



March 2012

Vol. XXXVI No. 7

# CAPITAL REGION BOCES FACULTY ASSOCIATION

## TRIAD

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

### News from the President

Dear Colleagues,

Spring is on its way. The sun is higher in the sky and the air is getting warmer. The better weather always helps me smile and appreciate life more. I find that some days are so nice that it's really hard to be down.

Spring is a great time of year. The flowers are starting to grow and the trees all have blossoms. It is a time where we see things come back to life. It is a time of new hope and a time of renewal.

Unfortunately, hope and renewal do not really seem to be a part of our Governor's agenda. Slash and burn would be a better way to describe his treatment of the public work force and the important services we provide. He seems to have found the perfect scapegoat in our public education system and our teachers. This governor is not only wrong in his rhetoric, but has shown us clearly by his statements and actions that he has no interest in supporting us or the rest of the 99 percent. We need to be vocal and let Governor Cuomo and our legislators know how upset we are with the continual efforts to take care of that one percent of the population that have most of the country's wealth.

There are two things I think we need to do. First, continue to or begin supporting VOTE/COPE. Do you know that NYSUT can not use your dues for lobbying? VOTE/COPE is the funding vehicle that allows NYSUT to lobby for legislative changes. Changes that may enhance retirement benefits, allow you to retire sooner, maintain or improve BOCES funding, maintain or improve college funding and so on.

Much of what we enjoy today is a result of lobbying. There are many, many people and groups of people competing for tax dollar support. The truth is without our political action committee - VOTE/COPE, BOCES might be gone or greatly reduced.

The second thing is to continue to go on the NYSUT website at [www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org) and FAX your legislators and the Governor. It's easy and it's effective. If you are not sure how to do this, ask for help. If possible, use your home address. If you need to send them from school, be sure to do it before or after your workday, and send those letters. It will take no money out of your pocket, but will help put some in.

If we take these two actions we will make a positive difference in our futures. If we act collectively, we can be a political force. We can be a force for not only our own best interests, but one that benefits our students and their future.

Don't hesitate to solicit friends, neighbors or other teaching professionals to send letters through the NYSUT web site. We also have links on the Faculty Association website [www.crbfa.org](http://www.crbfa.org). The voices of thou sands of constituents, through letters, phone calls or individual discussions, sends a resounding message that we want ringing in the Governor's and our legislator's ears for a long time to come. This is not the first time we have had to fight for our employment and for the benefit of kids and education. It probably won't be the last. If we don't speak out, who will?

Looking Forward, Doug

### CALENDAR

CAPITAL REGION BOCES  
FACULTY ASSOCIATION.

#### EXECUTIVE BOARD

April 4, 2012

#### REP COUNCIL

March 21, 2012

#### BOCES BOARD

March 19, 2012

March is Women's  
History Month.



Birthstone:  
Aquamarine

Flower:  
Jonquil



#### TRIAD Article Deadline:

March 27, 2012 for  
April Newsletter

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# VOTE-COPE 2012 COMING YOUR WAY SOON!

## Give To VOTE-COPE

### Putting Activism To Work

By Catherine A. Jakway, VOTE-COPE Chairperson

Dear Colleagues,

NYSUT'S active membership is celebrated this month as the union unveils its 2012 VOTE-COPE campaign **"You Have the Power."** "Besides the dollars, it's our members who get out a positive message about the work they do," said Andy Palotta, NYSUT Executive Vice President. "Whether they work in the private sector, in government, in schools or health care facilities, they stand up to the anti-union rhetoric. That kind of activism is needed more than ever.

#### What is VOTE-COPE?

VOTE-COPE is the Voice of Teachers for Education – Committee on Political Education, the non-partisan political action arm of New York State United Teachers and its affiliates. Funded entirely by voluntary contributions from members, VOTE-COPE is used to help union-backed candidates and campaign committees that support education and labor.

VOTE-COPE helps strengthen political action programs at all levels-national, state and local. To help on the local level, VOTE-COPE provides rebates to participating unions for local political action.

VOTE-COPE funds, by law, are kept separate from those of NYSUT. Decisions on the use of VOTE-COPE contributions are made by a statewide committee. VOTE-COPE solicits and accepts only voluntary contributions. Contributions to VOTE-COPE are not tax deductible.

Members play a vital role in VOTE-COPE'S success. In order to continue VOTE-COPE'S important work, increased contributions are needed. Contributions can be made by check (made out to "Vote-Cope") or through payroll deduction. Retirees can contribute through automatic pension deduction.

Please support your union's efforts to protect public education, access to health care, labor rights, and fairness for working families. A contribution to VOTE-COPE helps ensure your voice will be heard on issues, large and small, that affect your life. We know these are difficult financial times, but if you can increase your VOTE-COPE contribution even by \$1 it would be greatly appreciated.

When you get your Vote-Cope packet in the mail, please help by making a contribution today.

We have a VOTE-COPE contribution to fit all budgets:

Amount per check Yearly Contribution

\$1.00 = \$22.00, \$2.00 = \$44.00, \$3.00 = \$66.00, and up.

