the internment of Japanese-American children and their families; challenged the absurdity that Spanish-speaking children were incapable of learning like other children; and opposed the segregation of Black children in schools that were inherently unequal.

Stocks said America faces another social justice issue: 30 states have passed laws designed to suppress voting rights of millions of Americans. Estimates indicate such laws will make it more difficult for up to 3.2 million Americans to vote, particularly those of color.

In Florida, New Smyrna Beach High School teacher Jill Cissarelli conducts a voter registration project each year as part of teaching her students about civic responsibility. But, said Stocks, Cissarelli didn’t realize that Florida’s new law also makes it more difficult to register people to vote, and as a result faced thousands of dollars in fines for helping her students to register.

“Jill persevered to protect her project, and she is a shining example of a social justice patriot,” said Stocks.

Other social injustices exist, as well, he said. Today, the average CEO of a Fortune 500 company makes about 600 times more than the average education support professional; back in the mid-1950s it was only about 20 times more. Today, one of every five children in our classrooms lives in poverty. What’s even more devastating is that one in 45 children in America experiences homelessness each year.

“That’s 1.6 million children who are sleeping in cars, under freeway overpasses, living in tents and abandoned buildings and getting ready for school in public restrooms,” said Stocks.

“We know them, we feed them, we teach them, we comfort them,” he said. “They’re on our school buses, in our cafeterias, in our classrooms. They come to school hungry. They start first grade a year or two behind their middle-



Meeting the VP: Millard Education Association President Paul Schulte had an unexpected opportunity as an NSEA delegate to the NEA Representative Assembly — he was selected to meet Vice President Joe Biden and his wife, Dr. Jill Biden. “It was an amazing opportunity to listen to him speak passionately about education, and I was honored to be selected from all the Nebraska delegates to meet him backstage,” said Schulte, who is also a member of the NSEA Board of Directors.

class peers.

“As educators, you know better than anyone what a toll this takes on children.

“They need teachers and education support professionals who will lift them up and be the wind at their backs.”

Stocks said it’s time now for another

generation of NEA leaders and activists to put the power and legacy of the Association to work to defend democracy, to fight for equal opportunity, and to create a more just society.

“Be the activists for social justice and equal opportunity in America!” he said.

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A Sweet Ride!

NSEA Signs Fleet Pricing Pact with Omaha, Lincoln Auto Dealers

Toyota, Chevrolet, GMC Cadillac, BMW Included in New Agreement

NSEA members, get ready to start your (new) engines!

The Nebraska State Education Association has entered into an agreement with Old Mill Toyota that will allow members to purchase new cars at pre-arranged, fleet corporate pricing, which falls below dealer cost.

The agreement covers all makes and models of the Toyota brand. Through an Old Mill Toyota sister company, Husker Auto Group, NSEA members will also have access to a similar pricing structure for all makes and models of automobiles in the GMC, Cadillac, Chevrolet, Mercedes Benz and BMW product lines.

Under the agreement, NSEA members will purchase at the pre-arranged, fleet corporate pricing, which is considerably less than the manufacturer's suggest retail price, or the "window sticker price" that customers see on dealership lots.

"Teachers watch their pennies pretty carefully. When they need a new vehicle, this pricing structure will help them stretch their dollars further," said NSEA President Nancy Fulton.

NSEA Executive Director Craig R. Christiansen worked out agreement details with Jason Fricke, corporate and business sales representative for Old Mill Toyota.

"This is an offer of real value to our members," said Christiansen. "It's a further example that our members can, in reality, save money by joining with the association."

Incentives, As Well

Jason Fricke clearly understands the desire of NSEA members to watch their dollars closely. He grew up in a family of educators – his parents are Dave and Lisa Fricke, who each spent 36 or more years in the classroom. Lisa Fricke chaired NSEA's Government Relations Committee before retiring from the Lexington Public Schools last year.

"This is fleet business pricing, which

is the pricing that corporations and businesses that buy many vehicles at a time qualify for and pay," said Jason Fricke. "The great thing is that our teachers get this same pricing up front, at no cost to them, when buying just a single vehicle for their personal use."

There is another great aspect of the arrangement, as well: NSEA members will also get any incentives being advertising at the time of sale. For instance, if Toyota offers a \$500 cash back incentive, or zero percent financing at the time of purchase, NSEA members earn those price benefits on top of the fleet pricing. Standard military and recent graduate discounts will also apply.

Josh Ames, fleet sales manager for Husker Auto Group, said the fleet pricing eases the anxiety of buying a new vehicle.

"This eliminates the hassle, the anxiety that comes when an NSEA member says 'I have to buy a car,'" said Josh.

Jason said the prearranged pricing

"This is an offer of real value to our members."
— Craig R. Christiansen,
NSEA Executive Director

promises to be equally strong among all brands offered through Old Mill Toyota and Husker Auto Group. All an NSEA member needs do is show proof of membership – NSEA's current membership card, for instance – at the time of purchase.

Discounts may also be available on pre-owned automobiles, he said.

Eighty percent of Toyota's Camry, Tundra and Sequoia models are made in

the U.S., ranking those models ahead of several Dodge, Chevrolet, GMC, Jeep and other 'American' brands.

Old Mill Toyota is at 108th and West Dodge Road in Omaha; Husker Auto Group is located just south of Interstate 80 on N. 27th Street in Lincoln.

To learn more, or to begin the purchase process, e-mail Fricke at:

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Browse through the available listings at Old Mill Toyota or Husker Auto Group at these websites:

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A different route: Discussions about the career path for educators was deep and deliberate during a conference of the National Network of State Teachers of the Year in Omaha. From left are De Tonack, Lincoln, Nebraska Teacher of the Year 1992; Michael Fryda, Omaha Westside, Nebraska Teacher of the Year 2010; Donna Mauer, Omaha, chair of the Omaha Education Association Instructional Advocacy Committee; and Bob Feurer, North Bend, Nebraska Teacher of the Year 2011.

Reimagining Teaching

Theory of Change Would Alter the Teaching Career Path

Teachers of the Year Proposal Would Give Educators Options Within the Profession

A new vision for public schools that includes teacher collaboration, innovation and creativity also foresees a career continuum that offers advancement and growth opportunities for teachers that go beyond traditional options of remaining in the classroom, moving to administrative duties or leaving the profession.

The vision, or Theory of Change, has been posited by a group of well-credentialed supporters: the members of the National Network of State Teachers of the Year, or NNSTOY.

The stakes are broad. Supporters believe the Theory of Change ideals (see sidebar) would result in improved recruitment and retention of talented teachers and an improvement in student learning and skills.

As one NNSTOY member said, “this is all driven by student achievement.”

The theory came to Omaha and NNSTOY’s annual conference this

NNSTOY’s Theory of Change

By promoting differentiated roles and responsibilities for teachers along a career continuum, talented teachers will be recruited and retained, effective teaching will increase, and students’ learning and development of 21st century skills will improve.

past summer. Seven Nebraska Teachers of the Year, several local educators and NSEA leaders participated alongside more than 30 current and former Teachers of the Year from as far away as Alaska, New Jersey and Guam. Their goal: to work with noted national researchers to advance the Theory of Change.

