



Thanks to our Volunteers and Supporters:

*By Dennis Moore, Executive Director*

At PLUK the last couple of months have been as busy as we've seen it in the past several years; school starting back, parents and schools calling for assistance, information and training dramatically stepped up, and four of our state Associate Boards have had events (Corporate Softball Tournament in Billings, Kids Theatre Experience in Kalispell, Variety Show in Great Falls and Magical Tymes Party in Missoula). Additionally, PLUK's 20th Anniversary and Founders' Day Celebration was held on September 8th. We've been busy, but it's all been good work and activities.

We sincerely appreciate all the work of friends across the state. It's impossible to mention them all, so I've decided to just touch on a few. Deborah Hayes Hyde and Ramona Holt have been never-ending supporters in planning the Missoula Magical Tymes Party, and they had a large strong committee and many volunteers helping. Valerie

Burgan chairs the Great Falls Associate

*"The future will belong to those who believe in their dreams."  
--Senator Paul Wellstone*

Board and was one of the numbers of volunteers behind their recent event. Jeff Randel, one of PLUK's Board members has been instrumental with PLUK receiving ConocoPhillips' contribution to the area annual "Refineries' Golf Tournament." Alex Tyson of KTVQ2 in Billings, also a Board member, was a tremendous help with this year's Softball Tournament. Thank you everyone!

With the Christmas season just around the corner, we're launching a "Christmas Appeal Project" in an effort to introduce more people to PLUK. This

is an important but uncomplicated project and conducted by volunteers and Associate Board members throughout the state. Detailed information is on the next page.

If you'd like to help, but haven't been asked, please call and we'll send you info and packets. Thanks and please have a wonderful and safe holiday season.

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*Emelie Kay Eaton, one of 25 candidates running for office in Montana, participated in a forum September 22. The Billings Disabilities Services Coalition, 23 organizations that serve people with special needs, sponsored the event to raise awareness about disability issues.*



**United Way "Day of Caring" volunteers recycle a small mountain of donated computer equipment, September 16.**

a cover letter and project information on PLUK and the overall program. PLUK embarked on a mission to develop greater public awareness across the state several years ago, and the Christmas Appeal project is one of the newest components of the Public Awareness campaign. For more information or to assist with the Christmas Appeal Project, call PLUK's Office at 800-222-7585.

## Kevin Red Star to Hold Event in Missoula for PLUK

For several years, Kevin Red Star, a nationally acclaimed Crow artist from Roberts, Montana has helped with donations to PLUK and the program's auctions. Recently, he agreed to step up his involvement with PLUK and to assist with actual events to auction original artwork and posters or prints for PLUK. Kevin agreed to participate with a project in Missoula in April and a second event in Billings in the fall of 2005. The events will include a workshop with kids on art, where he'll work with a group of young people to produce their own art. He'll also participate in a dinner and art auction and speak to the audience, helping to raise funds for PLUK. The details of the April and fall 2005 events are being planned at this time. We're excited about Kevin's involvement, he genuinely cares about our kids and wants to do what he can to help with our growth. For more information on the events or to help on the planning committees, call PLUK's office at 800 222-7585.

## PLUK Offers Christmas Honorariums as Gifts for that Individual Who Already Has Everything

Have you spent time thinking about what to buy for that special family member or friend who already has everything? Or, have you bought a gift in the past to find out that he or she already has the same thing? PLUK is offering a special Christmas Honorarium, you can make a donation to PLUK and we'll send a special Christmas card to the recipient announcing your gift. It's a great way to help PLUK and give a Christmas gift to someone special in your life. What better way is there to let someone know you care about them and to help children and families at the same time? We will list those Christmas Honorariums in the first newsletter after the holidays.

For more information, call PLUK's office at 800 222-7585. Or, simply send us a note or letter along with your gift and explain that you want to make the gift as a "Christmas Honorarium" and give us the name and address of the recipient. Get the Christmas spirit and help kids too!!!

