



OVER THE BACK FENCE

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Please duplicate and send to members in your district.

"Pursuing Excellence in Small and Rural Schools"

AIRSS TEACHER OF THE YEAR CONTEST

The NREA will again present the annual NREA Teacher of the Year Award at the National Convention in San Antonio, Texas October 25-29, 2008. This award is sponsored and funded by the John Deere Company. The teacher receives a \$2,000.00 honorarium, and the school district receives \$1,000.00 to purchase instructional materials and school supplies.

We use the same application so that the Illinois winner can be submitted to the NREA for competition in the national contest.

The application form can be downloaded from the NREA website at www.nrea.net. Click on EVENTS at the top of the page to get the application. Please adhere to the directions printed on the forms. One copy of the application is due to Robert G. Rogers, 219 N. Branch St., Bluffs, IL 62621 by 5:00 p.m. Wednesday June 4, 2008. Again, a committee will select the Illinois representative and forward the materials to the NREA. The Illinois winner and school district will receive plaques for recognition of this honor.

MEDICAID BILL BLOCKED

Through lobbying efforts of schools, the House voted to block the Bush administration from cutting federal spending on Medicaid health care. AASA and the NREA Coalition, in which AIRSS is a member, were instrumental in blocking the legislation that would have made schools and other agencies bill insurance companies for Medicaid charges. For those of you who contacted your congressman when AIRSS alerted you about this legislation, your support helped win this vote. Thank you and congratulations. Your membership in AIRSS and the NREA help to make this possible.

C.A.R.E.S. AWARD

The CARES Award recognizes outstanding efforts to build strong ties between rural school districts and the communities they serve. The winning entry will

demonstrate innovative or creative ways a district has contributed to its community.

To qualify, the rural school district must be a member of the NREA. School districts are encouraged to self-nominate.

Districts should submit eight copies of the CARES Award Nomination Form and Work Plan (no longer than three pages, double spaced), along with any supporting materials, such as brochures, curricula, multimedia, etc. To be eligible for the 2008 CARES Award, projects must have been in place during the 2007-2008 school year.

To obtain and application, go to www.nrea.net. Click on Awards at the top of the page.

Nominations will be accepted through May 30, 2008. The winning district will be notified by September 15, 2008.

Nominations will be evaluated by the NREA Award and Recognition Committee. To evaluate the success of the initiative, the judges will be looking for evidence of careful planning as well as results that indicate the project met its objectives.

The winning district will be honored with a \$5,000 prize and recognized at the NREA Convention, Oct. 25-29, 2008, in San Antonio, Texas. Airfare, hotel accommodations and conference registrations will be provided for two representatives from the winning school district.

Return **eight** copies of the Nomination Form and Work Plan to: NREA CARES Award, Attn: GAFRI/CMS, 525 Vine St., 7th Floor, Cincinnati, OH 45202, by May 30, 2008. Please note that support materials will not be returned.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. John Hill, the NREA Executive Director, at (765) 494-0086 or by email at jehill@purdue.edu.

This award is made possible through the support of the Great American Financial Resources Company.