



# DPI VISTA Monthly

JUNE 2008

**Jane Grinde**  
Project Director  
**Ruth Anne Landsverk**  
Family Education  
Coordinator

**Betsy Prueter**  
VISTA Leader

Volunteers don't get paid, not  
because they're worthless, but because they're priceless

SHERRY ANDERSON

## AMERICORPS\*VISTA A NATIONAL SERVICE MOVEMENT

**Fight Poverty  
with PASSION**

By Betsy Prueter

Every once in a while I find it inspiring to remember that we are all part of a national movement of service. There are **19** of you serving with the DPI VISTA Project. But there are **81** VISTAs serving in Wisconsin. And there are **6,500** VISTAs serving across the country!

What's more, since 1965, when VISTA was established as part of President Johnson's War on Poverty, over **170,000** VISTAs have served America. VISTAs have been integral in starting programs such as Head Start, Habitat for Humanity, the credit union system, Upward Bound, and Neighborhood Watch.

In all 50 states there are VISTAs, immersed in service and building capacity in communities. They are developing after school programs, training mentors for children, organizing housing for hurricane victims, expanding access to affordable health care, designing literacy awareness campaigns, developing community technology centers, building programs to assist the unemployed, conducting outreach to parents,

integrating service-learning into classrooms, fundraising for non-profits, starting parent-teacher organizations, hosting dialogues, connecting college students with community service opportunities, and planning Family Fun Fairs.

The work that you do matters for families in your hometown, it matters for families here in Wisconsin, and it matters for families across the country. VISTA boasts a proud legacy of leadership and service, of which all of you are now a part.

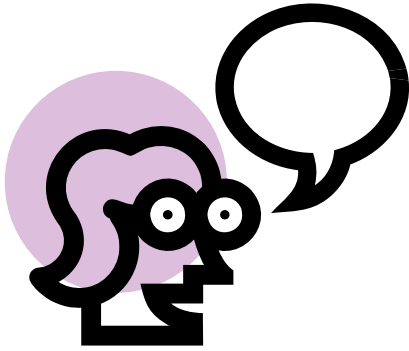
As many of you are entering the last quarter of your VISTA service, it might be a good time to reflect on your experiences. What was your biggest contribution? What were your proudest moments? What was your biggest success? What is *your* legacy as a Volunteer in Service to America?

I encourage you to share your service story. You can do this 3 (and probably more) ways.

- 1- Contribute to the VISTA Viewfinder, an online newsletter sent to all VISTA members nationwide. Contact [vistaoutreach@cns.gov](mailto:vistaoutreach@cns.gov) for more information.
- 2- Submit an entry for publication on the Corporation for National and Community Service's Service Stories website by emailing [stories@cns.gov](mailto:stories@cns.gov).
- 3- Write up your service story and email it to Betsy ([betsy.prueter@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:betsy.prueter@dpi.wi.gov)) for inclusion in the next VISTA newsletter!

# LITERACY KEYS

PEN WEEKLY NEWSBLAST



Available online here:

[http://www.publiceducation.org/newsblast\\_current.asp](http://www.publiceducation.org/newsblast_current.asp)

Schooling does matter, but literacy starts at home, writes Laura Pappano for the Harvard Education Letter. Teachers have long urged parents to read aloud to their children, but now there is a second and perhaps more powerful message coming from educators: talk to your kids! Mounting research that links language-rich home environments with reading success and school achievement is driving educators and community groups to target families long before children even register for school.

It is highly probable that home support for literacy markedly influences kindergarten language skills and in turn, fourth grade reading comprehension scores. In fact, exploratory investigative discussions between parents and children are central to higher-level literacy, while the social-emotional bond parents have with children can amplify learning.

Parents remain uniquely able to tailor explanations that click perfectly with their child and also provide more extensive opportunities for rich discussion than a teacher attending to a class of 25 students.

