



# Alaska PTA News

January/February 2008

Volume 7, Number 6

## In This Issue

President's Note  
Convention in  
Fairbanks  
Programs  
Teacher of The Year  
Award  
Treasurer Note  
Membership  
Leadership Training  
Legislative  
Advocacy  
Donation Link

## To Our Local Unit Leaders

On behalf of the  
Alaska Board of  
Managers (AKBOM)  
we ask that you  
forward this  
newsletter on to all  
of your members  
and to anyone else  
that you know of  
who would like to  
receive this  
publication.

## Alaska PTA Executive Board

Al Tamagni, President  
[president@alaskapta.org](mailto:president@alaskapta.org)  
Mary Schrage, President-  
Elect  
[presidencyelect@alaskapta.org](mailto:presidencyelect@alaskapta.org)  
Pat Blakney, Treasurer  
[treasurer@alaskapta.org](mailto:treasurer@alaskapta.org)  
Amey Tamagni, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice  
President Membership  
[membership@alaskapta.org](mailto:membership@alaskapta.org)  
Paula Pawlowski, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice  
President Legislative  
[legislative@alaskapta.org](mailto:legislative@alaskapta.org)  
Nancy Copping, 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice

## A Note From Our President

### **Hey dads- Where are you?!?**

In all of the years that I have been involved in PTA, I have not had the opportunity to work with many fathers. Being in the male minority, I have only occasionally had the opportunity to get fathers involved with the PTA. I remember working with one father that was amazed that there was so much involved with PTA. When his term expired, he commented to me that his experience on the PTA had been far different than what he had expected. He came with the assumption that moms did most of the work. He was glad that he had the opportunity and experience to participate and be involved with his child's education and help plan activities that his child would experience and participate in.

### **So how did we get fathers involved? We asked them!!**

A lot of fathers feel that they are left out of the process because most of the events revolve around themes, events and hours that do not interest them. One way to get them involved is to try new events that may draw their interest, or ask children what they may think their dads may want to participate in. Sometimes the best way to get their fathers involved is through their hearts. Most children want to spend time with their fathers. Therefore, if you offer an event that is aimed at building the father/child bond, I guarantee the child will go home and try to get dads involved. Here are some other ways to get fathers involved:

- Educate them on the importance of their involvement.
- Emphasize that getting involved in PTA doesn't necessarily involve a large time commitment.
- Design invitations specifically for dads.
- Employ both male and female recruiters.
- Seek out male resources in the community.
- Publicize men's involvement in your PTA.
- Communicate with men more effectively.
- Ask them to become members.

There is such a variety of things that you can do to get dads involved. Ask your board, ask your kids, ask yourself . . . just make sure you ask. No

President Programs  
[programs@alaskapta.org](mailto:programs@alaskapta.org)  
Marie Lacher, Secretary  
[secretary@alaskapta.org](mailto:secretary@alaskapta.org)

### **Alaska PTA** **Region Vice** **Presidents**

Regions 1 & 3 - Vacant  
Pending Volunteers  
Georgia Sandgren, Region 2  
[region2vp@alaskapta.org](mailto:region2vp@alaskapta.org)  
Cathy Crew, Region 4  
[region4vp@alaskapta.org](mailto:region4vp@alaskapta.org)  
Tonya Halliday, Region 5  
[region5vp@alaskapta.org](mailto:region5vp@alaskapta.org)  
Tim Booth, Region 6  
[region6vp@alaskapta.org](mailto:region6vp@alaskapta.org)  
Lynn Hohl, Region 7  
[region7vp@alaskapta.org](mailto:region7vp@alaskapta.org)  
Karen McNeil, Region 8  
[region8vp@alaskapta.org](mailto:region8vp@alaskapta.org)

### **ALASKA PTA** **COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Mary Meacham, Advocacy  
[advocacy@alaskapta.org](mailto:advocacy@alaskapta.org)  
Mary Schrage, Bylaws  
[bylaws@alaskapta.org](mailto:bylaws@alaskapta.org)  
Pat Blakney, Budget  
[budget@alaskapta.org](mailto:budget@alaskapta.org)  
Julie Doll, Convention  
[convention@alaskapta.org](mailto:convention@alaskapta.org)  
Vacant, Education  
Paula Pawlowski, Grant  
Administration  
Nancy Copping, Health and  
Safety  
Kirsten Dolan & Katie  
Thaggard-Reflections  
Suellen Appellof, Public  
School Land Trust &  
Technology  
[landtrust@alaskapta.org](mailto:landtrust@alaskapta.org)  
[webmaster@alaskapta.org](mailto:webmaster@alaskapta.org)  
Dee Parsons, Immediate  
Past President  
[pastpresident@alaskapta.org](mailto:pastpresident@alaskapta.org)

matter who or how you do it, reinforce parent involvement. It makes parents feel wanted and the appreciation of this speaks louder than any other words.

