

# The Monitor

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## From the Director

"I can't believe it's already November!" How many times have you heard that or similar statements? As the cliché goes, "Time flies when you're having fun." Well, the first snow of the season is flying as I write this, so November is more believable. And soon the holidays will be here. Included in this issue is a list of resources for accessible toys. Pass it on to the parents you work with to help them with their shopping this year.



Elizabeth A. Lahm, WATI Director

On November 8, WATI and WisTech sponsored a meeting for individuals and

agencies concerned with preparing students to attend college after high school. Approximately 60 teachers, transition specialists, AT specialists, higher education disability service providers, and DPI staff convened in Wisconsin Dells to examine higher education tasks that face students with disabilities when they arrive at college. After reviewing tasks, availability of AT in middle and high schools to address these tasks was examined. Technologies related to making text accessible to

students with reading impairments were specifically demonstrated. Current and potential implementation strategies to improve the use of AT during the middle and high school years to prepare students for transition to college were shared. Next steps to continue discussion on this topic were generated. Notes from this session are being compiled and will be shared back with those who attended. If anyone else is interested in receiving a copy of them, just email me at [elahm@cesa6.k12.wi.us](mailto:elahm@cesa6.k12.wi.us).

The WATI Leadership Institute Fall 2005 is just around the corner. On December 9, Penny Reed, former Director of WATI, and Marsye Kaplan, from Baltimore Public Schools, will conduct a workshop on how to be a better assistive

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### Save the Dates

**June 19—23, 2006**

### WATI Summer Institute

**Look for details in the next issue of *The Monitor***

## Another Successful Implementation of AT

*Submitted by Ms. Halala and Ms. Knapp.*

This article is a continuation of the implementation of the Mini Grant opportunities that MPS provided staff in the Spring of 2005. Teacher Ms. Halala and Speech

Pathologist Jen Knapp of Keefe Avenue Elementary School collaborated their programs and requested copies of KidPix™, Co-Writer™, and WriteOutLoud™ for their fifth grade students. In this inclusive class, there were two students receiving speech and

language services, and four students receiving support for learning disabilities. During the first semester, the students researched dangers of a fast food lifestyle and publicized their findings in a

*(Continued on page 3)*

## From the Director

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technology trainer.

Although the registration deadline date has passed, we still have room to accommodate at few more. The fee for this workshop is \$100. Registration information is available on the WATI website ([www.wati.org](http://www.wati.org)).

The Spring 2006 Leadership Institute will be a truly special event. On March 31, at the new Holiday Inn Convention Center in

Stevens Point, members of the WATI Leadership group will share their "Recipes for Success". More information on this event will be available on our website as it becomes available and will also be in a future issue of *The Monitor*. Another thing on the horizon for WATI is publishing an update of the lending library catalog. We will make more paper copies available this time than last, but will not be able to put one in everyone's hands. We ask you to coordinate with your colleagues so

one catalog can serve many. Of course, the most up to date version of the catalog is on our searchable database. We also have plans to create smaller, more targeted catalogs, in areas such as early childhood. Watch our website under "What's New" for announcements of their availability. Until next time, enjoy the holidays and the freshness of a new season!

*Liz Lahm*

## Ongoing Events

**Adapted Phonemic Assessment, How Can you Assess Non-Verbal Students?** CESA 5, November 30, contact Judi Cumley at [cumleyj@cesa5.k12.wi.us](mailto:cumleyj@cesa5.k12.wi.us)

**Handwriting Tools/Assistive Technology for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder,** December 6, 6-8 pm, Menasha. Contact Kelly Brodhagen for more information at [kjbrod@new.rr.com](mailto:kjbrod@new.rr.com)

**Make & Take, Visual Support Strategies for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Susan Stokes, Presenter.** December 15, CESA 6. Prerequisite: Boardmaker™. For more information contact Bunny Boelter at [bboelter@cesa6.k12.wi.us](mailto:bboelter@cesa6.k12.wi.us)