‘Teachers Aren’t Widgets’

The vision, said Nebraska’s 2007 Teacher of the Year Maddie Fennell, is rooted in collaboration, innovation and creativity – the same skills today’s students must acquire to be successful. The vision promotes new

roles, responsibilities and compensation for teacher leaders.

“NNSTOY firmly believes that the lack of career opportunities for active teachers is at the root of teacher recruitment and retention problems,” said Fennell, the organization’s secretary. “Teachers aren’t widgets; their instructional expertise varies and all students will benefit if teachers are given options beyond either staying in the classroom with identical responsibilities and roles, year after year, or moving into administration.”

According to NNSTOY’s strategic plan, members are “specially situated to identify challenges to recruiting and retaining effective teachers, and to offer teacher-supported solutions.” State Teachers of the Year “know firsthand why some of their colleagues have chosen to leave the profession and why others haven’t been attracted to it in the first place.”

One of those reasons is lack of career options. By and large, educators can stay in the classroom, move to administration or leave the profession. The career continuum considered in the Theory of Change, however, might include advancements in a teacher’s career arc such that starts at novice,

moves to staff teacher, senior teacher and finally to master teacher. At each step, responsibilities and duties would change.

Dr. Jeremy Burruss, a research scientist at the Educational Testing Service in Princeton, NJ, said the career continuum is practiced in many other professions. Burruss – a Millard South and University of Nebraska-Lincoln grad – said that in some professions it takes up to 10 years and 10,000 hours of practice to be considered an expert. In the medical profession, for example, it might take 12 years for a doctor to complete school and various internships. Most plumbers must have five years and 8,000 hours to reach the “journeyman” level – and that’s not master plumber status, he said.

“Teaching does not have that structure,” said Burruss.

Sparkplugs and Engines

Molly Lasagna, a research and policy analyst with the American Institutes for Research, led attendees through a process to begin talking about the innovation that would lead to adoption of the Theory of Change.

“The sparkplugs of the engine of school reform include the need to alter the schedule of the school day to local needs; technology needs, among other issues,” she said.

With that in mind, she asked how educators would staff and operate schools if there were a career continuum in place. She asked attendees to consider changes in time, physical space, school leadership and teacher leadership.

Reporting for one study group, 2011 Nebraska Teacher of the Year Bob Feurer, North Bend, said the current school day does not meet the biological needs of students. “Year-round school allows for more flexibility,” he said. Another group urged a flexible school day that opens at 6 a.m. and closes at 6 p.m., varied by age group and scheduling and including time for staff development.

Legislative Knowledge

Further, Feurer’s group said student competency, not age, should dictate accomplishment – a second-grader reading at fifth grade level should sit with fifth graders to read.

As for teacher leadership, Feurer’s group said teachers should educate

themselves on legislation – as legislators control the purse strings.

Also submitted was this idea: returning to the idea of the principal as an instructional leader and advocate.

Fennell said NNSTOY hopes the Theory of Change will alter the way schools operate.

“NNSTOY wants to re-imagine current education systems, shifting the paradigm so that the most effective

teachers are provided opportunities to continue in the classroom while at the same time becoming leaders through differentiated roles and responsibilities that help to develop and sustain vibrant cultures of learning,” she said.

With such credentials behind the plan, count on change coming soon.

To review the NNSTOY Strategic Plan, go to this site:

www.nstoy.org

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A New Accountability Phase

State Board OKs New Measure of Student Growth

The Nebraska State Board of Education has approved implementation of a new plan for school accountability and it will begin to phase in beginning this school year.

The Nebraska Performance Accountability System (NePAS) will be the first state accountability system that will measure student growth. The State Board approved the plan in August.

NePAS will measure student performance in reading, writing, math and science, with scores assessed in grades 3-5, grades 6-8 and grades 9-12. The plan will judge each school in those four subject areas and grade-level configurations on status (the average of scores in the subject areas) and on improvement, or how much scores improve from year to year. For instance, the plan will compare reading scores of this year's fifth graders to reading scores of last year's fifth graders.

In addition, the plan will measure students in grades 3-5 and grades 6-8 on reading and math growth, or the progress made by students as they move through one grade level to the next in those subjects. Not every grade is tested in science and writing, and growth will not be a part of the grades 9-12 reporting measures.

Multiple Rankings

The multiple measurement approach has great value, said Valorie Foy, director of statewide assessment for the Nebraska Department of Education.

"Some states reduce assessment to one number or ranking," said Foy. "That is not what this model does. There are multiple rankings for grades and schools. The point is that this lets you see the areas in which you are being successful."

NSEA Director of Instructional Advocacy Jay Sears has worked with the State Board and the Department of Education on NePAS. He believes educators will find the growth measurement details to be most helpful.

"This will be most useful for classroom teachers and building units to look

at in setting classroom goals," he said. "Teachers will be able to answer the question 'did we add value to what we taught?'"

The first scores will appear with the annual Department of Education Report Cards around Oct. 31. Those scores will rank each district, by building configuration, in each of the four categories. For instance, the rankings will list each school district in each grade 6-8 configuration for reading, writing, math and science.

"Someone will be last, even if that school is outperforming all the other schools in the nation," Sears said.

"Teachers will be able to answer the question 'Did we add value to what we taught?'"

— Jay Sears, NSEA Director of Instructional Development

Three Years Away

Meanwhile, Nebraska does not have a waiver from the provisions of No Child Left Behind and the onerous annual yearly progress (AYP) rankings that are the hallmark of NCLB will remain in place. That may cause confusion, said Sears, as a district could receive a "needs improvement" designa-

tion under NCLB, yet rank among the top systems in the state under NePAS.

The NePAS system is better than the AYP process, said Sears, "where a school needed a checkmark in just one of 37 categories to land on the under-achieving list."

Foy is not fond of the rankings that come with standardized tests, but said the multiple measures will provide added, useful information. Teachers may see that their school's status is not as high as another school's status, but at the same time may see that their school is making improvement, she said.

It will be three years, said Sears, before the data will yield any growth numbers. State Board members, meanwhile, appear ready to let the program evolve.

"The board committee is willing to modify this program as it goes along," he said. "There are concerns about making this useful for schools and teachers."

For details, contact Sears at 1-800-742-0047, or check the Nebraska Department of Education website at:

education.ne.gov

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96 SEASONS, MANY REASONS

Dual Membership in NCA, NSEA Benefits Everyone, Says Bill Carlin

For 32 years, Bill Carlin has taught math at Adams Central High School near Hastings. He's also coached football in the fall, assisted with girls' basketball during the winter, and coached track each spring.

"As my wife says, that's 96 seasons."

Through each math class and each of those 96 athletic seasons, Carlin has had two championship organizations at his side: the Nebraska Coaches Association and the Nebraska State Education Association.

The NCA has helped Carlin hone coaching skills and abilities, and offered free or reduced admission to select sporting events. NSEA has worked with him to negotiate improved salaries, extra duty schedules and benefits.

When five reduction-in-force notices were considered by the Adams Central Board of Education last spring, NSEA helped members of the Adams Central Education Association understand and navigate the district's RIF policy. NSEA also aided Carlin and other ACEA members in talks with administrators about a buyout plan that eventually prevented any RIFs.