Please complete your payroll deduction form, automatic pension deduction, or by check, and return to:

Catherine Jakway  
311 E. Campbell Road,  
Schenectady, NY 12303

### Capital Region BOCES Faculty Association Leadership

POSITION	NAME	HOME	WORK	E-Mail Address
President	H. Douglas Harple	899-1044	862-4776	hdharple@msn.com
Vice President	Patricia Gollub	583-1119	862-4716	Gollub02@yahoo.com
CVP TA/EA	Colleen Condolora	393-2244	356-8349	condolora@aol.com
CVP Service	Susan Kusalonis	393-5598	421-2007	maidmrm300@aol.com
CVP Spec. Educ.	Flora Fasoldt	674-0223	377-9018	electflora@aol.com
CVP C T E	Jeannine Moran	587-7662	862-4816	jmmoran@hotmail.com
Recording Secretary	Barbara Burnham	334-1193	862-4720	baburnham@googlemail.com
Corresponding Sec'y.	Sue Davis	427-0459	456-0574	scdavis@nycap.rr.com
Treasurer	Deborah Sorvari	452-8138	334-1296	debmom39@nycap.rr.com
Membership Chair	Lisa Mink	372-7240	464-3979	lmink8@hotmail.com
Grievance Chair	E.J. Hanley	321-0485	356-8342	ehanley1@nycap.rr.com

# Capital Region BOCES Faculty Association

## Rep Council Highlights

February 12, 2012 by Lanny Barsale

### Chapter Vice-Presidents' reports

TA/EA: Colleen Condolora

- Negotiations – Cleaning up language in contract which is in NYSUT's hands right now. There will be an informational meeting soon with a vote, hopefully, early in April.
- TA showcase: **May 1<sup>st</sup>, 3:00 – 5:00 PM**

Service: Susan Kusalonis

- It's been fairly quiet. However, some people are being told that they don't have jobs in public places. There have been open meetings for service people. Do not want contract to be opened so they will try not to. Many problems can be dealt with using Memorandums of Understanding. (MOU)

Special Education Teachers: Flora Fasoldt

- The basic message about Tier 6 is that we don't support it. Public service workers have given this up and their retirement is at the mercy of Wall Street. It could make it hard to attract teachers.
- NYSUT movement is promoting the school aid petition. It has become competitive.
- APPR – final appeal this week. It may take a few weeks for a decision.
- NYSUT poll – 77% of parents reject weight on a single test to evaluation teachers.
- Extended School Year (ESY) requirement for teachers – Use data currently taking. Do not use form from administration. Attendance will be looked at (on a case by case basis) in determining who will be chosen to work summer school.

CTE teachers: Jeanne Moran

- Same information about political action.
- Meeting tomorrow with teachers about negotiation.

### New Business:

Arbitration costs exceeded budget. Must increase line item from \$500 to \$2,339. Motion made and passed to add \$1,839 from savings to that line item.

### Committees:

ED #10: (Colleen reported) There is a strong push for all members to get actively involved to **stop** Tier 6. Everyone should go to MAC.NYSUT.org and to the member action center. So far only .5% are enrolled. We need to attack the Governor about this. Go on the site, fill in the information and it will give you the list of your representatives. Then hit the button to fax the letters to them. These grass roots movements have been highly effective. We need to block Tier 6 not only for incoming teachers but to protect our retirement. Governor is trying to destroy the retirement system. Even our Comptroller is against Tier 6.

Negotiations: Tough climate for negotiations. We probably won't open the contract.

Budget: Committee will meet late February or early March. All requests were due at this Rep Council.

Nominations: In TRIAD. They are due March 1<sup>st</sup>. Elections will be in April.

PDP – Will be looking for changes on BOCES website to make it easier to find information about Professional Development opportunities.

**March 23<sup>rd</sup> Staff Development Day – flyer will be sent to staff soon.**

TRIAD – February issue is out. Susan will be out for surgery so not sure when next meeting is.

BOCES prom – May 11<sup>th</sup>.

Board meeting – Thursday this month. Need people to attend. Colleen Condolora and Catherine Jakway will be attending. Need others to be willing to attend. Andy Lockwood will receive an award.

No news on incentive – It will not be relayed to time. It will be some kind of monetary award.

Seniority List – see Chapter Vice-President if interested.

Lobby Day in Albany – March 14<sup>th</sup> from 10:30 to 3:30. Issues to be discussed are classroom funding, fairness and equity, and quality pre-kindergarten.

# TEACHING ASSISTANTS/EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS/AIDES

By Colleen Condolora, Chapter VP

Dear Constituents:

Winter break is over and I hope everyone was able to have some fun and relaxation. This is the time of year when we need to get invigorated for the long March stretch until our next break. Pace yourselves everyone!

Our Faculty Association website has been recently updated by our current webmaster Barb Burnham, CTE Teaching Assistant. The site has been revamped with new links and information. Please take a moment to check it out at [www.crbfa.org](http://www.crbfa.org). When you see Barb, tell her thanks for a job well done!

Please show your support on May 1<sup>st</sup> at the TA/Aide Showcase. Invitations were sent out in February, please RSVP to Marcia Siver. This year's candidates to be showcased for their Special Projects are, **Valarie Gottlieb & Linda Stern, Stephanie Champ, Courtney Stapf, Nancy Martin, Sandy Daunais, and Catherine Jakway**. This is a special afternoon celebrating the accomplishments of our Chapter. Please come and join in the celebration from 3:00 - 4:00 PM .

NYSUT is currently promoting a grassroots campaign to have our members voices heard. Please go the NYSUT website at [www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org) to join the Member Action Center (MAC). We need to be more proactive and vocal in order to safe guard all of our hard earned incentives over the years. Tier 6 will be detrimental to our future educators as well as our future and past retirees. Joining the MAC is very simple and painless. As unionist it is our responsibility to stay informed of the latest developments during these unprecedented attacks on our retirement system and education in general. Take a moment to have your voices heard by faxing the governor and your legislators. Your involvement does make a difference.

I want to take a moment to send out a speedy recovery to **Charles Mondun, Terry Livingston** and **Michele Angelo**. Get well soon everyone. Your friends and colleagues miss you.

In closing, thank you to everyone for all that you do! Each of you brings something special and valuable to your teams and students. Keep up the good work!

