



THE EDUCATOR

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LES Staff Adjusts, With Bumps, to New Homes

Eileen Snook's memories of LaGrange Elementary School go beyond her nine-year teaching stint there. She first came to know LaGrange 16 years ago as the parent of a new elementary school student. As she and her son wandered the halls of the school after classes had let out, admiring the artwork decorating the walls, she grew very fond of LES. Years later, Mrs. Snook decided to change careers and thought long and hard about where she wanted to spend the next phase of her professional life. "I thought about all the places I really like to be," she said, "and LaGrange was near the top of the list." She went back to school to earn her teaching certification while working part-time as a teaching assistant at LES. Then she was assigned to student teach there and finally, in 2001, she was hired full-time. "I felt like Lou Gehrig, the luckiest woman alive."

The closing of LES last June affected hundreds of people: students and parents, teachers and support staff in schools across the district. But the teachers of LaGrange have in

many ways had the most difficult adjustment. Some had been at LES for just a few years; others, like Linda Penn, had been there for 25 years or more. Mrs. Penn, who now teaches first grade at Beekman, was embraced by her new colleagues, but the transition after so many years at one school has still been difficult. "Although six of us [from LES] are together at Beekman and the new staff has tried to make us comfortable," she said, "it is just not the same. I think the word that best describes how I feel is 'lonely'."

Bonnie Glick worked for 17 years as a speech and language pathologist at LES and now splits her time between Vail Farm and Beekman. She too misses the community that existed at LaGrange. "Although my new schools have been very welcoming," she said, "it is hard to give up what we had at LES. Each school has its own unique way of doing things - their own culture of sorts. We had established our own identity at LES and it is no more!" Mrs. Glick, however, has benefited in a way from her new

circumstances. At VFES and BES there are other speech and language specialists with whom she can collaborate. "I had forgotten how nice it was to have other professionals to 'bounce' things off of and share ideas with on a daily basis."

Despite the warm welcomes they have received at their new schools and the sincere efforts of their new colleagues to make them feel at home, the transition for the LES teachers has been challenging. Many LES teachers have been separated from friends they have worked side-by-side with for years or, in some cases, decades. "I miss the ease with which I worked with my colleagues," Mrs. Snook said. "We've celebrated marriages and births together, graduations and engagements. My new colleagues at Beekman have been welcoming and helpful, but it doesn't have the same familiar feeling. I see that Beekman is a family, much the same way I felt about LaGrange, and so I hope that I don't always feel like a guest in my new building, but for now, it's not there."

ATA Members Show Solidarity at One Nation Rally

On October 2nd, several ATA members made their way to Washington D.C., where the One Nation rally was held. According to Steve Hertzog, AHS science teacher and rally attendee, "The theme of the rally was Jobs, Justice, and Education." The thousands of people at the event heard speakers such as Ben Jealous, head of the NAACP, and the Reverend Jesse Jackson. There was also entertainment provided by the likes of Harry Belafonte and George Clinton. Diverse groups were present at the rally, as evidenced by the



Steve Hertzog (AHS) shows his NYSUT pride while attending the One Nation Rally in Washington D.C. with his family. His daughter, Ella, and son, Ben, enjoyed the experience

identical shirts that many organization members sported. Unions were the largest groups represented, and the United Federation of Teachers had members from all 50 states in attendance.

To sum up what all of these people had in common, West Road teacher Betsy Marshall commented that, "People came together on a beautiful Saturday afternoon in October to recommit to the idea that people here in America deserve good paying

See Rally on page 2

November Election Endorsements

Trivia Challenge

Answer the question below correctly and you could win an ATA Polo shirt just like the one shown on page 5!

Who is the president of NYSUT?

Last month's winner, selected at random from among the one correct response received, was **John Filor** from AHS. He correctly identified the **Wagner Act** as the piece of legislation that guaranteed the right to form a union to American workers and is now the proud and handsome owner of an ATA polo shirt.

Submit your answer to the above trivia question to rmchugh@acsdny.org by November 5th. The winner will be randomly selected from the correct submissions.

