# SHTAnews

No. 3 • 15 November 2010

## **Message From the President**

Throughout my presidency I have made every effort to focus on professional issues and to look for the positive aspects in the many problem-solving situations that have occurred. If you look forward to that approach, you may want to skip the next three paragraphs.

At the October meeting of Representative Council, the representatives from Mercer requested information about the evaluation process for tenured teachers. The teachers at Mercer had not received the envelopes from the Personnel Department that indicated their status (due, not due, overdue). Everyone else at Representative Council had received their information in mid-September. When I contacted the Mercer administrator, he indicated that he followed all the appropriate procedures regarding evaluation information. But after checking with the building representatives (again), they indicated that no one had their evaluation information.

After more evasion from the building administrator, I emailed the administrator and asked "At this moment, have all of the Mercer teachers received this information for the 2010-2011 school year?" This was at 9:28 a.m. At 10:44 a.m. I received this reply "Dr. Thomas, At this moment all of the Mercer teachers have received this information for the 2010-2011 school year." Of course, during the hour between my question and the response, the building administrator scurried around the school delivering the envelopes!

Isn't it unethical to withhold critical information about evaluation procedures? This is not the first year that this has happened at Mercer. The representatives indicated that they have not received this information for several years. Meanwhile, the "resolution" of this situation from the central office administrators was to have the Mercer administrator offer extensions to the teachers. This has not been done. So, I am doing it:

Any Mercer teacher who wants an extension for her/his evaluation should email Lisa Howell, Personnel Administrator and cc me (Thomas\_R). If there is any problem with any extension, I will deal with it.

This is why employees need to be part of a collective that represents their interests. This is why we need a contract that deals specifically with management and labor relations. All it takes is one arrogant or inept administrator to undermine our role as professionals. Read John Morris's editorial for his perspective on the importance of organized labor.

On a positive note, Paul Repasy, head representative from the Middle School, and I met with Danny Young, Middle School principal to discuss learning walks. The conversation was open and informative. It was a good opportunity to meet with Mr. Young in his new role and

discuss different aspects of the Middle School program. I was really impressed with Mr. Young's flexibility—even before we met he had taken the opportunity to review the documents on learning walks and revised the checklist that had been developed.

Also looking at the positive, there were several concerns discussed at the November meeting of Representative Council that have received immediate responses from the Administration. Dr. Bernice Stokes has followed up with concerns from Woodbury about construction noise as well as report card concerns from Mercer and Onaway. When representatives bring issues to Representative Council, they do so with the intent of improving instruction and/or communication. If construction noise is interfering with instruction, that is not a petty issue. We are here to teach and our students deserve every opportunity to concentrate and learn. If there are problems with report cards (or the computers that we use to prepare the cards), that needs to be addressed. I appreciate that Dr. Stokes recognized the importance of the concerns that were expressed.

And here is one more positive item. Be sure to read Debbie Ashbaugh's report on the christening of the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association boat for the women's crew team at the high school. I was pleased to be included at this occasion.

Usually the Representative Council does not meet in December and there is not a December Newsletter. I would like to take this opportunity to wish each of you a relaxing holiday season with time for family, friends, celebration, and rest. Best wishes for 2011.

Respectfully submitted, Rebecca Thomas, president

# Reports from the Executive Board

#### VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is amazing that the year is progressing so quickly. Join me in congratulating the forty SHTA Fellows 2010-11

Boulevard	Carmen	Chung	
Boulevard	Bonnie	Jasiunas	
Boulevard	Naomi	Loges	
Boulevard	Tina	McCauley	
Boulevard	Lauren	Rollins	
Fernway	Jim	Belk	
Fernway	Michelle	Berggrun	
Fernway	Pam	Luksenburg	
Fernway	Wendy	McGuffin-Cawley	
Fernway	Kathleen	Mohney	
Lomond	Elisabeth	Bates	
Lomond	Elizabeth	Brazalovics	
Lomond	James	Henry	
Lomond	Cyndy	Steiner	
Lomond	Paula	Weizer	
Mercer	Robyn	Feinstein	
Mercer	Karen	Tritt	

