



Vermont-NEA

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David Ely wins first-ever Vermont-NEA Award for Teaching Excellence

Vermont-NEA Photo/Art Huse

David Ely is the teacher we all aspire to be.

HINESBURG -- "It is with great pleasure that the committee, with unanimous consent, has selected David Ely as the first recipient of the Vermont-NEA Award for Teaching Excellence," announced Vermont-NEA Vice President Bonnie Tuscany at the May meeting of the Vermont-NEA Board of Directors. She chaired the selection committee and described the committee's enthusiasm for Ely: "David is an outstanding educator."

According to Ely, 28-year veteran science teacher at Champlain Valley Union High School, "Public school students deserve the best possible teachers." As a teacher, David Ely lives up to his own high standard. He ranks among the very best.

Ely was named Vermont Teacher of the Year in 1990, and he won the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science and Math Teaching (1985), the Shell Science Teaching Award (1991), the Nest MIT Award (1992), the Tandy Award (1993), and the Genentech Access Excellence Fellowship (1995). He was honored as New England College Board Outstanding A.P. Teacher in 1999.

Ely believes that one of the most important functions a teacher can perform for students is "to model tolerance, nourish respectful dialogue, role-model exemplary behavior, and value each individual's perspective." He explains that his own impoverished background -- he was one of 18 children from a poor family in rural Vermont -- has given him great sensitivity. "I will not allow students to discriminate against others because of the way they smell, look, or talk," he says. And he folds positive lessons about diversity into his teaching. "I create and maintain learning opportu-



David Ely believes that one of the most important functions a teacher can perform for students is "to model tolerance, nourish respectful dialogue, role-model exemplary behavior, and value each individual's perspective."

nities in which kids are encouraged to accept diversity in the same way that nature accepts and promotes it. Systems, including plant, animal and humans, are much stronger when based in diversity rather than those based in homogeneity."

Over the years, Ely has been a generous colleague and Association member. He has served on myriad professional committees, from the Education Committee at St. Michael's College (10 years) to a committee for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (6 years). He served as board member and president of the Allenbrook Homes for Youth. He's been an Association negotiator, grievance representative,

president and state and national Representative Assembly delegate.

"David Ely is the teacher we all aspire to be," said fellow teacher Gay Mary Craig in a letter recommending Ely for the Award.

Another colleague, math teacher Allison Sherwin, wrote about an experimental learning opportunity for students that Ely carried out, and in which she participated: a trip to explore the ecosystems of Costa Rica. "It was truly one of the best experiences of my life," she said.

A former student, Jonathan Webster, also wrote: "I will be forever grateful to Dave Ely for the tireless effort he put into nurturing my love for science. His commitment to his

students both inside and outside of the classroom serves as a model for all educators, and his relentless work ethic is truly an inspiration to his students."

As winner of this Vermont-NEA Award, David Stanley Ely receives \$1,000 and becomes Vermont's candidate for the prestigious new NEA Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence. "Dave has the outstanding qualifications, experience, and disposition to be NEA's first national award winner," says Vermont-NEA President Angelo Dorta. The inaugural presentation of the national award will take place on December 6, 2001. The recipient of the national award will receive \$25,000 cash and a commemorative plaque. ■

INSIDE

Union and professional Association heritage	2	Speech and Debate workshop	5
Waits River, Essex Town settlements	3	Summer reading for kids ...	5
Letters	3	Vermont-NEA election results	6
The Vermont Legislature: Looking back and forth	4	Board supports History & Liberties project	7

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Are Vermont-NEA and its local affiliates labor unions or professional associations? That question frequently is asked — in earnest and rhetorically — by individual members, by Association leadership groups, and by some private citizens and elected officials in many venues.

We all know the answer. We're both. Always have been, always will be.

