



The Agenda

Official Newsletter of the Niagara Wheatfield Teachers Association

NWTA gets new three-year contract

At the contract ratification meeting held on May 27, 2009, the NWTA voted unanimously for a new three-year contract that offers some changes, including changes in health care.

The Board of Education adopted the NWTA Teacher Contract as its June 3, 2009 regular session meeting.

The contract will be in effect from July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2012.

The Negotiations Team, headed by Lee Galmbacher (VP; West), included Kevin

Rustowicz (Pres.; SHS), Glen Hiwiler (SHS), Matt Kaderli (ETMS), Cindy Mt. Pleasant (Tuscarora), and Mary Breier (ER).

In the process of developing a new contract, the team looked closely at other districts/unions and carefully considered member surveys.



The team's objectives were: to provide pay raises to match recent settlements and the consumer price index; to protect and enhance health benefits (including the addition of the new 105h plan),

to protect the sick leave bank, and to address faculty meetings.

Obstacles that the team met with were: the current national economic crisis, state aid/budget, medical inflation, and huge concessions being sought by the district's prior administration. The team worked diligently over the past year putting in a total of 24 sessions to insure fair and appropriate negotiations, ultimately getting contract language in place that serves the greater good. *Check out our website for all new contract information!*

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Wit and Wisdom... A message from the President

I would like to take a moment to thank each of you for your hard work this year, for your support of our Negotiations Team, and finally, your support of our new contract. I also want to wish you a safe summer.

A special thanks to our retirees who dedicated their lives and careers to making the difference in students' lives each and every day.

~Rusty



Class of 2009 NWTA Retirees

Please join us in celebrating the teaching careers of the following NWTA retirees:

From Colonial Village...

Judy Hastings

From Errick Road...

Sherryl Rimer

Marty Small

From the Senior High...

Susan Hahn

Congratulations and all the best to each of you as you begin your new life *outside* the classroom!

NWTA End of Year Picnic

Wednesday,
June 24, 2009

Hyde Park
Oasis Pavilion

Food and
drink
provided!

3:00 PM 'til
Dusk

RSVP to a
Building Rep



From Where I Stand... *Time Flies*



*Darla Bubar,
Editor*

It never ceases to amaze how fast the year wraps up once May and June roll around.

It seems that time kind of runs out and the next thing you know, we are saying our goodbyes and summer vacation is upon us.

A lot has happened this

year that has affects each of us—a new superintendent took the helm, the budget was passed, and most importantly, we ratified a new teacher contract.

As I look back, I want to thank each of you for your readership, your support of the NWTA, and your contribution of articles, photos, flyers, and cartoons to *The Agenda*.

Each of you plays an

important part in our union and in our solidarity, whether you are actively involved, provide support behind the scenes, or give encouragement to your colleagues.

Enjoy your summer—rest, relax, and unwind a little. Before you know it, we'll be right back here wondering where the time went!

~ Darla

NWTA Scholarships... *Saying Thanks*

Submitted by Mary Graber, Committee Chairperson

Dear Mrs. Graber, I am truly honored to have been named the NWTA Clark-Foster Scholarship recipient. I want to thank you and the entire scholarship committee. Everyone on the committee was so friendly during my interview and helped make it such an enjoyable and memorable

experience. It means so much to be awarded such an honor. Please express my appreciation to all the teachers at Niagara Wheatfield for making this possible. This scholarship

will help me tremendously as I work toward achieving my goals at Mercy Hurst College. Thank

you!

Warm Regards,
Nathan Stern

Dear NWTA Scholarship Committee, Thank you for selecting me to receive the Friends Scholarship. It is an honor to receive an award from an organization that my parents have dedicated their careers to helping. Thank you again.

Sincerely,
Michael
Hellemann



Perspective from the Vice President... *Say NO to Tier Five*



Union legislative analysts say the Tier 5 proposal will require greater contributions from middle-class families over a longer period of time in exchange for diminished retirement eligibility and inferior retirement benefits. They say these changes will not save taxpayers a single dime over the near term and will provide only marginal savings over the longer term.

Join retirement systems now!

The Teacher-Members on the state TRS board advise part-time members - if they have not done it already - to sign up for the pension system now as a Tier 4 member. If Tier 5 were included as a part of the budget bill, it could soon be too late.

The Tier V retirement plan proposal will require greater contributions from middle class families over a longer period of time in ex-

change for diminished retirement eligibility and inferior retirement benefits. These changes will not save taxpayers a single dime over the near term and will provide only marginal savings over the longer term. More specifically, this legislation will:

(1) Increase Employee Contributions: Requires all employees to contribute 3% of salary for their entire careers; and

(2) Increase Vesting from 5 to 10 Years: Requires all employees to obtain 10 years of service prior to vesting in their retirement benefits; and

(3) Increase Minimum Age for Retirement to Age 62: Increases the minimum age for retirement for employees to age 62 with 10 years of service; and

(4) Reduce the Final Average Salary Pension Factor from 2% to 1.66%: Reduces the pension factor for employees with less than

25 years of service to 1.66% per year of service versus the current 2% calculation provided to members with 20 or more years of service.

More importantly, if this plan is enacted, it will severely hamper the ability of public schools, colleges and universities to attract and retain quality educators and these changes will directly impair the ability of these public institutions to deliver quality educational services to our students and our communities in the future.

Governor put away the politics and start standing up for middle class workers who deserve the right to work and retire in dignity and security.

Call the AFL-CIO Legislative Hot Line at **(877) 255-9417** and tell Gov. David Paterson to oppose the Tier 5 retirement plan or go to the NYSUT.org website and **VOTE NO to Tier 5!**



Showing their PRIDE! Superintendent Carl Militello poses with Nwta Vice President Lee Galmbacher and Kindergartner, Chase Kendzia from West Street, who was a recipient of the Falcon PRIDE Award during this year's second annual PRIDE recognition.

We would love to hear from you!

If you are interested in submitting an article, photo, or any other newsworthy event, please contact the Editor, Darla Bubar at dbubar@nwcsd.org.

**All submissions are subject to editing for space and clarity.*

RETURNING in September:

*Contract Contest
The Lighter Side*



NWTA Executive Board

Kevin Rustowicz, President
Lee Galmbacher, Vice President
Rich Tilyou, Treasurer
Cindy Mt. Pleasant, Recording Secretary
Darla Bubar, Communications Secretary

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



On June 3, 2009, NYSUT held its annual Local Leadership Awards Dinner honoring members who have made contributions to their unions. This year's recipient was Darla Bubar.



What's Good on the Bookshelves



Perhaps I have been doing a disservice. Up to now I have commented about books that are mainly current and mainstream.

While a few could be considered literature, many have been more or less escapist and little more.

I feel this might be a bit of an error based on things that I have observed these last couple of years.

While we have often as a group been critical of the manners and

morals of the business world, I fear that the same issues have begun to affect us.

An attitude of look out for me first and screw the other guy is being too often employed.

While each of us has to adjust our own behaviors, I think a little introspection about our group in particular may be in order.

From the literature standpoint, I for one this summer will read at least a couple books that fall under the heading-**classics**. I mean the older not the newer. Authors like Dickens, Austen, Hardy, Eliot and

even Joyce and Chaucer to name just a few.

They are **classic** for a reason. That reason being that they inform us of ageless lessons about humans and the human condition. Errors we make and errors we could avoid.

It never hurts to remind ourselves that we all need improvement and refurbishing now and again. What better time for us than the summer, when perhaps we have a better opportunity to quietly think. At least once in a while!

~ C. Donner