Mercer Bonnie Hoynacke Onaway/Blvd Qiuhui Li Susan Onaway Mears Woodbury Robert **Bognar** Woodbury James Caffrev Woodbury Darlene Garrison Woodbury Ruth Heide Woodbury Aisha Mason SMS Kellv Anderson SMS Pamela Katz SMS Susan Landi **SMS** Linda Roth Mike **SMS** Sears SMS Addie Tobey **SMS** Erik **Johnson** Kenneth Culek SHHS **SHHS** Amanda Rabatin **SHHS** David Klapholz SHHS John Moore SHHS Piya Roy SHHS Robert Schneider SHHS Robin **Taylor** SHHS Alisa Warshay

These members have earned \$100 that they can use to promote their professional development.

I would like to take this time to remind you of the annual PTO Council campaign. I am asking that you seriously consider making a contribution to the annual campaign if you have not yet done so. The Council is responsible for the creation and distribution of the calendar that I know so many of us use on a daily basis. Please send these contributions through school mail to the Administration Building to the attention of PTO.

I also hope that by this time you have received a letter to encourage your participation in the Night for the Red and White. For the first time, you should have received this letter electronically. Attached to the email is a contribution form as well as information regarding staff ticket pricing. I hope that you will consider attending and making a contribution to the Silent Auction.

I wish you all a happy and safe Thanksgiving!

Respectfully submitted, Dollye Finney, vice president

#### TREASURER'S REPORT

The Investments Committee (made up of Darcel Arrington, Todd Keitlen, Matt Zucca, Dollye Finney and myself) met with Brady Krebs, our Edward Jones advisor, at the end of October to discuss our investments. Our investments with Edward Jones are currently up over \$700,000. The current financial report is attached.

Respectfully submitted, Bill Scanlon, Treasurer

#### SALARY TENURE COMMITTEE

We have had two meetings to negotiate with the Superintendent and his team. On October 14, we exchanged our packages focusing on our expectations for the collaborative process. We met again on October 26. Our team has also been meeting to discuss the process and our priorities. At this point, there are no specifics that can be shared.

I do not expect to have a completed agreement prior to December 31, 2010. Please understand that if there is no agreement, our current agreement remains in effect. I will send you an update in December after we have held more discussions.

Respectfully submitted, Rebecca Thomas, chairperson

FINANCIAL	REPORT	
7/1/10	11/8/10	
COMPOSITE BALANCE		
Balance 7/1/10		802,998.46
Receipts 7/1/10 to present		21,188.55
Change in Valuation 7/1/10 to present		66,105.67
		890,292.68
Expenditures 7/1/10 to present		-5,941.96
Expenditures charged to last fiscal year 2009-2010		-3,674.71
TOTAL		880,676.01
BANK AND BROKER RECONCILIATIONS		
A. BUCKEYE STATE CREDIT UNION (BSCU) (11/3/10)		
Certificates of deposit		
24 mo. @ 3.0% APY-Matures on 2/02/11	<u>44,054.96</u>	
Total Certificates of deposit		44,054.96
Savings accounts ( 0.50% APY)		101.30
Share draft account (0.25% APY)		21,796.44
Unposted deposits and transfers		<u>0.00</u>
		65,952.70
Less outstanding checks		<u>0.00</u>
TOTAL BSCU		65,952.70
B. EDWARD JONES (10/29/10)		
Regular Association Account	392,838.20	
Advisory Solutions Account	355,814.40	
	300,011110	748,652.60
C. KEY BANK (11/3/10)		
Certificates of deposit		
29 mo. @ 2.15%-Matures on 9/6/11	20,724.43	
Total Certificates of deposit		20,724.43
Business Money Market Account (0.35% APY)		45,990.15
Unposted deposits and transfers		0.00
2		66,714.58
Less outstanding checks		-643.87
TOTAL KEY BANK		66,070.71
TOTAL		880,676.01