That answer is also embedded in Vermont-NEA's Purpose and Priorities Statement, the final written result of the 1998 Member-to-Member Survey and two years of follow-up strategic planning by Association governance leaders, staff, and grassroots members. Ironically, it was a long and demanding series of tasks that distilled such a brief document from lengthier early drafts. However, the concise Statement now is our definitive roadmap for Association advocacy on several broad fronts.

The "Association Member Well-Being" and "Active Membership" Priorities highlight our labor union side: "Excellent compensation, benefits, and working conditions for members;" "Protection of the rights of educators;" "Active, well-organized, self-sustaining local and state Associations." Association members rightfully expect their Associations to represent their interests well on these matters and to effectively plan and budget to make reasonable progress towards attainment of these goals.

The "Student Achievement" Priority similarly showcases our professional association roots: "Safe, secure, and civil learning and working environments..." "A system that recruits and retains highly qualified and diverse educators and enhances their skills;" "School curricula, policies, and procedures developed with local Associations;" "Adequate and equitable public school funding." Indeed, these issues of instructional excellence and support, educator quality, and adequacy of resources for public schools were central concerns of Vermont-NEA and NEA prior to the inception of public employee collective bargaining in the 1960's.

Some members express appreciation at times that local and state Association activism on professional education issues will weaken efforts on bread-and-butter union issues. There is not much evidence to cause such anxiety.

Vermont-NEA began a statewide compensation initiative nearly two years ago to help local Associations achieve \$35,000 salaries for new educators and \$70,000 salaries for veterans. Positive results are starting to show. It also is successfully promoting Livable Wage standards for ESP members in numerous Vermont school

districts. And, the Association today continues to fight vigorously in the Legislature for significantly increased health insurance coverage for retired teachers AND their spouses or domestic partners.

At the same time, Vermont-NEA is fulfilling its duties as a professional Association. It is promoting proven, carefully structured mentor and induction programs for new teachers. It is an active supporter of voluntary, advanced certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, a form of teacher professional development akin to the national certification process that has been available to speech pathologists and school nurses for years.

Vermont-NEA also has begun work with representatives of the Legislature and the Vermont Department of Education to develop a Governor's Institute on Professional Teaching. The Institute aims to recruit some of our best high school students to pursue careers in Vermont public schools. Likewise, in addition to the established Education Support Personnel of the Year Award, the Association recently announced its first-ever Award for Teaching Excellence to honor outstanding service by seasoned educators. And, Vermont-NEA was instrumental in helping Vermont to become the 19th state to focus on educator quality under the auspices of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future.

Local Association activity mirrors Vermont-NEA's labor union and professional association priorities. More local Associations are participating in regional bargaining councils to strengthen their expectations at the bargaining table for fair and professional salaries, benefits, and working conditions. They also are building self-reliance by receiving and giving training on proper use of their contract's grievance, layoff, and due process rights and responsibilities to ensure fair treatment of their members. As local Associations, they have their own consistent communications and community relations programs and are active in school board and legislative elections.

Local Associations are involving themselves in a variety of professional roles, too. Over 20 local Association/school district partners want to be included in a week-long summer session using the PATHWISE Induction Program to train experienced teachers as mentors for beginning educators. Each year, more local Association bargaining teams include fee subsidization, additional professional days, and salary credit proposals to support colleagues who choose the National Board Certification program for professional development. Some local



Associations have worked with school district management to adjust contract provisions to institutionalize voluntary leadership roles as instructional team leaders, professional development providers, curriculum specialists, school action-planning team members, mentors, and student assessment coordinators.

Local and state Association programs and services should not be viewed as an either/or debate pitting traditional "union advocacy" against "professionalism." We know from organizational experience and common sense that we need appropriate Association involvement in both domains. In fact, they are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. And, it is local Associations themselves who are most capable of assessing their current needs, deciding their local Association priorities, and determining for themselves the exact type of assistance required from Vermont-NEA, if any.

