



# CAPITAL REGION BOCES FACULTY ASSOCIATION

## TRIAD

March 2010

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Affiliated With NYSUT [10-195] & AFT/NEA AFL/CIO-[Local 2991]

### News from the President

Dear Colleagues,

Happy Spring! Yes, I believe spring is here. The sun is higher in the sky and the days are getting warmer and warmer. When I go to my car in the afternoon it is warm to hot inside. The plaited woodpecker (woody woodpecker) gives its funny call. Soon all the birds will join in. Another telltale sign spring is here is student excitement. They get pretty antsy as we go into spring and then head towards summer. It's all in a day's fun (and work).

I admit, I really love teaching, but chuckle when I hear all the criticism of us, the education professionals and our unions. So many say how great we have it, yet most are unwilling to take on the challenge of teaching. These critics are probably wise staying where they are. Having been on the other side (in business for over 25 years) I have a pretty good idea how hard many of the non-teaching jobs are. Not all that hard and when they do require the same level of effort and commitment we put in, the financial compensation is much greater.

Another thing I find a real issue, yet out of our hands is student attendance. Kids miss school for a lot of reasons. Sometimes they are good reasons and many times they are not. If a kid is sick they are sick. They should stay home and get well. I find that my students are often out of school because they just didn't feel like going. As a result, they fall behind and some never really catch up. Yet we are often criticized for these

students' lack of progress and success in school. And sometimes we get the "It just isn't interesting enough". Okay, I get that, but I do not feel it is any reason for students to not attend or do their work.

We are, as they continually tell us, preparing kids for life. I really don't know any supervisors that would accept those reasons for a lack of attendance and performance. Do you? I could elaborate more, but I'm sure you get the gist of what I am saying. There are so many things that are out of our control that negatively affect a student's educational success and are truly out of our control. Yet it seems we are expected to fix it. We can do a lot to help, and we do, but many of the real problems with education and student success go way beyond the classroom.

We work hard and do good work all the time and great work much of the time. But we can not fix all the ills of our society. The problems we as a society face are multi-faceted and require an overhaul of a number of our societal systems. Our families have changed and the challenges of today are in many ways, very different than those of previous generations. A tune-up of our educational systems may be in order, but many of the radical changes that are being touted by so many are those who neither teach nor support teaching. I think Lewis Carroll's writing could be a political satire on what is happening to education today. The sound of the Queen of Hearts saying "off with her head" rings a familiar tone. What I really wonder is "Who is today's Cheshire cat?"

Looking forward, Doug



### CALENDAR

CAPITAL REGION  
BOCES FACULTY ASSOC.  
EXEC. BOARD MEETING

3/3/10

BOCES BOARD MTG.

3/15/10

REP COUNCIL MTG.

Maywood School

3/17/10

Superintendents Conf. Day

3/26/10

Passover Begins

3/29/10

Giffy's Bar-B-Que Maywood

4/23/10

Celebration Bash

5/13/10

TA/EA Show Case

5/18/10

Newsletter Committee

TRIAD Article Deadline:

3/23/10

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# OSHA RELEASES WORK-PLACE INJURY AND ILLNESS REPORT

Every year since 1996, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has collected work-related injury and illness data from more than 80,000 employers. For the first time, the agency has made the data from 1996 to 2007 available in a searchable online database that allows the public to look at establishment or industry-specific injury and illness data. The workplace injury and illness data is available on the OSHA web site as well as Data.gov.

"This effort will improve the public's accessibility to workplace safety and health data and ensure the agency can function more effectively for American workers." Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their employees. OSHA's role is to assure these conditions for America's working men and women by setting and enforcing standards and providing training, education and assistance.

"This is a valuable resource for our members and leaders because OSHA is now collecting more injury and illness data from public employers including school districts," says Darryl Alexander of the AFT health and safety program. "For instance, we now know that public school employees have higher rates compared to private school employees."

# BOCES Lobby Day February 23, 2010

By Betty Ann Frampton,  
Secretary, Special Ed.