**Creating Communicative Environments,** CESA 5, December 19, February 20, April 11 & May 15. Contact Mary Wirkus-Pallaske at [mpallaske@cesa4.k12.wi.us](mailto:mpallaske@cesa4.k12.wi.us)

**AT Technology Tools and Software CESA 3.** January 20, February 17, contact Cindy Nankee at [cnankee@cesa3.k12.wi.us](mailto:cnankee@cesa3.k12.wi.us)

**Get a GRIP on Communication,** CESA 2, January 24 and March 3, 2006, contact Jill Gierach at [jgierach@cesa2.k12.wi.us](mailto:jgierach@cesa2.k12.wi.us)

**Supporting the Struggling Writer with Assistive Technology,** CESA 3, January 20, 2006. Contact Cindy Nankee at [cnankee@cesa3.k12.wi.us](mailto:cnankee@cesa3.k12.wi.us)

**Mystery Book Theatre: Reviving Adult-Child Communication Through Literacy,** CESA 2 January 30, contact Jill Gierach at [jgierach@cesa2.k12.wi.us](mailto:jgierach@cesa2.k12.wi.us)

**Clicker 5 Training,** CESA 2, January 31, 2006. For students who struggle with reading and writing for many different reasons. Contact Jill Gierach at [jgierach@cesa2.k12.wi.us](mailto:jgierach@cesa2.k12.wi.us)

**AT "Connection" Sessions** CESA 4 February 2, & April 27. Contact Mary Wirkus-Pallaske at [mpallaske@cesa4.k12.wi.us](mailto:mpallaske@cesa4.k12.wi.us)

**Assistive Technology Continuum Low to High Tech Tools and Using them Effectively, Judi Sweeney, Presenter.** Green Bay, February 23 & 24. Contact Paula Lees at [plees@cesa7.k12.wi.us](mailto:plees@cesa7.k12.wi.us)

**For detailed information on WATI workshops visit our website at [www.wati.org](http://www.wati.org)**

**Boardmaker™,** CESA 7, February 3, 2006 contact Paula Lees at [plees@cesa7.k12.wi.us](mailto:plees@cesa7.k12.wi.us)

**IntelliBraille: The IntelliShare Conference!** CESA 2, April 4 & 5 2006 contact Jill Gierach at [jgierach@cesa2.k12.wi.us](mailto:jgierach@cesa2.k12.wi.us)

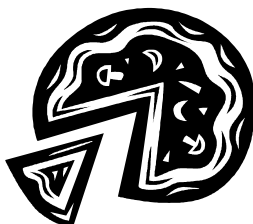
**Stages: A Tool for Creating Alternate Assessment Portfolios,** CESA 6, February 23, 2006. Contact Karen Stindt at [kstindt@cesa6.k12.wi.us](mailto:kstindt@cesa6.k12.wi.us)

**AT Networking Sessions,** CESA 6 December 14, January 11, February 8, March 8 & April 26. Contact Karen Stindt at [kstindt@cesa6.k12.wi.us](mailto:kstindt@cesa6.k12.wi.us)

## Another Successful Implementation of AT

(Continued from page 1)

multimedia commercial format. The project design was driven by the school's educational plan to include more special education experiences in inclusive settings by incorporating more technology into the curriculum. IEP objectives for the students included increasing intelligibility and loudness of oral speech, giving directions in sequential steps, stating an opinion and supporting it with relevant reasons and following written/spoken directions. Over the course of a two month span in the spring, (during 90 minute blocks once a week), all students followed written directions to make their own personal pan pizza. The students were then given information for surrounding area pizza restaurants and were instructed to compare fat content, calories, protein, cholesterol, and ingredients. The students watched commercials and learned to identify propaganda and the role it played in selling the products. They were then asked to complete a web, generating reasons why someone might want to purchase our pizza. They were asked to complete a web, generating why reasons why some would want to



Pizza anyone?

purchase their pizza. They needed to decide what type of picture they wanted to take with the digital camera, what caption would go on the slide and what scripted message would be taped along with the slide.