## Christmas Appeal Project

PLUK's Associate Boards across the state, along with additional volunteers, are helping with a very simple but important project – "PLUK's Annual Christmas Appeal Project." The project helps to introduce the work of the program to others and hopefully new friends. Associate Board members and volunteers give out four packets of information each, and ask their friend "to look over the information and consider helping." By doing this, PLUK hopes to spread the word of the importance of the program and to help others learn about the services that PLUK provides.

The packets are simple in that they include

## Monthly Update

**Media Director:** Roger Holt  
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This is a publication of Parents, Let's Unite for Kids (PLUK), a private, nonprofit Montana organization founded in 1984 by a group of parents of children with disabilities and special health care needs. *Monthly Update* is available in alternative formats by request.

### Principal Office

Parents, Let's Unite for Kids  
516 N 32nd St  
Billings MT 59101-6003

800-222-7585 (toll free)

406-255-0540 (TT)

406-255-0523 (FAX)

[plukinfo@pluk.org](mailto:plukinfo@pluk.org)  
<http://www.pluk.org>

## PLUK Training Events and Activities

For the most current information on trainings, visit <http://www.pluk.org/training/>.

PLUK associate boards around the state are sponsoring a number of trainings and activities this coming year. Mark your calendar if you are interested in participating. We've also included a training registration form on the next page to simplify the process. Feel free to make copies.

### All Day Workshops in November

*Update: All registrations are at the early registration rate and there is a special rate for full-time students and parents of children with special needs (see registration form on next page)*

#### **November 1, "Staying Cool When Our Buttons are Pushed," with Doug Cochran Roberts, 205 Sunny View Ln, Kalispell,**

The Summit, Educating or parenting children or teens can be tough, but more so when they are not responsible. It can get even tougher when they are



**Doug Cochran Roberts**

disrespectful, angry and defiant. How do we keep cool when our buttons are pushed? How do we keep a good relationship when we are both frustrated? Participants will learn the importance of using the concept of safe haven and emotional regulation to make discipline more effective and our buttons more manageable. The concepts and techniques from "Discipline with Love and Logic" will help participants provide effective ways to set healthy and loving limits for themselves. Participants will see how to help kids take better charge of their emotions, own and solve their problems, and, consequently, become more confident and responsible. Specific examples of working with kids during difficult moments will be modeled.

For detailed information and registration, visit [http://www.pluk.org/training/Staying\\_Cool.htm](http://www.pluk.org/training/Staying_Cool.htm)



### Next Statewide Interactive Videoconference:

**November 9, 6-8pm,**

#### **"Issues in Hearing and Vision," airing from Great Falls.**

The presenters will be from the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind and the Office of Public Instruction. Parents and educators who deal with issues in hearing and vision are encouraged to attend this free training. This session will be available statewide through the VisionNet Interactive TV system and over the internet. For information and to register, visit the web site (see below), call the office at 800-222-7585 or complete and mail/fax the registration form on the next page. We need at least three registrations to open up a site.

Visit <http://www.pluk.org/training/ITV.htm> for further information on this training.

All Interactive TV trainings are archived on video and web. You may visit the archive at <http://www.pluk.org/ITVarchive.htm>.

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## All Day Workshops in November cont...

### Tools for Independence: Assistive Technology

**November 3 – Bozeman, Holiday Inn (Jefferson Room)**

**November 10 – Great Falls, Montana School for the Deaf and Blind, 3911 Central Ave, Penny's Conference Room.**

*Presented by Roger Holt, ATP, PLUK's director of technology programs.*

These full-day seminars offer a unique opportunity to gain valuable information on the topic of assistive technology. The two morning sessions will cover the basic information of technology and the law and how to make technology decisions. The afternoon sessions will cover specific strategies, devices, resources and what may be expected in the future.

For detailed information and registration, visit <http://www.pluk.org/training/AT.htm>

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## TRAINING REGISTRATION FORM

November 9, "Issues in Hearing and Vision," airing from Great Falls (free).

November 1, "Staying Cool," Doug Cochran Roberts, Kalispell

November 3, Assistive Technology, Roger Holt, Bozeman

November 10, Assistive Technology, Roger Holt, Great Falls

\$99 for single registration *Note: fees only apply to the Nov 1, 3 & 10 sessions.*

\$75 each for two or more registrants

\$50 special rate for full-time students

\$50 special rate for parents of children with special needs

I am a parent and I would like to be considered for one of the limited number of parent scholarships.