I was very fortunate to attend the Lobby Day on February 23, 2010. It was my first time meeting with various legislators and I found it extremely interesting and helpful. I learned a great deal that day.

My group was composed of students, administrators, school board members and special education personnel. The one component that our group lacked was a parent of a special needs student.

The legislators heard the views of administrators, students and special education personnel. But I think a parent of a student could shed a whole different light on the needs of our students.

The legislators were attentive and listened to what we had to say and asked many questions. Our group leader was Mark Jones and he kept everyone on track and on target.

In my opinion, this was an extremely worthwhile day at the Capitol and something that all of us should have the opportunity to experience.

**Debbi Evans** was also present.

## Capital Region BOCES Faculty Association Leadership

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President	Doug Harple	862-4776	hdharple@msn.com
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Grievance Chair	E.J. Hanley	321-0485	ehanley1@nycap.rr.com
EAP	Kevin Eglit	454-9650	Employee Assistance Program

# Capital Region BOCES Board Meeting Highlights – 02/11/10

By Susan Kusalonis

Civil Rights Audit recently completed by SED went well. CTE received a 9.5 out of a 10

**55/25** – NYSUT has a bill in both the Senate and Assembly. This will only be for NYSUT members only. CSEA’s deal with Governor for Tier 5 was no layoff in State. SANNY sat out of this entirely. DS mentioned to NYSUT that we would like to see this available for all. 55/30 significant penalty if you retire before 30 years otherwise.

Berne-Knox-Westerlo sent Board rave review on our HR Person. They wanted to thank us for helping them with Albany Co. Civil Service.

Facility Plan – One Roof – Request For Proposal out in 4 to 6 weeks. Anticipate substantial savings (25% reduction in space - duplicate common areas will be gone).

New Legal Ground – BOCES Lawyer, Kevin Harren, has won for BOCES (against NYSUT) a precedent setting case on reduction in force. – No bumping if not reduced more than 50%.

## ***MAKE SURE YOU’RE COUNTED IN THE 2010 CENSUS***

You count! The 2010 Census is about to begin, and the AFT is encouraging members to participate in events and initiatives designed to raise awareness of the census. At stake is more than \$300 billion per year in federal and state funding to be allocated to communities for schools, roads, hospitals and other projects.

The AFT adopted a resolution supporting the goals of the census. In addition, the union is in a partnership with the U.S. Census Bureau to make sure all of our members reach out to their students and co-workers to encourage a full count. Some hard-to-reach communities historically have been undercounted, including immigrants, documented and undocumented; people of color; the homeless; formerly incarcerated individuals; and multifamily, limited English-speaking and low-income households. Census forms will be mailed or delivered to households in March. April 1 is National Census Day, so encourage family and friends to complete and return their forms. From April through July, census takers will visit households that have not returned their forms by mail. As required by law, the Census Bureau must report population information to the president for apportionment in December 2010.

<b>Capital Region BOCES FA Representative Council Meeting Dates for 2009-2010</b>	
<b>Rep Council Dates</b>	<b>Rep. Council Location</b>
March 17, 2010	School Support Ser.
April 21, 2010	School Support Ser.
May 19, 2010	Maywood School
June 9, 2010	School Support Ser.
All Rep Council meetings run from 4:15-6 PM unless there is a motion to extend.	

## **Conference Dates 2009-2010**

### **2010**

**April 28-29**

NYSUT Local Presidents Conference / Marriott Wardman - Washington, DC

**April 29-May 1**

Representative Assembly / Marriott Wardman Hotel - Washington, DC

**July 7-11**

AFT Convention Washington State Conv & Trade Center, Seattle, WA

# TEACHING ASSISTANTS/EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS/AIDES

By Colleen Condolora, Chapter VP

Dear Constituents:

I wish to take a few moments to say a few kind words of recognition to a former colleague.

