

# The Inyo Insight

An Education Newsletter from the Inyo County Superintendent of Schools  
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## ICSOS Welcomes Dr. Lisa Fontana as New County Superintendent

Dr. Lisa Fontana has been recently appointed by the Inyo County Board of Education on a unanimous vote to replace retiring County Superintendent Dr. Terry McAteer.



Fontana, currently the district superintendent for Pioneer School District in El Dorado County, will assume office this July. "She brings a wealth of experience to the position," said McAteer. "The County Board was seeking a person

with a strong curricular and instruction background," noted McAteer. "Lisa brings that having been a long-time instructional leader in Douglas County Schools."

Prior to her position with Pioneer School District, Fontana was the elected Alpine County Superintendent of Schools. "I am so honored to be offered the position and am looking forward to working

with Inyo districts and teachers," said Fontana.

Fontana began her teaching career as a kindergarten teacher in the Eastern Sierra following her graduation from Sacramento State. She spent 18 years in Douglas County Schools moving up the ranks to Assistant Superintendent for Instruction before assuming the Alpine County position. In the process, Fontana earned her masters and doctorate in education from the University of Nevada at Reno. Fontana will have two years remaining in the term

before she needs to seek re-election. Fontana and her husband, Dave, plan to reside in the Bishop area.

McAteer is retiring mid-term after serving 22 years as a county superintendent (14 in Nevada County and 8 in Inyo.) He and his wife, Liz, are returning to Grass Valley to be closer to their two children. "I've truly enjoyed my eight years in Inyo and believe we've been able to accomplish a great deal on behalf of our students," said McAteer.

## Juvenile Hall Moving to Bishop

Due to declining numbers of youth being adjudicated to serve time in Inyo County Juvenile Hall in Independence, the Inyo County Board of Supervisors recently decided to seek new alternatives. Instead of spending \$1.5 million annually to serve an average Hall population of three students, the Board has directed staff to creatively use these funds to improve services offered to our local youth.

County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Terry McAteer has stepped forward with a plan to move the Keith Bright School, currently housed in

Juvenile Hall, to Bishop and be co-located with the Jill Kinmont-Boothe Community School (JKBS). The concept, according to McAteer, is to allow Bishop Unified teachers use of a vacant classroom at JKBS to conduct classroom instruction to these wards of the court while receiving support from Probation Department staff. "We have the facility to provide academic instruction, vocational training, recreation and counseling services to these at-risk youth and believe it is a cost-effective solution to partner with the County of Inyo," said McAteer.

(See **HALL** on page 3)

## Afterschool Youth Recreation Proposal to Go Before Board

County Supervisor Jeff Griffiths and County Superintendent of Schools Terry McAteer are proposing a plan to provide Inyo County youth afterschool recreation and art on a daily basis along with weekend open gyms.

"The greatest problem our youth in this county are facing is boredom," said McAteer, who believes that providing more recreational and arts opportunities for our youth is essential towards enhancing their lives. He said that too many youth go home to empty homes after school. On Friday and Saturday nights

they find themselves with nothing to do or nowhere to go.

The McAteer/Griffiths Plan would create supervised afterschool recreational and arts opportunities at all schools in the county starting this fall along with the opening of school gyms on Friday and Saturday nights during the winter months.

The new program would be funded by using the redirected savings from the current cost of maintaining the \$1.5 million Inyo County

(See **RECREATION** on page 3)

# Summer Camp Registration Now Open

The Inyo County Superintendent of Schools is happy to offer our Sierra Adventure Summer Camp for middle school students for the second year! Last summer we registered 60 boys and 57 girls. Everyone had a great time and we received lots of positive parent feedback. So this year, we're going even bigger! This year we have room for 78 boys and 78 girls. Spots are expected to fill up quickly.

The mission of this overnight camp is to provide a safe and fun experience away from home for a week. This time at camp fosters independence, resilience, responsibility, and

confidence. Students spend the week at the Sierra Adventure Center in Big Pine with a very qualified and fun staff of classroom teachers, outdoor educators as well as responsible high school counselors.

One of our goals is for students to know that nature is safe, fun, and deserves respect. Students connect to nature by playing outdoor games, studying local plants and animals, hiking in the Sierra, tasting edible wild foods, collecting insects, learning some basic survival skills, wading through streams, and lying on the grass to look at the stars. Other activities

include introduction to archery on our archery range, various crafts and art projects, campfire with singing and roasting marshmallows, swimming, capture the flag, and other classic summer camp pastimes.

Being at camp is a break from screens and cyber-life. Kids interact face to face with their peers and practice communication and social skills without their cell phones. They eat dinner family-style where they learn table manners and how to make conversation with others.

A great camp experience in middle school can be life

changing. Kids may discover interests in the outdoors, science, or art that guide their career paths. Young people come back with new friends and a new confidence in their ability to succeed in a world away from their families.

The cost for the whole week is only \$20, so please encourage students in 5th- 7th grade to sign up! Registration forms will be sent in the mail as well as be available at the school offices and at [www.sierraadventurecenter.org](http://www.sierraadventurecenter.org). Contact Hillary Behr with any questions at 760-873-3262 x 2131.

## Fifth-Graders Gear Up for College and Career

Fifth-grade students gathered on the Cerro Coso Bishop campus on April 8, 2016 for the area's first College and Career Day for elementary students. A

similar event for 8th grade students has been in place for several years. Now ICSOS is expanding the push for higher education to the younger set.