With 18 NSEA staffers on the road across the state, members always have prompt answers to questions about contracts and employment issues. Those staffers — UniServ directors — are experts at resolving issues that affect employment or extra duty assignments.

For those and other reasons, Carlin believes membership in both associations is a must. He has gone so far as to meet with coaches and non-members in other school districts to encourage them to join NSEA. So why, with so much at

stake, do many in the coaching ranks choose to join one or the other of the two organizations?

"I've been active in both associations, and I just think being a member of both is a part of being a professional educator," he said.

Millions of Dollars

Carlin is a past president of the NCA, and has returned to the association's Board of Directors.

He is a three-time president of the Adams Central Education Association and has been on the negotiations team for 27 years, the past 10 as head negotiator.

High on Carlin's list of NSEA membership benefits is the statewide health insurance plan the association built and today manages, along with the Nebraska Council of School Administrators and the Nebraska School Boards Association. The plan is used in nearly every Nebraska school district and collectively saves those districts millions of dollars each year — dollars that can be funneled into salaries and programs.

How effective is the health care plan? There was no premium rate increase for the 2011-12 school year, and just a 2.99 percent increase for 2012-13 — both figures well below the 8 percent national medical inflation rate.

Support, Preserve

NSEA's work with the state's teacher retirement plan is also important, said Carlin.

For more than 60 years, NSEA has worked to protect

At the Coaches Clinic

These three Fremont coaches and NSEA members attended the July meeting of the Nebraska Coaches Association in Lincoln and made their way to the NSEA booth. From left are Andrea Highstreet, Stacie Fancher and Cherrie Kerr.





Bill knows the drill: Veteran Adams Central Coach Bill Carlin understands and knows well the benefits of NSEA membership. That's why he has taken on local association leadership positions over the years.

and improve the plan, and many of the plan's enhancements and safeguards were enacted due to NSEA's persistence. For instance, NSEA alone pushed for cost-of-living adjustments to be a part of the retirement plan. Carlin encourages NSEA to continue to fight for such retirement plan enhancements, but such progress won't happen without broad and deep association membership.

"Those improvements didn't happen because

people dreamt about it," he said. "People in the association worked hard. Everybody needs to help support and preserve it."

The health insurance plan and NSEA's work as teacher retirement plan watchdog, said Carlin, "are enough to merit membership in NSEA, in my book.

"If you're going to be a teacher and a coach, it's my belief that you need to belong to both organizations," said Carlin.

'I've been active in both associations, and I just think being a member of both organizations is part of being a professional educator.'

— Bill Carlin,
Adams Central

"As a teacher and coach, I have to ensure I am staying on top of the changes happening in my classroom and coaching for the safety of my students. NSEA and NCA help provide those changes to me while offering training in order to become a better teacher and coach."

— Amy Copper,
Loup County

'I belong to both the NSEA and the NCA because they are professional organizations that promote what I do! Teach and coach!'

— Michael Cobelens,
Waverly

'Some of the valuable services that NSEA provides are crucial to teachers and coaches across the state of Nebraska.'

— Darin Boysen,
Executive Director,
Nebraska Coaches
Association

'Little things arise, like an iffy evaluation that you need to contact someone who knows how to help you out in those situations. NSEA is always there to take care of that stuff.'

— Beth Willet,
Southern (Wymore)

Now Online: Veteran Coaches Talk About Membership Value

NSEA was on hand at the Nebraska Coaches Association meeting in Lincoln in late July, and filmed a short video about the benefits of membership in both the NSEA and the NCA. Among the stars in the video were Bill Carlin of Adams Central, above; and Beth Willet, a teacher and coach at Southern (Wymore), shown at right visiting with NSEA UniServ Director Rich Wergin.

Others in the video include NCA Executive Director Darin Boysen and Loup County Public Schools teacher and coach Amy Copper. To view the video, go to the NSEA website at:

www.nsea.org



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WS300912

A Walk for Kids

NSEA Children's Fund Collects \$15,000 at Two Walk-a-thons

The first two walk-a-thons to benefit the NSEA Children's Fund were a success, if gauged simply on an income basis.



The two walks – one in May in Lincoln, and another in Millard in August – were short on walkers but raised a combined \$15,000 when corporate donations, pledges and other income was totaled.

NSEA members and other school employees were asked to walk and to encourage family and friends, businesses, schools and others to join the event as a community service. All proceeds went to the Children's Fund.

Those who walked and collected pledges were eligible for prizes, including a pair of University of Nebraska football tickets, given away in a drawing.

The key sponsor was Ameriprise Financial. Other sponsors were Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska, Union Bank and Trust Co., First Nebraska Educators Credit Union, Horace Mann, Clark Creative Group



Sacking for charity: As part of the Children's Fund Walk-a-Thon fundraiser in Millard, NSEA members sacked the groceries of customers at Super Saver Grocery Store in exchange for a free-will donation. Millard Education Association members Jill Anderson and Jim Gilin took part.

and Omaha Print. The Super Saver grocery group was a key sponsor as well; both walks were staged with the help of Super Saver staff and from Super Saver parking lots.

Founded by NSEA in 1994, the mission of the Children's Fund is simple: to ensure that a child's personal need does not interfere with his or her ability to learn and succeed. Over the years, the Children's Fund has given thousands of Nebraska children in every corner of the state the opportunity to succeed.

"When a child needs new eyeglasses, shoes, a coat, boots or other such basic necessities their family can't afford, the Children's Fund is there to help," said NSEA President Nancy Fulton. At the request of an NSEA member, assistance is immediate and confidential. NSEA assumes the overhead in the operation; every penny donated helps a child.

For more details, go to the NSEA website at:

www.nsea.org/nsea-childrens-fund

Nurses, Trainers Eligible for Additional Coverage

Nurses who teach or supervise in the medical arts area should not start the school year without the NEA Educators Employment Liability Program Insurance.

For just \$13, NEA provides nurses and other health educators and athletic trainers additional liability insurance coverage for teaching and supervisory responsibilities.

The policy for active and active part-time NSEA members covers school nurses for:

- Rendering first-aid and regular nursing services as a part of the member's educational employment.
- Administering oral prescription medicine to students, if advance written authorization has been provided.

In addition to nurses, eligible school employees include

dental hygienists, occupational therapists or physical therapists. NSEA members who are athletic trainers may also buy the additional coverage.

NSEA members wishing to purchase this extended coverage should send a letter requesting the coverage, along with a check for \$13, payable to NSEA, to: Megan Lyons, NSEA, 605 S. 14th St., Lincoln, NE 68508-2742. Be sure to indicate your occupation (school nurse). Also include your home and work telephone numbers.

Checks for the 2012-13 school year must be received by Oct. 1, 2012. Checks received after that date will provide coverage for the remaining months of the employment year.

For more details, call NSEA at 1-800-742-0047.

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Thies was OEA Exec

Lauded as Mentor, Principled

John C. Thies, executive director of the Omaha Education Association for 23 years, died at his Council Bluffs, IA, home on Aug. 28. He was 81.

