



MONTANA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF & BLIND

# Express

giving kids the building blocks to independence

Volume XI, Issue III, Summer 2012

## MSDB Foundation Welcomes New Board Members

**PAGES 8-9**

## Academic Bowl Team: Meeting the Challenge of Washington, D.C.

**PAGE 12**



# SUMMER FUN AND THE EXPANDED CORE CURRICULUM

Sharon Woods, Outreach Consultant

Play is a very important part of growth and development for all children. For children with visual impairments play is a wonderful opportunity to develop skills in the expanded core curriculum areas of self-help, orientation and mobility, social interaction, recreation and leisure, sensory skills and daily living. It is not necessary to formally plan for these experiences. Simply look for ways to involve your child in a variety of experiences directly and



in a hands-on manner. Some examples will be given here but certainly each family and child can come up with a wide variety of opportunities that suit their family member who is visually impaired. Summer is a great time to explore some new activities.

The following activity can develop most areas of the expanded core curriculum. In an outdoor environment with adult supervision, fill a

container with water and a variety of toys, scoops, sieves and cups. To develop self-help and independence: don't do anything! Allow your child to explore and play. If your child needs some guidance, play with the items in close proximity to your child so they can watch as you model how to use items in the container. If your child has very limited ability to watch, position yourself behind him, putting his hands on top of your hands as you play and explore. If your child has motor impairments consult with the physical therapists about positioning equipment such as wedges that can help



your child dangle their hands into the container and play.

You can also cook or make play dough with your child. There are many simple two and three ingredient recipes that are perfect. Make sure your child is involved in the activity from beginning to end. By this I mean: shopping for ingredients, paying for ingredients, where they are kept in the kitchen, measuring, mixing and clean-up. Talk to your child's occupational therapist to find ways to meaningfully include children with motor impairments by activating switches to turn on kitchen appliances. All the expanded core curriculum areas are practiced in these activities! Summer is a great time to learn to do a new chore. Contributing to the family in an important and meaningful way is a great way to learn that: "I am important, I can do things by myself and I can help others rather than be the one who always needs help." ❖

*For more information on the expanded core curriculum for children and students with blindness or visual impairment please go to: [www.afb.org/section.aspx?FolderID=3&SectionID=44&TopicID=189&SubTopicID=4](http://www.afb.org/section.aspx?FolderID=3&SectionID=44&TopicID=189&SubTopicID=4)*

*For more information on cooking with your child please go to: [www.tsbi.edu/resources/2146-get-out-in-the-kitchen-and-rattle-them-pots-and-pans](http://www.tsbi.edu/resources/2146-get-out-in-the-kitchen-and-rattle-them-pots-and-pans).*

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## SAVE THE DATE: Untangling the Dots 2012

**October 18-19, 2012**

**MSDB Campus, Great Falls, MT**

The MSDB Outreach staff in the Department for the Visually Impaired is hosting the annual workshop for persons providing Braille instruction. A Montana law

passed in 2006 requires this training. This year's training will include a hands-on workshop with Jan Zollinger: *Teaching Braille Literacy Through the Arts*. Braille practice and techniques will be explored. Please bring transcription course materials to work on. This is a great opportunity for teachers to network and learn more about dots! ❖





Graduation took place May 26th. The seniors chose staff member and pastor Mike Dean as their Commencement speaker. In his eloquent address, Mr. Dean reminded the students, *“Graduation is only a concept. In real life, everyday you graduate. Graduation is a process that goes on until the last day of your life. If you can grasp that, you’ll make a difference in our world.”*

## CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES

Steve Gettel, Superintendent

The end of the school year brings so many important activities: the Arbor Day/Spring Program, the prom, the senior trip, the last travel weekend, the awards assembly and the last day of school. They’re all exciting and hold a certain amount of tradition. But of course the most important of all Spring events is the graduation of our seniors!

Graduation is a celebration of the success and hard work of these fine young men and women. Graduation symbolizes their transition from childhood into adulthood. And graduation is proof that teamwork at MSDB leads to successful outcomes for our students. Without the cooperation and collaboration of parents and school staff our students wouldn’t have access to the learning opportunities and individual programs all our children need and deserve. Without the willingness and dedication of skilled teachers, cottage life attendants, and support staff our students wouldn’t have access to a high quality education and caring cottage services that encourage and train them to be smart and independent. And of course without the dedication of our students, focused on their learning and transition goals, we wouldn’t have a graduation class of seniors.

I want to say congratulations to everyone on the team, but especially to our seniors: Steen Fowler, Nicole Wilkins, Parker Wilkins, Sean Wixsten, Thea Dupre, Isaac Jones, and Darrin Smith. May you always be successful and happy in the years ahead. ::



For a wealth of information about MSDB as well as a detailed calendar of the school year, check out our website at:

**[www.msdb.mt.gov](http://www.msdb.mt.gov)**

## IN THIS ISSUE

### Page 2

- Summer Fun: Expanded Core Curriculum
- Save the Date: Untangling the Dots 2012

### Page 3

- Congratulations, Graduates

### Page 4-5

- Meet the Class of 2012

### Page 6

- COSB Outreach Forum 2012
- Join us for a Gala Event: MSDB turns 75 and MAD turns 100

### Page 7

- Gone Fishin’
- MSDB Cares!

