



Meet Jeanne Swanson, MASSP Secretary



Jeanne Swanson

Your next MASSP Secretary is Jeanne Swanson. She has been an educator for 32 years, including 18 years administrative experience as an assistant

principal and principal of Waseca High School. She has enthusiastically advised Waseca High School's student council during that same time period. She is a native of Waseca and received her B.S and M.S. degree, as well as her administrative licensure from Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Jeanne has been a member of MASSP for 17 years and an active member of the Southeast Division, where she has held the office of secretary and been on various subcommittees. She has regularly attended the Southeast Division meetings during those seventeen years and was selected the 1999 SEMASSP Principal of the Year.

During her involvement with MASSP she has chaired the Membership Subcommittee at Strategic Planning from 2007-2010 and served as the representative on the Minnesota State High School League from 1999 until 2004. Jeanne was the Minnesota As-

sistant Principal of the Year for the 2000-2001 school year. She has been a long time attendee to both the summer and winter conference and was a member on a panel for new principals during the both the summer and winter workshops. Jeanne participated in the Principals Academy sponsored by the National Institute of School Leadership, the U of M and MDE in 2007-2008.

Jeanne and her husband, Vance, live in Waseca, with their son John Patrick. Other family members include son Colby and his wife Shannon who live in Arcadia, Wisconsin and son Peter who lives in St. Paul. Besides family and school activities keeping her busy, Jeanne enjoys music, reading, walking and swimming.

Jeanne has been involved in the following Waseca organizations; Waseca Rotary, Waseca United Way Board of Directors, Waseca Area Foundation Board of Directors and was selected the Boss of the Year in 2006 by the Waseca Chamber of Commerce.

Jeanne is very excited to have been selected the MASSP secretary and is eager to start her term this summer.

Congratulations to Jeanne Swanson! We are looking forward to working with you. Ω

Marion Boyd Named MASC Administrator of the Year

The Minnesota Association of Student Councils' announced Marian Boyd, associate principal at Wayzata



Marian Boyd

High School, as their 2011 Administrator of the Year. In the words of the student council advisor and officers, "Ms. Boyd is a huge supporter of empowering students to make

good choices."

Ms Boyd helped in bringing a tradition back to school in a safe way where everyone benefitted from the process. Wayzata High School used to sponsor an annual powder-puff football game, but this tradition was discontinued in the late 1980's. Over the years, junior and senior girls have casually organized a non-school sponsored event. When the event was becoming more dangerous, with injuries and inappropriate behaviors and rivalry, Ms. Boyd worked with the Student Council for a solution.

Lauren Stufft, student council vice president states, "Ms. Boyd approached the student council about

Marian Boyd

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Thinking About...

by Joann Knuth
Executive Director

Public schools, leaders, and teachers continue to make the news, with front page, in-depth stories in both the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* and the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* on Sunday, April 10th. It seems there is not a day that we are not featured in print and visual media, legislative reports, and civic conversations.

Those of us inside schools have the same goals and vision as those outside — improve academic opportunity and success for all and close the achievement gap. The MASSP vision, first published in *The Bridge to Higher Learning: A New Vision for Minnesota's High Schools in the Global Information Age* continues to be to prepare every student for postsecondary success — whether it is a technical school, two-year college, or four-year college or university.

We don't reach this goal by blaming and firing "bad teachers," or outlawing unions, or adding more tests, or grading schools and teachers, or reporting the number of "failing schools." And we don't reach the goal overnight. According to Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, continuing down the NCLB road by 2014, 82% of American public schools will not make AYP. They will be labeled failing according to the current law — a term not in the law but public discourse.

Our leaders authorized and passed NCLB a decade ago, and schools had to follow the law or lose funding. It is important to remember that the legislation only applies to schools that are receiving Title I dollars. The number of schools qualifying is increasing because childhood poverty is increasing in Minnesota. Currently, one out of every five children lives in poverty in our state.

I digress. My point is that we have invested billions of dollars irrationally with minimal results and labeled our schools failing. In a word — this is crazy.

