



# THE EDUCATOR

Newsletter of the Arlington Teachers' Association

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## Support the School Budget on May 21

This year's school budget vote will take place on Tuesday, May 21. The ballot will also include a bus proposition and school board candidates.

The support of every ATA member is vital to ensure a positive outcome to the budget process. If you do not live in the district it is important that you talk to your friends and family who do and encourage them to get out and vote on the 21st. Make sure to tell them why passage of the budget and the bus proposition are important to you and how they will benefit the children of the district.

To the right you will find some facts to help you inform others about the 2013—2014 Arlington school budget, the bus proposition, and the candidates running for election to the school board. More information can be found at [www.arlingtonschools.org](http://www.arlingtonschools.org).

### BUDGET FACTS

- A 2.00% tax levy increase is proposed
- The average tax increase for a \$250,000 home would be \$8.92 per month
- If the budget fails twice, a contingency budget with a 0% tax levy increase would be adopted. It would not include full-day kindergarten, and would require other drastic program cuts and staff reductions.

### SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES

The terms of three current school board members, Christine Baxter, Kelly Lappan, and Cindy Smith, are expiring and four candidates are running to fill these three seats. The ATA recently interviewed all of the candidates and is endorsing the two incumbents: **Christine Baxter** and **Kelly Lappan**. We believe that the other two candidates, Jennifer Eraca and Tina Vaitkus, are also qualified, and are advocates for public education.

### BUS PROPOSITION

When school buses reach a certain age or number of miles NYS requires that they are replaced. Taxpayers are asked to permit the district to purchase new vehicles. This would cost a family with a home valued at \$250,000 \$5.93 per year over 5 years, starting in 2014-2015. If the bus proposition is not passed the district will have to lease buses, which will be more expensive. Additional transportation costs would mean having to reduce funding for other parts of the budget.

## Will You Be On the Bus With Us?

There is going to be a big rally in Albany on June 8. You know that. You've gotten the emails and fliers and seen the Facebook posts. But do you know why it is so important that you be there? You, not just those other people who are always doing



Photo by Laura Griffone

Teachers at Beekman Elementary wore blue on May 9 to participate in an AFT-led protest of the over-reliance on high-stakes testing. If you care as much as they do, please attend the rally in Albany with us on June 8.

"union" stuff. Why should you get on our bus and spend the day in Albany?

In the words of ATA CAC Co-Chair Betsy Marshall, "If only a few hundred teachers and parents show up on June 8 our elect-

See Rally on page 2

## Trivia Challenge

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

**How many square miles does Arlington cover?**

Last month's winners, selected at random from among the correct responses received, were **Julie Jee** from AHS, **Linda Penn** from Beekman, and **April Meyer** from Arthur S. May. They correctly identified **nine** as the number of school board members in Arlington. They will be the proud owners of ATA fleeces.

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

Submit your answer to the above trivia question to [rmchugh@acsdny.org](mailto:rmchugh@acsdny.org) by May 31st. The winner will be randomly selected from the correct submissions.

# NYSUT Rally Aims to Make a Difference

*Continued from Front* -ed representatives will know that they do not have to do anything different than what they have been doing. When tens-of-thousands of teachers, parents, and students stand together and demand an end to the failed policies of NCLB and RTTT politicians just might decide that they better start paying attention to what we have to say."

You care about the future of public education and know that changes need to be made in many areas such as testing and funding. We need you with us on June 8 to make sure that our ideas about those issues and others will be

heard in Albany. As Marshall puts it, "I believe that teachers and parents have the answers to what works in education; not bankers, CEOs, and politicians. Our

***"I believe that teachers and parents have the answers to what works in education; not bankers, CEOs, and politicians. Our voices will not be heard until we raise them together."***

***-Betsy Marshall,  
ATA CAC Co-Chair***

voices will not be heard until we raise them together."

Buses will be leaving AHS at 9 a.m. on Saturday, June 8. We would really like you to be on one.

Please fill out the registra-

tion form you received in your mailbox at school and return it to your senior building representative or the ATA Office by May 18. More forms can be found in the "Special Announcements" section of the ATA's web page.

More information about the rally can be found at <http://www.nysut.org/resources/special-resources/sites/one-voice-united>. It promises to be a day that you will not soon forget.

ATA second vice president Steve Hertzog describes his view of the event succinctly: "The ATA has rented a bus and will provide you with a free ride, a free lunch, and an opportunity to change the future."

## Spotlight on the Contract: Public Office

*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](mailto:sfalk@acsdny.org).*

"1. Subject to the provisions of this section, the District shall grant a leave of absence not exceeding two (2) years, without pay or increments, to a teacher to campaign for or serve in public office.