Role:  Parent,  Educator,  Professional,  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Special Accommodations: \_\_\_\_\_

### Payment Information

Check (Payable to PLUK)

Credit Card (Payable by phone, call the PLUK Office - 800-222-7585)

Purchase Order # \_\_\_\_\_

General Comments/Questions for Presenters: \_\_\_\_\_

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Send registration to PLUK, 516 N 32<sup>nd</sup> St, Billings MT 59101 • Fax registration to 406/255-0523.

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## Montana Training and Events Calendar

The following is a listing of training activities/events happening around Montana. Parents who need financial assistance in order to attend trainings may apply for parent training grants through the PLUK office. For the most up-to-date calendar of training, visit the online calendar at <http://www.pluk.org/Calendar.htm>.

If you have events you would like to include in the calendar, please send to [plukinfo@pluk.org](mailto:plukinfo@pluk.org).

### **Person Centered Planning, November 3-5, Butte**

The Developmental Disabilities Program and Department of Public Health & Human Services is sponsoring a three-day person-centered planning workshop November 3-5 at the Copper King in Butte.

For more information, contact Perry Jones, [pjones@state.mt.us](mailto:pjones@state.mt.us) 406/444-5662, or Sandi Cory, [scory@state.mt.us](mailto:scory@state.mt.us) 406/444-2995.

### **Sensory Integration Tool Kit Workshop, November 5-6, Billings**

Using Occupational Therapy strategies to promote sensory integration in the classroom and home.

This workshop facilitates the use of occupational therapy strategies to promote sensory integration in classrooms and homes. All educators, administrators, therapists, social nurses, and parents are encouraged to attend as a team.

For information/registration, contact Pam at STEP, 248-2055. You may also register online at <http://www.msubillings.edu/mcdregister/>.

### **Read Well and Beyond, November 8, Polson**

This workshop focuses on the use of ReadWell, a field tested and research based beginning reading program. Participants will have an opportunity to participate in either a introductory session or for those who have been using this program, will have an opportunity to learn some more advanced strategies to make the connection between ReadWell and the classroom curriculum.

Contact Region V CSPD Coordinator Nancy Marks at 406/728-2400 ext 5036 or [admin@cspd.net](mailto:admin@cspd.net). Find additional information and register online at <http://www.cspd.net>.

### **ReadWell Kindergarten, November 9, Polson**

ReadWell Kindergarten is a field-tested and research-based early literacy program for kindergarten students which includes: \*\*age-appropriate thematically- based whole class activities (phonemic awareness, oral language and vocabulary development, music games, art, writing, etc.); \*\*individually-appropriate, mastery-based small group instruction in systematic, explicit phonics, story reading, fluency, and comprehension; \*\*regular assessment with built-in interventions

when needed; and \*\*teacher-friendly implementation and instructional materials.

Contact Region V CSPD Coordinator Nancy Marks at 406/728-2400 ext 5036 or [admin@cspd.net](mailto:admin@cspd.net). Find additional information and register online at <http://www.cspd.net>.

### **Asperger Syndrome Support Group, November 11, Billings**

Anyone whose life is affected by Asperger Syndrome is invited to attend these meetings. Meetings are scheduled for November 11, January 13, March 10 and May 12 at 7:00 PM. Meetings take place at: 17th Street Station, 1648 Poly Drive, Billings.

Contact Valerie at 245-1770 or Paula at 248-6186 for information.

### **Region III CSPD: Differentiated Instruction Workshops, November 16 & 17, Billings; November 18, Lewistown**

Presented by Rick Wormeli, a practicing middle school teacher who brings innovation, validity and high standards to both his presentations and his instructional practice, which includes years of teaching math, science, English, and history.

For information, go to <http://www.msubillings.edu/cspd/>.

