



# Pequannock Township Education Association



## CHALKBOARD

December 2010

### ~President's Message~

Colleagues,

Can you believe it's the end of 2010? We say it every year, but the time seems to go faster, as I get older!

This year has been difficult for our members, in many ways; the State imposed contribution for benefits has resulted in a smaller paycheck for all of us, the Governor's office continues its attacks on our pensions, and we are not sure what the future will hold for our profession. And yet, everywhere I look, I see evidence of our staff's commitment to the educational quality of Pequannock Township School District.

At the end of November, Morris County held a dinner to celebrate Educational Support Professionals. Dale Schoenig, Donna Blossfeld, Alice Decicco, Marge Deo, Susan Flood, Cathy Warren, Diane Mee, Cheryl Rosano, Noelle Squicciarini, and Pamela Wehrer enjoyed music, a lavish buffet dinner, speakers, and fabulous prizes. The *County Line* editor, Richard Dixon, and the Morris County Council of Education Associations President, Susan Vigilante, were especially complimentary about our ESPs. Their general opinion was that the Pequannock Educational Support Professionals were an amazing testament to the professionalism and the unity of our local Association. I heartily agree!

On December 20<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, you can watch another great example of our Pequannock staff at work. NJN Public Television's award-winning show, Classroom Close-up NJ will be featuring our own Morris County Teacher of the Year, North Boulevard's Yvette McBain. The show, which airs Monday the 20<sup>th</sup> at 7PM, and Sunday, the 25<sup>th</sup>, at 9AM, will showcase Yvette's peer mediation work with her First Grade students.

As we end 2010, I consider myself fortunate to be part of a local Association which includes members such as these, and, of course, all of you!

Finally, in January, the Morris County Council of Education Associations will be sponsoring their annual IPD Weekend at the Hamilton Park Conference Center in Florham Park. Check out this issue of Chalkboard for more information.

I wish all of you safe, healthy, and happy holidays. Enjoy your families, enjoy your break, and come back energized and refreshed for the New Year.

Sincerely,

*Lee Ann*

## **~Negotiations~**

Helene Zablocki (PTHS)

The PTEA Negotiations Team met with the Board on Monday, November 29th, for three hours. We were unable to come to an agreement without the assistance of a mediator so we have jointly agreed to file for impasse. Please continue to check the Association's website, [pteaweb.org](http://pteaweb.org), for updated information.

## **~Grievance~**

Ann Marie Finnen (SJG)

The Board of Education has denied the grievance related to policies that were enacted without the consultation of the Association even though they deal with items that are mandatorily negotiable. Specifically, the Board is requiring employees to utilize all of their personal time if they file for Family Leave Insurance. The Association has begun the process to file for arbitration and is also investigating the possibility of an unfair labor practice.

Earlier this month, the Association filed a Level 1 grievance on behalf of a member who has had a disciplinary letter unjustly placed in his personnel file. The administrator in question has denied the grievance and we have proceeded to Level 2. The Association is awaiting a response on this issue from the Superintendent.

## **~PRIDE~**

Karen Schiffel (SJG)

### **Friends of Education**

Awards will be given to member nominated outstanding local citizens who have made contributions to the educational system in Pequannock Township.

#### **Qualifications:**

Nominee may not be permanently employed by the Pequannock Township BOE at the time of award presentation (Lunch Aides are eligible).

- Services performed must have been on a voluntary basis.
- Recipients will be chosen from nominations by PTEA members stating reasons for nomination.
- Nominees must have influenced a substantial number of children in Pequannock Township over a period of 2+ years.

#### **Deadline:**

Wednesday, December 22, 2010

If you would like to nominate someone for this award, please send your nomination letter, or email, to Karen Schiffel. Please include your name, address, and phone number on the nomination.

## ~Report from NJEA Convention 2010~

PTEA Vice President, Ann Marie Finnen (SJG)

Although there was plenty of rain outside the convention center, inside the spirits were sunny and enthusiastic. Tens of thousands of NJEA members converged upon Atlantic City last month in the largest professional development conference in the world. The offerings were too numerous to list, but a quick glance at the session booklet revealed something for everyone. The “Teacher as Hero” session was particularly motivating, as author Laurel Schmidt helped participants identify 10 behaviors of effective teachers and ways we can incorporate them into our instruction.

On Friday, the County Teachers of the Year (including our very own Yvette McBain), presented a round table of best practices from virtually every discipline. I gained a wealth of knowledge regarding differentiating literacy instruction, utilizing laptops in the classroom, and the use of social networking sites to improve professional development. I also had the chance to meet and chat with the New Jersey Teacher of the Year, Danielle Kovach a special education teacher from Hopatcong. Being in the midst of such talented and dedicated professionals was inspiring and highly enjoyable. I was a bit overwhelmed and in awe of the Technology Showcase. The possibilities to connect with our students through technology are truly endless!

