

OMLA News



Oregon Middle Level Association October 2004

an affiliate of the National Middle School Association

**Congratulations to Patti Kinney,
principal of Talent Middle School!
Patti was elected to the office of
president-elect of NMSA!!
Thanks for your help, Oregon**

NMSA Professional Development Activities

NMSA Annual Conference

November 4-6, 2004 Minneapolis, MN

This is THE premier conference for middle level education! Join thousands of educators from around the nation for fun & fellowship.

National Symposium on Middle Grades Research, Policy, & Practice

December 6-7, 2004 Chicago, Illinois

Sponsored by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform, University of Illinois/CPRD, and the Illinois Board of Higher Education Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant

Middle Level Essentials

February 12 & 13, 2005 Columbus, Ohio

Middle Level Essentials (MLE) is an annual event for teachers and administrators with a focus on in-depth knowledge in areas important to today's middle level professionals. The 2005 MLE will focus on:

- * Differentiated Instruction
- * Culture and Poverty
- * Attracting and Retaining High Quality Teachers in Hard to Staff Schools



Nominate Someone

Go ahead, make someone's day! Each year, OMLA awards the John Pence Award for Service to Middle Level Education and the David Putnam Regional Recognition Award. The awards are given to individuals who exemplify excellence and commitment to middle level education.



Nominees for the Pence Award may be a person or a group and may include school staff or community members that support middle level education. The award honors John Pence, a middle school teacher and administrator, who served on the OASSA/OESPA Middle Level Committee at the time of his death.

The David Putnam Award goes to an experienced, excellent middle level teacher. It is given in honor of David Putnam, a middle level teacher and administrator and one of OMLA's founders and continued supporters.

The nomination forms are in this newsletter. The awards will be presented at the March 2005 OMLA conference in Troutdale.

Nominations are due by December 1. Fill them out and send them in **now**, thanks!



From Your OMLA President & Treasurer & Newsletter Editor Beth Madison

So here we are, another year in full swing. One thing for sure, the life of a middle school educator is never dull. And I can assure that the life of this OMLA president is pretty interesting as well. I moved this year from a middle-class suburban school in Albany to one of the poorest schools in the state in Portland and I am having a great time. Life is so incredibly different. If you are thinking that you need a great new challenge, go on out there and get yourself a new job. It can be very inspiring.

It was a good year for OMLA financially (in my opinion, but that's what you get here.) We ended our 2003-04 fiscal year on June 30 with a loss for the year of \$3474. This includes having paid the management fee we owed COSA for the last three years of \$1500. Given that our only source of income was membership, a little bit of interest, and our sponsor, Educators Protection Group, I think this was pretty good. Our bank account stands at around \$22,000 as we enter this fiscal year. Last year we sent our newsletter out to everyone in the state four times, including a special

issue on bullying, sent beautiful award blanks to you as well to celebrate kids and adults, and had a formidable presence at the NMSA convention in Atlanta and at the Affiliate Leaders' Summit in Ohio. We have already made a 50% down payment to Edgefield for our March 2005 conference and we hope to turn a small profit. Interestingly, we share the profit with the Oregon Association of Secondary School Administrators and Oregon Elementary School Principals Association in thanks for the work that their parent organization, Confederation of Oregon School Administrators, does to organize the conference. Hey, you administrators out there, if you don't belong to COSA, let me make a pitch here for you to join! Have you spent all of your professional development funds for the year yet? If not, fork it over to COSA today. They are an awesome organization and the only one that has all of our best interests in mind.

Oh, yeah, and don't forget to VOTE and get everyone else to also! I think this newsletter will be in your hands before the fateful November 2. Those of us up here in Multnomah

County are especially holding our breaths to see if county residents will overturn the I-Tax, in which case Portland Public Schools will lose \$43 million from THIS school year, not to mention the other county school districts' losses this year and next. PPS has indicated they will cut six weeks off this school year plus a bunch of other things. In that case, I won't mind being OMLA treasurer, conference chair, newsletter editor and soon-to-be past president because as a PPS principal, I will have time on my hands.

And speaking of time, I know you have some. How about writing an article for me to publish in this newsletter? It goes to every middle-level school in the state. Instant fame can be yours. In this issue, you will notice that one of my teachers wrote an article for your enjoyment. You can too. Attach it as a Word document and email it on to me at bmadison@pps.k12.or.us for consideration. I promise to edit nicely.