# GRANT OPPORTUNITIES



## **NATURE OF LEARNING GRANTS PROGRAM**

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation give grants to organizations to start or expand Nature of Learning programs in their communities.

Deadline: June 16, 2008.

<http://www.nfwf.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Search&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=4784>

## **CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH GRANTS**

The American Dental Association Samuel Harris Fund for Children's Dental Health Grants Program awards grants to oral health promotion programs designed to improve and maintain children's oral health through community education programs.

Deadline: July 17, 2008.

[http://www.adafoundation.org/ada/prod/adaf/prog\\_access\\_harris.asp#eligibility](http://www.adafoundation.org/ada/prod/adaf/prog_access_harris.asp#eligibility)

## **GRANTS FOR AFTER-SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAMS**

The Mr. Holland's Opus Special Projects Program provides musical instruments and instrument repairs to existing K-12 school music programs that have no other source of financing to purchase additional musical instruments and materials.

Deadline: August 1, 2008.

[http://www.mhopus.org/app\\_special\\_0.asp](http://www.mhopus.org/app_special_0.asp)

## **EXCELLENCE IN PRIVATE ENTERPRISE EDUCATION**

Honors outstanding educators who excite a commitment in their students to the free enterprise system and unleash the entrepreneurial skills of their students at the elementary, junior high school, high school and college level.

Deadline: October 1, 2008.

[http://www.ffvf.org/leavey\\_info.asp](http://www.ffvf.org/leavey_info.asp)

### **RGK FOUNDATION GRANTS FOR EDUCATION**

RGK Foundation awards grants to programs that focus on formal K-12 education (particularly mathematics, science, and reading), teacher development, literacy, and higher education.

<http://www.rgkfoundation.org/guidelines.php#programs>

### **BACK-TO-SCHOOL GRANTS**

Dollar General Back-to-School Grants provide funding to assist schools in meeting some of the financial challenges they face in implementing new programs or purchasing new equipment, materials or software for their school library or literacy program.

Deadline: June 15, 2008.

<http://www.dollargeneral.com/Community/Documents/Back-to-School%20grants%20application%202008.pdf>

### **GRANTS FOR EDUCATION ON FOREST STEWARDSHIP**

The Save-the-Redwoods League, a nonprofit organization that works to protect the ancient redwood forest from destruction, will grant funds to schools, interpretive associations, and other qualified nonprofits engaged in quality redwood education.

Deadline: June 30, 2008.

<http://www.savetheredwoods.org/education/edgrants.shtml>

### **GRANTS FOR THE WELFARE OF AMERICAN CHILDREN**

American Legion Child Welfare Foundation Grants to Help Children fund proposals that aim to contribute to the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual welfare of children of America through innovative organizations and/or their programs designed to benefit youth.

Deadline: July 1, 2008.

<http://www.legion.org/cwf/grantseekers/overview>

### **AWARD FOR DESIGN AND EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE IN SCHOOLS**

KnowledgeWorks Foundation and the American Architectural Foundation seek submissions for the Richard Riley Award, which recognizes design and educational excellence in "schools as centers of community" — schools that serve as centers of community and provide an array of social, civic, recreational, and artistic opportunities to the

broader community and to students, often clustering educational and municipal buildings together.

Deadline: July 25, 2008.

<http://www.nationalschoolsearch.org/en/Index.asp>

### **MOTOROLA GRANTS TO COMMEMORATE THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF LINCOLN'S BIRTH**

The Motorola Foundation and the Chicago History Museum are commemorating the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth by identifying projects developed by civic, educational and cultural organizations that actively engage the public in lessons from Lincoln's life. The grant program will focus on the themes of Bringing History into the Future, Engaging in Current Events, and Leadership Skills.

Deadline: July 30, 2008.

<http://www.motorola.com/content.jsp?globalObjectId=8772>

### **NWA GRANTS TO IMPROVE EDUCATION IN METEOROLOGY**

National Weather Association Sol Hirsch Teacher Grants are given to improve students' education in meteorology. Teachers selected will be able to use the funds to take an accredited course in atmospheric sciences, attend a relevant workshop or conference, or purchase scientific materials or equipment for the classroom.