<b>Budgeted Account</b>	s					
	7/1/10					11/8/10
Account	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Debits</u>	Transfers out	<u>Credits</u>	Transfers in	<u>Balance</u>
Accounting	3000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,000.00
Compensation for officers,						
representatives, et al.						
President	9302.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	9,302.00
Vice President	5581.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,581.00
Secretary	5581.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,581.00
Treasurer	5581.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,581.00
P.R. & R. Chairperson	5581.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,581.00
Editor	4653.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,653.00
Building reps. and alternates	10000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10,000.00
Conferences and meetings	2500.00	687.82	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,812.18
Contingency	250.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	250.00
Fellowships and Grants	4000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,000.00
Insurance	5000.00	4,375.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	625.00
Legal	5000.00	300.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,700.00
Negotiations	50000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	50,000.00
Executive Board expenses	500.00	88.93	0.00	0.00	0.00	411.07
Officers' expenses	500.00	75.21	0.00	0.00	0.00	424.79
Payroll taxes	700.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	700.00
Professional day	200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	200.00
Publications	1000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00
Public Relations	7000.00	415.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,585.00
Social	2500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,500.00
STRS(TPO contributions)	9000.00	0.00	<u>0.00</u>	0.00	<u>0.00</u>	9,000.00
TOTAL	137429.00	5,941.96	0.00	0.00	0.00	131,487.04

#### PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A few members recently asked me about our rights related to "unruly" students and maintaining a safe and secure environment for the rest of our students. First, I'd like to remind everyone to look over your handbook from your building principal. If this handbook is not specific, ask your principal about the building policy. Or, ask your SHTA building representative to discuss this at a meeting with the principal.

Most of us understand the basic, pro-active measures we all take to effectively manage a classroom. For example, structured lesson plans with clear instructions and expectations usually help the majority of our students stay on task. When a student misbehaves, it is always good to have an action plan with a series of steps including calls home, detentions, notes to the principal, etc.

A more serious concern arises when a student is out of control and could injure other students or teachers. In these cases, it is difficult to find one consistent approach that works best in all buildings or in all situations. Calling the office may be the protocol in some buildings, while calling security may be the first option in others. If help does not arrive quickly enough, calling 9-1-1 is definitely appropriate if the circumstances demand such action. Teachers are not expected to break up fights, but may feel inclined to do so. Teachers also have the right to protect themselves.

According to the Ohio Revised Code Section 3319.41 Corporal Punishment Policy, letter (C), "Persons employed or engaged as **teachers**, principals, or administrators in a school, whether public or private, and non-licensed school employees and school bus drivers **may**, within the scope of their employment, use and apply such amount of force and restraint as is reasonable and necessary to quell a disturbance threatening physical injury to others, to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects upon the person or within the control of the pupil, for the purpose of self-defense, or for the protection of persons or property."

Amended by 128th General Assembly File No. 9, HB 1, § 101.01, eff. 10/16/2009. Effective Date: 10-29-1996

This law clearly gives us the right to use force and restraint to stop a disturbance or protect our students or ourselves from physical injury. If we are assaulted by a student, it is our responsibility to file a report with the school nurse. We also have the right to file charges against the student by completing a police report.

While we hope these situations are rare, I thought it would be a good time to remind the membership about the rights we do have in these cases. Finally, if anyone is approached about disciplinary action related to physical contact with a student, make sure you bring SHTA representation to the meeting. If you are acting to protect yourself or your students, it is unlikely that disciplinary action will occur.

Respectfully submitted, Mike Sears, chairperson

#### LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Are Changes Coming with the Kasich administration?

Since John Kasich was elected governor on November 2, I have been watching and looking and waiting to hear something substantive about his plans for education. His campaign website, still functioning, gives a short outline of his priorities. He hopes to scrap Strickland's plans for the reform of educational funding. In a *Plain Dealer* article that compared the two men on this issue, both accused the other of bringing more unfunded mandates and higher property taxes to districts around the State. Strickland defends the current status of his plans, citing that the economy has prevented his proposed reforms from taking shape. Regardless, Kasich has made it clear that he plans to scrap what Strickland has set into motion. Just after he was elected, Kasich made the comment that he hopes that Ohio's school districts will become more "business-like." He said he hopes to fix the flawed system of school funding, and plans on expanding the school choice voucher program.