### **Focus on Decoding: REWARDS, November 29, Kalispell; November 30, Missoula**

Many students falter in reading at the middle school level because they have not learned strategies to use in decoding longer words. This lack of advanced decoding ability affects fluency, comprehension and vocabulary achievement. This session will teach participants to use REWARDS, a multi-syllabic decoding program that has been well documented as an effective remedial strategy for students in grade 4-12.

The trainer, Dr. Feldman is the Director of Reading and Early Intervention with the Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE), Leadership Team Consultant for the California Reading and Literature Project and Independent Consultant in the area of PreK-12 Literacy.

For more information and to register online, go to the Region V CSPD web site: <http://www.cspd.net>.

## Training and Events Calendar: Outside Montana

The following is a listing of upcoming training activities and events taking place around the country. For a complete listing, see <http://www.pluk.org/Calendar.htm>.

### **Contemporary Issues in ADD/ADHD, November 4-7, Teleconference**

The objective for this FREE On-line Seminar & Teleconference is to present what the correct body of scientific literature tells us is happening in the brain of a child or adult with ADD/ADHD. There are chemical imbalances, and there are a wide array of pharmacological and behavioral interventions used in the treatment of ADD/ADHD, once a differential diagnosis is made. All of these issues and more will be addressed in this Web-based interactive symposium.

Register at: [http://www.eparent.com/web\\_seminar\\_add\\_adhd/](http://www.eparent.com/web_seminar_add_adhd/)

### **TASH Conference 2004, November 18-20, Reno NV**

The TASH conference is one of the largest and most progressive international conferences to focus on model, innovative, and effective strategies for achieving full inclusion of people with disabilities. This invigorating conference brings together some of the best hearts and minds in the disability movement with several hundred presenters and features over 450 breakout sessions, exhibits, roundtable discussions, poster sessions and much more, jam-packed with info. It provides a forum for individuals with disabilities, families, researchers, administrators, educators, scholars, and others to create dialogue and action for social

and systems reform.

For more information and call for papers: <http://www.tash.org/>

### **Third National Symposium on Dispute Resolution in Special Education, December 2-4, Washington DC**

CADRE will convene the Third National Symposium on Dispute Resolution in Special Education at the Academy for Educational Development in Washington, D.C. from December 2-4, 2004.

For additional information visit [http://www.directionservice.org/cadre/2004\\_conference.cfm](http://www.directionservice.org/cadre/2004_conference.cfm).

### **International Conference on Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families, December 5-8, Chicago IL**

Lessons Learned: Weaving Our Future From the Threads of the Past

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the DEC conference! In remembering the individuals and events that have shaped our profession, we'll see just how far we've come and use these accomplishments to build excitement as we shape the future of our field. [http://www.dec-sped.org/conference\\_04/about\\_the\\_conference.html](http://www.dec-sped.org/conference_04/about_the_conference.html)

### **Learning Disabilities Association 42nd Annual International Conference on Learning Disabilities, March 2-5, 2005—Reno, NV**

The largest learning disabilities conference in the world is coming to Reno, Nevada, and bringing more than 300 workshops and exhibits. Topics include: adult issues; medical research; health issues; workshops on early childhood, reading, classroom strategies; and NIFL "Bridges to Practice."

When: March 2-5, 2005

Where: Nugget Hotel, Reno

Registration: \$75-\$230

Contact: <http://www.ldaamerica.org>



*Julie Beckett, keynote speaker at Founders Day Celebration.*

## In the news:

### Announcing Virtual Pencil Algebra

<http://www.HenterMath.com>

Henter Math is pleased to announce the release of Virtual Pencil Algebra, computer software for interactive access to algebra for students who are Pencil Impaired. It is an answer to the serious need for educational software to help students with disabilities who cannot use pencil and paper and therefore require an alternative environment for manipulation of numbers. A student can read, create, or manipulate equations involving a variety of elements and expressions. Teachers can use VPAlgebra to create an assignment or test, password protect it, and then send it to the student via email.

For this first version a blind student will need the Jaws screen reader to work with VPAlgebra. You can read more about VPAlgebra at <http://www.HenterMath.com>, and download a version for a free trial.

