



THE EDUCATOR

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November 2020? How About May 2019?

It's school budget season again, and with that comes school board elections. It is vital for the continued health of our schools that we elect school board members who keep the best interests of the students and employees in mind while also considering the impact on tax-payers. With the current emphasis on mental health and school safety, along with the trend of "right-sizing", many important funding decisions will have to be made. Along with that is the need to maintain an engaged workforce. The results of the recently-released focus group study shed light on many areas that the school board has the power to make improvements on. To provide the best experience for our students we need

school board members who will listen to the concerns of the district employees and who truly care about Arlington.

We all know someone who fits that description, whether he or she is a family

This year the terms of current Arlington school board members Christine Baxter, Kerri Fasulo, and Mark Tornatore are up.

Please contact the ATA Office at 845-454-7002 or ataupdate@gmail.com if you

know of anyone who would be interested in running for a position. It is a great opportunity for people who care about their children's future and their community as a whole to make a difference.

To be eligible, candidates must live in the district and not be currently employed by Arlington. In order to be on the ballot in May a petition must be obtained from Central Office and returned there with 92 signatures by April 22. ATA members are available to help with that task.

Please contact the ATA Office at 845-454-7002 or ataupdate@gmail.com if you know of anyone who would be interested in running for a school board position this year. Completed petitions to run are due to Central Office by April 22.

member, friend, or neighbor. Often these people don't know how much we need them though. That's where you come in: the ATA is requesting your help to identify possible school board candidates and to talk to them about running.



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Trivia Challenge

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

What year was the first NCAA March Madness basketball tournament held?

Last month's winner, selected at random from among the correct responses received, was **Juliet Menasche** from Noxon. She correctly identified **FDR** as the first U.S. President to name a woman to his cabinet. She will be the proud owner of ATA gear. Answer this month's question and you could win ATA gear too!

Submit your answer to the above trivia question to sfalk@acsdny.org by March 22. The winner will be randomly selected from the correct submissions.

Annual DCSPCA Drive Has Begun

Once again, the Arlington Teachers' Association will be sponsoring a supplies drive for the Dutchess County SPCA to honor Jackie Higgins, a champion for the teachers here in our district. Jackie was the ATA's administrative assistant for many years. She was the first face people would see when they would visit our offices, and the first voice they would hear on the phone. She was always kind, greeted you with a smile, and made you

feel like family. In 2010, the ATA suffered a great loss with her passing.

As a way of ensuring

her memory live on, we are proud to sponsor this cause that was special to

Please consider donating these desperately needed items:

- *Brand-name dry dog food
- *Brand-name dry cat food
- *Paper towels
- *Bleach
- *Non-clumping kitty litter (Yesterday's News)
- *Laundry detergent
- *Clean, dry towels and blankets
- *Hoses and hose nozzles
- *Long handled scrub brushes
- *Cake-sized paper plates
- *Wee-wee pads
- *Uncooked white rice
- *Peanut butter
- *Pet toys

Jackie for the 9th straight year. She loved animals, and the Dutchess County SPCA is always so appre-

ciative of our donations as a district. Last year, we were able to donate two VERY full car loads

worth of supplies.

March 11 through March 26 we will be collecting donations for the DCSPCA. Monetary donations are welcome and appreciated. Please write checks to DCSPCA. All donations (both monetary and non-monetary) are tax deductible.

Thank you for your continued support of our fundraising efforts and for helping us to honor

the memory of the ATA's friend, Jackie Higgins.

-Kristine Jackson, PR Chair

Charity Abounds In the Spring

The ATA has been busy supporting many worthy causes around our area. Next up on our list is the Gift of HOPE basketball game on April 12. Every year, the ATA sponsors the jerseys worn by players at the game. This is a fundraiser where money is raised to give each graduating student who has lost a parent a scholarship. (See page five for more details.)

Additionally, the ATA has pledged to support the Arlington Education Foundation's annual 5K race. This will take place on Saturday, April 27. In

addition, we are waiting to hear about dates for our annual spring highway clean-up.