**In Solidarity, Colleen Condolora**

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## SERVICE CHAPTER by Susan Kusalonis

Dear Colleagues,

As I sit here recuperating from my hip replacement, I wonder how you are all doing in the trenches. It is a crazy time of year, superintendent day conference day, testing of students, annual reviews, etc. and hope you all pull through well. I'm enjoying my two dogs and two cats, they are great company. Not used to being away from adult conversation.

The Association needs your help. Please give us your personal email for emergency contact. The Governor is trying to take away the retirement systems from us. He claims that the change will only effect the unborn. The problem with this is as we age out; "Wall Street" will start having access to the retirement money. The future members will be using 403b and 401's to save for their future. At some point the existing retirement systems will be smaller and smaller and have less ability to fund those of us still around. Not good. We know how Wall Street can take us down.

This is only one of many situations that has been important for you to be aware of. Barb Burnham has been working on the Faculty Association Web Site and hopes to be able to use this vehicle in the future.

# Healthy Living; Living For Good Health

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

## We All Have The Power To Heal, The Power To Give Hope, The Power To Save a Life.

### Part 1



According to You're a Match: A Donor's Guide to Donation, The National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP) is dedicated to ensuring all patients who need a transplant receive access to this potentially life-saving treatment. Headquartered in Minneapolis, the non-profit organization:

- Manages the **Be The Match Registry®**
- Facilitates transplants worldwide
- Conducts research
- Provides education and support to patients, donors and health care professionals

The Be The Match Registry is a confidential national database of potential volunteer marrow donors established and maintained by the NMDP.

Thousands of patients hope for a bone marrow donor who can make their life-saving transplant possible. They depend on people like you. Have you ever wanted to save a life but didn't know how? This may be for you.

You have the power to save a life. Take the first step today.

When you join the Be The Match Registry you are joining to help any patient in need of a bone marrow donor. Every day, thousands of patients with leukemia and other life-threatening diseases hope for a marrow donor who can make their transplant possible. Seventy percent of patients do not have a donor in their family. They depend on people like you. As a volunteer, you are never under any legal obligation to donate and your decision is always respected. However, a late decision not to donate can be life-threatening to a patient, so please think seriously about your commitment before deciding to join. You can give hope to patients with blood cancers like leukemia and lymphoma, sickle cell and other life-threatening diseases. Patients especially need you if you are **between the ages of 18 and 44**. That's because younger donors produce more and higher-quality cells than older donors. Be The Match relies on financial contributions to help cover the \$100 cost of adding each new donor to the registry. As part of your donor registration process, you

will have the opportunity to make a financial contribution. They encourage you to make a gift. Any amount helps. Be sure you understand what to expect when you join the registry so you feel comfortable with your decision.

### **Part II Next Month:**

#### **Get the facts FAQs about joining the registry**

For more information:

#### **Contact:**

**Be The Match Foundation National Marrow Donor Program,  
3001 Broadway Street N.E.,  
Suite 100, Minneapolis, MN  
55413-1753—1(800) 507-542 7**

marrow.org

bethematchfoundation.org

There are many types of materials available on their websites that are very informative and that can be ordered right on line. I ordered several items and I received them in less than a week. (Their websites say 2 – 3 weeks but plan on receiving them sooner!)

<b>Rep Council Dates</b>	<b>Location Of each meeting</b>
3/21/12	Albany/Schoharie Rms.
4/18/12	Albany/Schoharie Rms.
5/16/12	Albany/Schoharie Rms.
6/13/12	Albany/Schoharie Rms.

# NOTEWORTHY NEWS

By Catherine A. Jakway, TA. Spec. Ed., Nomination and Election Chairperson

## ELECTIONS AND ED 10 DELEGATES

### PLEASE VOTE!

Nominations for Faculty Association officers and ED 10 Delegates have concluded and I am now preparing envelopes with your Chapter ballot, (each Chapter will be a different color) your candidates bio's and a return self-addressed envelope. If your name or address has changed from what we presently have, please contact **Lisa Mink** at [lmink8@hotmail.com](mailto:lmink8@hotmail.com) or myself at [MsSmarty-pants429@nycap.rr.com](mailto:MsSmarty-pants429@nycap.rr.com). This will ensure your ballot arrives in a timely manner. Any returned mail will be sent back to our Faculty Association address, 1015 Watervliet-Shaker Road, Albany, NY 12205, and not to me at my home address.

I will stay in contact with our Faculty Association President, **H. Douglas Harple** during that time and I will be given any returned ballots ASAP so I can correct the addresses and resend them. Please help me make this a smoother mailing by updating your information before I conclude labeling envelopes on or after April 11<sup>th</sup>.

Every ballot counts and I am hoping for record returns. This is the "big" election; that which decides your Faculty Association officers and your ED 10 representatives for the next two years.

Ballots will be mailed out on Friday, April 13, 2012. The returned ballot **postmarked** deadline will be **Monday, May 7<sup>th</sup>**. I am allowing a few days from that time for ballots to arrive. Please vote, put a stamp on the envelope and return just the ballot to me in the

return self-addressed envelope. Any ballot received after the postmarked date cannot and will not be counted. I will also be in need of an election ballot counting committee (one member from each Chapter). I will be seeking a representative from CTE and Sp. Ed. Teacher Chapters, Chapter and the Service Chapter.

Please contact me at the above personal email address or at my cell # 469-7969 if you are able to represent your Chapter. The Association President will then appoint you to the Committee. Thank you.

### Social Gathering Dates

Our Social Gatherings, aka Happy Hour Get Together are planned for **Friday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>**, at 3:00 PM until ? at O'Tooles Tavern in the Kohl's Plaza on Central Avenue in Colonie.

Our next Social Gathering is scheduled for **Friday, April 20<sup>th</sup>** at 3:00 PM until ? at Dorato's in the 20 Mall, Rt. 20, Guilderland.

Brent Pierce and I are trying to "centralize" social gathering locations for all of our colleagues due to the fact that we are so widespread.