This is a great time to get your board and membership involved. Have contests between grade levels to see who can get the most fathers to register. There are so many things you can do to promote the involvement of fathers.

If you need any help or resources please feel free to contact the PTA office for assistance.

Al Tamagni Jr.,  
Alaska PTA President



## **Alaska PTA Convention Goes North** **to Fairbanks!**

**“Charting Our Course”**  
**April 17-19, 2008**

### **Westmark Hotel & Conference Center**

813 Noble Street  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701  
Hotel Phone: (907) 456-7722 Hotel Fax: (907) 451-7478  
Front Office: (907) 459-7704 Central Reservations: 1-(800)-544-0970  
**[www.westmarkhotels.com](http://www.westmarkhotels.com)**

Local Coordinator: Julie Doll 488-6185 [thegrypps@acsalaska.net](mailto:thegrypps@acsalaska.net)

**Contact Julie to be a part of the team that makes it happen!**

AK PTA Regions I & II are hosting the **2008 State Convention** in Fairbanks. Convention is a great opportunity for units to participate in workshops and seminars. It is a chance to take advantage of great training and networking, and to involve and showcase our students, teachers, staff, administrators, parents, volunteers, and supporters with program reviews, highlights, and awards.

## **ALASKA PTA OFFICE:**

Physical Address:  
555 W. Northern Lights,  
Suite 204  
Anchorage, AK 99503

Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 201496  
Anchorage, AK 99520-  
1496

1-888-822-1699 toll free  
907-279-9345 or 907-278-  
0085  
Fax: 907-222-2401

Office Manager: Sarah  
Tuggle  
Office Hours: 10am-2pm  
Monday-Friday

[akpta@alaska.net](mailto:akpta@alaska.net),  
[www.alaskapta.org](http://www.alaskapta.org)

*Need to get in touch with the Board of Managers? It's easy!! Simply click on the link listed below on the net or enter the online link into your computer and you will.... **Contact Us***

**Alaska PTA Home Page**  
<http://www.alaskapta.org/>

**Alaska PTA Blog**  
*Look for updates, changes and announcements on the*

[Alaska PTA Blog](#)

**National PTA**  
<http://www.pta.org/>

Our theme this year is ***“Charting Our Course”*** which means looking at where we’ve been, where we’re going, and how we’re going to get there! We want to celebrate our achievements and focus on reviewing what works and what doesn’t, prioritizing, planning ahead, and preparation for a successful future.

Thursday evening, April 17, is the **Kick-Off Reception**. Parents, teachers, students, and community members can come out to meet our exhibitors, have a snack, and hear the opening comments. Conventioneers can then participate in the Program Roundtables to discuss a slew of important issues and learn some “best practices”.

First-time convention-goers can learn all about convention at the Friday breakfast and representatives from all regions will have time to get together in the evening.

The **General Sessions** provide insight into how AK PTA works with National PTA and state agencies. It is a great opportunity to see the Parliamentary Process in action and get comfortable with Robert’s Rules of Order.

**Rooms are available for \$69 at the Westmark Hotel & Conference Center** and you can use their airport shuttle. We can help each other get around town for whatever errands you might want to run. Let me know if you’d like to help with the set-up or tear-down activities. This would be a good opportunity for an older youth group available Thursday during the day or Saturday evening. We could also use some sharp teen “runners” throughout the convention to help with last-minute needs, technology issues, seating arrangements, passing messages, etc.

There will be materials for purchase from the PTA store and a silent auction to raise money for our scholarships/mini-grants – bring a gift basket or item from your corner of the state for the auction table.

We’re hoping for a big turnout early Saturday morning, April 19, for our **“Walk For Healthy Kids”** to raise awareness and funds for wellness programs. Bring your friends, kids, co-workers, teachers, students, staff and your PTA/Education banners, signs, noise-makers, etc for a quick stroll around downtown.