Each year NYSUT endorses candidates for the November elections. The endorsements, which are non-partisan, are based on the candidates' voting records on educational issues. The issues considered include charter school reform, education funding, and a property tax cap. Below are the local endorsements. **Please remember to vote on November 2nd!**

United States Senate



Charles Schumer

Kirsten Gillibrand



New York State Assembly



Kevin Cahill

Marc Molinaro



New York State Senate



Mike Kaplowitz

United States Congress



John Hall

Maurice Hinchey



Scott Murphy

New York State Comptroller

Tom DiNapoli



New York State Attorney General



Eric Schneiderman

Members Attend Rally in Washington D.C.



Thousands of people attended the One Nation Rally, many carrying their messages on large placards.

Photo by Betsy Marshall

ment that works for the majority not just a few." Hertzog was impressed by the whole event, adding that "The crowd was huge and the variety of speakers was broad and interesting."

Marshall touted the day by saying, "If you have never been to a political rally on the National Mall I would highly recommend the experience. Jon Stewart's upcoming October 30th "Rally To Restore

Sanity" along with Stephen Colbert's "Rally To Keep Fear Alive" should be a fun day. Take the kids. Make a family day of it. Our nation's capital is not really that far away."



Many members of the diverse crowd at the One Nation Rally proudly displayed their affiliations on their backs.

Photo by Betsy Marshall

Continued from Front
jobs, an equal opportunity for a good education and a govern-

Q&A: NYS Professional Development Requirements

What is the professional development requirement?

Holders of a Professional teaching certificate are required to complete professional development hours to maintain the validity of their certificates. Professional certificate holders must complete 175 hours every five years.

Can I complete the 175 hours at any time during the first 5 years, or must I complete 35 hours each year?

Regulations do not specify that any portion of the required hours be completed annually.

If I complete more than the required number of professional development hours during a 5 year professional development period, may I "roll over" the extra hours to the next 5 year period?

No.

What if I am National Board certified? Must I still complete 175 hours of professional development every 5 years?

If you obtain your National Board certification in the area of your Professional certificate during a 5-year professional development period, the National Board certification process satisfies the entire requirement for that cycle. However, if you obtained National Board certification prior to the 5-year period, you are not exempted from the required 175 hours for that period.

Are individual teachers responsible for making sure their professional development hours are entered into their records by the school district?

Public school districts are required to report professional development hours for their employees online. But, while it is the district's responsibility to report hours, it is in

the interest of every Professional certificate holder to verify that his or her professional development hours are reported and that his or her individual record is complete.

Once I complete the 175 hours of continuing professional development, do I need to re-apply for the Professional certificate in order to keep this certificate valid?

No. If all your hours have been reported and recorded onto the TEACH system for the particular 5 year professional development cycle, you need to do nothing further in order to retain your Professional certificate.

This Q&A has been excerpted from the Office of Teaching Initiatives webpage. To learn more about Professional Development requirements, go to <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/faqpd.html>.

Spotlight on the Contract: Meetings

Each issue of The Educator will spotlight a particular part of our contract in an effort to make our members more familiar with their rights and the terms and conditions of their employment. If you have a section you would like to see featured, email rmchugh@acsdny.org.

"1. Teachers may be required to remain after the end of the regular workday as hereinbefore described, without additional compensation, for official staff meetings and similar functions, on no more than two occasions per month. Every such function shall end no later than one hour and fifteen minutes after the meeting is convened. In emergencies and at the discretion of the principal, she/he may call an additional meeting making it three meetings for that month deducted from the total of twenty for the year. In the month following the month in which three meetings were held, no more than two meetings may be held. All meetings shall have agendas published by the principal or the appropriate department chairperson. Copies of these agendas shall be sent to the Superintendent.

"2. Where practical, there shall not be meetings or required attendance after regular school hours on Fridays or on any day immediately preceding any holiday, teachers' conference day or other day upon which teacher attendance is not required at school.

