

# Schalmont Teachers' Association

# STATIC

President's Report

April 2010

## Determine Your Destiny....

What does it mean to be part of a union? All of us have different expectations as to what the union stands for--what we represent. This leads us to make our own personal decision as to how involved we want to be in the Association.

Our STA Officers and Executive Board work hard to support its members in the everyday life of an educator, from providing information regarding our contract, to assisting members with questions regarding certification or benefits, to representing them in conflicts, and in making sure that the working conditions are safe for all of us. Our monthly meetings are only part of what makes our STA run smoothly. There are many other people who have taken on leadership roles over the years to make sure that we can teach/work in a district with academic freedom and individual teaching styles. This climate is the result of a group effort and could not be accomplished by just the Executive Board.

Each year you are encouraged to apply for leadership positions within our organization. We believe members should have an opportunity to get involved in a different way, using their individual talents and personal qualities to enhance the strength of the association. All of us have talents and we would like to call on you to demonstrate your willingness to get involved, not only for your own benefit, but for the profession in general.

The leadership positions are designed to keep members informed of what is happening at the local, state and national level. These positions are paid for from the STA annual budget and they afford members an opportunity to actively determine the direction of STA.

The leadership applications will be out soon. Please take a moment to evaluate your own professional abilities and talents and think about using those talents to promote your profession through a leadership role in STA. Join those who have led Schalmont teachers for the past forty years. Become a leader and get involved with our association on a more active level. We need good people to continue to help our union grow professionally and educationally.

In solidarity,  
Mary Beth

## Jefferson Teacher Spends Break Volunteering in Guatemala



Sue Hennessy, a third grade teacher at Jefferson, spent her February break in Guatemala with twenty-five members of her church. They stayed in a retreat center sponsored by Vision Trust. The group traveled from Guatemala City to a Mayan village in Cruz Blanc and worked on a number of projects. Sue worked with the educational team, training the village teachers in the Responsive Classroom techniques that she had learned in Cincinnati in the spring of last year. She also taught mini lessons on character education, including respect and caring for one another.

Sue stated, "While we lived in difficult living conditions, it brought such perspective to my life. I came home grateful for the opportunity to serve others who have so little, but appear so happy. I am also grateful to be living in the United States of America and working at a job I love."

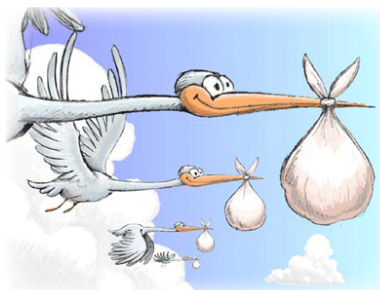
After her trip, Jefferson teachers (Sue Hennessy, Leea Mulone, Sarah Scotti, Pat Vissat and Mary Zanta) had their classes write letters to the children in the village. Schalmont parent, Mrs. Aragosa, translated the letters into Spanish for the children. Sue's class also video-taped a "Morning Meeting" and Mrs. Dougall translated as Sue taught her lesson. The Mayan teachers loved this video!

She is looking forward to going back to continue the work of the group in the same village either this summer or next February.



## Stork Makes Deliveries

Kristen DiPiazza (Mariaville) and her husband, Joe, on the birth of their son, Joseph Matthew, born February 26, 2010. Joseph weighed in at 9 lbs., 4 oz. and measured twenty-one inches long. He joins three year old sister, Maria.



Jessica Zupan and her husband on the birth of their son, Evan, born April 1, 2010. Evan weighed 6 lbs., 9 oz. and was nineteen and one half inches long.

Katie LeRoy (Jefferson) and her husband, Joe who welcomed Abigail Grace LeRoy to their family on April 16th. Abigail was 8 lbs., 4 oz. and was 19 and one half inches long.

## STATIC and STA Website Win Recognition at NYSUT Journalism Conference

Schalmont Teachers' Association was recognized at the First Annual Journalism Conference on March 27. Our STATIC, designed and edited by Carol Carelli and Kelly Healy, won an Award of Merit for Best Newsletter in Class II and our STA website won an Award of Merit for Best Website for Class II.



*Carol accepts award from Maria Neira, NYSUT Vice President and Lee Cutler NYSUT Secretary Treasurer. Pictures courtesy of Betsy Sandburg, NYSUT photo editor.*

STA President, Mary Beth Flatley and Carol Carelli, STA Secretary attended the conference. Carol accepted the awards on behalf of the Association.

