Editors’ Note

We Have a Winner!
Two Actually!!!

The results are in: Steve Armstrong, social studies chair at Hall High in West Hartford, has won election as Vice President for NCSS. This position leads to the presidency in two years as Steve will rise to President-Elect in 2012-13 and then President in 2013-14. Joining Steve on the Board of Directors of NCSS is Elyse Poller who was elected to the board as a middle grade representative. Elyse is a social studies teacher at Mansfield Middle School in Storrs.

President’s Message

As I write we have just had our annual Spring Meeting and Awards Dinner. Hats off to Pamela Hamad, Chuck Moakley, Mary Skelly, and all who helped make that such a success. Please check the rest of the website for information on all the award winners.

Two of our members are now also taking additional roles with the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS). Elyse Poller will soon begin her term as a member of the NCSS Board of Directors next year and Steve Armstrong, who has been an important part of CCSS for many years, has been elected VP of NCSS for the 2011-2012 academic year. He will be President-Elect in 2012-2013 and President in 2013-2014. Congratulations!

Last time I wrote about some of the frustration of being a social studies educator during these times. Today I’d like to write about the future of CCSS and how we can address (continued on page 2)

With all the national attention given over to reading, writing and math, one has to wonder why administrators have not figured out that social studies is the vehicle to make these subjects come alive. Since our last issue we have witnessed a catastrophic earthquake/tsunami/and nuclear meltdown in Japan, the ongoing events of the “Arab Spring” and Mississippi flooding, the assassination of Osama bin Laden – with all its national and international implications, and conflicting budgets presented by Republicans and Democrats (plenty of numbers to work with there!). Locally, a high school suspension (since rescinded) of a student for his creative prom invitation went viral – a wonderful example of the power of contemporary media and issues related to school authority and student rights.

And for anyone interested in politics and government there have been any number of potential Presidential candidates – zany and otherwise - to spark research and discussion. Add the round-the-clock “analysis” of all these developments by the media and there is no end of reading and writing material for students – whose votes will be equal to yours in less time than you likely wish. So feel free to send this editorial to your school administrators. (continued on page 2)

Yankee Post is Available Only Online
To receive Yankee Post via email, or notification of a new issue . . .
Please join CCSS and send your email address to: ctsocialstudies@yahoo.com
To join CCSS and NCSS: see membership form on page 11
Check Us Out at http://www.ctsocialstudies.org/ and Bookmark the Site
those concerns. As historians we are trained to take examine the past, and we have a very poor track record of predicting the future. But maybe our sense of the importance of moments of transition can make us keenly aware of the right time to move ahead.

As such, we have spent a lot of time over the past year thinking about where we are and where we want to be. There is not doubt these are challenging times for the social studies. At the elementary level, social studies is being crowded out when it is even thought of at all. At other levels, the nature of a culture of testing has meant that those areas not tested, and not likely to make the cover of newspapers when test scores are announced, are much less likely to get resources. State and district social studies coordinators either don’t get replaced or are burdened with additional responsibilities. Teaching American History grant funding is cut by more than 50%, and last week a bill, the “Setting New Priorities in Education Spending Act,” was introduced to eliminate it entirely, along with 42 other education programs.

At the same time, we all know the importance of what happens in our classrooms for the future of our students and our nation. To begin with, we are the only ones teaching them to examine critically the nature of political discourse, for instance that maybe a bill called “Setting New Priorities in Education Spending” might actually be a bill to end spending, not set new priorities. Now, maybe after we teach and model how to understand the political process, the budget, the history of education’s role in the nation’s development, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens, our students might decide that federal education spending is too high or too low or should be eliminated entirely.

BUT, without our efforts to teach them to recognize arguments, evaluate evidence, ask questions, and develop their own arguments, they will be at the mercy of whichever end of the political spectrum shouts the loudest, appeals to baser instincts, or has the slickest marketing campaign.

We live in a complex world where the forces of the past and the demands of the present require effective citizens to think critically. Our students will live in a more complex world where the forces of today’s legacy and the demands of tomorrow will require effective citizens to think critically while awash in an ever-expanding sea of information. We can help them navigate that process.

