



THE EDUCATOR

Newsletter of the Arlington Teachers' Association

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 1

SEPTEMBER 2015

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

APPR Update 2

No changes will occur at Arlington yet this year.

Education Law Q&A

State Ed has not set any details for new requirements yet.

Trivia Challenge

Win ATA gear.

Mid-Hudson Region 3

The ATA met with other locals in the region.

Renegades Night 4

See photos from the summer event.

What's Going On? 6

Member accomplishments are highlighted.

Photographer Needed 7

The ATA is in need of a staff photographer.

Tenure

Congratulations to newly tenured ATA members.

Calendar and Announcements 8



A Word From Our President

As we begin the 2015-16 school year, I am glad to be back with you. I hope you all have enjoyed your summer and are re-charged to take on the challenges of our profession. This time of year

always brings excitement with the return to school. For me it is very special as I have been on the sidelines since February. The 3020-a process that was brought against me is over and I am back to the classroom, and the helm of the ATA. I feel it is incredibly unfortunate how the whole ordeal played out, and it should be a warning to all that we are now facing a new day in Arlington.

I would like to take

this opportunity to thank Greg Nieman, the officers, and the executive board that operated the union in my absence. We have all worked so long together that challenges like this do not upset the operation of

We are currently starting our second year without a contract. We should receive the fact-finder's report in the next few weeks and will continue the negotiating process then, possibly with more mediation sessions.

our great union. It is true, I was never far away, and I spent a good amount of time at the ATA office, but the process would not allow me to be with you. With all of that behind me, I am now back to tackle the challenges that are currently facing

us. Contrary to the accusations of the district that the ATA was not willing to meet with them for negotiations over the summer, Greg and I met with Brendan Lyons to attempt to settle the contract twice in July. We were unsuccessful at coming to a settlement informally. On August 26 Donna Doerrier, the negotiating team and I met again with the district and a mediator in the formal process of fact finding, and we were again unsuccessful at reaching an agreement. We are currently starting our second year without a contract. We should receive the fact-finder's report in the next few weeks and will

See Word on Page 7



ARLINGTON TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION
46 Davis Ave., Poughkeepsie, NY 12603



(845) 454-7002 · www.arlingtonteachers.com · ata4547002@aol.com

APPR Update: Nothing New Yet

Trivia Challenge

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

Where is the best place to go to enjoy some music on Tatoonine?

Submit your answer to the above trivia question to rmchugh@acsdny.org by September 18th. The winner will be randomly selected from the correct submissions.

This past spring Governor Cuomo forced through state legislature another round of onerous teacher evaluation changes. These latest changes bring with them threatening consequences and make teachers even more vulnerable to the effects of high stakes testing. State tests will now account for no less than 50 percent of each teacher's score and these tests will often be even further removed from the control of the

individual teacher being assessed.

These regulations were set to go into effect this November while

As for the upcoming school year, we will begin by operating under the teacher evaluation system we have had in place over the past few years. We will continue to keep you informed as the situation evolves.

the guidelines were to be released this summer. To date, much of this new inane APPR framework remains incomplete. Still, the ATA

has met with the district several times this summer in an effort to ready ourselves to meet these new regulations while protecting our teachers. We discussed many issues such as those pertaining to teacher observation, student performance, and SLO's.

The ATA has also extended invitations to the Administrators' Association, Central Administration, and the Board of Education to join us in a powerful *See APPR on Page 5*

Education Law 3012-d Q&A

Q: I seem to remember that the new education law that was passed last April said something about everyone having to be recertified: do I have to do anything about that?

A: Not yet, but you will. Here is what it says on State Ed's website: "The 2015-2016 New York State Budget added a new provision to the Education Law which requires that, beginning in school year 2016-2017, all holders of teaching certificates, teaching assistance certificates, and educational leadership certificates which are valid for life (Permanent, Professional and Teaching Assistant Level III) register with the Department every five years. . . The deadlines for registration will be determined on a rolling basis and the schedule will be posted on the Office of Teaching Initiatives website, <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/>, later this year. . . The Department will establish regulations prescribing the registration process and the required Continuing Teacher and Leader Education coursework later this year."

Q: Will there be a fee for recertification?

A: The new education law does not state that a fee is required. It does, however, say that a fee will be charged for late registrations. At this time that is all of the information that is available.

Q: Does everyone now have to do a certain amount of professional development to maintain their certification?