### Page 8-9

- MSDB Foundation Welcomes New Members to Board of Directors

### Page 10

- Foundation Supports Extra Travel Weekends

### Page 11

- MSDB Outreach: Meet Abbie

### Page 12

- Academic Bowl: MSDB Takes on Washington, D.C.
- Preschool: The Whole Kit & Kaboodle

### Page 13

- Senior Trip: Trains, Boats & Cheesecake

### Page 14

- Baby Jamborees
- Congratulations Retirees

### Page 15

- Supplementary Aids and Services Guidelines

### Page 16

- Let There Be Dancing...

# MEET THE CLASS OF 2012



## Isaac Jones

**Home Town:** Great Falls, MT

**Interests/hobbies:** playing video games and hanging out with friends

**Favorite thing about MSDB:** I like performing in Expressions of Silence (EOS) and have been on the team for 6 years. It is fun performing at different places and learning how to sign new songs. I also like being on the Academic Bowl team. I was on the team for two years and I learned a lot and the questions were new to me and surprised me. Also, I like seeing my MSDB teachers.

**What will you miss about MSDB:** I will miss seeing my teachers and friends at MSDB. I will miss Mr. Sangwin's funny voices. I appreciate having the opportunity to learn at MSDB.

**What do you plan to do after you graduate:** I plan to go to college at the COT here in Great Falls for carpentry.

**Favorite Quote or something inspirational you would like to tell others:** Believe in yourself and always follow your dreams.



## Parker R Wilkins

**Home Town:** Superior, MT

**Interests/hobbies:** Riding horses, drawing cars, and playing with my dog, Annie.

**Favorite thing about MSDB:** My favorite thing about MSDB is the teachers in the VI department because they are like my second family. They taught me that independence is important.

**What will you miss about MSDB:** I will miss the teachers, house parents, and the students. They have all taught me great things. I love all of them like brothers, sisters, mothers, and fathers.

**What do you plan to do after you graduate:** After I graduate I will move to Missoula and live with my brother, Robert. I will work at Albertsons until I get my Mission Call. A Mission means that two people go to an assigned place and we teach the gospel. My church is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.  
**Favorite Quote or something inspirational you would like to tell others:** Be Prepared. This quote means that you need to always be prepared for life.



## Sean Wixsten

**Home Town:** Butte, MT

**Interests/hobbies:** Watching T.V., listening to music, and buying movies and cds.

**Favorite thing about MSDB:** That it is a pretty good school. My favorite class is woodshop because I get to learn about tools and how to use them.

**What will you miss about MSDB:** I will miss the teachers and my friends. I will miss the cottage staff. I will miss the V.I. Games, managing the Goalball weekend, and the food.

**What do you plan to do after you graduate:** I plan to move back to Butte. I plan to get a job at Hastings or Wal-Mart in the entertainment and electronics area.

**Favorite Quote or something inspirational you would like to tell others:** My something inspirational would be "I have a dream", by Martin Luther King, Jr. I have a dream of being independent in my life and overcoming my fears.

**"SENIOR CLASS MOTTO: WHAT LIES BEHIND US AND WHAT LIES AHEAD OF US**



## Nicole (Coley) Marie Wilkins

**Hometown:** Superior, MT

**Interests/hobbies:** In my spare time, I like to read, scrapbook, and write music and lyrics. I also enjoy walking, playing with animals, and doing things outside.

**Favorite things about MSDB:** Is just hang out with friends and have fun.

**What will you miss about MSDB:** I think the thing I'll miss most of all is hanging out with great friends, but the other thing I'll miss is having great people to tell me that it is ok to be afraid and face your fears. Another thing I will miss is teachers that will help and tell you great things about yourself.

**What do you plan to do after you graduate?** My plans after I graduate include coming back to MSDB for one more year. I am also going to take classes at MSU College of Technology to get the training I need to get my certification to be a Veterinarian Technician. Then I would like to further my education in Veterinarian studies.

**Favorite Quote or something inspirational you would like to tell others:**

"Do or Do Not There is No Try." –Yoda. "Action is eloquence." –Shakespeare  
To be smart is a good thing, but not to be smart is missing out on reality. My advice for underclass students is to work hard, pay attention, don't miss out on good opportunities, and most importantly make sure that things are turned in on time.



