



SPRING 2004

SECA REPORTER

SECA 2004 & Daytona Beach

“Early Childhood is Not a Race, It’s a Journey”

What could be better than Florida in March?! We shed our coats, put on our shorts, enjoyed the sunshine, re-energized ourselves and renewed our commitment to children for 2004.

Our 2004 conference participants couldn’t find a better spot to network with colleagues and get the latest information from experts in the field of early childhood education.

We started the conference with **Dr. Thomas Moore**. Who could have more enthusiasm about children than Thomas? He combined his musical talent with his vast store of experience and expertise to encourage us all to “slow down and play.” Children know how to do this. It’s just the adults who have a hard time figuring out how to enjoy and savor the world around them!

During Friday and Saturday, we provided over 100 sessions for participants that included music, math, science, curriculum and just about any other topic you could want. Handouts were in great supply and participants left for home with new ideas to try with their children.

Dr. Maurice Sykes provided the keynote on Friday morning and talked about “lessons learned in the sandbox.” How many of

us have truly kept our child-like wonder and joy in exploring our world and the people with whom we work and play?

Florida’s Finest (Mar. Harman, Anna Moo, and Garry Smith) completed our keynote presentations on Saturday with music and got us all on our feet, clapping our hands and singing. It’s hard to miss the joy of childhood while you’re singing and clapping! What a wonderful way to teach children many of the concepts that can be so boring and dull. Wouldn’t it have been wonderful if some of your classes as a teenager and adult were put to music?

We had a very successful **Director’s Seminar** and once again provided a special forum just for directors and administrators to learn from and network with each other. We know how hard they work during the year and we strive to provide a truly fun and educational experience for them each year.

Our **Beach University** for students was a hit and no one seemed to mind coming to class in beach attire! As the future of our organization, we hope they had a wonderful conference. **Don’t forget Dallas in 2005!**

SECA Welcomes New President

On January 1, 2004, the Southern Early Childhood Association welcomed its new President, **Beverly Oglesby**, of Jacksonville, Florida. Beverly has served SECA as the State Representative from Florida and spent last year as SECA's President-Elect.

Beverly is a kindergarten teacher in Jacksonville and has that "hands-on" knowledge of what it means to be a teacher in a classroom. She's been recognized by her peers for her excellence in teaching and is a Past President of the Early Childhood Association of Florida.

The Early Childhood Association of Florida recognized Beverly at the Daytona Beach conference with an Ice-Cream Social on Friday night. Congratulations Beverly! We're glad to have you at the helm.

Thank You to Phil Acord

We've been fortunate to have a wonderful leader in Phil Acord for the past 3 ½ years. Phil is currently serving as the Immediate Past President of SECA and will complete his term of office in December of this year.

Phil's vision and commitment to SECA have carried us through some challenging times and we've worked to re-invent SECA to meet the new realities of our affiliation structure and develop our strategic partnership with NAEYC and other organizations.

His work during the last 3 years has helped to strengthen the Association, to define its role as the professional organization of the South and to expand our horizons in program and member services.

We commend him for his service to SECA and thank his staff at the Children's Home in Chattanooga, TN for supporting him in his work with the Association.

2004 Election for SECA President-Elect

The Southern Early Childhood Association will elect a new President-Elect in the fall of 2004. We have three wonderful candidates who are willing to serve the Association as President in 2006-2007. The candidates for President-Elect are:

Nancy Coghill of Louisiana
Terry Green of Kentucky
Donna Richardson of Oklahoma.

In this issue of the *SECA Reporter* (pages 2 and 3) you'll find short bios of each of the candidates. For a more comprehensive look at the candidates, please check your Spring/Summer *Dimensions of Early Childhood* that will be mailed in June. **This issue of *Dimensions* will include a vision statement from each of the candidates and the official ballot.**

As your President-Elect, the candidate undertakes a 4-year term of service to the Association. She will serve as President-Elect in 2005 and will become the SECA President in 2006-2007. At the conclusion of two years as SECA President, another year of service is required as the Immediate Past-President.

If the candidates are willing to serve, what is your responsibility to support them in this role?

1. As a member of the Association, you have the privilege of selecting your future leaders through the power of your vote. Exercising this privilege by returning your marked ballot is your first responsibility.
2. Leaders are only effective if they receive input and information from members. Take the time to let us know what you need and want from your SECA membership.
3. Get to know your state representative on the SECA Board. Each state has an equal vote on the Board and your representative needs to hear from you.