Deadline: August 1, 2008.

[www.nwas.org/solhirsch.html](http://www.nwas.org/solhirsch.html)

### **VERIZON GRANTS FOR LITERACY**

The Verizon Foundation is now accepting proposals from eligible institutions for Literacy Grants.

Deadline: November 1, 2008.

<http://foundation.verizon.com/grant/guidelines.shtml>

### **GRAFFITI PREVENTION GRANTS PROGRAM**

The Graffiti Hurts National Grant Program aims to help communities kick-start or add to local graffiti prevention programs. Grant funds may be used for one-time projects with the potential to reduce graffiti in the community.

Deadline: June 6, 2008.

<http://www.graffitihurts.org/>

## **STAPLES GRANTS FOR DISADVANTAGED YOUTH**

The Staples Foundation for Learning provides funding to programs that support or provide job skills and/or education for all people, with an emphasis on disadvantaged youth.

Deadline: June 16, 2008.

<http://www.staplesfoundation.org/foundapplication.html>

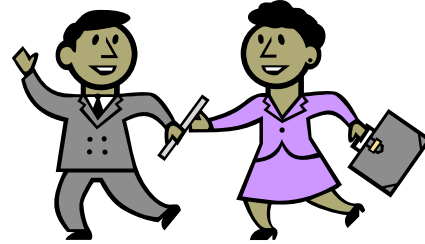
## **MINI-GRANTS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

Ezra Jack Keats Mini-grant Program for Public Schools and Public Libraries supports educators, parents and children in their efforts to spread literacy and love of learning.

Deadline: September 15, 2008.

<http://www.ezra-jack-keats.org/programs/minigrant.html>

# **SUMMERTIME: A TIME OF TRANSITION**



By Ruth Anne Landsverk

Transitions are a big deal for most children and parents. Whether a child is starting Kindergarten, middle school, high school, or a brand new school anywhere in between, partnership practitioners can do lots to answer questions and alleviate concerns. Ideally, attempts to ease transitions for students should begin the spring before, but it's never too late to gather the heads on your Partnership Action Team (your "PAT heads!") together to examine how transitions are made to and from your school, how families are involved, and how transitions can be made even smoother.

Effective transition programs include a variety of activities that

- provide students and parents with information about the new school,
- offer students and families social support during the transition, and
- encourage joint parent-student-teacher planning for the next level. (Mac Iver, 1990)

Many schools commonly offer incoming students tours of the new school and opportunities to visit classes. Schools also frequently host parent meetings and community events at the new school to help families become comfortable in and familiar with their new surroundings.

Match partnership strategies to grade levels. Middle school students, for example, want to know what high school is going to be like, and they and their parents need to know about and understand high school programs and procedures. Parents need to be especially involved in helping eighth-graders choose the classes they will take in ninth grade and in understanding the long-term impact of those decisions. How does your school communicate the importance of those decisions to families, and allow them input?

The needs of students and families should guide the activities you design for your school. Following are a few ideas for activities, some of which can be carried out next fall:

**Ideas for preschoolers.** Pre-kindergarteners and parents may be invited into the school for a developmental screening day or to have a school lunch. The school may conduct a parent-and-child meeting about preparing for Kindergarten or may visit and distribute information to child care providers in the community. Mail home a short biography of and welcome from your child's teacher during the summer. Learn about how neighborhoods can establish early childhood PTAs to promote the learning and development of children from birth through age five at [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org).

**Ideas for middle school students.** Feature on the school website a video of parents, students, and teachers informing fifth graders and their families how to help students through middle school. Survey parents about what questions they have about the middle school and how they would like to volunteer. Distribute survey results (and answers to FAQs) in the school newsletter. It's not too early to distribute a sequential series of information to families that help them begin postsecondary planning, identifying activities and courses needed to fulfill students' goals for the future. Two valuable websites to get families and students thinking ahead are KnowHow2Go ([www.knowhow2go.org](http://www.knowhow2go.org)) and the Wisconsin Covenant (<http://wisconsin covenant.wi.gov>).