In addition to the recognition ceremony, workshops were held in a variety of areas such as editing, proofing, layout, advertising and website design. The workshops were designed to help locals improve the look and "feel" of their newsletters and websites.

It was also an opportunity to speak with other editors, webmasters and NYSUT Publications staff to glean suggestions as to how we could potentially improve our publications.

We are on a roll! This is the second year that Carol and Kelly entered the statewide competition earning recognition for both our union newsletter and our website and the second year of accolades. Congratulations goes not only to the editors, but to those who assist us in providing timely news to our members!



*The Editors can't do it alone. Lend a hand-submit news items. What's happening in your building? Are you in a unique certification area and have knowledge to share? Have you found some interesting websites that may be of interest to others? Are you a talented artist who has a political cartoon to share? The STATIC is your union voice. Send ideas in MS Word via email to either one of the STATIC editors (see back page for contact information). Next issue: June 2010!*

# 2010 - 2011 STA Building Representative Election

In accordance with the STA Constitution, the following calendar has been established for 2010-2011 election of STA Building Representatives. Officers and NYSUT RA Delegates are elected for a two-year term expiring on June 30, 2011.

Friday, May 14, 2010

Last day for names to be submitted to the Election Committee for consideration as a candidate for STA Building Representative.

Thursday, June 3, 2010

STA Annual Meeting (Candidates will have the opportunity to speak to the membership at this meeting).

Friday, June 11, 2010

Election of STA Building Representatives will take place in all buildings. Members will vote in the building where his/her paycheck is delivered.

\*\*\*\*\*

I am interested in running for the position of STA Building Representative (1 year term) at:

\_\_\_\_\_ High School

\_\_\_\_\_ Mariaville

\_\_\_\_\_ Middle School

\_\_\_\_\_ Woestina

\_\_\_\_\_ Jefferson

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Send completed form to Lori DeMeo, Election Committee Chairperson, at Jefferson.**



## **STA General Membership Meeting**

Annual Business Meeting

Thursday, June 3, 2010

Middle School LGI Room

3:45 PM

### Agenda

1. Secretary's Report
2. Treasurer's Report
3. Vice Presidents' Reports
4. President's Report
5. STA Election Committee Report
6. STI Report
7. Mentor Program Report
8. IDEA Grant Report
9. Approval of 2010-2011 STA Budget
10. Member Concerns

## 2010 VOTE-COPE CAMPAIGN

Get politically involved through the Vote-Cope 2010 Campaign. It's that time of year again when we ask for voluntary contributions to Vote-Cope. We realize it's hard to ask for money in tough times but, we feel that the task is easier when the cause for which you are raising funds is clearly defined. The contributions that are made to Vote-Cope help your own profession and the institutions in which our members work. The theme of the campaign this year is:

**"You Can Complete the Puzzle."**

Collectively we have a responsibility to our profession and to the institution in which all of us work. It's vital that we support Vote-Cope in their efforts to protect what we've earned and to achieve our collective political goals. Vote-Cope is key to our local political successes, as well as our work in Albany and Washington, DC By contributing to your PAC, you help to protect what we've earned.

The logo for Vote-Cope features the word "vote" in a large, bold, lowercase sans-serif font. Below "vote", the word "COPE" is written in a smaller, all-caps, spaced-out sans-serif font. The "C" in "COPE" is significantly larger than the other letters and overlaps the bottom of the "e" in "vote".

How do we get the message to our governor that we are not in support of the proposed budget cuts to education? Lobbying efforts are one way that unions get a message to politicians. Vote-Cope is another. Vote-Cope is the union's voluntary non-partisan political campaign fund.

Right now, we're facing a \$1.4 billion cut in state aid and hundreds of millions in cuts to public higher education. There is the threat of privatization, legislative attempts by the New York State School Boards Association to eliminate tenure and repeal the Triborough Law, the statute that prohibits public employers from cutting benefits and salaries when contracts expire. You do not have to look far to make the connection between politics and the terms and conditions of our careers and the places in which we work.

There is no debating that these are challenging times for all. Political action becomes increasingly important and Vote-Cope funds essentially protect the institutions in which our members work. We are urging you, **our members**, to get politically involved this year through your Vote-Cope contributions as well as your phone calls and faxes to legislators. Schalmont teachers understand the importance of political action and that is evident from their generous contributions to Vote-Cope. Our overall goal this year is for a \$3.00 per member contribution. When your building representative or Vote-Cope coordinator asks for your contribution please keep in mind what Vote-Cope does for every one of us at Schalmont. Keep in mind that the job or program that you save through the political action of Vote-Cope may be your own.