Outside of Arlington causes, the ATA helps to support a program called Literacy Connections with a bronze sponsorship to their spelling bee. We sponsor two spelling teams to compete in their annual event. This year, the competition will be held at Marist College on Tuesday, April 2. Literacy Connections is committed to helping increase literacy in our community. We also support Rebuilding Together Dutchess County, an or-

ganization that works with local homeowners who may have fallen on hard times to fix their homes. The ATA gives a monetary donation as well as sends several of its members to help with the day's project. Stay tuned for dates related to this project.

Our members are doing so much, both inside and outside the classroom, to make our community a better place to be. Your efforts are noticed and appreciated.

-Kristine Jackson, PR Chair

ATA Lobbies For Public Education

Every year on the first Saturday in February NYSUT hosts a legislative luncheon in Kingston for our locally-elected state representatives. Our District 19 U.S. Congressman is also invited. Union presidents from around the region either attend themselves or send a representative from their local. Betsy Marshall has been attending the luncheon every year since taking on the role of Community Action Committee (CAC) Co-Chair for the ATA. The purpose of the luncheon is to allow educators the opportunity to speak with representatives about important education issues in an informal setting.

According to Marshall, there was a markedly different dynamic at play during this year's luncheon. For the first time in many years, all invited representatives decided to attend the luncheon themselves rather than send their legislative assistant to meet with teachers. She says, "I was pleased to meet Anthony Delgado, our newly elected congressman from the 19th district who not only attended, but stayed for the entire luncheon - a first. I guess the activism of teachers statewide during the 2018 election cycle did not go unnoticed."

Marshall sat at a table with State Senator Sue Serino where the conversation focused on BOCES funding and the need for a revitalization of programs designed to provide students the opportunity to learn skills that lead to jobs in our local communities. A few of the other topics of conversation in the room included:

- Increasing funding for Foundation Aid to schools in order to fully fund schools; expense-based reimbursement, strengthening student support services and improving school safety and climate.
- A rejection of executive budget proposals that would force some of the poorest districts in the



Photo courtesy of Brendan Lawler

ATA CAC Co-chair Brendan Lawler (third from right) joined other local NYSUT members in meeting with NYS Assemblywoman Didi Barrett (standing, center) in Albany on March 5.

state to follow state mandates for allocation of funding rather than allowing for local control.

- Re-formulation of the tax cap and the 60% supermajority rule.
- The enactment of reforms that would make the charter school industry more transparent and accountable to the public.
- Increased funding for special education services and a rejection of the executive budget proposal to allow schools to petition SED for "flexibility" in complying with certain special education requirements, which would erode the quality of education for students with disabilities.

The other annual NYSUT event that puts members in contact with New York politicians is an advocacy day in early March. This year the ATA's CAC Co-Chair Brendan Lawler attended the event in Albany on March 5. His first meeting of the day was with Assemblywoman Didi Barrett. Lawler reports, "We discussed our concerns over the possibility of the tax cap becoming permanent, overall funding for our school districts, and need for more resources to deal with the opioid epidemic, the mental health crisis, and the vaping

epidemic. I focused on the aforementioned crises in our schools and again mentioned that the teacher evaluation system does nothing to deal with them and that administration has far better uses for their time."

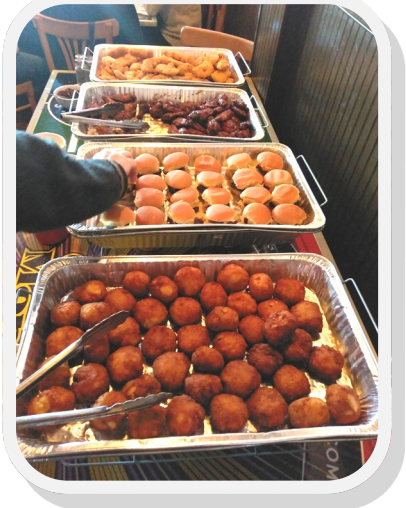
Lawler's second meeting of the day was in Assemblyman Kieran Lalor's office. According to Lawler, "Lalor was unavailable to meet with us personally but we had a productive meeting with a staffer who graduated from Arlington in the class of 2017 and is now interning with Assemblyman Lalor. She had nothing but good things to say about the importance of education and particularly the education she received at Arlington. She plans on pursuing a career in human rights and it was quite clear that she will represent our school community quite well and reflects all of the work each and every one of you do every day in your classrooms."

