



THE EDUCATOR

Newsletter of the Arlington Teachers' Association

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 11

OCTOBER 2012

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You Must Vote on November 6

On November 6 you need to vote. And not just for the next president, but in all of the local races also. No excuses. Sure, the presidential election is important, but unlike in swing states such as Ohio, your vote is not likely to be a deciding factor in who wins the race. It may be in a local or state election.

Why should you care about who wins local elections? If you consider the recent legislation that affects your job and education the most, from teacher evaluations to new pension tiers to charter school reform, it was

all enacted at the state level. Yes, some of those laws were in reaction to federal policy directions, but it was our state senators and assembly members who made the de-

We're not millionaires who can influence a political race with our money, but we do have power - we can vote.

isions that directly affect our livelihoods and the education of our children. Perhaps most importantly, these state legislators have the final say in how schools are funded, and in setting the

entire state budget.

Before you vote, make sure you are well informed about the choices presented. In this issue of *The Educator* we have tried to help you navigate the new election districts that are in place and to let you know which candidates have been endorsed by NYSUT as being friendly to education. You should also receive an election guide in the mail from NYSUT. Please read it.

We're not millionaires who can influence a political race with our money, but we do have power - we can vote.

ATA Displays Community Spirit at Arlington Street Fair

The ATA participated in this year's Arlington Street Fair on September 22. The fair is an annual event based in the downtown Arlington area of Poughkeepsie. Each year it highlights local businesses and organizations in the area and provides a day of events and festivities for the entire family. Given that our new ATA office is located on Davis Avenue in Arlington, the Street Fair is a perfect fit for us to showcase who we



Photo by Betsy Marshall

ATA members help children decorate a craft at the Arlington Street Fair in September.

are and all the good we are doing inside and outside of our classrooms.

For the second year in a row, our booth attracted children of all ages. Much like the seeds of learning teachers

plant each day, children had the opportunity to decorate a seed pot and plant a seed of their own. Additionally, the ATA displayed literature about reading for parents and provided the community with a lot of ATA-inspired goodies like flags, t-shirts, and magnets.

Thank you to all who volunteered their time to help keep our booth up and running.

We look forward to participating in this special event year after year, helping remind our neighbors of our commitment to children, education, and community.

--Kristi Bogaczyk, PR Chair

Q&A: Paul Curran, Assembly Candidate

Trivia Challenge

Answer the question below correctly and you could be the proud winner of ATA gear!

Which current NY state senate candidate is a physics teacher?

Last month's winners, selected at random from among the correct responses received, were **Alison Durkin** from Vail Farm and **Lily Cheung** from OPS. They correctly identified **Student Learning Objectives** as what SLO stands for. They are now the proud owners of ATA fleece.

Answer this month's question and you could win ATA gear too!

Submit your answer to the above trivia question to rmchugh@acsdny.org by November 16th. The winner will be randomly selected from the correct submissions.



Photo by Sam Falk

ATA Political Action Committee chairs Betsy Marshall and Robert McHugh (right) recently met Assembly candidates Frank Skartados (left) and Paul Curran at a NYSUT event.

Paul Curran is an Arlington resident who is running for New York State Assembly in District 105. He recently answered some questions for the ATA's Political Action Committee co-chair Robert McHugh.

Why are you running for the Assembly?

I have two children that ATA members have been educating for most of the past decade. I want to make a difference in the world that they will inherit. I am a businessman. I started a company that develops very large wind and solar energy projects on old industrial and landfill sites. I know that sustainable economic development is good for everyone in the state. However, I currently see reticence on the part of many in the state to approve new economic development quickly. I want to be part of the improvement in the efficiency of NYS government for the benefit of current and coming generations.

What is your opinion of the state's tax cap law?

The 2% tax cap is not a perfect standard, and it will need adjustment as we gain more experience with it. One such adjustment deals with the 2% override standard on school budgets. School budgets have always been set by majority vote. That standard should be retained.

When I interviewed for the NYSUT endorsement, I was struck by how much of the questioning was not about education, but rather about economic development and my work in successful alternate energy projects. The NYSUT committee noted that a good economy can support great educational opportunities, and that teachers, administrators, and tax payers all need to support measures that get business growing again.

