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**FALL 2007**  
vol. 2, no. 3

## MVAEA announces a change in 2008 conference location



*by Evan Bensley*  
*(Northwest Iowa*  
*Community*  
*College), IALL*  
*president*

**M**any of you  
may already  
know that the

2008 MVAEA conference location has moved  
to the Mid America Center in Council Bluffs.

But you may still be wondering ... why?

In a nutshell, delays occurred with the  
construction bids for the Honey Creek Resort  
State Park near Centerville—pushing the  
completion date of the resort significantly past

our scheduled conference dates in mid-July.

Steve Allison, your MVAEA president-  
elect and Conference Planning Committee  
chairperson, actively worked with the Honey  
Creek Resort developers to find another  
location suitable for our conference.

The 2008 conference will actually be a  
regional conference that will include MVAEA,  
the Iowa Association for Lifelong Learning  
(IALL), and the ABE Institute. It will offer  
loads of fantastic networking opportunities!

The dates for the 2008 conference have  
remained the same as those that were initially  
announced: **July 16–18, 2008**. We look  
forward to welcoming MVAEA to the great  
state of Iowa next summer. Plan now to attend!

### CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

dates	<b>July 16–18, 2008</b>
location	<b>Mid America Center, Council Bluffs (across the river from Omaha)</b>
details	<b><a href="http://www.mvaea.com">www.mvaea.com</a> <a href="http://www.iowall.org">www.iowall.org</a></b>

# What are the advantages of mandatory continuing education?

by Sandra Kerka

The issue of mandatory continuing education (MCE) for professionals is controversial because at its heart are questions about the nature of professions and of adult education. Being a professional implies commitment to continuing one's education and the ability to pursue practice-enhancing learning. So there would seem to be no need for mandates.

However, due to advances in knowledge and technology, as well as public demands for accountability and consumer protection, the number of states requiring continuing education for many professions has significantly increased in the last 10 years (Queeney and English 1994).

This article reviews arguments on both sides, and it relates MCE to the national standards and competency movements. It describes how continuing professional education (CPE) program developers can provide effective learning for professionals in a mandated environment.

## CHIEF ARGUMENTS AGAINST MCE

The following are the chief arguments of those opposed to MCE (Brockett and LeGrand 1992; Morrison 1992; Nelson 1988; Queeney and English 1994):

1. It violates adult learning principles, such as voluntary participation, the informal nature of adult education, and adult self-direction. It promotes uniformity by disregarding individual learning needs and styles.
2. By definition, professionals are supposed to be autonomous, self-managed, and responsible for mastery of knowledge; MCE is punitive to those who participate voluntarily.
3. Evidence that it results in improved practice is lacking. All that is mandated is attendance, which may not change attitudes, motivation, determination to practice responsibly, or ability to learn.
4. Programs are not consistently and uniformly available. Many lack quality and relevance to

practitioner needs. MCE may encourage providers to focus on profit.

5. Requiring participation may reduce motivation and individual responsibility.
6. Professionals should be accountable for effective performance, not participation.

## CHIEF ARGUMENTS FOR MCE

Proponents support MCE for the following reasons (Brockett and LeGrand 1992; Little 1993; Nelson 1988; Queeney and English 1994; Queeney, Smutz, and Shuman 1990):

1. Expecting voluntary participation is not realistic. Those who need it most may be least likely to participate.
2. There is some evidence that well-designed programs can influence effective practice.
3. MCE provides equal access to opportunities.
4. Mandates protect the public from incompetent or out-of-date practitioners.
5. While imperfect, it is better than alternatives such as examination or practice review.
6. Professionals submit to its norms; a license to practice implies consent to be governed by rules of the profession.

Although some studies have found negative attitudes among those required to participate, Queeney, Smutz, and Shuman (1990) suggest MCE participants may judge their participation more thoughtfully and critically because it is required; they expect high quality and applicability and become more astute consumers of learning options.