**Ideas for high school students.** Invite a panel of freshmen to share with eighth graders and parents what they learned this year – and what they wished they knew beforehand – to help them succeed in high school. Invite ninth grade students to support incoming eighth graders by corresponding with them and/or “shadowing” them for a day. Print a parent directory of students' and parents' names, phone numbers, and/or addresses so parents know who their teens are hanging out with. Place on the school website – or encourage parents to sign up for an e-mail distribution list to receive -- the school newsletter, daily announcements, or notice of important upcoming dates and events.

**Ideas for graduating high school students.** Many schools host an evening for parents and students to learn more about post-high school options. But what about the families who can't get there? Post on the school counselors' webpages sites to learn about graduation requirements, testing, financial aid and scholarships, careers, and school visits. Throughout the school year, distribute timely information for seniors' families. Finally, nothing replaces a face-to-face meeting; invite families to meet with school counselors at times convenient to them to get those critical questions answered.



# INTERVIEW WITH A VISTA



## ROBYN ANSWERS MELANIE'S QUESTIONS

**MELANIE:** Where are you from?

**ROBYN:** Palatine, Illinois.

**MELANIE:** How long have you lived in Milwaukee?

**ROBYN:** Fifteen years.

**MELANIE:** What sports do you like to do?

**ROBYN:** Any sport that my children like to do.

**MELANIE:** You have so much energy; so where do you get it from?

**ROBYN:** My kids. I have 5 children and 2 grandchildren-- I have to have energy. Although the steroids they put in my chemo probably helps.



**MELANIE:** If you could change the world, what would it be?

**ROBYN:** I would find a way to stop child abuse, terminal illness and many other things. I would also find a way to stop these rip off gas prices.

**MELANIE:** Some countries already have free health care, for example, Cuba. Do you think health care should be based on an individual or the families' income?

**ROBYN:** That would depend on if everyone would get good health care. I have a feeling if it is based on income that some people would not be treated so well because of their income or lack of I should say. I believe that everyone should have good, quality, affordable health coverage. Affordable does not mean free though.

**MELANIE:** Can you imagine what our nation will be like in fifty years from now which will be the year 2058. Give a basic description on how you think our society will be for Americans, such as their lifestyle and what will be the culture trends."

**ROBYN:** Very, very sad. As much as I would like to see the world get better I don't believe it will happen in 50 years.

**MELANIE:** Do you prefer cake or pie?"

**ROBYN:** frosting



**MELANIE:** I'm a cookie monster, so can you give me an easy cookie recipe?

**ROBYN:** Look for Robyn's recipe in the July newsletter!

**MELANIE:** What is your favorite song?"

**ROBYN:** I'm not sure I get excited any time I here anything from the 70's era

**MELANIE:** What kinds of music do you like, Jazz, Gospel, Rock & Roll, Classical, Folk, Pop, Hip Hop, Country Western, New Age, R& B?"

**ROBYN:** I like oldies.

**MELANIE:** Before our VISTA service is over, I would like to make a 20 year time capsule and bury it in the ground for generations to find and dig up? We can leave evidence of how our society is now so they can compare it to theirs. What do you think about that?