Above all, be a concerned and committed member. **BE SURE TO VOTE IN 2004!**

Meet the Candidates

Nancy Coghill

Nancy is a resident of Carencro, Louisiana and an Associate Professor in the College of Applied Life Sciences at the University of Louisiana/Lafayette.

Her educational background is from the multi-disciplinary family and consumer (home economics) field with a specialization in child development and family relations. She earned her Ph.D. from Florida State University and has spent 24 years in higher education.

Nancy has worked in and administered university lab schools, Head Start and faith-based programs.

As an active member of the Louisiana Early Childhood Association, she has served as the LAECA President and was selected as the 2001 Outstanding SECA Member. She has previously served on the SECA Board of Directors and as Fiscal Officer. Her state affiliate states that "Nancy's wisdom, maturity and ability to work with many people would be assets to SECA."

Terry Green

Terry is a resident of Henderson, Kentucky and is a Child Development and Health Services Team manager for Audubon Area Head Start in Owensboro, Kentucky.

She holds a M.A. E. Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education Degree (a degree in both regular and special education) from Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky.

In her professional career, Terry has worked in the three major areas of early childhood education: private programs, public school and Head Start. Her current job provides

opportunities to work with child care partners and 19 different school districts.

The Kentucky Association for Early Childhood Education awarded her the KAECE Leadership Award in 1996. Currently she serves as the SECA Secretary.

Donna Castle Richardson

Donna is a resident of Edmond, Oklahoma and is a Full Professor and Chairperson of the Department of Education at Oklahoma City University. She earned her doctorate in early childhood education from East Texas State University.

Early in her career, Donna worked as a first grade and kindergarten teacher in the Oklahoma City Public Schools and began her career in higher education in 1973.

She has actively worked in the area of family literacy and, in 1999, her program, *Reading Discovery Tutor Training Program*, was recognized for effective and promising practices by the United States Department of Education.

Donna has been active in the Early Childhood Association of Oklahoma and served as President in 1990.

She previously served on the SECA Board of Directors as the ECAO representative and, during her tenure on the Board, served as Secretary.

**If you want to understand today,
you have to search yesterday.**

Pearl Buck

Dues Increase Will Support Enhanced Member Benefits

Effective September 1, 2004, SECA membership dues will increase to \$20 per year for a full membership. (Your local, state and/or NAEYC dues will be in addition to our dues.) This dues increase was adopted by the Board of Directors in November 2003 and ratified by the membership at the annual meeting held in Daytona Beach, Florida on March 20, 2004.

SECA has not instituted a dues increase since 1998 and our budget has been hit by inflation and increasing costs for publishing and providing member benefits.

Although we're increasing dues to support our budget, we're also working to enhance the benefits SECA can provide to individual members and state affiliates.

SECA will set aside \$1 of each member's dues to support our local affiliates through leadership training each summer. We're also continuing to develop member benefits and to utilize technology to develop these products in a cost effective and efficient way.

Posting the *SECA Reporter* on the web is our first attempt to make our publications and products more readily accessible to our members whenever they choose to access them. You'll have immediate access to the publication as soon as it's published and won't have to wait for the mail to get your copy. Go on-line August 1 and November 1 to get the latest *SECA Reporter*.

Our website will have several new additions in 2004. You'll find new pages that include:

- *Parent Pages* that can be used by programs to give parents updated and important information about child development.
- *Curriculum Tips* for teachers to use in their classrooms.
- *Public Policy Alerts* to keep you informed as an early childhood professional about what's happening at the state and national levels.

Dimensions of Early Childhood will still come to you in the mail three times each year.

We thank you for your continued support of our professional organization and look forward to providing you new, different and enhanced member benefits in 2004.

SECA's Community Service Project

In 2003, the Southern Early Childhood Association initiated a community service project to benefit Heifer Project International. As with any project, there are varying opinions concerning the value of the project and the charity, and we want to share a letter from a concerned SECA member about this project. On page 4 you'll find the SECA response and an article about a project that was developed in Texas to support this charitable organization. We encourage you to share your concerns, and we'll do our best to share them with the SECA membership.

