

**WISCONSIN CHAPTER  
OF  
NATIONAL AT-RISK EDUCATION NETWORK**

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“We must capture a student’s heart, before we can capture their mind”.

**From the President:**

I want to wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all of us at NARENWICH. I am sure we are all looking forward to spending time with our family and just taking time to rest. As you take time to reflect and rest, I hope you’re able to enjoy the Joy of Christmas Day.

**THE LAST CHRISTMAS TREE**

I saw a truck of Christmas trees  
And each one had a tale,  
The driver stood them in a row  
And put them up for sale.

He strung some twinkle lights  
And hung a sign up with a nail;  
“FRESH CHRISTMAS TREES”  
It said in red  
“FRESH CHRISTMAS TREES FOR SALE.”

He poured himself hot cocoa  
In a steaming thermos cup,  
And snowflakes started falling  
As a family car pulled up.

A mom, a dad, and one small boy  
Who looked no more than three  
Jumped out and started searching  
For the perfect Christmas tree.

The boy marched up and down the rows,  
His nose high in the air;  
“It smells like Christmas, mom!”  
“It smells like Christmas everywhere!”

“Let’s get the biggest tree we can!  
“A tree that’s ten miles high!  
“A tree to go right through our roof!

“A tree to touch the sky!”

“A tree *SO* big  
That Santa Claus  
Will stop and stare and say,  
Now, **THAT’S** the finest Christmas tree  
I’ve seen this Christmas Day!”

It seemed they looked at every tree  
At least three million times;  
Dad shook them, pinched them, turned them ‘round  
To find the perfect pine.

“I’ve found it, mom!  
The Christmas tree I like best of all!  
It’s got a little bare spot  
But we’ll turn that to the wall!”

“We’ll put great grandma’s angel  
“On top the highest bough!  
“Oh, can we buy it?  
Please, mom, **PLEASE?**  
Oh, can we buy it **NOW?**

“How ‘bout some nice hot cocoa?”  
Asked the man who owned the lot.  
He twisted off the thermos top,  
“Now **THIS** will hit the spot!”

He poured the steaming chocolate  
In three tiny paper cups.  
They toasted,  
“Here’s to Christmas!”  
And they drank the cocoa up.

“Is this your choice?”  
The tree man asked,  
“This pine is the best one here!”  
The boy seemed sad---  
“My daddy says  
“The price is just too dear.”

“Then, Merry Christmas!”  
Said the man, who wrapped the tree in twine,  
“It’s yours for just one promise  
“You must keep at Christmas time!”

On Christmas Eve at bedtime  
As you fold your hands to pray,  
“Promise in your heart  
“To keep the joy of Christmas Day!”

Now hurry home!  
This freezy wind  
“Is turning your cheeks pink!  
And ask your dad  
To trim the trunk and give that tree a drink

And so it went on  
All that blustery eve  
As the tree man gave  
Tree upon tree upon tree

To every last person  
Who came to the lot---  
Who toasted with cocoa  
In small paper cups,

Who promised the promise  
Of joy in their hearts---  
And singing out carols  
Drove off in the dark.

And when it was over  
One tree stood alone;  
But no one was left there  
To give it a home.

The tree man put on his  
Red parka and hood  
And dragged the last Christmas tree  
Out to the woods

He left the pine right by a stream  
In the cold,  
So the wood's homeless creatures  
Could make it their home.

He smiled as he brushed off  
Some snow from his beard,  
When out of the thicket  
A reindeer appeared.

He scratched that huge reindeer  
On top his huge head---  
"It looks like we've  
Started up Christmas again!"

There are miles more to travel,  
And much more to do!  
Let's go home, my friend,  
"And get started anew!"

This story is collected in the book *The Solstice Evergreen*, a collection of stories reveling the hidden meanings of evergreen trees in the home throughout history. By Howard D. Fencil

May you have a blessed and safe Christmas and a happy New Year!

### **NARENWICH ANNOUNCES SCHOLARSHIP WINNER**

**Diedra Florez-Serda** is NARENWICH's first scholarship winner. She has won \$500.00 to go towards her secondary education plans. Diedra attended Crossroads Academy in Wautoma Wisconsin. Her teacher was Wendy Appel. Diedra's plans are to attend Mid-State Technical College. Diedra was chosen from several fine applications. Please encourage your seniors to take

advantage of this fine scholarship offer. For an application and more information please go to the NARENWICH website.

**Editor's Note: This announcement appeared in the last news letter as well. It stated that Diedra's teacher was Cheryl Wuyts, when actually her teacher was WENDY APPEL. My sincerest apologies for the error.**

### **Nominations Now Being Accepted for Regional and the Anthony Dallman-Jones Awards**

Has someone really made a difference in the lives of at-risk students in your program or community? If you would like to nominate someone for the Anthony Dallman-Jones Advocacy Award or for one of the regional awards please go to the NARENWICH website and download the nomination forms. All of the information you need is on those forms. The award winners will be announced at the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Reclaiming the Dream Conference.

### **Reclaiming the Dream, NARENWICH's Fourth Annual Conference**

Have you made your registrations yet? What a conference we have planned for you. This one is going to be bigger and better. Look whose coming:

David Perlman, Assistant Attorney General. He also serves as a consultant for Fox Valley Technical College: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Jerry Mills is an internationally acclaimed educator, singer/songwriter. As a child he experienced the "failures, fears and frustrations" of some nameless problems. You will want to hear his story.

Diedra Florez-Serda NARENWICH's first scholarship recipient will be there to share her story.