Thies was assistant executive director of OEA from 1971-73, and became the association's exec on March 1, 1973, a position he held until his 1996 retirement. NSEA Executive Director Craig R. Christiansen knew Thies for 30-plus years, and worked alongside Thies when Christiansen was the OEA president.

"I had the opportunity to work with him on a daily basis for four years. It was a time of some of my deepest learning. John was one of the most decent, principled men I have ever known," Christiansen said.

As associate executive director of OEA, current NSEA UniServ Director Tom Scates worked with Thies from 1989 until Thies retired from OEA in 1996, and then followed Thies as OEA executive director. It is fair, said Scates, to say that Thies was a guiding force in OEA negotiations from 1974 through 1995, when the OEA greatly expanded the scope of the master agreement.

Thies was more than a boss, said Scates; he was a great mentor.

"I admired John's ability to grasp the essence of a situation and express it succinctly and forcefully," said Scates. "He demonstrated this in meetings with the district, especially when representing members and their concerns. John was patient, had a calm demeanor, and was wise. He had great integrity and was a man of his word."

Courage, Honesty, Insight

Christiansen said "John had a deep voice that always got everyone's attention. And he spoke with courage and honesty and insight that always kept everyone's attention."

NSEA Associate Executive Director Neal Clayburn met Thies when Clayburn was executive director of the Lincoln Education Association. Clayburn also worked with Thies through the Urban Executive Director's Association, which includes execs from NEA's 200 largest locals. Thies was a founder of that group.

"I respected him greatly," said Clayburn. "I did go to him for advice on issues in urban locals, and we continued to help each other out. Early on in my career he certainly gave more than he got."

Christiansen was one of a small group of friends who met regularly with Thies for lunch, with the most recent scheduled two days before Thies died. Christiansen was unaware that Thies was too ill to attend.

"Before I went into the restaurant, I was on the phone with a friend, who asked me what I really wanted from that lunch. I said that I just wanted one more hour with John. It will always be my loss that I didn't have that hour," Christiansen said.

Born in Iowa, Thies spent four years in the Air Force and then attended Omaha University, where he earned bachelor's and master's degrees. In 1956, he began teaching in the Individual Progress Department at Omaha's Bancroft School. He later transferred to the Visiting Teacher Department, where he worked 10 years before joining OEA in 1971.

He had served on the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska Board of Directors. He was an active member of the First Christian Church.

His wife, Mavis, and a daughter, Tamara Jo Boege, preceded him in death. He is survived by his sons, Tim J. (Susan) Thies and Todd C. Thies; grandsons, Joshua and Jacob.



Thies

Zane Harvey, Anthony Blum

Two teachers and coaches for the Broken Bow Public Schools died in May in an automobile accident near Ansley that also injured several members of the school's basketball team.

Zane Harvey, 38, and Anthony Blum 24, died when a pickup truck crossed the center line of Highway 2 one mile west of Ansley and collided with their school van.

Harvey had taught math at Broken Bow since 1999, and was an assistant football coach, assistant basketball coach and head boys' golf coach. Blum taught business education and was the head boys' basketball coach, and had just completed his first year with the district. Both were NSEA members.

Harvey and Blum, along with the players, were returning to Broken Bow from a basketball clinic at the time.

Harvey, a Stapleton High School graduate, also taught in Beatrice. A graduate of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, he played on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's 1995 national championship football team. He is survived by his parents, Robert and Monica Harvey, a brother and sister-in-law, and two nephews.

Blum graduated from Minden High School and was a graduate of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He is survived by his parents, Dale and Jane Blum of Minden, and two brothers.

Nancy Hermanson

Lincoln teacher Nancy M. Hermanson, 58, formerly of Campbell, died on June 25 as the result of a motorcycle accident on Interstate 80 near Grand Island. Hermanson and her husband were returning to Lincoln on Interstate 80 when a car heading the same direction allegedly turned to make a U-turn, colliding with Hermanson's motorcycle. The car's driver has been charged with felony motor vehicle homicide.

Hermanson was a long-time NSEA member and while teaching in Campbell served on NSEA's Tri-Valley Board of Directors. In Lincoln, she taught at Everett and Bethany elementary schools.

A Kearney native, Hermanson is survived by her husband, Lloyd, two sons, several siblings and her mother.

Verl Scott

Verl Scott, 81, died in Lincoln on July 12, 2012. A Mitchell native, he attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln where he was a three-year football letterman and earned All Big 7 honors as a linebacker in 1952.

He was commissioned and served as a First Lt. at Fort Benning, GA, and Fort Carson, CO, from 1954-56. He later played and coached in the Canadian Football League. He came to Seward in 1958 as a biology teacher and football and track coach. In 1963, he became the first principal of the new Seward High School and in 1966 became superintendent.

Scott was active in the NSEA, and served on the board of directors. He served on the Nebraska Council of School Directors. He worked at the Nebraska Department of Education as a consultant until he retired in 1986.

He is survived by his wife, Helen, two children and six grandchildren.

Eight EHA Groups Earn Wellness Awards

Eight Nebraska schools in the Educator's Health Alliance were among 26 Nebraska employers honored in August for successful promotion of workplace wellness. All eight utilize the statewide EHA Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska health insurance plan organized by NSEA more than 40 years ago.

The schools received the Sowers Award, created to recognize Nebraska employers that have developed quality models for encouraging wellness at work.

Factors considered for the award included the level of support for the program by company leaders, assessment of employee needs and wellness plan design. Recipients were:

- Crete Public Schools.
- Educational Service Unit 8, Neligh.
- ESU No. 13, Scottsbluff.
- Fremont Public Schools.
- Kearney Public Schools.
- Leigh Public Schools.
- Southeast Community College, Lincoln.
- Western Nebraska Community College, Scottsbluff.

Turning Down Insurance?

You Might Want to Reconsider — Quickly!

If you're a new hire in your school district — whether a first-time teacher or a veteran teacher just starting in another district, take note of this health insurance deadline: You have just 31 days after employment to enroll in the Educator's Health Alliance (EHA) Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska health insurance plan. If you don't act within that window, you may not get another chance!

EHA rules prohibit late enrollment in the Blue Cross program. Thus, teachers should consider their decisions carefully, said Neal Clayburn, NSEA's associate executive director.

"Health insurance is an important benefit, and decisions around that insurance should not be made lightly. Educators should not rush decisions and decline health insurance in order to 'save the district money,' or because their spouses are already covered," he said. "In many instances, declining the EHA insurance is irrevocable."

The rules are slightly different for

school districts with 50 or more employees, than for smaller districts, said Clayburn.

In the larger districts, after the first 31 days of employment, teachers are not eligible for enrollment in the EHA plan unless there is an involuntary change in coverage because of the death or divorce of a spouse or loss of a job.

In districts of 50 or fewer members, a late open enrollment program during the month of August is available, with an 18-month pre-existing condition clause.

Regardless of school district size, he said it's important that teachers not be dissuaded from taking the insurance, or be persuaded into taking other options in lieu of insurance.

Clayburn noted that if members using the EHA plan gain a spouse through marriage or a child through birth or adoption, those dependents must be enrolled within 31 days to be eligible.