"3. Teachers may be required up to two (2) hours of additional time after school on a school day each year by the principal or subject matter supervisor or Assistant Superintendent for Instruction for professional development. The specific topics shall be approved by the Superintendent of Schools and presented to the President of the Association in advance. If possible, this time shall be scheduled on pre-established faculty meeting days. In addition, members shall be afforded one (1) month's notice of such obligation."

Explanation: This provision (Article XII E, page 16) regulates the number and duration of after school meetings members are obligated to attend. Except in emergencies, there can be no more than two after school meetings per month, each lasting no more than 75 minutes. The meetings should not be scheduled before holidays or conference days. Moreover, administrators may schedule up to two hours of additional required time after school each year.

Negotiations Update:

"In our current contract negotiations, we have had several discussions with the district's team. At this time we have not reached a settlement and we will continue our ongoing talks to reach an agreement. We are planning a general membership meeting in the near future and ask that members make every effort to attend. I would like to thank all of you who gave us your home email. We plan to use this to announce the date of the general membership meeting, so be checking your home email. ."

— Donna Doerrier

2010—2011 ATA Officers

President

Bob Maier

First Vice-President

Greg Nieman

Second Vice-President

Edward Hotaling

Treasurer

Kathleen Blank Cicala

Chief Negotiator

Donna Doerrier

PR Committee Chair

Kristi Bogaczyk

Community Action Chairs

Steve Hertzog

Robert McHugh

Welfare Trust Chair

Ron Higgins

Newsletter Editor

Sam Falk

Staff Writer

Robert McHugh

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BES — Anne Schillinger

NES — Elise Pattison

VFES — Pam Goetz

OPS — Anne Marie Beesmer

Traver — Siouxzanne Harris

West — Betsy Marshall

TIS — Jen Spagnola

AMS — Greg Fredricks

LMS — Patty Bauerline

UVMS — Dave Lazarus

AHS — Steve Hertzog

AHS — Noreen Mills-Martin

CAO — Sue Lesser

Welfare Trust Questions Answered

What is Welfare Trust?

The Welfare Trust provides ATA members with reimbursements for out-of-pocket personal health, dental, and vision expenses. Enrolled families are entitled to \$2750 in dental benefits per family member, \$300 in vision benefits, and \$350 in personal health benefits, per year.

What are the start and ending dates for each Welfare Trust account?

Dental: Jan. 1 – Dec. 31
Vision: Oct. 1 – Sept. 30
Personal Health: Oct. 1 – Sept. 30

What are some examples of eligible expenses?

Some examples of items that members can be reimbursed for are co-pays, prescriptions, eye examinations, contact lenses, crutches, substance abuse treatment, and even home improvements for medical purposes.

How can I get reimbursed for my eligible expenses?

A reimbursement form can be found on the ATA website for personal health and vision benefits. The completed form, along with applicable receipts, must be mailed to the address found on the form. Dental benefits will be applied directly at your dentist's office.

If I get reimbursed from my FLEX plan can I still get the money from the Personal Health Account of the Welfare Trust?

Yes. Paying with your FLEX plan money is no different than paying directly from your own pocket. Just submit the receipt with the Personal Health Account Form.

Are there any dentists that accept the ATA payment in full?

Yes. There is a list of participating dentists on the ATA website. Call the dentist office and ask if they accept the Arlington Teachers' schedule administered by Preferred as full payment before you make your first appointment.

How is the value of the payment determined for the Dental if I go to other than a participating dentist?

A monetary value is assigned to each dental code. There is a list of payment values at the ATA Office. Welfare Trust Representatives in each building have a copy. The American Dental Association does not permit us to make a general distribution of their codes. At one point we had the values on our website, but the ADA insisted we take them off the site.

I signed up for health insurance; do I also have to sign up for the Welfare Trust?

Yes. You must fill out the enrollment/change form found on the ATA website. Send the completed form through the interschool mail to Ron Higgins, ATA Office.

—Submitted by Ron Higgins,
Welfare Trust Chair

Education in the News: Should We Wait For Superman?