**ROBYN:** I think it would be fun to make a time capsule.



## MELANIE ANSWERS ROBYN'S QUESTIONS

**ROBYN:** When is your birthday?

**MELANIE:** November 25.

**ROBYN:** What is favorite color?

**MELANIE:** Teal

**ROBYN:** Would you rather vacation on water or land?

**MELANIE:** I rather vacation on land.

**ROBYN:** What is your favorite food?

**MELANIE:** My favorite food is taco salad with tortillas.



**ROBYN:** Are you an only child or do you have siblings? If you have siblings how many?

**MELANIE:** I have one brother; no sisters.

**ROBYN:** What is your most rewarding part of being a VISTA?

**MELANIE:** Volunteer recruitment is rewarding because I like to recruit volunteers into the school and you see immediate results when they tutor students in the classrooms. For example, when I was assigned at Neeskara Elementary School, one of my main responsibilities was to recruit parent volunteers to tutor the students in the classrooms. Now, I am working with the Milwaukee Fatherhood Collaborative in recruiting volunteers for the Pre-Father's Day Celebration in June. I am excited about working on this event because it's encouraging fathers to reconnect with their children. Furthermore, this event sends a message to the community that fathers are valued and they are needed by their families to help nurture their children to be productive citizens.

**ROBYN:** What do you plan to do after your VISTA term?

**MELANIE:** I plan to seek a civil service career and start a home-based business.

**ROBYN:** What is your favorite season?

**MELANIE:** Spring is my favorite season. Spring is my favorite season because there isn't a big insect problem and there are so many beautiful flowers.

**ROBYN:** What will you miss the most about being a VISTA?

**MELANIE:** I'll miss brainstorming with the other VISTAs.

**ROBYN:** If you could go anywhere in the world where would it be?

**MELANIE:** The Virgin Islands in the Caribbean is a must for me to visit.

**ROBYN:** What is your favorite song?

**MELANIE:** The Shadow of Your Smile; it was the theme song in the movie *The Sandpiper*. I've heard many jazz versions of the song.

**ROBYN:** What is your favorite dessert?

**MELANIE:** Matt's chocolate chip cookies.

**ROBYN:** If you could change anything in the world what would it be?

**MELANIE:** I would stop all the wars in the world and teach world governments on how to settle conflict peacefully without using war weapons. World governments would compromise about their differences and reach a consensus about their political issues without violence. I get my inspiration from Dr. Martin L. King. He was an excellent civil rights leader who worked for racial socioeconomic equality. No matter where my life path directs me, I want to work as a change agent in my community by promoting the philosophies of people like Dr. Martin L. King.

**ROBYN:** What was your most memorable moment growing up?

**MELANIE:** My most memorable moment was when my mother and I went on the Chesapeake Car Ferry to Ludington, MI. We had a great time because we met some very interesting people. We



saw Lake Michigan's awesome beauty, and back then the lake was cleaner than it is now. It was the first time I ever traveled across the lake, and it looked like an ocean to me because of Lake Michigan's large size and powerful waves.

The trip took the all day, but it was fun.

**ROBYN:** Did you have an idol or super hero growing up?

**MELANIE:** Yes, Diana Ross, but I outgrew the idol thing real fast.

**ROBYN:** What famous person do you think you are most like?

**MELANIE:** I would say the musician and singer, Ella Jenkins because she uses song and musical instruments to teach preschoolers math and language arts in the classroom. I like her methods to educate students. When I worked as a child care teacher, sometimes I used teaching methods to motivate the children to learn other subjects within a musical environment.

**ROBYN:** What special skill do you have that you think others can learn from?

**MELANIE:** To resourceful by recycling things that other people are ready to throw out.

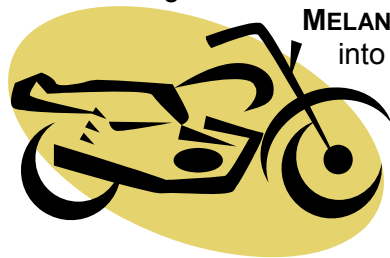
**ROBYN:** What would be one thing that you would want to change about yourself?

**MELANIE:** To take more risk, but within the confines of the law. ☺

**ROBYN:** Do you have any secret talents?

**MELANIE:** I like to draw sometimes.

**ROBYN:** Are you excited about all the Harley's that will be coming to Milwaukee for the 105<sup>th</sup>?



**MELANIE:** Not really, I'm not into motorcycles, but the Harley's 105<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration will boost Milwaukee's economy.