Each student learned to import the graphic they had taken with the digital camera, as well as to add text and an audible message. The students then linked the slides together to create a slide show commercial that will be available on the MPS website Portal this Winter. The students also utilized the

KidPix™ software to create their own advertisement posters. Some students used the Co-Writer™ and WriteOutLoud™ programs to write donation letters to area grocers.

KidPix™, CoWriter™, and WriteOutLoud™ were more than assistive technology to this class. Especially in regard to KidPix, it was the only technology available for the students to complete such a project. The technology tools were also highly motivating for them.

This project made it very clear to the teachers the increased need for more exposure to assistive technology, especially for the students with special needs to succeed with their peers.

When the initial grant was written a particular student was indicated that had been working on speech intelligibility for two years. The teacher was very concerned that the student might not agree to take part in the oral narration for which he had been chosen. Not only were the student's ideas strong when explaining why someone should purchase a pizza, but his recorded message was clear and strong! The student was motivated to take a very active role in a project that the teacher questioned whether or not he would participate at all! This was a very successful project although there have

**“KidPix™, CoWriter™ and WriteOutLoud™ were more than assistive technology to this class. Especially in regard to KidPix™, it was the only technology available for the students to complete such a project. It was also highly motivating for them.”**

been a few students still crunching an occasional Dorito after school!

## Lending Library Highlights

### Portable Assistive Technology Devices (2.1.1.0.)

If all you need is a notebook for word processing and email, it is probably not necessary to spend big bucks on a computer. The Neo, Dana, and AlphaSmart 3000, are portable, light-weight, durable and wireless. These devices offer a full-sized keyboard and can be connected to a printer. They

are powered by 3 AA batteries, a rechargeable battery pack, and/or AC Adapter.

The WATI Loan Library has these devices available for check-out to Wisconsin public school staff. Please refer to the Loan Library's searchable database on our website ([www.wati.org](http://www.wati.org)) for additional information.

AlphaSmart item numbers are:

- 2.1.1.0.d
- 2.1.1.0.i
- 2.1.1.0.j

Dana item number is:

2.1.1.0.k

Neo item number is:

2.1.1.0.n

## Early Childhood Adaptive Art Strategies for a Snow Party

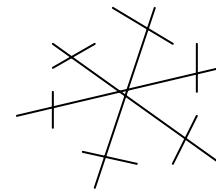
By: Sue Loesl, ATR-BC, Adaptive Art Specialist, Milwaukee Public Schools.

Working with early childhood (EC) students in art can be an exciting experience! In my 17 years in Milwaukee Public Schools, I have truly enjoyed developing activities with the classroom teachers that are sensory and thematic based. As it is the winter season, there are wonderful opportunities to facilitate creating SNOW in the classroom in a variety of mediums. One of my favorites is to use stuffing or Fibrefill™. It is great for having in a class snowball party! The Fibrefill™ is soft, pliable in one's hands, lightweight enough to throw, but also lightweight enough not to hurt anything or anyone. It floats gently toward the intended area, and takes a little accuracy to get it there! Another good gross and fine motor activity is to PULL the Fibrefill™ apart to make pieces to throw. The students will love tossing the "snow" into buckets, boxes, and other containers of various sizes. Pull it out and start over! They can use plastic shovels to push the snow around and put into containers as well. An extension activity is to then create a picture of the snow experience. The students can use a

piece of light blue construction paper (9"x12"), white crayons (in regular or oversized as needed), white tempera paint in flat lid containers masking taped on the bottom to the tables (adding a teaspoon of liquid soap to the paint will help in cleanup), paintbrushes (some students may need an adapted paintbrush with a large handle), silver glitter, glue and Fibrefill™. The students can begin by coloring with the white crayon on the paper; some may be able to copy a teacher's simple snowflake (three lines crossed in the middle and then each of the six lines dashed (see picture)). There may be some students that might need to have their paper masking taped to the work surface. Teachers might show visuals of other snowflakes for inspiration.