I'm out of room here so I will just say one more thing. Send us your membership money today. We promise to do good things with it.

OMLA Officers and Directors

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Beth Madison, Portland

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NMSA Trustee, soon to be NMSA President-Elect

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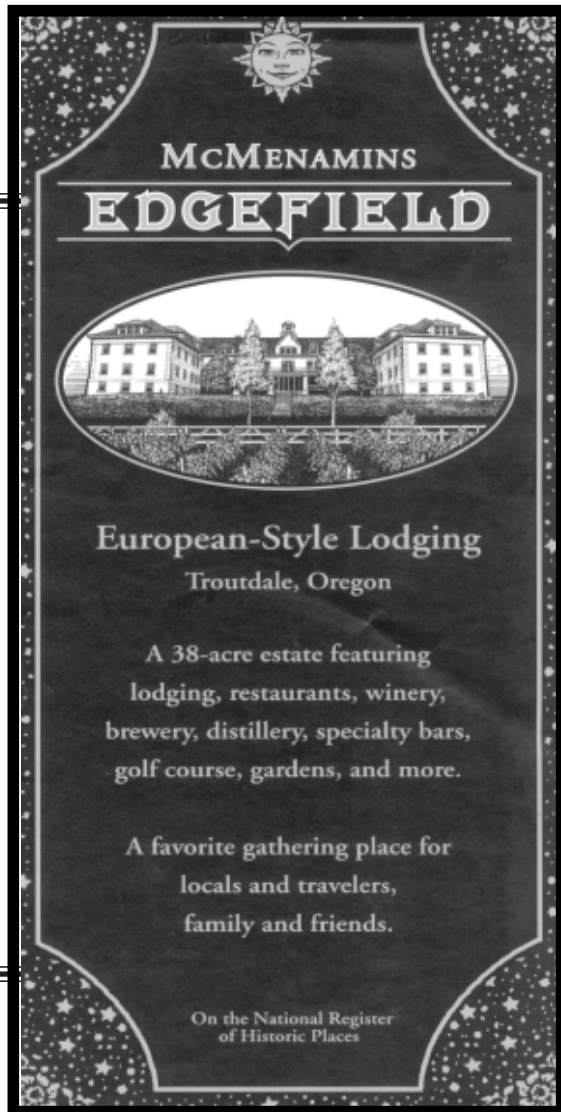
Tom Zandoli, Waldport

Member-at-Large

Pete Lorain



Conference



Closing the Achievement Gap: Best Practices in the Middle

Theme: Safe Harbor--A Whale of a Show!

Keynote Speakers:

Anita Archer

"Literacy for Today's Adolescents"

Otis Fulton

"Lexiles: The Oregon Literacy Initiative"

Dottie Coven

"The Classroom Performance System"

March 11-12, 2005

Have you ever been to McMenamin's Edgefield in Troutdale on the beautiful Columbia River Gorge? If so, you know what a GREAT place it is. If not, do we have an opportunity for you! OMLA has booked Edgefield as the site for our middle school conference on March 11 and 12, 2005. **Mark your calendar now because it is a MUST DO!**

We will put out a conference brochure in the next few weeks. The David Putnam and John Pence Award applications are in this newsletter. Please be thinking of some folks to nominate for them. We have purposefully made the forms easy to complete. Really easy, in fact. Selected individuals will be honored at a banquet dinner and it is guaranteed to be a gala occasion. Along with the usual great speakers and entertainment, we plan to have a golf tournament. This will be too fun to miss!

Rooms at Edgefield will fill quickly, so be sure to get yours soon. Registration is limited by the size of the facility, so when you get your registration form, fill it out and get it in quickly. You must be a member to attend, so you might as well join now.

This will be a great use of Title 1 school improvement funds, with speakers on literacy and other topics related to student achievement, and time to spend with teams from your school.

www.omla.net

Look us up!



.....

"Together celebrating the uniqueness of the middle level experience through advocacy and professional support."

Schools to Watch

I went into Google and typed in the search word “middle school.” It was no surprise that Google found 7,320,000 results in .32 seconds. You have to love the internet! I quickly found my way to the Schools to Watch program.

Michelle Celsor Pedigo, former principal, Schools to Watch: Barren County Middle School, Glasgow, Kentucky, wrote the following about her assessment of what it took to become a School to Watch. I found it interesting and I think you will too.

