Dear Colleagues,

It seemed like just yesterday we were starting another school year and now the Holiday Season is upon us. It is certainly a time of wonder. The students are excited in anticipation of the holidays. They may just be hoping for a snow day or maybe there is a magic that touches all of us.

I am not sure that all will have as great a holiday as we might want. The last few years have been difficult and many of our friends are no longer working with us. The economy is not up to speed and the state is continuing to have budget problems.

Think about the kind of leadership we have in this state. A governor who has little or no desire to help education, but claims he is fixing it. An education commissioner who is an elitist who sends his kids to a private school while stating that students, parents and public school teachers are special interest groups.

Well maybe he is right. If people banding together in an effort to save New York’s public education and help today’s students receive a high quality education is a special interest group, then so be it. It is a group of which I am proud to be a member. Yes, there may be many reasons for long faces. Yet somehow I believe that in the end we will be okay. Especially if we remember how we have been treated when elections roll around.

Given the state deficit, we will need to continue to fight to maintain funding at its already low levels, so kids from working class and poorer families have a chance at quality education and the services needed to make that possible. Despite it all, I believe that we will persevere and continue to work to make this a better place for our students, friends and families.

There is a definite magic to the season, I can feel it. This magic makes us smile in spite of what is wrong. There seems to be something mystical that causes us to be a little friendlier and a bit more giving. I can’t explain it, but the truth is, it is there. It truly is a time to give thanks.

There is a magic about the season and I am thankful for it. I am also thankful for all the hard work your Executive Board and the various committees have done to help your Association operate. This newsletter is one example of this. I want to thank the editors and staff for the fine job they do.

I want to thank members of the Rep Council for continuing their hard work. They are the strength of the Association. Their decisions are what define much of the way we do business. Their efforts and dedication demonstrate a unity of purpose despite small differences that exist amongst us.

We all need to remember to thank our Executive Board. They work untiringly and deal with the day in and day out business of running this Association. The work that has gone into making the health insurance committee, labor management committee and APPR committee has been enormous. They continually go above and beyond the norm to protect our rights and our contracts.

I would like to personally thank them. I truly appreciate all they do. My job would be impossible without their work.

And finally I would like to thank you for your continued support and help. As we are entering the Holiday Season I want to wish all best of luck and good fortune. I know I have been blessed with the most important things in life and I hope you are too.

Looking forward, Doug
Dec. 14, 2013—Faculty Association Bus Trip to New York City
$30.00 per person—Each person may bring up to 2 guests.

Name __________________________ Email Address ______________________________
Guest #1 __________________________ Guest #2 ______________________________
Phone Number __________________________
Emergency Contact Person __________________________
Emergency Contact Person’s phone number __________________________

We will be leaving Maywood School (1979 Central Avenue) at 8:00 AM, please arrive no later than 7:45 AM. We will be returning at approximately 9:30 PM

Please send completed registration form and send with check made out to “CRB Faculty Assoc.” to:
Carolyn Pierce, 1247 Trinity Avenue, Schenectady, NY 12306

Deadline for registration is November 29th. You will receive an email confirmation when your seat(s) on the bus have been secured.

Capital Region BOCES Faculty Association
Important Dates for 2013-14

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<tr>
<th>BOCES Board of Education</th>
<th>Executive Board</th>
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<td>November 18, 2013</td>
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Capital Region BOCES Faculty Association Leadership

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<th>WORK</th>
<th>E-Mail Address</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
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<td>862-4776</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hdharple@msn.com">hdharple@msn.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>Patricia Gollub</td>
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<td>862-4716</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Gollub02@yahoo.com">Gollub02@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>CVP TA/EA</td>
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<td>356-8349</td>
<td><a href="mailto:condolora@aol.com">condolora@aol.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Recording Secretary</td>
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<td>Deborah Sorvari</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Grievance Chair</td>
<td>Kristen Lashway</td>
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As I write this, I’m laid up with a bad hip and a bad foot (opposite sides) looking out at a very dismal day. As we enter the season for giving thanks, it is hard to feel that way. I have a list of tasks that I need to get to that physically I can’t. I also have a great deal of paperwork to do the alternate assessment. I’m on medication that makes me feel spacy and a bit nauseated. I have a puppy that needs to be walked and played with. Basically, I feel pretty useless and not so thankful.

