

MRTF President's Message

By Jane Fullerton



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

I hope 2010 will be a wonderful year for each and every one of you. This New Year's greeting will be said and heard all around the state this month. The celebration of the New Year is the oldest of our holidays. It was first celebrated by the ancient Babylonians more than 4,000 years ago. The celebration of the New Year is a mix of old and new traditions. Early Christians believed New Year's Day should be spent reflecting on the past year and focusing on making improvements in their life in the coming year. The practice of making resolutions grew from these ancient customs, with customs such as the dropping of the Ball in Times Square and the singing of *Auld Lang Syne* became popular in the 20th century.

Many cultures have annual traditions of making New Year's Resolutions. It is believed the Babylonians were the creators of the New Year's Resolutions or Promises and people all over the world have been breaking them ever since. Their most often made resolution was to return things they had borrowed during the past year, especially farm machinery.

Traditionally, on New Year's Eve, activities included fireworks, loud festive celebrations, and activities to scare away evil spirits. It was be-

lieved you could affect your luck throughout the coming year by what you did or ate on the 1st day of the New Year. For that reason, it became a tradition for folks to celebrate the first new day of the year with family and friends and to always have black-eyed peas to eat.

As we close the door to 2009, it is only natural that we, too, must reflect on our past year. We must begin by counting our many blessings. May each of us be blessed with good health, kind friends, close family, love and laughter.

Professionally, as we reflect on 2009, we are blessed with MRTF's new office and MRTA's permanent home. Many said it could not be done; but never underestimate the power of Strength in Numbers. This past year says, "MRTA we're here to stay."

Research shows that approximately 50% of all Americans will make resolutions to change or make improvement at the beginning of the New Year. The most common resolutions or promises made are to lose weight, to quit smoking, and to be better organized.

Whatever your resolution, you are in good company as millions will be working to make positive changes in their lives although more people actually break their resolutions than keep them. Research says that people who write their resolution are 10 times more likely to

reach their goals than those who do not.

As a time honored tradition, your Foundation has some resolutions to make for 2010. MRTA's 50th Birthday Anniversary, and request that all of our MRTA members join us so we can keep our resolutions.

The MRTF first resolves to continue its commitment to excellence.

MRTF resolves to embrace and support a visionary plan for building the future not only for present retirees, but for future retirees of public education.

MRTF resolves to make a difference. A wise person once said of paying interest on debts, "...those who understand interest earn it, those who don't pay it. Once you are free of debt, your money will start working for you."

With this thought in mind MRTF's final resolution for 2010 is to celebrate MRTA's 50th birthday by becoming debt free. To be debt free allows us to use our money to increase member benefits and to promote the teaching profession.

To ensure that MRTF keeps its promises, we seek the help of every member of the MRTA. We need each of you to recruit a new member, buy an extra raffle ticket, join the \$50 for 50 years birthday party and to make a generous tax free contribution to the Foundation.

"By giving, you leave a legacy; you create a memory that will not fade."

Happy New Year!

2010 MRTF Classroom Grant Winners



Kingdom of Callaway Unit President, Ann Offutt presents Fulton Middle School grant recipient Meredith Burstin with a \$500 classroom grant.



Mehlville Unit President, Judy Compton presents Mehlville Senior High School grant recipient Jessica Hilliard with a \$500 classroom grant. Pictured left to right are: Judy Compton; MHS principal Vince Viviano; staff members Erin Moeckel, Jessica Hilliard, and Sonia Mamroth; and librarian Chris Gerwitz.

(left) Region 9 Vice President Vicki Orr presents Neosho South School grant recipient Janet Cantrell with a \$500 classroom grant.

(right) Region 9 Vice President Vicki Orr presents Purdy School grant recipient Dianna Laswell with a \$500 classroom grant.



MRTF President Jane Fullerton presents Appleton City R-II grant recipient Matt Stephan with a \$500 classroom grant.