Conduct a thorough needs assessment and look for curriculum gaps with regard to national standards and depth of learning. Look for interdisciplinary approaches and how students of all levels and varied learning styles are being approached. This needs assessment should be driven by the staff so they will internalize the need to get things done. Establish priorities and the urgency to accomplish those priorities.

Establish a system for teachers to talk about high-level instruction within their content area and within their teams. Adhere to timelines and expect teachers to reflect about student learning. Make schoolwide decisions based on common needs across the contents.

Look at extracurricular and co-curricular programming. Ensure that ALL students have a chance to find their niche at this school, not just the athletic or academic students, but *all* students. Work with others to develop these programs. Also begin to “walk the talk” of making sure there is an adult for every child in the building. Help students to know they will be listened to and heard and put programs in place that nurture this relationship.

Begin to build teacher morale. Help teachers and staff to understand and internalize the professional expectation of the school. Help them to know they can help children to learn at high levels. Talk with them about instruction and expect them to be able to talk back. Be in the hallways during different parts of the day and help everyone to see that instruction is the business of this place.

Work with the staff to create a “welcoming school.” Model the practice that parent and community people, as well as our students, are our customers. Expect the “we’ll find a way” attitude and lay another system in place to encourage this. Establish positive office referrals for students and a schoolwide discipline code. Put in place parent volunteer and business partnership programs, and two-way communication between parents, community, and school. Use the word “partnership” a lot and expect teachers to contact parents and work with parents to educate all children.

Some Deserving Folks

For the past two years, OMLA has sent blank forms for schools to present three Outstanding Student Awards and one Outstanding Service Award. Any school that requested extra award blanks received them, and while we don’t know how many were actually awarded in total, we have received feedback from all over the state that schools did present these awards. Thanks!

Jay N. Musfeldt, Principal of Zion Lutheran School in Corvallis wrote to me and said, “Beth, these awards have proven to be a great motivator for our students and faculty.” Here are some details about the recipients awarded at their closing assembly for the 2003-04 school year.

OMLA Outstanding Achievement Award: Tim Moss, 7th Grade. Tim has made a significant turn in his school performance in both academic achievement and work habits. In addition, he has participated in and made significant contributions in both co-curricular and service activities at the school. Tim has definitely pointed it in the right direction.

OMLA Outstanding Service Awards:

First recipient, Mr. Vince Straub, 8th Grade homeroom, middle school math, and Assistant Principal. Along with his regular class load, Mr. Straub assumed the duties of principal for a month during the year during a medical leave and death in the family of the principal. During this time, Mr. Straub had to deal with a ruptured water main that threatened to close the school and preparations for a heavy Christmas schedule. All was accomplished with skill and good humor.

Second recipient, Mr. Mervin Munster: Mr. Munster has been instrumental in developing the Middle School department of Zion Lutheran School during his nine years here. His creative approach to teaching science and the development and fostering of science excellence throughout the whole school has placed Zion among the leaders in the area. Zion’s Middle School science team took home the first Science Expo trophy at the Lutheran Elementary School Tournament in February 2004. This Expo featured science competition between over 20 Lutheran schools from around the west coast. Zion’s 5th grade Destination Imagination team finished 3rd in the state of Oregon.

When the Telephone Rings Say, "Yes!"

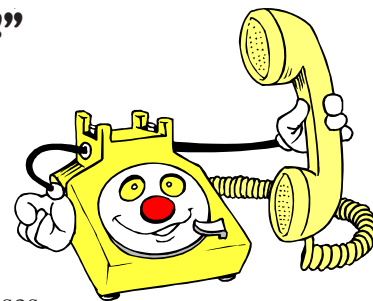
By Terri Hjelm, George Middle School, Portland Public Schools

The telephone rang. I heard my friend say, "Will you join us on the multicultural novel selection committee? It will be fun." I felt excited. Maybe it would feel like a book club. My friend said, "Every school will nominate a participant." This would be a chance see friends from old schools I'd taught in. Images flashed on the front of my thoughts. We'd just pick up our old end of the day discussions about books. They'd been dialogues that turned our passion for literature and teaching into sparkling creativity and strong friendships. Perhaps, I hoped, the commitment would lead me back into dedicated reading patterns that I really missed. Visions of extended duty dollars ran through my head. I could buy more books for my classroom with the extra dollars. I even hoped that my service would help erase a feeling that I was out of the literary loop and not reading enough. So I said, "Thanks, I'd love to."