After they are done making either scribbles or snowflakes, they can push the paint brushes into the white paint and paint a quick snowstorm over the crayons with three or four swipes of the brush. The crayons will resist the paint and show through. It takes but a few minutes to dry, or the next part can wait until the next day. Repeating the pulling of the Fibrefill™, the students pull "little

bitty pieces" and glue five or more little pieces onto the picture, over areas that don't have quite so much crayon and paint. A glue stick can work with this, or the Tap-n-Glue™ cap from Discount School Supply ([www.discount-schoolsupply.com](http://www.discount-schoolsupply.com)) which eliminates the puddling of glue problem that many EC classes experience. After ALL that, the teacher can take the art piece and lay it on the floor in the cover of a copy paper box. Using a regular bottle of glue that flows, the students can be directed or hand over hand assisted to drizzle glue over the picture of snow. While shaking glitter over the picture, the student's shrills of delight will fill the room! The teacher can carefully then tap off the glitter into the box and recycle it back into the glitter container as needed. When completed, the students have a very visual and tactile experience of the snow party!



## Websites to Visit

MPS staff suggest the following sites:

<http://Crayon.net>

Reluctant readers need different strategies to engage their learning. A number of teachers have found this site (which allows them to create their own newspaper). The free template is linked to other news sources around the world. Some students may still need support tools such as text-to-speech to help them process the information gathered.

<http://www.education-world.com>

Lots of resources and materials for classroom teachers. The technology

section has had some very good resources.

<http://www.awesomelibrary.org>

Many links to other great sites are organized for students, teachers and parents. Be sure to check out the Awesome TALKING Library.

<http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide>

This is considered a premier web collection of links for teachers. Everything from slide shows to web quests and current trends in education. There are two large communities of special education technology that connect teachers, staff and parents. They are listservs, so you'll need to

subscribe to them to gain access.

<http://www.qiat.org>

(QIAT) Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology, pronounced like the word quiet. The QIAT Consortium is a nationwide grassroots group that includes hundreds of individuals who provide input into the ongoing process of identifying, disseminating, and implementing a set of widely-applicable Indicators for Assistive Technology Services in school settings.

## Assistive Technology and Golf: What's the Connection?

By Karen Stindt

As you looked at this issue of *The Monitor* and saw the title of this article, were you wondering to yourself, what does golfing have to do with assistive technology? Or perhaps you are thinking that maybe there is some new technology out there for handicapped golfers? Or is this one of those new acronyms for some new technology? Well, golfing does bring to my mind an important concept related to assistive technology that is not any of the above. Read on and I'll explain.

In order for this story to make sense, I must start with a little background about myself before I get to the part about my experiences with golf and assistive technology. I am an OT who has worked over 20 years in public schools with children with special needs. About 10 years ago I went back to school to get my masters degree in therapeutic science (OT). At that time I had an interest in seating and positioning as it was such a significant component of some of my students daily life. As I took classes related to this issue, I discovered that seating and positioning was part of a larger world, the world of assistive technology. It was in that class that I discovered the Alpha Smart. Wonder of wonders, I embraced this new technology like the sailor from a sinking ship who clings to a life vest.



Here it was, the answer for all my students with learning disabilities who had poor fine motor skills. Their ability to perform handwriting was almost impossible, but even if possible it wasn't always too functional. That's how I began my foray into assistive technology. I have since had the opportunity to work as an assistive technology consultant for WATI in the CESA 6 region.

So now you may be thinking, OK she's gotten to how she got involved with assistive technology, but what about the golf part? Well, a few years ago some of my friends took up golfing. Having taken golfing lessons B. C. (before children), I felt comfortable joining them and enjoying a social and sporting outlet that golf could provide. We were getting a little too old for the vigorousness that was a part of our previous sport (volleyball), but all wanted regular exercise, enjoy the company of friends, and also have a reason to enjoy Wisconsin's beautiful summer scenery.