A one-size-fits-all model of Vermont-NEA programs and services simply cannot assist local Associations and their members effectively in today's complicated public education environment. Many local Associations will rightfully continue to emphasize traditional union goals because basic member needs — such as better pay and working conditions, job security, and equitable treatment — still have not been improved sufficiently. Or, perhaps, serious problems between school administration and the local Association exist and preclude significant levels of cooperation on more complex instructional and school performance issues. Other local Associations, however, will desire and gain from Association activity and assistance in accordance with the Student Achievement Priority of Vermont-NEA's Purpose and Priorities Statement.

Vermont-NEA and its local affiliates are hybrid organizations. Our union status and collective bargaining rights legally guarantee that our voices must be heard. Our standing as a professional association speaks also to our students, to our profession, and to our communities. Our words and actions, therefore, must remain faithful to both aspects of our common organizational heritage.

Angelo J. Dorta, President

Waits River & Essex Town settle

Contract settlements are falling into place throughout the state as Vermont-NEA locals strive toward the Association's \$35-70K salary goal. Here are two good examples:

Merged bargaining pays!

Waits River has been part of the merged Orange East Education Association for years, but this year for the first time, 34 Waits River teachers sent a merged Orange East bargaining team to the table to negotiate a new contract.

The five-member team -- which included one Waits River teacher and one Waits River support staffer -- settled an excellent two-year contract at mediation on April 26. Along with a lot of very good language that brings

Waits River in line with the rest of Orange East, new salary money increases 10.6% for 2001-02 and 6% for 2002-03. The current 2000-01 base is \$21,295.

Big congratulations to these Orange East Education Association negotiators: Claire Mead (president) of Bradford; Lynn Sciortino of Bradford; Al Zielenski of River Bend; David Stern of Waits River; and Donna Bifano of Waits River. UniServ Director Joyce Foster advises the local.

Essex reaches \$30K in 2001

The Essex Educators' Association settled a great contract at mediation last week. New money increases 20% over four years, and a new early retirement incentive is the richest in

Chittenden County.

The base salary now increases to \$29,175 for 2000-01; to \$30,342 for 2001-02; to \$31,859 for 2002-03; and to \$33,484 in 2003-04. The maximum salary in 2003-04 will be just about \$67,000. The retirement incentive will be available to a maximum of 15 people. It will pay 80% of the teacher's 2000-01 salary over three years, plus 18 months of single health insurance coverage, and it will be granted according to seniority.

Essex Town negotiators Bob McCann, Judy Steffens, LouAnn Furlick, and Lois Kenney certainly deserve congratulations! Vermont-NEA UniServ Director David Boulanger advises the local. ■

Average salary of Vermont public school teachers ranks 28th in nation in 1999-2000

According to research released in May by our National Education Association, the average salary of Vermont public school teachers last year was \$37,714, ranking 28th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

NEA estimates that the average salary increased 2.48% this year, to \$38,651. This estimate for 2000-01 may still be adjusted.

These are the average salaries, ranked state by state, for 1999-2000:

1. New Jersey	52,174
2. Connecticut	51,780
3. New York	50,173
4. Michigan	48,695
5. Pennsylvania	48,321
6. California	47,680
7. Alaska	47,262
8. District of Columbia	47,076
9. Rhode Island	47,041
10. Illinois	46,486
11. Massachusetts	46,250
12. Delaware	44,435
13. Maryland	44,048
14. Indiana	41,850
United States	41,724
15. Ohio	41,436
16. Wisconsin	41,153
17. Georgia	41,023
18. Washington	41,013
19. Oregon	40,919
20. Hawaii	40,578
21. Minnesota	39,802
22. North Carolina	39,419
23. Nevada	39,390
24. Kansas	38,453
25. Colorado	38,163
26. Virginia	38,123
27. New Hampshire	37,734
28. Vermont	37,714
29. Texas	37,567
30. Florida	36,722
31. Alabama	36,689
32. Kentucky	36,380
33. Tennessee	36,328
34. South Carolina	36,081
35. Iowa	35,678
36. Missouri	35,656
37. Arizona	35,650
38. Maine	35,561
39. Idaho	35,162
40. West Virginia	35,008
41. Utah	34,946
42. Wyoming	34,140
43. Arkansas	33,386
44. Nebraska	33,284
45. Louisiana	33,109
46. New Mexico	32,554
47. Montana	32,121
48. Mississippi	31,857
49. Oklahoma	31,298
50. North Dakota	29,863
51. South Dakota	29,072