Excitement rekindled over the panic about half-way through our first discussion topic and continued to grow with each meeting. We met in small groups sharing what we'd noticed in each novel. I loved *Miracle's Boys*. I felt that emotional pull that used to suck me in as an adolescent. Suddenly I remembered

how my adolescent addiction to those emotional tugs on my heart propelled my reading through junior high school forty years ago. Adult concern over high levels of adversity and violence in many multicultural novels melted away in our discussions. My love for the stories about struggle and learning to meet the world through eyes that saw the world differently blossomed again. I remembered my young feelings of connection to many different kids as novels taught me something about their lives even though I lived far away. I was eager to share more of these novels with my students.

Happily the committee work demands grew manageable. I learned to read more efficiently. Many of the books could be read from cover to end in a three hour drive to Seattle. I liked crossing two off in a weekend and enjoyed not having to drive. I learned not to leave a paperback outside in the desert. Sun melts the glue in the spine. I made new friends that were passionate about literacy, much like I am. I became more consistent about keep a reading log. My journal recordings impacted the discussions I held with my students. They heard my personal responses. I didn't cover up the tear drop stains splashed over a few pages when I shared my log on the overhead. My



responses were more detailed, more personal. I became a more active model. Feelings that I was a didactic teacher who talked at my students melted away. I could hear their ideas more loudly than my own. But the benefit didn't stop there. I became more active on the regional reading council. Novel and curriculum discussion led to new friendships and teaching partnerships this year.

I reached out to contribute and received the greater benefit in access to a wider circle of my colleague's ideas and experiences. Rejuvenated by the leadership opportunities, I am taking part in new ways this year and my love of books continues to expand.

Personal favorites I recommend:

- **Kite Rider* by Geraldine McCaughrean
- **Miracle's Boys* by Jacquelyn Woodson
- **Color of My Words* by Lynn Joseph
- **Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant* by Francisco Jimenez
- **The Clay Marble* by Minfong Ho

Month of the Young Adolescent



"No other age level is of more importance to the future of individuals, and, literally, to that of society; because these are the years when youngsters crystallize their beliefs about themselves and firm up their self-concepts, their philosophies of life and their values - the things that are the ultimate determinants of their behaviors."

Understanding and Appreciating the Wonder Years, John H. Lounsbury

NSMA has proclaimed October to be the Month of the Young Adolescent. See their website, www.nmsa.org/moya/moya_2004/index.htm, for endless ideas on activities. There are so many things you can do to celebrate this wonderful age group.

***Oregon Middle Level Association
Annual Conference
March 11-12, 2005
“Closing the Achievement Gap”***

CALL FOR PRESENTERS

The Oregon Middle Level Association is seeking applications for presenters to middle school educators at the 2005 conference at Edgefield in Troutdale, Oregon. Presentations are 60-minute concurrent sessions in a relaxed and beautiful environment in the Columbia River Gorge. We are particularly interested in topics related to ESL, test taking tips and tricks for TESA, literacy, Special Education, AYP, differentiated instruction, closing the achievement gap, and other student achievement related topics.

Primary Presenter Information:

Name _____ Position _____

School/Organization _____

Work Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Work Phone (____) _____ Home Phone (____) _____

Email: _____

Times Available: Friday, March 11 ___ 12:30-1:30 ___ 1:45-2:45

 Saturday, March 12 ___ 11:30-12:30 ___ 1:45-2:45

 Any _____

Method: ___ Lecture ___ Hands On ___ Discussion ___ Other:

Intended Audience: _____

Presentation Equipment Needs: (all others you must provide)

___ Chart paper ___ Tables for materials ___ Overhead projector/screen

Co-Presenter Names and Organizations:

Name: _____ Organization: _____

Name: _____ Organization: _____

Name: _____ Organization: _____

—— See other side ——

Presentation Information: Use this space or attach a sheet

Presentation Title: _____

Presentation Abstract:

Program Book Description (As you wish it to appear in the conference book. 50 words or less)

The selection committee must receive your application by December 1, 2004.

Speakers will be notified after December 1, 2004. Presenters serve on a contributing basis and are required to register for the conference if they will attend sessions. As contributors, presenters are not reimbursed for lodging, travel, or conference fee. Membership fee is waived for presenter and co-presenters.