## Steen Fowler

**Hometown:** Manhattan, MT

**Interests/hobbies:** Making things.

**Favorite things about MSDB:** Friends

**What will you miss about MSDB:** Friends

**What do you plan to do after you graduate?**  
Jobs



## Thea Dupre

**Hometown:** Helena, MT

**Interests/hobbies:** Expressions of Silence, Special Olympics, playing Wii

**Favorite things about MSDB:** There are many fun activities to do.

**What will you miss about MSDB:** The staff.

**What do you plan to do after you graduate?** I will come back to MSDB as a transition student next year.

**Favorite Quote or something inspirational you would like to tell others:** I will miss you!



## Darrin Scott Smith

**Home Town:** Black Eagle, MT

**Interests/hobbies:** Riding my 4 wheeler, video games, helping my friend Jim.

**Favorite thing about MSDB:** Playing basketball in the gym.

**What will you miss about MSDB?** I will miss school lunches and my teachers.

**What do you plan to do after you graduate?**  
I would like to continue working at Steve's Sport Center.

## MSDB CAMPUS TURNS 75 MAD IS 100 YEARS OLD

### Join us for a Gala Event

An exciting commemoration is coming up in September. MSDB will celebrate 75 years on the Great Falls campus, and the Montana Association of the Deaf (MAD) marks 100 years of serving Montana's Deaf community! The two organizations jointly are planning a big gala, September 5-8, 2012. We have invited all former members, staff, and students of MAD & MSDB to make this a grand celebration.

The celebration will open with a reception on September 5 at the Holiday Inn. The next day MSDB students will host lunch on campus and provide a campus tour. Attendees will also be able to tour the MAD/MSDB museum in its new location in the Vocational Building, where various groups will also have booths with hand-made crafts. That evening each returning MSDB graduating class will have their own "class reunion" at different places around town.



Friday will be filled with fun. After another lunch provided by the students, the Expressions of Silence will give one of their popular performances, and alumni and staff will offer skits and storytelling. That evening there will be a picnic at the fairgrounds, also known as Montana ExpoPark. A dedication ceremony of the Hall of Fame will be held Saturday afternoon at the Mustang Center. The ceremony will recognize some high school athletes, and display cases will be unveiled.

There will be some optional tours for those who want to visit the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center, Malmstrom Air Force Base Museum, and C.M. Russell Museum on Thursday and Friday mornings. Participants in the Gala activities can pay for individual events they choose to attend, which cost from \$15-\$45 each, or purchase a Gala Combo ticket for \$150 at the door or \$130 before August 15. **Come join us and make this a grand time for all to remember!**

*This is a great time for MSDB students, staff, and parents to mingle with former alumni and staff. Contact Gala Chair Ed Van Tighem for a registration form and more information at 761-0769 or [vantighembe@bresnan.net](mailto:vantighembe@bresnan.net). ☼*

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## COSB OUTREACH FORUM 2012

### Steve Fugate, Outreach Consultant

The Council of Schools for the Blind had their annual Outreach Forum in Aberdeen, South Dakota this year. Schools were well represented at the event, with attendees coming from both the East and West Coasts and many locations in between. The South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired was a wonderful host for the forum, providing great accommodations, informative presenters and fun activities.

Attendees had the chance to tour the South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Their school offered a bright and friendly environment for students to learn a wide variety of curricular and expanded core curricular skills. There were classrooms for academic subjects as well as life skills classes, adaptive physical education classes and an impressive sensory garden that was located in a courtyard.

There were two and a half days of informative presentations on topics ranging from the topical – use of iPads in the learning environment – to ideas about helping our students prepare for college. Each presentation was



*Somewhere under the rainbow? Outreach Consultant Steve Fugate joins other COSB participants.*

well developed and discussion and questions were lively, informed and led to many great discussions. All topics appeared to resonate with attendees regardless of geographic location or service delivery model.

No set plans have been made as to where the COSB Forum will be held next year. However, whichever state earns the honor will have their work cut out to match the quality and fun had at the Aberdeen Outreach Forum. ☼



# Gone Fishin'

**Richard Aguon, Cottage Houseparent**

**T**he Cottage Student Council members took a special trip to Holter Lake this spring for some fishing, a picnic, and all around fun! Members worked hard throughout the year raising the funds necessary for the trip. The anticipation on the students' faces was evident



at every meeting and fundraiser. The members (students and staff) would like to thank everyone (including the MSDB Foundation) for their support and generosity in

making this special outing possible. Although there were no fish caught, it was not for a lack of effort from all (darn fish stayed in the water & wouldn't come out!), and the smiles on all the faces and the laughter heard all day long indicated that they had a great time. ❖



MSDB students showed their support by selling goodies and wearing yellow during our 2nd annual Alex's Lemonade Stand event. Join our school in the fight against childhood cancer, please visit: [www.alexslimonade.org](http://www.alexslimonade.org)

## MSDB CARES!

**Diana Blake & Amanda Taylor, MSDB Teachers**

**D**id you know that cancer is the leading cause of death by disease in children under 15 in the U.S.? It is also the second leading cause of death overall behind accidents. A couple of years ago, our students and staff learned of a community service event called Alex's Lemonade Stand and felt such a heartfelt need to help that we began a project called MSDB Cares.

