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What's good on the bookshelves

2012 by Whitley Strieber

As the cover states, "The Mayan calendar ends... the war for souls begins..." Lots of cool and very creepy fun involving, parallel universes, three earths, some tongue-in-cheek references to current personalities.



Murder for Christmas by Agatha Christie

If you like something mysterious around the holiday this Hercule Poirot case is too much fun. This is an old familiar murder mystery formula.

~Charlie Donner

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).



The Agenda

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Obama seeks to expand employment and jumpstart the economy



President-elect Barack Obama boldly announced the goal of creating or saving 2.5 million jobs by January of 2011. This is exactly the kind of leadership and vision our country needs in order to put people back to work and get our economy moving again, as our country faces historic economic challenges. President-elect Obama understands that we need to get started right away on the task of jump-starting job creation in America, and that we can do this by putting people back to work rebuilding and modernizing our crumbling infrastructure. The AFT is pleased that one of the job-creation areas Obama sees as a priority is modernizing schools. Deplorable conditions in classrooms, hallways and

bathrooms don't provide an environment conducive to learning and teaching in the 21st century. Modernizing schools can address three major priorities—putting Americans to work, requiring that schools use the latest energy-efficient technologies, and turning our schools into facilities that will help every child reach his or her God-given potential. The president-elect and leaders of the congressional majority also understand that we need to undertake a significant fiscal stimulus program to help states and local governments grappling with record budget shortfalls that will restrict their capacity to meet the needs of their citizens. As our leaders begin to draft a new stimulus plan, we believe it should include, among other things:

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Wit and wisdom



Kevin Rustowicz,
President

The line of work we do is exclusive to teachers and fortunately, we are protected under our contract—also known as a collective bargaining agreement (CBA). Our CBA is a binding document which means that it is law. Law that the district must follow and law that we must follow. Many people, in the best interest of kids and without knowing it—circumvent or even violate our CBA. Although we are aware of this—people must remember that the NWTA is not part of a police state and that we, as members of the NWTA, do not police each other. Instead, we must respect the philosophical teaching differences and class-

room differences of all our peers. Likewise, and because of that very fact, we need not publicly admonish our peers or discuss our peers with colleagues or administrators. All that that does is create backstabbing and mistrust which in turn puts misinformation out to the public. As we break for the holiday season, I think we need to take a step back to be thankful that, in light of the recent events in the economy, we still have our teaching careers and a strong union. Strong teachers and a strong union naturally lead to a strong CBA. Be mindful of how you treat your colleagues and how you carry yourself. We are always stronger united than divided. Have a safe and happy holiday.
~Rusto

If you were married recently or recently moved—please remember to help us keep our NYSUT enrollment up to date! Let Kathy Weber or Rich Tilyou know of ANY CHANGES as soon as possible. Thank you!

Contract connection

Here's your chance to win a \$10 gift card from your choice of either Starbucks, Tim Horton's, or Dunkin Donuts!

The Association was informed by the Human Resources Department that there will be a reduction in the force next Fall. The District intends to use evaluations and seniority as factors to determine the lay-offs.

Decide if the following scenario is **complaint** or **grievance** based on our contract language. Cite the page and section number from our current contract that you used as evidence for your answer.

*all members in good standing are eligible. Winner will be drawn randomly from all correct entries submitted. Include your name, building, and gift choice along with your entry!

Sick bank reminder

In accordance with its contract with the Niagara Wheatfield Board of Education, the Niagara Wheatfield Teachers Association operates a Sick Leave Bank for the teachers of the Niagara Wheatfield Central School District. The purpose of the Sick Leave Bank is to provide additional sick days to its active members who have suffered a personal illness or disability, or illness in the immediate family, when individual accumulated sick time has been exhausted. Please refer to the NWTA website for requirements on how to

request days from the Sick Bank All new teachers joining the Sick Bank will have one day deducted from their accumulated sick days for membership. All current members will have a day deducted to continue membership. Please note those Sick Bank members who are 52 years of age, or have 20 years of service in the district, will not have a day deducted, but will continue to maintain membership. Karl Heilemann, NWTA Sick Leave Bank Chairman



The lighter side



WNY Regional Office Winter Leadership Conference



January 30 and 31 at the Hyatt in Downtown Buffalo

Don't forget to mark your calendars if you signed up!