So, what of the future of CCSS. We need to find ways that we, as a group, can be an effective advocate for our students by defending what happens in our classrooms to principals, school boards, parents, the community, and elected officials. Together, we can fight for the importance of history, geography, civics, economics, world cultures, sociology, and all of the other social studies disciplines that teach our students to understand the world and their place in it.

My hope is that next year I can write about all we’ve accomplished!

John Tully

Join CCSS and NCSS - see Page 11
One Hundred Years Ago in the United States. Some Statistics for 1911

The average life expectancy for men was 47 years.
Only 14 percent of the homes had a bathtub.
Only 8 percent of the homes had a telephone.
There were only 8,000 cars and only 144 miles of paved roads.
The maximum speed limit in most cities was 10 mph.
The tallest structure in the world was the Eiffel Tower in Paris!
The average US wage in 1910 was 22 cents per hour.
The average US worker made between $200 and $400 per year.
A competent accountant could expect to earn $2000 per year; a dentist $2,500 per year;
a veterinarian between $1,500 and $4,000 per year, and a mechanical engineer about $5,000 per year.
More than 95 percent of all births took place at home.
Ninety percent of all doctors had no college education! Instead, they attended so-called medical schools, many of
which were condemned in the press and the government as “substandard.”
Sugar cost four cents a pound; Eggs were fourteen cents a dozen; Coffee was fifteen cents a pound.
Most women only washed their hair once a month, and used Borax or egg yolks for shampoo.
Canada passed a law that prohibited poor people from entering into their country for any reason.
The Five leading causes of death were:
1. Pneumonia and influenza
2. Tuberculosis
3. Diarrhea
4. Heart disease
5. Stroke
The American flag had 45 stars...
The population of Las Vegas, Nevada, was only 30!!!
Crossword puzzles, canned beer, and iced tea hadn’t been invented yet.
There was neither a Mother’s Day nor a Father’s Day.
Two out of every 10 adults couldn’t read or write and only 6 percent of all Americans had graduated from high
school.
Marijuana, heroin, and morphine were all available over the counter at the local corner drugstores.
Back then pharmacists said, “Heroin clears the complexion, gives buoyancy to the mind, regulates the stomach and
bowels, and is, in fact, a perfect guardian of health!” (Shocking?)
Eighteen percent of households had at least one full-time servant or domestic help....
There were about 230 reported murders in the ENTIRE U.S.A.!

FINALLY
In 1911, a telephone was a luxury; radios were unknown and TV, Computers and Internet unimagined
Today, this information can be sent to others all over the WORLD all in a matter of seconds!

Editors’ Note: This information arrived “over the transom” with no source. We thought it interesting but have not confirmed the data; students might want to check its accuracy.
Failing Grades on Civics Exam Called a ‘Crisis’

The New York Times  May 4, 2011  By Sam Dillon

Fewer than half of American eighth graders knew the purpose of the Bill of Rights on the most recent national civics examination, and only one in 10 demonstrated acceptable knowledge of the checks and balances among the legislative, executive and judicial branches, according to test results released on Wednesday.

At the same time, three-quarters of high school seniors who took the test, the National Assessment of Educational Progress, were unable to demonstrate skills like identifying the effect of United States foreign policy on other nations or naming a power granted to Congress by the Constitution. “Today’s NAEP results confirm that we have a crisis on our hands when it comes to civics education,” said Sandra Day O’Connor the former Supreme Court justice, who last year founded icivics.org, a nonprofit group that teaches students civics through Web-based games and other tools.

The Department of Education administered the test, known as the nation’s report card, to 27,000 4th-, 8th- and 12th-grade students last year. Questions covered themes like how government is financed, what rights are protected by the Constitution and how laws are passed.

Average fourth-grade scores on the test’s 300-point scale rose slightly since the exam was last administered, in 2006, to 157 from 154. Average eighth-grade scores were virtually unchanged at 151. The scores of high school seniors — students who are either eligible to vote or about to be — dropped to 148 from 151. Those scores mean that about a quarter of 4th- and 12th-grade students, and about one-fifth of 8th graders, ranked at the proficient or advanced levels.

“The results confirm an alarming and continuing trend that civics in America is in decline,” said Charles N. Quigley, executive director of the Center for Civic Education, a nonprofit group in California. “During the past decade or so, educational policy and practice appear to have focused more and more upon developing the worker at the expense of developing the citizen.”