We were just one of many schools around the world doing their



part by raising money and awareness for pediatric cancer. Alex's

Lemonade Stand started as a small effort by Alex Scott to raise money to help other kids with cancer after she had recovered from cancer herself. Her inspiring effort grew to include activities throughout the country.

On May 10 we hosted our 2nd annual Alex's Lemonade Stand where we served pink and yellow lemonade with fresh fruit (strawberries, lemons, and oranges), peanut butter cupcakes, lemon bars, chocolate chip cookies, brownies, and many more baked goods.

The MSDB Foundation supplied us with cups, plates, napkins, and decorations. The baked goods were donated to us by our wonderful staff members. The students worked for 2 hours serving over 100 people from the school and the Great Falls community. They also learned the meaning of hard work, helping others, and a sense of pride and accomplishment. ❖



# Montana School *for the*

## HELP US GIVE KIDS THE BUILD

### MSDB FOUNDATION WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**T**he MSDB Foundation is pleased to welcome three new members to its Board of Directors.

• **SHANNON HOILAND** is Community Bank President and Business Banking Manager at Wells



Shannon Hoiland

a preschool student at MSDB and has received early intervention services through MSDB's Family Advisor

Fargo Bank in Great Falls. In addition to her business expertise, she contributes the important perspective of an MSDB parent to the Foundation Board. Shannon and her husband James have two sons: Ben, 5, and Tyler, 2. Tyler is

Program since he was an infant. The Hoilands have been valuable spokespersons for MSDB, and Shannon has been an active volunteer at the school, including establishing a Reading First program. Wells Fargo sponsors Reading First, and for two years, Shannon read to the students every other week. She is a welcome addition to the Foundation's Public Relations Committee.

Shannon serves on the Board of Directors of the Great Falls Development Authority, the Benefis Health System Foundation and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Great Falls. She also serves on the Great Falls Community Development Council and as Vice Chair of the United Way of Cascade County Campaign. She is active in Rotary Club and is a graduate of Leadership Great Falls.

• **JON MCCARTY** is a shareholder in the Great Falls law firm of Scott, Tokerud & McCarty, P.C., which he joined in 1992. Jon's law practice has focused on estate planning, estate and trust administration, tax planning and special needs planning. He chaired the State Bar of Montana's Elderly Assistance Committee, co-authoring

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

**W**ith your help, the MSDB Foundation has been able to provide funds for services and equipment for the students at MSDB for 30 years. The Foundation is committed

to funding academic and extracurricular activities that help prepare students for independent lives. Please join us in that commitment by making a tax-deductible donation at [www.justgive.org](http://www.justgive.org) or mailing it to:



# Deaf & Blind Foundation

## BUILDING BLOCKS TO INDEPENDENCE

the Handbook for Guardians and Conservators. Jon's professional background makes him a valued member



**Jon McCarty**

of the Board and its Development Committee.

Originally from Missoula, Jon has been active in the Great Falls community and served as president of both the Great Falls Lions Club and Children's Museum of Montana.

He currently is a Commissioner on the Great Falls Housing Authority Board and President of the Cascade County Estate Planning Council. Jon's wife, Rhonda, is principal at Valley View Elementary in Great Falls. They have two children, Meagan, age 18, and Ryan, age 16.

• **KAREN SNOW** is Advertising and Marketing Manager at Bob Ward & Sons Sporting Goods in

Missoula. She brings valuable marketing experience to the Board and the Public Relations Committee at



**Karen Snow**

a time when the Foundation is working to get out its message about the School's services to a broader audience. Her extensive community service includes working with the American Heart Association, American Diabetes Association, Big

Brothers Big Sisters, United Way, the Inland Northwest chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, and the Kootenai Medical Center Foundation.

Karen says she grew up ski racing at Bridger Bowl, near her hometown of Bozeman, and now that she's returned to her native Montana after 20 years in other western states, her latest passion is hiking in Glacier Park. She also runs, kayaks, flyfishes, and mountain bikes. ■■

### MSDB Foundation

P.O. Box 6576 | Great Falls, MT 59406  
For more information, please call 406-771-6040

***"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."***

*~Helen Keller*

# Foundation Supports Extra Travel Weekends

Jim Kelly, Dean of Students

For many years one of the barriers for parents considering sending their children to MSDB as residential students has been the fact that the students would only go home one time a month. This is hard for many families – to not be able to tuck their son or daughter in bed at night. Several years ago, the MSDB Administration did some research and figured the cost to send the children home every weekend was about \$350,000. This was presented to the legislature but did not garner much support, as they were not accepting any new proposals. Next, the Administration proposed to the MSDB Foundation that the Foundation might fund a plan to add one extra “travel home” weekend each month to the students’ schedule.

While there was no promise that more students would attend as a result of the increased number of weekends at home, the MSDB Foundation was very supportive of this plan and pledged more than \$30,000 to cover the expenses of sending students home five extra times during the school year.