**Karen Teal**, a Special Education Teaching Assistant for over 25 years, succumbed to cancer in February. She fought a courageous battle and throughout her ordeal she never wavered from her dedication to her students and co-workers. She faced her challenges with dignity and determination and never complained how difficult some days were for her. She cherished her students, her work and her co-workers. I firmly believe her love for her profession kept her here with her family and friends for a little bit longer. Her work gave her solace and comfort. I wish for everyone to have the commitment and passion for their profession as Karen had. She truly understood that we often get back more from our students than we ever give. Thank you Karen for all that you contributed to making our unit proud. You will be missed by all the people you have touched. I also want to say thank you to all the co-workers who made Karen's journey more comforting for her. Her family had many kind words for you.

In April, I will be in Washington DC to attend the Representative Assembly (RA) as an ED-10 delegate. The RA is NYSUT's highest policymaking body. It is at the RA where the member voices are heard through their elected delegates. Another political voice is the money collected through Vote Cope. You will be receiving shortly

VOTE COPE enrollment forms from our Chairperson, **Cathi Jakway**. The VOTE COPE fund is what NYSUT uses to make your voice heard in the political arena. During these fiscally challenging times it is vital that NYSUT have a strong VOTE COPE member participation. Please consider contributing to the NYSUT's nonpartisan political action fund. Your Association dues cannot and will not be used for political purpose. This is why your contribution to VOTE COPE is so important.

A survey will be coming out in late spring regarding the evaluation process. As you know, this year was the first year the evaluation was implemented fully following the pilot year. Your input will be a valuable resource for the committee to review. Please take the time to complete the survey. Your opinions matter and will be taken into consideration to making this evaluation model a valued and growing experience. At the TA/EA Professional Development Showcase, on May 18<sup>th</sup>, we will be showcasing the many exemplary Special Projects our Chapter has done. I am looking forward to this special day.

In closing, with Karen in my thoughts today, I want you to look around and observe fully all the fine co-workers and students you have surrounding you. Be proud in what you accomplish each day and remember to find the passion for your profession, just as Karen did. It makes a difference in your outlook on life.

**In solidarity,**

**Colleen Condolora**

## **Earth Hour – March 27<sup>th</sup>**

On Saturday, **March 27**, at 8:30 PM. local time, the AFT and the World Wildlife Fund are asking you to turn off your lights for ONE HOUR. By turning off your non-essential lighting for 60 minutes, you'll be joining millions of people around the world in their commitment to fight climate. Go to [www.EarthHour.org](http://www.EarthHour.org) for more information.

**No Rep Council  
Highlights, Feb.  
21, 2010**

**Due to Snow Day**

## Service Chapter VP

Susan A. Kusalonis

Dear Constituents:

Negotiations!! I guess you have been wondering what is going on. Not much. It is the Association's hope that the Teacher and Service Chapters not open our contracts and settle on the financial piece only. Nothing has been discussed as yet. When I have something concrete, you will hear from me on this subject.

The Educational Interpreters have completed the February deadline on their process for Albany County Civil Service. The new seniority list could be available by April 1<sup>st</sup>. At that time, I will contact everyone with a time and place to meet and review it.

Thank you all for your support.

**In solidarity, Susan**

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### Capital Region BOCES Faculty Association Student Incentive Award

Capital Region BOCES Faculty Association will again offer the Student Incentive Awards. Applicants must be dependents of Association members. Awards are two scholarships for \$1000 each to be used for post-secondary education. One award will be given based on need and the other based on scholarship. Applications are available on the Association Website [www.capregbocesfa.com](http://www.capregbocesfa.com) and **due by April 1, 2010. Selections are made by the Student Incentive Committee.**

**Mail applications to:**

**Lanny Barsale**

**PO Box 762**

**Cobleskill, NY 12043**

## AFT Applauds New Initiative To Fight Childhood Obesity

The AFT praised First Lady Michelle Obama's leadership in drawing attention to and helping combat the increasing rates of childhood obesity. The White House announced a new task force on childhood obesity on Feb. 9. "We are deeply concerned by the disturbing and dramatic rise in childhood obesity over the past three decades," AFT president Randi Weingarten says. "Every day in the classroom, teachers see the harmful effects of students' poor nutrition and health habits on their ability to do well in school and in life. We look forward to working with Mrs. Obama to further advocate for physical education as well as healthy meals and snacks in schools, and to extend the positive message of the importance of a healthy lifestyle to parents and communities."

