Dear Colleagues,

Happy New Year! I can’t believe it is 2009. I want to wish you all the very best in this upcoming year. I hope your holidays were full of fun and that all your wishes for the Holiday Season came true. As we prepare to move forward and face all the challenges that will be presented in this new year, I hope we all will be granted the strength and patience needed.

I would like to thank everyone for working hard throughout the year. Our Faculty Association is alive and well because of ongoing efforts of so many. If you are an Association officer, member of Rep Council or one of our committees, I thank you. All the work you do is what makes our Association strong.

If you are not part of one of these groups I invite you to join us. Contact your chapter VP or myself for more information.

The beginning of another year can be a time of reflection, renewed hope and resolution. Looking back, I think it was a good year. I find myself in good spirits and good health. As we move into this new year, I am hopeful it will be better than we think. Though I expect we will have more challenges, I feel confident we will handle them and be successful.

As for hope, I am forever hopeful that more people will learn to appreciate how hard we work for the children in our care and recognize what we do to help them. I hope that funding for needed student programs will not be cut. Education is one of the solutions for many problems. I think, after many years of ongoing attacks on public education, people are starting to wake up and though the economy is not great, our work will be supported. The political tide has shifted and we now have many more pro-people and pro-education legislators. Let’s support and help inform these legislators and hope they don’t get sidetracked by other issues and the influence of “Big Business”.

Looking forward,
Doug
Rep Council Highlights
By Lanny Barsale

New Business:
- The delegates who attended the AFT Convention last July, did a power point presentation. Report will be in the next TRIAD.
- Board Meeting –
  - Discussion about school budget cuts. Many are cutting field trips. They are trying to cut back without losing people.
  - BOCES is looking at ways to save energy. An Energy Manager would be part of the process. There is a software program to document changes. Hope to save 2.6 million in 10 years.

Old Business:
- Survey Committee for Related Services – still collecting surveys. The District Superintendent is willing to look at the survey results.
- Service Unit seniority list update – There will be a meeting with Robert Zordan in the next few days. Certified people under State Education are not affected. Civil Service jobs could be affected. OT’s and PT’s (from the Teachers Chapter) are under Albany County Civil Service.
- NYSUT Peer Review Conference Participation – the people who attended this conference were not in attendance at the Rep Council. Hopefully we can get someone to present at next Rep Council. Both sides of the “table” have got to want this. It should not be confused with mentoring.

Standing Committees:
- Nominations Chair – Lanny Barsale. Nomination forms will be in the February issue of the TRIAD. Please check with people before you nominate them. We will only be electing delegates for AFT in this election.
- Elections Chair – Cathi Aini-Jakway was appointed Chair by Doug Harple.
- Budget Committee – Volunteers to be on the committee are: Colleen Condolora (TA), Don Orlando (CTE), Joan Kosinski (Service), Lois Leonard (Sp. Ed.). We need all budget requests by the February Rep Council.

Select Committees:
- Still no retirement committee report.
- TRIAD Committees will be meeting over the holiday recess, please get articles in.

Other Information:
- SRP Regional Round Table – January 29th. Will look at State financial crisis and the impact of that on school budgets. 4:00 – 7:00 PM includes supper.
- The Association is giving each student who volunteered at the Kid’s Holiday Party $25.00.
- Be sure to get retirement letter in by January 15th even if you are only thinking about it. This gets sent to Mark Jones. This will be for the 2009 – 2010 school year. There is a sample letter under the Faculty Association Website under retirement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capital Region BOCES Faculty Association Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POSITION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVP TA/EA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVP Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVP Spec. Educ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVP C T E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corresponding Sec’y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grievance Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dear Gabby,

What is the difference between the evaluation you receive after an observation and a summative evaluation?

Confused in Catskill

*********************

Dear Confused,

You are not alone. The APPR process confuses many of us! The Annual Professional Performance Review is negotiated between the BOCES and the Teachers’ Unit of the Faculty Association. Its procedures and the forms used in the process are described in the contract.

Briefly, if you are formally observed by your principal, you should have a pre conference to talk about what you are going to be doing in your lesson, an observation of that lesson, and a post conference to discuss the lesson. Based on all of that, the principal writes up the evaluation. Since you have had a chance to discuss everything with your principal prior to the evaluation being written, there should be no surprises once you receive it. You are asked to sign to show that you received the document (it does not mean that you agree). If you do have a conflict, you may write a rebuttal.