If you have any suggestions for future dates and/or locations, please contact **Brent Pierce** Spec. Ed. teacher at his personal email address only, [bmp4sw@gmail.com](mailto:bmp4sw@gmail.com).

## Annual Local Recycling Day Coming in April

Capital Region residents and businesses invited to recycle unwanted electronics

Capital Region residents and businesses with unwanted electronic equipment can recycle it in an environmentally friendly way.

The 10th Annual Electronics Recycling Day will be held on **Saturday, April 21 at Taft Furniture in Colonie**. The recycling day is being held in honor of Earth Day and people and businesses are invited to recycle used TV's, computers, cell phones, VCR's and other unwanted electronic equipment.

Last year, over 4,000 cars lined up to recycle unwanted electronics and over 250 tons of electronic equipment was recovered and recycled instead of going to landfills. The equipment filled up 20 tractor trailers.

NewsChannel 13, participating municipalities and other sponsors will host the event that will be held from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Volunteers are needed.

For more information please contact John Hodgens at [jhodgens@wnyt.com](mailto:jhodgens@wnyt.com) or call 518-207-4740 (work) or 518-334-1126 (cell).

Reprinted from WNYT Channel 13 webpage Wednesday, February 29, 2012

# Counseling in Times of Stress

From time to time, major changes in our lives tax our ability to cope. Newly diagnosed medical conditions, caregiving responsibilities, divorce, a child leaving home, a change in job responsibilities, or living on a reduced income in retirement are but a few examples of transitional problems which precipitate stress.

Embarking upon even a short course of counseling with an objective and empathetic professional can be most helpful in reinforcing your strengths and facilitating adaptation to change. If you conclude that counseling may be helpful to you in accepting and adapting to stressful life changes, then give us a call. We will assist you in getting the help that you need.

**NYSUT Social Services:**  
1-800-342-9810, ext. 6206.

UFT Retirees please call  
212-598-6880.

UFT In-service members please call  
212-539-0500.



# Helpful Educational Acronyms

**ADA** – Americans with Disability Act

**ADD/ADHD** – Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder

**APE** – Adaptive Physical Education

**AE** – Age Equivalent

**AIDS** – Academic Intervention Services

**ASL** – American Sign Language

**AT** – Assistive Technology

**AU** – Autism

**BIP** – Behavior Intervention Plan

**BOCES** – Board of Cooperative Educational Services

**BOE** – Board of Education

**CPSE** – Committee on Preschool Special Education

**CSE** – Committee on Special Education

**DB** – Deaf and Blind

**DD** – Developmental Disability

**DHH** – Deaf/Hard of Hearing

**ED** – Emotionally Disturbed

**FAPE** - Free and Appropriate Public Education

**FBA**- Functional Behavioral Assessment

**FERPA** – Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

**IDEA** – Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

**IEE** – Independent Education Evaluation

**IEP** – Individualized Education Program

**IH** – Impartial Hearing

**IQ** – Intelligence Quotient

**LD** – Learning Disabled

**LRE** – Least Restrictive Environment

**MD** – Multiple Disabilities

**MR** – Mentally Retarded

**OHI** – Other Health Impaired

**OI** – Orthopedically Impaired

**OT** – Occupational Therapy

**PDD** – Pervasive Developmental Disorder

**PT** – Physical Therapy

**SED** – State Education Department

**SEIT** – Special Education Itinerant Teacher

**SI** – Speech Impaired

**TBI** – Traumatic Brain Injury

**TDD** – Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf

**VESID** – Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities

**VI** – Visually Impaired

# From the Editor's desk

Lanny Barsale, Co-Editor

From the Editor's desk

Several years ago I wrote an article for the TRIAD about teachable moments. I wish I still had a copy of that article because teachable moments have been surfacing in my thinking in the last couple of weeks. The concept of "teachable moment" was popularized by Robert Havighurst in his 1952 book, Human Development and Education. In the context of education theory, Havighurst explained,

A developmental task is a task which is learned at a specific point and which makes achievement of succeeding tasks possible. When the timing is right, the ability to learn a particular task will be possible. This is referred to as a 'teachable moment.' It is important to keep in mind that unless the time is right, learning will not occur. Hence, it is important to repeat important points whenever possible so that when a student's teachable moment occurs, s/he can benefit from the knowledge.

Havighurst linked the concept to repetition and I agree but the definition I used in the previous article was more linked to flexibility and to seizing the moment. In the literature published in the nineties a "teachable moment" is an unplanned opportunity that grows out of what is happening in the classroom. By virtue of what a student says or does, the flexible teacher can capitalize on an ideal chance to offer insight to his or her students. No teacher can plan for such moments. When students exhibit a keen interest, even if the plans are thrown off temporarily, a flexible will seize the opportunity to

pursue that interest. Recently I have noted how a simple question from a student can spark a research project, engage a group such that the students show real enthusiasm, and lead to greater retention. All the better when repetition is involved because when students are reminded of a prior interest and how much enjoyment was derived from the learning, they are more likely to follow a new interest or to get involved when you return to the original lesson.

Parents and teachers are urged to look for teachable moments – that time when the child is most receptive to learning. For example, a child may resist learning fractions, but during a classroom cooking activity, the child may take a real interest in figuring the fractions needed for the recipe.

Since I first wrote about it, the concept has gained much attention. Take a look at [teachablemoments.org](http://teachablemoments.org) on the internet. There are ideas for lessons for k – 12 that other teachers have found helpful for sparking teachable moments. One theme that I have noted is that there are often local, national, or world happenings that students are aware of and wish to talk about. If you are alert you can see how the discussions can translate into the pursuit of skills you were already attempting to teach.

