



Royal Oak Education Association

ROEA Reporter

April, 2008

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BARGAINING

As you probably know, we will be bargaining this spring for our 2008/09 wages, benefits and calendar. Bargaining a calendar will be a different process this year as Public Act 101 allows the intermediate school districts to mandate when Christmas and spring breaks will occur. Christmas vacation will be from December 22nd through January 2nd; spring vacation will be from April 6th through April 10th. Christmas is a full two weeks while spring break is one week and incorporates Good Friday.

While the times mandated by the ISD are probably convenient for most of us, the long term problem is that we have lost in part our ability to bargain calendar. An example of how this may work against us in the future is the February break. The law recommends a uniform February break. Undoubtedly, the ISD will encourage district superintendents to eventually adopt a standard for whether we get a winter break. This will create problems in bargaining for us and all other local districts as breaks have bearing on the length of the year. If the county superintendents feel that mandated decisions are better for local districts than collective bargaining (and believe me, they will), our ability to bargain other calendar issues such as the number of staff meetings, professional development meetings, and professional learning community hours is in potential jeopardy.

There are appropriate union responses to the superintendents working collectively such as the possibility of collectively bargaining with the county in unison with other local school districts. We need to begin to work together in this regard as an amalgamation of local districts. The ROEA Executive Board has asked Laurie to petition the county to bargain calendar with us. We have yet to hear from the county. We hope that this action will begin the process of local districts working together to maximize our union's influence and strength.

At this point, however, we are still able to locally bargain important calendar issues such as the inclusion of professional learning communities into the day. Our survey will be very important this year in the area of calendar. (The bargaining team always assumes that everyone would support us in demanding an adequate cost of living increase and fully paid health benefits.) As a result of last year's bargaining a committee of teachers who represented the ROEA met with district administrators to discuss professional learning communities. You will be receiving the recommendations of the PLC committee as an e-mail attachment.

The survey will most likely have several questions about your thoughts regarding

Royal Oak Education Association

26111 Evergreen, Suite 225
Southfield, MI 48076

Phone: 248-358-4770
Fax: 248-358-4758
www.ROEAonline.org

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PAC is Political Insurance

By Betty Ann Garlak

Auto insurance, life insurance, health insurance—all are imperative to provide security in times of need. When you give to PAC (Political Action Committee), you are ensuring our legislators will support you in these critical political times. Don't overlook this opportunity to have a voice in the issues that support education. Your PAC dollars go towards Republican and Democratic leaders to promote legislation that affects you—your health care, retirement, bargaining rights, class size, just to name a few.

out of 338 members. \$7,845.00 has been sent to Lansing.

CONGRATULATIONS to the staff at Upton School! They had 100% participation. Way to show your support! Here are the other building percentages:

- Addams - 92%
- Oakland - 92%
- Northwood - 73%
- Churchill - 66%
- Oak Ridge - 66%
- RO High School - 64%
- Addams ECC - 63%
- Keller - 45%
- RO Middle School - 42%

This past January, a PAC participation raffle was held at the ROEA midyear party. Twenty winners received \$10 gift cards to be used at Royal Oak businesses. The raffle winners were Bonnie Attan, Gail Zipser, Anna Falkiewicz, Rhys Dwelley, Bill Dionne, Leslie London, Kelly Sebastian, Gail Kearney, Carol Burke, Tom McLeod, Jill Ex, Susan Rutenburg, Derek Miller, Trudie Connor, Rebecca Bates, Michelle Daane Gumbleton, Lynn Legg, Kristin Ryan, Lisa Shannon and Nancy Mayhew. The winners of the door prize raffle were Dick Rockwell, Lisa Vitale, Tim Jankowiak and Jennifer Browne.



Betty Ann Garlak

If you have contributed to PAC this school year, THANK YOU for doing your part. If you have not yet done so, it is not too late. Email me and I will gladly send you a contribution envelope for a cash or check donation.

Join your ROEA members in solidarity to send a message to our legislators to protect our career. To date this year, our PAC contribution includes 61% of our membership. That is 209

Bargaining *(Continued from Page 1)*

PLCs. We are expecting 100% participation in the survey. It is a critical part of the ability of the bargaining team to work towards what our members want. Successful participation in the survey is our first action in securing another strong contract. So, be a part of the team!

In solidarity,

Sid

Survey Committee

The members of our survey team worked hard to compile meaningful questions. They will meet again to tabulate the survey results. Many thanks to survey committee members Jennifer Browne, Tracy Crawley, Nancy Dreyer and Mary Kosnik.



Screening and Endorsement

By Betty Ann Garlak

I had the opportunity to work with a committee of SOMEA representatives this past January to interview three candidates for the 9th Congressional District. We interviewed Gary Peters and Nancy Skinner. Incumbent Joe Knollenberg chose not to attend the interview. After screening and discussion, our committee came to the unanimous decision to recommend Gary Peters. This recommendation was passed on to the MEA and NEA. Gary Peters is the former Lottery Chairman and State Senator. He has a history that strongly supports education. He supports the NEA's position on school vouchers, NCLB, funding, and protecting social security, pensions, health care and salaries. He is a proponent of smaller class size, funding for up-to-date technology and Head Start programs. Our committee felt that he will represent us well in the U. S. Congress. His opponent, Joe Knollenberg, has not been a friend to education. This is an important race that has been targeted by the National Democratic Party. Please consider spreading the word about supporting Gary Peters, helping out in his campaign and voting for him in the upcoming November election.



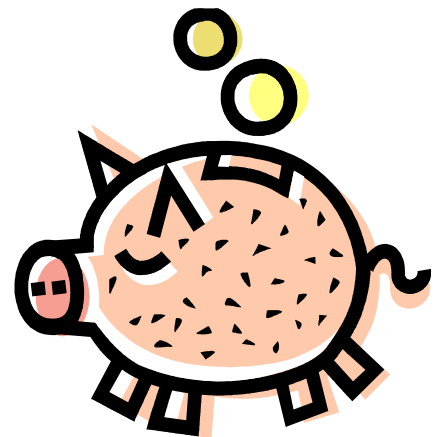
Gary Peters

Item of Interest

By Nancy Dreyer

This is a "FYI" to inform all Royal Oak teachers that Verizon offers teachers a 20% discount off their basic cell phone service. If you are not already receiving the 20% discount there are several ways to get the 20% discount added to your monthly bill. One way is to take a pay stub or your ID badge to a Verizon corporate office (the place that sells the phones). They will do it there for you. Also, you can do it online by giving them your school email address. If you are getting new Verizon service, just give the salesman your school email address and they will take care of it.

I just recently started using Verizon and got my discount. My girlfriend who teaches in Livonia has always had Verizon and didn't know about the discount until I told her. (She's probably lost \$500 by not having it!) It's not something they advertise, but they have been doing it for the past 2 years.



Classified

All of the people who advertise in the Reporter are connected to the ROEA, ROESA or ROESPA. They are either members of the union, spouses of members, or retirees. You can expect a high quality of service and commitment to the needs of fellow union members as a result. Classified ads are also posted on our web site, ROEAonline.org.

For Sale...

Year-round mobile home on Lake Huron
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