At the end of the year, your principal may write a summative evaluation. That is based on all formal and informal observations of your work throughout the year. It is basically the principal’s opinion of how you perform on all of the items in your rubric. Before your summative conference with the principal, you should do a self reflection (look over your rubrics and evaluate where you believe your skills are). Gabby just takes a pencil and circles the description that best describes her for each item in the rubric.

You do not have to write down or submit your self reflection. Then if there are any conflicts of opinion during your discussion, you are prepared to discuss them and, if needed, show evidence to support your position. Again, since there has been open communication throughout the process, there should be no surprises when you receive the written evaluation.

Gabby

*********************

Dear Readers,

Do you have questions? Gabby would really love to hear from you. What she doesn’t know she will find out! (Of course if you ask her, she thinks she knows it all!) No question too big or too small.

Gabby keeps everything confidential, so don’t worry about being named. All names are changed to protect the innocent.

Please send your discrete inquiries to:

Dear Gabby   c/o
jleonar4@nycap.rr.com
OR
maidmrn300@aol.com

The AFT has released two new reports to help affiliates work with their communities to turn public schools green. The first report, "Building Minds, Minding Buildings: Our Union’s Road Map to Green and Sustainable Schools" Green schools mean healthier environments for students and staff. Research shows that better environmental quality yields more productive human beings and greater academic achievement for all students," says AFT president Randi Weingarten. "No one has better insight into what makes classrooms the best possible learning environments than the teachers and paraprofessionals who work in them," says AFT executive vice president Lorretta Johnson. "That's why school districts should know they'll get better results by involving the union and all school staff in school design decisions."

The second report, "School Infrastructure Funding Need: A State-by-State Assessment and an Analysis of Recent Court Cases," is an outside study showing that current funding need totals well over $250 billion nationwide. The report lays out how most legal action taken as a lever to build and repair schools occurs at the state level, and that major decisions have been handed down in recent years in states such as Arkansas and New York. It also recommends a partnership at all levels of government to bring school buildings up to par, with the federal government taking immediate action through direct funding, particularly at crumbling facilities attended by low-income children.

SOURCES AND CONTRIBUTORS:
Kathy Chavez; George Jackson; USDA; Jennifer Anderson, Ergonomics Today; Leonard Edmonds, editor; Laura Baker, copy editor; Val Klayman, design editor
TEACHING ASSISTANTS/EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS
By Colleen Condolora, Chapter VP

January has arrived and I hope everyone had a wonderful Holiday Season and had an opportunity to enjoy friends and family and take a few days to get some rest and relaxation.

With January here, as you are aware, the five year anniversary has arrived for the initial group of Teaching Assistants. This means our due date is here for the 75 hours of professional development. If you haven’t entered your data yet, it is imperative that you do so immediately. This is a condition of your employment, so please enter your professional development into Timekeeper. If you are someone who is not comfortable using the computer, please have ready for your principal, your proof that you have completed your 75 hours of professional development. It can be in a folder, binder or even a shoebox if this is how you keep your records. As long as you can provide proof this is the most important factor.

In the spring, workshops for untenured Teaching Assistants will be offered through NYSUT’s Education and Learning Trust. I am presently meeting with administration to secure a location and dates for the workshops to be held. This professional development will greatly benefit new hires and Teaching Assistants on Level III who are required by the State Education Department to complete 75 hours of professional development every 5 years. More information on these workshops will be forthcoming so please check your GroupWise emails for updates.

The Children’s Holiday Party was well attended and a success. I would like to take this opportunity to thank volunteers, Sarah Adriance, Cathi Aini-Jakway, Gail Radecky and Santa himself, Brent Pierce for their assistance in making this a wonderful time for the children. A special thank you to Culinary students Tiffany Silvano, Mike Wolf, Christopher Tuttle, and Jessalyn Stafford for volunteering their Saturday morning to prepare the food and drinks.

In closing, if you know of anyone who may need help with entering their data, please have them contact me or perhaps you could lend a helping hand. Thanks, and try to stay warm.