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### **NEW GADGETS, NEW INJURIES**

There's no doubt that electronic devices like BlackBerry and QWERTY cell phones have enhanced our everyday work and communication. But, according to a recent article in [ergoweb.com](http://ergoweb.com), they also have given rise to a new generation of repetitive stress injuries like "BlackBerry thumb," a condition in which the thumb becomes sore and swollen from overuse. Working on small keyboards, repeatedly texting on cell phones and excessive use of any electronic device also can cause a variety of injuries.

It's easy to lose track of time when you are working with a handheld device or laptop, and this can create the potential for injury. To prevent or minimize injuries, the article recommends that you take regular breaks by getting up to walk around at least once an hour; look away from screens periodically, and generally give your joints and muscles an opportunity to recover at regular intervals.

#### SOURCES AND CONTRIBUTORS:

The Office Professional; Leonard Edmonds, editor; Laura Baker, copy editor; Val Klayman, design editor.

# **RETIREES CORNER**

Jeanette K. Christoff, Teacher, Retired

Dear Retirees,

The bitterly cold days of mid winter kept us indoors with time to sort through closets and boxes which contained some of the many acquisitions of our lives. Having grown up during and after WWII, when commodities were scarce, we learned to value, treasure, repair, reused and save the things we had. Saving became a way of life and a mind set difficult to change. So, we began the task of sorting through some of our accumulated treasures.

We inherited boxes and albums of photos, with too many of them, undated and unlabeled. As we gazed upon the many faces, we wondered who these people were, what their names were, if any could have been our great grand parents, who now live on in us through our inherited genes. We looked for clues; a family resemblance, a date, a familiar location, the time of year, similarities among photos, the clothing and hairstyles. We speculated about the special event in their lives on that day, which was worthy to be captured in that moment in time, to be recalled and cherished.

As we held each photo, we felt a connection to each smiling face as they too might have once held the photo of their likeness and recalled their moment. Perhaps they wished it could be again, to regain the days of youthful energy, to feel the excitement and zest for life they once knew. Perhaps the photo caused them grief for someone who was once a

part of their life and was now absent. Perhaps they were saddened by the maladies brought on by the years, which had robbed them of the vital self they once were. How cruel the passing of time can be.

But perhaps, in their retrospective glimpse at their past, they were grateful that life had moved on, and may have recalled all they had achieved, savored the wisdom they had gained and relived some of the experiences they had. They may have been pleased with the work they had done and with the family and friends who had entered their lives. Most importantly, we hope they were happy with the person they had become.

As we close the albums, their perpetual happy faces remain unchanged as they have through the decades. Their youth and energy continues undiminished on the square of glossy paper and they continue to be as they once were, each keeping their secrets we so wish we could know.

A biblical quote says that all will be revealed in eternity. What a nice thought. We would love to know to whom those smiles belong, to listen to their stories of the photos and to learn about their daily life in the era in which they lived. We could finally know our connection to them and the journey that brought a glimpse of their lives into our hands. Perhaps, someday.

## ***SCHOOL BREAKFAST WEEK—READY, SET, GO!***

Missing breakfast isn't good for adults, and it's especially bad for schoolchildren. Adults don't work well on an empty stomach, and kids don't learn when they're hungry. Research shows that children who eat breakfast have improved academic performance and behavior. The National School Breakfast Program is contributing to the physical and academic growth of many students by providing a healthy morning meal.

**National School Breakfast Week** will be celebrated the week of March 8-12. This year's theme, "The School Breakfast—Ready, Set, Go!" introduces students to the importance of breakfast and shows them how eating school breakfast helps prepare them for the busy day ahead. The school breakfast campaign, which ends this month, helps students learn the importance of good nutrition and being active.

