Greetings to All!

As I work in my office on yet another Snow Day (#13), I am looking forward to spring or at least some normalcy in our schedules. (At least the daylight hours are increasing, as I am reminded daily by WKHJ!). I know that snow days and delays disrupt everything for students, teachers, and administrators. I say a huge “thank you” to our Transportation Department and our County Roads Department for keeping us safe during our “Garrett County Winter.”

After getting my feet wet and beginning to learn the ropes these first months, I am hopeful that I will be out visiting schools/teachers more frequently and working more closely with everyone in my new role. It appears as though the MSP grant for which I applied (in August!) will finally make its way to Garrett County. This will open up some exciting opportunities for Professional Development and Collaboration for all teachers of STEM K-12 as well as some unique opportunities for Discovery Education Resources, STEM internships and a STEM Academy in conjunction with Garrett College. I am continuing my grant seeking and working on additional ways to access funds to support teachers and students. I am also looking at some unique STEM competitions for students.

The 4.0 policy and procedure changes are in the works so we will soon be reporting grades using the 4.0 scale, making that task easier for our guidance personnel. The new Student Planning Guide (thanks to our guidance counseling staff) will be available soon and scheduling will also be taking place. I will be visiting schools to distribute some materials for Project Lead the Way and our new Biomedical Science Program—anticipated to begin this fall.

I continue to work on the SB 740 Transition Course Reporting Requirements with other members of the committees K-12, higher education and MSDE. I will keep you posted regarding our recommendations once the committee has finalized their work.

Lastly, our Service Learning Implementation Plan was officially approved by MSDE so the work to begin Implementation/Transition can soon begin. Don’t worry, this is intended to make everything easier for everyone as well as more consistent while still preserving the unique student selected independent component. I look forward to working on this with all of you K-12!

Michelle Harman
Mrs. Rebecca Kenyon-Sisler Nominated for Carl S. Weber Award!

The Carl S. Weber Award
One person can make a difference!

Dr. Carl S. Weber was one of the founding MWMC Board members, representing the academic community. Through this award, we celebrate Carl’s life and work by acknowledging others who share his generous spirit, his commitment to Maryland’s waters, his vision for collaboration, and his leadership in advancing monitoring and assessment. Beginning in 2007, the Award has been presented annually to an individual involved in water monitoring in Maryland who exhibits the spirit, vision and leadership so exemplified by Carl.

Mrs. Rebecca Kenyon-Sisler, Northern Garrett High School’s Advanced Placement Environmental Science Teacher, was the key person behind the Cove Run Brook Trout Restoration Project - an inspirational story of a community working together to protect and enhance a trout stream for our present and future generations. Rebecca collaborated with the Youghiogheny River Watershed Association and the Youghiogheny Chapter of Trout Unlimited to obtain two Maryland Department of Natural Resources’ Aquatic Resources Education (ARE) Grants. The ARE Grant program fully funded the budget request and this program has enabled Northern Garrett High School’s Environmental Science students the unique opportunity to participate in an action watershed restoration project that provided a hands-on learning and community service experience.

Riparian restoration sites were established on the three farms in the headwaters of the Cove Run watershed in late winter 2012. Two of the restoration sites required the installation of fencing to create a buffer on both sides of the stream. New partnerships were formed with Habitat Forever, LLC and the United States Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service, as they planned and installed the riparian fencing in early spring 2012. As soon as the fencing was completed, the Environmental Science class students planted hundreds of native trees and seedlings at each of the sites. The students did an amazing job of getting 160 trees and seedlings planted on their first day! Invasive plant species removal such as multiflora rose and Japanese barberry was conducted by the students to help with the establishment of the planted trees and shrubs.

The students have visited the sites several times during the past two years to collect water quality data as well as to conduct stream habitat and bio-assessments to monitor the health of the stream in the restoration sites. Water quality parameters such as temperature, turbidity, pH, dissolved oxygen, and nutrients are monitored by the students. While conducting the pre-restoration stream habitat and bio-assessment, the students documented an aquatic invertebrate community that was basically tolerant to pollution. However, just after one year of the establishment of the vegetated riparian zone – pollution sensitive organisms such as caddisflies, mayflies, and stoneflies were showing up in the samples.

The future of Cove Run is looking bright thanks to the work of Mrs. Kenyon-Sisler and her students!

Some unique opportunities for students and teachers. If you wish to explore on your own, the links and topics are all available via our webpages. If you need assistance, please let me know.

Deadlines are fast approaching for many of these items!
1) Summer Internships
2) Siemens Institutes—teachers
3) MLW Leadership
4) National Youth Science Camp
5) Discover Grants—Literacy

http://www.pathwaytofinancialsuccess.org/

Apps for the Classroom

This was in the MAST Rapper Newsletter—written by Joanne McGarry of Howard County. If you have any apps that you would like to share that are related to STEM or STEM-fields, please share and I will post in this newsletter and on our website.