Some feel that the mandatory debate is a dead issue (Brockett and LeGrand 1992; Nelson 1988; Queeney and English 1994). Rather than arguing about whether professional continuing education should be mandatory, the focus should be on improving the content and delivery of CPE. However, the "content of CPE courses is often based on precedent or what the providers think is worthwhile, rather than any

*continued on page 6*

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WEBSITE FOR  
THIS ARTICLE:  
[www.ericdigests.org/1995-2/mandatory.htm](http://www.ericdigests.org/1995-2/mandatory.htm)

# From the President

## Be willing to challenge your assumptions

by Leslie Shore (Minnesota), MVAEA  
president

We just made it through a long, hot summer where things happened in our region that tested the will and resilience of us all. One of the things we learned is that what we take for granted—whether it be the safety of a bridge, or dry streets in our communities—are in reality assumptions we make of how life should be. As educators, we take for granted things about our students that are also assumptions about the way things should be. Those assumptions hurt our students more than we know.

*Where do these assumptions come from?*

One assumption is generational. Most of the current teachers of adults are from the Veteran or Boomer generation and, as a result, bring many preconceptions and biases about education based on our experiences. That was then; this is now. We cannot let our assumptions about how learning takes place at school and at home get in the way of student success.

Another assumption is technological in nature. As educators, we have a tendency to assume a certain level of accessibility to computers and the Internet at home or in the community. We work in environments that have the most up-to-date technology and are surprised when a campus isn't wireless.

Consider this additional information:

### Assumption #1

The type of teaching that we received in college is equal to the task of preparing our adult learners for success in today's working environment.

### Reality

Our learning took place in both an individualistic and competitive environment. The working world now requires teamwork and cooperation. How we teach our content can

set students up for failure or success. We have to leave the familiar and venture out into the new andrological concepts that take teamwork, globalization, and technology into account.

### Assumption #2

Our students have nearly unlimited access to a computer and the Internet.

### Reality

The most recent PEW Foundation Internet survey shows that only 47% of adult Americans have an Internet connection at home. Further complicating the issue is that in rural areas, only 31% have Internet access at home; for those whose income is under \$30,000, only 30% have Internet access at home; and for those who have not graduated from college, only 23% have Internet access at home. The Gates Foundation noted that the 20% of low income individuals who used the library for Internet connectivity face, "inequities (that) exist in regards to hardware, software, number of computer terminals, and connectivity speed" (Gates Foundation, 2004). The 30-minute usage increments allowed in rural and suburban libraries is not up to the task of providing necessary access for adult students.

### Assumption #3

Your choice! There are more assumptions we make about our adult learners—from why they have come back to school to what their home learning environment is. If undiscovered, each assumption carries risks, for it impinges on our students' maximum learning.

### Reality

I implore each of you to examine the assumptions you have about your learners. Ask questions of them. Get to know them in a way that makes your teaching as impactful as possible. Do not take for granted that our learners are as you were (or are) as a learner; in fact assume they are not!

### WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Sources quoted in Leslie Shore's column are as follows:

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. "Toward Equality of Access: The Role of Public Libraries in Addressing the Digital Divide." 2004. Available at [www.ims.gov/pubs/pdf/Equality.pdf](http://www.ims.gov/pubs/pdf/Equality.pdf).

Horrigan, J. (2007) Home Broadband Adoption 2007; Retrieved on Sept. 10, 2007 from [www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/217/report\\_display.asp](http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/217/report_display.asp).

## DEVELOPMENT FUND UPDATE

# Butler Community College receives funding for honors project

by Rhonda Jones, (St. Louis Public Schools Adult Education & Literacy), Development Fund Committee chair

**B**ecause our previously named Development Fund recipient—Carol Plant of Sturgis, S.D.—made a move out of the adult education field, the new MVAEA Development Fund recipient is Sue Choens, who directs the Butler Community College adult education program in El Dorado, Kan.

The Butler Community College adult education program will implement an honor society to recognize students, improve student employment opportunities, assist students in obtaining financial aid for post secondary

education opportunities, develop a student ambassador program component as a model for Kansas, and create awareness of adult education in the community and state.

The mission of the National Adult Education Honor Society will be to provide meaningful recognition to deserving adult education students, to improve student employment opportunities, to develop student ambassadors for local adult education programs, and to create adult education awareness with school administrators and state legislators.

