

The Pipeline

Volume 2, Issue 2

November 2007

Don't forget to check out our website at www.otaonline.org for contacts, contract information, and more!

The President's Corner

Dear Colleagues,

I hope this letter finds that Thanksgiving was a big success and you all had a chance to visit with loved ones, watch the games, eat turkey and unwind just a bit. Speaking of games, as I write this note, our Varsity Football Team is preparing to play their next game in the Semi-Finals in Kingston, NY. The outcome has already been decided, but win or lose, we are SO proud of their accomplishments! LET'S GO "O"!

I should also mention our 4 teachers who have recently achieved National Board Certification! They are Stephanie Esposito, Marcie Variano, Tanya Lesser and Matthew Clayton. Congratulations! You have shown a superior commitment and dedication to your profession. The students of Ossining will benefit tremendously from your advanced education and expertise.

I am continually impressed that we teachers in Ossining are always striving to develop professionally, so that we might find a better way to help eradicate that achievement gap. With our continued effort and dedication, an answer can only be around the corner!

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These next few months will fly by as we go about the tasks at hand. Holidays, demands, expectations, deadlines, and commitments both personal and professional, can lead to stress and anxiety. Try to take a few minutes to notice the little rewards we achieve each and every day.....and then, READ YOUR CONTRACT!

Article X, pages 18 & 19, refer to INSTRUCTIONAL COUNCIL. If you have an educational/instructional concern or question which can't be resolved/ answered at the building level, you might want to ask your Building Vice Presidents to have your Instructional Council Representative put the issue on the agenda for their monthly meeting with the Superintendent. Letter C, #4 is of particular interest and should always be kept in mind as we teach our students. Students AND Teachers, deserve an environment conducive to learning and teaching!

Have a great holiday season and celebrate it all!!!

Terry Bartok

OTA: Shaping Ossining's Future!

New Member Information

During October our newest members received pamphlets developed by NYSUT related to Parent-Teacher Conferences and Certification. These pamphlets provide assistance and support for these two important aspects of our occupation. Remember our regional NYSUT office periodically provides video-conferences related to certification and is an excellent source of information and help. Our NYSUT Regional Office is located in Tarrytown and their phone number is (914) 592-4411.



School News

Roosevelt

So many wonderful things have been happening in the Roosevelt School PreK! Thanks to the PTA, each of the children was able to pick out their very own pumpkin from the "Roosevelt School Pumpkin Patch" and have individual pictures taken to commemorate the event. Later, the children painted them back in the classrooms and took them home for Halloween. We've also had a visit from the Ossining Fire Department during Fire Safety Month as well as music and puppets in our classrooms with Annie Grilli. The PreK children were also able to receive their first ever public library card! Each class had a visit and a tour at the Ossining Public Library. They had story time with the librarians and were able to check out books themselves. November culminated in a wonderful Thanksgiving Day Feast on Tuesday the 20th with a traditional meal for the children as well as a "Parents' Buffet."

Park

Congratulations to Loredana Dedvukaj and Adriana Tolosa! Recently Loredana and her husband welcomed their first child, Sarina. In addition, Adriana and her fiancé were married this past September. We offer our best wishes to both ladies during this exciting time in their lives!

Claremont

Congratulations to Ron Whitehead, art teacher, who led a fundraising effort to raise money for Sew Much Comfort. Sew Much Comfort provides adaptive clothing free of charge to support the unique needs of our injured service members from all branches of the military and national guard. Ron, with the help of teachers and staff members throughout the District, was able to raise a grand total of \$371.40.

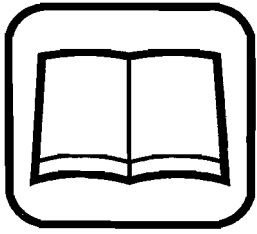
AMD

The Breast Cancer Walk was held on October 22, 2007 in Purchase, NY. Many OTA members along with family and friends joined together to walk for this great cause. Teachers from Brookside were able to raise \$400.00, while teaching assistants and teachers from Park and Claremont raised admirable amounts as well. AMD teacher Sarah Arbitrio raised an amazing \$3,000.00! AMD teacher Yvette Wilde raised \$500.00. We hope that more teachers will join in on the fight against Breast Cancer and raise money to Walk together next year!

Lisa Margolis gave birth to a healthy baby boy in October!

"I awoke this morning with devout thanksgiving for my friends, the old and the new."
-Emerson





Know Your Contract

ARTICLE VII. A. 2-6. Sick Leave (page 14 of your contract)

A. Sick Leave

2. If a teacher, by reason of illness, fails to complete a work day, the following procedure shall be applied: a teacher leaving work during the morning session shall be charged for one-half day of sick leave; a teacher leaving work during the afternoon session shall not be charged for sick leave.
3. After a total of ten (10) days' absence due to illness, the Superintendent may require a doctor's certificate upon a teacher's return to duty.
4. Sick days may be used for family illness as it relates to the spouse and children of OTA members of up to twelve weeks of accumulated sick time.
5. For family sick leave purposes (care of mother or father), a teacher shall be allowed to use accumulated sick days up to ten. After ten, the teacher would be required to pay the cost of the substitute.
6. A teacher is not able to use sick days under this provision for child care needs immediately after childbirth when the child's birth is medically considered to be without complications.

*"For all that has
been, thanks. For
all that will be,
yes."
-Dag
Hammar skjöld*

Ossining Staff Development Center

David and Ruth Schultz, age 5 and 4, respectively, were honored at a Nov. 19 event for having read or heard 1,000 books as participants in the "1,000 Books Project"-a community program developed three years ago by the Ossining Staff Development Center in cooperation with the Ossining Public Library to prepare children from birth through age 6 for reading success in school. David and Ruth join three other students who completed the program last year.

To participate in the program, parents can borrow canvas carry-bags, each filled with 10 age-appropriate books, from the children's room at the Ossining Public Library for a period of two weeks. At times during the summer, all 100 bags-which were sponsored by Ossining District faculty and staff, as well as members of the community for \$100 each-are on loan.

Due to the popularity of the 1,000 Books Project, the Ossining Staff Development Center has begun a second series consisting of 620 books made up of a combination of dual-language and multicultural variety for further benefit the entire community. These books have the text written in both English and another language, such as Spanish, Chinese, Portuguese, Indian and others, making it easier for parents who are more comfortable reading to their young children in their native language. This series of books exposes children to reading as well as to the understanding of different cultures. In addition, it brings the English translations to parents, who themselves may be learning a new language.

"The best way to put a child on the road to lifelong learning is to get them reading early and often," said Carole Ernest, director of the Ossining Staff Development Center. "The 1,000 Books Project is an ideal resource for parents who don't have the time or the means to select 1,000 age-appropriate books to enhance their child's love of reading, so we do that for them."

The Ossining Staff Development Center, funded through a state grant since 1992, assists teachers in their professional growth and enrichment by offering courses and workshops throughout the school year and summer months.



**Ossining Teachers
Association**

Phone: 914-941-2955
Fax: 914-941-2955
Email: mail@otaonline.org

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ONE TOGETHER ALWAYS!