

2009-2011
NWT
EXECUTIVE
BOARD

Kevin Rustowicz,
President
Ext. 3122 (SHS)

Lee Galmbacher,
Vice President
Ext. 5110 (West St)

Cindy Mt. Pleasant,
Recording Secretary
Ext. 5313 (Tuscarora)

Darla Bubar,
Communications
Secretary
Ext. 2708 (ETMS)

Kevin Schucker,
Treasurer
Ext. 1506 (SHS)

Inside this
issue:

SLB/Scholarship Winners	2
From Where I Stand	3
Member Benefits Ad	4
New APPR	5
Picnic Announce- ment	6
What's Good on the Bookshelves	7



The Agenda

VOLUME 36, ISSUE 9

MAY 2010



Contact your retirement system now

if you've filed for the Early Retirement Option (Chapter 45)

From the NYSUT Leader

May 21, 2010

Gov. Paterson signed a bill April 14, which enables NYSUT-represented employees in public schools and public higher education to elect to retire before age 62 without penalty if they are 55 and have 25 years of service in ERS and/or TRS. This Early Retirement Option provides for a retirement period between June 1 and Aug. 31 this year; for public higher education members, it provides another three-month period designated by public higher education institutions ending no later than Dec. 31. The bill became Chapter 45 of the Laws of 2010.

The Empire State Administrators Association has filed a legal challenge to Chapter 45, asserting that it is unconstitutional and seeking to include non-NYSUT-represented bargaining unit personnel in the retirement option. The attorney general, NYSUT, TRS and ERS are opposing the complaint, and a ruling by the New

York Supreme Court in Albany County is expected shortly.

While we are confident that Chapter 45 will be upheld, it's important to let your members know that the litigation is pending, that its outcome cannot be guaranteed, and that a finding of unconstitutionality could have significant consequences in terms of retirement benefits. Please also assure them that while we fully expect to win, if we do not prevail in this round, NYSUT will pursue any and all legal and legislative remedies to honor this agreed-upon retirement option. It's essential to advise your members who are considering submitting retirement or resignation notices, or have already done so based upon their eligibility under Chapter 45, to consult with the appropriate retirement system about the implications of any court ruling on their individual retirement benefits. Notices of retirement submitted to TRS and/or ERS may be rescinded up to 14 days following submission, and resignations submitted to a school district can be

rescinded until accepted by the Board of Education.

In addition to Chapter 45, a bill has been introduced in the Legislature (A11144 Abbate / S7909 Savino) which, if enacted, would provide employers the option to authorize eligible employees to take advantage of a retirement incentive of either (1) one month of service credit for each year of service up to 36 months, or (2) to retire without penalty with at least 25 years of service and attainment of age 55. Those options cannot be combined with Chapter 45 or any local incentives. Download the fact sheet for the 2010 early retirement incentive proposal.

We are pursuing all steps necessary to protect our members from any adverse action by the courts. In the meantime, we will continue to keep you and members fully briefed on the pending challenge to Chapter 45 and the status of the proposed retirement incentive in the Legislature.

The N-W School Budget Vote was passed by an almost 5-1 margin as pollers converged on the new voting location, the Senior High ALC. Incumbent, Kathy Fleming, and new-comer, Mike Brock, were elected to fill the two vacant seats on the Board of Education.

The NWT mailed 932 postcards out to NYSUT members living in our district.

Thank you to all who came and voted to support to excellent work being done at N-W!



Sick Leave Bank seeking donations

The Nwta Sick Bank is looking for donations of Sick Days from its members.

If you have accumulated more than 200 days consider donating days in excess of 200 to the Sick Bank. Any member of the Sick Bank who has contributed days in excess of his or her personal total of 200 days may have all or part of the excess returned upon retirement, if the days contributed will help that teacher reach or approach the 200 day limit for buy back purposes.



In other words, donating excess days to the Sick Bank could mean more money in your pocket.

Days in excess of 200 will be lost if you do not donate them. You may not begin the school year with more than 200 days.

If you are thinking of retiring within the next three years you should not donate any days to Sick Bank. You may receive a bonus at retirement if you use five or less days. Check out the contract.

If you are leaving the district please

consider donating all of the days you have left. Term substitutes are in a position to donate. Any member who is laid off and contributes their remaining accumulated days to the Sick Bank will have these days returned if he or she is reinstated. Otherwise sick days are lost when you are laid off.

All donated days will be taken after the last day of school in case you need to use them before that date.

Please contact Karl Heilemann, Nwta Sick Bank Chairman, if you would like to donate days. (X5180, kheilemann@nwcsd.org)

If you had a name change or address change , please contact our membership Roster Chairperson, Andy Zwelling, via email ASAP... it is important that we keep our rosters as current as possible to eliminate overpayment of dues and duplication of enrollment.

Nwta Scholarship winners announced

May 20, 2010. . . The Niagara Wheatfield Teachers Association has announced its 2010 scholarship winners. For over 20 years the Nwta has funded three scholarships to worthy students through teacher donation. The Clark-Foster Scholarship was given to Pavel Belov of Lockport, N.Y. He will be a 2010 graduate of Lockport High School and will pursue his education at the University at Buffalo. He wants to study Neuro Science.

