

# Manitou Springs School District 14

Volume 1, Issue 1

Fall, 2004

## District 14 Shining Stars

Manitou Springs School District 14 is blessed with wonderful teachers, administrators, support staff, and parents. As evidence of this, three of our school family have recently been recognized by their peers from around the state of Colorado.

**Deborah Lowery, Secretary of the Board of Education, has received the Colorado Association of School Boards McGuffey Award.**



This award is presented annually and "...honors that unique board member who brings to her board work both the head and heart of committed and passionate service." Both of Deborah's sons are graduates of Manitou High School. She sees every child as

a "precious gift from God" and knows that our children are "safe and well educated" in District 14.

**Laura McCracken, Manitou Elementary School art teacher, has been recognized as the Colorado Art Educator of the Year.**



Laura has developed an exciting and active art program as its first and only teacher. Michael Cellan, art teacher at Manitou Springs High School writes, "when you enter the halls of her school, you are entering a wonderful gallery. Walls are covered with works by young artists who are pushed, prodded and challenged to create art that involves higher

level thinking skills".

**Keith Elsberry, Principal of Manitou Middle School has been named the Colorado Distinguished Principal of the Year.**



Mr. Elsberry has served school as principal for 21 years and was chosen from a field of forty K-8 principals from around the state of Colorado. As the Colorado winner, Mr. Elsberry will attend the national conference of awardees in Washington D.C. this fall. Parent Adele Faber said, "he has such dedication to the kids. He knows every child by name and looks after every one of them."

**Thank you for your outstanding work on behalf of our children!**

## Board of Education Goals by President Larry Rice

The Board of Education has established non-prioritized goals to advance the District 14 Mission Statement and Learner Goals as well as to guide our discussions and decisions. These goals are also used by the administration, leadership teams, and staff to gauge the results of their efforts and to guide their work. **We believe these goals will strengthen and solidify our commitment to community values and mandates.**

The following are the non-prioritized Manitou Springs District 14 Board of Education Goals:

1. Continue to implement a K-12 coordinated curriculum.
2. Ensure effective and efficient use of District resources for academic achievement to achieve the Mission Statement and Learner Goals while advancing our Vision.
3. Create a climate that encourages and rewards innovation, leadership capacity, and professional growth.
4. Efficiently maintain and enhance the value of District facilities and grounds.
5. Identify and address issues related to District enrollment levels.
6. Continue the tradition of supporting strong community values.
7. Gain regional, state, and national recognition for District 14 students, staff, and programs through active engagement in professional organizations and networks and through proactive communications.
8. Strengthen communication among students, staff, and community and the Board of Education.

A few examples of how these non-prioritized goals have been implemented are the management of the mill levy override funds, yearly refinement and coordination of our K-12 curriculum, state and national awardees (see "Shining Stars" this page), and the use of fund balance and capital reserve to upgrade our infrastructure (see "Fund Balance" page 3)

The Board of Education is excited and proud of the work being done in District 14. We celebrate our district's accomplishments and continue to tackle problems always being firmly committed to our students' and our community's best interests. We will continue to provide the very best educational opportunities possible for our students with a state and nationally recognized staff along with outstanding facilities and a caring, involved community.



## *Russ Vogel Appointed MSES Principal*



Last spring the Board of Education appointed Russell Vogel as Manitou Springs Elementary School Principal beginning August 15, 2004. Mr. Vogel was the Assistant Principal at

Remington Elementary School in Falcon District 49 and had served in that capacity since August, 2002. He also served as the

assistant Principal in Stetson Elementary School and as an administrative intern at Remington Elementary. He was a fourth grade teacher at Remington Elementary School and was the Colorado Springs Gazette Newspaper in Education Teacher of the Year in 2000. Prior to pursuing a career in education, Mr. Vogel was an award winning journalist.

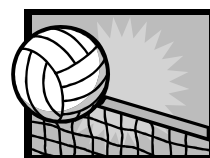
In his application Mr. Vogel wrote, *"My wife and I are planning to move to Manitou Springs expressly so our three daughters can attend this excellent dis-*

*trict's schools. It would be a melding of my plans and dreams to be the principal at Manitou Springs Elementary School."*

Russell Vogel was the unanimous recommendation of a selection committee composed of three parents, four MSES staff members, and Superintendent Crawford. We are proud to have attracted such a quality educator and leader to our District and welcome Russell and his family to our school and community family.