The **“Call to Convention”** registration packages will be out by the end of January. So spread the word, think outside the box, go ahead and start working those travel plans, we want to see you ***Chart Your Course to Convention ‘08!***



## LEADERSHIP SATURDAY

1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month  
10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the

### **ALASKA PTA OFFICE**

555 W. Northern Lights,  
Suite 204  
Anchorage, AK 99503

If you are interested in working with the Board of Managers, letters of interest and applications for nomination can be found on the Alaska PTA website:

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

or by contacting the [Alaska PTA office](#).

The following Committees need you: With your help, we can do more for all of the children in Alaska:

Click on the links below to check each one out.

[Nominations](#)

[Bylaws](#)

[Convention](#)

[Legislative](#)

[Advocacy](#)

[Lands Trust](#)

[Education](#)

[Environment Health and Safety](#)

## Programs Update: Use Awards to Celebrate Your Strengths

One of the less-talked about, but powerful programs available through PTA is the Awards. There are a variety of awards and recognitions offered by Alaska PTA and National PTA. Following are some highlights. For more detailed information, go to [Alaska PTA](#) and/or click on the links given with each award title.

### **National PTA Awards:**

**The Phoebe Apperson Hearst–National PTA Excellence in Education Partnership Award** recognizes PTAs whose collaborative efforts with parents, families, educators, and community members promote parent/family involvement in ongoing programs that support and encourage student success. **Deadline: April 15, 2008.**

The **PTA Unit Achievement Award** recognizes and celebrates the great things local PTAs are doing all the time. There's no fee to participate, and the application process is easy! The form is simple and the requirements are easy to fulfill, but the recognition and the satisfaction of running a successful PTA is important to PTA members and to the entire school community. **Deadline: March 14, 2008**

**The Parent Involvement Schools of Excellence Certification** recognizes schools whose parent involvement programs are based on the [National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs](#). The standards, already endorsed by nearly 100 health and education organizations, were created around the six types of parent involvement identified by Joyce L. Epstein, Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins University. National PTA's Schools of Excellence Certification establishes the gold standard for parent involvement practices by providing a framework for schools to evaluate themselves.

### **Alaska PTA Awards:**

**HUGS** is the recognition award any unit will receive at the State PTA Convention in April for having the following items turned into the AK PTA office by March 14: Current officers list, current membership list, completed audit, membership dues, and insurance payment.

**The Alaska PTA Outstanding Student Leader Award** provides recognition for students who make meaningful contributions to local PTA programs and activities. **Deadline: March 14, 2008**

**The Alaska PTA Outstanding Educator Award** recognizes six outstanding

- [Grants](#)
- [Membership](#)
- [Parental Involvement](#)
- [Reflections](#)
- [Ways & Means](#)

## H.U.G.S.

Items to be sent to the Alaska PTA office to be a

### **"HEALTHY UNIT IN GOOD STANDING":**

1. Current Officers List
2. Membership List
3. Membership Dues
4. Updated Bylaws (should be updated every 5 years)
5. Annual Audit for the 2006-2007 school year
6. 990EZ form filed if required

## What Does It Mean to Be Part of a Community?

educators, one from each region of Alaska PTA, who demonstrate professional excellence and commitment to the Mission and Purposes of PTA. One individual will be chosen from these six regional winners as recipient of the Alaska PTA Outstanding Educator Award. **Deadline: March 14, 2008**

**The Alaska PTA Program Recognition** provides the opportunity for PTA/PTSAs to share their favorite and most successful ideas, projects and activities. All program/activity descriptions will be distributed at our annual convention. **Deadline: March 14, 2008**

**The Alaska PTA Honor Unit** is awarded to PTA units who have well-trained leaders, are responsive to their membership and focus their activities on the needs of children, and demonstrate sound financial management practices. **Deadline: March 14, 2008**

**The Alaska PTA Study Grant Award** is available to children who are members, or whose parents are members, to give students the opportunity to participate in programs in which the children excel, such as music, dance, theater, and other educational programs. **Deadline: May 15, 2008.**

**The Alaska PTA Excellence for Children Award and Commitment to Children Award** are given to individuals in honor of their contributions to the welfare of children and youth. These awards have special significance as enduring symbols of outstanding service. The recipient need not be a member of PTA.



### **Tips for Treasurers – Local PTA Units**

Insurance payments for the period December 1, 2007 – December 1, 2008 were due by November 30, 2007. If you have not sent in your \$135.00 for insurance coverage, please do so immediately. The first membership dues were due by October 31, 2007. If your unit has not paid any dues this school year, please send those in ASAP. Any additional membership dues will need to be turned in by March 31, 2008. If you are unsure what your PTA still needs to turn in to our office, please contact your Region Vice President, or call Sarah at the office, 279-9345.

