



THE EDUCATOR

Newsletter of the Arlington Teachers' Association

VOLUME 4, ISSUE III

DECEMBER 2013

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Going Above and Beyond

Every month as I prepare to put together this newsletter I reach out to my Communications Committee members at each school to see what they can tell me about the special things that ATA members are doing in their buildings. This month I received so many responses that they take up this entire issue.

We are all kept very busy with the daily running of our classrooms, along with the ongoing tasks of adapting to new standards and curricula, so it would be understandable if we had no time for much else. Yet Arlington teachers regularly make time to enrich

their teaching practices and to help others in the local community and beyond. In the following

2013 National Board Certification Recipients:

Xiang'e Bove-- BES
Tara DiCorcia-- AHS
Alison Durkin-- VFES
Stephanie Marden-- AHS
Katie Nixon-- AHS
Kim Paesano-- BES
Amy Pagano-- VFES
Krysta Weiss-- AHS
Erica Wolff-- AHS

pages you will read about ATA members doing everything from helping their students make cards for veterans at Castle Point to organizing

a trip to build homes in Nicaragua.

Special recognition goes out to the nine ATA members who achieved their National Board certification this month, and to everyone who served as their support system. Some of these same teachers are those that you will also find listed in the following pages as making special contributions to the Arlington community.

Take joy in the great things that your colleagues have achieved both in and out of the classroom and be proud to say that you are a member of the Arlington Teachers' Association.
-Sam Falk, Newsletter editor



ARLINGTON TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

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Empathy Drives Transcontinental Charity

Trivia Challenge

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

In what year was Arlington Middle School's building constructed?

Last month's winner, selected at random from among the correct responses received, was **Anthony Stewart** from TIS. He correctly identified **\$10.2 million** as the cost of Arlington's security and safety referendum. He is now the proud owner of an 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 **December 20th**. The winner will be randomly selected from the correct submissions.



Photo courtesy of Marie Taylor

Former Arlington Superintendent Frank Pepe brought suitcases of school supplies donated by AMS faculty, staff, and students to Nicaragua last year.

The journey began last year when Marie Taylor, AMS library clerk, traveled to Nicaragua with the organization Bridges to Community to help the small village of La Ceibita build a school. During the week, parents, grandparents and members of the community talked to her about their dreams for their children; all of them began with an education. For a week, she worked side by side with Nicaraguans and Bridges volunteers to make these dreams come true.

While the people of La Ceibita were thrilled with their new building, it was clear to Taylor that schools need more than walls. La Ceibita had committed teachers, but as a village in the second poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, basic school supplies are hard to find and harder to purchase. So, upon returning

to AMS, Taylor asked the staff if they would be interested in collecting supplies for La Ceibita. Living our core values, the school's students and staff responded with enthusiasm; in August, a total of seven suitcases of supplies were hand carried to Nicaragua. Former Arling-

Visit www.bridgestocommunity.org to learn about the organization or contact Marie Taylor at mtaylor@acsdny.org.

ton Superintendent Frank Pepe himself carried five of the suitcases and presented them to the community at the school's grand opening.

Inspired by that project, the Arlington connection to our Nicaraguan neighbors is growing. Taylor will be leading a team of ACS D employees and friends to Nicaragua in July 2014 to work on new projects. Most likely, we will be helping a family in need build themselves a cinderblock home in Jinotega.

We may also have the opportunity to support a new library in that community. We want to let the Arlington Community know about two ways they can support our efforts.

First, we would like to extend an invitation for other Arlington folks to join us next July. While we have 13 people committed, there is plenty of room for others. If you are interested in traveling with us, please visit www.bridgestocommunity.org to learn about the organization or contact Marie Taylor at mtaylor@acsdny.org.

Second, our group needs to raise several thousand dollars for the materials for our build and a possible scholarship to an AHS student. (A cinderblock home costs approximately \$3500.) We would be grateful for any tax-deductible donations.

Make checks out to Bridges to Community and send them to Marie Taylor at AMS and she will see you get receipts

needed for tax purposes.