Congratulations, Sue! We look forward to hearing about this innovative leadership development project at the 2008 MVAEA conference in Iowa.

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE FUNDING?**  
To learn more, visit [www.mvaea.com](http://www.mvaea.com) or contact Rhonda Jones (phone 314-367-5000 or e-mail [Rhonda.Jones@slps.org](mailto:Rhonda.Jones@slps.org) for deadlines and procedures.

## [www.literacynet.org/diversity/writing.html](http://www.literacynet.org/diversity/writing.html)

This site features information on how writing is an important part of adult literacy development and adult education overall. *Site suggested by Jim Lightbody.*

## [www.isoc.org/isoc/whatis/conferences/inet/96/proceedings/c4/c4\\_2.htm](http://www.isoc.org/isoc/whatis/conferences/inet/96/proceedings/c4/c4_2.htm)

This site discusses a variety of considerations for meeting the needs of adult learners in developing courses for the Internet. *Site suggested by Jim Lightbody.*

## [www.ericdigests.org/1998-1/popular.htm](http://www.ericdigests.org/1998-1/popular.htm)

This site is part of an ERIC Digest report that addresses popular education, which is a form of adult education that encourages learners to examine their lives critically and take action to change social conditions. It is “popular” in the

sense of being “of the people.” Popular education emerged in Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s, but its roots may actually extend back to the French Revolution. *Site suggested by Jim Lightbody.*

## [agelesslearner.com/intros/adultlearning.html](http://agelesslearner.com/intros/adultlearning.html)

This to-the-point site highlights adult education issues. *Site suggested by Jim Lightbody.*

## [www.libraryinstruction.com/active.html](http://www.libraryinstruction.com/active.html)

This online essay defines active learning and applies it to library instruction. *Site suggested by Jim Lightbody.*

## [edweb.sdsu.edu/people/bdodge/Active/ActiveLearning.html](http://edweb.sdsu.edu/people/bdodge/Active/ActiveLearning.html)

This site provides some very practical advice about online instruction using active learning. *Site suggested by Jim Lightbody.*

**ON THE WEB**  
resources you can put to work right now

# MVAEA faces challenges of 2008 and beyond

by Dale Amunson, Iowa representative

The Missouri Valley Adult Education Board met July 12 in Sioux City to establish its annual budget and to plan the meeting agenda for the coming year. The Board, through a bylaw action taken at the 2005 MVAEA conference, decided to hold at least one meeting via teleconference call. This will take place in October. MVAEA has found this to be very efficient alternative in the way of travel and expense for the organization. It also proves that the MVAEA Board is receptive to change for improvement of the association.

## Unusual conference situation

In 2008, the Board will face another change. The annual conference will be held in July rather than in March or April, as has been the case in most previous years. This has major implications for both the 2008 and 2009 budget years, in that two conferences—2008 and 2009—will be about nine months apart. It also means that there will be almost a year and a half between the 2007 conference and 2008 gathering. This will be a budget challenge, which makes it even more important for the Board to be frugal with its budget as well as its meeting schedule considerations.

## Leadership opportunities

In other news from MVAEA, there will two openings on the MVAEA Board at this next election, as Phil Wegman (treasurer) and Karen Ulanski (Board secretary) will be at the end of their terms. If you are interested in running for either of these positions, you may contact me (e-mail [daleaa@butler-bremer.com](mailto:daleaa@butler-bremer.com)) for further information.

## Membership invitation

Finally, if you have not joined or renewed your membership to MVAEA, I encourage you to do so now! Thanks for your support!

# 2007-08 MVAEA Board Member and Officer Listing

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**NO EXCUSES!**  
This list of board members and officers is provided so that you have no excuses for contacting your state rep or alternate with news of your programs, awards, special events, etc. Please keep this guide handy for any time you have news or information to share!

# Article examines pros and cons of mandatory continuing education

*continued from page 2*

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systematic analysis of what constitutes competent current practice of the profession" (Hager and Gonczi 1991, p. 24). Some consider competency-based standards the solution.