One bright spot was that Hispanic students, who make up a growing proportion of the country’s population and student body, narrowed the gap between their scores and those of non-Hispanic white students. On average, Hispanic eighth-graders scored 137 and non-Hispanic whites 160. That 23-point gap was down from 29 points in 2006. Among high school seniors, the gap narrowed to 19 points from 24 points. The achievement gap between blacks and whites in civics, about 25 points at the fourth- and eighth-grade levels and 29 points among high school seniors, did not change significantly.

The results showed that a smaller proportion of fourth and eighth graders demonstrated proficiency in civics than in any other subject the federal government has tested since 2005, except history, American students’ worst subject. “We face difficult challenges at home and abroad,” Justice O’Connor said in a statement. “Meanwhile, divisive rhetoric and a culture of sound bites threaten to drown out rational dialogue and debate. We cannot afford to continue to neglect the preparation of future generations for active and informed citizenship.”

http://www.nytimes.com/

Coming Events for Civil War Remembrance

1) Civil War encampment in Woodbury - August 13-14, 2011

2) 125 Anniversary of the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Arch - September 17, 2011 - Bushnell Park, Hartford, CT. 10 a.m. rededication ceremony.

3) October, 2011. Forum on Civil Liberties During the Civil War - Legislative Office Building - day and time to be announced. The forum will include three CT judges and three scholars in a two hour forum with plenty of opportunity for questions and answers.
Saturday, March 26 was one of my favorite days of the school year. Yes, a Saturday. The day started early here at Mansfield Middle School – registering enthusiastic middle and high school students from various schools at 7:30 a.m. to participate in District History Day. It got even better as I witnessed participants’ creativity, skill, enthusiasm and pride in full blossom throughout the day.

History Day is a national competition that allows students to choose, research and present their analysis of a topic. Winners of these contests proceed to a State competition; and winners from States move onto a national competition. Students choose topics related to a given theme for the year. This year’s topics were as diverse as the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire, the banning of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and of DDT, and the WWII atomic bombs, among others. History Day is coordinated through social studies and enrichment programs.

Unfortunately, social studies education is often being sidelined these days due to a test-driven focus on reading, writing and math skills. History Day is a perfect reminder of why social studies is so important in a child’s education. Participants have learned the importance of reading and analyzing text carefully; of editing and revising to relay their thoughts clearly; and the skill of supporting statements with specific evidence. These are skills that are tested on the Connecticut Mastery Tests.

And if that weren’t enough, they also learn how to make creative presentations. They have five choices of projects for History Day: a research paper, a performance (which they write and perform), an exhibit (whose strict word limit requires effective use of visuals), a documentary, or a website. Students learn to employ technology effectively and to work within time and word constraints – skills that will serve them well in future endeavors.

But what is most exciting – and most important - for me is that students make connections between the past, present and future. They recognize that in order to move forward, they need to understand the past. They are excited to learn and to share that knowledge. I love that every year I learn something new. These students have experienced the challenges and thrills of studying primary sources – working through author’s bias, historical context, unfamiliar grammar, and strange vocabulary and syntax – and were able to analyze those sources, along with secondary sources, to create their own understanding of their event(s) and the impact of those events on life today. They learn to look at things from different points of view. They learn about different forces (e.g., economic, geographic) that influence events. They learn how to learn.

Social studies education is critical to creating empathetic, responsible global citizens. History Day is a way of sparking those global citizens on their journey of discovery and learning. It is a way of welcoming them as lifelong explorers of the world.

Congratulations to all the participants – whether they are going on to States or not – for taking on the challenge and embracing the process.

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The Churchill Centre: Research Paper Competition
An Annual Research Paper Award for Secondary School Students
Papers Due September 15, 2012

We seek history research papers of the caliber published by *The Concord Review*, the only quarterly journal in the world to publish the academic work of secondary students, and a great friend of The Churchill Centre. By prior agreement with Will Fitzhugh, Founder/Editor of *The Concord Review*, papers submitted to The Churchill Centre remain eligible for submission to *The Concord Review*. To review the style of paper we seek, see here. [http://www.tcr.org/tcr/essays.htm](http://www.tcr.org/tcr/essays.htm)
The teaching of social studies is at risk, especially at the elementary school level, as the emphasis on reading, writing and math test scores absorbs more energy and time during the school day. Ironically, it is the very skills that are the focus of reforms and test preparation that are at the heart of social studies instruction. It is essential that social studies professionals have tools and support to demonstrate the relevance of social studies in today’s students’ education. The Northeast Regional Conference on the Social Studies (NERC) provides these.