Questions? Call NSEA at 800-742-0047.

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Middle Level Education Conference Dates Set

What: The 2012 State Symposium of the Nebraska Association for Middle Level Education, Friday, Oct. 12, at York Middle School.

Who: The keynote will be Jack Berckemeyer, a former Denver middle school teacher and assistant executive director for the National Middle School Association. He authored *Managing the Madness – A Practical Guide to Middle Grades Classrooms*. His focus is on the importance of being an adult advocate for all students, creating positive relationships with students, classroom management. Berckemeyer's morning address is entitled "Middle Level Education: Living it, Loving it, Laughing About It?" In the afternoon general session, he will look at "Understanding Adolescents." The NAMLE Professional Development Institute will also offer breakouts. Exhibitors with educational resources will attend.

How: Contact York Middle School Principal Brian Tonniges at brian.tonniges@yorkdukes.org, or visit:

www.namle.org

DHHS Launches Anti-Bullying Plan

What: The Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources Services Administration has launched a set of comprehensive, research-based Bullying Prevention Training Modules to empower individuals and organizations to address bullying in schools, neighborhoods and communities across the country. The modules include training materials, PowerPoints for community presentations, community action toolkits, videos and feedback forms.

Who: For anyone – educator or interested community member – interested in putting an end to bullying.

How: Read more, or access the training materials at [StopBullying Blog](http://StopBullyingBlog.com).

High Schoolers Asked to UNL Chemistry Day

What: High school juniors and seniors, their parents and teachers will get an up-close look at chemistry opportunities and careers at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Department

Ag Sack Lunch Program is Back!

Will Raise Fourth-Grade Awareness of Agriculture

Nebraska fourth-grade students will have another opportunity this school year to combine their tour of the State Capitol Building with a lively learning experience about the importance of farming to the state.

They'll also get a free lunch consisting of foods produced right here in Nebraska, as well as a card game full of farm-related facts to take home. The Nebraska AG Sack Lunch Program will educate Nebraska fourth-graders and their families about the importance of agriculture to the state.

This program is sponsored by the Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB), the Nebraska Pork Producers Association (NPPA) and the Nebraska Corn Board (NCB).

In early September fourth grade teachers in 660 elementary schools in 44 eastern Nebraska counties will receive letters of invitations to participate. Those are the classes most likely to make the Lincoln trip, said Victor Bohuslavsky, NSB executive director. A primary objective of the Ag Lunch Program is to help students from urban areas better understand how agriculture affects their lives on a daily basis.

Each year more than 20,000 students come to Lincoln to visit the State Capitol as part of their fourth-grade curriculum. The Ag Sack Lunch Program invites teachers to reserve a time and place, either before or after their tour, to enjoy the presentation and a free lunch.

The 20 minute presentations teach students about the vital role agriculture plays in the state's economy. "Ag Ambassadors" – University of Nebraska-Lincoln students trained specifically to conduct these sessions – come from farm backgrounds.

"Feedback from participating teachers have complimented the program so highly, we decided to offer the program again this school year," says Bohuslavsky.

The lunches, donated by the NSB, NPPA and the NCB, are limited to the first 5,000 students to register for the program. Project coordinators urge teachers to register their classes as soon as possible, even if they haven't firmed up their Capitol tour schedule yet. Registration is available on-line at:

brokawmarketing.com/reservation

For more details, call Karen Brokaw at 402-432-2299.



of Chemistry's 12th Chemistry Day on Saturday, Oct. 13. Included are research lab tours, a panel discussion with chemistry students, hands-on demonstrations, a Chemistry Quiz Bowl, scavenger hunt, the chance to win chemistry-related prizes and scholarships to UNL.

Where: Hamilton Hall on the UNL City Campus.

How: Registration is free and includes lunch. To register, visit:

www.chem.unl.edu/chemday

You may also contact Peg Bergmeyer at 402-472-3514 or at:

pbergmeyer2@unl.edu

Keep America Beautiful Hosts 'Recycle Bowl'

What: Keep America Beautiful, the nation's largest volunteer-based community action/education organization,

has teamed with Nestlé Waters North America in the second Recycle-Bowl youth recycling competition. Participating schools will track and report how much recyclable material they collect. At the close of the competition, the school in each state that collects the most recyclable material per capita will win \$1,000. A national champion school will receive a prize valued at \$2,500.

Who: Last year, more than 1,200 U.S. elementary through high schools participated in learning about waste reduction and environmental responsibility through in-school recycling. Sixty-seven percent of participating schools saw "significant" or "some" increase in the amount of material recycled.

How: Registration for the Oct. 15-Nov. 9 incentive-based recycling competition is open to all U.S. schools at:

<http://recycle-bowl.org>

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L1300912

Save With Dave!

Welcome back! I hope you are refreshed and energized as the new school year starts!

As your new Affiliate Relations Specialist from NEA Member Benefits, I'm here to make you aware of important programs designed to support you in your personal and professional life.

This is a great time to highlight two benefits provided through the NEA Members Insurance Trust, at no cost to eligible members. The NEA Complimentary Life Insurance program, previously called Dues-Tab Insurance, provides term life and accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D) insurance coverage to eligible members as follows:

- Up to \$1,000 of term life insurance.
- Up to \$5,000 of accidental death and dismemberment coverage.
- Up to \$50,000 of AD&D insurance for any covered accident that occurs while on the job or serving as an association leader.
- \$150,000 of life insurance for unlawful homicide while on the job.

The NEA Introductory Term Life Insurance Plan provides eligible NEW members with \$15,000 of term life insurance coverage for 12 months from the date of membership. After one year, new NEA members may continue their coverage at low member-only rates.

While coverage is automatic, please remember to register or update your beneficiary via the NEA Member Benefits website or by calling the Member Benefits service center toll free at 1-800-637-4636, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (or Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.) ET. The website is at:

www.neamb.com

Questions? Contact me directly at:

dglenn@neamb.com

For NEA member eligibility requirements and applicable benefits criteria for NEA Complimentary Life Insurance and the NEA Introductory Term Life Insurance Plan, consult the Summary Plan Description documents on the NEAMB website (look under the Insurance tab).

*David Glenn is Nebraska's
NEA Member Benefits representative.*



Glenn

Getting Ready to Buy a Home

The Key to Success is Preparation

Financial preparation is the first — and perhaps the most important — step in the home buying process. Get ready for your purchase by taking a careful look at your finances, especially your savings, credit, income and debt.

Down-Payment Options

Buying a home doesn't necessarily mean having to make a large down payment. If you have a down payment in mind, you'll reach it more quickly if you stick to these rules:

■ **Pay yourself first.** When you pay your monthly bills, the first check you write should be to your savings or investment account.

■ **Avoid unnecessary purchases.** The less you spend on big-ticket items that you don't really need, the sooner you'll become a homeowner. Keep that goal in mind when you shop.

■ **Set realistic goals.** Take an objective look at your monthly income and expenses, and decide how much you can afford to put aside. If saving for a home causes you to lag on your other obligations, it will defeat the purpose.