Mail to: Glen Martz
Cascade Middle School
1525 Echo Hollow Road
Eugene, OR 97402

If you have questions, email Glen Martz at gmartz@bethel.k12.or.us

Thank you for considering this opportunity!

Teaming Up!
Twice the Opportunity...
Dual Membership has its advantages
Oregon Middle Level Association 2004-05
National Middle School Association



Dual Individual Membership Application

Name: Mr. Ms. Dr. _____

School: _____

Title: _____

Mailing Address: Home Work

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

TEL: (work): () _____ (home): () _____

(FAX): () _____

e-mail: _____

May we share your name with other organizations requesting the NMSA mailing list? Yes No

How did you hear about OMLA? ___ member renewal ___ newsletter ___ colleague ___ conference
___ website ___ other: _____

OMLA Membership Year: July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005
NMSA Membership Year: One calendar year from the time you join

Dual Membership—\$89 (See *www.nmsa.org* and *www.omla.net* for member benefits)

Type of Payment, Please check one:

Purchase order (must accompany this form) Check (payable to NMSA)

VISA MasterCard

Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Cardholder Name: _____ Signature: _____

Mail with payment to: National Middle School Association
4151 Executive Parkway, Suite 300
Westerville, OH 43081

*Please do NOT send this application for dual membership to COSA in Oregon.
This form goes directly to NMSA.
Only individual, team or institutional memberships for OMLA go to COSA. Thanks!*

2004-05

Membership Application

Individual or Institutional

Oregon Middle Level Association

"Together, celebrating the uniqueness of the middle level experience through advocacy and professional support"

Date: _____

Contact Person: _____ Title: _____

School: _____ District: _____

County: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Work Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

How did you hear about OMLA? member renewal newsletter colleague conference
 website other: _____

Membership Type: *Membership Year: July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005*

_____ Regular: \$35

_____ Full-Time Student, \$20

_____ Team: \$125, includes five members (list names and email addresses below)

_____ Institutional: \$250, includes entire staff (attach sheet with names and email addresses)

Name: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Email: _____

All Memberships Include:

- Newsletter and conference brochures
- Reduced conference fees and discount book prices
- Regional activities, conferences and networking
- Influence in Oregon middle level education through cooperation with COSA, TSPC, ODE, Higher Education Consortium, and Northwest Affiliates Partnership
- Influence in National Middle School Association through Western Region Trustee

Please make check payable to COSA/OMLA and send with this form to:

OMLA, 707 13th St. SE, Suite 100, Salem, OR 97301-4035

Phone: (503) 581-3141

Fax: (503) 581-9840

Website: www.omla.net

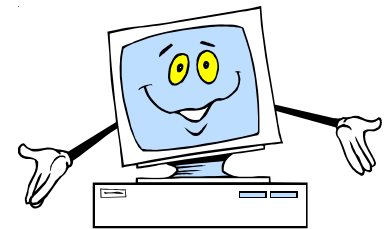
Differentiating Instruction--The Ultimate Teacher Tool: The Classroom Performance System Empowered Classroom

from "The Classroom Performance System--A White Paper"

The Classroom Performance System provides each student with a simple and wireless handheld response pad. This pad is a non-threatening, robust polling device that lets students answer teacher-posed multiple choice or T/F questions simultaneously from their desks. Through this electronic device, the answers are fed into the teacher's computer and displayed immediately through a projector onto a screen, already tallied. Not only does the teacher get an immediate idea of student comprehension, the scores can be fed directly into their grade book. Since students have no risk of embarrassment with respect to their individual answers, they are very motivated to partake in the activities.

*****The returns on those minimal efforts are significant and include the following:**

- Complete reporting on student performance
- Standards-based reporting
- Immediate and delayed feedback to students and teacher
- Repetition on key learning points
- Retrieval of information in a variety of scenarios
- Spacing of questions to maximize learning
- Grading, grade entry, and grade reporting electronically
- Availability of student performance data to district administrators seamlessly.