In solidarity,
Colleen

2009 Robert G. Porter Scholars Program Applications and Publication Ads Now Available

AFT members and their children are eligible to participate in the Robert G. Scholars program, which awards four $8,000 scholarships to graduating high school seniors and $1,000 grants to AFT members who are continuing their education. You can download ads to drop in your newsletter or membership publication from http://leadernet.aft.org/communicating/banner_ads/other/ The zipped folders--one with ads in .wmf format and one with .tif format--each have three sizes of ads you can use.

To apply for a scholarship or grant, download the application from the AFT Web site at www.aft.org/afplplus/scholarships or e-mail an application request to porterscholars@aft.org.

Deadline for the applications is March 31, 2009.
Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the New Year.

As always I would implore you to consider involvement in your Association. The Service Chapter needs more representation at Rep Council; we are entitled to eight and only have three. Our Chapter is very diversified, we have custodians, messengers, OTA/s, PTA, LPN, RN, computer programmers, data entry specialist, senior account clerks to mention a few. To facilitate an increase in representation, I will be making phone calls asking for your help. Please seriously consider becoming involved. Your Chapter needs you.

At this time I would like to welcome Heather Muchmore, (Educ. Interpreter, Sp. Ed.). She was appointed at the December Board.

On another note, I have been attending the monthly BOCES Board Meetings. I find them to be very interesting. Our new District Superintendent, Charles Dedrick, has hit the ground running. His communications with staff have been enlightening. I hope that with his leadership, we will not be too devastated by the upcoming impact of the world’s financial situation.

As a reminder, Human Resources has asked that any Service Chapter member with information relating to any permanent appointment to an Albany County Civil Service position, which is not in their Human Resources office records, to please contact them with the information at 862-4910. When we meet in the near future, grouped by job title, HR wants their information to be as accurate as possible.

I recently attended an Insurance Committee meeting and one thing I came away with is the fact that our Medco prescription plan is self-insured. The more three-month prescriptions that you get through the mail, the more money we save as a group. I have been using the mail format since the beginning and have found it to be convenient and cost effective.

As always, in Solidarity, Susan
The Christmas Season of 2008 will be long remembered for the devastating ice storm we survived. Recalling the crackle of limbs breaking and their crashing to the ground, brings chills with each recollection of that cold, powerless and black first night. The fear that such an event might occur had become a reality and I pondered how I would keep my disabled sweetheart safe and warm.

My best efforts to keep a fire going in our Franklin wood stove warded off the cold a bit, but was of minimal comfort without lights, a cooking range and coffee.

My heart leapt when our hardwired phone rang and Cathi Aini-Jakway asked, “How are you doing?” In response to our plight, she said, “We have power, come stay with us.” And so we did and what might have become a dire situation for us, became a memorable weekend of family and friendship.

We will forever be grateful to Cathi, Victor, and daughter Amy for extending their hands of help and hearts of love to us. God has Blessed us.

PERSONALS

Congratulations to Eleanor and Mario Notar who marked their 50th anniversary on August 10th. They celebrated with their family at The Water’s Edge Restaurant. Ely and Mario have four children and 11 grandchildren ranging in age from 5 to 24 years old.

RETIREE UPDATE

WE INVITE YOU to share update for the RETIREES CORNER

Name
How are you?
Have you moved?
Travel?
New family members?

Send to: Jeanette K. Christoff
1029 Day Rd., Schenectady, NY 12303
Phone- 518-356-0137  OR  jankachristo@juno.com

We enjoyed hearing from BOCES retirees and friends over the Holidays: Cecie Evans, Stephanie Hinds, Carolyn Kozubal, Jan Albertini, Dianne Ammerman, Ginny Wilbur, Mimi Mounteer, Kathy Prokorym, Sylvia Hauser, Jane Caruvana, Terri Cuomo, Anita Riccio, Fran Yankowski, Doris Schuyler, Lauren Duffy, Rosael Camacho-Blake, Gerene Lynn, Cathi and Susan. Updates in the next issue.
Healthy Living; Living For Good Health
By Catherine A. Aini-Jakway, TA, Spec. Ed.