We know our schools are not failing. We know Minnesota has amazing schools and teachers all over the state who are inspiring their students and preparing them for success in postsecondary education and careers. We also know that Minnesota schools must improve. The data drives us to improve. Minnesota graduates 75% of its students from high school, according to Peter Hutchinson, president of the Bush Foundation. Over half, 58%, of those graduates enroll in college; only 27% earn a four-year degree. Going deeper, of the 75% who earn a diploma, 35% are white, 27% Asian, 12% African American, 9% Hispanic, and 8% American Indian. These statistics are most disturbing and must drive us to action.

What is the action? Improvement doesn't occur overnight. There is no silver bullet. But there are places where improvement is occurring, where there is a declining or no achievement gap and where communities have come together in support of what works in achieving academic excellence for all students. One place is Finland; another place is Cincinnati.

What distinguishes success? In Finland teachers are an "elite bunch." Only top students are recruited into teaching, and they must first earn a degree in their discipline and then a masters degree in education. This advanced degree is earned at a university where teacher education is research based. They get a great amount of supervised teacher-training at training schools, near the universities.

Finland recognized years ago that "teachers are the key for the future," according to Henna Virkkunen, Finland's Minister of Education. Teachers are recruited, given extensive preparation and support, valued, and respected. And, very importantly, they are viewed as the experts of their own work. Minister Virkkunen says "teaching is such an attractive profession in Finland because teachers are working like academic experts with their own pupils in school."

Finland does not use evaluation for controlling teachers, but for developing them. "Our educational society is based on trust and cooperation. . .we trust the teachers."

What about diversity? While Finland is certainly more homogeneous than the U.S., their immigrant population is increasing. They are seeking more immigrants because the Finnish population is aging. In areas around Helsinki more than 30% of the students are immigrants. They are also doing well on the PISA test (Program for International Student Assessment). Finland is providing the support they need, including teaching them their native language.

What about teacher unions? They partner closely with local and national leaders, have the same goal to ensure the quality of education, and meet frequently with school leaders. Teacher unions in Finland are very powerful according to the Minister of Education.

Finland recruits top students into teaching, develops them through rigorous university programs, supports them in continuing professional development, gives them autonomy to be experts in their classrooms, pays them well, and venerates them. Finnish students continue to score at the top of international tests in all subjects.

We know that quality teachers are most important to ensuring academic student success and quality principals are most important to ensuring schools' success.

What is the Cincinnati story? According to Dane Smith,

Knuth. . .continued on page 7



Legislative and Legal Updates

by Roger Aronson, MASSP Attorney and Lobbyist

Just when you thought you had the concept of probationary teachers under control the legislature is getting involved in the question.

First, Minnesota Law currently sets the initial probationary period as three years of consecutive teaching experience. Thereafter, the probationary period in any subsequent district is one year for teachers or principals. The statute requires three annual written evaluations of the teacher. Failure to do the evaluations is bad practice, but it does not entitle the teacher to another year. Finally, prior to July 1st, the school board may non-renew any probationary teacher for any reason—or for no reason. Simply saying for “financial limitations” was sufficient for the Minnesota Court of Appeals.

In the early 1980’s the school board association had a major legislative initiative to move the initial probationary period from two years to three years. It involved considerable debate in House and Senate committees but ultimately was passed and has remained largely unchanged for over 25 years.

Until now.

The legislature is considering several changes to the statutes governing probationary teachers. One legislative proposal (HF 945) mandates that each district create a professional development model for probationary teachers. In addition, the bill requires the issuance of an annual employment contract for probationary teachers. Finally, terminating a probationary teacher becomes much more difficult. The bill states that the annual non-renewal of a teachers contract must be based on:

- (1) the teacher’s professional growth plan incorporating standards of effective professional practice, student learning goals, and teacher evaluations under a newly created evaluation program;
- (2) the teacher’s appraisal results and performance effectiveness rating under the newly created evaluation system; and

(3) other locally selected criteria aligned to instructional practices in teaching and learning.

If this is adopted, gone will be the days of simply deciding that a probationary teacher is not a “good fit” for the school. Pro-

probationary non-renewals would require significant documentation that far exceeds any current practice.

Why is this proposal coming forward? Why would legislators be interested in such a prescriptive plan?