How do you feel about the new teacher evaluation system created by the state?

Feedback from administrators and parents has always been encouraged by the teachers that I interface

with. My wife Brenda was a Special Ed teacher in two districts and still holds some of her more blunt principals in the highest regard. In my own business life, my colleagues and employees always want to know how their work is being received and how they can improve. In that sense, teacher evaluation is good. The current emphasis on standardized testing is troubling. Great teachers need the freedom to challenge students, and the new system does seem to have a "teach to the test" emphasis.

Would you talk a little about your children's experience in Arlington? What have been the highlights?

Michalyn and Reilly have benefitted enormously from their time at VFES, UVMS, and AHS. When Brenda and I moved back to the area in 2003, we specifically chose to live in the Arlington district because of the quality of schools and we have been greatly pleased by the results. We have enjoyed the opportunities for parents to get involved through the PTA, Arlington Band Boosters, Admiral Players parents, science fair committees and sports at Arlington facilities. I was a math and science student (I will be the only licensed professional engineer in the Assembly), so it has been with enjoyment that I have seen my kids go their own way in extracurricular programs in the arts. With the size of AHS and the district, it is great that student interest in such a wide range of disciplines can be accommodated.

NYSUT Would Like You To Tell It Like It Is

"Have you had it with testing, testing, and more testing?" Thus begins NYSUT's invitation to join them in sounding off about how testing is affecting your students. NYSUT recently launched a new campaign to encourage members to let the state education commissioner and Board of Regents

know how their policies are getting in the way of teachers providing a sound education. Visiting http://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/1846/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=11782 will bring you to a form letter containing prompts (seen below in italics) that teachers can fill out and have automatically sent. It is an easy way to have your voice heard. Here is the letter I wrote:

To Education Commissioner John King and the Board of Regents:

As a practitioner, I call upon you to rethink the obsession with standardized testing. There is now more than enough peer-reviewed research to show that the testing policies enacted under No Child Left Behind and Race To The Top are not improving educational outcomes. I am beginning to think that the New York

State Chamber of Commerce and their friends in state government, who continue to push these failed policies, are actually getting the poor results they were hoping for.

It is not "bad" teachers standing in the way of a better and more equitable public school system for all of the chil-

dren in this state. It is bad businessmen who would rather extract a profit than invest in public education.

It is time to put resources into helping teachers meet the demands of the new common core standards instead of investing in the politics of privatization and business profiteering. It is time to focus on reinvesting in our schools so that the excellent teachers in this state can once again focus on student learning.

Here's what you need to know about what my students are experiencing. This was a suggested lead in sentence from

my union. I believe that you are already well aware of the negative impact that standardized testing is having on students, teachers and schools so I will skip telling you the same story that you are hearing from hundreds of parents, teachers and other education professionals from across the state.

I offer the following solutions to ensure student assessment and teacher evaluation are done right.

Start to honestly look at the accumulating research. Begin to question the validity, worth and true cost of standardized testing.

Rather than listen to corporate financiers whose main motivation for pushing their brand of education reform is to build their business and create profit for themselves, start listening instead to parents and teachers who actually care about children and education, and who do not stand to reap huge financial rewards from the business takeover of community schools.

A message from a dedicated teacher and a strong union advocate,

--Betsy Marshall, PAC Co-chair



Spotlight on the Contract: Outside the Classroom

Each issue of The Educator spotlights 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. Until the new contract that was approved in June 2012 is published we will be featuring segments from the previous contract that will remain unchanged. If you have a section you would like to see featured, email sfalk@acsdny.org.

"The private and personal life of a teacher is not within the appropriate concern or attention of the Board or Administration except as it may interfere with the teacher's responsibilities to and relationships with students or the school system or impair his/her ability to fulfill his/her teaching duties."