But it’s really not that hard to make the attitude adjustment. It’s only been a bit more than two years since I looked out at the destruction caused by Hurricane Irene and I see the progress made in the rebuilding of this county that I call home. I also have a friend coming over to walk the dog and do some of the “must do now” tasks. My friends have been joining me for meals and helping me with shopping. My team at school gives me the needed support to come to work and still be productive. And even the kids have pitched in. I have a very volatile group of students but this week they far exceeded the expectations for their behavior. Even the most difficult student did his/her best to support me in much the way I try to support them every day.

The beginning of November reminds me that I have eight months to go in what will be 32 ½ years with BOCES. Diane Kavanaugh (retired Speech Pathologist) said to celebrate every month of one’s last year and that’s what I am trying my best to do. I’ve been involved with the Association for 29 of those years and that’s been a blessing that I’m not sure that all people realize. Our Association negotiates a good contract and will continue to do that this year in spite of the adversities. It’s a tough time to be negotiating but I have a lot of confidence in the people doing that. I am also seeing a rise in members’ participation in Association jobs but also jobs all over the BOCES organization. This was noted at a recent BOCES Board meeting. It was mentioned that more people were getting involved with committees, especially the Professional Development Plan Committee. The comment made was that people want to be more involved with the things that affect their careers. So all of this gives me more to be thankful for.

However, it is important not to become complacent. We need to continue to be vigilant. We need to support the Association and the BOCES organization. We need to be a reason for our colleagues to be thankful. I’ve often felt that Thanksgiving is the forgotten holiday. In the stores we see Halloween fade into Christmas with little notice of Thanksgiving. We can’t forget what those early settlers did for us and we shouldn’t forget what the early union leaders did for our members. Let’s not only be thankful for all of that, let’s continue to be a reason for others to be thankful.

Happy Thanksgiving!

In Solidarity,
Lanny Barsale
Dear Constituents,

The holidays are upon us once again with all the magnificent colors shining through the fall foliage. Thanksgiving has always been one of my favorite times of year. I am always reminded of previous Thanksgivings with family, friends and loved ones who are no longer here to share the holiday again. I wish for everyone to have a wonderful holiday vacation and hope you are afforded the opportunity to make new memories to store away for future reminiscences.

On Tuesday, December 3, 2013 at Maywood School there will be a Teaching Assistant/Aide Faculty meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to review the APPR, Student Learning Objectives and the impact Teaching Assistants have on the process. Students, teachers and principals have much invested in making sure this process is followed correctly. Please take this seriously and attend the upcoming meeting. We are a very important component in implementing the Student Learning Objectives and it is vital that everyone is fully aware of the facts on the new regulations. See everyone at the 3:15-4:00 PM TA Faculty meeting in Conference Rm. A, on December 3rd.

Information will be coming shortly from administration.

I want to extend my thanks to the new Faculty Association Representatives for the Teaching Assistant/Aide Chapter. Thank you to Elizabeth Hart, Patricia Blizzard, Mary Beth Fenton and Cindy Foss. Thank you once again, it is so appreciated by many.

Unfortunately, I am writing this article before a scheduled negotiation meeting, so I do not have an update for this article. The meeting scheduled for next week is to finalize some language and then proceed to exchange our proposals with administration. I will have more information for you in the next article in December.

This is all the updates I have for now. I want to extend my best wishes for a healthy, wonderful Thanksgiving with your loved ones. Try to find some time for yourselves and enjoy the feast. I know I will!

In Solidarity,
Colleen Condolora
Salutations to Our Readers,

Do you recall having to read some of Shakespeare's works in high school and college? Although easier than Beowulf, how torturous it first was with strange words and unlike the language we spoke. As we plodded along, it became easier, interesting and even enjoyable. We came away with a feeling of accomplishment and determined to tackle some of his other writings. But all of our good intentions came to naught as we counted the number of books yet to complete on our list of required reading.

Our interest in and appreciation for Sir William was rekindled by a recent Gazette article (9/21/13). We learned that many sayings and phrases which dot our language are attributed to Shakespeare. We say attributed because there are no manuscripts known to exist written in his own hand. But that is another story. Forthwith cometh gems from Sir William:

- What’s in a name
- Tongue tied
- Elbow room
- Tower of strength
- North by northwest
- The be all and end all

Let us hope the cryptic jargon of texting and tweeting does not obliterate these colorful phrases. So we close with, “All’s well that ends well”.