While the 8th grade event focuses on preparation in high school for college, the 5th graders rotated through several sessions to learn about career choices. "Our primary goal,"



ICSOS employee Hillary Behr leads students in an engineering activity.

said County Superintendent of Schools, Terry McAteer, "was to offer an interactive and motivational experience for our 5th grade students to explore different careers and recognize that

college is part of the path toward those careers."

Presenters followed up that message by saying that students should work hard in school now to build the skills that will take them onto college later. "Working hard now to keep options open later will come up again and be expanded upon when these students participate in the 8th grade day later on," said Ilissa Twomey, Director of Curriculum & Instruction for ICSOS and primary organizer of the event.

During the event students rotated through seven sessions, each representing a different career field. Sessions covered health care, art, law enforcement, engineering,



Students explore chemistry with retired BUHS teacher, Joe Profita.

science, math, and fitness. Each session was lead by an expert in the field and had hands-on activities set up for the students. Activities included, among other things: trying on tactical vests in the law enforcement room, learning how to check oxygen saturation levels in health care, and creating mini-books in art.

ICSOS thanks all of our volunteer presenters and their assistants: Jarrod Bowen, Mackenzie Brown, Francis Cholewa, Dana Ellis, Yvette Mattiessen, Lori Michelon, Danny Nolan, Janelle Pope, Joe Profita, Jessica Scida, Joe Slovacek, Madeline Tomasek, Heleen Welvaart, and Stuart Wilkinson. Thanks, too, to Deanna Ing Campbell, the staff at Cerro Coso Community College, and Cerro Coso nursing students for their assistance.



One student dons a SWAT team gas mask.



Heleen Welvaart teaches students about pupil dilation.

# Congratulations, 2016 Speech Contest & Geography Bee Winners

## Hall

(Continued from page 1)

He noted that JKBS and Keith Bright would remain completely separate programs but just use one facility.

The Probation Department is formulating a plan to allow these low-level juvenile offenders to remain at home and be transported daily to a common site for instruction and treatment. Youth who pose a greater risk to themselves and to the community will be transported to a neighboring county's juvenile hall. The plan will be adopted by the Board of Supervisors in May and will go into effect on July 1st.

## Recreation

(Continued from page 1)

Juvenile Hall. "We have an incredible window of opportunity," said McAteer, "to use funds that were previously used for the incarceration of our youth and direct them now towards positive activities such as arts and recreational opportunities for all of our K-12 youth."

Griffiths, who has championed the project, added, "the County spends a great deal serving at-risk youth and now we hope to provide services for all youth."

The proposal is slated to go before the Board of Supervisors at their May meeting.

### SPEECH CONTEST



Left to right: Terry McAteer; Haley Yarborough; Kylee Jorgensen; Bodie Steinwand; Jake Rasmuson

The 64th Annual Inyo County Speech Contest was held on March 10, 2016. Seven students from four schools participated.

Students were given four to six minutes to answer the question, "In your opinion, what questions should our presidential candidates

address?" Students raised a variety of issues; including health care, climate change, gun control, and the cost of higher education.

performances.

ICSOS praises all of the other students who participated, too: Mahdi Ayman (Home Street), Clarissa Castro (Owens Valley), Joey Huston (Big Pine), and Erik Martinez (Owens Valley.)

Special thanks to Coldwell Banker for sponsoring the event; judges Sandy Burns, Serena Johnson and Mary Kemp for donating their time; and all of the school coaches who supported their students along the way: Melinda Darndenne-Ankring, Vivian Hanson, Joslyn Hernandez, and Jennifer Morales. This event would not have been possible without their participation.

Haley Yarborough, an 8th-grader at Round Valley Joint Elementary School took top honors. Kylee Jorgensen (7th), also from Round Valley, placed second and third place went to Bodie Steinwand (8th) of Big Pine Elementary School. ICSOS congratulates these students on their award-winning

The 3rd Inyo County High School Geography Bee was held March 24, 2016 at the Jill Kinmont Boothe School. The Geography Bee is a fun and friendly competition between teams from any school in Inyo County wishing to participate.

This year Bishop Union High School and Owens Valley High School sent their teams to compete. The two teams stayed neck-and-neck throughout the night, but in the end, Bishop emerged victorious.

ICSOS congratulates the Bishop Union High School

team members on their win. Team members were Desert Kiddoo, Makayla McDevitt, Cecilia O'Dell, and Noah Reid. Their coach was Karyn Holland.

The members of the Owens Valley team included: Andrew Cardinale, Harrison Keener, Steven Mather, and Shandra Ratchford. Bryan Mack served as the coach for Owens Valley.



Bishop Union High School Geography Bee Team (left to right): Noah Reid, Makayla McDevitt, Cecilia O'Dell, Karyn Holland, and Desert Kiddoo.

Thank you to both teams for your participation and good sportsmanship.

### GEOGRAPHY CONTEST



Inyo County Superintendent of Schools

# Sierra Adventure Summer Camp

**Cost: \$20**

**Open to all Inyo County Students currently  
in 5th- 7th grade**

5 day overnight camp at Sierra Adventure Center near Big Pine!



**Boys: June 20th- 24th**

**Girls: June 27th- July 1st**



## To Register :

Look for application forms in the  
mail or visit

[www.sierraadventurecenter.org](http://www.sierraadventurecenter.org)

to download the forms and for  
more information about camp

**Register by May 19th!**

**Archery Hiking Nature Art Survival Skills  
Songs Crafts Starwatching Games**

**Questions? Contact Hillary Behr at (760) 873- 3262 x 2131 or [hbehr@icsos.us](mailto:hbehr@icsos.us)**