What Kasich has proposed, in addition to changing the Stickland plan for funding, is an increased focus on the use of technology for instruction. He has also stated on numerous occasions that Ohio school districts are top-heavy, and has hinted at consolidating districts, particularly rural ones, under more centralized administrations. Finally, he emphasizes the importance of making teachers accountable. A particularly troubling quote from Kasich: "Now my concern with the teachers union is that I am convinced they are a lot more concerned with their own situation rather than the situation of our children."

It shall be interesting to see, in the coming months, what all of this means and how it translates into a real plan.

Respectfully submitted, Anna Hruby chairperson

#### PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

This past month I attended the christening of a Shaker girls' crew team boat with our Associations name on it. Some of our members might remember that last year we were presented with a public relations opportunity by someone associated with the Shaker girls' crew team to have our Associations name put onto one of their boats for a small donation to their organization. As many of you know we make a variety of limited donations each year to organizations that support the Shaker students and community in positive ways. This donation fell under those guidelines. The Shaker girls crew team organization worked hard to get our name on one of their boats and when completed we were invited to attend the christening to see our Associations name on the boat. Myself, Dr. Thomas and Matt Zucca attended the christening in the flats on Halloween day. We were treated to a very nice, traditional boat christening ceremony and we were able to take pictures for our members to see. Those pictures will soon be available on shtaweb.org! Please look for our Associations name on one of the girls' crew team boats the next time you attend one of their events!

Respectfully submitted, Debbie Ashbaugh, chairperson

#### POLICY COMMITTEE

This month's 'Law-in-the-Limelight' is from **By-Law V, Part G**: Legal Aid.

One of the 'safety nets' that the SHTA provides its members is financial aid for legal support. The fund is not used often, and of course there are checks and balances. But if a member needed a lawyer for a problem involving work in the Shaker Schools, our association has the procedures in place to help out.

Here is part of the Article:

- G. Legal Aid Committee
- 1. Funding
- a. Funding for this committee shall be from the general savings account and from voluntary contributions. The Treasurer shall designate the general savings accounts of the Association as the Legal Aid Fund.
- b. A purpose of the fund shall be to provide available resources for legal and or related services for the Association as authorized by the Executive Board.
- c. A further purpose of the fund shall be to provide monies to assist any members of the Association who may need legal aid in connection with their employment in the Shaker Heights City Schools.

Respectfully submitted, David Klapholz, chairperson

#### SOCIAL COMMITTEE

It is time to take a break and relax.....On Friday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, please join us at JILLIAN'S for a night full of fun!!!! There will be line dancing, eating, pool, socializing and toasting. You never know, you may even win one of our lovely prizes. We hope to see you there!!! Please view the attached flyer for more details.

Respectfully submitted, Darlene Garrison, chairperson

#### SECRETARY'S REPORT

MINUTES FOR THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL MEETING
November 8, 2010
Boulevard School

The President, Rebecca Thomas, called the meeting to order at 4:29 p.m.

Dollye Finney welcomed the SHTA representative council on behalf of Colleen Longo, principal of Boulevard School.

The minutes of the October meeting were approved.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT: Lisa Howell and Dr. Stokes attended the meeting. There was no report.

PTO REPORT: Karen Slovikovski, PTO Council Co-president, stated that the council was preparing the nominating board for next year. PTO Council Members met with members of One Shaker to discuss how they could meet the needs of the students better.

#### **OFFICERS' REPORTS:**

#### **PRESIDENT**

Dr. Thomas sent a letter to Dr Freeman regarding how evaluations were handled at Mercer. She stated that Mercer teachers who wish to have an extension for their evaluation should notify her.