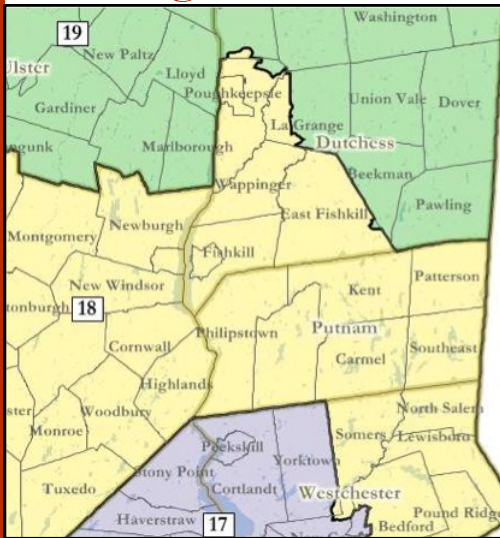
"Teacher participation or non-participation in voluntary extra-curricular, community, church, club or social activities shall not be considered in evaluating teacher performance."

Explanation: These provisions (Article VI, page 8, and Article XIV, page 19, respectively) together say that what teachers do outside of the classroom is not to be considered during any evaluation process, as long as their activities do not interfere with teaching duties. Teachers should not be discriminated against due to life-style choices. In addition, their participation in any community or extra-curricular activities at school cannot be taken in to account by administrators when evaluating a teacher, such as for tenure, or within the new APPR process. A provision of the ATA's APPR agreement dictates that "Teachers will not be penalized for expectations beyond the contractual day, which includes all required after-school meetings. They may, however, be commended for attendance at sporting events, concerts, extracurricular activities, etc." Domain 4 of the Danielson Framework deals with what teachers do outside of the classroom.

Election 2012 - Know Your District

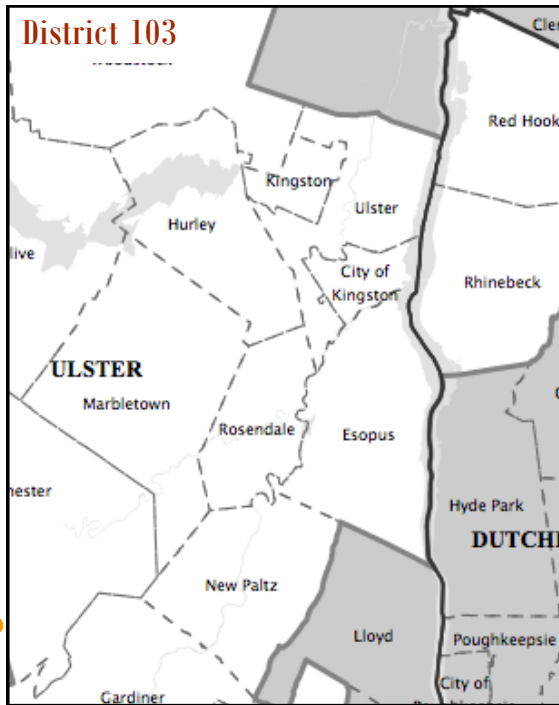
In 2012 all of the election districts in New York State were redrawn, as they are every