A mailing will arrive at your home sometime prior to the conference confirming your attendance.

Grant winners announced

Congratulations to the following grant winners from the NWTA!

Martha Rogala

Tuscarora:
Mara Slipko-Neville

Colonial Village:
Joanna Torreano

West Street:
Jennifer Golias

Errick Road:
Melissa Gould



ESL:
Elena Dzadur

NW High School:
Tracy Bloom
Ryan Coyne
Melissa D'Angelo (2 grants)
Jeff Hazel
Dana Mullvich

The grant monies awarded to our teachers totaled \$8,423.00





Obama continued from page 1

- Increasing the federal contribution to the state’s Medicaid program, and providing grants to immediately help cash-strapped states and sustain vital state and local public services; and
- Providing additional direct aid to struggling school districts under programs such as Title I, Head Start and IDEA.

These aren’t just steps to address the immediate crisis. They also are long-term investments in our economic future that have been ignored for far too long. Passing a plan that reflects these priorities will be hard work. We will be counting on advocates like you to make your voices heard now, so that the new Congress, working with the president-elect, can begin to work on an agenda that charts a new course for our nation—one that will create jobs and fuel long-term economic growth—so they can have it ready to be enacted soon after Obama’s inauguration on Jan. 20, 2009. As the presidential transition continues and events unfold, stay on the lookout for our alerts and make sure your voice is heard on Capitol Hill in the coming weeks!

Negotiations continue...

The Negotiations Team has several meetings set throughout the month of December. Talks continue around salaries and health care.

As updated information becomes available, members will be updated.

Our Negotiations Team is headed by Lee Galmbacher and includes, Kevin Rus-towicz, Glenn Hiwiller, Matt Kaderli, Mary Breier, and Cindy Mt. Pleasant.




us. How does this all relate back to the NwTA? *That* one is pretty obvious and one can also read between the lines a little, too. We are in the midst of negotiations for a new contract, we have a new superintendent, we are looking at new district initiatives, we are facing possible financial cuts, and as always, we have a lot of new teachers who have joined the ranks that we must take under our wings. We should use this time of flux as a time to join together in solidarity—that is one thing that we do have control over. Recently, we all witnessed how a group of teachers can come together to make a difference in the lives of our colleagues and in our communities through local donations. We all know that our workplace is often our second home and thus, our extended family. We can agree to continue to work together for the betterment of our students, colleagues, and ourselves through positive relationships and interactions with one another. We can embrace the in-

evitable changes by living each day to the fullest instead of living each day for the tomorrows that may not come. Most importantly, we can face the changes together, united. Changes *are* sometimes difficult, but a necessary part of life. Even the littlest changes can cause us great strife because they signify the unexpected. But, fear not. We are in this together and we can use these moments to gain new insight into what lies ahead. As this year draws to a close, reflect back on how your own life has changed over the past 365 days and how you made the most of what you were given. *Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.*

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.*



From where I stand... *changes*



Darla Bubar,
Editor

*Nothing endures but
change. ~Henry*

David Thoreau

We are so “predictable” sometimes—and as humans, perhaps we like it that way (creatures of habit as one might say).

We plan, schedule and fit our lives into routines. We fall into patterns, most of us living each day as though things will be just as they are. We try as much as possible to have “control” over our lives living as though tomorrow will always come. We expect the EXCPECTED. It is summed up in this quote from The Five People You Meet in Heaven by Mitch Albom, “Had he known his death was imminent, he might have gone somewhere else. Instead, he did what we all do. He went about his dull routine as if all the days in the world were still to come.”

Then, almost out of nowhere—as it may seem—we are faced with CHANGE!

What is it about change that is so frightening? So difficult to grasp? The fear of the unknown or the fear of loss, perhaps.

Oddly, the simple fact of the matter is that life creates change—life also demands it. Life itself changes. That is one thing humankind can be certain of.

With the passage of time change is inevitable. We are faced with hellos, good-byes, new hires, retirements; we watch as babies are born, children grow-up, people grow old; we plan while seasons continue in cycles; we teach knowing that our students and colleagues will move on; and we live knowing that eventually, life will come to an end, even as harsh as that may sometimes be.