Lori DeMeo and Joann Perillo-Lasky  
STA Political Action Coordinators

# Legal questions have a way of piling up...

## Maybe it's time to consider enrolling in the Legal Service Plan!

Stuff happens. You may be facing a speeding ticket, a house closing, a divorce, identity theft, elderly parent issues, and the list can go on and on. In today's world, at some point, you'll most likely need the advice or services of an attorney.

When that time comes, you can turn to the Legal Service Plan endorsed by NYSUT Member Benefits Trust.

When you enroll in the plan, you'll receive a multitude of benefits for personal legal matters. Anytime you wish to talk with an attorney, whether for advice or consultation, you have toll-free access weekdays during normal business hours. There's even a toll-free hotline for emergencies occurring beyond these hours.

You'll receive two, hour-long office consultations with a plan attorney, legal document review and legal letters written on your behalf.

If a problem can't be resolved by letter or phone, you'll be referred to a plan attorney. Referral attorneys are located throughout the continental US and charge plan members \$200 an hour or 40 percent less than their standard hourly rate, whichever is lower.

Many personal legal matters have fees that are capped, and there are guaranteed discounts on probate fees and personal injury cases.

Also included is a Legal Security Package each year of plan enrollment. This package includes forms to request a:

- **Simple will** - allows you to select a guardian for your children and beneficiaries of your estate. Without a will in place, the state makes these decisions. A will also speeds up the probate process and makes settling your estate much easier.

- **Power of attorney** - allows you to give another person the right to sign your name and transact your financial affairs.

- **Living will** - enables you to express your wishes regarding end-of-life treatment.

- **Health care proxy** - allows you to appoint someone to make medical decisions on your behalf if you are unable to make them yourself; it also contains directions regarding organ donation.

The plan offers advice and guidance with identity theft issues, debt consolidation and mortgage foreclosure.

You can purchase an Elder Law rider to help you in

your health and estate planning as well as assisting you with these issues for your parents and grandparents.

If you have a business of your own, for example, a rental income property, you can purchase the Business Protection rider to obtain business legal services.

To find out more, call Member Benefits at 800-626-8101. Or go to [www.memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://www.memberbenefits.nysut.org) to view or print a brochure and enrollment form. You can also enroll online.



For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits or refer to your NYSUT Member Benefits Trust Summary Plan Description.

Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.

## STA Executive Board Meeting Minutes January 5, 2010

**Members Present:** Mary Beth Flatley, President; Kelly Healy, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President; Carol Carelli, Secretary; Alisha Couse, Treasurer; Bob Anderson, Chris Bailey, Lori Bittner, Deborah D'Arcangelis, Michael Foley, Cori Kinns, Kim Knapik, Joann Lasky, Mike Libertucci, Kevin Meachem, Carol Walker, Mary Zanta **Absent:** Kathy Cathell, Fred Orlando, Peter Rings, Carol Russell

The meeting was called to order at 3:37P.M.

Motion to approve the minutes of December 1, 2009 minutes (with corrections) made by Kelly Healy. Seconded by Kevin Meachem. Motion carried.

### Treasurer's Report - Alisha Couse

- Distributed budget as of January 5, 2010. Explained changes in the appearance and the categories with (-) balances. This will assist us in the budget preparation for next year so that money can be allocated to areas which are overspent. Alisha will provide balances of savings accounts and CDs at next meeting.

### Secretary's Report - Carol Carelli

- Cards were sent to Bob Anderson, Sandy Stryjek, Krista Gillis, Adam Labuda/Carrie Shapiro, and Kevin Mercoglan.

### Vice Presidents' Reports - Kelly Healy, 1<sup>st</sup> VP

- Kelly reported that the issue regarding nurse still not resolved and they are still working on a resolution.
- Mary Beth reported for Pete Rings, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP, Discussion of Flex Card for 125 accounts. There are still some unanswered questions as to the process and how the card would work. Mary Beth will ask Pete to see if he can get any more specific information as to how this would work.

### Bargaining Update - Mike Foley

- Mike will be meeting with Mary Beth, Valerie Kelsey and Marc Reitz on Thursday, January 7, 2010 to explore possibilities of where we can go given the state of the economy nationally and state-wide. Asked for input from the executive board regarding negotiating in the current climate.
- Discussion of declining enrollment and its effect on teachers' jobs. Will there be cuts? The district will have a better idea once the legislature passes a state budget and state aid is known.
- Important for all of us to actively stay involved in the negotiation process.