I am more convinced than ever of the value of the concept for teachers, one-to-one assistants, speech therapists, social workers, all classroom personnel. Send me your stories of "teachable moments" in your classroom for subsequent TRIAD publications.

**In solidarity,  
Lanny Barsale, co-editor**



# RETIREES' CORNER

Jeanette K. Christoff

Greetings,

The months of June-uary and February were a treat, making life easier for us seniors as well as for those commuting. Last year, snow throwers, salt and roof rakes were impossible to find and are now available in abundance. We joke that our generator is working well. It has kept away the winter storms.

On to Association matters: The composition of our TRIAD sub-committee has changed with the return of our long-time friend, and colleague, **Lanny Barsale** as co-editor. Back in the 80s it was type, cut and paste, as she and Pat Gordon brought us our newsletter. Lanny has been on the Executive Board, Rep Council and on numerous committees through the years. She brings an in-depth knowledge of our contracts, constitution, past grievances and their outcomes. Lanny bears witness to 30 years of Association history. We are fortunate to have her. Welcome back girl.

We are pleased to learn that Susan, who had considered withdrawing from candidacy in the up-coming election, has decided to run for Service Chapter VP. Because our Association is a unity of all chapters, her withdrawal at this time of negotiations could affect all chapters. She has worked tirelessly in her position and often with little support from chapter members. Only recently have members come forward to fill the Rep Council vacancies to which the Service Chapter is entitled. Susan is not one to leave a job half finished and brings her years of experience, plus the insight she has gained as the BOCES board monitor for the Association.

The proposed Teacher Evaluation process proposed by our governor, and its acceptance is of great concern. An item that we find especially troubling is a return to the unannounced observations. Was not this a major issue back in the 60s when our Association was founded? Has this right been given away in exchange for funding? It would appear so. What other future losses will there be?

If this can happen despite our state wide New York State United Teachers (NYSUT), try to imagine what your working conditions would be if there was no one to represent you. It is more crucial than ever that every one support the Association. Last month, our TRIAD told of The Way Things Were. We hope history is not repeating itself and that the gains made will not be lost to the dictates of those in power.

## SCHALMONT SETTLES

After 958 days without a contract, a 5-year contract has been approved. Teachers will receive retroactive pay of 1.5% for the years 2009-2011 and for the current year to date. They agreed to take no increase for 2012 and 2013, other than longevity. Salary range with a Masters degree is \$42,939 to \$95,531. Employees health benefit contribution will increase from 5% to 10%. They have agreed to a less costly plan. (Gazette 2/14/2012.)

## NYSUT has launched the new Member Action Center

(affectionately know as the "MAC") website. This site will offer our members an exciting and easy way to take action on a variety of issues. I encourage you to check it out. The site can be found at:

**[mac.nysut.org](http://mac.nysut.org)**

Please share this site among your fellow school-related professional contacts and encourage members to sign on to become e-activists. There are some great new videos, fliers you can download regarding Tier VI and opportunities to send faxes and make calls.

Next week we will follow up with a second email invitation for members to join our new

Facebook Action Center. Please encourage members to "like" our new page here:

**[www.facebook.com/NYSUTActionCenter](http://www.facebook.com/NYSUTActionCenter)**

We will be using this site to take action, relay information and otherwise keep in touch with our "friends". Please help us to spread the word.

Thanks for all of your help. Margaret MacCartney  
NYSUT, School-Related Professionals Coordinator, [mmac-cart@nysutmail.org](mailto:mmac-cart@nysutmail.org)

## FROM OUR READERS

- Just wanted you to know that I really enjoyed reading your article this month. Hope present employees can appreciate how much their working lives have improved due to Association efforts. Hope all is well with you and Stan. Take care, **Jim Owen**
- I love your article. Remembering where we came from and how we got here will help keep us grounded and not take for granted what we have. Thank you so much for you help and dedication! **Doug Harple**
- Thank you so much for giving the new BOCES teachers (probably from 1980 to present) the history of what we used to put up with before we worked so hard to get a union in place. I had even forgotten the nonsense that we went thru in those days; especially the insult of being paid according to the district that we were assigned to. When I was out in Cobleskill, I made peanuts compared to a teacher doing the same job in a more suburban district. God Bless the Union. Lest they ever Forget. **Marilyn Sargent**, Writer / Special Education Consultant
- Some of the topics noted in the Feb. TRIAD had a profound impact on me. In the beginning...The way things were...The first contract secured...Will our story continue...what a tribute to the work that has been accomplished by the BOCES Faculty Association. It's incredible. I hope that the history is published is more BOCES publications, the bigger the target audience, the better. After reading the article about Rosa's Law. I immediately went to the Rosa's Law site and tweeted a link to it. Then I contacted Sen. Gilebrand asking her to vote **no** on the House Appropriations CR Bill for 2011. The article that Colleen wrote "My Journey..." leaves me with grateful respect. Thank you, **Susan Jadlos**, TA.

## Republican Education Legislation Is a Step Backward

Two Republican-sponsored bills to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which passed the House Education and the Workforce Committee Feb. 28 along party lines, would undermine efforts to improve our public schools, AFT president Randi Weingarten says. "The federal government has long played a central role in ensuring that all children have access to a high-quality public education," Weingarten says. "It is unconscionable that some in Congress want to walk away from our nation's commitment to providing an education that allows every child to compete on a level playing field. Instead of addressing the flaws of No Child Left Behind, these proposals take several steps backward—not the step forward that students and teachers need."

### Fixing the Fixation on Testing

In her latest column that appears in the *New York Times*, AFT president Randi Weingarten focuses on the need for our schools to move away from their current "test mania." As Weingarten writes: "Teachers don't want to spend valuable time endlessly preparing for 'the test.' They want to guide their students to ask insightful questions, offer well-reasoned opinions, and work diligently until they master content. Those are the types of classroom experiences that unleash students' ingenuity and reveal their understanding of the material. And that's the kind of learning that is being stamped out by the current pervasive fixation on testing."