Dr. Thomas met with Middle School Representative Paul Repasy and Principal Danny Young. They discussed the Middle School "Walk Through" program to get a better understanding of the process.

She attended the Instructional and Administrative Council meeting that discussed employee evaluation and disciple.

Dr. Thomas discussed the new Lice Protocol for the district.

She questioned the advertisements sent to potential parents in the Mercer neighborhood and how the ad was worded.

She met with Bryan Christman and Dr. Freeman to discuss the changes in the states new healthcare requirements.

#### **VICE-PRESIDENT**

Dollye Finney announced the winners of the SHTA fellowships. The winners will have their names published in this month's newsletter.

She stated she has worked on the first phase for the Race to the Top grant.

Ms. Finney announced The Night for the Red & White letter will be sent out to staff members electronically. She encourages members to make donations to the silent auction.

#### **SECRETARY**

Matt Zucca took attendance.

#### **TREASURER**

Bill Scanlon presented and discussed our current financial report. He attended the meeting with our financial planner and the SHTA's Investment Committee. He is waiting to-hear back from the Associations' accountant and the required audit.

#### **EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS**

#### LEGISLATIVE

Anna Hruby discussed plans to write about Governor-elect Kasich's education plan.

#### **POLICY**

Dave Klapholz had no report.

#### MEMBERSHIP AND ELECTIONS

Stacy Elgart reported that we currently have 415 members. She stated membership has gone down due to attrition

#### TEACHER EDUCATION

Steve Smith had no report.

#### PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Mike Sears stated that members familiarize themselves with the building procedure for handling classroom emergencies.

#### PUBLIC RELATIONS

Debbie Ashbaugh announced the Association's donation to the Female Crew team for the naming rights to one of the team's boats. She attended the boat christening ceremony along with Dr. Thomas and Matt Zucca.

#### **PUBLICATIONS**

John Morris said that items for the newsletter need to be sent to him by midnight on Wednesday at morris\_j@shaker.org.

#### LEGAL AID

Chante Thomas-Taylor had no report.

#### **SOCIAL**

Darlene Garrison supplied flyers to building reps for our social event scheduled for Friday, November 19<sup>th</sup> at Jillian's in Cleveland Heights. The membership is invited for socializing, food, pool, fun, and door prizes! She encourages all to come.

#### SALARY/TENURE

Rebecca Thomas stated negotiations are progressing. The negotiating team has met many times to prepare for their meetings with the administration.

#### **BUILDING REPORTS**

The following reps asked questions, expressed concerns, or made statements on behalf of the membership in their buildings:

Onaway asked that Assist Now brochures be distributed. They also expressed concerns about formatting problems regarding the districts report cards and Macintosh operating systems.

Woodbury stated that new teachers did not get their evaluation information by the September 30<sup>th</sup> deadline. They also asked that work that needs to be done that would disturb instruction should be conducted-before or after school hours.

Middle School has met with building administrator to discuss "Walk Throughs". They are also working with the administration to address the process in which teachers cover classes for other teachers.

The High School met with the administration to clarify the "Walk Through" process. They stated the morning of Professional Day was productive.

Mercer Reps had concerns about the wording on the latest revision of the district report cards and a question about summer units.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

**NEW BUSINESS** 

None.

#### FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Becky thanked the Boulevard Reps for hosting the meeting. She also thanked all the Reps for their hard work and dedication.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

THE NEXT MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR MONDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2010.

Respectfully submitted, Matt Zucca, secretary

### Why Labor (like Vaccination) Still Matters

This newsletter is a publication of the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association, an independent organization of professional educators in the Shaker Heights City School District. Signed editorials represent the opinion of the author(s) and may or may not reflect the thinking of other officers or members of the Shaker Heights Teachers' Association. Members and friends of the Association are invited and encouraged to express their opinions or share information via this newsletter.