When the school was first established students would go home at Christmas time and then would go home at the end of the school year for the summer months. Students literally lived at the school (in the old dormitory) during those early days.

Since the 1970’s the students in the residential program have traveled home one time per month. Typically this was around a major holiday (Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, Mother’s Day, etc.). Students traveled via a variety of different forms of transportation . . . everything but horseback and wagon train (perhaps at one point they did)! In recent times, we have had students traveling by plane, train, bus and automobile. However, over the past ten years public air transportation in

Montana has become more expensive and the bus routes have been severely reduced. For the past several years we have been chartering buses with a local bus company

to send students to the major towns (an MSDB staff person always accompanies the students on the bus).

As we are finishing out the first year of the extra travel weekends we are still pondering the effects of the additional five travel weekends. For residential students who are new to MSDB, traveling home twice a month is the norm. For families whose

students have been enrolled at MSDB prior to this year, well, according to Brooke Wood, “I really like to see my family more often, but I don’t like the long bus ride.” For students such as Brooke this involves an extra 14 hours per month on the road.

When speaking to families about the current travel arrangement, kids traveling home once “every couple of weeks” sounds a whole lot better than “just once a month.” The school staff and families are grateful to the MSDB Foundation for making this change possible. ■■



MSDB: Supports families by giving students more opportunities to travel home.



# Meet Abbie

Sarah Eyer, Outreach Consultant

Having a bad day? Need some sunshine? Meet Abbie Jessop. Her ever-present smile and heartfelt giggles are contagious. You'll need to take some time getting to know her. In addition to being labeled deaf/blind Abbie has cerebral palsy, so her signing is unique, but pay attention and it's all there.

Sixteen-year-old Abbie lives in the Bitterroot Valley with her large family, where she is home-schooled with some support and opportunities for socialization through a local Christian school. Abbie attended public school until she was in fourth grade, and her mother and sister provided much of her support, including interpreting services. After that, Abbie transitioned to homeschooling and part-time attendance at Pines Academy in Pinesdale.

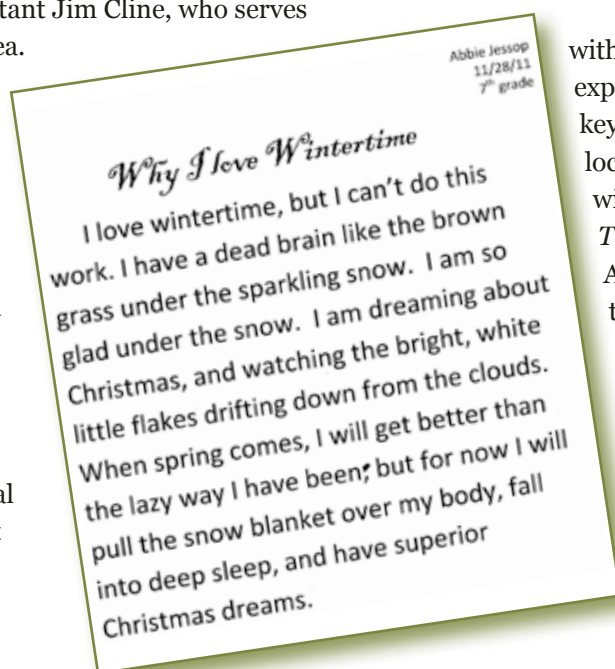
It makes a big difference for Abbie that her large, supportive family has learned sign language, and so have some friends and peers from the community. Abbie and her family have received ongoing support from MSDB's Outreach Program and are currently being served by MSDB Outreach Consultant Jim Cline, who serves the Bitterroot area.

Abbie and her mom, Robyn Warner, also take advantage of the many additional resources offered by MSDB. They attend the yearly Family Learning Weekends and MSDB's bi-annual Deaf Enrichment Weekends. It has been remarkable to watch Abbie's development over the years. When she first started coming to MSDB she used a wheelchair, then showed up with a walker, and now walks independently. Her friends and MSDB staff also appreciate Abbie's sense of fashion - very cool.

Abbie's poem, "Why I Love Wintertime," (highlighted above) is just a small sample of her writing portfolio. She enjoys writing humorous fictional stories (complete



Abbie Jessop, 16, enjoys coming to MSDB's bi-annual Deaf Enrichment Weekends.



*Why I Love Wintertime*  
I love wintertime, but I can't do this work. I have a dead brain like the brown grass under the sparkling snow. I am so glad under the snow. I am dreaming about Christmas, and watching the bright, white little flakes drifting down from the clouds. When spring comes, I will get better than the lazy way I have been; but for now I will pull the snow blanket over my body, fall into deep sleep, and have superior Christmas dreams.

with swear words), as well as documenting real-life experiences. In addition to writing, using either a keyboard or pencil, Abbie loves to read. Robyn uses the local library and free online resources to supply Abbie with the classics. Most recently she has been reading *Tom Sawyer*, *Little Women*, and *The Secret Garden*. Abbie enjoys using the Kindle because she can enlarge the text and frame the text into manageable amounts. Robyn supplements electronic text with the original books from the library and also condensed books with pictures to increase Abbie's enjoyment and understanding.