Congress established the **National School Breakfast Program (NSBP)** as a pilot in 1966, and it became a permanent entitlement program in 1975 to assist schools in providing nutritious morning meals. More than 10 million children participate in the NSBP which is always looking for increased participation. Congress is now in the process of reauthorizing the NSBP, along with the National School Lunch Program and other federal nutrition programs.

# Healthy Living; Living For Good Health

By Catherine A. Jakway, TA, Spec. Ed.

## \$ SAVE MONEY \$ Use MEDCO By Mail Prescription Service

I would like to remind everyone about using MEDCO by mail to fill prescriptions. Depending on which insurance plan you have, Medco is part of our health care package. Using MEDCO will save you money. Since we participate in different insurance plans, it would be worth your time to give them a call and find out what “perks” may be available for you. Many of the plans offer a “buy 2 months get 1 month free” offer.

In these difficult economic times, shouldn't this be all about **saving** our money anywhere we can?

This is a plan we negotiated for in our recent contracts, also giving you reduced costs from what we had previously been paying. Many of our employees find it much more convenient than having to go to the pharmacy every month. Using MEDCO saves you time and money. Think about it... You don't have to leave the house, the prescriptions come to you. How easy and convenient is that? And who said pharmacies don't make deliveries anymore? The days of having to use your \$ fuel \$ to drive to a pharmacy are over! To start saving yourself some hard earned cash, fill out the MEDCO form available on-line at ([www.medco.com](http://www.medco.com)), attach your script and mail. Prescriptions may also be faxed right from your doctor's office. Just bring the appropriate form. Let them do it! No driving or waiting in a pharmacy. What a time and money saver already!

AND...it gets even better! Refilling your prescriptions just got even easier! There are so many options. First, you can call it in using the phone number printed right on the bottle cap. Just follow the automated steps and your meds will be at your door within a matter of days. Second, you can go to their website and create your own account. From then on, you can refill a script right on line. You will get confirmation emails when it will be ready to be shipped and then again when it is on the way. In just a few days, you have it in your hand. If you ever need help or are unsure what to do, call the member services number: 1-800-711-0917. Their representatives will walk you through the whole process.

But here's the best part...MEDCO now offers an enrollment in their automatic refill system, called the **Worry-free Fills** program. You will get an email reminder that the script will be refilled or asks you to call if you are no longer taking a certain medication. All three refill options also give you three methods of payment. You can be billed and pay later, you can use your credit card payment set up that will charge you automatically, or you can have it automatically deducted from your checking account.

Using MEDCO is great! I got a call one evening from a representative and the person contacted my doctor to fax a script! Now that's what I call service! After all, we are pay-

ing for it. If I don't have to make the call and wait on hold forever or drive to the pharmacy tired from working all day, dragging myself out of the house, then waiting 15 minutes or more that it takes, translates in the language we know that really means, **WAIT FOREVER!!** MEDCO is the way to go!

If you are not using MEDCO, you should be. **Please take advantage of this program.**

MEDCO manages our self-funded prescription drug program. Why should you use it you ask? Because the money for it is coming out of your **PAY CHECK!**

The money you pay each paycheck for the prescription cost is put into a BOCES account. When you purchase a prescription, you pay your co-pay. The balance owed for the prescription is taken out of the account. Any money not used from that account at the end of the year could mean that our bi-weekly deduction could become **LOWER!**

Using MEDCO will save all of us some \$\$\$\$\$\$ in our paychecks!

And who doesn't love larger paychecks?

## **TRS: Urge lawmakers to act now on 55/25 retirement option**

*New York Teacher - February 24, 2010*

**Q: My district offers an incentive for early notice of retirement, so I need to make my decision soon. What's going on with the 55/25 retirement option? Do you think the Legislature will act on it soon?**

A: Lawmakers are moving forward with NYSUT's 55/25 early-retirement option legislation, with a bill (S.6712) recently introduced in the Senate. We expect a similar bill to be co-sponsored in the Assembly. The governor and Legislature committed to enact a 55/25 early retirement option for NYSUT members as part of the Tier 5 pension bill enacted in December. The legislation would provide a temporary early-retirement option for NYSUT members who belong to either the New York State and Local Employees' Retirement System or the New York State Teachers' Retirement System. It would allow NYSUT members the option to retire early if they are at least 55 years of age and have at least 25 years of service without diminution or penalty of their standard benefits. The three-month open enrollment window would begin on June 3.