Don’t Get Caught In The Dark, Stay Storm Ready

Last month’s ice storm left thousands of people in massive power failures and dangerously unprepared. Extensive damage from fallen trees and downed power lines kept National Grid and outside companies working 24 hours a day to restore service to the east coast. Many people decided to wait out the storm hoping that power would soon be restored. Unfortunately for so many, it was days later, forcing those out of their homes into the warmth and safety of shelter from family, friends, or local communities. Residents stood in long lines at supermarkets, hardware stores, and gas stations to purchase needed supplies, risking their own safety by driving on impassable roads during the state of emergency. If it is not necessary for you to be out, don’t. If you do have to drive, keep your fuel tank at least half full because gas stations rely on electricity to power their pumps. Why wait until disaster strikes? What takes so little time to have ready in case of emergency all year round, can save your life. National Grid and The American Red Cross recommend having available these essential items in a personal storm kit:

- Working flashlights and a battery operated radio or TV for updated information
- Batteries
- A supply of drinking water, along with a small supply of foods like canned and dried and a manual can opener. If you have a baby, keep some ready-to-use formula on hand.
- Extra blankets and firewood.
- Extra medication, first aid supplies and essential baby items. If you use medication that requires refrigeration, most can be kept in a closed refrigerator for several hours without a problem. If unsure, check with your physician or pharmacist.
- Remember to also store extra pet food, they are helpless without you.

During a Storm

- Avoid opening the refrigerator and freezer to keep your food as fresh as possible.
- If you have space, keep frozen water in plastic containers. This can serve as drinking water or will help keep food cold for several hours.
- Due to the extreme risk of fire, do not use candles during a power outage.
- Cordless phones don't work if the power goes out. Keep a corded (traditional analog) telephone or cell phone available.
- Leave a light switch on to let you know when the power is back on.
- When an outage occurs, unplug sensitive appliances such as VCRs, TVs, stereos, air conditioners, microwaves, and all computer equipment to protect them when your service is restored. Keep computer files and operating systems backed up regularly. Buy extra batteries and a power converter if you use a laptop computer. A power converter allows most laptops (12 volts or less) to be operated from the cigarette lighter of a vehicle. Get a high quality surge protector for all of your computer equipment. Consider purchasing and installing an uninterruptible power supply (UPS). Consult with your local computer equipment dealer about available equipment and costs.

If the power may be out for a prolonged period, plan to go to another location (relative, friend, or public facility) that has heat to keep you warm and safe.

Safety First!

- Always use extreme caution near wires and power lines, treat them as though they are live and deadly. Never touch downed power lines or anything coming in contact with fallen lines, and don't walk beneath overhead equipment, lines or wires.

Using a Generator

- If you are considering obtaining a generator, get advice from a licensed professional, such as an electrician. Do not run a generator inside a home or garage. If you use a generator, connect the equipment you want to power directly to the outlets on the generator. With proper equipment you can connect a generator to a home's electrical system. If you do so, you must insure that your house power is not connected to the power grid by opening your main breaker. This protects the linemen working to restore power.

Always remember family and friends. No one should be left in the bitter cold or in the dark. You won’t know if they need help unless you try. If you can’t reach them by house phone, keep cell numbers current and available. Get a neighbor’s number as a back up plan. Neighbors are close by giving you peace of mind if you can’t travel out. Some people don’t ask for the help they need. Your concern for their safety and well-being may be enough encouragement for them to leave their homes for a few hours or even a few days. Start the New Year off to a smart start. It’s always better to be safe than sorry.

For more detailed information and information for people with disabilities and energy conservation, visit red-cross.org and click on blackouts, or nationalgrid.com and click on Storm Central.

Have a safe and healthy 2009.
Special Ed. Teacher Unit Meeting Minutes—December 17th

Minutes taken By Carolyn Beattie

Topics discussed:

Teacher contracts—All members of the teacher unit should have a copy of the contract. For new Association members, copies will be provided. Contact your Faculty Association Rep if you have any questions.

The ongoing issue of the length of the school day for teachers is still being discussed among the appropriate parties. When specific information is determined, it will be made available.

New Teaching Assistant Training—Questions were raised as to the content of new TA training. Are Teaching Assistants informed about their specific roles and responsibilities within the classroom? Are TAs given practical strategies to assist them as a member of the classroom team? Additional topics covered included the TA pool and classroom closings.