A: No. Only those with Professional certificates, not Permanent. Holders of Professional certificates will have to complete 100 hours of professional development every five years to maintain their certificates, down from the previous requirement of 175 hours. The caveat is that it appears that fewer things will count toward those hours, such as faculty meetings. Once again, there are no definitive regulations regarding this yet from State Ed. The ATA will make sure to keep members updated as soon as any information is available.

Mid-Hudson Region Locals Join Forces



Mid-Hudson Regional Staff Director Ann Harrison gives a Power-Point presentation as ATA Community Action Committee Co-Chair Betsy Marshall (right) looks on.

As every good union member knows, our strength is in our numbers. Not only is the ATA powerful because of our 700+ members, but because we are a part of a larger organization, New York State United Teachers (NYSUT). NYSUT, with its 600,000 members, is split into 17 regional offices. The ATA falls under the guidance of the Mid-Hudson Regional Office, which is located in Kingston. There are a total of 42 locals in the Mid-Hudson Region.

NYSUT hosts a number of statewide programs and conferences each year, but with the varying demographics of our large state it can often be more effective to gather only those locals within one region to work together. For that reason NYSUT's Mid-Hudson Regional Office decided to hold its own Action Plan Conference.

On Monday August 24 approximately 10 locals from the

Mid-Hudson region gathered at the Marist Boathouse in Poughkeepsie. President Bob Maier, Chief Negotiator Donna Doerrier, Community Action Committee Co-Chair Betsy Marshall, and Communications Chair Sam Falk represented the ATA. Locals that had participated in NYSUT's Local Action Project (LAP) or Leadership Conference in the past were invited. The ATA took part in the three year LAP program ending in 2012.

The specific purpose of the Regional Action Plan Conference was to review the four principals of LAP: member engagement, community outreach, communication, and political action. "Reinvigorating our lo-

icals is good for our communities," stated NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist (LRS) Mark Dwyer. "Help us infect the other locals who aren't here right now," added LRS Jeff Benton.

The day started with a guided self-reflection by individual locals, considering questions such as "how healthy is your local?" and "what is the biggest challenge facing your local?". After lunch Benton led a discussion on the importance of labor organizations. With all of the challenges facing the teaching profession today, and with additional challenges looming in the future, it is a necessity that we are able to work together.

To that end, the Mid-Hudson Regional Office would like to organize a region-wide event in the next few months. The goals of this event would be two-fold: to show both ourselves and the general public that we are able to work together. Be on the lookout for an announcement about a region-wide community service event soon. We will need all ATA members to take part.

-Sam Falk, editor



ATA President Bob Maier, Chief Negotiator Donna Doerrier (right), and Community Action Committee Co-Chair Betsy Marshall reflect on the strength of our association.



The YMCA was popular with the children in attendance.



AHS English teachers Mike Reiter (left) and Dan Pitt bring their families every year.



All-you-can-eat food and drinks were appreciated by all.

On August 7 ATA members gathered at Dutchess Stadium in Beacon for the 5th Annual ATA Night at the Renegades, and for the second year in a row the weather was perfectly clear. The evening included post-game fireworks along with some great baseball.



L-R: Betsy Marshall (TRP), Kathie Blank Cicala (LMS), and NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist Kathy Schwartz enjoyed the night.

Photos by Sam Falk



Beekman Gives Back

The following is a snapshot of the great works achieved at just one of Arlington's elementary schools throughout a single year. This description of their generosity in the 2014-2015 school year can serve as a source of inspiration for all of Arlington in this new school year.

Beekman Elementary School gives back to the local and global community every year. A group of students help set up some of the activities through the Helping Hands Club under the direction of Christine LaGuardia. Others are also adult coordinated. The involvement of the Beekman School community throughout the year is strong.

In October the children collect change for the Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF to benefit children in need around the world. Later in the year some children also made bookmarks as part of a literacy challenge through Students Rebuild. For each bookmark they made, \$1 was donated to promote literacy in Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

Veterans are the focus in November and in late spring. Students write letters thanking veterans for their service, and the fifth grade collects toiletries and household products for a

walk for the homeless veterans.

In December children donate toys to the Make a Wish Foundation in honor of their teachers.

Throughout the year children participate in fundraising walks on the school track to benefit organizations. This year they walked for Sparrow's Nest, Max it Out, and Cystic

Beekman reaches out beyond its walls to make a difference throughout the year.

Fibrosis. The latter two were in honor of children attending Beekman.