Is a community defined by geography? Sometimes. Is there a community when people are associated by like interests? That's closer. But a better definition for community might be "a group of individuals who are *connected*."

It is not a common membership card or even the mutual desire to advocate for children that truly unites PTA members as a community – it is *how* we connect with each other, *how* we support and engage and share with each other. Building upon this idea is so important that PTA has recently updated its National Standards to put even more emphasis on the community – of PTA members, of schools, and of the public at large.

The new National Standards for Family-School Partnerships serve as a guide for how families, schools, and citizen leaders can best form a community that works toward a common goal of student achievement. The first step in creating these stronger communities is ensuring inclusivity. Do your local units have plans in place for how they will reach out to all the families who are not yet involved with their



## Membership Counts

Over the holiday break, reminders by mail and e-mail went out regarding payment of membership dues and submittal of Board Information Lists. It is very important that we have contact information for each unit's Board. If your Board does not wish to provide home addresses, please just submit their names with the school address.

Remember to submit dues remittance payments to the state office in a timely fashion. Your unit's number of voting delegates for the State Convention is determined by the number of paid members received up until March 31, 2008. As of April 1<sup>st</sup>, the National PTA clears their records and any members submitted by our units will be counted toward the 2008/2009 year. Membership lists may be input into OMDR, e-mailed to the State PTA Office, or mailed in with dues remittance form.

Amey Tamagni  
V.P., Membership



## Legislative

Be the **FIRST** to participate in our first legislative electronic survey to set the Alaska PTA Legislative Priorities for 2008. Go to:

**<http://www.alaskapta.org/legislative.htm>**

And answer 10 short questions to state your opinion BEFORE January 31, 2008. Using this method of input is our first attempt to collect information electronically from YOU the member. If you want to let us know what you think in a longer format please send an email to: [legislative@alaskapta.org](mailto:legislative@alaskapta.org)

After all the results are 'in', the AKPTA Legislative committee will quickly work on developing "Talking Points" that will help you speak with your legislator about the priorities.

school? Do they have strategies for drawing in civic partners from their neighborhoods and towns? If not, there's no better place to start than with the National Standards.

There's also no better time to begin than right now – with PTA's second half membership drive. This winter we have an excellent opportunity to bring fresh voices and important contributors into our PTAs and schools. Let's make sure we are extending membership invitations to new families transferring at semester break, to champions of education, and to business owners in the area – they are all welcome in our community of advocates. For those potential members not familiar with our organization, the Showcase DVD that arrived with your fall state allotments is a terrific introduction to the value of PTA in schools.

For over 110 years, PTA has represented a community of people dedicated to the health, education, and well-being of America's children. As inheritors of that great tradition, it's now our job to keep this community strong, and growing.

**Then:** Plan on joining the Alaska PTA March 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> in Juneau for our annual "Legislative Fly In" where we speak with legislators about our priorities and what that means to your local communities. Watch for email and check out the [www.alaskapta.org](http://www.alaskapta.org) website for more information about the schedule while we are in Juneau. There is no registration fee to participate but PLEASE let us know if you are planning on attending so we can provide resources and agenda. We encourage first timers to attend so that you will have 'other PTA members' to follow and buddy up with.

The Legislative Committee will continue to track bills of interest for Alaskan children and keep you informed throughout this 90 day session. If there is a particular bill please let us know if we can help you.

Thank you,  
Paula Pawlowski

**Quick Guide for Alaska Legislative Session 2008**

**Main Page:** This web site offers you the ability to track bills, locate and contact your legislators (PDF document), access committee information and stay up-to-date on legislative activities. Check out the students page for educational and fun information. For further information on navigating this website and the legislative process in general, please contact one of your Legislative Information Offices.

**<http://w3.legis.state.ak.us/home.htm>**

You can also find a list of:  
Prefiled Bills 1<sup>st</sup> Released as of January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2008  
Prefiled Bills 2<sup>nd</sup> Release as of January 11, 2008

You can **contact** your Legislator with a PUBLIC OPINION MESSAGE using up to 50 words using the form from [www.legis.state.ak.us/poms](http://www.legis.state.ak.us/poms). They may also be sent from any of the nearly two dozen Legislative Information Offices (LIOs) around the state.