If you would like to contribute to any of the above topics or have a different issue you wish to discuss with members of the Teachers Unit, plan on attending one of our next meetings. Meetings start at 3:30 and finish by 4:15.

Upcoming Meetings
January 21st—@ School Support Services; February 25th—@ School Support Services; March 18th—@ School Support Services; April 22nd—location TBD; May 20th—@ School Support Services

To receive email reminders and a copy of the meeting minutes, please email Susan Stewart at jsdsvs@aol.com.

Mileage Reimbursement Information

The standard business mileage rate for transportation expenses incurred beginning Jan. 1, 2009, will be 55 cents per mile, down from the 58.5 cents rate in effect during the second half of 2008, the IRS announced.

Mileage for union business which is incurred beyond the normal workday commute will be reimbursed by the Association at the appropriate IRS standard mileage rate. Mileage claims must be submitted to the treasurer for reimbursement during the months of December and June. Conference transportation, including mileage expense, is exempt from the December/June submission dates.

Mileage for BOCES business (ex. Health Insurance Committee, PDP, Labor Management, etc.) will not be reimbursed. Please refer to the CRBFA Travel Expense Policy for a more detailed explanation. You can find a copy of the expense claim form and expense policy on the FA website and at Rep Council meetings.

Questions? Contact Debbie Sorvari, CRBFA Treasurer @ 452-8138.

Upcoming Conference Schedule

Regional Presidents Conference
February 5-6, 2009—
Gideon Putnam, Saratoga Springs

NYSUT Health & Safety Conference
March 6-7, 2009
The Hilton, Saratoga Springs

AFT PSRP Conferene

March 19-22, 2009, Baltimore, MD
Committee of 100
March 23-24, 2009, Albany
NYSUT Representative Assembly
April 2-4, 2009, Buffalo, NY
Book donations welcome...
Teachers in the ICDSII program at the Page Avenue School in Cohoes are accepting donations of new or gently used upper elementary or middle school-level picture and reading books to help stock their new classroom library. To make a contribution or receive more information, contact Special Education teachers Chris DePoy or Jessica Walthers (teachers).

Focusing on 21st Century Skills in Education: Tech Valley High School Study Tours, February 25, March 11, 25, April 29 or May 27, 8-11 a.m.
To pre-register for any of these tour dates, visit: https://www.questar.org/tvhs/registration.asp

Therapy dog makes reading doggone good

The students in BOCES special education teacher Bonnie Zanker’s CDS classroom are learning that reading can be a lot more fun when it happens with a friend—particularly one of the four-legged variety.

Since last school year, Teddy, a flat-coated retriever and registered therapy dog, and his human companion, clinical social worker Naomi Bloch, have been weekly visitors during group reading time in Zanker’s class in Latham Ridge Elementary School.

“It’s not surprising that dogs have found their way into classrooms and libraries across the country,” says Donna Lamkin, the BOCES reading specialist who helped introduce Teddy and Bloch to Zanker’s students as a means of encouraging literacy learning.

Rotterdam I students get ready to read

Elementary students at the Rotterdam I Academy now have many more reasons to curl up with a good book—1,400 reasons to be precise.

Thanks to a bright idea and the generosity of the school’s teachers, staff and community, the school now has a brand new library space with over one thousand picture and chapter books in the school’s main office.

“I think that reading is a wonderful, wonderful thing and something that has given me so much pleasure in my own life,” said BettyAnn Frampton, secretary at Rotterdam I and the woman behind the idea for the new library space. “Many of the children at the school don’t have regular access to a library outside of school. My hope is that this will encourage a few more of them to love reading.”

Once the idea to create a more formal library from which children could choose the books they read was hatched, donations (almost the entire collection was gifted to the school) of beautiful, and only gently worn, books began pouring in from teachers, their friends and families.

“What’s been so very heartwarming about this is how everyone in our community pitched in to make it happen,” said Principal Leo DiPierro. In addition to books, shelving was donated from the BOCES Maywood School and staff pitched in after hours to categorize and ready the space for use.

