



## President's Message

Colleagues:

I begin this note at the start of Teacher Appreciation Week. In Pequannock, our students and their parents often make it a point to honor us with notes, gifts, food and kind words throughout the year. We are fortunate to have families who appreciate the work we do. But as you know, teachers don't always have the support of the public. There are a number of entities that would like nothing better than to denigrate our profession, remove the power of our unity, and replace our profession with groups like Teach for America - a corporate reform powered group that "trains" teachers in five weeks, and plugs them into urban districts at the expense of fully-trained, tenured, and unionized teachers. While many of the TFA recruits may be passionate about teaching, it is antithetical to put a teacher in a classroom after only weeks of training, when many states - NJ included - are mandating more rigorous coursework for teachers who go through college and university teacher training programs.

The struggle to maintain the dignity of the teaching profession is ongoing. Although the pendulum is slowly swinging back, we still have work to do. We must continue to fight the onslaught of standardized testing and its insidious take-over of genuine learning.

Your Association is working to delay the implementation of the PARCC tests as well as the plan to use student test scores to evaluate teachers. You can participate in the discussion by sending your experiences with the PARCC field test in Pequannock to NJEA by clicking here: <http://www.njea.org/news/2014-04-10/parcc-trial-in-your-school>

Your PTEA has recently added a parent/community page to our website. (<http://pequannocktownshippea.org/parents/>) Among other things, the page has links to articles and brochures about standardized

testing. I ask you to read the articles, as well, and to engage in a dialogue with parents. We can work to reestablish the educational standards that encourage children to grow, to think and to reason - the standards by which our children can truly become lifelong learners.

The school year is slowly winding to a close, and much of the year's work is behind us. But as you all know, the work of educators does not stop at the end of the school year. We will be attending professional development conferences, engaging in graduate study, reading educational material that will help us to bring valuable learning experiences to our students, and planning lessons for next year. Your PTEA leadership will also participate in advocacy training. I invite you to visit the NJEA website and our Association website often for updates and information regarding legislation and initiatives that impact educators. I also encourage you to take plenty of time this summer to get some well-deserved rest, and to recharge for what awaits us in September.

*Lee Ann*

## Upcoming Dates

**May 7** – Hope Comedy Night, PTHS

**May 8** – Rep Council meeting, SJG

**May 9** – Yankee Candle orders due to Ann Marie Finnen (SJG)

**May 27-30** –PTEA Food Drive in each school

**May 30** – Deliver donations to First Reformed Church and help sort them for the food pantry. Please contact your AR.

**June 2** – MCCEA Retirement Dinner Meadow Wood Manor, Mountain Lakes



## Vice President's Message

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

During Teacher Appreciation week, I would like to express my gratitude to all of you who work tirelessly on behalf of our students. No matter in what capacity you serve our district, our Association is enriched by your skill, dedication and constant efforts. As a parent, I am especially grateful to those of you at PV and PTHS, because I know how fortunate my children are to attend these two schools. Thank you for creating an environment where they can flourish. Thank you for helping to shield them from the stress of all the demands that are placed on them and on you. Thank you for mourning with them, laughing with them, inspiring them, and cheering for them. Thank you for always making it clear that they are more than test scores.

*Ann Marie*

## Yankee Candle Sale – Final Week

Thank you to all members who have ordered candles or other products from the Spring Yankee Candle catalog. It's not too late to order something nice for yourself or as a gift for someone else. Friday, May 9 will mark the end of the order taking period. Please forward any additional orders you may have, with payment in a check made out to "CASH" to Ann Marie Finnen (SJG). Also, contact Ann Marie if you need another order form. The PTEA Philanthropic Fund will receive a generous percentage of all sales. Ann Marie will deliver them to you by the end of May.

If you choose to order online,

<https://www.yankeecandlefundraising.com/ycfroot/store.htm> (Group #990064263), you will be charged a shipping fee for orders totaling less than \$100, and 40% of the purchase sales will be donated to our scholarship fund. You can continue to place orders online through the end of June, and still earn money for our fund. Thank you to Laura Higley (PTHS) for the idea and for organizing the sale.