## *Four MSHS Teams Named Academic State Champions* by Glenn Hard, Activities Director



As the Athletic/Activities Director for Manitou Springs High School, it is my honor to announce that our athletes are achieving great success academically as well as athletically. To date, four teams have received the Academic Team Champion award. Those teams are Boys Soccer, Girls Soccer, and Volleyball in 2002-2003, and Boys Soccer again in 2003-2004. This award is given by the Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA), to the team in each sport with the highest combined cumulative grade point average, as compared to all other teams within the 3A classification in the State of Colorado. **In the sports mentioned, we had the highest GPA in the state!! Good Job Mustangs!!!**

## *Athletic Fields Upgraded*

In the summer of 2003, new sod was installed on Richardson Field because the prolonged draught had virtually destroyed all of the grass. At the same time, a sub-surface of up to eight inches of soil and mulch was added to allow grass roots to grow deeper, to hold more moisture, and to make the field more draught resistant. This past spring, new drainage was installed on the east side of Richardson field which has allowed us to extend the playing surface another 15 feet toward the home team bleachers. We are now able to safely play soccer at that site. Begin-

ning this fall, all football games and varsity soccer games are being played on Richardson field and all soccer practices and sub-varsity soccer games are on Maestas Field.

We have also begun an aggressive maintenance program of deep tine aeration, traditional aeration, over seeding, topdressing and fertilizing all of our fields to keep them in quality playing condition.

In addition, we are completing the process of resurfacing the track and rebuilding the jumping pits at the high school. The latex surface had deteriorated to the point

where we could no longer safely host track meets. Due to collapsed and aging piping, we also replaced the entire underground drainage system. We hope to have this project completed by late fall, weather permitting.

All of this work has been financed through the district's fund balance: funds remaining at the end of the fiscal year as a result of higher than expected revenues and/or lower than expected expenditures.

## *Support Our Local Businesses* by Leslie Lewis, Chamber of Commerce

In the rush of your daily life, please take time to enjoy all that Manitou Springs has to offer. When was the last time you strolled through our local shops or galleries? When shopping for a gift or something new for your home, do you go to downtown Manitou Springs or drive to Colorado Springs? The business community, including lodging, retail, galleries, restaurants, gas stations and convenience stores, provides much of the city income. They not only pay school district mill levies and property tax, they collect sales tax which covers a large portion of the cost of city services. In addition, many businesses support the school through advertising in programs and donations. By shopping in Colorado Springs, you are supporting their infrastructure, not ours.

Most businesses are open year round. While many carry merchandise that visitors buy, they also offer unique items for gifts and for personal purchases. We have the best restaurants in the Pikes Peak region. You can enjoy a casual family dinner or a special occasion extravaganza. The next time you are looking for that special something or dining out, please look in Manitou Springs and support the businesses that support your town and your children. For a list of shops in Manitou Springs, stop by the Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau.

## *Fifth Graders Go Camping* by Russ Vogel

More than 80 fifth-graders from Ute Pass and Manitou Springs Elementary Schools learned a bit about nature, each other, and themselves recently at District 14's annual fifth-grade camp, held this year at Bear Trap Ranch. Campers enjoyed nature classes and great food and lodging in their three days and two nights at the rustic mountain camp southwest of Colorado Springs.

*The 85 fifth-graders, along with nearly 30 faculty and parent chaperones, arrived at camp on Wednesday, September 15, and headed out for their first camp classes, which included Nature Art, Nature Journaling, Animal Games, and Outdoor Survival Skills.* By Friday afternoon, tired campers had rotated through



each of the classes and a culminating hike.

Camp activities are tailor-made for young Coloradoans, teachers say. "Teaching survival is an absolute pleasure," said Ute Pass Fifth-grade Teacher Greg DiFiore. "The students respond with enthusiasm to the lesson because they can all relate to what it feels like to lose sight of their parents at some time or another."



## *MSEF* by Dee Funkhouser

Manitou Springs Education Foundation (MSEF) has recently completed its sixth year of existence and is now an active agency with part time staff and a board of ten members. The MSEF provides money for innovative programs to District teachers and staff through an annual mini-grant

program. In addition, our Student Art Project produces packages of art cards for sale, using art projects completed by students in each of our four District schools. We sponsor a mentoring program to facilitate eighth grade student transition from middle school to high school and to provide high school students with opportunities to build leadership skills.

The Annual Sweet Tart Ball will be held for a second year at the Business of Art Center on Friday, February 11, 2005. As those of you who attended last year's event know, a great time was had by all!

I thank all of you who have volunteered time and contributed money to MSEF in the past. We are blessed to have the Manitou Springs and Ute Pass communities to work with and serve. This year, we are also asking that contributors consider designating their United Way gifts to the MSEF. And as we continue to grow in our community role, additional volunteers are always appreciated!

