

The Pipeline

Volume 3, Issue 1

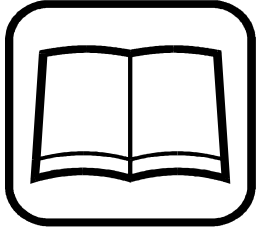
November 2008

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

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No Contract: Day 136



Know Your Contract

Article XVI, G. states:

This agreement shall be effective for a period commencing July 1, 2005 and continuing until June 30, 2008.

136 Days Without a New Contract!!

New Members

Did you know that nearly 33% of new teachers leave the profession after only three years and almost half leave after 5 years? Many of them cite the lack of professional support and guidance as their main reason for leaving. Your teacher colleagues are exceptional supports for you in your beginning years. They may not know you could use some support unless you ask them. I have not met a teacher here in Ossining who would not help me with any question or issue when asked.

Another support for new teachers is through a web site created by the American Federation for Teachers found at <http://www.aft.org/tools4teachers>. The web site features resources and communications tools that will appeal to all teachers. These interactive features allow educators to access a range of research-based information and to reach out to one another.

*“A verbal contract
isn’t worth the paper
it’s written on.”
-Samuel Goldwyn*

District Must Allow Teachers Paid Time for Screenings

Sections 159b and 159c of the New York State Civil Service Law allow public school teachers to take up to 4 hours of paid leave, during regular work hours, for breast cancer and prostate cancer screenings. This leave is granted annually, without a charge to your sick or personal days. However, it is not cumulative and does not carry over into following years. Any absence extending past the state mandated 4 hours should come from a teacher’s accrued sick days. The District is looking into how to notify the Subfinder system for these absences. For now, if a member needs to schedule their paid 4 hour release time for a mammogram or prostate screening, he/she should contact Linnea Carnes at 941-7700, extension 328.

Ossining Staff Development Center

We still have room in all courses. If you would like to register, please send your registration form and checks to Carole Ernest c/o OHS as soon as possible. Your early registration can prevent a course from being canceled due to low enrollment.

All courses are for one inservice credit. For more information and registration forms please go to the Ossining Staff Development site: <http://www.osdconline.org/>

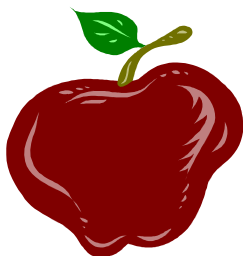
November 18 Registration Deadline:

Creating & Using Literacy Take Home Discovery Packs

Literature Circles

November 20 Registration Deadline:

Spanish for Educators



The President's Corner

Dear Colleagues,

I had sincerely hoped that our newsletter would come out this month discussing the attributes of a new and fair contract. Although I have noticed that other districts continue to settle with their union members, unfortunately, this is not the case for us in Ossining.

Instead, we get to rise each morning and head off to work, wondering how WE will be able to continue to pay those high food and energy bills, expenses like college loans or savings plans for our children, or even figuring out how to get by, now that OUR spouses, significant others or family members have either lost or are threatened with losing their jobs. We are being punished more than once. We are included in the population of losing much of what we've placed into our retirement accounts. We are included in having our lives disrupted in the same way all other Americans have had their lives disrupted, but in addition to this, the members of the Ossining Teachers Association must suffer the additional insult of having no contract. We OTA members are truly concerned about the state of the economy, but still deserve a fair contract. All over Westchester other teachers have been given the respect and consideration of settling with their districts and achieving fair agreements. It seems so unfair that the teachers who implement all the educational goals and aspirations of the District Superintendent and the School Board on behalf of its children, aren't considered important or worthwhile enough to receive what other professionals have received in this very district. Hard economic times have not discouraged the Ossining School Board from showing its gratitude for a job well done to a certain few.

We teachers will continue to do an exemplary job with our students because that is what we do. We will continue to take on more and more responsibilities, and work even harder than imagined. We will also continue to feel more and more unappreciated for the dedication we continue to give to this district and its families. It is becoming difficult to accept the accolades awarded to teachers from administration and school board members. If these words hold truth, why have we not arrived at a fair and equitable settlement?

The NYU Report states that one of Ossining's greatest strengths is found in its superior staff. Letters and phone calls from concerned parents recognize the positive and invaluable contributions of the Ossining teachers to their children's education. OTA members have stood in unity expressing their dismay and frustration over an expired contract. Clearly, all of this feedback received from a variety of sources should have motivated the School Board to approve a fair and just conclusion.