A community thrives when all members embrace their interdependence with compassion and empathy. The ATA has always excelled at supporting the local members of our community. In this increasingly global world, we are now proud to extend our support to our neighbors in Latin America. We hope you will join us.
-Michelle Gillian, UVMS;
Nora Kindley, AMS;
Kathleen Tuckruskye, ASM

BES Teacher Promotes a Love of Reading

Best-selling author James Patterson's mission through his Read-KiddoRead website and many other activities has been to help children become life-long lovers of books. I am proud to be working with him to develop a program that will reach out to children through their schools to test the power of book ownership: Does having their own books make it more likely for kids to pick up a book instead of picking up the remote or game controller?

The objective of Patterson's We Read in Our House program is to provide students with their own books. Four schools are in the initial start-up for this program. Two 5th Grade classrooms are in the Bronx; the 2nd grade classrooms are in Newburgh (Patterson's hometown), and at Arthur S. May from the Arlington Central School District. The participating teachers will receive 12 titles to send home with each of their students – "for keeps" -- after reading and celebrating the books in their classrooms.



We will track the impact of having a home library with teacher, student, and parent surveys and through observation and informal evaluations. Much of the research that supports this program comes from the National Literacy Trust (NLT). The NLT published their survey of over 18 thousand children ages 8 to 17 in the United Kingdom. The NLT's essential question was "Do children and young

people enjoy reading more because they have access to books or does having the books foster the enjoyment?" Their results supported the findings of a twenty-year study by the University of Nevada which demonstrated that "having as few as 20 books in the home still has a significant impact on propelling a child to a higher level of education." A third study conducted by Reading is

Fundamental demonstrated that "... access to print material improves children's reading performance, encourages children to read more and for longer periods of time..." What We Read in Our House hopes to do is prove it to a number of communities – from parents to teachers, from booksellers to librarians to academics.

I am thrilled that I was asked to be a part of this project and even more thrilled that I was able to offer this to the Arlington Central School District. This program has the potential to be achieved nationally, and it is great to know that Arlington is a participant in the foundation. Please check out the ReadKiddoRead.com website. It has a lot of valuable resources for teachers and students. You can also "like" James Patterson on Facebook to be kept updated on this and other projects that he holds dear to his heart.

-Laura Griffone, BES

Spotlight on the Contract: Secondary Class Load

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. If you have a section you would like to see featured, email sfalk@acsdny.org.

"In the secondary schools, except as otherwise provided in this paragraph 2, the number of daily periods of classroom instruction for a secondary teacher shall not exceed five (5). However, in science, driver education, and business education, an additional one or two periods per week may be assigned by the appropriate administrator. Any teacher so assigned shall have reduced supervisory duties, such as study hall, homeroom and lunch supervision. Tenured teachers in the middle and high school buildings may volunteer to teach a sixth assignment as an alternate to a supervisory assignment, subject to the following conditions:

- a. No teacher will teach any class outside of his/her teaching certification area.*
- b. No teacher shall lose his/her position or any part of his/her positions as a result of a sixth assignment(s)."*

Explanation: This provision (Article XI, page 15) says that at the secondary level teachers should be assigned five daily periods of classroom instruction and a supervisory duty, along with their lunch and prep periods. Science, driver education, and business teachers may be assigned an additional one or two periods per week, resulting in an average of 5.3 periods of classroom instruction per day that is permitted, no matter how many separate teaching assignments that entails. In addition, any tenured teacher may volunteer to teach a sixth assignment in lieu of a supervisory duty.

2013—2014 ATA Officers

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Bob Maier

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Second Vice-President

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Treasurer

Kathleen Blank Cicala

Chief Negotiator

Donna Doerrier

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BES — Anne Schillinger

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VFES — Pam Goetz

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JDWR — Betsy Marshall

TIS — Sue Ramsden

AMS — Carmine Anastasio

LMS — Steve Bronzi

UVMS — Jim DeBonis

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. 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

AHS's Spirit of Giving campaign is being led this year by business teacher *Kelliann Hogan*, English teacher *Katie Nixon*, and special education teacher *Michelle Nicholas*.