The app that she shared was “3D Brain” made by Cold Spring Harbor. It is free and you can upgrade for $0.99 to investigate different parts of the brain. It will label the brain for you, isolate one structure so you can look at it in relationship to the rest of the brain, and also provide you with information about the function of different structures.

Another feature of this app is that it gives you case studies about different structures and is linked to peer reviewed research articles.

For science teachers who have been scanning NGSS, you will find an app that can help with 4TLS1 & MST LS1."

Please share any apps that you might use for instruction or that you
Shawn Nicklin Nominated as Life Changer of the Year!

We are pleased to announce that Shawn Nicklin has been nominated as a 2013-14 Life Changer of the Year. The Life Changer of the Year program recognizes and rewards K-12 school district employees and educators who make a positive difference in the lives of students. Please feel free to view Shawn’s Life Changer nominee profile by going to the following website: www.LifeChangeroftheYearNominees.com.

About the Nominee: Mr. Nicklin has made a significant difference in the lives of the students he has taught in his 19 years of teaching. He makes learning about history fun and engaging by incorporating unknown facts and stories, movie clips that depict a particular era or topic, and using techniques that make assessing attained knowledge less stressful on him and his students. He is not only their teacher, but also takes the time to discuss problems when they need an ear or advice, helps students plan for their college careers, assists with resume writing, and coaches the Ladies Soccer Team (and brought back former soccer players as assistant coaches). As a coach, he led the team to a 13-3-1 record, and during home games, took time at the beginning of the games to honor Veterans, breast cancer and leukemia survivors, other teachers who made an impact on the athletes, youth athletes, and the athletes themselves. He has been an inspiration to many through his commitment to work and family and finding a happy balance.

Transition Courses Update

We are still working on developing our proposal through our state committee. I will keep you posted as the plan comes together. I have a conference call this week to finalize our subcommittee work with a full meeting later this month. SENATE BILL 740 can be found at: http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frmMain.aspx?pid=billpage&stab=02&id=sb0740&tab=subject3&ys=2013RS

"What’s Up in the Sky for February and March 2014?"

By Dan Hewins

The month of February opens with a crescent moon. Jupiter will be the bright star like object in the sky and will visit the moon Feb.10th. Mars and the star Spica from the constellation Virgo will ascend together in the early evening sky. Mars will look more orangish. On Feb.14 we will have a full moon and on March 1st there will be a new moon. Venus will be the bright morning star in February and March. March 19th Mars the moon and the star Spica will form a trio. While on March 21st Saturn will be two degrees above the moon. Day light savings time starts March 9th so clocks “spring ahead” one hour.

NASA’s Opportunity & Curiosity Rovers are still exploring Mars on separate sides of the red planet. Their continuous research has given high definition pictures and the information that Mars once had water. Opportunity has just completed its tenth year of exploration on Mars. January 28th marks twenty-eight anniversary of the shuttle Challenger disaster. It is a constant reminder of the ever present danger of space travel!

Keep looking up into the sky at night!
NGHS SGA Members Attend FSU/Allegany Maryland Leadership Workshop

Members of the Northern Garrett Student Government Association attended a day-long Maryland Leadership Workshop Conference (MLW) hosted by Frostburg State University and Allegany County Association of Student Councils/Allegany County Public Schools. Nearly 100 students from Allegany and Garrett County attended the event which was held January 15, 2014 in the Cordt Building on Frostburg’s campus.

The day’s events were organized and presented by staff from MLW who travel throughout Maryland and beyond to present leadership training to various groups and organizations. The January 15 event focused on Stress/Time Management, Ethical Decision Making, Conflict Resolution, and Self-Awareness. Presenters included Ryan Arrendell, Jeremie Lecuyer, Olivia Keithley, Devan Ogburn, Michael Burgan, and Libby Norford.

For more information about Outreach Opportunities or Residential Leadership Summer Camps provided through MLS, visit visit www.mlw.org. For information about Leadership Opportunities through Garrett Association of Student Councils, contact the Youth Development Office at 301-334-8911 (Michelle Harman).

Alex Miller exchanges ideas with an Allegany County delegate during an Ice Breaker exercise.

The Northern High School Delegation

Annie Fratz shares her ideas about the traits of an effective group member in her workshop.

MATH BRIEFING—DROP BOX!

For information regarding the Math Briefing held on January 23 via Webinar, use the below link.

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/vgow7cnlxbupb6/AA8YJOyC9v

GRADUATION DATE SET!

The Garrett County Board of Education at its regular meeting on Tuesday evening set the high school graduation date for Garrett County Public Schools.

Both high schools will conduct graduation ceremonies on Saturday, May 31, 2014, at the CARC (Community Aquatic and Recreational Center) on the campus of Garrett College. Northern High School’s graduation ceremony will be held at 10:00 AM, while Southern High School’s graduation will be held at 3:00 PM.