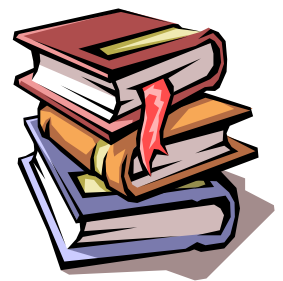
It is appalling and embarrassing that a group of individuals who have received accolades for so long for their hard work and dedication, and are told so very often how crucial we are to the success of Ossining's students, seem to be given punishment and are being used as a way to save money as a result of the times in which we live.

We deserve better than this!

Terry Bartok- OTA President



"We are obliged to respect, defend, and maintain the common bonds of union and fellowship that exist among all members of the human race."
-Cicero



Relay For Life

One of our OTA LAP initiatives was to be part of the first ever Ossining Relay for Life for the American Cancer Society. The event drew 130 people and raised almost \$25,000. The OTA provided 31 people and \$4743! Go, OTA! Be sure to thank the following individuals for a job well done:



AMD

Sarah Arbitrio
Allison Bacon
Pamela Barcia
Elizabeth Blye
Allison Dunkley
Nancy Durfy
Marybeth Griffin
Iris Rivie
Valerie Weinstein
Laurie West
Yvette Wilde
Sanam Shams
Dorian Burden
Brenda Hunter
Lauren Riccardi
Angelo Yumet

Brookside

Tara Reynolds
Marie Barrow
Celeste Theis
Ivy Taylor
Stacey Brown
Rachelle Furlan
Lorriane Richardson

OHS

Linda Cascioli
An Choumanova
Roxana Estrada
Tara Purdy
Kathy Schmitt
Margaret Whelan
Zachary Yonkler
Donna Love

*“Long ago we stated
the reason for labor
organizations. We
said that union was
essential to give laborers
opportunity to deal on
an equality with their
employers.”*
-U.S. Supreme Court

School News

Claremont

This year, School of Rock will be coming to Claremont School! An Ossining Matters grant was written by Brandon Beck at Claremont School, which will teach students to play the electric guitar during the afterschool HEROES program. Ten electric guitars have been ordered and the rest will be rock history. If anyone has any electric guitars or other musical instruments that they no longer have use for, please feel free to donate.

OTA Represents at the Ossining Matters Walk/Run

Proving that you can't keep a good man or woman down, the OTA was well represented at the Ossining Matters Walk/Run, despite searing heat and humidity and the threat of torrential downpours courtesy of tropical storm Hannah. On September 6, 2008, OTA runners and walkers joined stalwart members of the community to make the fund raising event a rousing, if damp, success. Other members worked at the OTA's refreshments table, where exhausted participants were provided with cool water, Gatorade, and nourishing snacks. In a show of support for this LAP team initiative, Tom Anapolis, NYSUT's Manager of Program Services and LAP Conference Coordinator, drove all the way from Albany to participate in the event, even doing "hard labor" alongside the OTA and the Ossining Matters organizers. His participation was most welcome.

For more information about Ossining Matters, or the Walk/Run, visit their website at www.ossiningmatters.org. While there, enjoy the photographs of the winners and participants, including the OTA. Many thanks to President Terry Bartok and 1st V.P. Sarah Arbitrio, as well as LAP members Valerie Weinstein, Laurie West, Barbara Rink (and Brian!), Ron Whitehead and Mary Beth Griffin, plus Yvette Wilde, Jennie Paul, Brenda Hunter, Bradley Morrison, Tim Scholten, Chad Schindler, Erica Olin, Dean Carretta, Mike Mery, Cynthia Burdwell, and Tom Anapolis from NYSUT.



Welcome New Teachers

Park



Natalia Cruz-Santiago is the new 1st Grade Dual Language Teacher in the English Zone. She graduated from Pace University in 2007. She received the Rockefeller Brother's Fund Fellowship for Aspiring Teachers of Color. Natalia is currently pursuing her Masters degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages at Lehman College. In the past she has taught in several self-created programs which include Project Empower: Want Power Explore History and Inglés en un Dos Por Tres where she taught English to students in the Dominican Republic. Natalia was also a substitute teacher in various districts and became a reading teaching assistant at Park School last year.

Cathy Ibanez is the new Art teacher at Park School! Previously, Mrs. Ibanez was an Art teacher at the Lee F. Jackson Elementary School in the Greenburgh Central 7 School District. Mrs. Ibanez is also the parent of students in the Ossining School District.

Megan Millet is a new teacher in the self-contained classroom at Park School. She has been working in a school setting for the past 4 years. She began as a substitute teacher in Ossining. When she was placed in a self-contained classroom she realized that is what she wanted to do. The following year she was a TA at Brookside school. The following 2 years she worked in Pleasantville at the Bedford Road Elementary school as a 1:1 aide for child on the autistic spectrum. It was a wonderful and rewarding experience that she loved.

