



THE EDUCATOR

Newsletter of the Arlington Teachers' Association

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FEBRUARY 2016

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Challenges Loom On the Horizon

ATA President Bob Maier's 2016 State of the Union Address

As we work our way through the 2015-16 school year, there are many challenges on the horizon. Each year I take this opportunity to report to our members the status of what we have accomplished, and what lies ahead.

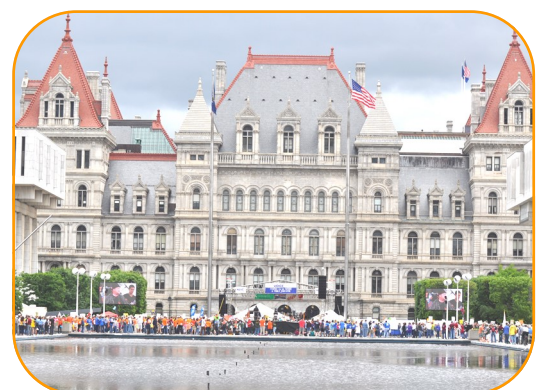
As 2015 drew to a close we were fortunate to settle our contract. This had been a two year struggle, and we are glad to have that in our past. The settlement brought us a new direction in our health care, but this change has gone fairly smoothly. I know we have had spots of diffi-

culty, and we continue to work through issues, but when you consider that we transitioned 700 working families, and over 400 retirees,

know if you are having any difficulty, as we can work those out rather quickly.

What we face on the horizon is somewhat troubling. If you don't follow national news about the union movement, I want to bring you up to speed on a case that just went to the Supreme Court. On Monday, January 11, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments for *Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association*, a case that challenges agency fee payments collected by public sector unions. Agency fee payments See Challenges on Page 7

I don't bring these two issues to you to incite fear, rather I want to inform you of what we face in the near and not too distant future.



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



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

Trivia Challenge

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

In what year did New York State last hold a Constitutional Convention?

Last month's winner, selected at random from among the correct responses received, was **Kim Paesano** from Beekman Elementary. She correctly identified **February 1966** as the date of the first Festivus celebration. She will be the proud owners of ATA gear.

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 February 12th. The winner will be randomly selected from the correct submissions.

Annual SPCA Drive Has Begun

In 2010 the ATA and community lost a dear friend and life-long supporter with the passing of Jackie Higgins. Jackie had been the ATA Administrative Assistant for many years, but she was so much more than that to anyone who knew her. Jackie was an ever-positive person who made the ATA office feel like a home. Visitors were welcomed and greeted as though walking through a family member's door. Even hearing Jackie's voice on the phone was enough to warm the heart of any caller. Though she was not an ATA member, Jackie dedicated her life to our union's cause and its membership. She is dearly missed!

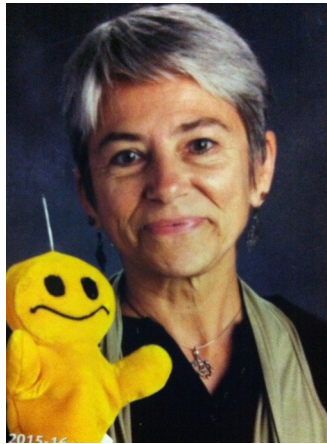
Jackie loved animals, and so we are proud to honor her memory through the 6th Annual Jackie Higgins Memorial SPCA drive. This is an annual fundraising event that helps us remember Jackie and support a cause she held dear. Starting now we will be collecting donations for the Dutchess County SPCA. Below is a list of items the DCSPCA can use. Monetary donations are also welcome and appreciated. If you choose to give money, please make your check out to DCSPCA. All donations (both monetary and non-monetary) are tax-deductible. Items to donate include:

- *Brand Named Dry Dog Food
- *Brand Named Dry Cat Food
- *Non-clumping kitty litter
- *Clean, dry towels and blankets
- *Long handled scrub brushes
- *Paper Towels
- *Bleach
- *Laundry detergent
- *Hoses and hose nozzles
- *Cake-sized paper plates

Please place your donations in the boxes labeled "Jackie Higgins SPCA Drive." The drive will run from now through March 1, 2016.

