



The Agenda

Official Newspaper of the Nwta

Spring Break MOA Rejected

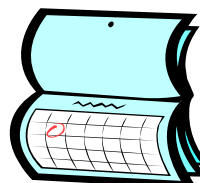
As reported by Darlene M. Fegatilli, President

On May 23, 2006, the Nwta held a meeting to vote on the proposed MOA regarding Spring Break. During the meeting, all participants had the opportunity to discuss the MOA before voting.

Several teachers shared their concerns and statements regarding the MOA.

In the vote, the MOA was defeated.

(Look for more updates on this issue in the fall of 2006!)



The Spring Break split still in question...

Inside this issue:

From Where I Stand 2

Construction Update 3

The Lighter Side 3

I Hope You Dance/Tuition Reimbursement 4

What's Good on the Bookshelves 5

Sick Bank in Need of Days

Sick Bank is looking for donations of Sick Days from it's members.

Two groups of people should plan on donating days...

1. If you have accumulated more than 200 days please 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 at the going buy back rate at the time of retirement. Days in excess of 200 will be lost if you do not donate them. You may not begin the year with more than 200 days.

2. If for any reason you are leaving the school district please consider donating all of the days you have left. Term Substitutes are in the 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.

Please contact Karl Heilemann, Sick Bank Chairperson, if you would like to donate days. West Street Elementary, 215-3200 Extension 5140, or kheilemann@nwcsd.org

END OF THE YEAR UNION PICNIC

- June 23, 2006
- Hyde Park
- 3:30—?
- Eats, Drinks, and always a good time!

Come out and support your local!

From Where I Stand... *I Hope You Dance*

Some of you may have heard the song, "I Hope You Dance," performed by Country Music's Lee Ann Womack and if you haven't, I reprinted the lyrics on page 4 of this issue for you... "Why," you might ask?

Well, recently my daughter danced like she does every year in her annual dance recital. Familiar with these? A bunch of moms going crazy through rehearsals and tears and hairspray and make-up and costumes (please don't let those costumes show off any more skin than they need to) and tap shoes and batons, and about 2,000 mg of Tylenol Extra Strength (for the moms of course!)... all for what ends up being about thirty minutes of stage time to watch your little girl dance her heart out because she loves to and has since she began dancing as a pre-schooler.

So what has prompted me to write about dancing... quite frankly, antlers. Yes, I said antlers. You see one of the routines required that my daughter dress like Rudolph and dance to the tune, "Run, Run Reindeer." A great routine, but not so great costume. Those darn antlers were broken when the costume lady handed ours out so she kept them to repair them.

Unfortunately, somewhere along the way—the antlers got misplaced (or stolen by someone with an apparent fetish...) needless to say the day of the recital—we had no antlers and I was really, really, really, REALLY mad—after all the costume costs me \$50 and last minute glitches freak me out! Had I known ahead of time—I would have fixed the damn things myself! (Oops—Am I on a rant here?)

So, anyway, back to the story... the costume lady decided to make some antlers from scratch the day of the recital out of an old spider she used for a Halloween decoration and some brown felt—no I'm NOT joking! Meanwhile I'm ready to blow a gasket. The recital is just hours away and no antlers. Now I'm starting

"The basic truth is... we simply hope... and that is no small thing!"

to relate to those Texas Cheerleader Moms and I have what boils down to a temper tantrum and start complaining to every other mom whose daughter is in the routine while they all try their hardest to console me and empathize—but of course they couldn't because heck—they had their daughter's antlers.

At that point, the only thing that might have helped is a double shot of whiskey!

My poor daughter. Luckily she's smart enough to ignore my obvious character flaws! Amazingly enough, the pseudo antlers turned out fine and thanks to a few dozen bobby pins, a couple of safety pins, and some elastic, they managed to stay on my daughter's head throughout the routine. The thirty foot rule didn't hurt either!

So—the moral of the story... it seems that when it comes to your own children, you're willing to sacrifice because you only want them to have the best, be the best, and succeed in all they do. When the small stuff gets in the way—even the most rational, educated people act like blubbing idiots. In essence, we lose it—our sanity, our sensibility, our logic—all of it—tossed by the wayside in an effort to ensure that our own children rise to the top.

For teachers, our classrooms are no different—we're measured by the success of the students in our classroom. State scores, passing rates, Regents Diplomas, and the number of graduates determine whether or not we're at the top of some Business First edition of the School Report Card. Principals spend big bucks to ensure that we are in-serviced in the latest Guru's ideas of educational reform and we are bombarded by Field Notes reminding us that we are fighting an ever losing battle against some greater enemy that threatens the public school teacher

(perhaps by the name of Commissioner Something-or-Other).

We get freaked out by the small stuff—a momentary test score or failure rate... forgotten homework or missing school supplies... We get upset for students and colleagues when they have a bad day because we can't control things from happening as much as we might want to.

We let discipline issues ruin a great week or bureaucracy get in the way of teaching the stuff we know kids need to be successful and often forget those moments when our many successful students rise to the top—get accepted into some great college or university—launch a terrific career or simply stop back years later to say, "Hello," or "I loved your class," or even —"You were my favorite teacher."