Fantastic presenters for our break out sessions which topics include: Brain-Based Learning, ATODA/Mental Health Issues for Students, Parent and Community Involvement, Project/Community Based Models.

All of your friends and colleagues from across the state are going to be there

You can download a registration form from our website. Do it today, come and be part of the solution. See YOU in WAUSAU!

### **NEWS TO KNOW!**

- Take a look at the new NARENWICH website at: [www.Narenwich.org](http://www.Narenwich.org).
- **The 2007 NARENWICH State Conference will be March 8 – 9, 2007, at the Plaza in Wausau, Wisconsin.**

- **ALERT** – if you or someone else you know of have not been getting your newsletter, or you have moved and/or your email has changed, please contact Betsy Haltinner at [haltibet@gcsd.k12.wi.us](mailto:haltibet@gcsd.k12.wi.us) or call (715) 265-4266 ext. 6220.
- **We are asking for members to not renew their memberships until you register for the conference.** Please register and renew your membership at the same time.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Annual NAREN National Conference, February 19 – 22, 2007, Edgewater Beach Resort, Panama City, Florida

## **NARENWICH NEEDS YOU!**

At the conference this year we will be holding elections for the Board of Directors of NARENWICH. We will be electing:

**President Elect:** This position is a two year term. However at the end of the two years this person steps in to the role of President. Needless to say this position is a very important position. Do you have a desire to lead our organization? Then this position is for you.

**Secretary:** This position keeps notes and records of all the organizations meetings and business. This is also a two year term.

**Treasurer:** This position handles all of the financial matters of NARENWICH. It is a two year term.

**Region 1 (CESA 10 and 11)**

**Region 2 (CESA 9 and 12)**

**Region 4 (CESA 3 and 4)**

Each of these regions is up for elections this year. Each of them is two year terms.

The Board of Directors meets four times per year and once at the convention. In order for NARENWICH to continue to be strong, we need people who are willing to serve and be a leader. We need you! Please contact Jill at [jillbg@mcpasd.k12.wi.us](mailto:jillbg@mcpasd.k12.wi.us) if you are interested in running for one of these positions.

**Committee Work** – We can sure use some help! We have three standing committees that are need of some people that are willing to lend a hand in making our organization even better then it is.

1. **Conference Committee** – if you're interested in helping to plan for the annual NARENWICH Reclaiming the Dream Conference please talk with Jennifer Varsik at [jrvarsik@yahoo.com](mailto:jrvarsik@yahoo.com) . She is always looking for individuals who are creative and interested in helping make our conference even better.
2. **Member Services Committee** – please contact Betsy Haltinner at [haltibet@gcsd.k12.wi.us](mailto:haltibet@gcsd.k12.wi.us) . The membership committee has been busy updating and publishing the membership directory and is looking to expand its role this coming year to better serve our members.

3. **Political Action Committee** – is it your feeling the state and federal government ought to be doing more to support at-risk programs and children? Do you have a special interest in issues that are affecting our students and their families? Then this committee is for you. Please contact, Shirley Jensen at [skidge47@hotmail.com](mailto:skidge47@hotmail.com) if you're interested.

Don't forget to share your ideas and news with us. If you have young people who have been honored or you have victories to share please send them to me. E-mail Randy Hughes. [hughesr@kaukauna.k12.wi.us](mailto:hughesr@kaukauna.k12.wi.us).

Come on; get involved after all it is your organization.

### **Welcome to Two New Board Members:**

Please help us welcome Marty Gholston and Kim Parrott. Marty has accepted the role as treasurer. Marty is with the Generac Second Chance Youth Apprenticeship Program. Kim is the CESA 7 Alternative High School Director in Green Bay. Kim is our new representative for region 3.

Here is an update list of your Board of Directors.

Randy Hughes, President	<a href="mailto:hughesr@kaukauna.k12.wi.us">hughesr@kaukauna.k12.wi.us</a>	(920) 766-6100
Sally Schulz, President Elect	<a href="mailto:sschultz@madison.k12.wi.us">sschultz@madison.k12.wi.us</a>	(608) 204-2440
Heidi Thuli, Secretary	<a href="mailto:hthuli@cesa1.k12.wi.us">hthuli@cesa1.k12.wi.us</a>	(262) 787-9545
Marty Gholston, Treasurer	<a href="mailto:mgholston@generac.com">mgholston@generac.com</a>	(262) 544-4811
Jill Gurtner, Past-President	<a href="mailto:jillbg@mcpasd.k12.wi.us">jillbg@mcpasd.k12.wi.us</a>	(608) 829-9641
Elizabeth Haltinner, Region 1 Member Services Committee	<a href="mailto:haltibet@gcsd.k12.wi.us">haltibet@gcsd.k12.wi.us</a>	(715) 265-4266
Jennifer Varsik, Region 2 Conference Committee	<a href="mailto:jrvarsik@yahoo.com">jrvarsik@yahoo.com</a>	(715) 476-0100
Kim Parrott, Region 3 Conference Committee	<a href="mailto:kparrott@cesa7.k12.wi.us">kparrott@cesa7.k12.wi.us</a>	(920) 436-0500
<b>VACANT Region 4</b> Political Action Committee		
Meg Zabel, Region 5 Member Services Committee	<a href="mailto:zabelmeg@asds.k12.wi.us">zabelmeg@asds.k12.wi.us</a>	(920) 997-1399
Shirley Jensen, Region 6 Political Action Committee	<a href="mailto:skidge47@hotmail.com">skidge47@hotmail.com</a>	(414) 383-3172