-Kristine Jackson, PR Chair

ATA Member of the Month: Siouzzanne Harris



I started working for the Arlington School district 17 years ago. I started the elementary class for children with Autism at Traver Road School and I am still there today. Before coming to Traver I taught at the Children's Annex in Kingston for 10 years. Coming to a public school meant lots of changes for me- the biggest change was joining the Teacher's Union! I wanted to learn as much as possible about the union and the contract and decided that the best way to do that was to become involved. I spoke with my union rep, Clare Hubbard, and started attending meetings. Then I became a building rep for Traver. When Clare retired, I became the senior rep and I have been involved ever since. I joined several committees to really get more deeply involved; I have been part of the Health and Safety Committee, and volunteered for election time phone calls. When Yvonne Alexander (the long time Union Photographer) retired in 2007 she asked me to temporarily fill her shoes until a replacement was found—I remained the union photographer until just this year when I finally stepped down. I was fascinated by the negotiation team's reports on working towards a contract settlement under past superintendent Frank Pepe, so when an opening in that committee became available I expressed an interest in that and was chosen to help out. I have now helped negotiate three contracts! I became a delegate for the Teachers Retirement System and attend annual meetings in Saratoga. I also became involved in the Welfare Trust because I wanted to know more about the great benefits our union offers its members. I love working with my colleagues and getting involved with such a strong team. Our union is one of the best around and I am proud to be an active member!

-TRPS special education teacher Siouzzanne Harris on why she volunteers with the ATA

ARLINGTON *Team Hope*

The 9th Annual Gift of HOPE dress down day will be taking place on March 18th. HOPE stands for Helping Others Pursue Education. For the past 10 years college scholarships have been awarded to over 120 students in the Arlington School District who have suffered the loss of a parent or guardian at some point in their academic endeavors. We currently have 35 graduating seniors who are eligible to receive a scholarship.

Along with our new design we have also decided to continue our tradition of a March Madness basketball tournament. This is an evening filled with fun and excitement that will involve the entire district. We will have food available from 4:30pm throughout the entire evening.

Doors will open at 4:30pm on March 18th at Arlington High School. Introductions will begin at 6:00pm, with tip-off at 6:30pm. Admission will be \$5.00, or \$3.00 for anyone wearing HOPE apparel!

Order forms will be collected no later than February 15th. Forms will be available at each school. Please send orders to Marc Provost at AHS through interoffice mail. Cash or checks accepted.

Checks can be made payable to: **Gift of HOPE**
Sent to: **Arlington High School (Attention Marc Provost)**
1157 Route 55, LaGrangeville, NY 12540

All of the proceeds will benefit the students of Arlington High School. Please show your support by ordering a shirt and wearing it on the day of March Madness. All of your continued support and cooperation with this great cause is appreciated. Thank you for your generosity.

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Next Level #6010
Tri-Blend T-shirt
Vintage Black



Next Level Unisex #6051
Tri-Blend 3/4 Sleeve Raglan
Heather Gray / Vintage Black



ALO Sport #M3101
Triblend Hooded Pullover
Longsleeve T-shirt
Heather Charcoal



Authic Pigment #Ap207
10.5 oz 100% Premium Cotton
Washed Black Charcoal



*Logo printed on front in colors black and light blue

NAME: _____ SCHOOL: _____

Check or cash for my shirt order is enclosed in the amount of \$ _____

Email: _____ Phone Number: _____

I would like to additionally donate \$ _____ to "The Gift of HOPE" (optional)

I Need a Day Off!

Everyone needs a day off now and then, whether it is because of illness, professional development, or to attend to personal matters. A wide variety of reasons are given as options in the AESOP system. Here is a guide to when some of these can be used.

Article XV, Section A of the ATA contract states that all ATA members are given 15 working days each year, at full pay, for leave because of a "personal illness and for illness or death of concern to the staff member." Unused days are accumulated without limit. Members who have completed one full year of teaching at Arlington are also eligible to make use of the Sick Bank if they run out of their personal sick days. Anyone with questions about the Sick Bank should contact Debbie Fealey at AHS.

Article XVI, Section A of the ATA contract provides paid leave for a maximum of 10 days per school year for persons called into temporary active duty with any unit of the U.S. Military Reserves or National Guard, provided that such obligations cannot be fulfilled on days when school is not in session.