Frampton says that the goal now is to have each of the school’s K-5 classes use the library once a week beginning this January. Each student will be given his or her own library card and have the opportunity to choose books to borrow and learn to be responsible for.

Book donations welcome!

The Rotterdam school is now hoping to grow its library space. Purchases will be made, but the school is also accepting donations from the community of contemporary, new or gently worn picture books or early readers.
For more information about donating books to the Rotterdam I school, please contact the school’s secretary BettyAnn Frampton at bframpto@gw.neric.org or (518) 464-6394.

DHH student receives kudos at RIT’s National Science Fair

Kayla Thornton recently had a very good hair day.

This March, Thornton, an 8th grade student in the BOCES Deaf and Hard of Hearing program, competed with students from around the country in Rochester Institute of Technology’s (RIT) third-annual National Science Fair for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students. Thornton was selected to receive a second place award of $300 and a commemorative plaque for her work on a project about the effect shampoo-based chemicals such as formaldehyde and sodium laurel sulfate can have on hair and health.

The award-winning project was the culmination of months of study on hair structure and analysis of the data collected from seven volunteers who assisted Kayla in her research by washing their hair with various shampoos.

The genesis of the project was an eighth grade science research assignment—something her BOCES teachers Carol Donovan (Teacher) and Kathleen Strollo say Thornton went well beyond meeting the requirements of.

Although she admits that the project was time-consuming and that the analysis of data and preparation of materials in time for the RIT science fair competition created a bit of stress, Thornton says she enjoyed the process and, in particular, the time she spent at RIT.

“The award is really a tribute to Kayla’s hard-work, dedication and, I might even say, fortitude,” said Strollo. “When the going got tough, I just kept reminding Kayla to keep her eye on her goal.”

01/09 Page 9
**Good to Know!**

Whether you are a new educational professional or have had many years of experience, it is important to protect yourself in the educational setting. NYSUT has published an excellent brochure entitled: “What You Need to Know About Protecting Yourself”. The entire brochure is available from NYSUT by calling 1-800-342-9810 (ask for the Publications Department) or by contacting one of the Triad Co-Editors. An excerpt from the brochure on “Touching Students” was published in the November TRIAD. This month we are publishing the following excerpts: Notes and Jokes, Handling Money and Alone with Students.

Here are a few examples of situations that could confront any school employee and, if common sense isn’t used, career-threatening consequences could result.

**Showing Videos:** To avoid unnecessary entanglement, a good practice is to include administrative input into video selection. It is an excellent idea to preview any videos to be shown in your classroom if you are not familiar with the content. Employees with the best intentions have gotten into trouble as a result of showing inappropriate videos to students.

**Student Health Considerations:** No one knows how many adults and students in schools are HIV-positive or suffer from other communicable diseases. All employees and students should take appropriate precautions. There are other students in schools who require health services, including the administration of medication, monitoring and/or cleaning of medical equipment, and a variety of other actions. Most of these situations are governed by the New York State Nurse Practice Act. You should consult with your union representative and your school nurse before providing any health services to students.

**Personal Safety/Avoiding Hostile Situations:** Schools once were “safe havens,” even in dangerous neighborhoods. That is no longer the case. While NYSUT is working with legislators to make all schools safe, we must be vigilant and prudent. There are many different working environments among schools in our state. These suggestions for your personal safety while on the job and commuting to school may be more applicable in some settings than others:

- Car pool whenever possible. It’s better for the environment, it’s safer and it’s sociable.
- When leaving school late in the day, ask another staff member to watch until you start your car.
- Don’t leave belongings unattended. Lock your desk.
- Never be in a room with a closed door with a student or parent. Leave the door open and position yourself so that you can be seen from the hallway.
- Never challenge anyone who is brandishing a weapon.
- Don’t wear fancy, expensive jewelry to school.
- Each school district is required to have a sexual harassment policy. Every member should be aware of this policy.

Contact your site administrator for more information.