Each year a board is set up in the Main Office with the holiday wishes of local families in need. Clubs and classes often adopt a family and wrapped gifts and items like grocery and gas cards are donated. Last year AHS helped over 30 families make their holiday season a little brighter.

English teachers *Rhapsody Mancini* and *Katie Nixon* and health teacher *Nicole Benedetto* have organized a Door Wars competition at AHS for the third year. Teachers are encouraged to decorate their doors in the theme of school and holiday spirit, and then students, faculty, and staff can vote for their favorite doors by placing change in jars in the Main office. All proceeds from



Photo by Greg Nieman

Titusville Intermediate/Vail Farm Elementary

Art teacher *Amanda Buhler* recently had a solo exhibition of her work entitled "Sublimation" at Mill Street Loft's Gallery 45 in Poughkeepsie. Three years in the making, this body of work expresses a prolific exploration of the jellyfish form in a variety of drawings, paintings, and prints. In the tradition of Hudson River school artists, the work exposes the sublime in nature and the notion of rebirth.

the competition will be donated to the Spirit of Giving campaign to benefit local Arlington families.

Arlington Middle

Guidance counselors *Pam Riggins* and *Vincent Spadaro*, social worker *Cindy Vandermark* and social studies teacher *Greg Fredricks* presented to the AMS PTA Wednesday, November 12 on social media and student safety regarding texting and on-line interactions. This information was very well received by the parents in attendance and extremely useful in efforts to educate parents on the appropriate use of technology.

Jamie Lolkema has been not only teaching her Home

and Careers students important life skills, but also the qualities of compassion and charity. She used a lesson in sewing to produce hot/cold packs that were donated to the AMS Holiday Helping Hands Project to raise money for the needy families in the district. These hot-cold packs were then sold with all proceeds going to the fund. If you are interested in purchasing a hot/cold pack, please email Maryellen Seigel.

Sue LaRocca and her art students constructed and painted beautiful "Giving Trees" that are displayed in the faculty room as a part of the Holiday Helping Hands Project. These festive trees help the staff at AMS to em-

brace the spirit of giving this holiday season.

English teacher *Kristine Jackson* received a grant from the Mid-Hudson Teacher Center to borrow 15 laptops for use in her classroom until June. She plans on using this technology to empower her students academically by incorporating more research based activities. In addition, students will have an opportunity to present material digitally, improving their technology skills for the future.

Beekman Elementary

Speech therapist *Christina Gibson* led a Mission Trip to Haiti where she helped a local church build a floor for their church, and spent afternoons serving the community and leading activities with the kids, then in the evenings spent time at an orphanage.

BES students and teachers are involved in character education, which is run through our WITS committee, chaired by first grade teacher *Linda Penn*. The committee is dedicated to encouraging students to use their wits about bullying. Its name stands for Walk away, Ignore, Talk it out, and Seek help. The committee consists of principal *Kathy Lowell* and teachers *Kim Wright*, *Liz McGrath*, *Kim Trahan*, *Eileen Snook*, *Julie Shook*, *Laura Griffone*, *Christina Gibson*, *Michelle DeJong*, *Anne Schillinger*, and *Linda Simoneau*. November's word was "empathy." To help kids understand empathy for others they have been read a story, or are involved in a novel where they will have empathy for the character.

Students and faculty have made cards for veterans at Castle Point. The cards will be put on the breakfast, lunch, and dinner trays of vets who are residing at the nursing facility. This is an ongoing project that will last through the holidays.

Students and faculty have also making holiday cards for children in Columbia Presbyterian Cancer ward. It is a wish that they are fulfilling that was requested by a former BES student who herself is battling cancer.

Union Vale Middle

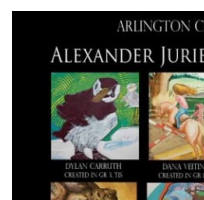
Technology teachers *Doug Dickeson* and *Clint Walters* represented the Arlington district at the Maglev competition held last month at Dutchess Community College. They used their expertise to guide students into constructing rubber band, motor and wind vehicles. Their team of students won numerous trophies, fostering a continued positive reflection of the Arlington district. Dickeson and Walters participate in the event annually.