If you want to contact them by **email** the format is:  
Senator\_firstname\_lastname@legis.state.ak.us or  
Representative\_firstname\_lastname@legis.state.ak.us

If you want to mail them by **snail mail**:  
Name of Legislator  
Alaska State Legislature

Jan Harp Domene  
PTA National President

## Happy Birthday National PTA!

Celebrate Founders Day February 17<sup>th</sup>. For more information about the history go to [www.npta.org](http://www.npta.org). The Alaska PTA celebrates it's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. For more information go to [www.alaskapta.org](http://www.alaskapta.org).

How old is your PTA??

## PTA Leadership Training

At a time when PTA budgets are tight and schedules are even tighter, e-learning is a solution for members looking to expand their skills cost effectively and without the need to travel. This e-learning initiative is a step toward

Alaska State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

If you are really politically inclined you can watch the action either on your computer or on your TV thanks to Gavel to Gavel, KTOO, Juneau's public television station.

**To watch on your computer:**

[www.ktoo.org/gavel](http://www.ktoo.org/gavel)

**To watch on TV:**

Anchorage: Cable Channel 17

Mat-Su – Cable Channel 17 or MTA Vision Channel 302

Kenai, Soldotna, Seward, Homer: Cable Channel 10

**Other:**

**Democratic legislators:** [akdemocrats.org](http://akdemocrats.org)

**Republican legislators:** [akrepublicans.org](http://akrepublicans.org)



## Getting Yourself Connected...

If you find yourself watching CNN nonstop you are a legislative junkie! Here is how to get up to date news directly.

**This Week in Washington:** Each week that Congress is in session, *This Week in Washington* will update you about what's happening on Capitol Hill, and about legislative issues that affect families, schools, and communities.

To subscribe, visit [the PTA website: www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)

*This Week in Washington* comes to you free of charge via the Internet as a service of PTA in the furtherance of its nonprofit and tax-exempt status. Unless otherwise noted, PTAs may reproduce and distribute the materials from the PTA website for PTA use without express written permission. PTA materials may not be duplicated by any other organization or person without written permission.

### **Highlights of this week's update:**

Last month, President George W. Bush signed into law a \$551 billion omnibus spending bill for fiscal year 2008 (FY08) containing 11 of the 12 annual appropriations bills. The omnibus followed the president's veto of a FY08 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education appropriations bill in mid-

achieving PTA's goal of making all members informed advocates by 2020. E-learning courses are available through [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org) and they include PTA Basics, Conflict Management, Grant Writing, Running a Successful PTA Program, and Effective Advocacy For Your Child. To log in you will need your username and password located on the back of your membership card. If you did not receive a membership card, contact your local unit board members.

November. Congress was unable to secure enough votes to override the veto.

For a detailed list of FY08 program funding levels, visit the Department of Education website's budget section. Tables are available in [PDF \[86KB\]](#) and [MS Excel \[793KB\]](#).

**Head Start Program Reauthorized:** On December 12, President George W. Bush signed into law legislation reauthorizing the Head Start program. The [Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act](#) of 2007 concludes a four-year effort to reauthorize the law.

**SCHIP Funding Temporarily Extended:** On December 29, 2007, President George W. Bush signed into law [legislation](#) extending the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) through March 2009. Created 10 years ago, SCHIP is a state-federal partnership intended to provide health coverage for children from low-income families not poor enough to qualify for Medicaid.

Twice, Congress passed legislation significantly expanding the program, passing legislation increasing SCHIP's annual funding from about \$5 billion to \$12 billion annually for the next five years. President Bush vetoed both bills, saying that the legislation would expand the program beyond its initial intent. Congress was unable to override the vetoes.

**Farm Bill Passes Senate; Child Nutrition Bill Not Included:** On December 14, 2007, the Senate passed its version of [H.R. 2419](#), the Farm Bill Extension Act of 2007. The overall Nutrition title of the bill was increased by over \$5 billion. Included in the title is an increase in funding for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program (FFVP) from \$9 million to \$225 million annually. This Senate funding level will allow 4.5 million low-income elementary school children in 5,000 schools nation-wide to receive a fresh fruit or vegetable snack every day at school. The House version of the bill, passed in July, included \$70 million annually for FFVP.