Lawler speaks for both himself and Marshall when he avows that, "We will continue to advocate for our students, staff, and our schools so that more students will have the opportunities and resources to become the leaders of the 21st century."

Unity Through Food



The ATA held a Unity Pub on Friday, March 8 at All City Grill in LaGrange. Many members from all schools made their way to the restaurant after school to enjoy the camaraderie of their colleagues and some great food.





The 12th Annual Gift of HOPE Dress Down day will be taking place on Friday, April 12th. We will not be selling new shirts this year and are asking you to show your support by wearing an old **HOPE** shirt, or making a small donation and you will receive a bracelet or sticker. Please fill out the small slip at the bottom of the page and send to Marc Provost at the High School. Hope stands for **Helping Others Pursue Education**. For the past 12 years, college scholarships have been awarded to over 180 students in the Arlington School District who have suffered the loss of a parent or guardian at some point during their academic endeavors. We currently have 19 graduating seniors who are eligible to receive a scholarship.

We have decided to continue our tradition of a Faculty basketball game. The game will take place on Friday, April 12th. This year, we are excited to announce that we have paired with Arlington’s Unified Basketball team as they begin their second season with a home game versus John Jay - East Fishkill at 4:30 pm. **Unified basketball** is a fast-growing initiative in New York State that brings special education athletes and general education partners together on the same team to compete against other Varsity Unified programs.

Doors will open at 4:00 for food and concession. There will be a \$3 donation if you are only attending the Unified game. Proceeds will go towards the BOCES Prom. \$5 if you plan on attending both the Unified game and the Gift of HOPE game. If you plan on attending only the Gift of HOPE game, tickets will be a \$5 donation.

We are extremely excited for another great community night here at Arlington High School! The evening is filled with fun and excitement for everyone of all ages. Please come out and support our own Unified Basketball team and The Gift of HOPE!!

If you have any questions or are interested in playing in this years game, please contact Marc Provost at the high school at ext. 31348.

Name: _____

Donation: _____

School: _____



2018 — 2019 ATA Officers

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Bob Maier

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Greg Nieman

Second Vice-President

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BES — William Mueller

NES — Nicolle McMorris

VFES — Gwen Moschetto

OPS — Christene Way

Traver — Diana Judge

JDWR — Betsy Marshall

TIS — Larry Jeannotte

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. 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 Kathleen Bellino presented at the New York State Council for the Social Studies conference on March 8. Her talk was titled "Civic Engagement: From Your Classroom to Their Community".

Social Studies teacher Krysta Weiss is receiving a Forty Under 40 Mover & Shaker award from the Dutchess County Chamber of Commerce on April 4. According to their website, "The Forty Under 40 Mover & Shaker awards are bestowed annually to 40 individuals under the age of 40 who have shown a strong commitment to the Hudson Valley."

Arthur S. May School

Physical Education teachers Chris Keenan and Wendy Kane (who is



Photo by Paul Fanuele

Arlington High School

Physical Education teacher Aidan Topley became a U.S. citizen at a naturalization ceremony in Poughkeepsie on February 1. Topley is a native of Great Britain.

also at Beekman Elementary) organized an ASM Glow Bowling Night on March 22. The event served to bring families together and to break up a long winter.

Union Vale Middle

ELA teacher Jonathan Pickles published a book last fall titled *The Reader's Trace: Text Codes, Annotations, and Marginalia*. On his website www.picklesandbooks.com Pickles describes the book: "The ancient Greek hero, Theseus, navigated his way through the legendary labyrinth by following a spool of thread. With

The Reader's Trace, you'll guide students to trace their own thoughts through a text to reveal hidden insights and understanding, not only about stories but about their own reading processes. This is a book about annotating, text coding, and marginalia, and the many ways that you, as a teacher, can implement these close-reading techniques in your classroom. Interacting with a text in this way will give students the tools, techniques, and behaviors to become strong readers and self-directed, lifelong learners." See his website for more details.

New Elementary Club Stipends Benefit Students

Prior to beginning each round of formal contract negotiations the ATA's negotiating team asks all ATA members for suggestions. Before the most recent contract, one item that arose was to secure stipends for clubs at the elementary level, and to also reinstate intramurals for fourth and fifth graders. There had been a few specific stipends for clubs such as a student council, but it was important to elementary teachers to have the opportunity to create new clubs that would enrich their students' learning experiences. While at the secondary level there is more leeway for informal clubs due to the availability of late buses, the need for parents to provide transportation either before or after school is one reason why elementary clubs must be more formally maintained.