In connection with the sixth grade social studies unit on Human Rights teachers *Matt Fiedler*, *Chris Malet*, *Matt Reilly* (social studies) and *Melissa Clark* (ELA), and teaching assistant *Susan Wilson* helped the Union Vale Middle School student council organize a fundraising competition called Penny Wars. The premise of the game is that for five school days the three middle school grades and the faculty would all compete against one another to see who could earn the most points and be named the winner. Pennies count as positive points, so those would be placed in your own bin, while nickels, dimes and quarters count as negative points, so they would be placed in another group's bin. At the end of each day the results were announced, which increased the interest and made certain groups (usually the faculty) the targets for the next day. In the end the seventh grade won and got to vote on the charity that the money would go to (St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital) and what their grade level

prize would be (free student council after-school social). Ultimately a total of over 48,000 coins were willingly contributed and the final amount of money raised was \$1, 454.37.

Arlington Art Department

The Arlington Art Department in partnership with the Arlington Education Foundation is sponsoring the Arlington Central School District's Alexander Juried Art Exhibit, featuring artwork from grades K-12 with an opening on Wednesday December 11 from 4pm to 5:30pm at the Arlington High School auditorium lobby. This twelfth annual exhibit provides Arlington students the opportunity to professionally showcase their artwork and highlights the value that the arts bring to our community. The artwork will hang in the William J. Sweeney Performance Hall Lobby throughout the year. This Annual Juried Exhibit is curated by Arlington's art department, and is a fine representation of Arlington's renowned arts program. The exhibit is named in honor of Yvonne Alexander who began the event in 2002. Alexander was an Arlington art teacher from 1988 until 2007. The following art teachers have dedicated their time and expertise to keep this show alive for many years: *Kate Thyberg* (West Rd & Traver), *Sheri Altieri* (UVMS and AHS), *Amanda Buhler* (Titusville & Vail Farm), *Ted Braggins* (AHS), *Aimee Nyarady* (AHS and Noxon), *Lorraine Almond* (Vail Farm), *Ed Meyer* (AHS), *Linda Simoneau* (Beekman), *Carol DiPalò* (Overlook), *Chris Rifenburg* (UVMS), *Kathy Clark* (UVMS), *Brett Booth*, (UVMS), *Jason Kolachik* (ASM & Noxon), *Sean Bayliss* (AHS), *Heidi Every* (LMS & Vail Farm), *Sali Wohlbach* (AHS), and *Eric Cline* (AMS & West Rd.), *Sue LaRocca* (AMS), *Kathryn Paulsen* (LMS), *Corissa Appler* (AHS) and *Jill Freeswick* (LMS).



ATA Holiday Party 2013





These photos and many more can be found on the ATA's website at www.arlingtonteachers.com

Dates to Remember

DECEMBER

23-31st—Winter Recess - No School



JANUARY

1st—Winter Recess - No School

7th—School Closing Public Forum 7 p.m., CAO

14th—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., Traver

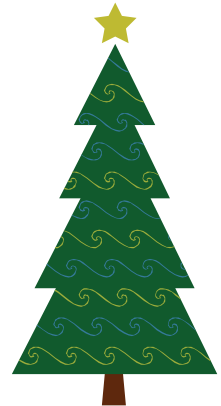
17th—Professional Development Half Day

20th—Martin Luther King Day - No School

21st—ATA Executive Council Meeting, 4 p.m., AHS Room 1432

27-30th—Regents Week

28th—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., CAO



FEBRUARY

1st—Deadline for June 2014 Retirement Decisions

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

14-18th—President's Day Weekend - No School

25th—ATA Executive Council Meeting, 4 p.m., AHS Room 1432

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



Announcements

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

Volunteers are needed to serve dinner at the Lunch Box in Poughkeepsie from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. on January 10 and 13 and February 10 and 14. Please contact Colleen Napora at cnapora@acsdny.org to sign up.

**The staff of
The Educator would
like to wish all ATA
members a happy
and healthy holiday
season.**

PR Chair Needed!

Would you like the opportunity to make a difference in our community? The ATA is in immediate need of a chairperson for our PR committee. Contact the ATA office at ata4547002@aol.com or (845)454-7002 for more information.