2. Eligibility under this Section E shall be limited to tenured teachers with five (5) or more years of service in the District. The "public office" for which leave is requested must be one which requires a full-time presence (for example, the State Assembly) as opposed to a part-time presence (for example, a school board)."

Explanation: This provision (Article XVII, page 25) states that tenured teachers are eligible for a leave of absence to run for a full-time public office as long as they have been with the district for at least five years. While this leave is unpaid, upon his or her return the teacher will be placed on the salary schedule he or she would have achieved in the year immediately following the commencement of the leave of absence.

# ONE VOICE UNITED

## RALLY TOGETHER

Educators, parents, students, community

June 8<sup>th</sup> • noon • Empire State Plaza • Albany

### *Stand!*

- Against corporate control of public education!
- Against the state's obsession with standardized tests!

### *Demand!*

- A MORATORIUM on high stakes for standardized tests!
- The state fully invest in public higher education!
- The state save SUNY Downstate Teaching Hospital!

### *Fight!*

- For the funding that public schools need!
- To restore local control — fix the tax cap!

### *Support!*

- The DREAM Act!
- The School Violence Prevention Act!

***Fighting for the Future of Public Education***

[www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org)

[www.twitter.com/nysut](http://www.twitter.com/nysut)

[#rallyJune8](https://twitter.com/rallyJune8)

# NYSUT RA Motivates Educators

The 41<sup>st</sup> annual NYSUT Representative Assembly (RA) brought more than 2000 NYSUT members together in Washington D.C. on April 10-13. Representing

ler Tom DiNapoli. All of these individuals provided inspiring, supportive, and encouraging messages at a time in the school year when you need it the most.

of the year, and school related professional of the year. Each of these award recipients has an opportunity to address the delegates as well.



Photo courtesy of Donna Doerrier

**ATA delegates (L-R) Steve Hertzog, Bob Maier, and Donna Doerrier attended NYSUT's annual Representative Assembly in Washington D.C. from April 10-13.**

the ATA were our delegates President Bob Maier, Chief Negotiator Donna Doerrier, and Second Vice President Steve Hertzog.

There are many purposes for this convention, one being to have a discussion of resolutions and constitutional amendments to shape the vision and direction of NYSUT regarding a wide range of education issues, labor issues, social justice initiatives, and concerns from our health care constituency. All discussions follow the formal Robert's Rules of Order.

A second purpose of the RA is to hear speeches directly from the leaders, decision makers, and key stakeholders who are involved in education and organized labor. During the RA we had a chance to hear from all of the NYSUT officers, U.S. Senator Charles Schumer, NEA President Dennis VanRoekel, AFT President (and former NYC teacher and UFT President) Randi Weingarten, NY AFL-CIO President Mario Cilento, AFL-CIO Secretary Treasurer Liz Schuler, and NY State Comptrol-

These leaders believe in what you do and understand that other influential players in the education arena have created situations and obstacles to you doing the best you can and feeling that you are able to help your students to the best of your abilities. A common thread throughout the speeches was that our organization must take an active

role in changing the direction of initiatives and mandates that deteriorate the quality of education. One of the best examples of this message was in VanRoekel's speech where he urged union members to not be satisfied with "playing defense" and just being happy with the status quo. VanRoekel urged us to "play offense" and fight to improve education and the working conditions of organized laborers, and as a result improve the standard of living in the United States.

The RA is also a chance to recognize and honor the accomplishments of individuals who have won the "NYSUT Constituency Awards". These are the awards given to the teacher of the year, retiree member of the year, higher education member of the year, health care professional

of the year, and school related professional of the year. Each of these award recipients has an opportunity to address the delegates as well.

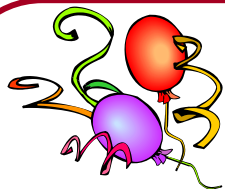
NY State Education Commissioner John King once again addressed the assembled delegates in the same manner that he did last year in Buffalo. He first gave a brief summary of the executive actions of the Board of Regents and the State Education Department. After describing the rationale behind some of the mandates and changes that we are presently living with, he then opened the floor to the delegates to ask questions. Our previous Commissioners have never done this, and are noted for having the least interesting speeches of RA's past. King may deserve some credit for bravely accepting harsh, practical, and "reality based" questions about some of the misguided principles and motivating factors involved in the recent and coming changes in education.

*A common thread throughout the speeches was that our organization must take an active role in changing the direction of initiatives and mandates that deteriorate the quality of education.*

The RA also allows the ATA delegates to network with leaders of other locals from New York State to develop solutions to common problems and build coalitions for common efforts. Maier joined the other NYSUT local presidents a day before the rest of the delegates arrive for a busy day of meetings and workshops for local presidents.

All of the transcripts of the speeches given at the RA can be found at [nysut.org/ra](http://nysut.org/ra). There is also a summary of the speeches and other RA accomplishments in the May issue of *NYSUT United*.