Your Credit

The way you use credit is an important part of the mortgage equation. Your lender takes your credit history

into account when deciding whether to approve you for a mortgage and what interest rate you will have to pay. If you've experienced financial difficulties that may have negatively affected your credit, it doesn't automatically mean you can't get financing to buy a home. Work with the lender to document and explain credit concerns.

Income and Debt

If you meet the basic loan qualification requirements, your lender will compare your income to your outstanding debt to determine how much you can borrow. Guidelines vary, but lenders usually prefer that the amount you spend on monthly debt, including housing expenses, be no more than 36 percent of your gross monthly income. Try to avoid taking on any new debt in the months leading up to your purchase. Even if your debts add up to more than 36 percent of your income, you still may be able to obtain a mortgage.

To learn more about your home financing options, call the NEA Home Financing Program at 1-866-327-6385 and speak with a Home Mortgage Consultant.

Remember, the benefits of the NEA Home Financing Program are extended to parents and adult children of NEA members.



Enter the "Who do you LOVE?" contest

Tell us who you love and win \$1,000 in Visa gift cards!

September is Life Insurance Awareness Month. To encourage NSEA members to think about life insurance as an expression of love, the NEA Members Insurance Trust is sponsoring a "Who do you LOVE?" contest through Oct. 15.

To enter, simply submit a story of 200 words or less that expresses why you love someone and why you want to protect them. You may also include a photo. Winning stories may be featured on the NEA and NEA Member Benefits websites.

The grand prize winner will receive two \$500 Visa gift cards — one to keep and one to share with a loved one! For details, or to enter, visit:

www.mynealife.com



Glenn is New NEAMB Rep in Nebraska

Glenn is Statewide Member Benefits Link For NSEA Members

NSEA members interested in saving money, or interested in spending their hard-earned dollars wisely, should do two things: watch these pages every month, and watch for David Glenn at NSEA events.

Glenn is the new NEA Member Benefits representative for Nebraska. He succeeds Eleanor “Snookie” Krumbiegel, who retired in May.

His duties include assisting and educating members about the benefits and programs available through the NEA Member Benefits program. Glenn is available to provide presentations to local associations on topics like insurance, investing, budgeting, continuing education, as well as Member Benefits programs in general.

“Member Benefits has an extensive variety of benefits, ranging from pet insurance to discounted master’s degree programs,” he said. “There are numerous ways members can recoup their dues dollars and save money. The key is truly increasing one’s awareness of what they have access to, while creating a means for them to save money.”

Glenn has been with Member Benefits for four years, and previously worked as a trainer for Wells Fargo in Des Moines and Minneapolis. He was a teacher assistant for three years in his native St. Louis.

With Member Benefits, Glenn will serve Nebraska, Wyoming, Oklahoma and Idaho. If you have questions about Member Benefits programs or services, or need additional details about a Member Benefits program, call him at 1-800-360-1296, or call the Member Benefits customer service center at 1-800-637-4636. Glenn can also be reached at:

dglenn@neamb.com

Wave of Sympathy

It’s Never too Early To Discuss Long-Term Care

When a national news columnist’s article about his family’s struggle to care for his aging father launched a wave of sympathetic letters, one reader asked “Why didn’t you talk about long-term care insurance?”

That example raised this question: Is your family prepared? NEA Member Benefits offers the NEA Long-Term Care Insurance Program, an exclusive group long-term care program for NEA members and their families.

For details, call 1-855-632-4582 to speak with a dedicated NEA Long-Term Care Insurance Program representative, or go to the website at:

www.nea4ltc.com

Long-Term Care Pop Quiz

1. The odds of a person over 65 needing long-term care are:

- A. 25 percent.
- B. 50 percent.
- C. 70 percent.

2. The NEA Group Long-Term Care Insurance Program is available:

- A. To NEA members.
- B. To parents and grandparents of members.
- C. To adult children.
- D. To all of the above.

3. Services covered includes:


- A. Assistance with bathing, dressing and eating.
- B. Home modifications, such as installing shower grab bars.
- C. A care plan developed by a nurse.
- D. All of the above.

4. The cost of a long-term care insurance policy* for a married 50-year-old is:

- A. \$55 per month.
- B. \$75 per month.
- C. \$100 per month.


(Answers: 1 C; 2 D; 3 D; 4 A)

*Benefit includes \$200 per day, \$100 per day cash benefit, 90-day elimination period, and guaranteed purchase option to buy additional coverage at a later date with no underwriting.



Benefits you can take to the bank.

Stay in touch with work or home with brilliant devices from Sprint. Save with discounts on monthly service plans from where you work.



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Trade in your old phone from any carrier.
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Mention this code to claim your discount.
Corporate ID: GAEDU_NEA_ZMB

Call: 866-639-8354
Visit a local Sprint Store: sprint.com/storelocator

May require up to a \$36 activation fee/line, credit approval and deposit. Up to \$350/line early termination fee (ETF) for advanced devices and up to \$200/ETF/line for other devices (no ETF for Agreements cancelled in compliance with Sprint's Return Policy). **Individual-Liable Discount:** Available only to eligible employees of the company or organization participating in the discount program (requires ongoing verification). Discounts are subject to change according to the company's agreement with Sprint and are available upon request for select plans (monthly service charges only). No discounts apply to secondary lines, Add-A-Phone lines or add-ons \$29.99 or less. **Sprint Buyback:** Available at participating Sprint store locations. Limit of three (3) returned devices, per 12 month period, per one active mobile phone number. Phone must be disassembled before recycling. Device will not be returned. To best protect your data, please delete all personal information from your phone. Credit amount depends upon valuation and may vary based on condition. Credit will be applied to in-store purchase or Sprint account within three invoices. Trade-in also available online at sprint.com/buyback. **Other Terms:** Sprint reserves the right to modify, extend, or cancel offers at any time. Coverage not available everywhere. Nationwide Sprint Network reaches over 285 million people. Sprint 4G LTE network is available in limited markets, on select devices. Visit sprint.com/4GLTE for info. Sprint 4G LTE devices will not operate on the Sprint 4G (WiMAX) network. Sprint 3G network (including roaming) reaches over 282 million people. Offers not available in all markets/retail locations or for all phones/networks. Pricing, offer terms, fees and features may vary for existing customers not eligible for upgrade. Other restrictions apply. See store or sprint.com for details. ©2012 Sprint. All rights reserved. Sprint and the logo are trademarks of Sprint. Android, Google the Google logo and Google Play are trademarks of Google Inc. LTE is a trademark of ETSI. Other marks are the property of their respective owners.

The Real Story

When I was in the 8th grade, our class read a story from the book “The Thread That Runs So True.” It was a story of a very young teacher in a one-room country school. I thought the author was talking about my family. My father finished the 7th grade. My grandfather only finished the 4th. They told me that it didn’t take much schooling to walk behind a horse-drawn plow. I loved the story, because the wooded hills and the country people who lived in them seemed so familiar. It was the details of the story that allowed me to recognize something from my own experience. Jesse Stuart, the author, told simple stories about what it meant to be a teacher fighting what seemed like an uphill battle.

A master storyteller, he wrote 61 books and nearly 500 short stories, many of which were about teachers and students. He was a champion and a heroic fighter for good schools. So, where are today’s champions of education? I have found them wherever I visit a public school.