U.S. Congressional



*Red Hook and Rhinebeck, are in District 19

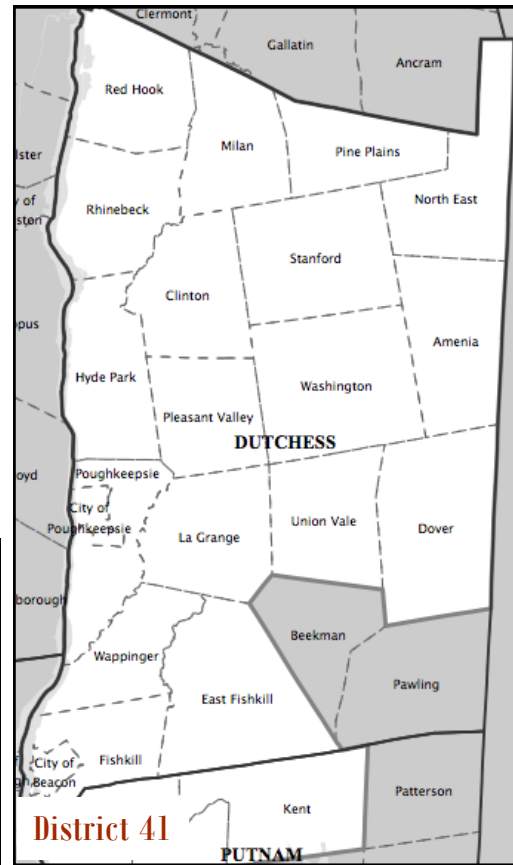
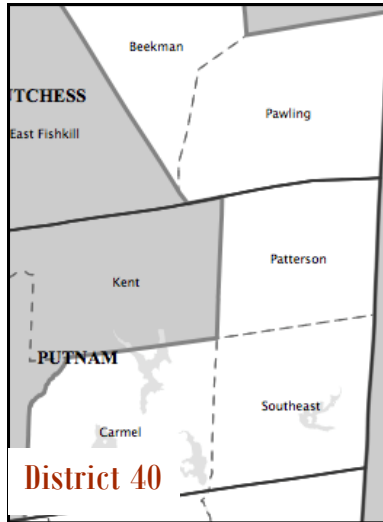
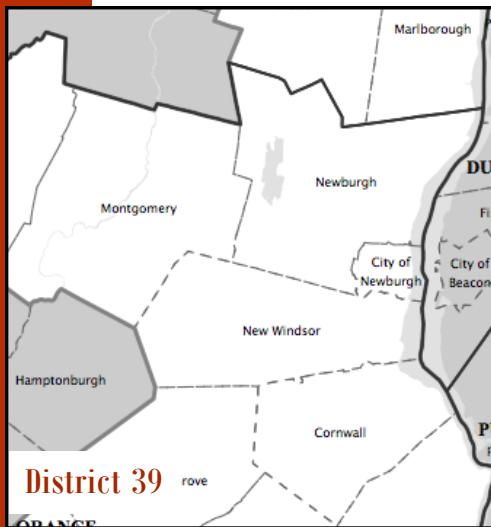
District 103



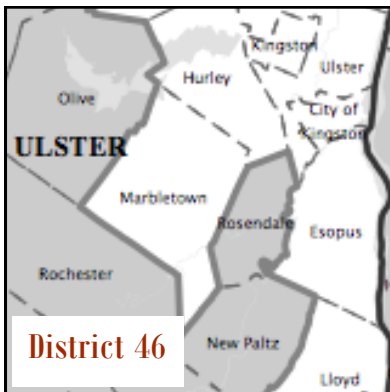
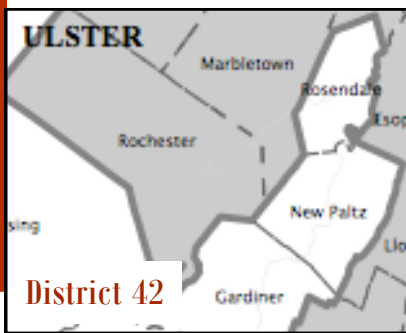
District 104