I spent a summer relearning all the rules, the clubs, the terminology, and even the etiquette that goes with this sport. I teed off, chipped, putted, and wedged my way around the course. I knew what I wanted that little ball to do, but for some reason it just didn't want to listen to me. Well, I take that back. It did listen to me but only a

little. It was very inconsistent. I would hit a good shot and it would go the right way and the right distance. Then the next 3, 4 or 5 shots would have a mind of their own (sounds like some students, doesn't it?). Needless to say, I tried harder. I was told to line up this way, try this type of golf club, keep my head down (this involved clamping my teeth on the neck hole of my shirt), but they all only helped a little if at all. Unfortunately, the little that these things helped was not help enough. I decided that 20% consistency was not high enough for me to continue this frustrating sport no matter how much fun it was to be with my friends outside in the glorious Wisconsin summer. Chasing that little ball around when it wasn't going to perform higher than 20% was not enough to keep me at it.

As my friends started to ask why I didn't want to continue, I started to notice some significant parallels between my golfing experiences and the experiences that my children with poor fine motor skills were having with handwriting. My friends said, "Why don't you practice more?". "I have been!" I replied almost indignantly. "Well, we're not very good either," they said. And I said "Obviously you can tolerate poor performance better than I can.". "But we can have such fun!" they said. I

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## Resource Updates

Here are some resources to use (or just to add to your list as resources):

Let's Play: Selecting toys (& also check out the resources section)

<http://letsplay.buffalo.edu/toys/toys.htm>

(Also links to other sites)

ATA's list of accessible toys:

[www.ataccess.org/resources/fpic/accesstoys/](http://www.ataccess.org/resources/fpic/accesstoys/)

(Additional accessible toy & play ideas in We Can Play area)

Lekotek:  
<http://www.lekotek.org>  
(Also links to AblePlay)

ATA has put out a toy guide the past several years. It is a great guide and it is based off of



Accessible Toys

ATA centers "testing" the toys and toy ratings. This has been done the past several years through a grant. It is a wonderful resource! If you visit <http://www.ataccess.org/> go to this site and look at the left column, you will see a "toy" link. I believe if you contact them, they will send some guides.

## Beyond the Classroom

*Adapted by Sue Loesl from the DPI Assessment Guidelines and Accommodations website.*

“The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 requires states to administer high-quality student assessments that are aligned with the state's academic standards and provide coherent information about students' attainment of such standards.” (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Special Education (WI DPI) page). Furthermore, “federal and state special education legislation requires that all students with disabilities participate in state and district assessments. Specifically, the 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) states, “All children with disabilities are included in all general state and district-wide assessment programs, including assessments described under section IIII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, with appropriate accommodation and alternate assessments, where necessary and as indicated in their respective individualized education programs.” The reauthorized IDEA specifies that [alternate assessment](#) is to be provided for the small number of students with disabilities for whom the standardized assessment is inappropriate even with accommodations. At present, the statewide assessment system, the Wisconsin Student Assessment System (WSAS), includes the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations (WKCE and WKCE-CRT) at *third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and tenth grades.*” This quote is taken from the WI DPI website, <http://dpi.wi.gov/oea/specneed.html> which is the overview page for all the issues related to Special Education and testing accommodations. It provides information that IEP teams can easily access in determining the needs of their students for the assessments.

NCLB ruling has impacted the teaching, testing, and IEP's of students with disabilities throughout our state in numerous ways. First, IEP teams must address the issue of testing accommodations/alternative tests within their meetings in collaboration with parents and all staff involved with the student. Accommodations should be ones that the student uses in the classroom, not just for the testing experience. The WI DPI also has available on their website “Assessment Guidelines and Accommodations” for students taking various statewide assessments in 2005-2006. They can be downloaded at <http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/assessmt.html> Prior to this year, the number of acceptable accommodations was quite limited and students who may have been successful on the assessments with few accommodations were either not taking the assessments or were taking the alternative assessments.

