



# THE EDUCATOR

Newsletter of the Arlington Teachers' Association

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## Survey Says...

Back in January all Arlington employees received an email with a link to complete an employee engagement survey. The email explained that, "This survey is part of the District's commitment to fostering two-way communication, collaboration, transparency, and a positive work environment."

As of this writing, the survey results have not been shared with most teachers, though principals and some building-level team members have been privy to them. The rest of us should be able to view the long-awaited results sometime during the last week of school.

Really though, we already know what the survey analysis will show.

Some school buildings will have expressed the sentiment more strongly than others, but generally we work well with our fellow ATA members, and feel that our voices are not

*Will the release of survey data help to engender a new era of respect and trust between all levels of district employees? Well, as the saying goes, the first step to recovery is admitting that you have a problem.*

heard by district administration. Will the release of survey data help to engender a new era of respect and trust between all levels of district employees? Well, as the saying goes, the first step to recovery is admitting that you have a problem.

In the meantime, we have our ATA brothers

and sisters to get us through the day. We lean on each other when we have a difficult time in the classroom, or a dispiriting meeting about grading practices. In addition, ATA leadership is there for us if we have employment issues such as a dispute about the use of a personal day, or the threat of a letter being put in our file over a disagreement with a principal.

With that in mind, I have no doubt that the ATA will continue to have 100% membership, even if the looming Janus decision requires resigning members yearly. We stand together in the face of challenges from both within the district, and without.

-Sam Falk,  
ATA Communications Chair



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## Trivia Challenge

Last month's winner, selected at random from among the correct responses received, was **Liz Dunn** from AHS. She correctly identified **propane** as the type of fuel Arlington started transitioning its buses to in 2016. She will be the proud owner of ATA gear.

Be sure to look for the next trivia challenge in September and you could win ATA gear too!

# APPR Efforts Stall

Over the last few months there was some momentum amongst NYSUT and its local affiliates towards getting the state government to alleviate the testing component of APPR. Many members of the New York state assembly and the New York state senate were supportive of our efforts and a bill to that end passed the Assembly and is in the Senate. Your phone calls, emails and letters worked to great effect, so thank you for your efforts.

Unfortunately, the senate president, John Flanagan, has decided not to

call for a vote on that bill. Flanagan's reasoning is that the bill could, as he sees it, erase gains that have been made in education under the APPR process, and time needs to be taken to sort out all of the issues related to teacher evaluation.

Flanagan also champions his past work on the education committee. We all know that there has been plenty of time to overhaul the entire system and we have seen how disastrous the APPR process is for our schools. As a former member of the education committee,

Flanagan should be aware of the real challenges that face public education and be willing to help. To further stall the process, Flanagan recently introduced his own bill that would eliminate state testing as a component of APPR. Unfortunately, his bill also calls for a large increase in the number of charter schools. The state senate will likely pass the bill, but it will not pass the state assembly so we will be stuck in the same abysmal system for at least another year.

-Brendan Lawler,  
ATA CAC Co-chair

# Membership Drive Continues

By now most, if not all, of our ATA members have been approached by another member to re-sign with the Arlington Teachers' Association. As the Supreme Court is due to provide a ruling on the Janus vs. AFSME case any day, we are working preemptively to re-sign our members in the event the court will require it.

This case has taken national attention to the realm of organized labor. What is at stake is whether a union can charge dues for someone who does not want to join. First I would ask, why would someone not want to join? The ATA and NYSUT provide a superior level of benefits and protection of our working conditions and salaries. Specifically, the ATA provides benefits that far outweigh the cost of our dues, mainly through the welfare

trust, representation by the officers day-to-day, and collective bargaining of contracts.

Up until now, a member who chose not to join could become an "agency fee" payer. What this means is that you would be charged the same amount as dues, but would not be a member. We are forecasting that this will be reversed, and individuals would be able to become a "free rider". This means an individual would be afforded most of the contractual benefits and salary without paying dues. Currently all members of the professional faculty are members who pay dues to the ATA, NYSUT, and the AFT/NEA. Thank you for this.

With the ruling, would this change? I do not believe so. As I have had many conversations with members across

the district, we, the ATA, are a strong local, and our level of commitment proves that. As we compare with our neighbors, and those across the state, we are fortunate to have what we have. The years of work by our predecessors, and the continued service from the organization today is a testament to the importance of our union. Either on an individual basis, or as a collective, the ATA is here to support our members, and ensure we are treated fairly in our profession. This re-signing exercise should be the extent of our effort to continue as a vital organization in the Arlington Central School District. Please let any ATA officer or building representative know if you have any questions or concerns.