Vanessa Santos is a new Kindergarten teacher at Park School! She graduated from Pace University with a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and a Master's degree in Literacy. She completed three years of student teaching in Ossining, working alongside many exceptional teachers. Her goal is to provide all students with equal opportunities to succeed.

Martin TeBrake is a new 1st Grade Teacher at Park School. He attended the Ossining Schools with the exception of 2 years that he spent at a school in Holland. He is a graduate of Fordham University and attended Fordham Law School. He received a Masters in Elementary Education from Long Island University. Teaching is his second career. Previously he taught 2nd grade at P.S. 24 in Riverdale.

Claremont

Marisa Micolucci is the new Art teacher at Claremont. Previously, she taught full time in two positions as an Art teacher and as a 5th grade Special Ed TA at Pocantico Hills School in Sleepy Hollow. She has also taught at Katonah Art Center through their outreach program. She received both undergraduate and master's degrees from Pace University and has a real passion for Art and Photography.

Dan Smith is the new Physical Education teacher at Claremont School. He worked in the District last year as a leave replacement at Park and AMD. His undergrad work was completed at SUNY Albany and his graduate work was completed at Manhattanville College. Dan is also the JV girls soccer coach at the High School.

AMD



JennyLynn Carey is new to Ossining after teaching 4th and 5th grade in the Bronx for two years and 2nd grade in Norwalk. She graduated with a BA in Psychology from UConn and an M.Ed. Curriculum and Instruction from Northeastern University in Boston. JennyLynn lives in Pleasantville with her husband, Andy, and three children, Kaitlyn, 6, Aidan, 2, and Ryan, 5 months. She enjoys camping, boating, the beach, and outdoors in the summer! JennyLynn teaches 6th grade Honors Math and Science and is having a fabulous time so far. The students enjoy learning and the staff has been welcoming and supportive.

Continued on page 6

*"We learn by
teaching."*

-James Howell

Welcome New Teachers, continued

Christine Chu, orchestra, is originally from Berkeley, California. She received degrees from the University of Michigan, Manhattan School of Music, SUNY Purchase, and Lehman College. She comes to AMD after a few years of teaching in Croton, NY and Greenwich, CT. In addition to being an educator, Christine is an active performer in the tri-state area as a cellist. She is excited to be joining the Ossining family!

Stephen Hancock is from the Bronx, New York and currently teaches 7th and 8th grade History at AMD. He is a recent graduate of St. Thomas Aquinas College. Stephen graduated this past May with a Bachelor of Science in Adolescent Education, History. This is his first year teaching and thinks that it has been a great experience so far. His colleagues at AMD are extremely helpful and have assisted him in becoming comfortable not only with the school, but also as a first year teacher. Stephen would like to take this opportunity to thank all of his colleagues for helping him and making him feel welcome at AMD. Stephen is thrilled to be a part of the Ossining family and is truly happy that he decided to begin his teaching career here at AMD.

Linda Mauskopf teaches Special Education Earth Science Regents, R.E.A.D., and RR. She has been teaching elementary school for 8 years in New Rochelle, Eastchester, and White Plains. Her Master's is from Manhattanville College, and her BA is from Tulane. Before becoming a teacher she was an actress in NYC and then became Director of Marketing for USA Network, moving to the same position at Cablevision Systems. She is thrilled to make this change to the middle school. It keeps her brain young!


Erica Naughton comes to Ossining with three years of teaching experience. She started as a NYC Teaching Fellow at Truman High School and then went to Mt. Vernon High School. Teaching is what she loves and is truly a satisfying career. Erica believes she has finally found her home in Ossining and thanks everyone for the warm welcome!

Elyse Ward is a new teacher! For the past 8 years she has been working as a hydrogeologist for a national environmental engineering firm. She has a Bachelor's in geology and got her Master's degree last year in Adolescent Education. She loves teaching Earth Science because what we teach in the classroom can be directly related to what's outside our windows.

Thank You Volunteers!!

The Annual OTA Back to School Picnic was another rousing success. Great food and great times were had by all. As always, we couldn't have done it without the help of our OTA volunteers, Christopher Engelhardt, Harry Quiroga, Walter Thut, and Ron Whitehead. Thanks guys!

Also, eight of our members gave up a day of their treasured summer vacations to perform the mundane task of data entry for our union. They met in Tarrytown on Monday, August 18 to start to build a spreadsheet we will be able to use to manage OTA communications and projects. Our NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist, JR Wilson, reserved space, the use of several computers, and arranged for lunch for them at the Tarrytown Regional Office. Thanks go out to Sarah Arbitrio, Deneen Burke, Marjorie Donahue, Carla Ofner, Tim Scholten, Valerie Weinstein, Linda Whitney, and Vette Wilde.