## COMPETENCE AND STANDARDS

Competency-based standards movements are well underway in vocational education and some professions in Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. Competency-based certification and licensure are also a growing part of MCE (Queeney and English 1994).

Educational providers, legislators, and professional associations disagree about what competence and expertise really mean. For example, a competent professional has the attributes—knowledge, skills, abilities (KSAs)—necessary for performing a job to appropriate standards (Hager and Gonczi 1991). Competence includes such aptitudes as interpersonal skills, motivation, and professional judgment (Cervero et al. 1990); it also involves values, beliefs, and attitudes (Nelson 1988).

To Davison (1994), competence is what a person is able to do, but the larger issue is what he is willing to do. Will he use acquired KSAs in the practice setting? The role of CPE is to bridge the gap between professionals' knowing how to and knowing to (Davison 1994; Nelson 1988).

Competency-based standards for professionals are nearly as controversial as MCE, because a mechanical approach that tries to break down professional performance into discrete tasks or skills ignores such higher-level aspects as critical reflection and professional judgment. Hager and Gonczi (1991) propose an integrated approach that identifies the KSAs displayed in the context of realistic professional tasks. The resulting standards would enable professionals to assess their own levels of competence and choose continuing education accordingly.

Another flaw in the competence approach is the assumption that performance is individual. Cervero et al. (1990) identify other influences upon performance: the relationship of the

professional with peers, subordinates, superiors, and clients; the multiple cultures to which practitioners belong; and the relationship of the professional to society (cultural context of practice). Thus, continuing education (mandatory or not) may improve competence, but it is difficult to separate effects of participation from other influences (Queeney and English 1994).

## POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

Rather than debating the mandatory issue or arguing whether competency standards are appropriate for professionals, "a preferable alternative might be to focus on alleviating the problems associated with continuing professional education as a tool for improving professional practice" (Queeney and English 1994, p. 16).

Some of the problems are as follows (Cervero et al. 1990): multiplicity of providers; lack of standards; and dissention about who should pay, who should determine the level and frequency of participation, and what type of activity should count as continuing education.

Effective CPE should be accessible, affordable, and of high standards. It is difficult to balance quality considerations with the need to keep costs reasonable, serve large numbers, and address continual updating needs in many specializations. Collaboration among providers is recommended. CPE should be relevant to individual learning needs, applicable to practice, and designed for different learning styles. Professionals in organizational settings should receive support for transferring learning to practice, and interstate mobility of MCE credentials should be established.

CPE should be rooted in and viewed as an extension of professional education. Competence evolves over time, and effective learning is a long-term, cumulative, integrated process (Cervero et al. 1990; Queeney and English 1994). CPE should be viewed as part of the lifelong learning continuum, and development of a mindset toward continuing education should begin prior to practice. This requires a systematic

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## Writing results!

by Sara Cottam, Hutchinson (Kan.)  
Community College Learning Center

**T**he Hutchinson Community College Learning Center has discovered that incorporating Workplace Essential Skills (WES) into its writing curriculum has gotten results. The center's writing curriculum is split into two classes: Writing One and Writing Two. Writing One focuses on grammar skills, career awareness, and filling out an application, while Writing Two focuses on writing an essay, resume, and cover letter, as well as interviewing. Students have benefited from being introduced to these skills.

At orientation, teachers have an opportunity to meet one-on-one with each student. At this initial intake we are able to complete the pre-tests for the WES checklists. We then know what skills we need to work on with our students. We have discovered a great, free website, [www.nycareerzone.org](http://www.nycareerzone.org), that offers fun tools for our students to help build employability skills. (I especially like the skills and interest inventory checklists!)

As students complete the cover letter and resume, they receive a disc to save their documents. Upon completion of the program, the students are given these discs. They have learned how to adjust cover letters and resumes to fit the positions for which they are seeking employment. We have a staff member from KDHR come in to do our interviewing when students are ready to post test. Having a member of your advisory board is another idea when searching for someone to come in and help with the interviewing process. This is one approach to consider when looking at implementing WES into your program.

*continued from page 6*

approach to developing a strategic lifelong learning agenda that is holistic (taking into account the multiple cultural influences on practice). Currently rare, educational counseling services for professionals are needed.