-Bob Maier, ATA President

# Summer Brings Mandatory Mail Order Prescriptions

There has been much conversation, and many questions about the Dutchess Educational Health Insurance Consortium's (DEHIC) decision to mandate mail order for maintenance medications. Many of you know I am a trustee on the DEHIC board, and I was a part of this decision that was made. There is no secret, the cost of pharmaceuticals are skyrocketing. To mandate mail order was an attempt to save money on the premium for both our members and the plan.

Both the Arlington district and Empire Blue Cross distributed information that explains how to enroll in the mail order program. If you or a dependent is on a maintenance drug (a drug every month over the year,) we will be asking you to transfer to mail order with Express Scripts. What this means is with either a phone call with the number on your insurance card, or online at EmpireBlue.com, one can

sign up for home delivery of medications. If you have difficulty doing so, please contact me at the ATA office, and I would be glad to walk



you through the process, or you can call the customer service number on your insurance card.

We understand that this has caused significant push-back by folks who enjoy their local pharmacy. To that end we have been working with many local pharmacies to contact Express Scripts provider services, and they can be af-

forded an opportunity to join their network as a point of service in-network. Recently both Pine Plains Pharmacy, and McCarthy's Pharmacy in Stanfordville, have signed up to be considered in-network, and members can continue to use them for their maintenance drugs.

If you have a neighborhood pharmacy that you frequent, and would like this opportunity too, please ask the pharmacist to contact provider services at Express Scripts. If they need support on this end, I would suggest they contact Pine Plains or McCarthy's for support in completing this process. As I understand at this time, chain stores like CVS, Rite Aid, and Walgreens, are not interested in participating. Please let me know if this is incorrect.

Thank you for your patience in this process. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

-Bob Maier, ATA President



Have you reserved your tickets yet for ATA Night at the Renegades?

If not, an order form can be printed at <http://www.arlingtonteachers.com/renegadeflyer.pdf> and sent with a check to the ATA office through interoffice mail.

Don't miss out on the fun on July 12!

## Summer Hours

*The ATA officers are still there for members over the summer. While the office will not be physically open, President Bob Maier checks the ATA's email and voicemail a few times a week in July and August. Messages can be left at 845-454-7002 or [ata4547002@aol.com](mailto:ata4547002@aol.com).*



# Retirees Say Goodbye

The ATA's annual recognition dinner was held on Friday, June 15, at Christos in Poughkeepsie. Twelve 2018 retirees were honored. Many more photos of the event can be found at [www.arlingtonteachers.com](http://www.arlingtonteachers.com).

**Brian Battistoni**– 32 yrs with Arlington  
*Arlington High, Math*

I would like to express my sincerest thanks to the ATA leadership over my career, in particular to Bob Maier and to Ron Higgins, for all of their collective hard work on behalf of students and teachers in the Arlington Central School District.

**Michelle Berner**– 14 yrs with Arlington  
*Arlington High, Library Media Specialist*

My family and I are grateful for the hard work and leadership of our ATA. Thank you!

**Sarah Combs**– 10 yrs with Arlington  
*Arlington High, Drama*

I greatly admire the dedication, humor and passion of my fellow colleagues. I will miss everyone and wish them good health and happiness in the coming years.



UVMS educators turned out to congratulate retiree Dawn Martell (second from right).

**Nancy Diehl**– 32 yrs with Arlington  
*LaGrange Middle, Math*

I feel very fortunate to have experienced a rewarding career as an educator in Arlington. While there are many things that I'll miss about teaching, I'll miss my colleagues the most.

**Dawn Martell**– 33 yrs with Arlington  
*Union Vale Middle, Math*

I am very fortunate to have spent my entire career teaching



Ernie Verdis

**Pat Haverkamp**– 24 yrs with Arlington  
*Overlook Primary, Reading Specialist*

I would like to thank the Arlington District and community for their support in making my career happy and fulfilling. I wish all of my colleagues success as you pursue educating the future generation! Happy Reading!

**Susan Jordhamo**– 22 yrs with Arlington  
*Union Vale Middle, Science*

I feel lucky to have spent most of my career in Arlington working with a team and department that are undeniably exceptional and always ready for the next adventure.