## *Fund Balance and Mill Levy Over-ride* by Roy G. Crawford

**Undesignated Fund Balance:** The Board of Education has approved a number of recent projects funded through our "Undesignated Fund Balance" which are those funds remaining at the end of the fiscal year as a result of higher than expected revenues and/or lower than expected expenditures. Through careful fiscal management, we are fortunate to be able to complete these projects, while maintaining at least a 12% of total budget fund balance as required by Board policy.

### **Recent projects are:**

- ◆ Staff Holiday Bonus, December 03
- ◆ Richardson Field drainage and turf
- ◆ High School boiler replacement
- ◆ Purchase of PowerSchool student management software (K-12)
- ◆ Demographic and Communications studies
- ◆ Field maintenance and equipment
- ◆ Track drainage and resurfacing
- ◆ District Auditorium lighting and sound system upgrade

**Mill Levy Override:** In 1999 the voters of District 14 approved a Mill Levy Override

in the total amount of \$900,000 to fund projects set forth by MSSD#14.

### **Mill Levy Implemented:**

- ◆ Increased employee base salaries (approximately 41% of the total mill levy)
- ◆ Enhanced staffing district wide in art, gifted and talented, music, and PE
- ◆ Added a middle school foreign language position
- ◆ Enhanced English and social studies staffing at the high school
- ◆ Enhanced technology instruction at the high school
- ◆ Purchased computers district wide
- ◆ Added a district computer technology position
- ◆ Expanded high school honors and AP level courses

If you have any questions about these or other financial matters, please contact Gerrit Mahsman, Asst. Superintendent for Business Services at 685-2024 or [gmahsman@mssd14.k12.co.us](mailto:gmahsman@mssd14.k12.co.us).

## *Alumni Association*

by Janice Penman

The Manitou Springs Alumni Association is a group of graduates who love to see the traditions of Manitou carried on by graduates of Manitou High School.

We publish a biannual newsletter, support the annual Homecoming events, assist reunion committees and solicit contributions to sustain the Jack Willie Memorial, the Bill Phelps Memorial and the George Rykovich Award of Excellence scholarships. We also care for the "Mustang Memories" memorabilia showcases in the front halls of the high school. **Contact Janice Penman at 685-2067 for information.**

### *College Admissions from Page 4*

The counseling office is constantly advising students of current scholarship opportunities and a file is maintained in the office for students to pick up scholarship applications.

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## *Message from the Superintendent* by Roy G. Crawford

It is with great pleasure that Manitou Springs School District 14 publishes this newsletter to the residents of District 14 and nearby communities.

Last year I convened thirteen focus groups which provided feedback and input regarding our district's effectiveness in communicating with its many constituencies. It became apparent that we do an adequate job of communicating with our parents, but not a very good job in communicating with the vast majority of our community members who have no children in school. It is my intent to pub-

lish this newsletter each fall and spring in an effort to provide an overview of the efforts of District 14.

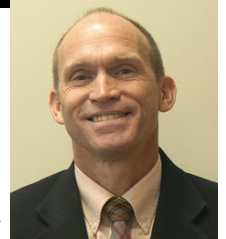
We appreciate and respect the fact that your financial and moral support of our schools is critical to our success and to our effectiveness. We can best serve the children of our communities with continued quality connections to all of our citizens.

If you would like more detail about any aspect of our schools, please contact me at [rcrawford@mssd14.k12.co.us](mailto:rcrawford@mssd14.k12.co.us), or 685-2024, or 405 El Monte Place, Manitou

Springs, CO 80829. Also, please contact me if you would like to provide feedback regarding the value of this newsletter.

*Lastly, please visit our website at [mssd14.k12.co.us](http://mssd14.k12.co.us). On the site you will find calendars of events, our Accountability Report, Board of Education information, and so on.*

Thank you for reading this first edition of our newsletter. I hope you enjoy it and find the information useful.



## *College Admissions* by Counselor Sherry Fairchild

**Colleges Attended:** The majority of our 2004 graduating seniors attended in-state colleges including the University of Colorado, Colorado State University, the University of Northern Colorado, the University of Denver, Colorado College and the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs. Out-of-state schools Manitou students are attending include: Loyola in New Orleans, Texas A&M, California Polytechnic, Arizona State, Puget Sound in Washington, Cottey College in Missouri, Embry-Riddle in Florida, and Sarah Lawrence in New York City.

**Scholarships Received:** *Manitou High School graduating seniors received \$1.3 million in scholarships from a variety of sources.* Scholarships came from institutions, local organizations, the military, and independent sources. Students must be commended for their hard work in completing the applications and submitting them for consideration. (continued on page 3)