Letters

Thanks from Scholars' Bowl

On behalf of my team, I would like to thank the Vermont-NEA and its membership for its sponsorship of the Vermont-NEA Scholars' Bowl season! It is through your generosity that we, as well as hundreds of high school students from around the state, are involved in this 'sport of the mind' throughout the school year.

The Burlington High School team is especially thankful because we will now represent Vermont in June at the Panasonic Academic Challenge at Disneyworld, arguably the best national competition of its type. This is the third straight championship for my team and fourth in the past five years, something of which they and I are very proud. We look forward to our trip to Florida as we are setting our sights high.

Thank you for your continued support and interest.

David Rome
Burlington EA

Join the NEA Peace and Justice Caucus

I'll be running the Peace and Justice Caucus Booth at this year's NEA Representative Assembly with my friend and fellow retired teacher, Marjorie Webb from Kansas. We do this largely at our own expense because we believe so strongly in the role this caucus plays in the deliberations and in the resolutions, new business items and legislative agenda adopted by representatives from all over the country.

Our running the booth frees up regular members to concentrate on the debates and voting taking place on the convention floor. We sell merchandise, distribute information, enroll members, and provide a meeting point for caucus representatives. The Peace and Justice Caucus booth is located with many others in a huge hall where teachers come for educational materials and to enjoy the sights. It's difficult for active convention delegates to spend the time it takes to run the booth

continuously. That's why Marjorie and I are now volunteering for our third year.

Vermont is well represented in the Peace and Justice Caucus because Vermont-NEA member Martha Allen of Canaan is the Northeast Regional Director. She is busy at the convention collecting memberships from delegations from NJ, PA and all the states to their north. She attends the daily Peace and Justice Caucus meetings and still manages the heavy workload that falls to members of a delegation as small as Vermont.

At last year's RA, teamwork and good floor strategy resulted in the passage of the following New Business Items: that NEA investigate the conditions of Mayan school children in Chiapas, Mexico; that President Bob Chase be asked to lobby the US president to lobby President Fox of Mexico to negotiate a just peace in Chiapas; that NEA study Campaign Finance Reform; that Affirmative Action in higher education be supported; that a recommendation be made that pension funds are socially responsible investments and that investments in companies that produce tobacco products be divested; and that NEA develop an action plan to pursue due process rights of non-tenured teachers.

Issues that the Peace and Justice Caucus leadership already have identified as ones we'd like to see discussed this year in Los Angeles are: Globalization/Child Labor; urging NEA to sign on to the Death Penalty Moratorium; opposition to the Bush Tax Plan which does nothing to help the nearly 20% of our nation's children who live in poverty; High Stakes Testing; and opposition to Star Wars, a costly and ill advised military boondoggle.

We'll be as vocal in our opposition to the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA) as we were to NAFTA, which the NEA opposed. (Vermont has lost 1,600 jobs since the North American Free Trade Agreement went into effect. Companies have moved to Mexico where cheap

labor and lax environmental enforcement make profits higher.)

You can support the work of the Peace and Justice Caucus by becoming a member. The annual membership costs \$15 and it is mainly through dues that we pay the rent on the booth, support the important work on the floor of the RA, and pay for a newsletter or two during the year.

If you would like to join, please contact me (387-4060 or badgefox@togethernet.com) or Martha Allen (266-8171 or sapfarm@aol.com). We'll be glad to send you an application. We also welcome your ideas about issues you feel should be addressed at the RA.