We understand time is of the essence, so we're asking members to contact their representatives in the Senate and Assembly and urge them to act swiftly to approve this important legislation. Tell them this retirement option will avert layoffs and help districts save money in the long run when you consider the salary difference between a new hire and a top-scale educator. You may link to this letter at [politicalaction.nysut.org](http://politicalaction.nysut.org).

**Q: If 55/25 does go through this year, will it be a one-year opportunity, or will it be the standard from now on?**

A: It will be a one-time offer for 2010 only.

**Q: I see that NYSUT is pushing legislation for the early-retirement option for pre-K-12 employees, but what about the SUNY employees?**

A: Under the legislation, the eligibility criteria is membership in either TRS or the Employees' Retirement System, and NYSUT membership. Therefore, a

SUNY employee who is a NYSUT member and belongs to either the TRS or ERS would be eligible.

**Q: I have a question regarding the possible 55/25 retirement option. My colleagues and I are unclear as to what retiring without penalty actually means. I have 25 years of service and will be 58 before the end of the school year. If the option becomes a reality, will I receive 60 percent of my FAS or 50 percent?**

A: The FAS formula is as follows: 2 percent for each year of credited service. If a member has 30 years the percentage factor is 60 percent. Obviously then, with 25 years of credited service the factor would be 50 percent. Normally, if the member is not 62 and does not have the 30 years of service, there is a penalty.

The whole point of the 55/25 is that during the designated three months in 2010, Tier 2, 3 and 4 members who qualify (through age and service) and retire at that time will receive the 2 percent per year and not sustain any penalty.

**How would the Early Retirement Option proposal affect me and my colleagues in Tier 1?**

**Q: One of our district reps tells me the 55/25 early retirement option being considered would mean that one can retire early with 60 percent of salary as if you had worked 30 years. I understood it to mean only that the early-retirement penalty would be removed. Hence, a person retiring with 25 years would get 50 percent and so on. Who's right?**

A: You are correct! Please tell your district rep before he/she misinforms others. It's nice thinking to provide us with more benefits, but the whole point of 55/25 is that people do not have the penalty.

**Q: I am retiring from teaching as of July. I am 62 years old with 23.6 years of time in the system. Can you tell me if the proposed early-**



retirement bill has any provision to encourage a Tier 1 like myself to retire? I am sure there are not many teachers out there like me, but it occurred to me that perhaps the state might be motivated to also entice someone like myself to retire. I am aware that Tier 1 folks are not "penalized" for leaving without the 25/55 combination, but I would feel really foolish if I did not explore the question because I am sure that it would not be an aspect of the bill that would be widely publicized when it is passed.

A: The 55/25 bill would only be for Tiers 2, 3 and 4 members, who are at least 55 and have a minimum of 25 years of credited service. It is meant to provide a one-time opportunity to retire without the penalty for not having 30 years of credited service. Tier 1 is a 55/20 plan. You qualify to retire without penalty.

**Q: I taught for less than five years at public elementary schools in New York state as a Tier 4 member. I have been home for 11 years now, raising my children. I plan on applying for teaching positions in about a year and a half, when my youngest child starts school. Over the years, I have occasionally contacted various people in the Teachers' Retirement System for advice. With all the changes I am hearing about regarding the tier system, I thought I**

**should again seek counsel to make sure I will be able to remain in Tier 4 when I do go back to teaching.**

A: Because you have been out of service for more than seven years (and originally had less than the vesting time of five years), you will not be returning to teaching as a Tier 4 member. However, if you indicate on the membership form you will have to file through the school district, that you elect to reinstate to Tier 4 (Part 3; Question 3 on the form) you will be moved back to Tier 4 when the paperwork is processed.