Breast Cancer Awareness is a staff event in October where teachers raise money by donating feathers in their hair. Children raise money through the annual Kickball for Life event every June. The funds this year helped a local family in need and added to the Relay for Life event at the High School.

We participate in more than just the district Cram the Classroom food collection. There are other collections. Blankets, towels and pet food are collected for the SPCA by the after school program. A group of Girl

Scouts, working on their bronze award, collected used backpacks to recycle for needy families. One group of children independently collected lightly used stuffed animals to give to a children's organization.

The Beekman Garden Club plants and tends vegetables through the spring and families volunteer to help out over the summer. Some of the produce is donated to a local food bank. Some produce was delivered to a particular family we knew to be in need.

Even through persuasive writing students are thinking of others. A group of environmentally minded students have worked toward building bat houses to protect an endangered species. A kindergarten class has argued to have the swings lowered to benefit the younger children in our community.

A group of students sang the National Anthem at a Renegades game this summer, using their voices to honor our country.

Beekman reaches out beyond its walls to make a difference throughout the year.

-Lynn Grainger (BES)

No Changes to Arlington's APPR Process Yet

Continued from Page 2
unified coalition to lobby local state legislators to repeal or alter these recent punitive APPR statutes.

As for the upcoming school year, we will begin by operating

under the teacher evaluation system we have had in place over the past few years. We will continue to keep you informed as the situation evolves.

Enjoy the opening of another school year and thank you for all

you do for the children of our community. As always, it is our honor to represent you.

-Greg Nieman, 1st Vice President

2015—2016 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

Kristine Jackson

Community Action Chairs

Betsy Marshall

Robert McHugh

Welfare Trust Chair

Ron Higgins

Media Specialist

Sam Falk

Éminence Grise Emeritus

Robert McHugh

Senior Building Representatives

ASM — Johanna Pungello

BES — William Mueller

NES — Nicolle McMorris

VFES — Pam Goetz

OPS — Nancy Thomas

Traver — Diana Judge

JDWR — Chris Greco

TIS — Sue Ramsden

LMS — Carmine Anastasio

LMS — Steve Bronzi

UVMS — Jim DeBonis

AHS — John Filor

AHS — Noreen Mills Martin

What's Going On?



Photo by Greg Nieman

Edcamp Hudson Valley

The ATA was a proud sponsor of the 2015 Edcamp Hudson Valley that took place at Poughkeepsie Day School on August 31. Over 100 ATA members attended the “unconference”. Pictured are those who took part in a class on public speaking taught by AHS English teacher Eric Buergers.

“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 dedication to seeking out professional development opportunities over the summer:

On September 3 math and science teachers **Louis Astorino, Cindy Binnie, Dale Corzine, Adrienne deMare, Kirk Dornton, Jacob Lawrence, Maribel Pregnall, and Gwen Saylor** (AHS); **Jesse Borle, and Stephen Bronzi**, (LMS); and **Karen Cunningham, Suzanne Gillian, Jessica Schoenberg, and Maureen Van Ackooy** (UVMS) visited

the Indian Point Energy Center in Buchanan, NY. They spent the day learning about the pros and cons of nuclear power while touring the inner workings of the power plant.

AHS Library Media Specialist **Lucy Miller** participated in the Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources Summer Teacher Institute from August 3-7. The session was a special Civil Rights Institute that focused on items in the Library’s collection that support teaching about civil rights struggles throughout American history. All educators can access teaching materials from the Library’s site at www.loc.gov/teachers.

UVMS foreign language teacher **Christine Miroff** took part in the Fulbright-Hays Group Study Abroad program Partners in Education: Working Together to Enhance the Teaching of Latin America. She traveled to Cusco, Peru from July 5 to August 16 as

part of a group of 15 educators with the goals of developing intercultural competence and knowledge of Latin American culture. A blog of her experiences can be found at christinemi-roff.blogspot.com.

AHS special education teachers **Colleen Napora** and **Michelle Nicolas** attended the Arthur and Rochelle Belfer National Conference for Educators at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum from July 15-17. At the conference, Museum educators and scholars shared rationales, strategies, and approaches for teaching about the Holocaust. Participants had the opportunity to tour the Museum’s Permanent Exhibition, as well as the special exhibitions *Remember the Children: Daniel’s Story* and *Some Were Neighbors: Collaboration & Complicity in the Holocaust*, and to explore the Museum’s full range of resources.

Photographer Needed

Are you looking to become more involved with the ATA, but aren't sure how? Here is your chance—the ATA is in need of a photographer.