For a number of reasons, the very nature of teaching and learning in today’s schools is changing. In addition to an emphasis on test scores, many commentators – critics and advocates of education reform alike – have been calling for an emphasis on 21st century learning, including the knowledge and skills that will better prepare our students for a different world. Social studies educators, given their tremendous ability to develop literacy skills, encourage critical thinking, incorporate technology into lessons, and promote awareness of global issues, cultural awareness and social activism, have the capacity to further cultivate 21st century learning for our students.

NERC 43 – to be held in Sturbridge, MA from April 3-5, 2012 – is an important resource for educators: it provides opportunities to share successful strategies for common challenges, explore educational materials and programs available, discuss methods to support social studies education today, and to create a network of committed, competent professionals. We believe that your involvement in NERC, whether as a workshop presenter, conference participant, exhibitor, or publisher will allow current and prospective teachers, administrators, and other educators to facilitate our students’ success in this rapidly changing world.

Save the date – and save social studies.
In Case You Missed NERC 2011:
Some Reminders of Why You Should Plan on NERC 43

Kidger Awardees David O’Connor and James Oliver Horton (right) with Jim Moran (left) and NEHTA President Amy George

Children of all ages were there

Scenes from the exhibit hall: Old skills (above), new materials (below) and people past and present (left)

Steve Armstrong leads a discussion on music of the depression
Top: Left - President John Tully and Vice President Pam Hamad; Top Right - Early-bird tour of the Peabody Museum
Middle: Left: Stedman Awardee Laura Alford, Hillcrest MS, Trumbull; Middle - Christina Chamberlain, Henry James Memorial School, Simsbury, Excellence in Social Studies Education Award; Right - Rebecca Taber-Conover, Old State House, recognized as the Bruce Fraser Friend of Social Studies
Bottom: Left - Keith Dauer and Sandy Senior Dauer, CCSS Service Award; Right - The Award Recipients
New England’s Oldest and Largest Conference on Multicultural Education
16th Annual New England Conference on Multicultural Education (NECME)
Welte Auditorium, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT, Tues. Sept. 27, 2011 8:30-4:30 pm

Please mark your calendars. This year the conference is FREE to all attendees!
REGISTRATION IS OPEN at www.necme.org

THREE Nationally Recognized Keynote Speakers

Dr. James A. Banks Keynote Speaker
Dr. James A. Banks holds the Kerry and Linda Killinger Endowed Chair in Diversity Studies and is Founding Director of the Center for Multicultural Education at the University of Washington, Seattle. He is a past president of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS).

Lee Mun Wah Keynote Speaker
Lee Mun Wah is an internationally renowned Chinese American documentary filmmaker, author, poet, Asian folkteller, educator, community therapist and master diversity trainer. Director Lee Mun Wah will preview his new film, If These Halls Could Talk (release date: Winter 2011) and lead a diversity dialogue about multiculturalism on college campuses.

Kris D. Gutiérrez Keynote Speaker
Kris D. Gutiérrez is Professor of Literacy and Learning Sciences and holds the Inaugural Provost’s Chair at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

Contact: Dr. William A. Howe, State Title IX Coordinator/Civil Rights Compliance/Multicultural Education
CT State Department of Education, 165 Capitol Avenue, Room 227, Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: (860) 713-6752 / Fax: (860) 713-7035 email: william.howe@ct.gov
SDE website: http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde

Professional Development Using the National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies

The National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: A Framework for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment are an excellent basis for professional development in social studies this summer. Like the original standards, the updated and revised book is based on the ten themes of social studies. It includes a revised section on essential social studies skills and strategies, and a sharp focus on:

**Purposes**

**Questions for Exploration**

**Knowledge:** what learners need to understand

**Processes:** what learners will be capable of doing

**Products:** how learners demonstrate understanding

This framework—purposes, questions, knowledge, processes and products—is an excellent basis for professional development. The curriculum standards provide a framework for implementing state content standards, and identify learning outcomes that teachers should seek when they teach specific social studies disciplines.