**ROBYN:** Do you have any exciting plans for this summer?

**MELANIE:** I want to take a summer vacation, but money is an obstacle, so I'll have to budget and crunch some figures to save for it. ☺

## RECRUITMENT

### HELP US FIND NEW VISTAS



We are currently recruiting for the following sites:

Milwaukee  
Janesville  
Wisconsin Rapids  
Dodgeville  
Oshkosh  
Wausau

#### HOW TO APPLY:

1. Visit <https://my.americorps.gov>
2. Create an account
3. Fill out your application
4. Send your application to the DPI VISTA Project
  - a. Find us using the following search criteria:
    - i. Program Type: AmeriCorps \*VISTA
    - ii. Program State: WI
    - iii. Program Name: WI DPI
5. For more information visit:  
<http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/fscp/index.html>

# NATIONAL NETWORK OF PARTNERSHIP SCHOOLS UPDATE FORM



<http://www.partnershipschools.org>

The 2008 *UPDATE* surveys were mailed to all school, district, state, and organization members. You must return *UPDATE* by **JUNE 30TH** to renew membership in NNPS for the 2008-09 school year. When you return *UPDATE*, we waive the \$300 annual membership fee (new rate in effect 9/1/08).

District Key Contacts to NNPS can now use a newly developed “fillable form” to complete *UPDATE* online. Go to the NNPS website – [www.partnershipschools.org](http://www.partnershipschools.org) – and click on the *UPDATE* box on the homepage. Then, follow the links to the online *UPDATE* Form for district leaders only. You may also use “snail mail,” email ([jganss@csos.jhu.edu](mailto:jganss@csos.jhu.edu)) or fax (410-516-8890) your completed *UPDATE* survey.

Returning *UPDATE* contributes to the research-based information that guides partnership program development. One of the major strengths of NNPS is how research informs practice and practice informs research.

Renew your membership and add to the growing knowledge about school, family, and community partnerships.



**MAIL OR FAX A  
COPY OF YOUR  
UPDATE FORM TO  
BETSY!**

# POVERTY FAQ



## DATA FROM THE IRP

<http://www.irp.wisc.edu/>

### WHAT IS THE NATIONAL POVERTY THRESHOLD?

The original version of the federal poverty measure. They are updated each year by the Census Bureau. For a four-person family unit with two children, the 2006 poverty threshold is \$20,444. For one- or two-person family units, the poverty thresholds differ by age; the 2006 threshold for one individual under age 65 is \$10,488, whereas for an individual 65 or over it is \$9,669.

### WHO IS POOR IN WISCONSIN?

According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, 10.2 percent of Wisconsin residents, on average, were poor in 2005.

### WHAT ARE GOOD SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON POVERTY RELATED ISSUES?

<http://www.irp.wisc.edu/links/category.htm>

### 2007 HHS POVERTY GUIDELINES

Persons in Household	48 States/ D.C.	Alaska	Hawaii
1	\$10,210	\$12,770	\$11,750
2	13,690	17,120	15,750
3	17,170	21,470	19,750
4	20,650	25,820	23,750
5	24,130	30,170	27,750
6	27,610	34,520	31,750
7	31,090	38,870	35,750
8	34,570	43,220	39,750
For each additional person, add	3,480	4,350	4,000



## Save the Dates



### THE “HEY! THAT’S A GOOD IDEA” CORNER

BY BETSY PRUETER

*Each month I try to highlight some of the successes our VISTAs are having. This gives us a chance to celebrate and share promising practices! As a new feature, I am now suggesting what “Key” each practice might address.*

#### NNPS EVALUATION WEB CONFERENCE

June 12<sup>th</sup>, Wisline Web  
1pm-2:30pm

#### VISTA CHECK IN: SUSTAINABILITY

June 25<sup>th</sup>, Wisline Web  
11am-12pm  
(jointly with Campus Compact)