Upcoming topics: Workplace Health and Safety, Records and Rights

Submitted by Lois Leonard, TRIAD Co-Editor

---

**Educator Focuses on Language-Based Spelling Instruction**

When it comes to teaching children how to spell, conventional wisdom holds that pure memorization (including flash cards and weekly quizzes) works best. But researchers have found there’s a better way, as the cover story of the Winter 2008-09 issue of *American Educator* shows. In "How Words Cast Their Spell," R. Malatesha Joshi, Rebecca Treiman, Suzanne Carreker and Louisa C. Moats describe how spelling requires knowledge of the language. Good spellers develop insights into how words are spelled based on sound-letter correspondences and the meaningful parts of words, as well as word origins and the history of the language. Such knowledge helps students learn to spell and also improves their reading and writing.

---

**Hard Work of Educators Shows Results in Math and Science**

The hard work of U.S. teachers and paraprofessionals to help their students learn math—combined with rich curricula aligned to assessments, and strengthened professional development and teaching methods—is paying off, as reflected in results of the 2007 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), AFT president Randi Weingarten says. The results, released on Dec. 9, show American fourth- and eighth-grade students have significantly improved in math since 2003, particularly fourth-graders. The results also show American fourth- and eighth-grade students have made steady improvements in science since 1995. "The AFT has a long and proud tradition of proactively raising the quality of public education," Weingarten says, "starting with acknowledging the problems identified in 'A Nation at Risk' in the 1980s, then spearheading the standards movement in the 1990s, and continuing our efforts to support our members today."
Oh snow!
Just a reminder: In the event of inclement weather, students and their parents/guardians should follow school closing information provided by their home high schools. Students’ home school districts determine whether or not to transport students, end their day early or close their high school campuses.

Career & Tech student-built home hits the road for Better Neighborhoods of Schenectady
How do you merge a house into traffic? Very carefully! As a long line of school buses left Career & Tech's Albany campus on December 4 after discharging their students, they were followed by huge flatbed trucks carrying two halves of a house. The event was not something you see at school every day, but Career & Tech is not your usual school. The event was a culmination of three years of effort by Building Trades students and their teacher, Doug Harple, who built the house for Better Neighborhoods of Schenectady.

Just the day before, the most recently completed half of the house was eased through the overhead doors of the Building Trades classroom, out of its cozy berth in F building, and into the parking lot, where the students steadied it and readied it for its December 4 excursion. On that day, movers contracted by Better Neighborhoods Inc. jacked up and flat bedded the home to 411 Hulett St. in Schenectady, where it will be finished and sold for an affordable price to a deserving family.

[Photo: Career & Tech Building Trades student and Bethlehem H.S. junior Michael Saintcross is interviewed by WTEN-TV10 as workers behind him prepare to move half of the house he helped build.]

Honors for Children & Education Career Academy teacher
Children & Education Career Academy teacher Deb Hall was named Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher of the Year by the New York State Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Teachers. Ms. Hall's classroom is located at Cobleskill-Richmondville High School, which offers the Children & Education Career Academy in partnership with the Capital Region BOCES Career & Technical School.

Beautifying Albany
Festive creations by Meg Bugler's Floral Design and Botanical Services students will be displayed in Albany's Ten Broeck Mansion for the holiday season. The busy classes also recently unearthed hundreds of tulip bulbs in Washington Park.

Making the holidays happier
SkillsUSA Advisor Debbie Toy reports: "Each year, our SkillsUSA chapter organizes a Helping Hands program for the holidays. Our goal is to assist families within our school community. We have just completed our Thanksgiving Food Drive and will be delivering turkeys, homemade pies and collected food items to families in our school community. After Thanksgiving, our Helping Hands Tree will go up in the main office. Faculty, staff and students purchase items and donate money so that we can create a magical holiday season for some of our most needy families."

This is your school: Keep it safe and clean
Silence your cells please . . .
A reminder: Cell phones should not be used during school. Parents/guardians needing to reach students should call the school office - 862-4800 for Albany, 295-3000 for Schoharie. Students' cell phones (and other electronic devices) should be silenced during class time.

And no smoking
New York State law prohibits smoking - by anyone - in schools and on school property.
In attendance from left to right were: Susan Kusalonis, Jim Reed, Deb Sorvari, Joan Kosinski, Sarah Adriance and Barb Burnham.

Sarah Adriance (TA, Sp. Ed.)