CPE should link practitioner competence to the ideals of public service and accountability by (1) stressing the value judgments and ethical considerations in practice, (2) developing competence and expertise in conjunction with understanding of the human purposes of professional service, and (3) promoting cooperation, interdependence, and collaboration as ways to improve competence (Cervero et al. 1990).

Nelson (1988) warns that MCE should not be oversold as a solution. Associations for professions in which continuing education is mandatory should promote the values of CPE to their members while acknowledging limitations and difficulties of certifying competence and of documenting MCE's effects on practice.

A most important factor in overcoming objections to mandated education is consideration of the professional as an adult learner. Programs should emphasize consultation and cooperation, not coercion (Nelson 1988). Professionals can be given broad latitude in the selection and design of their individual learning programs (Brockett and LeGrand 1992), especially if standards against which to compare them have been established.

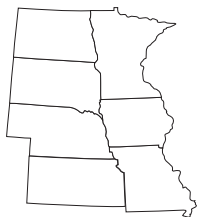
Cervero et al. (1990) provide this description of professionals as learners: "professionals construct an understanding of current situations of practice using a repertoire of practical knowledge acquired primarily through experience in prior 'real life' situations" (p. 178). CPE must foster practical know-how and critical reflection.

Although in some professions MCE has become the norm, its mandatory nature should not be the focus. "One answer to the mandatory continuing education conundrum may be not the mandatory or voluntary nature of continuing education, but the transformation of professionals into motivated seekers of education" (Queeney and English 1994, p. 4).

### NEED A MODEL?

**This article is a great example of how you can impact others in the field of adult and continuing education.**

***Happenings in the Valley* extends its thanks to Sara Cottam, who is an instructor in the Hutchinson Community College Adult Education program, for sharing her experiences and contributing to the MVAEA newsletter.**



# STATE NEWS

## IOWA

[www.iowall.org](http://www.iowall.org)

*submitted by Kim Oaks, IALL president-elect*

The Iowa Association for Lifelong Learning will hold its annual conference in Ames, Iowa, on Oct. 17-19. This year's theme? *The Power of Partnerships!* We have 24 concurrent sessions focusing on Adult Learning, Health and Wellness, Business & Industry, Adult Literacy, and Office Professionals. Once again this year we have set aside time for peer groups to meet—providing groups with approximately two hours for discussions and business. Additional information is available at IALL's Website.

*by Dale Amunson*

This year's conference chair is Kim Oaks, who is also a previous MVAEA Achievement Award recipient. The conference promises to be a great event with many quality speakers and sessions. In conjunction with the conference, IALL also hosts a silent auction which last year netted IALL's Development Fund just over \$1,000 for the cause.

Iowa members are also busy with another conference. Led by Steve Allison, MVAEA president-elect, the MVAEA Conference Planning Committee has begun to plan for the combined MVAEA, IALL, and ABE Institute conference to be held in Council Bluffs on July 16-18. Steve has amassed an eager group of volunteers to help plan and present the upcoming conference. The facilities and hotels are new and are easily accessible from I-29 as well as the Omaha airport. Preliminary plans are already very exciting! Watch MVAEA's Web site ([www.mvaea.com](http://www.mvaea.com)) for developing details.

### MEMBER NEWS

**Learn more about**

**SUE CHOENS, an**

**MVAEA member**

**on page 11.**

**Do you know**

**someone who**

**would like to be**

**profiled in the**

**NEXT issue?**

**Contact Shari Kiple**

**at [kiplecomm@](mailto:kiplecomm@)**

**[cableone.net](http://cableone.net).**

## NORTH DAKOTA

[www.dpi.state.nd.us/adulted/index.shtm](http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/adulted/index.shtm)

*submitted by Deb Sisco*

North Dakota held its annual fall conference on Sept. 20-21, using the conference title *Opening Doors with a New Set of Keys*.

S. E. "Bud" Pues opened the conference with a session titled, "All Great Minds Don't Think Alike!" For years, Pues has provided consultation and training to individuals with special learning needs and to programs serving people with special learning needs. He has more than 35 years experience spanning work as a classroom teacher, special education teacher, administrator of special education programs, state consultant for special programs, consultant and staff trainer, and adjunct instructor. He currently teaches for UCLA and UCR in teacher credential programs.