Article XVI, Section D of the ATA contract states that each teacher shall be allowed up to two days of leave for transacting or attending to "urgent, personal matters, such as cannot be performed at a time other than during school hours." It also states that this leave "shall not be used to extend vacations or holidays or for any recreational or entertainment purposes." Use of personal days requires that up to three school days notice be given to your principal. One unused personal day can be carried over to the next year for a total of three. Any other unused personal days are converted to sick days.

Article VI, Section C of the ATA contract allows for members who are designated by the ATA to attend meetings and conferences of organizations that the ATA is affiliated with, such as NYSUT's Representative Assembly. There are limitations to how and when this can be used.

Absence Reason

Time

Please enter a valid time range using the HH:MM AM format.

Notes to Administrator

(not viewable by Substitute)

255 character(s)

No specific number of allowable bereavement days are allotted in the ATA contract, but they are charged to the member's accrued bank of sick days.

In accordance with state law, the District will provide employees with up to four hours of paid leave (not charged to the employee's sick time) for the purpose of obtaining breast and/or prostate cancer screening. If you intend to obtain this cancer screening during your normal work hours, you must complete a form found under the Human Resources section of the district web page and bring the form to your screening facility.

Article XVI, Section F of the ATA contract states that the district will grant leave without the loss of pay for jury duty provided that teachers provide a copy of their notice to appear to the district in advance.

Article XVI, Section A of the ATA contract states that teachers shall be entitled to one day for "religious reasons which require absence during school hours."

Article XV, Section A of the ATA contract states that "whenever a teacher is absent from school as a result of personal injury caused by an accident or an assault occurring in the course of his/her employment . . . no part of such absence shall be charged to his/her annual or accumulated sick leave, but in no case longer than one year."



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 — shared

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 School

Math and Computer Science teacher Dawn Orlik was recently chosen by

former student Sam Price to be honored as part of the Outstanding Undergraduate Scholar award that he is receiving from the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT). Recipients of that award are given the opportunity to acknowledge a teacher who has had a profound influence on their career or a special meaning in their life. Orlik will be joining Price (all expenses paid) at the recognition event on April 7.

Beekman Elementary

Last summer 3rd grade teacher Lynn Granger joined the National Board Council of New York faculty. This group

of 14 National Board Certified Teachers from across the state began to create courses for teachers to hone leadership skills. The work began in July and is on-going with support from Dr. Jill Berg, the Director of Leadership Support and Organizational Learning at Teachers21 in Boston.

The first of these 15-hour courses, Facilitating Teams, will be launched this spring in pilot sites throughout the state. In this course, participants will build skills and practice strategies for:

- Strengthening team culture

See Members on Page 7

Tax Season is Upon Us Once Again

Dues Deductions for the Calendar Year 2015 for:

Full Time Teachers Who Were Employed In All Of 2015

| <u>Payment Option</u> | <u>Amount of Union Dues Deducted</u> |
|-----------------------|--|
| 6 Payments | \$871.88 |
| 15 Payments | \$920.19 *This applies to most members |

Full Time Teachers Who Started In September 2015

| <u>Payment Option</u> | <u>Amount of Union Dues Deduction</u> |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 15 Payments | \$407.05 |

Please note: ALL full time teachers pay the same ATA dues. Numbers are different due to number of payments and the fact that the dues structure changes school year to school year. The dues structure is based upon the school year and not on the calendar year.

Some members who are part time may pay a reduced amount of dues. Part time ATA members should use the value from their December 23 check stub. There are fewer than 10 members that this affects and I will email each of them to let them know.

Check your pay stub from the last paycheck in December (12/23/15- Deductions column, Y-T-D, DUES ATA) for your exact amount, as well as other potential tax deductions. Check with your tax preparation professional to discuss union dues and other work related tax deductions.

-Steve Hertzog, 2nd Vice President

Challenges Loom On the Horizon

Continued from Front
 are a charge that unions can levy to individuals who wish to not pay dues, nor join the union. This charge would be similar to the cost of dues for all of the services and benefits that the union provides to their members. Currently the ATA does not have any individuals who elect to be an agency fee payer rather than a member. The outcome of the *Friedrichs* case could threaten the future of public sector unions across the nation by decimating their solidarity and finances.