At first blush, it looks like something brought forward by unions objecting to the non-renewal of probationary teachers. This is not the case. In fact, this proposal was developed

without any significant input from school principals or teachers. Instead, outside education reform groups decided there was something missing in the school districts’ decisions about retaining probationary teachers. The assumption was that we were keeping too many probationary teachers and should be terminating more of them. If adopted, the effect may be just the opposite. Significant additional work will be required to non-renew a probationary teacher. We may have to keep some probationary teachers that we would have non-renewed.

Another significant issue arose in the Senate Education committee regarding leaves, which occur during a probationary period. Currently, if a teacher is gone on medical leave for a year during the three-year period, the probationary period starts over. This is in reliance on the language in the statute requiring three years of “teaching experience”. The statute does not say that simple employment satisfies the requirements of the statute. The only recognized exception is military service. Education Minnesota suggested that maternity leave should be an exception as well. The problem with this is that “good facts” make bad law. Once we start with the exceptions, the question will be where do we stop.

In the meanwhile, make sure you have your three evaluations and non-renewals ready. **Ω**




EdLeaders Network Members, Apply for CEU's ⁴

The process is now in place to apply to the Board of School Administrators (BOSA) for continuing education units (CEU's). It is important to keep two things in mind: to continue a professional administrative licensure principals must earn 125 units every five years, and CEU's are granted to applicants applying for 3 or more hours that meet BOSA standards.


MASSP has been working with BOSA to streamline a process for members joining the network webinars developed by educational experts from across the country. These webinars meet BOSA standards.

Upon completing a webinar, you complete and print out the ELN Webinar Evaluation which will include the title of the webinar, name of presenter(s) and length. There are additional evaluation questions, but it is only necessary to have the first page for validation of completion.


When you have completed 3 or more cumulative hours of webinars submit the documentation (evaluations) along with a completed "Request for the Approval of a Continuing Education Program" (available on our website) to Stan Mack, Executive Director of the Board of School Administrators. 

Here is a link to the Request for the "Approval of a Continuing Education Program" <http://www.massp.org/2011/massp/downloads/ELN.pdf>.

Ed Leaders Network affiliates: IL (IPA), IN (IASP), KY (KAESP), MI (MEMSPA/MASSP), MN (MASSP/MESPA), OH (OASSA), AND WI (AWSA)



We've got what **you're looking for.**



<p>The Ed Leaders Network is a collaborative initiative between multiple state associations to provide high quality, on-demand professional development webinars and professional networking communities to educational leaders.</p> <p>It is our belief that educational leaders impact student performance. It is our mission to provide professional development content that will assist educational leaders in their pursuit of improving their learning communities.</p>	<p>Webinar Topics Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership Management Behavior Management Teaching and Learning Data Legal Climate and Culture Technology 	<p>edleadersnetwork.org</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Save Time 15-30 min. webinars - Save Money * \$99 Member/\$199 Non-Member - Collaborate - Promote Learning - On-Demand 24/7! ...coming in 2011 <p><small>*Take advantage of our reduced annual rates for early adopters!</small></p>
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MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Principle

ESSENTIALS

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SUMMER CONFERENCE 2011



JUNE 14-17, 2011 — BREEZY POINT RESORT — BREEZY POINT, MN



President's Report

by Pete Olson
MASSP President

I would like to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve MASSP on the executive committee and as President during the last year. It has truly been an honor and my extreme pleasure to represent the principals of Minnesota at various meetings and conferences throughout the state and nation.

Our Strategic Action Goal areas for our organization this year included:

- Emerging Trends and Research
- Legislative Impact
- Membership
- Partnership
- Professional Impact

At our recent board meeting we heard from team chair members regarding progress toward goals and an overall update. An example of some the

work by the members includes correspondence from the Membership Committee to all superintendents encouraging and thanking them for their support. In the Legislative Committee the Legislative Objectives brochure was completed and is available to all members. I would like to thank those MASSP members who served last fall on the Strategic Task Force and the board members who are chairing the committees. Each area has goals for the future that will have an impact on how we operate as principals in our schools.