Mal Herbert
Retired Member

Thank you for re-electing me

Dear Association Members:

Thank you for re-electing me as Vermont-NEA President. In support of all Association members, I will strive to provide leadership and service consistent with Vermont-NEA's Purpose and Priorities Statement.

Such leadership and service mean very strong advocacy to fulfill our historical commitment to professional wages and working conditions, to better health and retirement benefits, and to standards of fair treatment and equity. It also means working in partnership to help you meet the challenges of a new era: safe and respectful schools, staff recruitment and mentoring, voluntary advanced certification, standards-based instruction and assessment, etc. It never is easy but always necessary to remain faithful to both our labor union and professional association heritage.

Together, we can strengthen the teaching profession, boost school performance, and deepen parent and community acclaim for public education. We should ask no less of ourselves and our Associations, and I look forward to our common work.

Angelo Dorta
Vermont-NEA

The Vermont Legislature: Looking Back and Forth

By Joel D. Cook, Executive Director

Some time ago, I had planned to sit here this weekend to report the results of the recently ended legislative session, but I sit here and the legislature is still several weeks shy of adjournment. I don't yet know the outcome of the work of hundreds of members and retired members regarding the Retired Teachers health insurance benefit. I don't yet know if any school funding revisions will be made. I don't believe, but I don't know, there will have been any fundamental change in school law generally. So, I don't know specific outcomes yet. I do know, however, that this legislature is like no other in recent Vermont history. I know, as well, that what public education needs right now is very little by way of legislation. I also know there are some ominous signs to make all Vermont educators attentive and, we hope, active in their own communities, informing and educating their own legislators about issues of importance to our schoolchildren and those who educate them.

A Legislature Like No Other

Traditional Vermont Republican dogma is that local communities are better suited than "Montpelier" to make decisions that affect our lives. This year, nevertheless, there is an increasing array of proposals from Republican lawmakers that would centralize policy-making and control at the State level. Up is down.

Traditional Vermont Democratic dogma is that progressive taxes are better than regressive ones, and that the income tax is the best progressive tax going. In one of the more fascinating of this year's occurrences, Democrats in the Senate split over use of the income tax to mitigate the property tax bite in school funding. Down is up.

Many current House members were elected in direct response to the civil union law. Several dozen sponsored the bill (H.259) to – in essence – stop schools from "promoting" homosexuality. The Judiciary Committee has spent no less than 20% of its time "fashioning" proposals designed directly to devalue, if not eliminate, civil unions and, at least indirectly, to demean those for whom that law was enacted. While interesting to watch, this is terribly disheartening to see. A libertarian spirit of live and let live extends only so far.

Other House members were brought together to "reform Act 60." Vermonters involved in school funding laws over the years must find that term ironic, since Act 60 was itself the reform of school funding in Vermont to meet the dictates of our State Constitution. This irony did not go unnoticed for long, as the rhetoric in the House Ways and Means Committee soon turned to "improving Act 60." That committee struggled over many



Joel D. Cook is Vermont-NEA's chief lobbyist.

long weeks and one public hearing in the State House to develop a proposal, but it currently languishes for lack of a majority that can agree on it or any variation. Ways and Means plainly learned how difficult it is to take into account all the moving pieces of the current law – and any replacement. Some of its members found solace in the difficulty the Senate faced with the issues. Ultimately, however, the Senate, where the Finance Committee conducted five public hearings around the state, passed a bill by an 80% majority vote.

Just What, Exactly, Is a "Do Nothing" Legislature?

Some folks have been describing this group of legislators as "do nothing." It is intended pejoratively, but, from where I sit, I'm not so sure it's all that bad.

In our corner of the world – in education – the last decade has seen more legislation, more mandates, more required studies, more changes, more tasks, more expectations, introspection, and inspection placed on public schools, public educators, school boards, the Department of Education, and – last in the list but none more important – on schoolchildren across the state than anyone can keep track of.