In a recent CNN.com article on the phenomenon of highly educated middle class American parents choosing not to vaccinate their children, the author made an interesting observation. The writer noted that this particular group of parents, in large part, did not vaccinate their children because in their lifetimes they had not experienced the childhood viruses that previous generations had (1). This writer's observation gave me the same thought about organized labor. Many educated middle class professionals do not acknowledge the importance of unions because they have not had to "use" them during their lifetimes. With an anti-union

governor like John Kasich as our governor-elect, I thought it might be a good time to remind ourselves why it is that labor (like vaccination) still matters.

Like receiving a yearly vaccine, we often complain about the cost of what we wish would be free. Many people feel the same about organized labor. A student of mine recently shared the complaint from his brother that the job he was working automatically took the \$700 union dues directly from his paycheck. What I enlightened the student about was the fact that these dues would likely help his brother if he experienced legal trouble while working his new job or would provide a strike fund if a strike became necessary. These dues would help give a voice to his profession in local, state and national issues relating to his profession. Perhaps most importantly, these dues would enable his union to negotiate contracts that ensured fair wages and benefits.

People also complain about the inconvenience of getting somewhere to receive the vaccine. Just like getting to the doctors or the drug store or the health department, it seems a hassle to talk to a union representative or attend an informational meeting when we assume that the contract should just be protected and that teachers should automatically have a voice within the district, the school board and the community. As with the development of effective vaccines, it has taken generations of dedicated professionals to make sure unions function as they are intended to function. Countless hours of negotiations, thousands of dollars of investment and long standing efforts at advocacy have gone into making our unions, and specifically our Association, what it is today.

Finally, even though the experts assure us it won't happen, sometimes the vaccine can make us feel weakened. We complain that sometimes our intention to help the widest range of members can hinder our best intentions or limit our personal interests. We are worried that we may appear as non-compliant and not "team players" if we use the contract as the protective document it was intended to be. But the purpose of the union, and the vaccine for that matter, is to protect and the minor inconveniences it may appear to create are worth the pain.

Not to imply that governor-elect John Kasich and anti-union politicians like him represent the flu, but I would say that we need to be wary of their effects. Kasich has already stated that he wants to attack binding arbitration (2), presumably for police and firemen, and "break the back of organized labor in the schools" (3). So I would encourage you to support your Association, be vocal about your support for organized labor, become involved and get vaccinated. JM

#### References

- 1. http://www.cnn.com/2010/HEALTH/10/20/why.not.vaccinate/index.html?iref=allsearch
- 2. <a href="http://www.newsnet5.com/dpp/news/political/elections\_local/governor-elect-john-kasich-names-key-aides-after-republican-sweep-of-state-offices">http://www.newsnet5.com/dpp/news/political/elections\_local/governor-elect-john-kasich-names-key-aides-after-republican-sweep-of-state-offices</a>
- 3. http://starbeacon.com/local/x343701395/Kasich-promises-county-won-t-be-forgotten-if-Republicans-regain-control

#### **Important Dates**

Tuesday, November 16 Board of Education Meeting at Woodbury

**Friday, November 19** SHTA Social at Jillian's 4:30 to...

**Tuesday, November 23** Thanksgiving Recess begins at 4:00 p.m.

Monday, November 29 Return from Thanksgiving Recess

Monday, December 6 SHTA Exec. Board at Woodbury (If needed)

Monday, December 13 SHTA Rep. Council at Onaway (if needed)

Tuesday, December 14 Board of Education Meeting at Middle School

Friday, December 17 Winter Recess begins at 4:00 p.m.

#### **Happy 2011!**

Monday, January 3 SHTA Exec. Board at Woodbury

Monday, January 10 SHTA Rep. Council at Mercer

Tuesday, January 11 Board of Education Meeting at High School

# SHTA Never Limits Happy To Just One Hour!!! ©

On Friday, November 19th, Please Join Us At

JILLIAN'S

12459 Cedar Road Cleveland Heights, Ohio

We will start our mingling, eating, drinking, line dancing and shooting pool at approximately 4:30ish.

Ooops, don't forget the prizes!!!!!!

\*\*\*\*\*We Hope To See You There!! @\*\*\*\*\*