In his session, Pues talked about the fact that no two brains are alike! Everyone learns differently due to genetics, environment and experiences. He discussed how brain research has become a new field of study, and he provided many important insights into the learning process. Pues offered other breakout sessions during the conference along with other presenters.

In other news, the North Dakota Resource Center has moved from Minot to Williston; the new director is Laurel Kaae. The center will continue to support the Adult Learning Centers of North Dakota with materials and professional development. To learn more, visit [www.ndresourcecenter.org](http://www.ndresourcecenter.org).

## KANSAS

[www.thekaea.org](http://www.thekaea.org)

*submitted by Sue Choens*

Some happenings in the Districts are:

- District IV, Salina Adult Education Center students who had perfect attendance at least one month during the semester were treated

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to a pizza party in June. These students also formed our Student Advisory Committee and gave the director feedback about the pros and cons of the program.

- The Salina Adult Education Center has hired a new ESL instructor. Donna Munsch will teach at two different ESL sites.
- The SAEC has acquired more space and renovated with new paint, carpet, and furniture.
- Butler Adult Education is going through change! Please extend a warm welcome our newest instructors. Leon Moore will teach our Writing and ABE/Literacy class. Christian Ramsey is helping students acquire CASAS competencies and was recently cross-trained in FastTrack instruction. Dennis Rittle works with students in the evening and will be the Workplace Essential Skills/Technology instructor.
- After 13 years as secretary, data entry, and GED examiner, Linda Sokolosky has left adult education to pursue other interests. Her position was restructured and Sheri Morgan, past WES/Technology instructor, has taken over the responsibilities of office manager and Chief GED Examiner. All of these changes have been very positive for our program.
- The Butler Adult Education program moved back to the north side of the Workforce Center in early June. We welcome the openness and slight increase in space. Although we are in the same building, we have a new address—131 N. Haverhill.
- Wichita Area Technical College Adult Education has been forced to cut the number of class offerings due to local funding cuts. On a more positive note, they are moving to six-week sessions for 2008.
- WATC Adult Education has joined with *Visioneering Wichita* as a strategic alliance to bring Georgia's Certified Literate Community Program (CLCP) concept to this region. CLCP asks communities to establish a non-profit collaborative to promote, support, and enhance community literacy efforts locally. The goal of the literate communities is to reduce the number of people in the region who do not have high school diplomas by half in 10 years.

Other happenings across the state:

- Adult education staff and students across Kansas have been impacted by the flooding—many losing everything they had.
- Adult Education Centers across Kansas held their annual GED graduation ceremonies in May and June. It was exciting to see the excitement of the graduates and their families!
- Several Kansas instructors have completed the first year of TIAN (Teachers Investigating Adult Numeracy) training and look forward to the second year. They returned from the GED math training with lots of new ideas to try.
- ABE Leadership Institute began July 25. In collaboration with Kansas State University, the Kansas Board of Regents has designed a Leadership Academy and is paying for one person from each Adult Education Family Literacy Act-funded program to attend.
- Be sure to mark your calendar and visit [www.thekaea.org/conference.htm](http://www.thekaea.org/conference.htm), the site for KAEA's 2008 conference—*The Heart of Kansas Adult Education*—scheduled for February 20-22 at the Highland Hotel and Convention Center in Great Bend.

## MINNESOTA

[www.mnmacae.org](http://www.mnmacae.org)

*submitted by Janet Jacobson*

The Minnesota Association for Continuing Adult Education is planning its annual fall conference on Nov. 8-9 at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul. The conference is entitled *Adult Continuing Education in Minnesota: The Future Starts Today*.

Dr. Terilyn Turner, former director of St. Paul Community Education, will present the conference keynote on the topic of "A Sentimental Journey Back to the Future: A Look at the Future of Adult Education through Reflection on Our Past." Several concurrent sessions are planned—including one on Web 2.0 technologies such as social bookmarking, blogs, podcasts, and wikis, presented by Robin Veal and Kate Pederson, who are librarians at Capella University. A panel discussion and the annual business meeting are also scheduled.