Abbie admits to watching too much TV, using captioning, of course, so she can get the whole story (and learn those swear words). Robyn says they have tried many accommodations over the years, some being very expensive, and concluded that, usually, "simpler is better."

In the future, Abbie would like to do something that involves working with animals. She recently opined that she didn't think being a veterinarian was an option, but undoubtedly she will find a niche for her many talents. Whatever she decides to do, Abbie will continue to inspire and brighten the lives of those fortunate enough to...

MEET ABBIE. ❖❖

# Academic Bowl: MSDB takes on Washington, D.C.

**Jennifer Wasson & Debi Knuth,  
Academic Bowl Coaches,  
MSDB Teachers**

We had the honor and privilege of escorting JG Hunter, Isaac Jones, Aubrey Winans, and Thyra Wood to Washington, D.C. for the annual Academic Bowl competition at Gallaudet University. These intelligent students spent the Fall and Winter quarters preparing for this special competition which included 79 teams from around the United States and one team from Canada.

Participants from each team are the elite Deaf and hard-of-hearing students from across the country. Competition is high and is quite draining for all the kids involved. Students must have in-depth knowledge about a variety of categories: Deaf Studies, History, Geography, Science, Math, Literature/



Culture, and more. Although the majority of the competition is keen, the kids made lifetime friends whom

they hope to see at next year's events.

In addition to the competition, we had the opportunity to tour the magnificent city of Washington, D.C. This year we visited The White House (awesome), the National Zoo (the guerillas were entertaining), The Holocaust Museum (very solemn), Aerospace Museum (out of this world), the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial (WOW) and of course, the Hard Rock Café (great music). One of our favorite places, The Cheesecake Factory (extremely yummy), had a menu of 19 pages, four of which were desserts. Needless to say, we had a wonderful meal and an even better dessert.

Thank you to the **MSDB Foundation** for allowing us to partake in this special event. Each time we go, we learn more about our American history, meet terrific people, and exercise our brains. It is a trip full of "Kodak moments" that will stay in our memories forever. ::

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## PRESCHOOL: THE WHOLE KIT & KABOODLE

**Leann Goss, MSDB Teacher**

Fridays are awfully noisy in the Preschool room in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Department at MSDB! It sounds a little bit like Santa's workshop with all of the hammers pounding. But instead of green and red elf hats and pointed shoes, our students can't be missed in their bright orange Home Depot smocks. And if you look closely, you will see pins on each smock proudly representing all of the projects each student has completed this year.

The Home Depot provides a free Kids Workshop at their store each month and whenever there are extra kits available, they have

generously agreed to give our preschoolers kits to complete here at school! We have made some pretty terrific things

and are learning to follow picture directions, to work together to help each other, and to create our own styles with the variety of paints and stickers available for decorating our projects. Some of our creations have been given to other people as gifts, some are used in our classroom, and some are just for our own fun. The best part is when we get to use the power tools (well, it's really just an electric screw driver, but it sure is fun!). Each month we take

great pride in our accomplishments and get very excited to see what new project we get to start. ::



**Thank you Home Depot!**



# Senior Trip: Trains, Boats & Cheesecake

Denise Philipp, Teacher

**T**he Class of 2012 eagerly departed by train for Seattle on May 10th for their Senior Trip. The seniors were accompanied by their Class Sponsors, Yvette Smail and Denise Philipp, as well as two additional staff chaperones, Steve Sangwin and Deb Brinka. While in Seattle the group enjoyed many sightseeing activities, which included a tour of the Pacific Science Center and the Experience Music Project. They also took in the view from atop the Space Needle, sailed around Puget Sound on a harbor tour, met some sea life at the aquarium and shopped at Pike's Place Market. The seniors and their chaperones took home many happy memories on their return May 15th. Here are a few highlights of what the seniors had to say about their trip...

*"It was my first time on a train; it was really hard to sleep. I would say my favorite part about my senior trip would have to be going to the Space Needle.*

*I also enjoyed the view of the ocean, because it made me feel more relaxed. I really liked eating at the Cheesecake factory."* — Isaac

*"On the trip I had a blast that made me tired. I think the thing I enjoyed was the music museum because there*

*were a lot of cool exhibits. Another thing that was cool was the horror exhibit. I really enjoyed the Senior trip and the cheesecake factory which was so yummy."* — Coley

*"I really enjoyed riding on the ferry boat. I also had fun walking around with my friends. We were very busy on our trip so we all slept a long time on the train ride back. I like the Space Needle and the Aquarium the best. My favorite place to eat was the Cheesecake Factory because I really liked the crab-bites."* — Thea

*"We went to the Space Needle and Red Robin. We did karaoke at the Music Museum. I had so much fun that I didn't want to leave Seattle. We went*