Carol McCord





**Liz Dunn (left), and Theresa Daleo-Stock are the organizers of the ATA's recognition dinner.**

eighth grade math in the Arlington School District, beginning in the mid 1980s at Arlington Middle School and moving to Union Vale Middle School when it opened. I have had the honor of teaching with so many brilliant, talented, enthusiastic and hilarious colleagues -- many of whom have become my closest friends. We have done our best to maximize the educational experiences to the thousands of students that we have shared.

I am truly grateful for the work that the ATA has done over the years to support Arlington teachers and ensure that we have the best possible working conditions. Thank you also to the many teachers, administrators and staff that have accompanied and supported me on this wild ride. I look forward to the many adventures that retirement will bring. I look forward to hearing about all the good you all will do for years to come.

**Carol McCord**– 16 yrs with Arlington  
*Arlington High, Health*

I would like to thank all my colleagues for being an integral part of my teaching career. I feel so blessed to have had you all in

my life. To my AMS family, I will all remember all the great times we had together, those memories will be with me forever. To my new AHS family, I've truly enjoyed working with you. Thank you for the guidance and support these past four years. I will fondly remember the many new friendships I have made and your kindness. It has been a wonderful experience and I will deeply miss you all.

**Suzanne Ramsden**– 25 yrs with Arlington  
*Titusville Intermediate, 5th Grade*

My career in Arlington has been very fulfilling. Everyday I look forward to coming to work to be with my students and colleagues. I will miss my Arlington family but you will remain in my heart forever.

**Lucy Relyea**– 26 yrs with Arlington  
*Union Vale Middle, Social Studies*

Over the past 26 years, during my time as a guidance counselor and teacher, I had the opportunity to visit all of the schools in the Arlington Central School District. It has been a pleasure getting to know the many students, parents, teachers and school staff in this community. After spending



33 years in Education, I leave Arlington with many wonderful memories and wish you all the best.

**Kathleen Tuckruskye**– 26 yrs with Arlington  
*Arthur S. May School, Reading Specialist*

**Ernie Verdis**– 30 yrs with Arlington  
*Union Vale Middle, Social Studies*

-All photos by Kathleen Vogt



**While AHS math teacher Brian Battistoni is retiring, his wife, Leslie, will continue in her role as the ATA's office secretary.**

**2017 — 2018  
ATA Officers**

- President**  
Bob Maier
- First Vice-President**  
Greg Nieman
- Second Vice-President**  
Steve Hertzog
- Treasurer**  
Dave Cordella
- Chief Negotiator**  
Robert McHugh
- PR Committee Chair**  
Kristine Jackson
- Community Action Co-Chairs**  
Brendan Lawler  
Betsy Marshall
- Welfare Trust Chair**  
Ron Higgins
- Communications Chair**  
Sam Falk
- Senior Building Representatives**  
ASM — Erica Dunn  
BES — William Mueller  
NES — Nicolle McMorris  
VFES — Gwen Moschetto  
OPS — Nancy Thomas  
Traver — Diana Judge  
JDWR — Chris Greco  
TIS — Sue Ramsden  
LMS — Kevin Walsh  
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](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 School**

Social Studies teacher Lauren Collet-Gildard co-authored a research article titled "Global climate change in U.S. high school curricula: Portrayals of the causes, consequences, and potential responses." It was published in the March 2018 issue of the Wiley journal *Science Online*.

Science teacher Gwen Saylor was awarded a HealthQuest Taconic IPA Science Education Grant through the Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley. According to their website, the Taconic grant is designed to "fund teachers to expand learning in the sciences through acquisition of classroom and laboratory science equipment in Dutchess, Orange and Ulster counties."

**Vail Farm Elementary**

First grade teacher Janet Will and K-2 self-



Photo courtesy of Taconic Region PTA

**Beekman Elementary**

Physical Education teacher David Ostrander was recently selected as the Taconic Region PTA's 2018 teacher of the year. He is seen here with New York State PTA President Gracemarie Rozea (left) and Taconic Region PTA's regional director Karen Quimby (right).

contained teacher Jennifer Sullivan have led their student council in several events in June. On June 2 they held a clothing drive to raise money for "One School, One Book." They are also doing a cereal drive this month together with AHS student, Brian Will. They will donate boxes of cereal to area food pantries to

provide breakfast for children during the summer months. Also, on June 3 they invited senior citizens from local senior centers to visit for the 6th annual Senior Tea. Student musicians will perform and student council members will share refreshments with our guests.