New York State Assembly

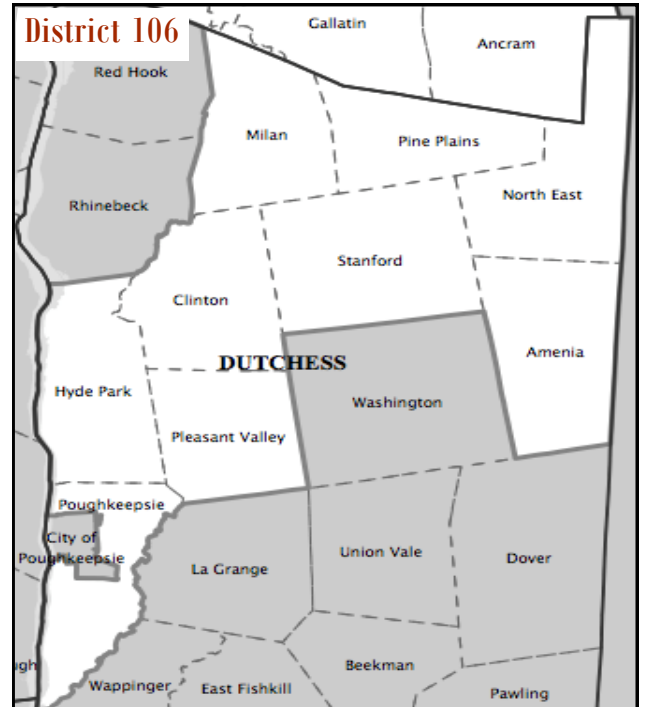
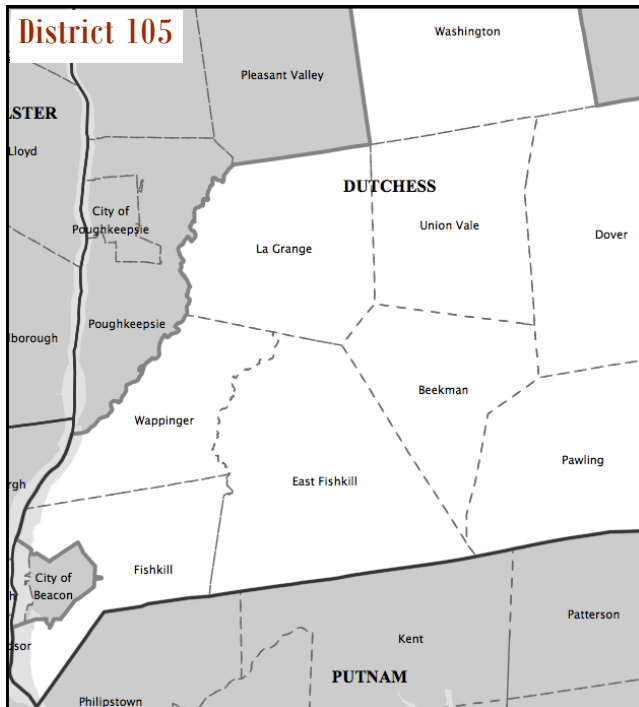
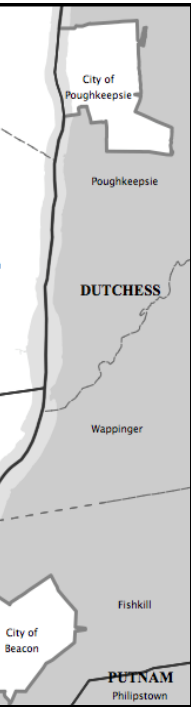


New York State Senate



All maps courtesy of www.hvalf.org

over 10 years. The following are maps containing the new districts that ATA members live in.



2012 NYSUT Candidate Endorsements

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 the property tax cap. Below are the local endorsements. **Please remember to vote on November 6th!**

U.S. President	Barack Obama (D)	District 104	Frank K. Skartados (D/I/WF)
U.S. Senate	Kirstin Gillibrand (D)	District 105	Paul F. Curran (D/WF)
U.S. House of Representatives		District 106	Didi Barrett (D/I/WF)
NY State Senate			
District 18	Sean Patrick Maloney (D)	District 39	Christopher W. Eachus (D/WF)
District 19	Julian Schreibman (D)*	District 40	Justin Wagner (D/WF)
*Note - Julian Schreibman (D) has been endorsed by other local labor organizations, including the HVALF and the NYS AFL-CIO, but not by NYSUT.		District 41	Terry W. Gipson (D/WF)
NY State Assembly		District 42	John J. Bonacic (R/I/C)
District 103	Kevin Cahill (D/I/WF)	District 46	No Endorsement*
		*The NYS AFL-CIO also declines to endorse in this district.	

What's Going On?