Secondly, even with an involved list of accommodations, other students may still not be able to take the examinations and may need to be considered for alternative assessments. The WI DPI website has a good form that can be used in the IEP meeting to identify whether the student should be considered for Alternative Assessments. That document is called Participation Checklist on the webpage <http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/assessmt.html> This form can be very helpful for teams determining the student's unique assessment needs. All the legalese aside, there are a number of accommodations that teachers can use with their students for the reading of assessments, depending upon the goals of the testing section. Of course, if a section requires that the student reads the passage for

comprehension, then the tester cannot read the passage to the student. But, many very simple accommodations can ensure that the student is using the skills that he is capable of to indicate his level of knowledge on the material. Such accommodations are the use of visual magnification devices, large print editions, markers to maintain place, listening to directions from a recording, turning pages for the student, rereading directions as needed, using directions that have been marked with highlighter and indicating responses to a scribe. This is a short list of the accommodations that have been approved through WI DPI. It is important to note that each student has individual skills and challenges and that at certain points in the tests, particular accommodations are not allowed. It is up to the IEP team to determine the strategies that put the student in the best light for success.

**“Many very simple accommodations can ensure that the student is using the skills that he is capable of to indicate his level of knowledge of the material.”**



Assessment Guidelines and Accommodations can be found at:  
<http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/assessmt.html>

## Assistive Technology and Golf: What's the Connection?

(Continued from page 5)

replied, "Let me know when you get to the 19th hole". (In golf terms the 19th hole is the club house bar.) "I will be happy to meet you there and enjoy your company without all the frustration of reliving the episodes of when that little ball wouldn't listen." "But you can re-live the goods ones" they cried and I replied "There aren't enough of them." So now I join them at the 19th hole. I have even been know to chauffer around some of them in a golf cart to enjoy their company and the lovely weather and landscape found in some of Wisconsin's golf courses, but I don't golf.

Recently, I gave in and went to the driving range and tried golfing again. If this were fiction, I would have gotten good enough to take up golfing again and lived happily ever after. The sad news is I hit 100 balls (at least it felt like that many) and no matter what club I used they all went about the same distance and landed in about the same area. Now that may be great for consistency, but I knew enough about golf to know that is not what is supposed to happen with different clubs and so once again I decided golf was not for me. Maybe when I retire and time and money are on different scales then they are now, I'll try again. We'll see.

In the meantime I have discovered how the children I work with feel when they are forced to work on a skill that is very difficult for them. Handwriting is at least as complicated as golf. Motor patterns, rules for spacing and spelling, concepts to think about when they are trying to write down the answer are all factors that influence handwriting. Many times I've been told by teachers that he can do it with you in OT or on this paper, now I am expecting him to do it all the time. Or the teacher will say when I stand over them, help or watch

them (take your pick for favorite teacher phrase) they can do it. As a former golfer, I know the extreme absurdness of these statements. Because if all I needed was someone to stand by me and tell me what to do, I would be Tiger Woods and would be making a lot more money than I am now. I have the right not to golf, but do our kids have the right not to do handwriting? You can well imagine what my behaviors might entail if I was forced to golf. There would be an extreme disinterest in the task, a lack of trying (as who gives a !@# \$ when you don't want to do this) as well as multiple excuses and reasons not to show up. (I'm broke, I just spend my whole summer paycheck at the outlet mall!) Sounds like some of our students when we push for more written work, doesn't it?

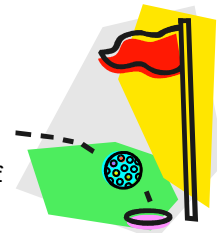
We all know the old adage that practice makes perfect, but I have to disagree with that statement. Practice will improve motor skills, but it will not make them perfect, if perfect is not within their reach. One author I read in graduate school (references available on request and when I have time to dig through all those journal articles stored in the basement) stated that practice does not make perfect and I agree. Their philosophy is that practice makes permanent. I especially agree with that as I have seen children who still write their name from bottom to top even when they get to 3rd or 4th grade, even though they know the right way to form the letters. I even met a graduate student instructor at Madison who made his lower case 'e' in three different strokes. It worked for him, but it was so distracting to me that I couldn't focus on the statistics problem he was trying to explain. Well, maybe my lack of focus was impacted by the content (whew, statistics was a tough old bird!), but I'll never forget that letter formation.