### President's Report - Mary Beth Flatley

- Race To The Top Federal Grant
  - States may apply for this federal money and are asking schools to support the NYS's effort in getting a share of the grant money
  - The amount of the grants will be based on Title I formula
  - The Superintendent needs to sign off on the grant indicating a willingness to support the initiatives included in the state's RTTT plan

## STA Executive Board Meeting Minutes January 5, 2010 (continued)

- The Commissioner of Education encouraged teachers' unions' presidents to sign a MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) indicating their willingness to support the initiatives as well. However, because the language is not clear and there were few specifics outlined in the proposal, STA was apprehensive about signing the MOU at this time. Mary Beth will relay this information to the Superintendent and will write a letter to the Board of Education outlining our reasons for not signing the MOU. This will not, however, prevent the district from obtaining their share of the grant, should New York State receive a portion of the federal money.
- Shared Decision Making - School Facilitation Teams
  - Explained the Shared Decision-Making process and the timeline in which it will be implemented. The district (at their January 6, 2010 faculty meetings) will present the plan to the teachers. This will be done jointly with the superintendent, STA president and other members of the Ad Hoc Committee who developed the plan.
  - All of the information outlining the plan will be sent to teachers. There will also be an opportunity for individuals to ask questions and express concerns through a survey which everyone will receive through Sabrenet (email).

### Building Concerns

- HS - Still problems with the heat - If other members are experiencing problems, please keep track with your thermometer and first let your building administrator know. If you continue to have problems, let Mary Beth know.
- Last Paycheck of 2009 - Teachers noticed differences in the amount received in their last paycheck of 2009. This was due to the additional life insurance and the tax liability and as discussed last year, will be an annual change for the last paycheck of the calendar year. If anyone has question, call or email Laura in Payroll.

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Kevin Meachem. Seconded by Mike Libertucci. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:21 P.M.

# STA Executive Board Meeting Minutes

## March 2, 2010

**Members Present:** Mary Beth Flatley, President; Kelly Healy, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President; Peter Rings, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President; Carol Carelli, Secretary; Alisha Couse, Treasurer; Bob Anderson, Chris Bailey, Lori Bittner, Kathy Cathell, Deborah D'Arcangelis, Cori Kinns, Kim Knapik, Joann Laski, Mike Libertucci, Kevin Meachem, Carol Walker, Mary Zanta **Members Absent:** Michael Foley, Fred Orlando, Carol Russell

The meeting was called to order at 3:38 P.M.

Motion to accept the minutes of the January 5, 2010 meeting was made by Kevin Meachem. Seconded by Kathy Cathell. Motion carried.

### Treasurer's Report - Alisha Couse

- Distributed budget as of March 1, 2010
- Update on STA funds - 2 - 6 month CDs - \$23,824.08. Savings account has \$10,330.47. Checking account fluctuates depending on when Payroll disperses dues money.

### Secretary's Report - Carol Carelli

- Cards sent to: Family of Sandra Stryjek, Carol Walker, Susan Cook, Kristen Brady, Kristen DiPiazza, Vince Carelli
- STATIC and STA Website won Award of Merit in the NYSUT Journalism Contest for Best Newsletter and Best Website in Class II. Congratulations were extended to Kelly Healy and Carol Carelli.

### 1st Vice President's Report - Kelly Healy

- Working with a teacher to regain certification.
- Explained the process for obtaining staff development for teachers who received initial certification on or after 2/2/2004.
- Recommended to all teachers to keep track of Professional Development hours on the card that was distributed in the fall. If teachers need another one, contact Donna Notar, STI Secretary.
- Clarification of mentor-teacher process for new teachers having a previous mentor.
- Working with Director of Athletics and HS Nurse to develop process for obtaining sports clearances.

### 2nd Vice President's Report - Peter Rings

- EBS was trying to deny coverage for contact lenses - Contract states that members are entitled to a two-year supply.

### President's Report - Mary Beth Flatley

- Sick Day usage for Sandie Stryjek - No STA members' sick days were needed for Sandie Stryjek
- Resignation of Carol Russell - HS Representative due to illness for the rest of 2009-10 school year. Will discuss with Kevin Meachem and Chris Bailey about appointing someone else for the remainder of the year or to just go with 3 reps until the next election.
- Race to the Top Application (RTTT) - received correspondence from three BOE members regarding STA's letter. Mary Beth also spoke with BOE President Thompson.
- Hoops for Haiti - Thanked STA member Stephanie Bush for her tremendous effort in putting together this event in such a short time. Thanked all members who supported this event. Also thanked Ryan's Embroidery for providing tee shirts for the players so quickly and inexpensively.