Certainly, some changes are easier to accept than others, and some are even welcome, especially in the face of adversity. But no matter what the change may be—we are forced to either accept what we are given or have it forced upon

Change has a considerable psychological impact on the human mind. To the fearful it is threatening because it means that things may get worse. To the hopeful it is encouraging because things may get better. To the confident it is inspiring because the challenge exists to make things better.

*~James Gordon,
M.D.*

We remember...



Donald B. Moyer, Jr., 56, of Sanborn, NY, died suddenly Tuesday, November 9, 2008, in Mount St. Mary's Hospital, Lewiston, NY, as

the result of injuries suffered in an automobile accident on his way to work. Donald was born in Niagara Falls, NY on January 16, 1952, the son of Nora (Mullen) Rook of Tucson, AZ and Donald B. Moyer, Sr., of Cattaraugus, NY. Don attended local schools and was a graduate of the Starpoint High School, in the Class of 1970. He was employed for the last 32 years by the Town of Lewiston and currently was a Grade 2 collection systems operator for the Waste Water Control Center. Don was an active member of the Sanborn and Town of Lewiston community, he has served as a member of the Sanborn Fire Company for 37 years, a Trustee of the Sanborn Historical Society, and was a member of the Town of Lewiston Recreation Commission for over 20 years. He was past president of the Niagara Wheatfield Music Parents Club, where he had volunteered for many years, in his son and daughter's theatrical productions, and had continued following their graduation. The last

few years Don was also a familiar face back stage at Artpark, where he was on the stage crew. He was a member of the Hope United Methodist Church, the Air Force Reserves and the Stagehands IATSE Local # 121, and the Ransomville Lion's Club, where he served as Vice President. Don enjoyed the company of his family including his dog Dixie, family camping, working on stage for the Stage Handlers Union and set design and construction with Dark Raven Manor Productions (Haunted House). Surviving is his loving wife of 35 years, the former Sandra L. Pyle; his son, Patrick D.; and daughter, Casey L. Moyer; his parents, Nora (late Lavern) Rook of Tucson, AZ, Donald B. (Elizabeth) Moyer, Sr. of Cattaraugus, NY; three brothers, Robert Moyer, David (Jean) Moyer of Niagara Falls, NY, James (Betty) Moyer of Gowanda, NY; a sister, Vicki Rook of Tucson, AZ; his sisters and brothers-in-laws, Patricia (René) Cevaer of Lockport, NY, Ronald (Karen) Pyle of Tampa, FL, Erma (James) Foley of Newfane, NY, John (Margaret) Pyle of Pensacola, FL, Harry (Mary) Pyle of Lewiston, NY; and several nieces and nephews.



Perspectives from the vice president... *waiting out the storm*



Lee Galmbacher,
Vice President

In these tough economic times there is a lot of uncertainty that surrounds us at work and home. One thing that we know for certain is that our family will always be with us no matter what happens to support and encourage us. That same analogy can be said of our **NWTA FAMILY...**

With new leadership in our district and change occurring all around us, we are apt to feel insecure and unsure of what is going to happen next.

One thing we can feel sure about is that our fellow members of NWTA are here to help us through the tough times and be the voice of reason when it seems as though chaos is on the verge.

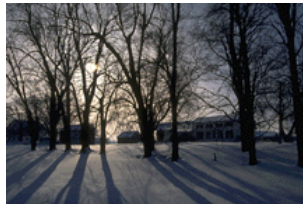
Change can be good to invigorate and bring about new ideas, but it also needs to be tempered with logic and experience.

A lot of rumors and questions will be circulating around us regarding our pension, the state budget for next year, our economic wellness contractually, job security, etc.

Your Officers, Building Reps, Board of Directors, and Negotiation Team have the same vision...

We stay STRONG
We stay INFORMED
and
We stay TOGETHER

Rely on each other for support, ask questions, find out answers, lean on your fellow NWTA members for guidance. Most importantly, re-



member to always be there for each other no matter what. Also be mindful of all the previous members who fought hard to get us where we are today.

NWTA STANDS UNITED!!!

Have a joyous and peaceful holiday season!

~Lee



NWTA board of directors' meeting dates set

All meetings will take place on Thursdays at Edward Town Middle School in the Adult Learning Center beginning at 3:45 PM.

- January 29, 2009**
- February 26, 2009**
- March 19, 2009**
- April 30, 2009**
- May 21 or 28, 2009 (TBA)**
- June TBA**