RETIREE UPDATE

We had a chance to chat with Dick Stigberg, Votec teacher, retired and Grievance Chairman. He has enjoyed some rounds of golf with other Votec retirees, Bob Cole, Bruce Weidman, Dave Wilsey, and Gordy Paro. All are doing well.

REMEMBERING...

our student Melissa Ferguson, 52, who passed away on Oct. 4, 2013. Missy spread joy and happiness to all she met. Missy’s mother, Meg taught in the Special Ed. Division in the 1980’s. Our condolences to her and her family.

RETIREES PERSONALS

Our condolences to (Virginia) Ginny Wilber upon the passing of her husband George (Jim) on Oct. 9, 2013, at age 88. The Wilber’s moved to Salisbury, No. Carolina after retiring. They have been married for 62 years. In addition to Ginny, whom he adored, George is survived by 2 children and 23 grand and great grandchildren.
Kristen Lashway (Teacher, Sp. Ed.) is appointed as our new Grievance Chair.

Chapter Vice-Presidents’ reports:

TA/aides – Colleen Condolora
Special Education TA Faculty meeting — TA Chapter to be updated on SLOs – want to be sure that everyone is on board. Originally scheduled for November 26th but change to December 3rd – 3:15–4:00 PM at Maywood.

Negotiation – meeting with Mike Rowan will be on Oct. 29th, will be ready to roll once we are able to negotiate “Time to move forward.”

TA/Aide Rep list will be ready for next meeting

Special Education – Flora Fasoldt
Updated rep lists – needed two more full-time reps. Shelly Peck who was an alternate accepted the position of Rep Council member.

Negotiation team for teachers – Doug Harple, Flora Fasoldt, Pat Gollub & Jeannine Moran

Committees –
Membership – no report

Negotiations – still meeting about Health Insurance. Need to resolve that issue first.

Audit – Catherine Jakway (TA, Sp. Ed.) Dan Bush, (Teacher, CTE) Kate Clark (Speech, Sp. Ed.)

We need someone from Service Chapter.

Nominating and Election: Need members

TRIAD – next Tuesday – volunteers are needed to do Highlights for December and January

Joanne Cogswell (Teacher) – December
Ann Conway (Social Worker) – January

BOCES Board Meeting – Meeting will be on Monday at Schoharie CTE.

Social Committee update – to plan events – tentative dates:
December 7th – Children’s party
December 14th, NYC – will put on website

Next town hall meeting – October 22nd
Board members were recognized for School Board Recognition Week – cake was provided

Annual Review of Professional Development Plan – Nancy Jones, Barb Catalano, Jim Haas
Went over subcommittees – mini grants, data-driven decision making, student achievement
Talked about goals – sharing across divisions – webinairs, shared PD opportunities between divisions, embedded staff development, in-house expertise:
- Focus – Common Core Learning Standards – adopting and adapting
- Star Enterprise, SLOs, eDoctrina (for SLOs and observations), BOCES wide and regional
- Assessments
- Professional Development Opportunities – VISTA, CCLS modules, TCI, Math in Focus,
- Professional Learning Committees, NYSAA Frameworks, Technology
- Mentioned grant that would provide Ipads to all speech therapists,
- SEDL and CARE,
- NERIC – Model Schools, Online tools – Google, Software trainings, Twitter
- Career Development Occupational Standards – commencement credential (no more IEP diploma), CCLS – Career and Tech classes naturally use non-fiction, Employability profile
- Educational Support Services – themes.
- – Educate, unite, inspire
- TAs – Technology, behavior management
- Trying to find a way to document all of this. There is much better participation in this committee – People appear to want to have a say in their professional development.

Audit – Cusack and Company
So far it’s positive, 67 page report. Out of that there were 3 comments and they are already taking corrective actions. We raised revenues and maintained costs. There is a surplus for needed reserves such as retirement rates.

All reports have been filed

Comptroller – every 5 years. It’s a 4 – 5 month process. They conduct a risk assessment – what to focus on. They have taken preliminary information. Comment was made that “they have to find something.”

The offices at 900 will be moving upstairs so they can gut the downstairs. It will take 4 – 5 months. November Board meeting will be at Maywood School.

National School Boards Conference – registration on Wednesday. Chuck, Lynn and Michelle will be presenting on test security. State Ed. thinks very highly of this team.