This column is written by Sheila Salenger, Michael Corn and Paul Farfaglia, your Teacher-Members on the New York State Teachers' Retirement System Board of Directors.

- Sheila Salenger — 800-342-9810, ext. 6618
- Michael Corn — 315-735-8421
- Paul Farfaglia — 315-431-4040
- In-service TRS members with pension questions can call them at the phone numbers at left or e-mail ssaie
- Retirees please call David Keefe, the retiree representative on the TRS board, at 516-741-1241.

## ***MAKE THE SCHOOL BUS A SAFE HAVEN***

The yellow school bus is an icon of education in America that safely transports students to and from schools as well as field trips and extracurricular activities. But school buses are also places for bullies to operate thanks to things like high seats and a lone driver with their back to the students focusing on the road. According to the **American Public Health Association**, school buses rank as the number 2 place for bullying behind the playground, ranked number one. One school district in New York State, Guilderland in Albany County, created the Peaceful Bus Program (PBP) to successfully combat their school bus bullying problem.

The PBP personalizes the bus, the driver, school liaisons and the students. The kids invest in the bus, learn to govern their behavior and stick up for other students. Students meet three times a year to learn how to stem bullying behavior and explore solutions, older kids mentor younger ones, and the meetings coincide with mandatory bus drills. The most important meeting is the "getting to know you" meeting that takes place the first week of the school year when students are introduced to each other, the school liaisons and the driver. All of this interaction helps to clarify appropriate bus behavior for students.

Students also get their picture taken in front of their bus with their driver. The photo is enlarged and laminated and hung in the hallway where students sign their names. They also get to name their bus, giving suggestions to the driver who makes the final decision. So instead of just getting on the bus, they get on the Super Yellow Hero, Rob's Rockers or "The Bears."

## **HER STORY: CELEBRATE WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH**

How much do you know about women's history? Can you answer the following questions? Which U.S. president issued the first proclamation declaring the week of March 8 as the first women's history week? Why was that week chosen for this celebration? In what year did Women's History Week become Women's History Month?

The National Women's History Project, which spearheaded establishment of this special month, is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. The overarching theme in 2010 is "Writing Women Back into History," which will highlight topics from previous years. Women have not always gotten the recognition they deserve for their accomplishments and contributions to society and history. National Women's History Month provides an excellent avenue for recognizing and celebrating women's historic achievements as well as an opportunity to honor women within our families and communities. Each of the past themes recognizes a different aspect of women's achievements from ecology to art and from sports to politics.

Go to <http://www.nwhp.org/> for more information about Women's History Month and the answers to the questions. Celebrate the month by celebrating the women in your life!

Reprinted from the Electronic PSRP Newsletter. Roger Glass; National Women's History Project

## **FINDING THE LOST CUSTOMER**

Most organizations and businesses know the importance of good customer service. They focus a lot of time and energy focusing on their external customers. But according to Nancy Friedman, aka the Telephone Doctor, too many organizations and businesses don't realize that they have internal customers, aka co-workers, that are important also. Sometimes co-workers are lost in the shuffle or not considered at all because of all the attention given to external customers.

Friedman gives the following tips to help create good internal customer service:

- **Respect differences:** Just because your co-worker likes classical music and you like country music doesn't mean that you can't be the best of colleagues.
- **Recognize personal space:** If you work in a cubicle space or open reception area, be aware that others are around you and be sensitive to their communication needs, such as speaking quietly when others are on the phone.
- **Show gratitude:** Thanking your co-workers with a note or phone message or just stopping by their work space to tell them how much you value their work will be greatly appreciated

Life does not come with clear directions...



- Relationship Issues
- Care for aging parents
- Substance abuse
- Medicare/Medicaid questions
- Chronic illness and Disabilities
- Reassurance through difficult times

Contact NYSUT Social Services  
1-800-342-9810, ext. 6206 or [socsvcs@nysutmail.org](mailto:socsvcs@nysutmail.org)



# Legal questions have a way of piling up...

## Maybe it's time to consider enrolling in the Legal Service Plan!

Stuff happens. You may be facing a speeding ticket, a house closing, a divorce, identity theft, elderly parent issues, and the list can go on and on. In today's world, at some point, you'll most likely need the advice or services of an attorney.