-ATA Second Vice President  
Steve Hertzog



# The Arlington Teachers' Association 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Miniature Golf Outing

Bring the whole family for a day of Miniature Golf, Free Food, Music, Crafts, Prizes, Raffles, and Lots of Fun!

Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup> 11am-2pm

Overlook Golf Center

\$8.00 per player

**Pre-register by May 25th and registration is only \$7.00 per player PLUS you will receive an additional door prize ticket on the day of the event!**

\*\*\*\*\*

### Registration

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ No. of Players: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 School: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

*Make checks payable to: Arlington Teachers' Association*

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**PLEASE RETURN THIS REGISTRATION FORM AND FEE IN AN ENVELOPE MARKED "ATA MINI-GOLF" TO THE MAIN OFFICE OF YOUR SCHOOL BUILDING OR SEND DIRECTLY TO:**

**Arlington Teachers' Association, 46 Davis Avenue, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603**

**NO TICKETS WILL BE ISSUED.**

**Simply check in at the registration table on the day of the event!**




Sponsored By:


Arlington Parent Teacher Association, Arlington Teachers' Association, Raymond Opticians

## Come to the 2013 Recognition Dinner!

On Friday, June 14th, the ATA will hold its annual recognition dinner/dance. The evening provides an opportunity to recognize and say goodbye to those who have decided to retire. The event will be from 6:30—11:30 p.m. at Christos, with dinner at 7:30 p.m. The cost is \$48.00 per person, which includes hors d'oeuvres, dinner, and a cash bar.



**New teachers — fill out the entry form at right to enter a raffle for two free tickets!**



**ENTRY FORM**

2 Free Tickets to the ATA Recognition Party

*You must be in your first five years of teaching at Arlington to be eligible.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Send completed form through interoffice mail to the ATA Office.

## 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?

"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](mailto: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 High

Science teachers Cindy Binnie, Marc Ouimet, Maribel Pregnall, and Gwen Saylor were recently awarded grants from the Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley.

### Arthur S. May Elementary

Planning for the May 29 Mini-Relay for Life is in full swing. The committee, headed by fifth grade teacher Ari Leach, and including teachers Johanna Pungello, Kendra Rogers, Tina McKinney, and Erica Dunn-Racz, has worked over the years to turn the relay into a major annual spring event at the school, including local business displays, family participation, refreshments, and prizes. The children and committee raised over \$5000 for cancer research last year. We look forward to seeing how much we can raise this year!

### Noxon Elementary

The first grade students of Betty Ann Adams, Jill Dunlop, and Vivian LaColla collected \$450 to benefit St. Jude Children's Hospital. They have collected over \$30,000 in the

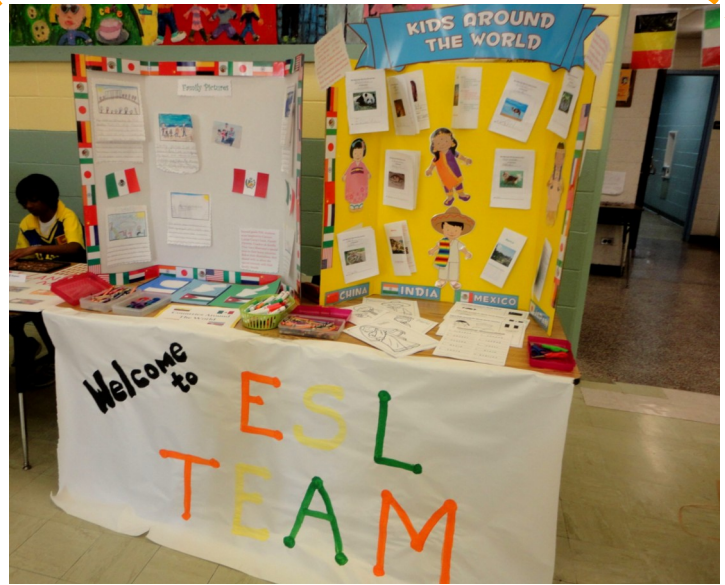


Photo by Melissa Tirado

### Noxon Elementary

ESL teacher Melissa Tirado and social worker Susan Grencer worked with the PTA to host Noxon's first International Festival. In the weeks leading up to the festival, ESL students read trivia questions about various countries during morning announcements which generated great interest. The well-attended festival featured food, music, and informational booths from a wide range of places: Africa, Dominican Republic, Germany, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Portugal, South Korea, Sri Lanka, United Kingdom, and Uruguay. The lively crowd enjoyed dance demonstrations and a fashion show, and students had passports to track which countries (booths) they visited. The festival was a great success, not only in how much fun everyone had but also in meeting the goals of appreciating other cultures, celebrating diversity, and coming together as a community.

many years that they have been holding the event.