*on the ferry. I didn't know how much oil a ferry could hold. I went to the original Starbucks and the fish market."* — Sean

*"We went to visit the Hall of Fame where there was a Horror Hall of Fame. On Saturday we went to Pike Street Market. Then we went to the Aquarium and saw cool mammals*

*and fish. After that we went on a harbor tour. On Sunday we went to the Space Needle. It was very high! Then we went to the Science Center and It was FUN!"* — Parker

*"We walked all day looking around. My favorite part of Seattle was our hotel because it was kind of fancy. I really liked Pike's Market and the Space Needle. I liked the train because I liked looking out the window. I had Oreo cheesecake at the Cheesecake Factory that tasted really good."* — Darrin



# Baby Jamborees

**Pam Boespflug, Outreach Consultant**

**MSDB** Outreach staff learned some fun new tools at a recent training offered by Vision Impaired InService in America (VIISA), and they wanted to share these with young children and their parents. They held two Baby Jamborees in May for children ages 0-3. The goals of the “Baby Jams” are threefold:

- 1) To give parents of children with sensory loss a chance to network.
- 2) To demonstrate a myriad of materials that promote learning and enhance communication, vision and tactual skills.
- 3) To provide Family Support Specialists an opportunity to observe kids with vision loss learn and to see a wide variety of possible materials and strategies.

The first Baby Jam was on May 9 at the MSDB campus in Great Falls. Outreach Vision Consultants Sharon Woods, Jane Garrison and Pam Boespflug facilitated the event for the 17 participants from around Montana. Participants used an obstacle course starting with stepping stones and ending with a mini-trampoline. They learned about special spaces, which are enclosed spaces with toys attached to



textured walls, customized for an individual child with visual impairment. The spaces are also known as small rooms or play corners. They experimented with tactual, auditory and visual comparables, which are balls or containers of different sizes, colors, textures, or sounds. They were introduced to lighted toys, special books, balls and much more.

Participants at the second Baby Jam enjoyed similar activities at Dawson College in Glendive, on May 19. This event was the first Baby Jam for both babies with hearing loss and those with vision loss. It was also the first Jam for eastern Montana. In addition to the babies and their families, the Family Support Specialist, MSDB Family Advisors and participants in the VIISA class were invited as well. MSDB Outreach Consultants Emily LaSalle, Steve Fugate, Sharon Woods and Pamela Boespflug were pleased to be able to host a Baby Jamboree for families living far from MSDB. ::



**Gary McManus:**  
39 years as a Teacher and Coach in the Deaf Department



**Maggie Sadler:**  
15 years as a Nightwatch Attendant in the Residential Department



**Dennis Slonaker:**  
38 years in the Ed. Dept. as an Outreach consultant and most recently as Director of Outreach



**Jim Takenaka:**  
15 years in the Blind/LV Department as a Teacher and with Technology



**Michael Dean:**  
7 years in the Blind/LV Department as a Teacher's Assistant

## CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR RETIREMENT

**T**he students, staff and parents THANK YOU for your many years of caring and dedicated service. Congratulations and best wishes to you all. These wonderful staff members will be greatly missed. ::



# SUPPLEMENTARY AIDS AND SERVICES GUIDELINES

## Laura Copp, Outreach Consultant

In each student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), we need to identify the supplementary aids and services (which includes accommodations and assistive technology) a Deaf or Hard of Hearing student needs to be successful in the classroom. In order to make this process more fluid and consistent, the Outreach team has been developing a document that can serve as a guideline for identifying and selecting these supportive aids and services. With great input from UM Rural Institute Research

Professor Gail McGregor and in collaboration with MSDB, we were able to take collective information and create a new IEP "Supplementary Aids and Services Guidelines for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students" which has been approved for use by the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI). This guideline (and it is ONLY a guideline) will be used across Montana to help IEP teams determine what possible support services a child with a hearing loss needs so that they can clearly identify them within the child's IEP. Below is an example of the IEP form:

## Identifying Supplementary Aids & Services (SAS) For Deaf/Hard of Hearing Students

### PHYSICAL SETTING: EXAMPLES OF SAS

#### Considering Factors

##### Room Arrangement and Seating

- ☐ Horseshoe seating arrangement
- ☐ Flexible seating (away from noise, near speaker and/or in view of the interpreter, better ear, away from glare)
- ☐ Insure access to the speakers face & lips

##### Auditory Environment

- ☐ Personal Hearing Aid/CI
- ☐ FM system
- ☐ Sound field system (list areas: ) \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Amplification monitor
- ☐ Pass microphone to all speakers
- ☐ Listening breaks
- ☐ Backup plan for amplification equipment problems
- ☐ Specialized lighting
- ☐ Acoustical improvements (soft services, carpet, etc.)
- ☐ Visual alerting systems
- ☐ As quiet a listening environment as possible
- ☐ Insure access to the speakers face

Comments/Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### SOCIAL/BEHAVIORAL: EXAMPLES OF SAS