Committee reports
Audit – internal update, focus on credit card usage
NYSSBA – resolution – It is regarding Tier 3 and Tier 4 employee contributions. They want to encourage the state to enact legislation to make employees pay into system after 10 years. They basically want to make a statement because it won’t happen and they know it. What is needed is legislation to enact that change. Lynn felt there was a “legitimacy to it.” Barbara felt it was a political statement, amateurish and a wasted effort. President stated that retirement benefits once accrued cannot be decreased. Chuck asked why pass a resolution that is illegal?

Membership to Schenectady County Chamber of Commerce approved - $603.00

Approval of field trip to Montreal – CTE Fashion Club

There was a concern about the number of chaperones (2) with 50 students. They should have at least 5 so a 1:10 ratio. They first need to know the number of students. They may use parents.

Report about the Commissioner’s Round table – he had to hold a second round table because when some were denied, they “bombed” him with e-mails.
School board members are showing that they want to talk to their commissioner.
Executive session and after that adjournment.
November 19, 2013

CELEBRATE!

The Third Tuesday in November is

New York State
School Related Professionals
Recognition Day

A day to recognize and honor the school support staff who help educate, transport and feed our children and those who keep our schools clean and safe, and the offices running smoothly.

Say “Thank You” to an SRP today!
This subject has hit close to home in recent months. At the time of this writing, my brother John, at the young age of 58 passed away from complications of genetic heart disease. He had three heart procedures recently, the last one to repair the atrial fibrillation. We thought the third one was “the charm” but there was much more to his illness than we were aware of. He had a massive heart attack and died on November 12th. I sit here writing in shock and disbelief. My father, John Sr. died from the same illness and the same way at the young age of 55.

My remaining three siblings have enlarged hearts, heart murmurs, or atrial fibrillation. My youngest sister, just 48 years old, could not walk to the end of her block without becoming weak and winded. This disease came on suddenly last November and she kept putting off a doctor visit until it got to the point of surgery this past spring. She never thought this could have happened to her until her symptoms became persistent. My sister’s heart is beating normally, she feels great and she said that she feels twenty years younger. So, who is the only sibling who hasn’t been checked for these genetic heart issues? You guessed it. My turn comes in December. Now that I know what it is, I don’t suspect I have it and I don’t want it!

You might have heard about atrial fibrillation without knowing exactly what kind of heart condition it is. Atrial fibrillation, or often referred to as afib, is an irregular heartbeat rhythm that starts in the upper part of your heart. Normally your heart rhythm should be controlled by a structure called the sinoatrial (SA) node, located in the upper right part of your heart, known as the right atrium. The SA node generates an electrical impulse that spreads in a very organized way through the left and right atria, causing them to contract and push blood into the lower parts of the heart (the ventricles). If you have this disorder, instead of starting at the SA node, the electrical impulse starts up in many different areas at once and becomes very disorganized. This causes the atria to quiver, or fibrillate, in an uncontrolled way, and your heartbeat becomes rapid and weak.

The Dangers of Atrial Fibrillation
Most people can live well with the symptoms, as long as they are treated. Afib could be dangerous if it comes on while driving. It can also cause fainting, which could result in a fall. The biggest danger is from blood clots. A blood clot can form in your heart because blood pools there when your heart is fibrillating. My brother’s first surgery was to repair the clot in his heart. This was a long tedious procedure that kept him in the hospital a number of days. If a blood clot travels to your brain, it can cause a stroke.

Complications of Atrial Fibrillation
Stroke is the most dangerous risk factor for a person with this complication. The risk for stroke is about six times greater than the risk for a person without it. Afib also weakens your heart over time. As your heart weakens, fluid can accumulate in the lower parts of your body and in your lungs, a condition called congestive heart failure.

Atrial Fibrillation Statistics
Also called heart arrhythmia, this condition is the most common of the serious types of irregular heartbeats, or arrhythmias. It affects millions of Americans. The risk of afib increases with age, usually showing up after age 60, but about half the people with this condition are younger than 75. Men are more likely to have this heart problem than women, and Caucasians are more likely to have it than African- or Hispanic-Americans.

Atrial Fibrillation Symptoms
You may have it without obvious or even any symptoms. You may just feel tired or out of breath and not realize you have an irregular heartbeat. The most common afib symptoms include a pounding or fluttering feeling in your chest (sometimes referred to as palpitations), a
lack of energy, feeling lightheaded, pain in your chest, and difficulty catching your breath.