### Agreement Reached on New York Teacher Evaluation

The Feb. 16 agreement between New York State United Teachers and New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo on a new teacher evaluation system shows what happens when everyone is committed to working collaboratively and using real tools, like collective bargaining, to reach agreement, AFT president Randi Weingarten says. "While collaboration is never easy, it always beats conflict and ultimately does right by our kids," Weingarten says. "Educators are in the classroom every day with their students and should be included in developing policies that they will have to convert into real-life teaching and learning for our students."

### Expert Optimistic About Common Core Standards

Shared education standards may have failed in the past, but at least one education expert is optimistic that, this time, the Common Core State Standards are going to stick. Robert Rothman, a senior fellow at the Alliance for Excellent Education and author of *Something in Common: The Common Core Standards and the Next Chapter in American Education*, says past attempts to create common education standards have failed, in part, for lack of implementation plans and distrust of a policy that was handed down to the states. This time around, the standards were developed by states for states and, says Rothman, are "compelling" and "coherent." They also have already been adopted by 46 states and the District of Columbia. Rothman spoke at a Feb. 15 education policy forum hosted by the AFT and sponsored by the American Educational Research Association and the Institute for Educational Leadership.

## BOCES Board of Education Meeting February 16, 2012

Special Education and Career and Technical Divisions presented their proposed budgets for 2013. Career and Tech will be closing two programs.

**Andy Lockwood**, Special Education teacher was recognized at the Board meeting as the selected "TopTeacher" recipient. Principal Maureen Gushlaw read the letter his former student, Melanie Hecker wrote.

Mark Jones, Assistant Superintendent of Management Services reported out for Dr. Dedrick, who was not in attendance for the Board meeting.

- The Governor's budget does not propose any cuts for BOCES aid to school districts. This is a positive sign.
- Regent Jackson toured the CTE career readiness programs and NERIC's Distance Learning lab.
- Skills USA received a \$25,000 grant to repair the park and cemetery in Schoharie County. Schoharie CTE received a donation for a bulldozer to replace the one that was destroyed by Hurricane Irene.
- BOCES lobbying day will be March 6<sup>th</sup>.
- There will be a Mandate Relief Council in late February.
- The Administrative budget vote will be on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. There are currently three Board seats up for reelection.
- BOCES calendar was presented for 2012-13, the Regents dates are missing.
- BOCES has completed updating the Board policies. The update was a five year journey for renewal. They will continue to revamp as laws change (bullying, cyber bullying, social media and travel guidelines.)

**Respectfully submitted, Colleen Condolora**

### BEST FIX YET!

There was a recently article in the St Petersburg, Ft. Times. The business Section asked readers for ideas on : "How Would You Fix the Economy?" I think this guy nailed it!

Dear Mr. President,

Please find below my suggestions for fixing America's economy.

Instead of giving billions of dollars to companies that will squander the money on lavish parties and unearned bonuses, use the following plan.

You can call it the "Patriotic Retirement Plan":

There are about 40 million people over 50 in the work force. Pay them \$1 million apiece severance for early retirement with the following stipulations:

- 1) they MUST retire. Forty Million job openings—Unemployment fixed.
- 2) They MUST buy a new AMERICAN car. Forty million cars ordered - Auto Industry fixed.
- 3) They MUST either buy a house or pay off their mortgage—Housing Crisis Fixed.
- 4) It can't get any easier than that!

PS. If more money is needed, have All members in congress pay their taxes...

Mr. President, while you're at it, make Congress retire on Social Security and Medicare. I'll bet both programs would be fixed pronto!

## Opt in for a hard copy of the TRIAD

A motion was passed by the Capital Region BOCES Faculty Association to try to "Go Green" and only send a hard copy of the TRIAD starting with the September 2012 issue to members who request it.

We will start asking those members who want to continue receiving a hard copy to let our Membership Chairperson, **Lisa Mink**, know that they want a hard copy and confirm the mailing address. You can contact Lisa by phone (518) 372-7240 at home; email her at [lmink8@hotmail.com](mailto:lmink8@hotmail.com) or by US mail to: 8 Jester Drive, Colonie, NY 12205.

We will continue to put this in each newsletter as a reminder.

## Labor launches new ad campaign to protest Tier 6 plan



Next week, the AFL-CIO in New York launches a new ad campaign protesting the proposed Tier 6. The ads -- supported by NYSUT and other public employee unions -- clarify that this proposal would cut pensions by 40 percent. Cutting pensions helps no one, except Wall Street, because the plan includes an ill-conceived 401(k)-like option. NYSUT is producing a post card message to accompany the new campaign.

Go to the MAC to find numerous action items for you to protest the proposed Tier 6. This is urgent. Leaders need to direct their members to the MAC to call and write legislators to express their concern about the pension change. It won't affect only future members, as the governor claims, it will undermine the entire pension system for all public employees including higher ed. Contact Peter Savage in NYSUT Legislation, psavage@nysutmail.org, if you have any questions or issues.

## Plenty of voting to be done before November in New York

While the big general and presidential election is coming up in November, local leaders need to keep reminding members of important voting dates this spring and summer. Here's a run-down. Share it!

- Special elections March 20 will fill vacant Assembly and state Senate seats in five districts.
- Republican and Democratic presidential primaries are April 24; that same day voters elect delegates to both national conventions. Many NYSUT members are running for these delegate positions.
- Most of us vote on school budgets May 15. See item above on new and updated support materials for locals.
- New York's congressional primary is June 26.
- Primary day for the state Legislature is up for debate. While Assembly Democrats would like statewide primaries to also be held on June 26, the same day as the congressional primary, Senate Republicans prefer an August primary. If no action is taken, the statewide primaries will automatically fall on Sept. 11.

