



MONTANA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS

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COMING TO MASBO SUMMER CONFERENCE

LaDonna Gatlin

(sister of the Gatlin Brothers!)



Yes she will be the closing speaker as well as a breakout session and entertain us as well. Don't Miss it!



Gatlin Quartet in action
Steve (10), Rudy (8), LaDonna (6),
Larry (12)

Summer Conference Happenings

MASBO began in 1968. This year marks the 40th birthday of MASBO! That means MASBO is going to have a celebration at this year's MASBO summer conference. LaDonna Gatlin will do a "Sentimental Journey" concert after our semi-formal sit down dinner. After all that, we will do something different for winning our special vendor prizes, and then we will do the silent auction.

Briefly the schedule of events are as follows:

- Monday** June 16 (2:30 p.m.) New Clerk Workshop
- Tuesday** June 17 (all day) New Clerk Workshop
- Tuesday** June 17 (evening) Golf
- Wednesday** June 18
 - Morning: Pre-conference workshops
 - Noon: Opening General Session / lunch
 - Evening: Free evening to do as you wish
- Thursday** June 19
 - Breakout sessions all day
 - Group luncheon
 - Evening - Semi-formal dinner, LaDonna Gatlin concert, Vendor Prizes and Silent Auction to benefit Nicole Beyer, Sidney.
- Friday** June 20
 - Morning: Breakout sessions, Closing General Session with LaDonna Gatlin (keynote), door prizes, election announcements and adjourn around 12:30 so you can get on the road.

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"MASBO IS DEDICATED TO TRAINING AND SUPPORTING THE PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE FOR BUSINESS OPERATIONS OF MONTANA SCHOOLS. THE GOAL IS TO ENABLE MEMBERS TO MANAGE THE BUSINESS IN ORDER TO SUPPORT EDUCATION FOR MONTANA CHILDREN"

Wind Power Breathes New Life Into Town's School Finances

(Reprinted with permission from the Denver Post By Karen Auge)

When finances hit the skids, when all the fat had been sliced off the budget and the next thing to go would have been the bone itself, inspired thinkers in the Wray School District decided to follow that age-old advice: Play to your strengths. In the case of Wray, that would be wind. Wind that bubbles up around the foothills west of Denver, churns through the city, then blasts east over 160 miles of plains to this town of 2,500. When it hits Wray, the wind roils through a canyon carved by the Republican River's north fork before it pops upon the southeast end of town with enough force to scrape the freckles off a first-grader. There, on a gentle bluff, the Wray School District built its wind turbine. Continued on Page 3

ASBO Conference Update - Denver

This year ASBO will be holding their annual conference in Denver November 7-10. This will be the first time in years that it is not crowding MCEL. For the 1st time in ASBO history, all attendees will fit in one hotel so there is no need for state room blocks. So, that means that everyone from Montana that will be attending will be responsible for their own reservations. The registration will probably open sometime in June. With ASBO being this



close, it would be a shame to miss it as there are Business Officials from all over the world attending and the workshops and events are second to none. If you would like more information, go to www.asbointl.org and click on the meetings tab or call the MASBO office.

Procurement Card Program

Currently there are several Montana Schools that have signed up for this "no fee" program. The P-Card Program has no transaction fees and no card fees. If you are in a program now through your local bank, you might want to check out P-cards as the district will have no ongoing costs. There will be a presenter from the BMO Bank at the Summer Conference doing workshops for new and veteran users. He will demonstrate some of the best practices out there and will demonstrate the reporting and downloading capabilities that you have available.

Quick Stats: Certification

MT Registered School Business Official- 21*	
Standard Certificate-----	32
Business Specialist -----	1
Number that are in the testing cycle ----	8

The certification tests will be given at Summer Conference. It takes about 45-60 minutes to take each test. All questions are multiple choice and there are no essay questions. You can make arrangements to take multiple tests in one sitting. See the Certification Manual under the Publications tab or under the Certification tab at the MASBO website. If you have any questions at all, please contact the MASBO office.

*another 18 have retired from "clerkdom" or moved out of the school business profession.

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Wind Power (cont from page 2)

What started as an agriculture teacher's idea to save on electric bills is now a gleaming, 250-foot-tall monument to the possibilities that unfold when a scrappy little town's generous spirit marries a global economy interested in greening. The result isn't just going to save a few dollars. Over the 20-some years of its life, the turbine is expected to cover the district's power bill, which can top \$80,000, with enough left over for kids' education - all the while supplying 20 percent of the town's power. "We're pretty proud of it," said Ron Howard, Wray schools superintendent.

Along the way, just about everybody in town has contributed, even as equipment from Belgium, energy credits from Vermont and two guys from Holland helping assemble the thing have given the project a cosmopolitan flair. To cover the turbine's \$1.8 million cost, school officials turned to the usual sources: the Rotary and Lions clubs, the chamber of commerce. The county scraped up a road - literally - to the site, and the city isn't charging for use of the land. "As long as there's a wind turbine on it, we don't have to pay a dime," Howard said. But they also got creative. They got money from federal grants and local endowments. And they sold electricity even before they produced it. NativeEnergy paid roughly \$260,000 for energy that will be produced over the turbine's lifetime.