#### Considering Factors

##### Skill Training

- ☐ Self-advocacy
- ☐ Social skills
- ☐ Transition
- ☐ IDEA and/or ADA

##### Behavior Management Plan

- ☐ Access to counselor
- ☐ Social skill training
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

##### Self-Management

- ☐ Study Skills Training
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

##### Peer Support

- ☐ Exposure to peers who are deaf/HH

##### School & Class Wide Systems

- ☐ Involvement in extracurricular activities
- ☐ Interpreter for activities and meetings

Comments Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### COLLABORATIVE: EXAMPLES OF SAS

#### Considering Factors

##### 1:1 Support

- ☐ Note taker
- ☐ Tutor
- ☐ Communication assistant
- ☐ Interpreter compliant with state standards\*
- ☐ Sign Language Instruction

##### Co-Teaching

- ☐ Team teach with educator trained to with Deaf/HH

##### Resource Room Assistant

- ☐ Study skills
- ☐ Test taking strategies

##### Teacher Consultation

- ☐ Audiologist,
- ☐ Teacher of the deaf
- ☐ SLP

##### Teacher Training

- ☐ Use of amplification equipment
- ☐ Professional development about hearing loss and educational implications
- ☐ In-service on working with interpreters

Comments/Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### INSTRUCTIONAL: EXAMPLES OF SAS

#### Considering Factors

##### Lesson Presentation

- ☐ Repeat/rephrase information
- ☐ Provide copy of classroom notes or non-standard written material (ex: lyrics)
- ☐ Note taker
- ☐ Record notes in digital format – transfer to computer
- ☐ Post vocabulary, directions & critical information on board
- ☐ Sequence activities to balance & distribute "listening" requirements across day
- ☐ Wait time for responses

##### Accessible Instructional Materials

- ☐ Captioned media
- ☐ Supplemental materials (ex: vocabulary lists)
- ☐ Visual supports (e.g., graphic organizers, PowerPoint's, pictures, cue system)

### INSTRUCTIONAL: EXAMPLES OF SAS CONT'D

#### Skill Acquisition

- ☐ Preteach/reteach
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Assignments & Worksheets

- ☐ Written on the board
- ☐ Clarification of directions & concepts (and if sign is used to make sure clarification is conceptually accurate)
- ☐ Modified assignments (reduced length, complexity)
- ☐ Extra time

#### Test Taking

- ☐ Clarification of directions
- ☐ Interpreter services provided for test directions and/or for accommodated sections
- ☐ Extra time
- ☐ Alternative tests
- ☐ Reading assistance with tests
- ☐ Alternate setting

#### Evaluations/Assessment

- ☐ Check for comprehension using strategies other than yes/no questions
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Learning Structures

- ☐ Assign a buddy (ex: reading aloud, following discussions, model outcomes, explanations, alerting) as defined by the team:
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Organization

- ☐ Visual Schedules, graphic organizers
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Educational Modifications

- ☐ Provide for listening breaks
- ☐ Slower pace of instruction
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Parallel Curriculum

- ☐ Replacement curriculum
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Assistive Technology

- ☐ Access to email, IM, Video Phone, Text messaging, technology
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

\*Montana's State Interpreter Standards: [www.mtrules.org/gateway/ruleno.asp?RN=10%2E55%2E718](http://www.mtrules.org/gateway/ruleno.asp?RN=10%2E55%2E718)



MONTANA SCHOOL  
FOR THE DEAF & BLIND

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## BACK TO SCHOOL: MSDB - AUGUST 27 | GFPS - AUGUST 29

Parker Wilkins and Thea Dupre enjoy their reign as Prom royalty.



### LET THERE BE DANCING...

**Dessica McKeehan, MSDB Teacher**

Let there be dancing and laughter! What better way than at a masked ball, which just happened to be the theme of Prom this year. On Friday, May 18, students and friends came together at MSDB to do just that...dance the night away! Everyone was welcome to choose a mask of their liking at the door to wear throughout the evening. Another highlight was crowning our new Prom king and queen, Parker Wilkins and Thea Dupre. A big thanks goes out to all of you who helped to make Prom a success! ❖



Thyra dons a mask for prom's "Masked Ball" theme.

### Thank You Rainbow Garden Club!

The Rainbow Garden Club has been providing MSDB with flowers and more for over 25 years. Their annual contributions to MSDB include sending flower arrangements for the formal dinners at the cottage every Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter. For Graduation they give us a beautiful centerpiece as well as corsages & boutonnieres for each graduating senior. They also clean out our planters and then return to help our students plant flowers in the spring time. MSDB sincerely appreciates the generosity and support of this wonderful community group. ❖



Volunteer & student helping MSDB "bloom".



Congratulations to Raymond Jolley on securing his driver's permit. Raymond just finished his freshman year at Sidney High School and will be transferring to his home state of Wyoming this summer. We'll miss you Raymond ~ thanks for the many smiles you shared with us!