The Nwta "Friend" Scholarship was won by Kayla Acklin of East Amherst, New York. Kayla will graduate from Williamsville East High School and

attend John Carroll in the Fall. She plans on majoring in Psychology.

The Nwta scholarship winner is Stephen Raglow-DeFranco of North Tonawanda, N.Y. who will be a 2010 graduate of Niagara Wheatfield High School. Stephen will be studying film production at York University in Toronto, Canada.

The committee was once again impressed by all the candidates' accomplishments and plans for the future. We are so taken on how well these students present themselves and how hard they have worked in school.

A special thank-you to everyone who contributes to the Nwta scholarship fund through payroll deduction or cash donation. Your dollars are helping excellent students pay for college!!!

Nwta Scholarship Committee

- Mary Graber
- Lori Pruyn
- Jeanne Zimmerman
- Linda Herman
- Laura Nist



From where I stand... a fond farewell



Darla Bubar, Editor

On May 19, 2010, the District held a retiree reception before the regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting. Educators and SRPs were recognized for their dedication and years of service by the administration.

NWTA retirees in attendance were Jennifer Ross from West Street and Donna



Pietrocarlo from the Senior High. It was so nice to hear their building principals talk about each of these terrific educators



and their long careers at N-W. Someone asked me today, "If you had to pick teaching all over again, would you still do it?" Naturally, I answered with a yes and I hope that as Jen and Donna look back on their teaching

careers, they too would answer yes because of the positive impact each of them has had on students.

The Board of Education also took a moment to honor long time board member and past president, Maureen Kaus. Maureen spoke fondly of her time serving on the board and we thank her for her years of dedicated service to N-W.

I would also like to recognize and congratulate the rest of our NWTA Class of 2010 Retirees: Christine Klopfer from Errick Road, Sharon Swift from ETMS, Barb Grabiec from the Senior High, Charlie Donner from ETMS, Dave Barth from ETMS, and Chuck Yore from the Senior High.



As these fine educators move from one part of their lives into the next, I would like to wish each of them the very best in their retirements and in all their future endeavors.

~Darla

IMPORTANT REMINDERS...

**2010 Annual Awards Dinner
June 3, 2010**

Samuel's Grande Manor
Event begins at 5:30 p.m.

**Corporate Challenge
June 10, 2010**

Delaware Park

**NWTA June Picnic
June 18, 2010**

Ellicott Creek Park

**Summer Workshop
August 25-27, 2010**

Seneca Niagara casino

ADMINISTRATOR MEETINGS

If you are asked to meet with your building administrator, you are allowed to ask for a meeting agenda in advance. If at any time you are made to feel uncomfortable in the meeting, or find that you are being reprimanded, you may ask for the meeting to be stopped and seek union representation immediately. The meeting can then be rescheduled.

If you are asked to meet with the Superintendent, you are to bring a union **officer** along to the meeting.

APPRs

With the end of the school year fast approaching, we are asked to contribute to our APPRs. Remember, adding things to the APPR are **OPTIONAL**. The building administrators are supposed to be filling out the evaluation form!

Congratulations to

Charlie Donner

**for being named the NWTA's
NYSUT Leadership Award Recipient.**

**Charlie will be honored on June 3, 2010 for his
accomplishments as a union representative for
the NWTA!**

Special savings for NYSUT members

If you like to shop and if you like finding money-saving deals, then NYSUT Member Benefits might just be able to make you happy! Through the NYSUT Member Benefits Corporation-endorsed discount shopping programs, you have many choices available to you.

The recently endorsed Motivano SmartSavings Online Discount Marketplace

offers a slew of shopping opportunities. You'll have access to hundreds of brand-name retailers and thousands of discounts, all from one Web site. Motivano negotiates the best deals and regularly updates its offers to help you stretch your hard-earned dollars.

From clothing to vacations, event tickets and computers, you'll find it all on Motivano. And you can even recommend your favorite merchants to be added to the site.

Another online shopping opportunity is through Working Advantage. From this site, you can get discount tickets for movie theaters, movie rentals, theme parks, online shopping, Broadway Theatre, museums and attractions, special family events and more. You can save up to 43 percent on movie tickets, up to 45 percent on theme parks and up to 50 percent on museums and attractions.

Yet another shopping opportunity is available with **The Buyer's Edge**. You can use this helpful buying service when shopping for your best deal on major appliances, TV, video and audio

equipment; cars (new and used); furniture; carpeting; exercise equipment; pianos; luggage; moving services and more. This is a helpful buying service for consumer products.

Be sure to check out the other discount programs endorsed by Member Benefits. A new plan, the **EPIC Hearing Service Plan**, provides savings from 20 percent to 50 percent off Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Prices on all name-brand manufacturer hearing aid technology and referrals to a network of credentialed audiologists and ear physicians.