"We purchase expected renewable energy credits, and we pay for those in a lump sum upfront," said Billy Connelly, the company's marketing director. NativeEnergy bought the anticipated units of energy and then will resell those units as renewable-energy credits. Renewable-energy credits go by many names, but they are units of energy created by renewable sources - like wind - that are bought and sold. Buyers may be green-thinking companies or individuals who want to shrink

their carbon footprint, but can't rely solely on wind or solar power. Instead, they buy renewable-energy credits, which help subsidize projects like Wray's. All that is beyond the jury-rigged contraption that agriculture teacher Jay Clapper originally envisioned.

Like a lot of plains towns, Wray's population is aging. And more seniors means fewer kids. The district's current 620 students is 100 fewer than a decade ago, Howard said. In a state where school funding is tied to student population, and in a town where the economy was being slapped around, that was a problem.



After cutting \$750,000 out of a \$5 million budget, district officials asked staff to suggest their own money-saving ideas. That's when Clapper offered his wind-generator plan. Clapper's original idea was to stick a turbine on a bluff behind the school and hook it to a power line to save a bit on electric bills.

"This is a progressive town" is a phrase used over and over here, by people who point not just to the turbine but also to the new aquatic center, a state-of-the-art physical rehabilitation center, a golf course and the pretty, new hospital. Wray has managed to avoid the sad pallor of resignation that has settled on so many plains towns, where everybody seems to have stopped trying. But even here, a school-owned wind turbine raised eyebrows. "There were a lot of doubts," Clapper said. People were skeptical about wind energy, about the cost, about whether a school could pull it off, legally as well as logistically, Clapper said.

Howard, the man whose task it was to answer those questions, buzzes around so fast you can almost miss the hitch in his walk - a little souvenir from his bull-riding days. He became an agriculture teacher, he said, because his mom nagged him about having a backup plan for when the rodeoing ran out. Even so, he expected his academic life to be more about curriculum and kids than finding benefactors and staying up nights Googling "renewable energy credits" - which is how he found NativeEnergy. It helps, he said, to know that in the end it all comes back to education.

In Wray schools Tuesday, first-graders made mini-turbines with high-schoolers' help. Clapper entertained at a school assembly using an ice-chest full of props to explain wind energy. Bobbi Andrews' kindergarten class got a lesson in wind and turbine construction from Kay Andrews' (Bobbi's mom) second-graders. The

older kids filed into the kindergarten class armed with drawings and definitions, and took turns sharing their wind wisdom. After the basics were covered, everybody got to build a take-home turbine out of paper plates, marshmallows and a carrot-stick base. And while they didn't grasp the significance of the turbine, they were certainly impressed by the hoopla it was creating.

"The governor is coming," said second-grader Brittney Chavez. Apparently, Brittney failed to convey the true magnitude of the occasion because a classmate corrected her: "The governor of the whole *United States* is going to be here!" the girl said.

Whether the chief executive of one state or 50, nobody can remember the last time a governor showed up, and the town plans to make a big deal of it. Colorado Governor Ritter will talk to all 620 students this morning, then the lot of them will get on school buses and drive out to the turbine for the ribbon-cutting and flipping of the switch. "This project embodies everything that Gov. Ritter is trying to accomplish," said his spokesman, Evan Dreyer. "It incorporates education with the new-energy economy." True enough. But, Howard said, pointing at the kindergarten class he just visited, "It's not about anybody else - it's about those dang kids in there."



Calendar of Events

- March 26** - Region 3 Workshop - Sidney
- March 27** - Region 6 Workshop - Miles City
- March 31** - Region 1 Workshop - Missoula
- March 31** - Budget Workshop - Wolf Point
- April 1** - Budget Workshop - Billings
- April 2** - Region 5 Workshop - Billings
- April 17-18** - Rev & Transp. Committee - Helena
- June 12-13** - Ed & Local Govt. Committee - Helena
- June 18-20** - MASBO Summer Conference - Great Falls
- Oct. 15-17** - MCEL - Billings
- Nov. 7-10** - ASBO - Denver
- June 17-19, 2009** MASBO Summer Conference - Holiday Inn Grand - Billings

MASBO helping MASBO Silent Auction at Summer Conference



**The MASBO Board has decided that
Nicole Beyer from Sidney will be this
years' recipient.**

Please bring your donated item(s) to the registration desk at the Summer Conference in June. If you want to donate something, and are not planning to attend the conference, please send item(s) to the MASBO office no later than June 11.

MCEL Update

MCEL will be October 15 - 17th in Billings. MASBO member participation at this meeting has been pretty limited so, I have made it my personal goal to try for 100 MASBO members to attend this year. The workshops must be important and pertinent to your professional development. The MASBO board has already decided upon several sessions that you just will not want to miss. Along those lines, we have already chosen a wonderful and uplifting closing session speaker.



In a program presented to audiences around the nation, Frank Pastizzo brings his special blend of theatre, philosophy, comedy, story telling, and live music to help us rekindle our enthusiasm for providing excellent human service.

Mark your calendar today for October 15, 16 and 17 in Billings!

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Learn how your school district can begin using PaySchools by calling MASBO at 406-442-5599 for information—website posting coming soon.



A Joint Service by MT School Board Assoc. and MT Assoc of School Business Officials

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