*continued on page 10*

## WHAT A GREAT IDEA!

**As Kansas reports, donations have allowed many of its programs to receive the local newspaper in classroom settings. The local paper can be a wonderful resource for adult educators and adult students—particularly in the areas of ESL and ABE.**

**Whether for planning lessons or searching for jobs, students and educators can benefit greatly! Why not what it might take to have copies of your community's local newspaper donated to your institution's classrooms?**



*continued from page 9*

Bella Hanson and Ben Bryant are writing a continuation of the MACAE history that was originally compiled by Harlan Copeland. Copeland's history covered the years from 1975 to 1992. The next volume includes 1993 to 2006. MACAE history will be featured at the fall conference, where attendees will play "Deal or No Deal" using MACAE history, people, and institutions as part of the game.

Other activities have included the continued development of MACAE's new Website—focusing particularly on making a threaded discussion capability available. In addition, Nancy Herther, Professional Development chair, sent out a survey to MACAE members, asking for information related to program planning during the next couple of years.

Future plans call for organizing an Adult Education Week in 2009, possibly with other state groups that include adult education as part of their mission. MACAE hopes to launch a new (yet unnamed) journal to provide useful information for adult ed practitioners.

Janet Jacobson is the new MACAE representative to MVAEA. Janet received her M.Ed. in adult education from the University of Minnesota in 2003. She coordinates the Intergenerational Volunteer Program offered through Minneapolis Community Education. Her specific interest is in older adult learning.

## NEBRASKA

[www.acean.org](http://www.acean.org)

*submitted by Anne Ausdemore*

The Adult and Continuing Education Association of Nebraska (ACEAN) board has met twice this fall to evaluate its efforts and plan future activities. In fact, board members have decided to meet monthly to work on conference planning and to focus on member benefits

aimed at revitalizing the group.

The next conference is being planned for late March or early April in 2008 in Lincoln—most likely with a one and one-half day format. Presenters from LERN have been well-received at past conferences, so ACEAN hopes to use another LERN consultant with a focus on external and internal marketing techniques. Smaller breakout sessions will focus on use of technology in continuing ed, partnering with other entities to deliver programming, and building a culture of customer service.

ACEAN also plans to conduct one-day seminars across the state focusing on one topic only. Suggestions so far include stress management, marketing material design, and issues of interest to administrative assistants.

The ACEAN scholarship is also being reevaluated. There has been some consideration given to making it available to assist ACEAN members with conference fees.

Billie Strand continues as the ACEAN president. She can be contacted at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Division of Extended Education & Outreach (402-472-1625).

## MISSOURI

[www.maacce.org/](http://www.maacce.org/)

*submitted by Michelle Hanson*

The Missouri Association for Adult Community and Continuing Education (MAACCE) is excited about the 2008 conference as the organization plans to make it a joint conference with the national COABE conference. The combined conference will be held at the Adam's Mark Hotel in St. Louis, Mo., on April 28 through May 1, 2008. *Show Me Success: Empowerment through Diversity* is the theme.

As you plan for your professional development in the coming year, we encourage you to consider attending this national conference being held in our region. If you are interested in presenting, volunteering, or learning more about the various activities, visit [www.coabeconference.org](http://www.coabeconference.org).

## SOUTH DAKOTA

[www.sdall.org](http://www.sdall.org)

### WHAT'S NEW WITH YOU?

**Let us know!**

**We'd like to include your news in the next issue of the MVAEA newsletter.**

**Submit your articles or photos to the *Happenings in the Valley* editor using the information on the facing page of this issue.**

# GETTING TO KNOW...

## SUE CHOENS

### Full Name

Virginia Sue Choens

### Preferred Name/Nickname

Sue

### Hometown

Douglass, Kan., when I was young; now it is El Dorado, Kan.