When that time comes, you can turn to the Legal Service Plan endorsed by NYSUT Member Benefits Trust.

When you enroll in the plan, you'll receive a multitude of benefits for personal legal matters. Anytime you wish to talk with an attorney, whether for advice or consultation, you have toll-free access weekdays during normal business hours. There's even a toll-free hotline for emergencies occurring beyond these hours.

You'll receive two, hour-long office consultations with a plan attorney, legal document review and legal letters written on your behalf.

If a problem can't be resolved by letter or phone, you'll be referred to a plan attorney. Referral attorneys are located throughout the continental US and charge plan members \$200 an hour or 40 percent less than their standard hourly rate, whichever is lower.

Many personal legal matters have fees that are capped, and there are guaranteed discounts on probate fees and personal injury cases.

Also included is a Legal Security Package each year of plan enrollment. This package includes forms to request a:

- **Simple will** - allows you to select a guardian for your children and beneficiaries of your estate. Without a will in place, the state makes these decisions. A will also speeds up the probate process and makes settling your estate much easier.

- **Power of attorney** - allows you to give another person the right to sign your name and transact your financial affairs.

- **Living will** - enables you to express your wishes regarding end-of-life treatment.

- **Health care proxy** - allows you to appoint someone to make medical decisions on your behalf if you are unable to make them yourself; it also contains directions regarding organ donation.

The plan offers advice and guidance with identity theft issues, debt consolidation and mortgage foreclosure.

You can purchase an Elder Law rider to help you in

your health and estate planning as well as assisting you with these issues for your parents and grandparents.

If you have a business of your own, for example, a rental income property, you can purchase the Business Protection rider to obtain business legal services.

To find out more, call Member Benefits at 800-626-8101. Or go to [www.memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://www.memberbenefits.nysut.org) to view or print a brochure and enrollment form. You can also enroll online.



***I'm not married. Do I need a will?***

***My monthly bills are too much to handle. What can I do?***

***It was a minor accident, I barely hit him! How can he sue me?***

***I'm starting a small business. Where can I get help?***

***My neighbor's tree is dangerously close to my house. What can I do?***

For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits or refer to your NYSUT Member Benefits Trust Summary Plan Description.

Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.

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

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## **TRIAD GOING GREEN**

If you want to opt out of receiving a hard copy, please email **Lisa Mink** ([lmink8@hotmail.com](mailto:lmink8@hotmail.com)). Please give her your name and Chapter you belong to and your home email address.

Please contact **Lisa Mink**, Membership Chair with any change in address that you have. You can reach her at [lmink8@hotmail.com](mailto:lmink8@hotmail.com). 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.

# **PERSONNEL PERSONALS**

**Stan Christoff** recently celebrated his 82nd birthday with his family at the historic Charlton Restaurant. Happy Birthday, Stan.

Speedy recovery to **Nancy Kosakoski** (Teacher, Sp. Ed.) on her second surgery this year. All is well and she will be back at work soon.

**Val Marco** (Sr. Acc. Clerk, Sp. Ed.) is proud announce that her son Chris has made the PRESIDENTS LIST at SUNY CORTLAND in his second year. He is majoring in Business Economics. Chris received a 3.96 for his first Semester.

Our condolences to **Christine McDonough (TA, Sp. Ed.)** on the passing of her mother on Feb. 13th.

Our condolences to **Paulette Johnson** (Secretary, CTE) on the recent loss of her father.

Our condolences to **Maryann Tuite** (Secretary, CTE) on the recent loss of her father Walter Van de Wal on Feb. 14.

Our Condolences to **Karen Condon** (TA, Sp. Ed) on the recent pass of her Step-Mother **Karen Teal**, also a BOCES employee.

## **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**

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869-2367