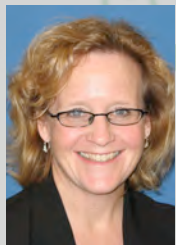
One of goals of the Legislative Impact team was to increase contributions to the PAL account, funds available to Roger as he works at the state capitol on our behalf with the legislature. Please watch for information on

how you can support this effort and 5 remember to bring your checkbook to the summer conference. In keeping with the goal of increased communication with legislators, Representative Sondra Erickson was invited to visit Princeton High School and share information with my staff regarding her role as Chair of the Education Reform Committee. It was an informative meeting, and I would like to thank Representative Erickson for taking the time to visit with my staff and students regarding the changes being discussed for the future of public education in Minnesota.

Our membership continues to hold strong and has even shown an increase during the last year in Minnesota. We currently have 1,093 active members and 1,285 total members in the state organization. Congratulations and thank you for continuing to keep this organization strong.

At our last board meeting information was shared on the ELN, the Ed

President's Report
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Coordinators's Report

by Mary Pat Cumming
MASSP Coordinator

On the Home Front...

I'm staying close to home on this newsletter, all Minnesotan!

Although I typically write about the news from Washington, DC, in my role as Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals State Coordinator, I feel very fortunate to also represent our organization in other roles closer to home. Most recently, I've been honored to serve as a panelist on the Education Minnesota Teacher of the Year selection committee.

Over 100 teachers were nominated or applied for the coveted honor of Minnesota Teacher of the Year. As a panelist, the process is arduous...a full day reading over 50 of the 100+ applications, another half day spent whittling down to 10 and then a full day of personal interviews with the 10 finalists.

Don't get me wrong here. While it is a time consuming process, I've reflected on the time the 100+ applicants put into their extensive portfolios and longer still, the time, commitment and energy they put into instructional practices, student relationships and community connections that demonstrated student academic growth and garnered the nominations in the first place. Amazing!

I was struck at the plethora of ideas and approaches taken in the portfolios and even found some 'take aways' for my school. Yet, every time I read a new application, I looked for the Principal's recommendation letter. I wondered, just what my colleagues across the state had to say about their best and brightest teachers?

These are talented teachers for sure, but more important, amazing individuals. In the letters I read, I saw many names and signa-

tures I've seen before at MASSP meetings, along with many elementary colleagues I have not. It didn't seem to matter whether elementary or secondary, north or south, urban, suburban or rural, as a whole, I was impressed with the incredible support, commendation and acknowledgment administrators provided to the excellent teachers working across the state of Minnesota. Frankly, as we all know, it is a privilege to work with the teachers and students in our schools who often make US look good when THEY deserve the credit.

The final selection process takes place the last weekend of April, with a new Teacher of the Year determined by the selection committee. While I don't know the outcome, I do know the impact the process has had on me and the feeling in my soul that makes me proud to be an educator.

Thank you MASSP colleagues for trusting me to serve on your behalf on this committee.

Thank you Teacher of the Year nominees...you are an inspiration! 🍷

Mary Pat Cumming can be reached at marypat_cumming@wmep.k12.mn.us



From the Field

By Nicholas J. Miller
Associate Professor
Educational Administration
St. Cloud State University

End of the Year Stress

No doubt the demands of the principalship have increased significantly in recent years. Principals feel particular pressures in the area of accountability. The entire process and logistics of testing demand significant time commitment of principals. The resulting scores add another dimension of stress. The constant public criticism of public education has also added to the pressure of the job. Although unjust and often unfounded, the legislature has taken the task of budget reduction and used it as a political platform to bash every aspect and every level of education in Minnesota. For many of us the months of April and May present additional challenges that lead to more worry and less sleep. Year end activities that may include seniors, prom, graduation, banquets, concerts and parent programs that not only require significant time but also present opportunities for unpredictable outcomes. It is easy to quickly forget how challenging the end of the year can be for principals. In the last few weeks I have been in many schools and my memory has been jogged. I think that it is helpful to recognize the additional stress and possible ways to deal with it.