### Interests

Family, cross-stitching, sewing, flower gardening, fishing, riding horses

### About Me...

I was raised in the small town environment of Douglass, Kan. My mother died when I was 12, and my father died when I was 13. An aunt raised my sister and me. I have been married for 39 years to Pat, who is retired and supports what I do. His mother, Joy, who is now deceased, pioneered the Butler Adult Education program through a Reading Academy in the early 1960s.

We have two daughters—Sherry and Tonya. They are both married and live within 15 minutes of us. They have given me five wonderful grandchildren who are now between the ages of 2 and 13 years old. We have 80 acres of land in the sand hills of southeast Kansas with a four-bedroom home, garage, and three stocked ponds. Our plans are to retire



there in a few years; however, for now it is a great place to get away, take the entire family, and let the grandchildren run wild.

I started working for Butler as an alternative school instructor 26 years ago, which evolved into a position as an adult education instructor, telnet monitor, and in 2002 Director and GED examiner. Butler is a great institution to work for, and the adult education employees are dedicated. I am hooked!

### Professional Involvements

I'm active in numerous leadership organizations: (2007) Butler Community College Representative, Character First Council; (2003-2007) Alumni Committee, Leadership Butler; (2001-2007) Treasurer, Kansas Adult Education Association (KAEA); (2006-2007) Kansas Representative, Missouri Valley Adult Education Association (MVAEA), Iowa; (2006) Board President, Leadership Butler; (2002-2006) Alternate Kansas Representative, Missouri Valley Adult Education Association (MVAEA), Iowa; (1989) Secretary, Kansas Adult Education Association (KAEA);

**what music I'm listening to:** country western or 60s rock 'n' roll

**what I'm reading at the moment:** only my two college class textbooks ...no time for anything else!

**last movie I saw:** Live Hard; Die Free  
**my pet's name(s) and type(s):** just lost our beloved dog, Hawley; Rainbow the beta is a pet at work  
**my favorite food(s):** Italian food; homemade breads and cookies  
**my favorite color:** all colors, but I tend to gravitate towards the blues  
**3 people—alive or dead—who I would invite to dinner:** Jesus, my mother, and my father

**what I do to relax:** spend time with my family, cross-stitch, garden, and walk

## MVAEA

Happenings in the Valley

*Happenings in the Valley* is published by the Missouri Valley Adult Education Association to provide news, information, and assistance to those interested in continuing education and lifelong learning.

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Shari Kiple

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# CONSULTANT'S

## ORNER Here are the latest membership updates

by Sharon Luhring, MVAEA membership services consultant

**G**reetings! As of the end of September, MVAEA's 2007-08 membership has grown to 163 members. Here is a current state-by-state breakdown:

<b>Iowa</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Kansas</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Minnesota</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Missouri</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>North Dakota</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Nebraska</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>South Dakota</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Colorado</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Florida</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Ohio</b>	<b>1</b>

By the time you receive this newsletter, you should have received the 2007-08 MVAEA membership directory electronically! If there are any changes to your address or e-mail, please contact me by phone at 507-243-4347, by e-mail at sluhring@myclearwave.net, or by snail mail at P.O. Box 336 in Madison Lake, MN 56063.

If you have any suggestions regarding our organization's service to you, please contact me or any member of the MVAEA board. Thank you for being a member of the Missouri Valley Adult Education Association and for supporting MVAEA.

## Coming Up

**January 12, 2008**

Deadline for *Happenings in the Valley*

**April 10, 2008**

Deadline for *Happenings in the Valley*

**July 16, 2008**

MVAEA Preconference  
Mid America Center  
Council Bluffs, Iowa

**July 17-18, 2008**

MVAEA Conference  
Mid America Center  
Council Bluffs, Iowa

## Quoted...

“There is not telling how many miles you will have to run while chasing a dream.”  
— *Anonymous*

“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.”  
— *William Butler Yeats*

“Do not go where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.”  
— *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

### Missouri Valley Adult Education Association – Membership Application

**Membership Category (please check one)**

Individual (\$35)     Life (\$300)     Student (\$15)     Retiree (\$15)     Institutional\* (\$120)

\*For institutional membership, please attach a list of up to four persons who will be part of the membership.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit form and dues, payable to MVAEA, to Sharon Luhring (please see page 11 for contact information).