### National Center for Learning Disabilities and Schwab Learning Release a Parent's Guide to "No Child Left Behind"

New York, NY--Two national organizations, the National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD) and Schwab Learning, have collaborated to develop a handbook designed to provide simple, accessible information for parents on the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Making the "No Child Left Behind Act" Work for Children Who Struggle to Learn: A Parent's Guide, is available now at: <http://www.LD.org/NCLB> and <http://www.SchwabLearning.org/NCLB>.



*Susan Gregory and Connie VonBergen at Founder's Day Celebration.*

## Ideas and Answers

**Q** Does PLUK just serve children?

**A** "Children of all ages" is our usual response. Disability issues do not magically disappear once a child transitions from high school to the adult world. It just brings a whole new set of problems to deal with. For families, it is a life-long issue. PLUK has no eligibility criteria and has always assisted families and individuals with disabilities of any age. In fact we receive many inquiries from families whose children have no disability. They may have questions about home-schooling, parenting or custody issues. As the baby-boomers age, there is a dramatic increase in acquired age-related disabilities. They come to us looking for information. Because of Montana's low population, we can't support many specific disability organizations. PLUK is really a network of people, agencies and organizations that support one another for the benefit of people with special needs. We use this network of support and resources to respond to the needs of the people that contact us. People that we are assisting today may be assisting others in the future. Children that we have worked with in the past may now be teachers, counselors or even administrators. If you are reading this, you are a part of this network, a part of PLUK, and are helping in some way.

**Q** Is it true that smaller school districts receive less money for special education than larger districts so smaller districts can't provide all the services that might be needed?

**A** All school districts in Montana--whether large or small-- receive their special education funding from the state based on the total number of students served by their district. Each district receives a block grant which assumes that the district will be serving 10% of its overall population in special education. So, on a per pupil basis, each school district receives the same amount.

The problem for smaller school districts is that sometimes their numbers of students are so low that they do not generate enough money to fund a teaching position and curricular materials. It costs the same amount to the district to hire a teacher to work with four students as it would for that same teacher to educate 12 students. Larger districts, because of their larger numbers of students, have "critical mass." They receive enough funding so that they can use teachers and materials more efficiently and have less cost per individual student. These options are not available to smaller districts unless they pool their resources with nearby districts and serve students in cross-district programs.

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## Back Page

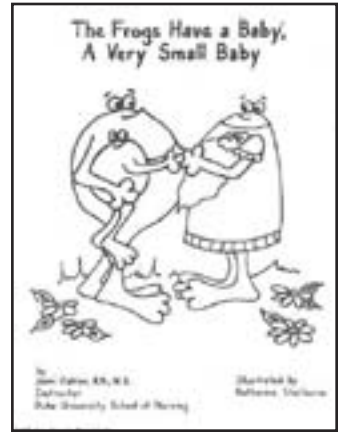
*News we couldn't fit anywhere else!*

### Frog Family Coloring Book

<http://www.pluk.org/Pubs/FrogFamily.pdf>

*Especially for siblings of newborns with special needs.*

This wonderful coloring book has been provided by our own Molly Mills and converted to an electronic document that may be downloaded and printed off of the internet.



### Book Scanning Offered as a New Service in the PLUK Technology Lab

PLUK has recently obtained a high-speed digital duplex scanner which is ideal for creating electronic texts from the paper originals. If you are interested in this service, contact Roger at [rholt@pluk.org](mailto:rholt@pluk.org) or 800-222-7585.

### New Webpage for Parents - the OPI Parents Page

*a message from Linda McCulloch,  
Montana's Superintendent of Public  
Instruction*

<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/parents/>

Parents are their children's first and most important teacher. For Montana's children to be successful students, a strong school and family partnership is essential.

The OPI Parents Page was created to help parents more easily find information about K-12 public education in Montana.

The evidence is clear, family involvement in schools matters, and the OPI Parents webpage helps communicate with parents about public education in Montana.

The purpose of this website is to be responsive to the issues that are important to parents and their students. If you don't find what you need, please let me know. ***OPISupt@state.mt.us***, <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/superintendent/>



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## PLUK Office

516 N 32nd St  
Billings MT 59101-6003

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*Address service requested*