I encourage each of you to take care of yourself and set aside time to relax. Get some sleep, exercise, and eat well. Find a good book that has nothing to do with work and enjoy. If you are not a member of an administrative team find some area principals and talk about how you feel. Only principals can really understand what you are feeling. Remember that most of the things we worry about never are realized or they never are as big as we think. Try to identify beforehand some effective solutions to possible problems so that you are prepared for the "unexpected". Work your underground pipeline of students and staff so that you get a jump on potential issues. Every school is going to have some end-of-the-year incidences, and it is naïve to think that they will just go away. Remember that June will arrive. Take solace in that

every principal is facing some of the same issues. The end of the year provides us with many opportunities to celebrate many of the successes of our students. Plan activities that provide you the chance to improve the climate and culture of your school. As I reflect on my career I feel that I was guilty of creating my own unnecessary stress. I wasted many precious hours worrying about problems that never happened. Take a deep breath and do whatever you can to enjoy these last two months.

Some things to consider as you plan for the final months:

Plan some end-of-the-year celebrations such as academic and activity programs. Make every effort to acknowledge some of the students who never get recognized. We made sure that our Academic Excellence Program included representatives of our entire school population.

Consider some type of student appreciation day that provides the opportunity for the staff to thank students for a great year. It can include yearbook signing which they will do anyway.

Think of ways to build good will with the seniors. We held an annual senior breakfast in the spring. It gave me an opportunity to say thank you and set the stage for the final months. Spring goes as the seniors go! In the middle school it may be the 8th graders.

Make sure that the significant end-of-the-year events such as banquets, prom, graduation etc are very carefully planned. Take the time to think about potential issues and develop plans to deal with them. Make the students aware of your expectations.

It is very important to carefully plan the final week of school. I always felt that an entire year could be judged by the final week. Develop a specific and detailed supervision schedule for staff and meet to clearly express your expectations. Think

about how you dismiss on the final 6 day.

If you have some traditions that you feel need to end, meet with key students and think about how they might be eliminated or at least modified. By this time of the year you know what students carry the power in your school.

Don't start any unnecessary fights. Don't initiate any new policies. You do not want to polarize a group of students.

Do your best work in the lunch room. You can learn what is going on and build upon the positive culture.

Get out of the office and keep your ear to the floor. Also talk with your staff because they often hear things in the classroom that you never hear.

Smile and stay calm. Your attitude is very contagious and sets the tone for your school. Ω

Contact Nick Miller by emailing him at njmiller@stcloudstate.edu.

K-12 Education Statistics	
Student Enrollment (includes Charter Schools)	821,823 in 2010 854,996 projected for 2015
Enrollment Options Program 2009-2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 61,717 Open Enrollment Students • 10,347 Postsecondary (PSEO) • 20,781 College in the High School Students
Students by Grade 2009-2010	821,823 Public 77,121 Non-Public
Secondary	387,452 Public 29,765 Non-Public
Elementary	364,783 Public 40,079 Non-Public
Kindergarten	57,059 Public 7,277 Non-Public
Pre-Kindergarten	12,529
<i>Statistics taken from Minnesota Government in Brief, published by Minnesota House of Representatives, Research Department.</i>	

president of Growth and Justice, it was a group effort “involving multiple interventions from cradle to career not just one or two ‘silver bullets’ such as lower class sizes, aggressive testing, or assigning pass/fail grades to school.”

Cincinnati came together as a community in a sustained and focused community effort to improve schools and achievement for all students. “The local business and philanthropic community, parents, community groups, teacher unions and national experts all played key roles,” according to Smith.

Schools were given more autonomy; large, low performing schools were converted to smaller more specialized schools; students were given choices; and funding followed students, giving schools greater flexibility in allocating the dollars.

Today high schools in Cincinnati “boast strong programs in STEM, performing arts, liberal arts, and information technology,” writes Smith. Key to their successes are the cooperative efforts of community leaders coming together in 2006 to form an organization called Strive Together. This collaborative initiative “has pursued a cradle-to-career approach emphasizing education from early childhood through to college and on to a career, and has spawned a national network,” according to Smith. Top leaders from Strive met with Twin Cities leaders in Febru-

ary, sponsored by the African American Leadership Forum and the University of Minnesota’s College Readiness Consortium.

Focusing on quality teachers with community collaboration to ensure excellent education and support from cradle to career, this will ensure success for all our students and real economic vitality for Minnesota. The Bush Foundation, with the leadership of its president Peter Hutchinson, is committing to the first part of that recipe: quality teachers. The Bush Foundation is engaged in a \$40 million dollar initiative over 10 years to replace half of all teachers who will be retiring with 25,000 new highly effective teachers in the next decade. He defines highly effective as achieving at least one year of student academic growth in one year of classroom time.