The recent documentary *Waiting for Superman* has garnered a lot of attention since its release in September. Oprah Winfrey devoted a full hour to praising the film; *Time* dedicated an entire issue and NBC News a whole week of programming to the education reform ideas it champions. *Waiting for Superman*, however, while compelling filmmaking, is anything but an example of objective journalism. The film's thesis, that charter schools are a panacea for the problems of urban education and that teachers' unions inhibit educational reform, is belied by countless studies and the day-to-day experiences of millions of educators. Below are excerpts from two more balanced assessments of the film's arguments.

"... the movie seems to suggest that what's needed is more charter schools... However, about half-way through, the narrator casually mentions that only about a fifth of American charter schools "produce amazing results."

"In fact, a study by the Center for Research on Education Outcomes

found that only 17 percent [of charter schools] did a better job than the comparable local public school, while more than a third did "significantly worse."

"... there's no evidence that teachers' unions are holding our schools back. Finland, which is currently cleaning our clock in education scores, has teachers who are almost totally unionized. The states with the best student performance on standardized tests tend to be the ones with the strongest teachers' unions."

—Gail Collins, *Waiting for Somebody*, *New York Times*, September 30

"Here's what you don't see [in *Waiting for Superman*]: the four out of five charters that are no better, on average, than traditional neighborhood public schools (and are sometimes much worse); charter school teachers, like those at the Green Dot schools in Los Angeles, that are unionized and like it that way; and noncharter neighborhood public schools, like PS 83 in East Harlem and the George Hall

Elementary School in Mobile, Alabama, that are nationally recognized for successfully educating poor children.

"You don't see teen moms, households without an adult English speaker or headed by a drug addict, or any of the millions of children who never have a chance to enter a charter school lottery... These children, of course, are often the ones who are most difficult to educate, and the ones neighborhood public schools can't turn away."

"You also don't learn that in the Finnish education system, much cited in the film as the best in the world, teachers are—gasp!—unionized and granted tenure, and families benefit from a cradle-to-grave social welfare system that includes universal daycare, preschool and healthcare, all of which are proven to help children achieve better results at school.

—Dana Goldstein, *Grading 'Waiting for Superman'*, *The Nation*, September 23



Unity Pub Brings ATA Members Together

New teachers and their mentors attended a Unity Pub event at The Dubliner on September 27. Top Left: Linnea O'Mara (AHS) converses with her mentor Bob Jacovino and ATA President Bob Maier. Top Right: Allyssa Hafer (NES) and her mentor Lynette Feliciano enjoy a snack. Center Right: Cindy Binnie (AHS), Tom Confrey (AHS), Eric Gidseg (Traver), and Katie Whittaker (AHS) partake in the free appetizers and drink specials.

Bottom Right: Members of the LAP team model the new ATA polo shirts.



How can I get an ATA polo shirt?



To purchase a polo shirt, simply fill out the order form to the right and send it, along with payment, to the ATA office through inter-office mail. Checks should be made out to the ATA, with "LAP" in the memo.

Size	Price	Quantity
S	\$10.00	
M	\$10.00	
L	\$10.00	
XL	\$10.00	
XXL	\$10.00	
XXXL	\$10.00	
	Total	\$
Name:		School:

Welcome New Members!

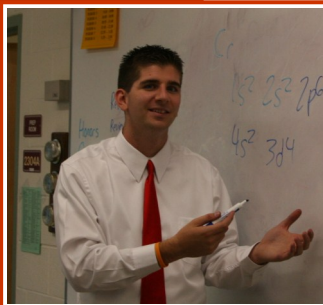
The Arlington Teacher’s Association would like to welcome the **Full-Time Probationary:**



Cindy Binnie
AHS—Science
Favorite Book: A Short History of Nearly Everything, by Bill Bryson



Lauren Collet
AHS—Soc. Studies
Favorite Food: Steamed pork buns from Chinatown



Thomas Confrey
AHS—Science
Favorite Food: Mashed sweet potatoes



Kristen DeYorio
ASM—Psych.
College Attended: Marist



John Jacobs
AMS—Math
Favorite Book: Jurassic Park, by Michael Crichton



Viviane Lynch
AHS—For. Lang.
Favorite Movie: An Affair to Remember

Part-Time:	Christian Narewski, AHS—Soc. Stud.
Rosemarie Conti, AMS—For. Lang.	Caitlin O’Dowd, BES—Spec. Ed.
Michael Garabedian, BES—Music	Maria Spinelli, LMS—For. Lang.
Lisa Kellman, ASM—AIS	Jaqueline Mayora, VF—Spec. Ed.