### LaGrange Middle

Italian teacher Luisa Martinelli was named Teacher of the Month of March by 92.1 Lite FM. Student Danielle Cussik nominated Mrs. Martinelli for the honor. Prizes included gift certificates to a local spa and restaurant and the Italian class also gets a \$100 pizza party.

Technology teacher Stephen Bronzi has been a facilitator of an after school au-

tism awareness discussion group. The group has discussed topics ranging from diagnosis to education to medication.

### Union Vale Middle

Home and Careers teacher Jean Gittere was honored at Arbor Ridge Caterers on May 9 by the Family and Consumer Science Association of Dutchess County. She won Teacher of the Year, a great and much deserved honor. Her student, Maeve Mullaney, won Student of the Year.

# ATA Members Help Out Their Community

For the second year in a row, the Arlington Teachers' Association joined forces with the local Dutchess County chapter of Rebuilding Together, an organization dedicated to helping low

-income families have safe living conditions. On April 27 approximately 40 volunteers from the community and the

Poughquag/Pawling United Methodist Church worked with ATA members at a home in Pleasant Valley. They completed tasks such as reinforcing and laying down a tile floor in the bathroom and kitchen, installing new windows and gutters, painting the interior and exterior of the home, and

doing lawn work.

The ATA was able to help Rebuilding Together by donating money as well as having some of its members donate their time and talents. Mem-

**"" It was a tangible way to truly help someone in need. I loved being able to work towards a common goal with people from different groups and organizations in order to support a family within our own community. ""**

bers Joseph Healy, Kristine Jackson, Sara LaCelle (AMS); Katie Whittaker (AHS); Betsy Denis and Doug Dickeson (UVMS); and honorary ATA members Laura

DiStefano and Dori Bischoff, all spent the day helping out.

Homeowner Michael Fetzer remarked how grateful he was to have so many people helping him out. Because of a disability, Fetzer has been unable to work for the past 10 years. He applied to Rebuilding Together because he wanted to make his home safer for his teenage daughter, who resides with him.

In a letter thanking ATA members for their help, Omer Gil, president the board of Rebuilding Together Dutchess County stated, "Mr. Fetzer's appreciation and personally seeing the relief on his face knowing that his and, more importantly to him, his daughter's living situation has instantly improved by the generosity of our volunteers is very heart-warming."

When asked why she volunteered to work on a Saturday afternoon,



Photo by Joseph Healy

UVMS teacher Betsy Denis gets ready to pry up some tiles that need replacing as part of the Rebuilding Together effort to renovate a home in Pleasant Valley.



Photo by Joseph Healy

AMS teacher Sara LaCelle looks on as Rebuilding Together volunteers receive instructions as to how to replace a window in a home in Pleasant Valley.



LaCelle replied, "It was a tangible way to truly help someone in need. I loved being able to work towards a common goal with people from different groups and organizations in order to support a family within our own

community. I would definitely be willing to do it again. It was fun, and I was impressed

by how much we were able to accomplish in one day!" Healy stated, "I have always wanted to take part in Rebuilding ever since Laura DiStefano told me about it, and you get to use power tools!"

-Kristine Jackson, AMS

# Dates to Remember



## MAY

- 14th—ATA Executive Council Session, 4 p.m., AHS room 1432  
Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., CAO
- 21st—**School Budget Vote**, 6 a.m. - 9 p.m.
- 27th—Memorial Day, No School
- 28th—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., CAO

## JUNE

- 1st—ATA Miniature Golf Outing, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m., Overlook Golf Center
- 7th—Last Day of Classes, AHS
- 8th—One Voice United Rally, 12 p.m., Empire State Plaza, Albany  
(Buses leave AHS at 9 a.m.)
- 11th—ATA Executive Council Session, 4 p.m., AHS room 1432  
Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., AHS
- 14th—ATA Recognition Dinner, 6:30 p.m., Christos
- 19th—Last Day of Classes, Elementary and Middle Schools  
(Middle Schools dismiss at 10 a.m.)
- 24th—ATA Night at the Renegades, 7 p.m., Dutchess Stadium
- 25th—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., CAO



# Announcements

This year's date for ATA Night at the Renegades is Monday, June 24. Ticket order forms can be found on our web page.

*Volunteers are needed to serve dinner at the Lunch Box in Poughkeepsie from 4 to 6 p.m. on June 10 and 14. Please contact Colleen Napora at [cnapora@acsdny.org](mailto:cnapora@acsdny.org) to sign up.*

**Stay informed! Like us on Facebook or check out the ATA webpage at [www.arlingtonteachers.com](http://www.arlingtonteachers.com) for photos, contact information, benefits forms, issues of *The Educator* and more.**