Learn More

More information on the standards, including articles from the September 2010 issue of Social Education with suggested means of applying the social studies standards, is available at www.socialstudies.org/standards

NCSS members receive a significant member discount when they purchase the revised standards.

How to Order

Copies of the standards are $19.95 for NCSS Members ($29.95 for non-members), plus shipping and handling.

Order Online at the NCSS online bookstore <http://socialstudies.us1.list-manage2.com/track/click?u=b84b817a58f1f46e9423d49b4&id=1f41541718&e=d4b488be201>

By phone: call 1-800-683-0812, citing the inventory number 100111.

By Mail or Fax: Orders and purchase orders can be faxed to 301-843-0159 or mailed to NCSS
10 things to learn from Japan

1. THE CALM
Not a single visual of chest-beating or wild grief. Sorrow itself has been elevated.

2. THE DIGNITY
Disciplined queues for water and groceries. Not a rough word or a crude gesture.

3. THE ABILITY
The incredible architects, for instance. Buildings swayed but didn’t fall.

4. THE GRACE
People bought only what they needed for the present, so everybody could get something.

5. THE ORDER
No looting in shops. No honking and no overtaking on the roads. Just understanding.

6. THE SACRIFICE
Fifty workers stayed back to pump sea water in the N-reactors. How will they ever be repaid?

7. THE TENDERNESS
Restaurants cut prices. An unguarded ATM is left alone. The strong cared for the weak.

8. THE TRAINING
The old and the children, everyone knew exactly what to do. And they did just that.

9. THE MEDIA
They showed magnificent restraint in the bulletins. No silly reporters. Only calm reportage.

10. THE CONSCIENCE
When the power went off in a store, people put things back on the shelves and left quietly.

History.com Interactive Feature: Civil War 150

Are you looking for a new and cutting-edge way to help students learn about the Civil War? History.com has launched a dedicated website, Civil War 150 which provides an immersive, in-depth look at the American Civil War. The site identifies the 150 people, places, events and technology that defined America’s greatest conflict in a compelling multi-media online experience. History.com worked with 16 prominent Civil War experts and historians to create an authoritative list for the Civil War 150, asking them to cast their votes for what they thought were the most important people, places, events and technology from the war. Students can check out what the experts picked, vote for their own choices and share with friends via social media platforms. Note to teachers: we know the wealth of information about the Civil War can be overwhelming, but do check out this site if you teach this era. It is a truly innovative site and is a great resource for Civil War research projects and activities.
CONNECTICUT COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES  
MEMBERSHIP FORM

Membership in CCSS entitles you to:
- Reduced Registration for the CCSS Fall Conference
- Reduced Registration for the Northeast Regional Conference for the Social Studies (NERC)
- Convenient access to the Yankee Post, the CCSS online newsletter
- Opportunity to apply for “mini-grants’ of up to $500 for innovative curriculum in social studies and other special projects
- Opportunity to meet colleagues and develop a network of professional friends and associates
- Ability to keep up-to-date with developments in the social studies.

If you have always wanted to become a member of NCSS, now is the time to act. New membership subscriptions to NCSS will also give you membership benefits from Connecticut Council for the Social Studies for one year—a $20 savings. This offer applies to only new NCSS Regular or new Comprehensive members only who send in their form to CCSS. Joint member benefits include:
- All CCSS benefits
- Regular and Comprehensive membership in NCSS includes a subscription to Social Education or Social Studies and the Young Learner
- NCSS Comprehensive membership also includes all bulletins published during the membership year.

Please complete membership form. Make checks payable to CCSS and mail this form to CCSS, P.O. Box 5031, Milford, CT 06460.

Name_________________________________email______________________________
Home Address___________________________City_________State_______Zip______
School Name_____________________________________________________________
School Address__________________________City__________State_______Zip______
Home Phone___________________________Work Phone________________________
Position_____________________Level of Instruction_____________________________
Areas of Special Interest_____________________________________________________

CCSS Membership (July 1- June 30) NEW NCSS Membership
_____Regular $20 ____Regular* $62
_____Student $10 _____Comprehensive* $73
_____Retiree $10

*Choose one:
___Social Education
___Social Studies and the Young Learner