This stipended position is perfect for someone who enjoys attending ATA events and taking photos. Ideally, the official photographer should be someone who has a stand-alone camera with an external flash since camera phones do not typically take good indoor photos.

The ATA's photographer is required to document the annual children's holiday party, mini-golf outing, and recognition dinner, though photographing other events would be desirable also. Photos appear in the ATA's newsletter, Facebook page, and web page and help us to mark memorable events, but also to show the public the great things that we do.

Interested candidates should contact ataupdate@gmail.com.

A Word From Our President

Continued from Front
continue the negotiating process then, possibly with more mediation sessions.

Moving forward, we will continue to fight for a fair settlement, and without success we will be asking you to become more active. I understand that you are all burdened with the new initiatives in your classrooms, but now is the time to organize our strength to be treated fairly. We can only hope an agreement is not far away. When the fact finding report comes we hope that we can resolve our disagreements about salary and benefits and put this behind us. Until that time comes please remain vigilant in your efforts to be the outstanding professionals that we are and to stand up for fair treatment.

Once again I have to say, I am glad to be back with you, and back with our students. Every few years it seems I have a serious challenge that faces me and my family. I have to thank you all

When the fact finding report comes we hope that we can resolve our disagreements about salary and benefits and put this behind us. Until that time comes please remain vigilant in your efforts to be the outstanding professionals that we are and to stand up for fair treatment.

for the continued support. The cards, notes, and emails that I received from so many of you were heartwarming. As my nightmare unfolded, I was always reassured that so many of you had my back. I appreciate the fact that you believe in me, and not the accusations that were brought against me. What happened to me was unfortunate, but we must move forward.

-Bob Maier, ATA President

Congratulations to Newly Tenured ATA Members

Elementary

Beekman

Christina Gibson, Christine LaGuardia

Noxon

Alicia Jazayeri

Overlook

Allison Longbard

Traver Road

Eric Tarsia, Cristina VanderWoude

West Road

Hildegard Cioffi

Middle

LaGrange

Sucheta Baichwal, Margaret Eschbach,

Mary Tetreault, Melody Wolff

Union Vale

Amanda Clemenza, Christine Miroff,

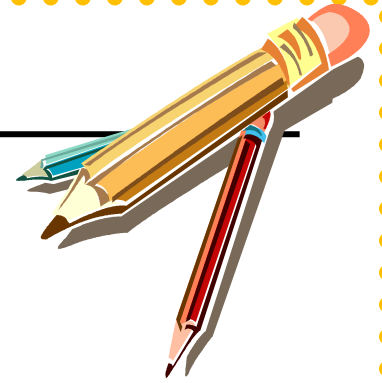
Kathleen Spinelli

High School

Julie Pineau-Kelsey, Alia Reynolds,

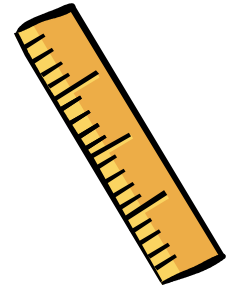
Aidan Topley

Dates to Remember



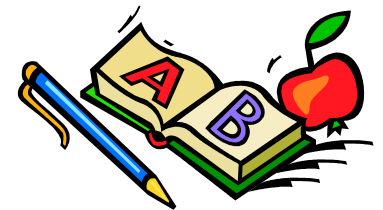
SEPTEMBER

- 8th—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., CAO
- 10th—NYS Primary Elections
- 14th—Rosh Hashanah—No School
- 15th—ATA Executive Council Session, 4 p.m., AHS room 1432
- 17th—Middle School Open House
- 21st—Flex Benefit Plans Meetings, 3 p.m. and 4 p.m., AHS room 1436
- 22nd—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., CAO
- 23rd—Yom Kippur—No School



OCTOBER

- 1st—Deadline to submit information for graduate or inservice credit
Deadline for using 2014-2015 Welfare Trust Benefits
High School Open House
- 9th—Professional Development Half Day
- 12th—Columbus Day—No School
- 13th—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., CAO
- 20th—ATA Executive Council Session, 4 p.m., AHS room 1432



Announcements

The Educator needs you!

Would you like to see more information about *your* school in here? We need your help in gathering information to print! Let us know about the great things ATA members do at your school by emailing Sam Falk at sfalk@acsdny.org.

Volunteers are needed to serve dinner at the Lunch Box in Poughkeepsie from 4 - 6 p.m. on September 11 and 14 and October 9 and 12. Contact Colleen Napora at AHS to sign

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