An amendment to the bill sponsored by Sens. Tom Harkin of Iowa and **Lisa Murkowski of Alaska** were not included in the final Senate version. Sens. Harkin and Murkowski sought to include language from the Child Nutrition Promotion and School Lunch Protection Act ([S. 771](#)) but were not able to garner enough supporting votes. That bill would [call on the USDA](#) to update its nutrition standards for school foods sold outside of meals to ensure that they conform with current nutrition science and address pressing threats to child health and nutrition at school.

Congress must now reconcile differences between the House and Senate versions of the Farm Bill Extension Act. The House/Senate Conference may occur as early as this month.

Watch for next month's article that will connect you with Alaska's up to date

information. If you can't wait, you can always call or email the Alaska PTA and consider joining the AKPTA Legislative Committee.



**Help ensure your child and all children are not short changed but have the best possible support in their education experience. AKPTA is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. If you would like to make a donation to the Alaska PTA online, click on the link below that we have provided.**

**[www.paypal.com](http://www.paypal.com)**

**We do need your financial support so we can continue to make a difference in education. Children everywhere need us more than ever! Your financial gift will be used wisely. We thank you for giving generously to benefit the children for soon they in turn, will give back what we have given them. Let us make sure they have been prepared well. To mail in a donation send to:**

ALASKA PTA  
PO BOX 201496  
ANCHORAGE AK 99250-1496

## **Raymond J. Voley named Alaska Teacher of the Year**

JUNEAU -- Alaska's 2008 Teacher of the Year is Raymond J. Voley, who teaches history and technology at Kenny Lake School in the Copper River School District.

Hal Spackman, Alaska Deputy Commissioner of Education & Early Development, announced the appointment of Voley in Anchorage today at the annual conference of the Association of Alaska School Boards. Voley's term begins January 1, 2008.

"Raymond Voley represents the many Alaska teachers who inspire their students to reach for excellence, whether it's performing Shakespeare or making a documentary," Spackman said. "Bringing passion and knowledge to his task, Mr. Voley finds his students' hidden talents and gives them a model of excellence to emulate."

Deputy Commissioner Spackman also announced that Michael Mahoney, a science teacher at Mt. Edgecumbe High School in Sitka, is the alternate Alaska Teacher of the Year. Mahoney would serve in the Alaska position if Voley is named National Teacher of the Year.

Voley is in his 15<sup>th</sup> year of teaching including eight in his current position. He holds bachelor of arts degrees from the University of Utah in political science and history and a master of arts in teaching from the University of Alaska Anchorage.

Before teaching at Kenny Lake, Voley taught special education in the Nenana correspondence program and 5<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade in Scammon Bay, a Yup'ik community.

"Teachers have always been my heroes," Voley said in his application for Teacher of the Year. He cited a journalism teacher who held him to high standards, a drama teacher who helped him overcome shyness, and a history teacher who taught a course on the Holocaust.

"My greatest accomplishments center on those times I personally inspired students who had a poor history of connecting with adults," Voley said. "I live for those 'moments of grace,' the times I feel as though I have helped change or inspire a life."

Voley said his greatest accomplishment as an educator was the Kennecott Cadre project, in which he and nine students created a 90-minute documentary on the history of the Kennecott mine.

Michael Mahoney, the alternate Teacher of the Year, has taught science for nine years, all at Mt. Edgecumbe High School, a state-operated boarding school in Sitka. He holds a bachelor of science degree in biology from Willamette University in Salem, Oregon, and a master of arts in teaching degree from the University of Alaska Southeast.

Mahoney said he was influenced to become a teacher by his biology teacher in Kodiak who made students feel welcome and who made going to class a pleasure.

Alaska Education Commissioner Barbara Thompson will enter Voley as the Alaska candidate for the 2008 National Teacher of the Year. The national winner will be recognized at an event in Washington, D.C., in April. The Council of Chief State School Officers sponsors the national competition.

Additionally, the Smarter Kids Foundation will donate approximately \$14,000 worth of equipment to Voley's classroom.

A statewide selection committee appointed by Commissioner Thompson recommended Voley from a field of four finalists. Besides Voley and Mahoney, the other finalists were Shelly Heiserman, a fifth-grade teacher at Cottonwood Creek Elementary School in Mat-Su, and Dan Sparkman, an English teacher at King Career Center in Anchorage.

Members of the selection committee were: Bill Bjork, President of NEA-Alaska; Richard Carlson, President of Alaska Council of School Administrators; Mary Schrage, President-Elect of the Alaska PTA; Scott McAdams, President Elect of the Association of Alaska school boards; and Ina Bouker, 2007 Alaska Teacher of the Year.