Photos by: Michelle Burk, Michael Canavan, Laura DiStefano and Sam Falk

following people to the Arlington School District and the ATA.



Barbara Mackey
TES—Spec. Ed.
College Attended: SUNY New Paltz



Sarah Mesuch
LMS—Guidance
Favorite Movie: Hoosiers



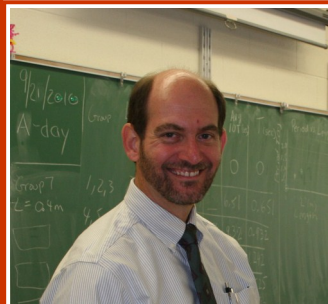
Cara Ann Murray
LMS—Spec. Ed.
Favorite Food: Peanut butter



Linnea O'Mara
AHS—Phys. Ed.
College Attended: SUNY Cortland



Katie Whittaker
AHS—Science
Favorite Book: To Kill a Mockingbird, by Harper Lee



Alan Zollner
AHS—Science
Favorite Movie: Sleepless in Seattle

Leave Replacement:

- Brendan Buschman-Kelly, AHS—Eng.
- Susan Cotten, ASM—ESL
- Melissa Dominick, AMS—Math
- Maureen Frischknecht, BES
- Allyssa Hafer, NES—Spec. Ed.

- Melinda Hill, LMS—Phys. Ed.
- Dena Kerr, LMS—Science
- Jamie Klein, AMS—Science
- Kristen Levine, NES
- Amanda Konunchuk, AHS—English
- Donna Piehler, NES

Dates to Remember



OCTOBER

29th—Deadline to submit Blue Jeans for Babies order forms

NOVEMBER

2nd—Election day

5th—Unity Pub, 3 p.m. — 6 p.m., Mahoney's

All members are invited to attend and enjoy free appetizers and drink specials

9th—Board of Education Meeting, 7:30 p.m., TIS

16th—ATA Executive Council Meeting, 4 p.m., AHS room 1432

23rd—Board of Education Meeting, 7:30 p.m., AHS

DECEMBER

3rd—Children's Holiday Party, 4 p.m.— 6 p.m., AHS

6th—Children's Holiday Party Snowdate

14th—Board of Education Meeting, 7:30 p.m., OPS



Announcements

Please Support the United Way

Each year the Arlington District supports the United Way. This year we are asking for your help again.

We have welcomed our new students and teachers to Arlington and we have met our new parents at Open House. In addition, music and sports activities are bringing many people together in the Arlington community. Yet, there is a part of the community that still is isolated. In our own county there are individuals who have tremendous difficulty meeting their personal and family needs, including those who live in Arlington and our own ATA members.

The United Way is one vehicle we can use to help meet that need. At a time when the feeling is that we are having so much being taken from us, it becomes difficult to consider giving. However, these are the times when we step back and see who we are and how proud we are of what we do and represent. It becomes even more important for teachers to be role models.

Would you please consider contributing to the United Way? Your building chairperson has distributed forms with an easy payroll deduction option to make your donation. Any donation will be welcomed.

Special thanks go to the Building Chairpersons for helping assemble and package United Way campaign information at the ATA Office and for collecting the paperwork at their respective buildings.

Many thanks.
Kathie Blank-Cicala
United Way Chairperson

There will be a
**general membership
meeting of the ATA in
the next few weeks in order
to discuss the current con-
tract negotiations. More
information
to follow.**

**Do you have an announcement
to share?**

The Educator welcomes all submissions from ATA members. Email announcements, photographs or article ideas to Sam Falk at sfalk@acsdny.org