‘Why Am I Doing This Job?’

Some would believe that the coldly impersonal ‘data’ from the No Child Left Behind federal law tells the story of a school’s achievement. How foolish. Schooling is deeply personal. It is told by the life stories of teachers, administrators and students. Numbers cannot give this information. Stories do. Consider the story of Carol Mae, a principal I met during one of my school visits. She said that teachers have to have a place where they know it’s OK to cry in the middle of the day. She keeps Kleenex and a bag of chocolates for just those times. And then she said that she, too, has put her head in her hands and cried and said “Oh, my God! What am I going to do? Why am I doing this job?”

She continued on, “Last year, I had a little girl who

was killed. The police called school one morning and asked whether she had been at school that day and then they said they believed she’d been murdered. The little girl with red hair was very, very bright and the mother just went berserk and shot her and her brother in their sleep — shot them five times each. The whole day, I could barely hold myself up, let alone carry the burden for others in the school and for the teachers. So, you know, we rally as a family and as a community and, unfortunately, we have a lot of that kind of stuff here.” I wondered if that was a day when students would take the tests that would give critics some data to compare to other schools.

A Masquerade

Carol Mae’s story, like those of Jesse Stuart, was not a generalized statement. It was a specific, personal, detailed story in which everyone can find

meaning. I hope she writes her own book someday. We still need master storytellers to champion education. In some ways, the battles that Jesse Stuart fought were easier than those today. His battles were against the fears and ignorance of unschooled citizens. The battle is not over. The battles today are against what purports to be good public policy, the demands of economics, or the dominance of numerical data to interpret the complexities of schooling — all masquerading as expert opinion and all threatening the future of our communities’ schools.

Seventy years ago, Jesse Stuart was fighting ignorance about the value of our schools. His stories were a huge part of that battle. Yours should be, too. Every person in America has a story about a teacher that made a lifelong difference. Tell that story to your neighbors, your friends and your family. Help them understand what the numbers can never tell — the real story of our teachers and schools.



The real story: NSEA Executive Director Craig R. Christiansen, in Plum Grove, KY, visiting the grave of educator and author, Jesse Stuart. On the stone is written: “a teacher lives on and on...good teaching is forever...”

Join NSEA-R Across the State!

Each year we salute local affiliates of NSEA-Retired and their officers who give their time to serve as officers and leaders. The NSEA-Retired Board and officers ask you to thank these volunteers for their dedication and service!

Bellevue Education Association-Retired

Details: They meet monthly September to May, except January. Activities for the year include technology; NSEA-Retired update (Roger Rea); Family Treasures at the Durham Museum (Shawn Forsberg); beekeeping (Bob Cook); Turkey's Underground Cities (Pam Arbuckle); Road Trip from Lincoln to the Arctic Circle (Ken Dewey); Alzheimer's (Betty Chin); a food drive; and a Christmas party.

Concerns: School board race, health care insurance, testing, the economy.

Officers: Co-presidents are Darlene Allen and Mary Kay Gibson. Other officers are Steve Lebedz, vice president; Barb Vaughn, secretary; Sylvia Pelzer, treasurer. Call or e-mail Darlene (402-293-1660) or Mary Kay (402-292-3749) with your questions and comments. E-mail addresses are:

allend70@aol.com
auntk.gibson@gmail.com

Lincoln Education Association-Retired

Details: Monthly meetings September to June. Scheduled activities are: Geology in Georgia O'Keefe's Art, by Robert Diffendal; The Tea Experience, Rodney Verhoeff; Promise of a New Land, by Cherrie Beam-Clarke; Slow Medicine, Carol McShane, RN, MS; Think Spring, Campbell's Nursery; The End of the World, Antarctica, Judy Zabel; Travel Through the History of the Haymarket, Ed Zimmer; scholarships; garage sales; breakfast for new retirees.

Officers: Janice Rowe is president. Other officers are Arlene Rea, vice president; Barb Hetcko, secretary; Billie Bussmann, treasurer. Call Janice with your questions and comments at 402-423-0267, or e-mail her at:

jrowe@lps.org

Millard Education Association-Retired

Details: They meet monthly. Activi-

Editor Sought for Corner

After nearly 16 years as the award-winning editor of the NSEA-Retired Corner, Tom Black is shutting down his keyboard. His October contribution to *The Voice* will be his last.

With his departure, NSEA-Retired President Roger Rea is looking for someone to fill Black's shoes.

"Anyone who has an interest in issues facing retired teachers, and who is willing to write about those issues, is encouraged to contact me," said Rea. "We need a retired member to step up to do this important job of communication with all NSEA members."

The duties include submitting text for inclusion in nine issues of *The Voice* on a monthly basis, September through May each year.

Black taught for 36 years, the last 34 in West Point. He has been an NSEA member since 1960, has attended Delegate Assembly more than 40 times. He was president of the West Point Education Association more than 10 times, and spent 20 years on the NSEA Board of Directors, including four as NSEA vice president and five as Nebraska's NEA Director. He is also a past president of NSEA-Retired. Black won numerous awards from NEA for his work on the Corner.

Black will continue to edit the NSEA-Retired Advocate, a separate publication mailed to retired members of the NSEA. Interested persons should contact Rea at:

roger.omaha@gmail.com



Black

ties for the year include: a wine-tasting experience; a North Omaha Walking Tour; a visit to the Douglas/Sarpy Extension Service; the Hot Shops-Mattress Factory; a Tour Horizon; participation in the NSEA-Retired Lobby Day; a Durham Museum bus tour; Dr. Keith Lutz at the annual Millard Public Schools retired luncheon; participation in the NSEA-Retired state conference; luncheon with the new retirees; and golf.

Concerns: One major concern is the state income tax on Social Security and Teacher Pension incomes.

Officers: President is Jim Rames. Other officers are Sidney Rames, vice president; Patricia Brinkman, secretary-treasurer. Call Jim with your questions and comments at 402-895-2484 or e-mail him at:

rames9@cox.net

Platte Valley Retired Education Association

Details: They meet in September, November, February and May. Planned activities for the year include an Irish family's settling in Nebraska, by storyteller Cherrie Beam-Clarke; the history of the Grand Island Army Ammunition Depot, by Howard and Sue Uhrich, and in honor of area veterans; following the Professional Bull Riding circuit, with Andy and Lila Gudgel; and The National

Weather Agency in Hastings, with Mike Moritz.

Concerns: Keeping members involved and participating, and how to get new retirees to join.

Officers: President is Guy Roggenkamp. Other officers are Martha McGahan, vice president; Linda Dahlstrom, secretary; Mary Ann Niemoth, treasurer; Jim McGahan, communications chair; Marianne Fitzgibbon, Card Committee chair. Call Guy with your questions and comments at 308-383-3579, or e-mail him at:

groggenk@charter.net

Elkhorn/Sandhills Education Association-Retired

Details: They meet in September, November, February and June. Activities for the year include a tour of the Herb Mignery Metal Western Art Sculptures near Bartlett; Christmas festivities; a tour of the West Point Dairy and lunch in the new hospital cafeteria; and a tour of Heritage Homes in Wayne.