#### QUARTERLY REPORTS DUE

July 15<sup>th</sup>, 5pm

#### YOUTH AS PARTNERS IN CIVIC LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

SAVE THE DATE: Oct 31<sup>st</sup>-Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>



Congratulations to Shanna Hammond, VISTA in Green Bay, who on Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup> became a mom! Her daughter, Penelope was born healthy and happy. Congrats to both Shanna and her husband Mike. Both Mom and baby are doing well. Feel free to pass along your congrats to [srussell@greenbay.k12.wi.us](mailto:srussell@greenbay.k12.wi.us).

Congratulations also to Lauren Jakubowski of Milwaukee, recently accepted in the University of Denver’s School Psychology graduate program!

1. **Robyn Krimke** organized a successful Community Partnership Fair which featured over 55 community Resource Tables for families in Milwaukee with over 530 participants!  
**[Collaborating with the Community]**

2. **Michael Castaneda** is already planning a September Parent Breakfast for Kosciuszko Montessori. It’s never too early to plan for Fall!  
**[Parenting]**

3. **Cat Horzewski** applied for and received \$600 from the American Legion Post to start a fund to cover ACT test fees for students at SUPAR in Milwaukee. **[Collaborating with the Community]**

4. **Brittany Pensis** has been researching the Summer Slide effect which is when kids lose up to 2 months of learning over the summer months. She has created a brochure to help families develop strategies to address this effect. *A copy of this brochure is attached.*  
**[Learning at Home]**

5. **Casey Gauthier** is working on a Family Reading DVD for families in Rhinelander. This DVD features parents and children reading together, interspersed with tips from school staff. She has been collaborating with students from a secondary charter school in Rhinelander. **[Learning at Home]**

## A WALKING SCHOOL BUS



By Julie Webster

Did you know only about 15% of students walk to school? That's down from almost 50% thirty years ago; no wonder childhood obesity has become such an epidemic. That is why schools like Franklin Elementary School have started the Walking School Bus (WSB) program.

Parent "bus drivers" meet students at designated bus stops at set times and then proceed to walk to school as a group. The WSB program has recently kicked off at Franklin School with Walking Wednesdays, which will continue every Wednesday morning until the end of the school year.

There are a number of benefits to WSB program: increased physical activity for both students and participating parents, decreased morning congestion at school drop off points, less fuel emissions in the air from idling cars and an increased sense of community.

To find more information to start your own Walking School Bus check these websites to help get you on your way:

<http://www.walkingschoolbus.org>  
<http://www.saferoutesinfo.org>

INTERESTED IN CONTRIBUTING  
TO THE **JULY** NEWSLETTER?  
EMAIL YOUR ARTICLES,  
RECIPES, OR REFLECTIONS TO  
BETSY BY THE END OF **JUNE**.

## RECIPE OF THE MONTH

### SPAGHETTI SQUASH

A healthy alternative to pasta



Submitted by Jen Gaul

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 spaghetti squash, halved lengthwise and seeded
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 1/2 cups chopped tomatoes
- 3/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 3 tablespoons sliced black olives
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
- 1/2 red pepper
- 1/2 yellow pepper
- 1/2 green pepper

#### DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease a baking sheet.

Place spaghetti squash cut sides down on the prepared baking sheet, and bake 30 minutes in the preheated oven, or until a sharp knife can be inserted with only a little resistance. Remove squash from oven, and set aside to cool enough to be easily handled.

Meanwhile, heat oil in a skillet over medium heat. Sauté onion in oil until tender. Add garlic and peppers, and sauté for 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the tomatoes, and cook only until tomatoes are warm.

Use a large spoon to scoop the stringy pulp from the squash, and place in a medium bowl. Toss with the sautéed vegetables, feta cheese, olives, and basil. Serve warm.

**NOTE:** You can substitute any vegetables and spices as you see fit. Also tastes great with spaghetti sauce!