In simple legislative terms, less right now is more – the best something that this legislature can do for public education is, well, very little. We are all still teetering under the weight of: all the change in school funding and budgeting and accounting; required action planning, in accordance with newly established criteria called "quality standards," which themselves have already been changed; anti-harassment laws and procedures that themselves also have undergone changes; school safety laws and policies regarding bomb threats and gun possession; standardized testing and associated protocols that themselves have so con-

fused people in the field that people have even lost their jobs over them; establishment of a Governor's Diploma which, despite enactment several years ago, had to be the subject of a special law last year to give the system a reprieve – breathing room – to get criteria and testing up and running; special attention to special education that always veers dangerously close to blaming children for having needs, and blaming their parents for wanting them met, and blaming their advocates inside and outside the school for trying to meet them; a high school choice law that has not even had a chance to get implemented before being subject to proposed overhaul and dangerous extension; teacher-testing; school employee fingerprinting; and on, and on...

The Effect of "Substantial" on "Equality of Educational Opportunity"

The world of school finance is a policy wonk's nirvana. It has been a focus of socio-economic "literature" for decades, and it has been a struggle, literally, of constitutional dimensions in most states in the country during that period. Ours is one where the notion of equality of opportunity has been successfully litigated. While not all current legislators accept the authoritativeness of a Supreme Court ruling, most certainly do, and they agree apart from the Court's decision that equality of student opportunity is important.

Early in this session, it became apparent, however, that in the debate over changing school funding, "equality" was subject to redefinition. The Ways and Means Committee almost immediately focused on the Court's use of the word "substantially" as it modifies "equal educational opportunities." The Committee did not attend to the Court's further, related ruling that a school funding system cannot be based on differences in community wealth. That ruling is not modi-

fied by "substantial." These two components of the Court's decision figure in the sharing mechanism in the current law. The provisions in any current House or Senate proposal appear to overlook the prohibition against any reliance on differences in community wealth. The House plan has local communities raising all funds needed, above what the State provides, on their own local property tax, with no adjustment for differences in local grand lists. The Senate plan permits districts with very high grand lists to avoid sharing for spending above certain narrower levels.

Cost v. Quality

Predictably, some legislators are trying to move the debate from equality in education to cost containment in education, with little concern expressed for the quality of education. We are seeing that take shape in several ways.

Some want the State to examine – and ultimately determine – what an "adequate" education is. The underlying theory is that if the State sets a standard of adequacy, that standard will become the (limiting) definition of education to which the concept of equality will apply. So, if 3 years of high school math were determined to be "adequate," a school wanting to offer a 4th, or even a 5th, could pay for higher level math through a purely local property tax, with no prospect for or worry about sharing. Then, all future debates over funding would involve expanding or contracting the meaning of "adequate education."

Others see promise in the State becoming even more directly the actual provider of education. We see that in a proposal that the State become one school district for the purpose of providing all special education and in a call to examine the advisability of negotiating all school employee contracts at the State level. And, of course, there are theories that reducing the number of school districts in Vermont will result in greater efficiencies and, therefore, lower costs.

We Need to Be Alert – Locally and in "Montpelier"

We in public education are in a defensive mode. All that has been done for, and to, us requires vast amounts of time, dedication, and energy: we need, for the most part, to be left to do what is already required of us.

In the arena of school choice, for example, do we really want to short-circuit the process of creating high school choice districts now by requiring "sending" schools, generally small, in less wealthy communities, to attach a check to any of their students migrating to a "receiving" school?

In consideration of charter schools, do we really want to add to the more than 350 or so public schools we already have to pay for?

In consideration of vouchers, how

Continued on page 6...

VDFL offers Speech & Debate Workshop for educators

"We've done a lot in Vermont with the writing voice over the years, but too little attention has been paid to the 'speaking' voice," says Bill Haines, president of the Vermont Debate and Forensics League. He thinks the need to emphasize helping young people find their speaking voice "is dramatic if we are asking young people to participate in public life and become engaged citizens."