Officers: LuEttta Clark is president. The vice presidency is vacant. Other officers are Marianna Wright, secretary, and Pat Monson, treasurer. Call LuEttta with your questions and comments at 402-329-6601.

-- Tom Black, Editor
wpc6296@cableone.net

Breed Earns National Recognition

Commissioner Cited for Leadership

Nebraska Education Commissioner Roger Breed was honored as the National Educational Administrator of the Year in July. The honor was bestowed at the annual meeting of the National Association of Educational Office Professionals.

Breed was nominated by the association's state affiliate, based on his leadership and support of staff. He is the second state education commissioner to receive the award since it was established in 1972.

The Nebraska Department of Education's affiliate to the national organization includes about 200 educational office employees. Members of the National Association of Educational Office Professionals work for K-12 schools and school districts as well as community colleges, higher education and departments of education.



Charts and calculations: Members of the Conestoga Education Association's negotiations team were in Lincoln this summer for a two day training on conducting comprehensive salary studies, used in negotiations. NSEA associate staff member Kathy Hutchinson conducted the seminar for, from left, John Frost, Deborah Van Fleet, Shylynne Morris, Sarah Lockett and Bobbi Keene. Not pictured is Tracy Morton.

Loup County's McNeil is Milken Fellow

The Lowell Milken Center of Fort Scott, KS, has awarded the Lowell Milken Center Fellowship to NSEA member Susan McNeil of Taylor.

The Fellowship is awarded on the basis of merit to educators who have distinguished themselves in teaching respect and understanding through project-based learning, or who have the potential for this distinction. The Center selects the best teachers in America to collaborate on projects that celebrate unsung heroes in history.

McNeil taught social studies for more than 30 years, and has also served as both a principal and superintendent. She is a former National DAR History Teacher of the Year, Milken National Educator, was a finalist for the Disney Awards, the Nebraska Christa McAuliffe Award winner, and 1995 Nebraska Teacher of the Year.



McNeil

NSEA Brings Home 11 Awards From State Education Editors

Efforts by NSEA to communicate with members and with the public have been recognized for excellence with 11 awards from the State Education Editors.

The honors were presented at the organization's 67th annual conference, held this year in St. Louis. NSEA won first place awards in these categories:

- **Editorial:** For an October 2011 commentary by NSEA Executive Director Craig R. Christiansen entitled "Who Cares?"

- **Feature Story:** For a January 2012 story about Bellevue teacher Trish Swoboda's donation of a kidney to friend and fellow teacher Lori Ballinger, entitled "A Most Personal Gift."

- **Best Photography:** For a January 2012 photo that accompanied the Swoboda and Ballinger story, captioned "A Happy Outlook."

- **Best Design, Marketing Materials:** For NSEA-designed membership materials on behalf of the Student Education Association of Nebraska.

- **Best Use of Social Media:** For a television ad campaign that urged the public to contact lawmakers in support of maintaining state aid. The campaign was entitled "Think Smart Nebraska."

NSEA won awards of distinction in these categories:

- **Feature Story:** For a September 2011 story entitled "Hometown Girl" that related how NSEA helped save a job for Plattsmouth teacher Marla Larsen Smith.

- **Best Editorial Design:** For the artwork and design of the "Hometown Girl" story on the pages of NSEA's magazine, *The Voice*.

- **Best Design, Marketing Materials:** for the NSEA 2011-12 membership materials.

- **Best E-Newsletter:** For the weekly Legislative Update.

- **Best Targeted Social Media Campaign:** For the NSEA truancy campaign entitled "Truancy Solutions."

- **Best Magazine:** For the monthly publication, *The Voice*.

The iSchool Initiative Revolution

Campaign Promotes Digital, Mobile Learning

The website for the iSchool Initiative asks visitors to “learn how you can be a part of a revolution for change in education.”

The iSchool Initiative is a student-led, non-profit organization, dedicated to revolutionizing the education system through innovative technology. The mission: to inspire and educate students on how to become lifelong digital learners in the information age. That is accomplished by raising awareness for the technological needs of the classroom, providing collaborative research on the use of technology in the classroom, and guiding schools in the implementation of this technology.

Travis Allen created the iSchool Initiative concept in 2009, upon receiving an iPhone for Christmas. After attempting to use the device in class as a learning tool, his teacher asked that he quit using his “cellphone.” Frustrated by limitations on his creativity, he formed a concept around mobile learning and established the iSchool Initiative.

During his freshman year at Kenesaw State University (KSU), Allen teamed up with Dr. Gary Robert, advisor to Students in Free Enterprise. With Robert’s help, Allen’s idea expanded into a fully functioning non-profit organization with 25 employees.

Today, the iSchool Initiative continues to support the movement for change in education and is a leader in the Digital Learning Revolution. To learn more, go to:

schoolinitiative.org

Speaking of Teaching

“There is nothing more notable in Socrates than that he found time, when he was an old man, to learn music and dancing, and thought it time well spent.”

—*Michel De Montaigne, Statesman, Author, 1533-1592*



More than 160 years! Family members of Jean Barney Talley have accounted for more than 160 years of teaching service in Nebraska!

Jean began teaching in rural Saline County and later taught at Friend, Beaver Crossing and Centennial in a career that spanned 43 years. She is seated in front next to her granddaughter, Mindy Dymacek, who teaches at the elementary level at Palmyra.

Standing, from left, are: Jean’s daughter, Janis Dymacek, who taught at Western and now teaches at Wilber-Clatonia; daughter Linda Patterson, who taught at Milligan and later at Gering in social studies and English; son-in-law Jim Dymacek, who taught music for nearly 40 years at Alma, Roseland, Campbell and Bladen, and counseled at Friend and Lincoln East, and now is an admissions rep for Doane College; daughter-in-law Cindy Talley, who taught at Benedict and now teaches at Fillmore Central; and granddaughter-in-law Kate Jizba Talley, who teaches at Bennington.

Adventures with Freddie

From Stella Bock, a teacher at Orange Avenue School in Cranford, NJ:

I have a teddy bear in my class called Freddie Bear. He’s pretty beat up but well loved. Each night a child takes him home with a large index card. They take Freddie on a trip that night to some place they’ve always wanted to go. Freddie and the child create a postcard from the place they’ve traveled to, one side a picture and the other side a message for the rest of the class. The message has to include some real information about the place. For example, the postcard might read, Hi everybody, here I am in sunny Spain, did you know that Spain produces more (blank) than any other country? The postcard requires research on the part of the child for the information it contains and the picture. The kids can’t wait to take Freddie on an adventure and they’re improving their geography and writing skills at the same time. I usually write the first postcard, then laminate them all and bind into a class book. The kids love their adventures with Freddie!



Adopt a Hallway

Peggy Partridge, a teacher for the Riverside Beaver County School District in Ellwood City, PA:

To keep our school looking neat and clean, I suggested an ‘Adopt a Hallway’ program. Classes volunteered to police the halls for litter and our principal posted signs reminding us to ‘Keep Riverside Beautiful’. The volunteering classes will be recognized at the end of the year for their hard work.

For more Works4Me tips, go to:
<http://www.nea.org/tools/Works4Me.html>