



NTEA Connection



NTEA Website: www.nteaonline.org

1619 State Street, Olympia, WA 98506 Phone: 360-352-5220 FAX #360-352-7361

President's Corner

October, 2004

The first month of school is behind us and what a busy month it has been. Teachers are back in their classrooms, levels testing has begun, effective schools strategies are looming, and we ratified a new, three year collective bargaining agreement. We have had our first opportunity to engage in a nonstudent / professional development day. Certainly we have been afforded many experiences in the first month of school.

Monday, September 27, 2004, the school board unanimously voted to approve our new contract. I had the opportunity to thank the board for approval and speak to the interest-based collaborative process. We have begun our first steps. Some believe these are baby steps, which may well be true. These steps will lead to our competitive goal.

In addressing the board I spoke to the fact that it is no secret that North Thurston Public Schools (NTPS) fall short of the state average in the compensation of extra days. A yearly comparison shows that we have made gains with this contract, but we have miles to travel to competitively compare with other districts in the state. We can't forget the loss of 50 teachers and 20 plus assistants and the subsequent impact that loss has had on our classrooms. We know that if we were to agree to forfeit another 20 or 30 teachers, we would be within the average Basic Education Allocation (BEA) that the state provides. The feedback that I have received from most of you is that we are not ready to increase class size beyond contractual limits to obtain extra compensation.

I believe that we, as an Association, *working together can make a difference*. I appreciate the input that I have received this month concerning all the topics mentioned in this newsletter. We need to continue to move forward, and we will. Stay informed, access the NTEA website at www.nteaonline.org. Changes that will benefit education will have to start with leadership at the national and state levels. To that end, you may easily access WEA's website from the NTEA site to obtain voting information.

We are in the process of an evolutionary change that will make NTEA stronger. Working with the district, our classrooms can and will continue to be among the "most effective" in the state.

I will conclude on a positive note, the school board vice president, Aaron Owada, praised the efforts of each and every teacher in our district at Monday's school board meeting. As Aaron was speaking, I noted the nodding heads around the table and around the board room. I agree with his comments -- your dedication to our students is to be commended. Congratulate yourselves for your excellence in education.



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EXPECT SUCCESS



Welcome to new staff members:
Shannon Gifford (Pl. Glade),
Jerome Huff (Horizons),
Patty May (SSHS),
Curtis Baird (Woodland),
Michelle Darragh (Komachin),
Patrick Earing (RRHS),
Debra Floyd (So. Bay) and
Zandrea Shattuck (THS).

Thought for The Month!

“Just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn’t mean politics won’t take an interest in you.”

Pericles, 430 BC



Did You Know?

- Your UniServ Council, WEA Chinook, offers support for those who are stressed over meeting new or unfamiliar demands or those who want to strengthen professional practices. If you feel that you could benefit from having the opportunity to discuss and work with peer from another school district, this program is for you. The program is completely confidential and requires self referral. To access this program go to www.wea-chinook.org and look under “Peer Support.”
- If you are a part-time employee and attended both days of the District’s LID days, you can count part of that as staff development time. Part-time employees are entitled to their FTE portion of LID days. In other words, if you are a half-time employee, you would have had to work only one of the two days. If you worked both, you could count seven hours towards your staff development time. I’d encourage you to call the NTEA Office if you have any questions about this issue.
- LID days are like any other contract days. Individuals who were sick, had to attend a funeral, were called for jury duty, etc., may utilize the appropriate leave and be paid for that day. You also have the option to make that day up by utilizing an appropriate LID training.
- We are in a continual bargaining process, so "openers" can be bargained throughout the year and added to our contract.
- September’s paycheck for health care looked grim.

Health Care Costs

Health care is an issue throughout the state, and our district is no exception. Attempts to improve out-of-pocket premium expenses have become the goal. September’s medical expenses were a shocking surprise to many members. The test to determine if we have made improvement will come in the October paycheck. NTEA is expecting that you will see a marked decrease in out-of-paycheck costs for your health care premiums. You have until October 11th to change your health care provider. I strongly encourage you to look at your options and choose the plan that most effectively fits your situation.

E-mail Service Now Available for WEA Members

A new home page and free e-mail service for WEA members, www.MyWEA.com, is now available. MyWEA.com is a members-only site that will feature a mix of member profiles, classroom tips, discussion forums and current issues. In addition to an e-mail Web interface that’s free of the annoying ads found on other commercial services, WEA members can use www.MyWEA.com to register the pewter key rings that were given out this fall with local membership materials.



"WEA Chinook will be holding a pre-retirement seminar for Plan 1 TRS and PRS members."



Ways to Help Your Child Learn Available

The Washington Education Association has provided the NTEA with copies of their booklet, 52 Ways to Help Your Child Learn. This helpful booklet gives suggestions for activities that parents and children can both participate in and ways to encourage learning for students in elementary school. Copies are also available in Spanish and Russian and can be distributed to parents during parent-teacher conferences.

If you would like to have the booklets for your conferences, call the NTEA Office.