*****The CPS classroom is characterized by the following:**

- A one computer classroom – the teacher's computer
- All students are empowered with a simple durable response pad to communicate with the teacher's computer
- A software interface supporting:
 - Simple questioning capabilities for involving all students by verbalizing questions
 - Feedback mechanism for providing students with absolute knowledge that their answer has been received
 - Feedback mechanism denoting class results for each question
 - Absolute capture of individual student results
 - Delivery and capture of student performance on traditional paper tests

*****In this environment, each student, regardless of age and background, can easily and without risk of embarrassment, deliver their answers to objective questions. These questions can be:**

- Constructed by the teacher "on the spot" and verbalized to the class
- Written on the board by the teacher
- Referenced by the teacher from any printed materials
- Constructed by teams of students and presented to other teams of students in a collaborative mode
- Pre-developed by the teacher and projected to the class from CPS

Interested? Dottie Coven, representative from Einstruction, the company that makes the Classroom Performance System, will speak at our OMLA conference in March 2005. See you at Edgefield!

Have YOU Joined?

OMLA's motto is: "Together celebrating the uniqueness of the middle level experience through advocacy and professional support." As middle level educators, you know how special and unique it is to serve this population. With ever-increasing demands on schools, having association with other middle-level professionals is invaluable.

Our membership fee is a very low \$35. Last year we took in \$6655 in membership. For a state that is large geographically but small in population, that is pretty average. But we would like to have many more members because the more we have, the stronger we are.

Membership benefits include:

- Reduced conference fees. We are having an awesome conference on March 11-12, 2005. All attendees must be members, so you might as well join now for a longer term of membership!
- Influence in National Middle School Association through Western Region Trustee. We are THE state affiliate for NMSA, an incredibly important organization to support. Given the increasing federal control of schools, NMSA is the organization out there advocating for our government to make sound decisions based on the whole child, not just on arbitrary test scores.
- Regional activities, conferences and networking
- Influence in Oregon middle level education through cooperation with COSA, TSPC, ODE, and Northwest Affiliates Partnership.



"National Middle School Association is dedicated to improving the educational experiences of young adolescents by providing vision, knowledge, and resources to all who serve them in order to develop healthy, productive, and ethical citizens."

Collegiate Middle Level Association at Portland State University

by Dr. Micki Caskey, PSU

Though the fall term at Portland State University (PSU) began September 27, 2004, our CMLA chapter started its work during the summer by recruiting members for the 2004-05 year. In July, the chapter's president, Ramon de la Cruz and Dr. Micki M. Caskey, faculty advisor, planned a lunch gathering at the university's park blocks to recruit members. While seated beneath a canopy of trees, two cohort groups of the Graduate Teacher Education Program (GTEP) learned about CMLA and the benefits of membership. As a result, 30 preservice teachers signed up to join the PSU-CMLA chapter.

On September 15th, our chapter had its first meeting of the academic year. Ramon distributed and reviewed the chapter's constitution and bylaws. He guided discussion about the purpose of CMLA and possible goals for the chapter. Next, ten officers were elected to leadership positions for the upcoming year. Notably, the members of our PSU-CMLA chapter are graduate students.

One of our proposed goals is to establish connections with the undergraduate students who may be interested in becoming middle school teachers. Possible ways of making these connections include distribution of recruitment flyers, contact with undergraduate advisors, and visits to selected undergraduate classes (e.g. Introduction to Education and Society.)

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Call Toll-Free:

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**Oregon Middle
Level Association**

Confederation of Oregon
School Administrators
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Salem, OR 97301-4035
503-581-3141

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**Thanks to
Confederation of
Oregon School
Administrators for
their support of
OMLA!**



**Ballot for Election of Officers to the Board of Directors
Oregon Middle Level Association**

Please vote for one person to fill each of the following positions:

President-Elect:

___ Tom Zandoli, Principal, Waldport Middle School

Treasurer:

___ Beth Madison, Principal, George Middle School

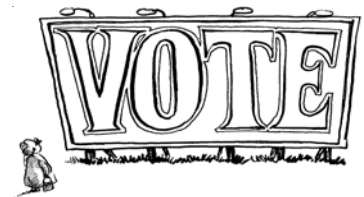
Region 1 Director: Crook, Deschutes, Gilliam, Harney, Hood River, Jefferson, Sherman, Wasco, Wheeler Counties

___ Sue Hukari, Teacher, Hood River Middle School

Region 3 Director: Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook, Washington and Yamhill Counties

___ Sarah Makarchek, Educational Assistant, Holcomb Elementary School

**Please send this ballot by December 1, 2004 to:
OMLA, 707 13th Street SE, Salem, OR 97301-4035**



Thank you!

clip 'n' send