Another new plan is online **Defensive Driving** courses through the National Safety Council, which offers convenience and savings. NYSUT members and their family members who are licensed in New York state can take this course at the Member Benefits-reduced

price of \$25.25 per person, a savings of almost \$20 per course fee.

Be sure to access these and other money-saving programs through the Member Benefits Web site, www.memberbenefits.nysut.org and click on Discounts - Members on the left-hand navigation bar. Using links provided from the site will ensure you receive any necessary discount ID codes and ensure you receive the Member Benefits discounted prices.

Questions? Call NYSUT Member Benefits during normal business hours at 800-626-8101.



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.

May/June 10

Union supports proposal for changes in teacher evaluations

NYSUT Leader Briefing

May 13, 2010

NYSUT is supporting a proposal by the Board of Regents to change the way teacher evaluations are done - moving from the current subjective, "drive-by" evaluations to a more transparent, objective and meaningful process that focuses on professional growth for all teachers. NYSUT was at the table to shape this proposal, the result of many weeks of intense sessions with the State Education Department, where our focus was clear: Develop a better way of doing evaluations that is good for students, fair to teachers and protects collective bargaining and due process rights. This proposal now goes to the Legislature for approval, and we will continue to provide detailed information and updates in the days ahead. Here is an article summariz-



ing the main developments; NYSUT's press release; and a detailed Q&A on the main points, including why we were at the table and how this ties in to developments at the state and federal level. Widespread media coverage, including this editorial in The New York Times is a welcome change in tone from the relentless and dispiriting union-bashing that has been all too prevalent. Another positive: This proposal, if passed by the Legislature, better positions New York state in the Round 2 competition for Race to the Top funds. Most importantly, we believe this is a step in the right direction for our members that advances our commitment to defining excellence, embodied in the principles introduced by our Board and passed at the RA.

We will continue to provide information through our website, in New York Teacher, at membership meetings throughout the state and in outreach to media. Members of NYSUT's Board of Directors were convened Monday at a special meeting dedicated to this topic and will be sharing details and answering questions at ED meetings around the state. And of course, NYSUT Regional Staff Directors and Labor Relations Specialists are your best resources for specific questions and concerns relating to your local circumstances.

We welcome your questions and feedback. NYSUT President Dick Iannuzzi has established an e-mail address for leaders to share your thoughts or general questions on the topic of the Regents' proposal on teacher evaluations at dialogue@nysutmail.org.

**Change is a part of life,
Let us help you with the
challenges we all face.**

**Call NYSUT Social Services
1-800-342-9810 x6206
or email us at
socsvcs@nysutmail.org**

Free, Confidential, Responsive

The lighter side





NWTA End-of-Year Picnic

Food and beverages provided

Friday, June 18, 2010

Playground for the kids

2:30 PM to Dusk

Ellicott Creek – Pavilion #15

Catered by Mario's

RSVP to a Building Rep by June 11, 2010

Scholastic achievement recognition dinner held

May 20, 2010

The 2010 Erie-Niagara Scholastic Achievement Recognition Dinner (SARD) took place this week at the Buffalo Marriott. This marks the 30th year that superintendents across Erie and Niagara County honor the top three students from each of the public, charter, and parochial schools in the area. The NWTA has been a long-time sponsor of this wonderful event. This year's honors went to Katherine Kroening, who plans on attending Clark-

son in the fall to study Civil Engineering, Rachel Pearson, who will be heading to Bucknell to study Business, and Christina Collins, who plan to get a degree in Spanish Education at SUNY Fredonia. Each recipient was awarded the crystal Bison, handcrafted by well-known Canadian sculptor Len Chodirker, for their academic accomplishments. The girls are pictured right with high school principal, Jeff Hazel.



Official Newsletter of the Niagara Wheatfield Teachers Association

NWTA
2292 Saunders Settlement Road
Sanborn, New York 14132

*If you'd like to contribute an article, photo,
or ad, please contact Darla Bubar at
dbubar@nwcsd.org.*

WE'RE ON THE WEB
WWW.NWTA-UNION.ORG



We are pleased that our history dates back to 1971 when the New York State Teachers Association certified our union. Today we are proudly affiliated with the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) and The American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

We are also honored to be a part of The American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO).

We stand united... we stand for education

What's good on the bookshelves

Altar of Eden by James Rollins

This is an interesting combination of genetic research, defense contracts and human experimentation. This is similar to The Island of Dr. Moreau. Added now are a few interesting and obviously new ethical issues updates. A quick read and not too far from what might conceivably happen.

Exit Music by Ian Rankin

Detective Inspector John Rebus is about to retire. Mixed with the mystery he and his fellow police officers are trying to solve are his own personal and ambivalent feelings about that impending retirement. This is an excellent story and, eerily for me, a character with some of the same thoughts as I have concerning leaving a career and the people one has worked with.

Charlie Donner, Edward Town Middle School



Happy
Reading!

Any views expressed in editorials or in opinion-type articles of this newsletter are solely the viewpoints of the individuals themselves and do not necessarily reflect the viewpoints of the NWTA at large.