## Congratulations Joanne Moloughney!

Last month, Joanne, a classroom aide at Hillview, was named the 2014 WDHA ESP Who Rocks! Diane Wolfe nominated her and together they attended a lavish banquet to celebrate the honor. Although there were over 20 teachers from Northern New Jersey who received recognition, only one ESP was chosen - making Joanne's selection all the more prestigious.



NJEA Secretary/Treasurer Sean Spiller took a moment to pose for a picture with the 2014 WDHA ESP Who Rocks Joanne Moloughney (HV) and Diane Wolfe, who wrote the nominating letter.

## **NEW DATE:** **HOPE Sponsors** **"A Night of Comedy"**

This annual event, sponsored by HOPE and the Municipal Alliance has been rescheduled to Wednesday, May 7 at 6:30. Two New York City comedians and an improv troupe will "take the stage" and provide an enjoyable evening of first rate comedy. Admission is \$5, and coffee and dessert will be served. Contact Maureen Montalbetti (PTHS) for more information.



## Use of Sick and Personal Days

All members are reminded that sick days may only be taken for your own medical need. If you have a sick family member, you must utilize a personal day. You may use a sick day for any medical appointment for yourself, and request approval for the absence before you take the day. There have been occasions in the past when the administration has allowed employees to bring their children to work with them. This practice is no longer permitted, and Victor has asked us to remind our members that they have personal days for this purpose.

## Legal News

At our General Membership meeting, Lee Ann announced that the lawsuit filed by a member against members of the PTEA has been dropped. There was no settlement, and your leadership is pleased that this litigation has come to an end.

## Scholarships

At this month's PTHS Awards Night, your Association will present \$4500 in scholarships to graduating seniors. This would not be possible without the generosity of our members. Thank you to all who donated this year. If you did not get a chance to make a contribution, would you please consider doing so for next year's scholarships? Beginning in September, we will be discussing ways to broaden the applicant pool and raise additional funds. Watch for our first Baked Potato Night, coming this Fall!

## Support the Pequannock Food Pantry!

Calling all PTEA members - we will have our final food drive of the year during the last week in May. The Pequannock Food Pantry needs our help to stock their shelves for the long summer. Look for blue PTEA tote bags in your faculty room to help you remember to bring in your donations. Then, on Friday, May 30 we need help from all schools to deliver the donations to the First Reformed Church and to sort them. Please let you AR know if you can help out even for a half hour. Many hands make light work!

## Join us on Facebook!

Don't forget to look for us on our private Facebook page! You must have a Facebook account to become a member. Search "Pequannock Township Education Association," send a friend request, and wait for an approval. You can easily read about hot topics, announcements, and join/start a conversation with colleagues.



## NEA Representative Assembly

This summer, some 8000 delegates will head to Denver, CO to attend the largest democratic assembly in the world – the NEA RA. PTEA will be represented by Lee Ann Brensinger (PTHS) and Patty Walker (PV). They will vote on behalf of our local on the adoption of NEA’s strategic plan and budget, legislative program, and other policies of the Association. They will also vote on proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws. PTEA is fortunate to have full representation at this important gathering.



## PRIDE

As we thank Karen Schiffel (SJG) for her many years of dedication as our PRIDE Chair, we welcome Susan Flood (PV) who will take over the responsibilities. This summer, Susan will write our proposal for funding from NJEA. If you know of an activity or project that connects our members and students with the greater community, consider reaching out to Susan or an AR to see if it can benefit from PRIDE funding.

This Spring, PTEA is proud to once again sponsor two Little League teams – our “Play Ball” sign is currently on display at Washington Field. We will also be supporting Elliot Honig (PTHS) and the FBLA with their annual Intergeneration Prom later this month.

### **Congratulations to all who are retiring this year!**

**Thank you for your many years of service to the children of Pequannock.**

**We wish you the best of luck as you begin this next phase of your life.**

Mary Anne Abazia

Lynn Connelly

Susan Conner

Rudy Ference

Cathy Furia

Maureen Montalbetti

Marie Raimondo

Michele Smith

Michael Wychules

Helene Zablocki