2012—2013 ATA Officers

President

Bob Maier

First Vice-President

Greg Nieman

Second Vice-President

Steve Hertzog

Treasurer

Kathleen Blank Cicala

Chief Negotiator

Donna Doerrier

PR Committee Chair

Kristi Bogaczyk

Community Action Chairs

Betsy Marshall

Robert McHugh

Welfare Trust Chair

Ron Higgins

Media Specialist

Sam Falk

Éminence Grise Emeritus

Robert McHugh

Senior Building Representative

ASM — Johanna Pungello

BES — Anne Schillinger

NES — Elise Pattison

VFES — Pam Goetz

OPS — Anne Marie Beesmer

Traver — Siouxzanne Harris

JDWR — Betsy Marshall

TIS — Sue Ramsden

AMS — Carmine Anastasio

LMS — Steve Bronzi

UVMS — Donna Curran

AHS — John Filor

AHS — Noreen Mills Martin

"What's Going on" is a monthly feature of *The Educator*. It highlights noteworthy accomplishments by ATA members. Do you know of a colleague who deserves recognition? Let *The Educator* know by emailing sfalk@acsdny.org. We can't know what's going on at all of your schools without your help!

Congratulations to the following ATA members for their contributions to the Arlington community and beyond.

Arlington Middle

English teacher Kristine Jackson and special education teacher Jessica Streck, advisors of the Friends of Ryan and Rachel club, organized faculty, staff, and student participation in Blue Shirt Day, a worldwide bullying prevention day.

Arlington High

Several ATA members participated in the Walk to Defeat ALS on October 21 in memory of Larry Haile, AHS secretary Seline Haile's husband who recently succumbed to the disease.

Physical Education teacher Nancy Kelly recently published

her second book, "Orienteering Made Simple and GPS Technology, An Instructional Handbook". It is designed to provide resources for teaching orienteering and GPS technology while incorporating national teaching standards.

Arthur S. May

Special education teacher Michele Anderson's short story "Kindness of a Stranger" was one of four selected to be published in the fall edition of the Red Lion Inn's bedtime story book. The book is left in each room of the inn in Stockbridge, Massachusetts for guests to enjoy.

First grade teacher April Meyer was selected as 92.1 Lite FM's Teacher of the Month for October. She was nominated by a student and his family and was honored with a surprise assembly, gifts, and a plaque. "This was a wonderful surprise and absolutely filled my bucket!" Meyer said, "With all of the hard work that teachers put in, this award made me feel appreciated by my students and their

parents."

--Erica Dunn

Beekman

Music teacher Mary Dallari recently participated in the "Highlights from the Footlights" musical revue in Rhinebeck. All proceeds went to help the Rhinebeck Center for the Performing Arts in its Hurricane Irene flood damage recovery.

Second grade teacher Karen Gell gives history talks at Dennings Point in Beacon once a month.

LaGrange Middle

Several faculty members have organized LMS's first Halloween costume party for faculty children. They were inspired by AMS's annual event. Activities will include pumpkin painting, cookie decorating, games, and crafts.

Noxon

Kristi Bogaczyk participated in the 39.3 mile Avon Breast Cancer walk in New York City on October 20 and 21.

New Teachers Partake in a Unity Pub



Above: UVMS building rep Anne-Marie Nolan (left) helped to welcome new teacher Christina Gorshoff to her building.

Right: New teacher Keira Godwin (right) enjoyed the company of fellow AMS teachers Kristine Jackson (left) and Jessica Streck.

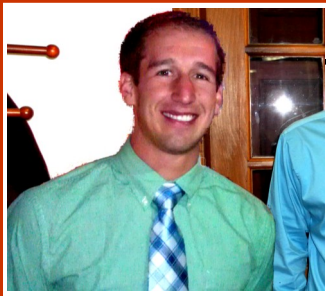
The ATA held its first Unity Pub event of the year on Friday, September 28 at Billy Bob's BBQ in Poughkeepsie. New teachers were invited to join their mentors and ATA building representatives for some camaraderie and great food.

Photos by Sam Falk, with lighting design by Donna Doerrier



Welcome, New Members!

With every new school year comes the movement of teachers to different buildings, the loss of some positions, and the change of full-time positions to part-time or leave replacement. The Arlington Teachers' Association hopes that all members are settling in to their classrooms this year and would like to welcome the following brand new people to the Arlington School District and the ATA.



Brian Bolstad

LMS—Spanish

Favorite Book: *Tai Pan*, by James Clavell

Favorite Food: Penne a la Vodka



Marcia Brandt

AHS—Special Ed.