## Help Schoharie School District win this grant from Samsung! Read below and click on the website to vote for Schoharie!!

<https://pages.samsung.com/us/sft/video/index.jsp#top>

The voting page can also be accessed by putting "Samsung Solve For Tomorrow Schoharie" in a Google search and selecting the first listing.

### Margaret MacCartney

School-Related Professionals Coordinator  
NYSUT, 800 Troy Schenectady Road, Latham, NY 12110

800-342-9810 ext. 6318

[mmaccart@nysutmail.org](mailto:mmaccart@nysutmail.org)

## *Dates to remember*

### Professional Issues Forum

The registration deadline has been extended one week to March 16 for NYSUT's important health care Professional Issues Forum, March 30-31.  
[www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org)

### *AFT PSRP Conference 2012*

**April 20-22, 2012**

**Marriott Wardman Park Hotel,  
Washington, DC**

The 35th annual Paraprofessional and School-Related Personnel Conference will be held April 20-22, 2012, at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, DC.

If you are looking for information about the pre-conference programming, registration deadlines and housing costs, you may click the links in the Conference Information box to preview the forms.

# Fixing the Fixation on Testing

Randi Weingarten

President, American Federation of Teachers

President Obama got high marks from teachers and parents when he said in his recent State of the Union address that schools should stop teaching to the test and instead give teachers latitude to teach with creativity and passion.

I immediately recalled times as a teacher when I thought my students learned the most. It wasn't when we were intensely preparing for the Regents exams or any other standardized tests. My students were most engaged during project-based learning, when they worked in teams and wrestled with complex topics, such as the decision to drop the atomic bomb during World War II. My proudest moment as an educator was watching my students compete in the We the People civics competition and observing—after all their preparation—the confidence with which our teams debated constitutional issues.

Those are the kinds of educational experiences that excite students and teachers alike. Teachers don't want to spend valuable time endlessly preparing for "the test." They want to guide their students to ask insightful questions, offer well-reasoned opinions, and work diligently until they master content. Those are the types of classroom experiences that unleash students' ingenuity and reveal their understanding of the material.

And that's the kind of learning that is being stamped out by the current pervasive fixation on testing. Test-based accountability is out of balance, and parents, teachers and public officials—from President Obama to California Gov. Jerry Brown to Texas Commissioner of Education Robert Scott—are speaking out about it.

Obama was right when he spoke last year about using standardized tests appropriately—to diagnose students' strengths and weaknesses, not to punish students or schools. Yet, numerous policies enacted by the U.S. Department of Education since No Child Left Behind have skewed the emphasis toward testing and sanctions.

Look at the difference between private and public schools in our country. Most private schools do not administer high-stakes tests, and that is reflected in their

curriculum and culture. Freedom from test fixation allows them to provide enriching experiences and in-depth instruction in an array of subjects.

Public schools, in contrast, are required by federal and state laws to administer what numerous experts consider to be too many low-quality standardized assessments, which have significant consequences. This, in turn, drives an excessive focus on the tests, test preparation and tested subjects.

Indeed, evidence supports teachers' and parents' concerns. An examination of National Assessment of Educational Progress results by Richard Rothstein of the Economic Policy Institute shows that disadvantaged students have made significant progress in the last generation, but that such progress has stalled in the decade since NCLB and its unprecedented test-based accountability measures were enacted.

## Test mania won't get our children or our country where we need to go.

Proper accountability is extremely important. But current public school accountability mechanisms don't gauge good teaching or deep acquisition of knowledge. The Common Core State Standards, and the assessments being developed as part of their implementation, can help

bridge that divide by focusing on deeper understanding of core content that students then can apply broadly.

Nations that outperform the United States have gotten this balance right—emphasizing teaching and learning versus testing and blaming. In Singapore, for example, where I spent time with teachers and students last week, schools are focused intently on growth and achievement. However, as I observed numerous diverse groups of children deeply engaged in learning, nothing I saw could be construed as teaching to the test.

Test mania won't get our children or our country where we need to go. Obama made a good case for this when he recently honored science fair winners from across the country at the White House. The president was clearly impressed by the innovative projects—he even shot a marshmallow from a small but powerful air cannon. The ingenuity on display at the White House should be cultivated in every public school in America.

We hope that the views expressed from the bully pulpit of the presidency will be matched with state and federal action that moves away from the excessive fixation on testing and toward the appropriate use of assessments to support teaching and learning. That's what parents of advantaged kids seek when enrolling them in private schools, and that's what the highest-achieving countries do. And it's what we can and should do in every American public school.



Weingarten with students at William B. Patterson Elementary School in Washington, D.C.

MICHAEL CAMPBELL

FOLLOW AFT PRESIDENT RANDI WEINGARTEN: [twitter.com/rweingarten](https://twitter.com/rweingarten)

## March 13 to April 15 is Deaf History Month.

### Some of the world's most famous quotes belong to a remarkable women who is honored during this time of year.

Helen Keller, while never hearing the famous quotes she shared with others, spoke words of wisdom that all of us can appreciate. Here are 15 of some of her most beautiful and famous quotes:

1. "Instead of comparing our lot with that of those who are more fortunate than we are, we should compare it with the lot of the great majority of our fellow men. It then appears that we are among the privileged."
2. "Keep your face to the sunshine and you will never see the shadow."
3. "While they were saying among themselves it cannot be done, it was done."
4. "It is a terrible thing to see and have no vision."
5. "The world is moved along, not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes, but also by the aggregate of tiny pushes of each honest worker."
6. "No pessimist ever discovered the secret of the stars, or sailed to an uncharted land, or opened a new doorway for the human spirit."
7. "Everything has its wonders, even darkness and silence, and I learn whatever state I am in, therein to be content."
8. "Life is either a daring adventure or nothing. Security does not exist in nature, nor do the children of men as a whole experience it. A voiding danger is no safer in the long run than exposure."
9. "People do not like to think. If one thinks, one must reach conclusions. Conclusions are not always pleasant."
10. "Science may have found a cure for most evils; but it has found no remedy for the worst of them all - the apathy of human beings."
11. "Be not dumb, obedient slaves in an army of destruction! Be heroes in an army of construction!"
12. "Faith is the strength by which a shattered world shall emerge into the light."
13. "I seldom think about my limitations, and they never make me sad. Perhaps there is just a touch of yearning at times; but it is vague, like a breeze among flowers."
14. "It is wonderful how much time good people spend fighting the devil. If they would only expend the same amount of energy loving their fellow men, the devil would die in his own tracks of ennui."
15. "Death is no more than passing from one room into another. But there's a difference for me, you know. Because in that other room I shall be able to see."

So let these famous quotes remind you that those who aren't distracted by the noise that surrounds us may have more insight into the world and the life within it than we can ever hope to comprehend,

### Healthy Meals for Healthy Kids

The U.S. Department of Agriculture released the final rule that sets the standards for improvements to the child nutrition programs that serve millions of children across the country every day.

The new rule implements important provisions of the **Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010**. It will substantially increase offerings of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, reduce saturated fat, trans fats and sodium, and set sensible calorie limits based on the age of children being served.

The final standards make the same kinds of practical changes that many parents are already encouraging at home, including:

- Ensuring students are offered both fruits and vegetables every day of the week;
- Substantially increasing offerings of whole grain-rich foods;
- Offering only fat-free or low-fat milk varieties;
- Limiting calories based on the age of children being served to ensure proper portion size; and
- Increasing the focus on reducing the amounts of saturated fat, trans fats and sodium.

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act strengthens the school nutrition environment, expands access to healthy meals, and simplifies processes so every child can receive a well-balanced school meal.

PSRP Electronic Newsletter AFT PSRP Union Leader, an electronic newsletter for leaders and activists, is prepared by the AFT PSRP division. Contributors and sources for this month's edition include Larry Doyle, Karen Arthmann, USDA, Let's Move; Lauren Samet, editor; Laura Baker, copyeditor; Valerie Klayman, production.

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## Is Level Term Life Insurance right for you?

With the cost of consumer goods such as gasoline rising at an alarming rate, we're all trying to cut back on expenses any way that we can. Cooking at home instead of eating out? Smart (and healthier)!

Consolidating and paying off debt as quickly as possible? Great decision! "Saving" money by not purchasing life insurance? Not so good. Ask yourself this... would your family be protected if something were to happen to you?

If your answer is "no," you may want to consider purchasing the NYSUT Member Benefits Trust-endorsed Level Term Life Insurance Plan – a new insurance offering available to NYSUT members and their spouses/certified domestic partners.

This plan offers life insurance in force for either a 10-, 15- or 20-year period. Your individual premium is scheduled to remain the same during the term period; you cannot be singled out for a premium increase due to your age or a change in health status; and coverage will not decrease during the term period.

Your rate for Level Term Life is based on your age at the time that you are approved for coverage. Keep in mind that the insurance company reserves the right to change rates for all insureds only once in a 12-month period.



When the term ends, you have a few options. You can renew for another term with proof of insurability, during which your benefits will remain the same. Or, you may renew directly into the Member Benefits Trust-endorsed annual renewable Term Life Insurance Plan with no medical underwriting (depending on age). You can also convert to an individual permanent life policy at a higher cost.

*For more information about this new program, please contact Marsh U.S. Consumer, a service of Seabury & Smith, Inc. – the plan administrator – toll-free at 888-386-9788. Feel free to also contact Member Benefits with any questions at 800-626-8101 or visit [memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org).*

## Need help getting your financial house in order?

It's spring time... and spring cleaning time! Take advantage of this opportunity to go through your home and get rid of those items that you no longer need. And, while you're getting your home in order, why not make sure your financial house is in order as well?

Do you have questions about how to properly invest your assets to build a college savings or retirement fund? Maybe you want to purchase or refinance a home, or simply pay off some debt?

These are important questions to ask of a professional you can trust who can put your mind at ease and help you avoid financial mistakes. The NYSUT Member Benefits Corporation-endorsed Financial Counseling Program – provided by Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. – offers unbiased, objective advice customized to specific financial situations such as the ones mentioned above.

*For more details, please contact Member Benefits at 800-626-8101 or visit [memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org).*

For information about programs or 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.

Mar./Apr. '12



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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## PERSONNEL PERSONALS

Condolences to **Susan Kusalonis** and her family on the passing of Anthony Kusalonis on Jan, 28th in Keeseville, N.Y.

We note the passing of **Pat Huba** on Feb.22, 2012. Pat was a Teachers Aide and worked on the Triad.

Congratulations to Chris and **Mellissa Eberhardt** (Teacher, Sp. Ed.) on the birth of their first baby, Sophie Madison, 7 lbs1 oz. Born on Feb. 7 and doing very well.

Our condolences to **Deborah Sorvari** (TA, Sp. Ed.) on the loss of her Mother In Law

### Remembering Jane Moore

Mom was 88yrs. when she passed at home with her children at her side. The Nuns always used to tell her she'd get her reward in heaven for rearing so many children. I think she got a down-payment on that reward here on earth because she was able to remain in her own home until the end and be cared for by her children.

As the children took turns sitting with her a lot of reminiscing went on as she prepared for her final journey. We were all blessed to have her in our lives!

**Ellen Lozada**, (TA, Sp. Ed.)

### Sunshine Chairperson

If you know of someone who could use a little cheering up, our sympathy, or a get well card, please contact:

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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.