Finally, (although I could go on and on, if time and space permitted) one of the high lights of the convention for me was attending the “2010 Celebration of Excellence.” In addition to recognizing this year’s Hipp Grant recipients from across New Jersey, two prestigious “Awards for Excellence” were presented to “public school graduates who have demonstrated exceptional leadership in their fields of expertise.” Dr. Joseph Renzulli, a pioneer in the field of gifted education, and Dr. John Mather, astrophysicist and winner of the 2006 Nobel Prize in Physics were both honored and gave humbling and fascinating acceptance speeches.

The entire conference was a testament to the incredible talent and dedication of our members, and I came away with a great deal of knowledge and inspiration. It had been quite some time since I last attended the Convention; I’m already looking forward to going again next year!



Yvette McBain, (NB) presents at the County Teachers of the Year Round Table session



NJEA Vice President Wendell Steinhauer, NJ Teacher of the Year, Danielle Kovach and Yvette McBain (NB) at the Celebration of Excellence

## **~Important Information~**

### **Would you like to be more involved in your Association?**

There are currently several positions available on the PTEA Representative Council: Association Representative at PV Middle School and District County Representative. If you have been thinking about serving your PTEA and would like more information about either of these positions, please contact your AR or your President, Lee Ann Brensinger (PTHS).

### **Look for the Signs!**

PTEA members have strong and loyal relationships with many of Pequannock's local businesses. We recently began asking business owners in our community to post signs that say: "This establishment proudly supports Pequannock Township Public Schools." Look for these signs in the windows of businesses throughout our town, and when you see one please consider utilizing the services of that business. Thank you to the following establishments who have already posted signs in their windows:

King's Kid Delicatessen

235 Newark-Pompton Turnpike  
Pequannock

Cosmo Bella Pizza

135 Newark Pompton Turnpike  
Pequannock

Instant Replay

599B Newark-Pompton Turnpike  
Pompton Plains

### **PTEA Gift Card Drive**

Thank you to all members – teachers and ESP's – who donated to our first Gift Card Drive. Almost \$700 in gift cards to local stores were contributed and are being distributed to the families that benefit from the Pequannock Food Pantry. Joyce Forde-Muller, who runs the pantry, was extremely appreciative and impressed with the generosity of the PTEA. Receipts will be distributed in the next few weeks. If anyone has ideas of how we can contribute to our community, please contact your Vice President, Ann Marie Finnen (SJG).

### **Morris County Council of Education Associations: IPD Weekend Schedule**

#### **Friday, January 29, 2011**

4:00 – 5:30 Registration

5:30 – 6:30 Dinner

7:00 – 9:00 *Surviving the Holocaust as a Hidden Child* – Maud Dahme

#### **Saturday, January 30, 2011**

7:30 – 8:30 Buffet Breakfast

8:00 – 8:45 Commuter Registration

8:45 – 10:45 Session I

10:45 – 11:15 Coffee/Tea Break

11:15 – 1:15 Session II

1:15 – 2:00 Buffet Lunch

**PD Credit titles:**

Using Data to Enhance Student Learning  
Special Ed Today  
Differentiated Lesson Planning  
Elementary Classroom Management  
The Successful Secondary Classroom  
Succeeding With Difficult Students for ESP  
English Language Learners: The ESL Classroom

**Advocacy workshop titles:** TBA

**Registration Fees:**

Commuter - \$50

Single Room - \$110

Double Room (with name of roommate provided) - \$90 per person

ARs will have registration forms soon!

**~Member News~**

Jamie Dean (NB) and her husband, Scott, welcomed Cameron Jackson Dean to their family on July 16, 2010. Cameron weighed 9lbs 8oz and is Jamie and Scott's second son.

Dina Van Ness (NB) and her husband, Dan, welcomed Olivia Danielle Van Ness to their family on November 3, 2010. Olivia weighed 5lbs 13 oz and is Dina and Dan's second daughter.

Anne Meyers (HV) and her husband, Adam, welcomed Molly Olivia Meyers to their family on November 4, 2010. Molly weighed 7lbs. 4 oz. and is Ann and Adam's first child.

Jose Torres (NB head custodian) & his daughter Karen spent two weeks (his vacation) in Columbia on a mission trip to help the needy. They brought many boxes of clothes and household goods collected from NB families to help the less fortunate in his native country.

Always remember,  
information from NJEA is  
at your fingertips. Their  
website was redesigned  
and is easy to navigate.  
Please visit [www.njea.org](http://www.njea.org)  
for the latest information  
from your state  
Association.