Unfortunately, the broken antlers of everyday teacher life (even though seemingly small) get in the way of our number one job—to make a difference in the life of a child. Sure, we try to fix them—and when they get lost—we look for some type of suitable replacement, but the fact remains... we hope that our students and our children *dance* or at least find something positive to do so that they can have just an ounce of success in a world that seems to constantly fight against them. Like Womack's song, we hope they never lose sight of the wonderful things in life or give those same things up for something insignificant. We hope they never stop the pursuit of their dreams, goals, an aspirations and we hope they each hold on to the things that made them who they become—the basic truth is... we simply **hope**... and that is no small thing!

Have a safe and wonderful summer.



Construction Continues Around the Secondary Complex...

A brief update from Del Ambrosia, Director of Facilities and Operations.

You may have noticed the excavation outside along the East side of the middle school or the fence that was erected around the work site of what will eventually become a two story addition to our Middle School. Near the end of May, construction crews began by excavating the foundation in preparation for concrete forms and the beginning of the walls.

Our construction project continues to progress along on schedule and without any significant problems. During the next few weeks, crews will begin erecting steel for building additions starting with the business classroom addition south of the high school and then on to the remaining additions.

Currently crews have begun working on the foundation for a large two story addition at ETMS and when complete will move on to foundation work at West street some time around the third week of June. Brick work is scheduled to begin next week and should start at the business classroom addition and continue around the High school until complete and on to ETMS followed by West street.

Site work has started moving soil in preparation for new sports fields, parking and access roads. If you look out back you can see the dirt berm that will outline our new fields and provide a wonderful vantage point to watch sporting events.

I wish to thank everyone for the cooperation shown during construction and can tell you that a number of the contractors have also expressed their thanks. Often con-

tractors have a difficult time working in a school setting and have found our schools a great example of team work. For us, this team work translates into a better quality job that will be completed on or ahead of schedule and on budget.

Thank you.

Del

Pictured at Right...
Construction photos from the new addition for the Middle School



The Lighter Side



I Hope You Dance

Lee Ann Womack - *I Hope You Dance* Lyrics

I hope you never lose your sense of wonder
You get your fill to eat
But always keep that hunger
May you never take one single breath for granted
God forbid love ever leave you empty handed
I hope you still feel small
When you stand beside the ocean
Whenever one door closes, I hope one more opens
Promise me that you'll give fate a fighting chance
And when you get the choice to sit it out or dance
I hope you dance
I hope you dance
I hope you never fear those mountains in the distance
Never settle for the path of least resistance
Living might mean taking chances
But they're worth taking
Lovin' might be a mistake
But it's worth making
Don't let some hell bent heart
Leave you bitter
When you come close to selling out
Reconsider
Give the heavens above
More than just a passing glance
And when you get the choice to sit it out or dance
I hope you dance
(Time is a wheel in constant motion always)
I hope you dance
(Rolling us along)
I hope you dance
(Tell me who)
I hope you dance
(Wants to look back on their years and wonder)
(Where those years have gone)
I hope you still feel small
When you stand by the ocean
Whenever one door closes, I hope one more opens
Promise me you'll give faith a fighting chance
And when you get the choice to sit it out or dance
Dance
I hope you dance
I hope you dance
(Time is a wheel in constant motion always)
I hope you dance
(Rolling us along)
I hope you dance
(Tell me who)
(Wants to look back on their years and wonder)
I hope you dance
(Where those years have gone)
(Tell me who)
I hope you dance
(Wants to look back on their years and wonder)
(Where those years have gone)

All lyrics are property and copyright of their owners.
All lyrics provided for educational purposes only.

Tuition Reimbursement Reminder from Central

This is a reminder that it would be appreciated if all outstanding grade reports, bills, receipts, etc. for courses taken this school year 2005/06 be received in my office no later than June 15th for payment to be issued on June 30th. The business office needs to complete all payments for the 2005/06 school year by June 30th as our new fiscal year begins July 1.

If you have any questions or concerns, please e-mail or call me.

Thanks!

Barbara Wendt, Secretary
Superintendent's Office
Phone: 716-215-3003
Fax: 716-215-3039

Picture This

Look for the return of
our *Picture This* contest
in September!

Congratulations to all
of our contest winners
for the 2005-2006
school year!

**Niagara Wheatfield
Teachers' Association**

Darla Bubar, Editor
c/o ETMS
2292 Saunders Settlement
Rd.

Phone: 716-215-3150 Ext.
2254

Email: dbubar@nwcsd.org

► **We stand for
education**

**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).

What's Good on the Bookshelves...

Guest Reviewer Charles Donner, ETMS

Dean Koontz, Velocity. Fast moving and keeps your attention.

One of those they say you won't want to put down, and they're right.

Martin Cruz Smith, Wolves Eat Dogs. Smith is the author of Gorky Park.

In this one Renko has to investigate murder?/ suicide? but this one places him in the sparsely settled (and for good reason) Chernobyl region searching for answers. As usual, interesting characters and a mesmerizing story.

If you are interested in submitting a book review, please contact Darla Bubar, Editor at 215-3150 ext. 2254 or via email dbubar@nwcsd.org

Sit back and relax this summer with a good book!

