

From the Desk of the Executive Director - Robby Cramer

This year The MSTA Board of Directors have been actively engaged in trying to fulfill the mission of our professional organization as well as be fiscally responsible to our membership. With that dual focus in mind as an Executive Committee we made extreme cuts in our budget for the past year. In addition, based upon current budget reports and projections for the remaining two months of our fiscal year we are determined to create a budget for next year that continues to be fiscally responsible.

Our state conference was traditionally an excellent revenue source for our organization. Currently the majority of our revenue comes

from our membership dues. We continue to explore new ways to raise revenues for our organization. We believe in our mission: *to stimulate, support, and provide leadership for the improvement of science education throughout Michigan.*

I would like to thank the MSTA Board of Directors for supporting our fund development campaign that enable our organization to send several new science teachers to the MSTA State Conference this past March.

Executive Director's Report

- **April 2010** - I have been on leave of absence since September 2009. Thus since that date the role of executive director has been a volunteer position.
- **Fund Raising and Fund Development**
 - Worked with President Betty Crowder to secure board donations and increase

MSTA Garage Sale

By Michelle Svoboda (2010 MSTA Conference Co-chair)

Like many organizations, MSTA is always looking for new and different ways to serve its members and raise much needed funds. During a brainstorming session last September, the idea of a garage sale was introduced. The more we talked, the more excited I became. After 18 years of teaching, I've accumulated a multitude of items that I no longer use. They were a good idea at the time or the curriculum has changed and I don't teach that particular unit any more. Now I would finally have a way to clean out my closets and help other science teachers as well.

Having run countless numbers of garage sales in my lifetime, I volunteered to chair this first-ever event. My first task was to figure out where to get additional items to sell. I asked Board members to look in their closets and bring 10 items to donate to the sale. I wanted to begin with a small sale this first year to see if members would embrace the idea. Immediately after the meeting, I went back to my classroom and began looking at my shelves. I managed to come up with two large boxes of items, which included educational games, teacher resources, lab equipment, videos, and some rock samples. A garage sale is born!

The response from the MSTA board was wonderful. They generously donated many, many items to the sale. Most were new or gently used. They included lab ware, microscopes, kits, books, resources, etc. Enough items were brought in to cover thirteen large tables. I was a little concerned that I'd end up with a lot of leftover items on Saturday. Pricing was done on Thursday afternoon based on what we thought teachers would be willing to pay, usually one-fourth of the original cost. There was also a table of FREE items which included reference material, posters, lesson plans, etc.

The sale began on Friday morning and ran through Saturday afternoon. We were overwhelmed by the response. The majority of items were sold by Friday afternoon, with just a few items remained for Saturday. Thanks to everyone who purchased items we raised \$2,500 (which included bag and pencil sales as well)! Not bad for our first year, I was hoping for \$500. This money will allow us to provide scholarships for new attendees for next year's conference. Plans for 2011 include inviting MSTA members to donate items. It's never too early to start cleaning those closets.

- membership
- Sent letters for follow up and sent thank you notes to all board members who contributed
- Rochelle Rubin offered to follow up on the final members.
- Sent letters to Past Presidents inviting them to participate in the campaign
- All funds collected supported MSTA memberships for new science teachers.
- **Membership**
 - Attended the Regional Directors Retreat in Frankenmuth, where a membership action plan was shared
 - Worked on ways to contact their members to renew memberships by letters
 - Developed questions to add to the membership survey
- **Conference**
 - Developed an Informal Science Strand for the 2010 MSTA State Conference
 - Secured the many speakers to be part of the stand
- **Board Awards**
 - Contacted Vern Ehlers, nominee for Mallinson Award
 - Contacted science educators for letters of support
 - Wrote the speech to honor Representative Ehlers
 - Ordered the awards and requested photos and wrote the biographical sketches
- **Finance** - Continued the analysis of the budget and promoted tasks that will increase membership
- **Leadership**
 - Shared the MSTA story at Michigan Teacher Advisory Council in December
 - Attended a leadership conference on how to best support your Board Members
 - Ordered awards for the Board Retreat
 - Supported the President and President Elect in designing the Retreat
- **Constitution and By-Laws Revisions**
 - Assisted in the development of the recently pasted Constitution and By-Laws
 - Helped President B Crowder on updating on the roles and responsibilities of each Board members
- **Partnerships** - Worked closely with the Michigan Water Environment Association in editing the forms for their awards and then read the applications and helped select the winners for this year.

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