Although it worked for him, I think that the only way I could get my golf skills to work for me would be to throw the ball and I doubt that the other golfers would approve of that!

The point is that all people are not created equal. If that was the case there would be no need for the bell curve (see, I did get something from that statistics class) as we would all be at 50% in everything. I do believe that all people should have equal rights, but we are all not the same. That's why I love assistive technology. It gives people with disabilities a chance to perform at the same level as other nondisabled people. No, assistive technology's not perfect, but we work very hard at what we do to help others be as independent and successful as possible. And when I have teachers who want students with fine motor skills to perform at their maximum abilities all day long, I tell them the story of why I don't golf. Even then I still have teachers who will say, "But they can do it when they want

to". (So I'm choosing not to hit the ball well when I have a bad shot? Not!) I'm still working on those teachers and someday I'll get through.

I hope you've enjoyed this comparison of assistive technology and golf and maybe you can start to see the parallels in these two seemingly unrelated topics. I also hope that you've had a good laugh as well as seen the power of a story in making people understand the complexities of skills such as handwriting. If you have any questions about this article or just want to talk about some of these issues just call Liz Lahm our WATI director. Nah, just kidding. You can give me a ring (920-236-0585) or email me (kstindt@cesa6.k12.wi.us). As you can see I'm always happy to share my opinion.



## 2005-2006 Monitor Schedule

October 1  
December 1  
February 1  
April 1  
May 15

Articles are due the 15th of the prior month.

### Monitor Editor

Sue Loesl, [loesl@milwaukee.k12.wi.us](mailto:loesl@milwaukee.k12.wi.us)

Phone: (414) 475-8127

We're on the web!  
<http://www.wati.org>  
<http://www.milwaukee.k12.wi.us>

## Our Mission ...



The Mission of the Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative is to ensure that every child in Wisconsin who needs assistive technology (AT) will have equal and timely access to an appropriate evaluation and the provision and implementation of any needed AT devices and services.



The Mission of the Milwaukee Public Schools is to ensure that maximum educational opportunities are provided for all students to reach their highest potential so that:

1. Students achieve their educational and employment goals, and
2. Parents choose the Milwaukee Public Schools to educate their children.

## Books to Ponder

*This article was reviewed by Jill Gierach, WATI Consultant from CESA 2.*

EDge: The Latest Information for the Education Practitioner, the November/December 2005 issue. The cover story, of the second issue of this newly launched E-zine was about assistive technology. This journal is published by a professional organization, Phi Delta Kappa International, which celebrates its 100 anniversary this year. The article is entitled *Nuts and Bolts of Assistive Technology: What Every Educator must know*, by Avril Bingue-Romano and Moniqueka Gold. The article was a weighty 13 pages long. The first paragraph contained this statement, which set the tone;

"Legal requirements regarding inclusive education make it clear that it is the responsibility of *all* educators to provide a complete school experience for *all* students, regardless of abilities or disabilities." The article then went on to define AT using a format similar to our checklist to explain tasks and tools, the need for staff development, and funding issues and AT resources. It was compelling that the subject of assistive technology was on the front of the issue and the main story of the issue. This puts assistive technology out where it really belongs: in the conversation of mainline educators and administrators who make curriculum decisions that affect students with disabilities. For a

reprint of the issue, contact Phi Delta Kappa at 1-800-766-1156. Cost of reprints are \$5, which includes S/H. For more information about the organization or to join or subscribe, go to <http://www.pdkintl.org/>



Keeping up to date in assistive technology.