Letter to the Editor

Please be advised that the Heifer International Foundation located in Little Rock, AR is a faith-based organization whose CEO earns \$155,212 a year. Their Chairman of the Board is Reverend Mark Lancaster. Charity Navigator has given them a 2 star overall rating. More information is also available to SECA members through the Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance and the American Institute of Philanthropy. Heifer is also not found on the list of Humane Charities at HumaneSeal@pop.net. I would like our members to be better informed before they decide to participate in the "SECA & Heifer International, Children Are Changing the World" Community Service Project that was featured in the Fall 2003, *Dimensions*.

Hilari Hinnant, Alexandria, VA

About Heifer International

Heifer International is an international charitable organization that is dedicated to improving the quality of life for the world's families and providing educational activities that help those more fortunate to understand the dire circumstances that many families face in other parts of the world. According to the Better Business Bureau, Heifer International meets all applicable standards for charitable organizations and it has a long history of working with volunteer groups to enhance the world's economy and well-being of children and families through economic self-sufficiency.

The educational materials that Heifer International has made available to SECA members qualify as fund raising activities and the cost of production of those materials influences the rating given by some organizations.

When SECA decided to develop this community service project, the following issues were considered:

- Because Heifer International has worked primarily through the faith-based community, we decided to develop a set of SECA materials, *Join the Global Family*, that were not faith-based. We were pleased to have the option of providing both faith-based and non-sectarian curriculum materials to our members. (As you may be aware, a significant number of the early childhood programs in the South are located in faith-based institutions.)
- The receipt of Heifer International curriculum materials in no way commits a person or program to fundraising for the organization. The materials are available whether or not you chose to implement a project.
- Because the theme of Heifer International is based on animal husbandry and the use of those animals to promote economic self-sufficiency for families in other parts of the world, we saw this a "natural" fit for our young

children in helping them to learn about other cultures and parts of the world. Obviously, we would anticipate that you, as early childhood professionals, would use only concepts and strategies that are appropriate to the age group with which you work and that you would not use a concept (such as using animals for food) if it will be upsetting to your children. (Because so many of our children in the South live in rural areas, this is not always a foreign concept to them, and you'll have to use your judgment.)

We hope that you'll take this opportunity to develop some type of community service project, whether or not related to Heifer International, to instill the concepts of sharing and community service in your children. We encourage you to review the charity ratings given by several organizations as you make your decision about participating with Heifer International.

If you develop a special project, let us know. We'd love to receive a short article about any project that you do. We'll have the opportunity to publish some of the project descriptions in *Dimensions of Early Childhood*. Watch for an article in the Fall 2004 *Dimensions* about a project in Texas.

For complete information on the SECA community service project, go to your Fall 2003 *Dimensions of Early Childhood*. If you can't find your copy, give us a call at **1-800-305-7322** and we'll send you the information.

To receive Heifer International materials, contact them at **800-422-0474** and ask for the **Read to Feed** kit or the **Animal Crackers/Fill the Ark** materials.

To receive the **Join the Global Family** materials from SECA (non-sectarian pre-K), call our office at **800-305-7322**.

Join Us in Dallas, Texas for
SECA 2005!

“Hitch Your Wagon to a Star...A Southern Voice for Children”

WHAT? 2005 Annual Conference

**WHERE? Intercontinental Hotel
Dallas, Texas**

WHEN? March 3-5, 2005

begin posting specific agenda information by **September 1, 2004**. Go to the “Conference” button to access that information.

Registration forms will be mailed to all SECA members at the end of October or you can access the forms on the SECA website by October 1, 2004.

It’s time to start thinking about SECA 2005 and we’re planning to have a wonderful conference in the “Great State of Texas!”

Keynoters for the conference will be:

- **Thursday Night**
Al Stewart
The Many Hats We Wear
- **Friday Morning**
Sharon MacDonald
Making the Hard Stuff Easy
- **Saturday Morning**
Madelyn Swift
Guidance and Discipline

If you’re interested in presenting, click on the “Conference” button and download the Request for Proposals.

We look forward to seeing you in Dallas at SECA 2005!

We’ll continue our popular *Director’s Seminar* and Saturday has been designated *Student and Child Care Providers Day*. We’ll have special events on Saturday to recognize these groups and the nurturing and care they provide our children.

Check our website regularly at www.SouthernEarlyChildhood.org to get the latest in conference information. We’ll