This is an amazing commitment. Bush has established partnerships with 14 institutions of higher learning, 11 in Minnesota and 3 in the Dakotas. These colleges and universities are working to recruit, prepare, place, and support top candidates into teaching, and they will guarantee their effectiveness. If the teachers are not effective the colleges of partnering postsecondary schools will intervene to help them succeed. There is strong alignment between preparing institutions and K-12 schools with tracking of data, interventions, and support. The sustainability and alignment of this commitment will get the best teachers in front of all kids. Ω

President’s Report . . .continued from page 5

Leaders Network, which is a professional development program that could change how we receive professional training and staff development in the future. Please watch for information from board members in your division and look for additional training and information at our upcoming summer conference.

I would like to close by saying Thank You.

Thank You to our membership for the support that I have received from you and your support of the MASSP organization.

Thanks to Central Division for their

backing and ideas and the CMASSP leadership team of Erich Martens, John Hayden, Mike Carr, Sandy Logrono and Al Niemann.

I would also like to thank my admin team at Princeton High School, Emorie Colby and Darin Laabs, for their support and help while I have been out of the building on MASSP business this year.

Thank you to the Executive Committee members Jim Smokrovich, Don Johnson, Mary Pat Cummings and Jeff Drake. This is a dedicated group representing the MASSP organization and fellow principals that I have gotten to know and consider friends. Their leadership is vital to the future of our orga-

nization, and I thank them for all they do.

Thank you to Joann Knuth for her leadership as the Executive Director for MASSP, and Nan, Ann, Renee, Patti, and Scott who do more work behind the scenes than we will ever know. To Roger, his sense of humor, his connections at the state capitol and his wisdom in keeping us out of hot water.

My thanks goes out to each and every one of these dedicated individuals.

I hope to see you all at our Summer Conference. Have a great end to the school year. Ω

“The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between, the leader is a servant.”

— Max DePree



Calendar of Events — 2010 - 2011

June 14, 2011Board of Directors Meeting.....Breezy Point Resort, Breezy Point, MN
 June 14-17, 2011Summer ConferenceBreezy Point Resort, Breezy Point, MN

Marian Boyd

. . .continued from front page

bringing back the powder-puff event as part of the Homecoming week activities. Instead of just making the suggestion, Ms. Boyd worked with student council to make the event a success. Ms. Boyd invited the junior and senior girls who would play key leadership roles in the non-sanctioned activity to a planning meeting over the summer. She empowered the group, so they would feel a part of forming a new tradition at Wayzata High School. With joint ownership in the activity, the students were much more likely to make the transition back to a campus activity a success. Ms. Boyd taught the student council representatives a great lesson about reaching out to their constituents and working together to make a positive change at the school.”

Student council advisor Sue Iverson commented that “Ms. Boyd does not just step in and fix things. Instead, she involves students in coming up with a solution and supports them in taking action.” Fortunately, Ms. Boyd demonstrates the belief that students need to be active participants in their school community. Instead of doing what is easiest, Ms. Boyd does what is best for student learning and, in the process, is teaching her students valuable leadership skills. Ω

MASSP Officers

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Central Division	Erich Martens	Sauk Rapids-Rice High School	Sauk Rapids, MN
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John Hamann	Underwood High School	“A” Representative	Underwood, MN
Luanne Wagner	St. Francis High School	“AA” Representative	St. Francis, MN

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11TH ANNUAL SUMMER CONFERENCE

MASSP GOLF TOURNEY

Thursday, June 16, 2011

1:00 p.m. Shotgun Start

White Birch Golf Course

Prizes

Tourney Bag

Tourney Results

...and More!

Register By Team Or By Individual. Green Fees & Cart - Only \$40.00 Per Player.

Once again, we will playing a scramble format, with teams consisting of 4 players. Trophies will be award to the team members of the three winning flights. All skills encouraged to play! To register contact Gary Huhnerkoch - glhuhnerkoch@herffjones.com.