Favorite Book: *The Harry Potter Series*, by J.K. Rowling

Favorite Food: None



Timothy Daniels

AHS—Music

Favorite Book: *Watership Down*, by Richard Adams

Favorite Food: Steak



Maggie Eschbach

AHS—English

Favorite Book: *The Handmaid's Tale*, by Margaret Atwood

Favorite Food: Hamburgers

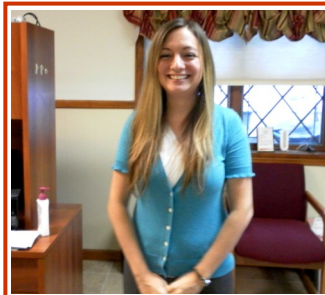


Keira Godwin

AMS—Math

Favorite Book: *Something Borrowed*, by Emily Giffin

Favorite Food: Pizza



Christina Gorshoff

UVMS—Speech

Favorite Book: *The Hobbit*, by J.R.R. Tolkien

Favorite Food: Pizza



Julie Pineau-Kelsey

AHS—Spanish

Favorite Book: *Sister Queens*, by Julia Fox

Favorite Food: Jamón serrano and Spanish tapas

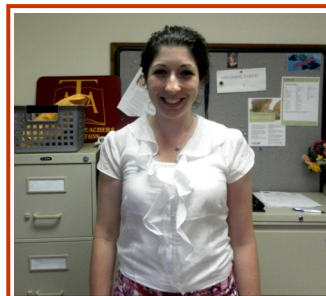


Nora Kindley

AMS—Library

Favorite Book: *Mrs. Dalloway*, by Virginia Woolf

Favorite Food: Bagels



Gina Noto

BES—Psychologist

Favorite Book: *The Catcher in the Rye*, by J.D. Salinger

Favorite Food: Lasagna



Kylie Urso

NES/VF—Psychologist

Favorite Book: *Plain Truth*, by Jodi Picoult

Favorite Food: Pizza

Did we leave someone out? Please let us know so that we can include him or her next month!

Dates to Remember



NOVEMBER

1st—NYSUT President Dick Iannuzzi, 4:15 p.m., AHS Café C/D

6th—**Election Day**

Superintendent's Conference Day

11th—No School—Veterans' Day

13th—ATA Executive Council Meeting, 4 p.m., AHS room 1432

Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., OPS

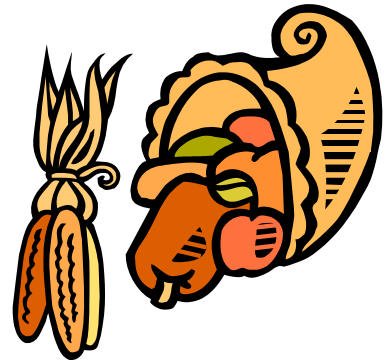
21-23—No School—Thanksgiving

27th—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., TIS

DECEMBER

6th—Children's Holiday Party, 5 p.m.—7 p.m., AHS

11th—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., CAO



Announcements

ATA Improves Dental Plan

Beginning January 1, 2013, the Dental Benefit will improve by 10%. All procedures are going to be 10% cheaper for you. Of course, if you go to a participating dentist there should be no charge. The list of participating dentists can be found on the ATA website.

The Vision account remains at \$300 and the Personal Health account remains at \$350 for now.

If there are ever questions or concerns related to Welfare Trust, please call Ron Higgins at the ATA Office, 845-454-7002.

All ATA members will be contributing one day to the Sick Bank this year. That day will be taken from the first paycheck in November.

A few weeks ago the husband of ASM kindergarten teacher LeeAnn Eckhardt was in a serious car accident and is still in the hospital, far from home. Friends of the Eckhardts have banded together to organize not only daily help for the family, but also a big fundraising event that will happen on November 4. Those interested in receiving updates and showing support can join the Facebook group at www.facebook.com/groups/186284064830042/

Stay informed! Like us on Facebook or check out www.arlingtonteachers.com for forms, photos, calendars, and more.

Volunteers are needed to serve dinner at the Lunch Box in Poughkeepsie from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. on November 9 and 12. Please contact Colleen Napora at cnapora@acsny.org to sign up.