My experience at the 80th AFT National Convention was very exciting. As I sit here and reflect on the day I left Albany I felt proud to be one of the delegates representing our Local 2991. The two highlights of the trip for me were being able to debate and vote on resolutions which were submitted by many locals. The second was to vote on new AFT leadership. I remember looking around and seeing over 3,000 delegates there for the same reason as I was. They were there to represent locals and to help make a difference for the future and for our followers.

I was asked, “What did you learn from attending and what can you share with your Local 2991?” I learned the process of submitting and amending a resolution from beginning to end, how important it is to send delegates to the AFT National Conventions, and to make our votes count at a National level. I was part of the Retirement Committee and learned that more than 300,000 AFT members and some 3 million union members are projected to retire between 2008 and 2020. I also learned how very important it is for us to have a current AFT membership card. If you would like to know more about these issues please visit AFT’s website: www.aft.org

James Reed (TA, Sp. Ed.)

The AFT Convention being held in Chicago did indeed hold up its nickname “The Windy City”. Not because of the winds outside, but for the winds of change. With over 3,000 delegates from every state and territory of our great country the convention was abuzz with words of action and a strong showing of solidarity.

Hillary Clinton’s arrival filled the convention hall to standing room only. Then Obama, being on the campaign trail, made a video conference appearance. Afterwards their speeches fueled an already energized crowd into a turbo charged convention.

I was honored to be a delegate and to be on the “Schools and Colleges Support Staff Issues Committee”. One of the resolutions I was proud to support was “A Living Wage and Access to Affordable Health Care for SRP’s”. This resolution was approved in Committee and passed on the Convention floor.

Debbie Sorvari (TA, Sp. Ed.)

In July, as a first timer, I attended the American Federation of Teachers biennial national convention in Chicago. Elected delegates took part in electing our new national officers, Randi Weingarten, Elected AFT President; Antonia Cortese, Elected Secretary-Treasurer; and Lorretta Johnson, Elected Executive VP. Attendees heard both Senator Barack Obama and Senator Hillary Clinton address the over 3,000 delegates at the convention. Our Faculty Association’s delegates participated in functions and workshops hosted by
PERSONNEL PERSONALS

Patty (Service, NERIC) & Dave MacDormand just became grandparents for the 2nd time this year, their son David (former student of our Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program) and his wife Erica recently gave birth to a beautiful baby girl named Kendi Rayn on November 23.

Congratulations to Becky Breeyear (Teacher, Sp. Ed.) on the birth of her daughter, Mary Caelyn Moreland, born on August 18th. She weighed 7lbs 3 oz. She joins Sean (2 years old) and Jack (6 yrs. old). Mary Breeyear, (retired TA,) Becky’s mom, was thrilled to have her granddaughter named after her.


Good bye and good luck to Jackie Thomas (TA, Sp. Ed.) from Amy Lasch’s CDS classroom who is moving to Florida.

Get well wishes to Zenaida Lazaro (TA, Sp. Ed), hope she will be back at work soon.

Wishing Pat Blizzard (TA, Sp. Ed) a speedy recovery from her recent surgery.

Sarah Adriance (TA, Sp. Ed) also had surgery recently. We wish her well and a quick recovery.

Condolences to Debbie Dutcher (DHH, Interpreter, Sp. Ed.) on the recent loss of her father.

Please contact Lisa Mink, Membership Chair with any change in address that you have. You can reach her at lmink8@hotmail.com or call 372-7240. In doing so, you will be assured of receiving all that correspondence that the Association will send you including your newsletter, the TRIAD.

If you know a member or retiree who should be getting the TRIAD, give them this information.

Sunshine Chairperson
If you know of someone who could use a little cheering up, our sympathy, or a get well card, please contact:
Theresa Bennett
23 Harriet Street, Albany, NY 12205
869-2367

The TRIAD is published monthly for the Capital Region BOCES Faculty Association Membership. We appreciate any comments or suggestions you may have.

TRIAD NEWSLETTER STAFF
Co-Editors:
Lois Leonard (jleonar4@nycap.rr.com)
Susan Kusalonis (maidmnrn300@aol.com)

Contributing Staff and Committee:
Pat Gollub (Gollub02@yahoo.com)
Dianna Bernard and Vocational Training & Transition Class
Jeanette Christoff (jankachristo@juno.com)
Cathi Aini-Jakway (MsSmartyPants429@aol.com)