# New Lunch Box Coordinators Relish Their Roles

The ATA has had a long tradition of contributing to charitable causes in the Arlington community. As an organization we have raised money for the Grace Smith House and the Arlington Education Foundation, donated items to the Dutchess County SPCA, and cleaned up Route 55, to name just a few ways we have made a difference. In addition, we have volunteered to serve dinner at Dutchess Outreach's Lunch Box in Poughkeepsie twice a month since 2011.

All of those efforts rely on an ATA member to coordinate them and sign up volunteers. While the ATA's PR committee and chair Kristine Jackson head many

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of them, others are led by members without an official title who just want to help. LaGrange Middle School math teacher Debbie Pollack has organized the annual high way cleanup for many years, and high school special education teacher Colleen Napora has coordinated the Lunch Box volunteers since the inception of the ATA's involvement.

In May, when Napora decided it was time for her to step down, she reached out to her group of regular Lunch Box volunteers and two generous people stepped up to fill her place. Liz

Crivello-Jordan, a fourth grade teacher at Beekman Elementary School, and Kathleen Vogt, a health teacher at Union Vale Middle School, have taken on the role of the ATA's Lunch Box coordinators.

According to Vogt, "I think the ATA's involvement with Dutchess Outreach is incredibly valuable; it's a special thing we do with and for our community. I want to help keep this great thing we have going. Plus, I really like to organize and plan 'stuff!'" Crivello-Jordan and her son Liam had been volunteering at the Lunch Box with his Boy Scout group. She says, "I take volunteering very seriously, and am committed to making this world a better place. I believe all people deserve to be happy, healthy, and safe. Liam and I have donated kitchen supplies as well; mugs, plates, cups, etc. We've been there for holidays, and enjoy making the guests happy, especially the children." She adds that, "I remember collecting food for the poor at a very young age. I want to instill in my son what my parents instilled in me. That is why Liam has been volunteering since he was in first grade. I think it is important that all of our staff knows what a difference we can make."



Photo by Liz Crivello-Jordan

**Liz Crivello-Jordan, a fourth grade teacher at Beekman Elementary, and her son Liam, a Beekman student, regularly volunteered at the Lunch Box before Crivello-Jordan decided to help run the ATA's volunteer program.**

Crivello-Jordan and Vogt encourage all ATA members to volunteer at the Lunch Box. For those who are unsure if they should sign up, Vogt advises, "Ask another ATA member, friend, or family member to join you the first time. And, don't worry about not knowing what to do, you'll be given clear directions and everyone helps each other out."

The ATA typically volunteers at the Lunch Box from 4-6pm on the first Monday and Friday of each month. Crivello-Jordan and Vogt can be contacted with any questions.

# Dates to Remember



## JUNE

- 20th—Last Day of Classes, All Elementary and Middle Schools
- 21st—Superintendent's Conference Day
- 22nd—Superintendent's Conference Day
- 23rd—High School Graduation, Dutchess Stadium, 1 p.m.
- 26th—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., CAO



## JULY

- 12th—ATA Night at the Renegades, 6 p.m., Dutchess Stadium

## AUGUST

- 28th—ATA New Teacher Dinner, 4 p.m., Tina's Restaurant

## SEPTEMBER

- 3rd—Labor Day, No School
- 4th—Superintendent's Conference Day
- 5th—Superintendent's Conference Day
- 6th—First Day of Classes



# Announcements

**Thank you to the ATA's  
Communications Committee for all  
of their help with The Educator  
this year!**

**Alice Estevez - ASM  
Janice Rifenburg - BES  
Chris Greco - JDWR  
Kevin Walsh - LMS  
Sharon Mosden - NOX  
Jayne Pugnali- OPS  
Aimee Holzapfel- TIS  
Cristina VanderWoude - TRS  
Katherine Falcone - UVMS  
Linda Delaguerra - VF**

*Volunteers are needed to serve dinner at the Lunch Box in Poughkeepsie from 4 to 6 p.m. on July 9 and 13 and August 10 and 13. Please contact Liz Crivello-Jordan at BES or Kathleen Vogt at UVMS to sign up.*

**Stay in touch over the summer! Like us on Facebook or check out [www.arlingtonteachers.com](http://www.arlingtonteachers.com) for forms, photos, calendars, and more.**