Types of Atrial Fibrillation
There are two types of this heart ailment. If you have or suspect you have afib that comes and goes on its own, it is called paroxysmal atrial fibrillation. Paroxysmal atrial fibrillation can last for minutes or for days. If you have the symptoms for more than seven days, it is called persistent or chronic atrial fibrillation and usually goes away only with treatment.

Atrial Fibrillation Treatment
Atrial fibrillation treatments include cardioversion, which is getting your heart back into a normal rhythm. This can be done with medications or with an electric shock. Medications may simply slow down your heart rate without actually changing your heart beat back to normal, or they may help keep your heart from fibrillating. It is also important to take medications that prevent blood clots. A procedure called catheter ablation may be used to give you long-term relief if you do not respond well to medications.

Atrial Fibrillation Safeguards
In many cases, there is no obvious cause. Although there is no way to prevent afib you can decrease your risk by avoiding some of the common factors that may contribute to arrhythmia. Avoid too much coffee and alcohol, keep your blood pressure and your cholesterol levels under control, don’t smoking, maintain a healthy weight, and see your doctor regularly.

The Best Atrial Fibrillation Practitioners
Your primary care doctor can help coordinate your treatment plan, which usually involves working with a cardiologist, a heart specialist trained to manage most atrial fibrillation issues. Other heart specialists you might see are those who do procedures like catheter ablation and cardioversion. Be sure to learn as much as you can about managing this heart ailment and work closely with everyone on your treatment team.

This article came from www.everydayhealth.com October 29, 2013

AFT Electronic Newsletter Articles

Make your voice heard as Congress debates budget
As we head toward the Dec. 13 deadline for a federal budget deal, conservative Republicans already are signaling that they want to put 99 percent of Americans on the chopping block while protecting the wealthy and corporations. We need to weigh in on key decisions affecting our economy and our nation, and to urge Congress to invest in public education, healthcare and other domestic programs. That means repealing the harsh cuts we saw during the first year of sequestration; protecting Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid from benefit cuts; and ending tax breaks to companies for sending their business overseas.

U.S. Senate takes a stand against discrimination
Members of the U.S. Senate joined together across aisles and ideologies, and took a giant step on Nov. 7 toward eliminating discrimination for LGBTQI working Americans by passing the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, AFT President Randi Weingarten says. "In the American psyche, it has become common sense that all workers—gay or straight, transgender or not—should be judged based on the quality of their work, not on who they love or who they are," she says.

11/13— Page 10
A financial safety net for NYSUT members & their families

Long-term care insurance pays for services that aren’t covered by Medicare or traditional health insurance but are important when you can’t fully take care of yourself.

You may think it’s unnecessary since you have no plans of ending up in a nursing home or requiring assistance for basic daily activities. The fact remains, though, that none of us can predict what’s going to happen in the future.

This is where long-term care insurance comes into play — helping to pay the high cost of custodial care and other long-term care expenses that a long-term illness or injury can bring.

That’s why the NYSUT Member Benefits Trust is excited to be back in the long-term care business with the endorsement of New York Long-Term Care Brokers.

With this endorsed program, NYSUT members and their eligible family members have the opportunity to receive a 5% to 10% discount on various plans.

With regional representatives throughout New York state and beyond, eligible individuals have access to long-term care insurance plans from multiple highly-rated insurance companies – including the New York State Partnership for Long-Term Care.

And with Americans living longer than ever today, the need for a financial safety net has never been greater. Through this endorsed program, eligible individuals can get a long-term care insurance plan designed with their specific needs in mind.

And don’t automatically discount the cost of this type of insurance as it may be far more affordable than you may think.

If you or a loved one has been previously declined for long-term care insurance, you may still be insurable with a different company. NYLTCB represents numerous long-term care insurance companies – all with different medical underwriting guidelines. Make sure to ask your long-term care insurance specialist for more details.

We encourage you to look into the cost of a long-term care plan tailored to your specific needs.

For more information about this endorsed offering, please contact NYLTCB toll-free at 888-884-0077. You can also contact Member Benefits with any questions at 800-626-8101 or visit memberbenefits.nysut.org.

For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.
Our condolences to Ruth Low (NERIC) on the recent passing of her daughter, Katlin Low (TA, Sp. Ed. at RA1)

Katlin was the niece of Patricia MacDormand (NERIC).

Our condolences also go to Catherine Jakway (TA, Sp. Ed.) on the loss of her brother John on Nov. 12th. He was only 58 years old.