*“Education is the
transmission of
civilization.”
-Will Durant*

Congratulations

Park

Noreen Bello and her husband welcomed their son Gavin Anthony.

Julie Bucci and her husband welcomed their son Carter.

Laura Mckenna and her husband welcomed their son Michael Philip.

Christina Newman and her husband welcomed their son Jayden Chase.

Cathy Ruiz and her husband welcomed their daughter Ava.

Marcie Variano and her husband welcomed their son Matthew Brayden.

Congratulations ladies!!

Claremont

Claremont had 6 weddings this summer. Congratulations go out to **Sara DeGregorio**, 5th grade teacher, who is now Sara Baio, **Jen Hamel**, 5th grade teacher, who is now Jen Hudson, **Kim Harter**, 5th grade teacher, who is now Kim Cowan, Bobbi Conklin, special education teacher, who is now Bobbi Lampron, to 5th grade teacher **Jennie Paul** and to **Bill Casey**, also a 5th grade teacher. Julia Symer, a 4th grade teacher, got engaged this summer, too!


AMD

On August 20th, **Erik Block**, Special Education Teacher at AMD, and his wife Christine welcomed their son Brandon into the world. Husband and wife are proud to report that Brandon is doing well and he can't wait to meet all of you!

Sarah Arbitrio is the first person from OTA to be invited to attend the NYSUT Leadership Institute. This summer, she attended the week long intensive training provided jointly by NYSUT and the faculty of Cornell University's ILR (Industrial Labor Relations) School. There were seventy-one participants this year, the largest group ever. The group included members from every corner of New York State, from locals of every size and from all the different segments of NYSUT's membership, teachers, nurses, school-related professionals, and college professors. During their week at Cornell, participants learned about the history of labor in the United States, the history of teachers' unions in New York, institutional change, leadership styles, and the concept of unions as vehicles for social justice. Each participant has selected a project to work on within their own local this year. They will continue their training and work over a long weekend in March at NYSUT headquarters in Latham, NY.

OHS

Congratulations go out to Dr. Christina Occhiogrossi, Ossining alum and current English teacher, who got married this summer to former OTA member and OHS Dean of students John Fink.




*“Let us never
negotiate out of fear.
But let us never fear
to negotiate.”
-John F. Kennedy*

Calendar of Events

OTA Calendar of Events

For information about any of these events, contact your
Building level OTA representative

- Nov. 7 -“First Friday” Social Black Jack’s, Croton
Bring a book to donate to the Veterans Administration OR
\$2.00 contribution to “Dress Sew Comfortable”
-Friday – wear black OTA shirt
- Nov. 10 -Dress Sew Comfortable Fund raiser to support disabled veterans
- Nov. 12 -Walk-in Wednesday District-wide entry
-Board of Ed 7:30
Arrive before 7:10 to line hallway, wear black OTA shirt
- Nov.14 -Friday – wear black OTA shirt
- Nov. 19 -Walk-in Wednesday District-wide entry
-extended day
- Nov. 21 -Friday – wear black OTA shirt
- Nov. 26 -Walk-in Wednesday District-wide entry
- Dec. 3 -Walk-in Wednesday District-wide entry
- Dec. 5 -“First Friday” Social (Place to be announced)
(Contribution/Cause to be announced)
-Friday – wear black OTA shirt
- Dec. 9 -Board of Ed 7:30
Arrive before 7:10 to line hallway, wear black OTA shirt
- Dec. 10 -Walk-in Wednesday District-wide entry
- Dec. 12 -Friday – wear black OTA shirt
- Dec. 17 -Walk-in Wednesday District-wide entry
- Dec. 19 -Friday – wear black OTA shirt
- Jan. 7 -Walk-in Wed District-wide entry
- Jan. 9 -“First Friday” Social (Place to be announced)
(Contribution/Cause to be announced)
-Friday – wear black OTA shirt
- Jan. 14 -Walk-in Wednesday District-wide entry
- Jan. 16 -Friday – wear black OTA shirt
- Jan. 21 -Walk-in Wednesday District-wide entry
- Jan. 23 -Friday – wear black OTA shirt
- Jan. 28 -Walk-in Wednesday District-wide entry
-Board of Ed 7:30
Arrive before 7:10 to line hallway, wear black OTA shirt
- Jan. 30 -Friday – wear black OTA shirt



*“Education means
inspiring someone’s
mind, not just filling
their head.”
-Katie Lusk*

**Ossining Teachers
Association**

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Linda Whitney
OHS- Dawn Bayer
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**Pipeline
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ONE TOGETHER ALWAYS!