In brief, the plaintiffs in *Friedrichs* contend collective bargaining is a form of political activity and want the Court to allow workers represented by unions to become "free riders", meaning they would not have to pay any dues or fees despite the fact their salary, health coverage, and retirement protections are secured through union representation. In a 1977 Supreme Court ruling in the case of *Aboud v. Detroit Board of Education*, the Court upheld the right of public sector unions to require the payment of dues by workers represented in collective bargaining; many current state laws on the issue are based on this nearly 40 year old

ruling. The Court will issue their ruling on the *Friedrichs* case sometime before the close of its session in June. We all hold our breath of how this could be decided.

Further off on the horizon is also a referendum on the November 2017 ballot in New York State. What I am referring to is the opportunity for New York to hold a State Constitutional Con-

Our educational system is based in our State Constitution, as is our pension system. The real fear is that if we move to a convention, all parts of the State Constitution are subject to change.

vention. New York's first Constitution was written in 1777 before the United States was formed as a country. Since then we have had three other Constitutions written, including the current one that was completed in 1937. The concern again lies in the details. Our educational system is based in our State Constitution, as is our pension system. The real fear is that if we move to a convention, all parts of the State Constitution are subject to change. Please don't get me wrong, I believe the Constitution should be an evolving document, but to change a single part can be done with an Amendment. A

convention will allow many special interests the opportunity to wholesale change the document that protects our profession and our pensions.

I don't bring these two issues to you to incite fear, rather I want to inform you of what we face in the near and not too distant future. The *Friedrichs* case will be decided before the summer, and the referendum will be on the ballot of November 2017 as we are required to vote on the convention every 20 years. As these issues unfold, we will do our best to keep you informed. We will definitely be looking for your support to address the ballot issue in 2017.

As I write this article, it always amazes me that this year is half over today. We work so hard on a day-to-day basis, we sometimes lose sight of the passage of time at such a brisk pace. I am always impressed of the individual efforts of you all every day. I am truly honored to lead this organization, and to have your support. The ATA leadership remains at the ready to support you in any way we can. On behalf of the ATA officers and negotiating team, have a wonderful 2016.

-Bob Maier, ATA President

ATA Members Contribute To Their Communities

Continued from Page 6

- Cultivating effective teamwork
- Collaborating to address problems of practice

Information about the pilot courses will be available in the next few weeks.

Union Vale Middle

Special Education teacher Karen Sipperly once again organized the annual trivia competition that benefits the Red Hook Library. Each year many Arlington teachers compete in the charity event. This year it was

held on January 31.

Vail Farm

Speech-Language Pathologist Bonnie Glick organized the Student Council's second annual blood drive on January 21.

Dates to Remember

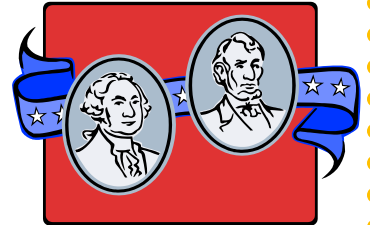


FEBRUARY

- 9th—Board of Education Meeting: Budget Workshop, 7 p.m., VFE
- 15th—President's Day - No School
- 16th—ATA Executive Council Meeting, 4 p.m., AHS Room 1432
- 20th—Math, Science, and Technology Fair, 8:30 a.m. - 12 p.m., AHS
- 23rd—Board of Education Meeting: 7 p.m., CAO

MARCH

- 8th—Board of Education Meeting: 7 p.m., JDWR
- 11th—Professional Development Half Day
- 15th—ATA Executive Council Meeting, 4 p.m., AHS Room 1432
- 18th—Gift of HOPE Basketball Tournament, 4:30 p.m., AHS
- 21—25th—Spring Break
- 29th—Board of Education Meeting: 7 p.m., OPS



Announcements

In the event that Arlington does not use up all of its allotted snow days, please be aware that all unused snow days will be given back, although only the dates for the first three “give-back” days are on the calendar. The contractual school year for teachers is 182 days long.

Here are the published “give-back” days:

- 1st Day - Friday, April 29
- 2nd Day - Friday, April 22
- 3rd Day - Thursday, May 26

Volunteers are needed to serve dinner at the Lunch Box in Poughkeepsie from 4—6 p.m. on February 8 and 12. Contact Colleen Napora at AHS to sign up.

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