Through the hard work of the ATA's negotiating team, not only has the number of elementary club stipends increased, but the amount of each stipend was significantly improved. This new ability to provide extracurricular activities for younger students has shown immediate effects.

According to Vail Farm art teacher Linda Delaguerra, her principal has now strongly encouraged teachers to offer a club. This has resulted in diverse offerings such as Board Game Club run by special education teacher Kristen Mateja; Vail Farm CARES, run by fifth grade teacher Gwen Moschetto; International Studies Club run by third grade teacher Amy Pagano; and Recycling Club run by special education teacher Jennifer Sullivan and speech-language pathologist Alethea McMorris.

At Arthur S. May School, speech-language pathologist Brian Westover comments that this is the first year that his school has been able to offer intramurals since they moved to their new building in 2015. He and physical education



Photo by Vivian LaColla

A member of second grade teacher Vivian LaColla's Crochet Club at Noxon Road shows off the "corner to corner" blanket she is working in.

teacher Chris Keenan now run intramurals for fourth and fifth graders that include activities like kickball, football, foursquare, basketball, floor hockey, and volleyball.

Each elementary school has been able to tailor their new club offerings to their particular school population. A new club at Arthur S. May is the Spanish Club, run by ENL teacher Brooke Chadwick. "Spanish Club is open to any student in the building who speaks Spanish," she says. "Its purpose is to encourage Spanish speaking children to embrace their heritage, practice their language and become biliterate as well as bilingual. Some of the older students are practicing to participate in a Spanish spelling bee at Vassar College. Next year we hope to have two clubs, one for English speaking students who want to learn Spanish, as well as keeping this club up and running."

A yoga club run by second grade special education teacher Michele Anderson has also proved to be very popular, with nearly 90 students

signing up when it began in October. A goal of the club is to help address the social, emotional, sensory, and self-regulation needs of students in the building. A session is also offered for staff once a month.

Noxon Road second grade teacher Vivian LaColla used the availability of a new stipend to start a club to teach fourth and fifth graders how to crochet. "I wanted to teach a skill that is becoming a lost art, and a skill that they can carry into adulthood. Once crocheting is learned, it is in their muscle memory," she explains. "Their latest project is a 'corner to corner' blanket. It's a great skill that they will have for the rest of their lives."

For some, contract negotiations may seem to be all about salaries and health insurance, but the above examples show that there can be a more direct connection between monetary negotiations and our ability to directly impact the lives of our students.

-Sam Falk, Editor

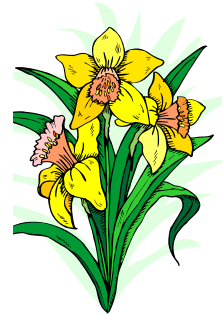
Dates to Remember



MARCH

- 19th—ATA Executive Council Meeting: 4 p.m., AHS Room 1432
- 21st—School Budget Public Forum: 7 p.m., CAO
- 26th—Board of Education Meeting: 7 p.m., LMS
- 29th—Professional Development Half Day, Elem. and M.S. only

APRIL



- 6th—District Arts Fair: 11 a.m. - 4 p.m., LMS
- 9th—Board of Education Meeting: 7 p.m., TRPS
- 15th-22nd—Spring Break
- 22nd—Board of Education Candidate Petitions Due: 5 p.m., CAO
- 23rd—ATA Executive Council Meeting: 4 p.m., AHS Room 1432
- Board of Education Meeting: 7 p.m., CAO

MAY

- 14th—ATA Executive Council Meeting: 4 p.m., AHS Room 1432
- Board of Education Meeting: 7 p.m., UVMS



Announcements

The Educator needs you!

Would you like to help spread the word about the good things ATA members do at your school? Just email ATA Communications Chair Sam Falk at sfalk@acsdny.org anytime you have information to share!

Volunteers are needed to serve dinner at the Lunch Box in Poughkeepsie from 4—6 p.m. on April 8 and 12. Please contact Liz Crivello-Jordan at BES or Kathleen Vogt at UVMS to sign up.

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