NEA Member Benefits Provides October Web Site Giveaway

NEA members can register anytime during the month of October 2004 in the "Members-Only" area of the NEA Member Benefits Web Site (www.neamb.com) for a chance to bring the world of wildlife into his or her school's classroom. Enter to win a visit by one of Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom ambassadors, Jim Fowler or Peter Gros. Along with their furry and feathered friends, Fowler or Gros will share a special conservation message and encourage students to take an active role in protecting the earth's wildest places. Mutual of Omaha will work with the winner to schedule a school program on a mutually agreeable date to occur in the period from November 2004 through January 2005! Giveaway entry begins on October 1, 2004 and ends on October 31, 2004. No purchase is necessary to enter.



Looking for a Conference, Class or Workshop?

The following offering has come to our attention:

Tips and Traps of Parent-Teacher Conferences

WEA Chinook and the Washington State PTA are sponsoring this workshop. Information about how to get the most from conferences, attitudes for a successful conference, and pitfalls to avoid, will be discussed from both the parents' and teachers' perspectives. Lots of time for discussion and questions will be provided. There is no charge for the workshop or dinner. The presentation is scheduled for Wednesday, October 15th, from 5:15 - 8:00. Registration is limited and the deadline for application is October 11th. To register call 943-1776.



WEA Chinook Offers TRS and PRS Plan 1 Pre-Retirement Seminar

Retirement ... an ideal that we look forward to for many years, but do little about until the last moment. Yes, most of our members are unprepared for retirement. A wonderful opportunity to do that is provided for you at no cost AND you get meals for free!!

Once again, WEA Chinook will be holding a pre-retirement seminar for Plan 1 TRS and PRS members. The seminar is sched-



Teacher Leslie Van Leishout and the River Ridge Theater Department were recognized for being "one of the outstanding high school theater programs in the nation..."

uled for Friday, November 5 (6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.) and Saturday, November 6 (8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.). Topics covered include: Teacher and Public Employee Retirement System, estate planning, financial planning, social security and health insurance plans. Meals provided will be dinner on Friday night (5:30 p.m.), continental breakfast and lunch on Saturday. There is no cost for any WEA member. A \$15.00 good faith pre-registration fee is required and will be returned on the 15th to those members who attend. Spouses will need to mail in a separate non-refundable check for \$25.00.

If you'd like to register, please call Jeannette at 943-1776. The class usually fills rapidly so its important that you pre-register early. If you have further questions, please contact Helen Carlstrom at 352-8741.

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Congratulations

Congratulations to Leslie Van Leishout and the River Ridge Theater Department for being recognized as one of the outstanding high school theater programs in the nation by the Educational Theater Association.

THE CLASSIFIEDS

WANTED :

The River Ridge High School Theatre is looking for a pianist. This is a paid position for the musicals, *Seussical* and *West Side Story*. The schedule is flexible. *Seussical* will run and rehearse September - November. *West Side Story* will rehearse and play January through March. For complete details call Leslie at 412-4837 or 753-1617 or e-mail lvleishout@nthurston.k12.wa.us.

WANTED: Used sewing machine. Call Jane at 456-5466.

FOR RENT: Condo available on Lake Chelan at Wapato Point December 23 - 30. Sleeps five. Skiing, ice skating, indoor pool. Cost: \$500. Call Dave at 455-7187.

FOR SALE: Treadmill good shape. Heavy-duty. Works well and is quiet. Cost: \$250 Call Frank at 866-0351.

1940's Singer Featherweight 221 Sewing Machine. Decals perfect. A few pin scratches on the surface. Sews great. Comes with case and accessories. Cost: \$395. Call Julie at 357-4933 in the evenings.

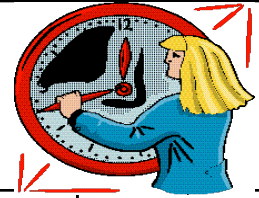
1994 Astro Van all wheel drive. Seats eight and easily converts to cargo, ABF brakes, air conditioning, cruise control. The van has 128,000 miles. Cost: \$4500. Call Mark or Colleen at 866-6122.

FREEBIES: Habla Espanol? Would you like an opportunity to practice conversing in Spanish a couple of times per month? Get together with other school district staff for relaxed conversation (and socializing).





October 2004



day	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
				Librarians Hawks Prairie 7:00 a.m.	River Ridge Luau 6:00	
				1	2	
3	Bargaining NTEA Office 9:30 Contract Admin 4:00 School Board 7:00 4	5	NTEA Exec. Board NTEA Office 4:00 6	7	Professional Development (State) Day NO SCHOOL 8	9
10	Columbus Day Local Presidents Meeting WEAC Office 11	12	Late Start, Middle & High Schools Meet with Supt. 9:00 13	14	PEAC Meeting WEAC Office 4:30 PM 15	Ramadan Begins 16
17	School Board Meeting 7:00 18	19	State Local Presidents Meeting 8:00 NT Citizens for Schools Mtg 20	21	NTEA Rep Council District Boardm 5:00 22	Coordinated Bargaining WEAC Office 4:30 23
24	Meet with Supt. 11:45 School Board Work Session 25	26	NT Citizens for Schools Mtg Venture Bank 27	28	Late Start, Middle & High Schools 29	30
31	Halloween Daylight Savings Time Ends (Set clocks back one hour)	Conferences No School				