## STA Executive Board Meeting Minutes March 2, 2010 (continued)

- Elementary School supplies - There will be some cuts made to the school supply budget. Teachers should make sure that when requesting specific supplies, indicate specific brand on request list. (Crayola crayons, not just crayons).

Motion to move to Executive Session made by Alisha Couse. Seconded by Kim Knapik. Motion Carried.

Motion to move out of executive session made by Kathy Cathell. Seconded by Joann Lasky. Motion carried.

- Calendar for 2010-2011
  - Discussion of placement of elementary conferences and a staff development day
- Motion made to approve 2010-11 calendar made by Mike Libertucci. Seconded by Bob Anderson. Motion carried.
- MOU - April 2, 2010 Staff Development Day - the district is asking to change the times of the staff development day to 7:30 A.M. - 1:30 P.M. This will not affect the HS/MS contract. Motion made to approve the MOU made by Chris Bailey. Seconded by Lori Bittner. Motion carried.
- Personal day before a vacation - if you are taking a personal day before a vacation, you must verbally give the principal a reason.
- Shared Decision Making Plan - The plan is complete and will be reviewed by the Board of Education at the next meeting. Once it is approved, it will be distributed to the stakeholders.
  - Recommended that the following members participate on the school facilitation teams:
    - § HS - Adam Dolan, Mary Martini-Faith, Bronson Knaggs, Michele Guzek
    - § MS - Lorinda Gandrow, Elisa Pepe, Karen Lynch, Kate Sinnott
    - § Jefferson - Alisha Couse, Carol Walker, Betsy Wright, Amy Glick
    - § Mariaville - Kim Knapik, Debbie Carusone
  - There will be training on the April 2 Staff Development Day, coordinated by STI. Some topics will be focusing on team building, consensus and their role on the team.
- Seniority Lists - There have been a number of requests due to the recent layoff notices. Mary Beth is the spokesperson for the seniority lists. If any member has a question, please contact her.

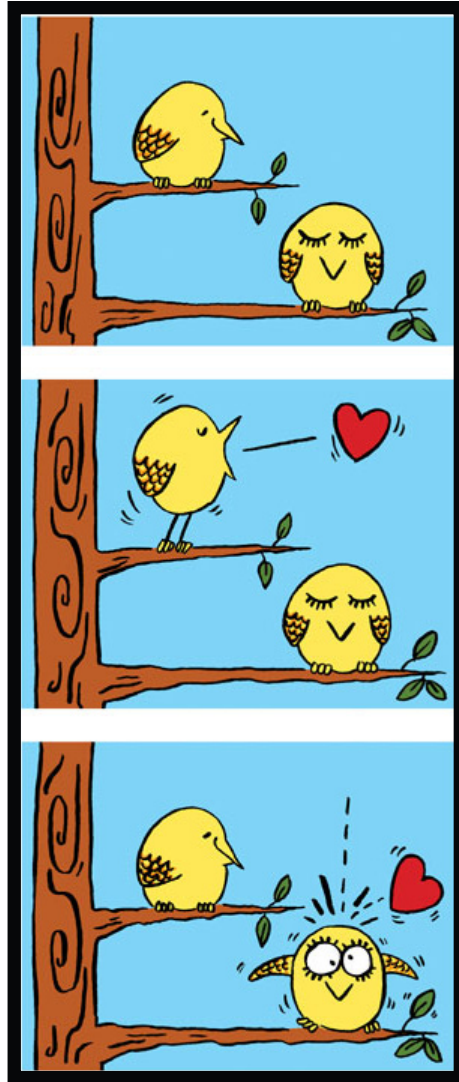
### Building Concerns

- HS - Health course being taught through Distance Learning after school. Will this set a precedent and potentially reduce the Health teacher position? Kevin Meachem has spoken with Terry Nash regarding this concern.
- MS - Joann Lasky - Political Action Co-coordinator indicated that the VOTE-COPE campaign will be starting shortly
- Question about sharing a nurse next year. It is a possibility and will be discussed during budget forums with community.
- Communication regarding STATIC minutes and grade level cabinet meetings at Jefferson. Miscommunication between principal and a teacher.

Motion to adjourn made by Kevin Meachem. Seconded by Mike Libertucci. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:52 P.M.

# Kooky Cartoon



*The STATIC* is the official publication of the Schalmont Teachers' Association, and is published during the school year. The Schalmont Teachers' Association is affiliated with the New York State United Teachers and the American Federation of Teachers.

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