A Speech & Debate workshop is scheduled for June 24-29 at Green Mountain College in Poultney to instruct secondary/middle school teachers in oral communication techniques. Workshop topics will include:

- ✓ debate
- ✓ extemporaneous
- ✓ impromptu speaking
- ✓ reading of prose
- ✓ reading of poetry
- ✓ dramatic interpretation
- ✓ original oratory
- ✓ radio announcing
- ✓ storytelling

Workshop participants will be able to research, formulate, and present material they develop and derive from other sources.

These skills will be emphasized: use of evidence, argumentation and rebuttal in debate; interpretation of an author's work; and the effective presentation for different types of speech activities. There will be opportunities to improve assessment and critiquing skills.

The workshop will qualify for three relicensure credits and three graduate credits from Castleton State College.

Instructors will be William Haines, Curt Hier, Carl Joecks, and Sheila Mable.

Workshop sponsors, besides VDFL, are: Vermont General Assem-



The workshop evaluation will be based primarily on the performance of the participant in culminating activities.

bly, Vermont-NEA, Vermont State Department of Education, and the Vermont Principals' Association.

A grant will likely cover daily expenses: room and board, mileage,

books. And scholarships for graduate course credit tuition might be arranged.

For more information, contact Bill Haines, bill@mhs.mps.k12.vt.us or 802-229-9303.

ARSP sends volunteer to Vermont

MONTPELIER -- Vermont-NEA is helping to sponsor a project by the American Civil Liberties Foundation of Vermont and the Action Reconciliation Service for Peace (ARSP) History & Liberties Coalition.

The goal of the sponsorship is to help teach Vermont high school students the lessons of how a country graced with a long history of culture and learning -- Germany -- could lose all of its liberties in about six years during the 1930s. The program is not expressly about the Holocaust, although the subject will surely come up in discussing the 1930s.

Ben Scotch, Executive Director

The goal of the sponsorship is to help teach Vermont high school students the lessons of how a country graced with a long history of culture and learning -- Germany -- could lose all of its liberties in about six years during the 1930s.

of ACLU of Vermont, explains that this lesson is important because a generation of American high schoolers have not lived through any disaster at the national level -- war, upheaval, depression -- and should ponder the

role of the active citizen in understanding history as a part of preparing for leadership.

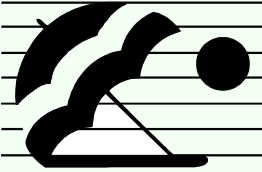
"As modern Germany grapples with shades of its history and works toward making democratic institutions secure, so do we grapple with our history and the need to make our demo-

cratic institutions, grounded in the Bill of Rights, secure for the future," says Scotch.

To further this goal, ARSP has sent a volunteer -- Anja Bubatz of Germany -- to Vermont for 18 months to

work with teachers throughout Vermont to include this discussion about liberty in the curricula of each school. Anja is trained in modern German history. She is based in Brattleboro, but will be travelling to schools all over the State.

Educators wishing to invite Anja to work at their school should contact Ben Scotch at the American Civil Liberties Foundation of Vermont, 802-223-6304 or aclvt@aol.com. ■



Summer Reading for Kids

Vermont-NEA's annual summer reading list for kids is available to Association members, while they last. Place an order for the attractive brochures, suitable for sending home with kids K-12, by sending a request to emcandrew@nea.org. Tell her how many brochures you need and where they should be mailed.

The booklist of suggested titles also is available online. Check out the list and make a copy at

www.vtnea.org/blist-14.htm

Vermont-NEA publishes a summer reading list for kids each year, as a community service. The brochure is delivered to Association members, book stores throughout the state, and to Vermonters who call Vermont-NEA's toll-free number to request a copy.

Thanks to these librarians for the summer 2001 reading recommendations:

✓ Leda Schubert, library-media consultant at the State Department of Education, edited the reading list (for the 7th year!).

✓ Vermont-NEA members Regina Luersen and Barbara Marchant, Leland and Gray High School, compiled the summer 2001 reading list for grades 9-12.

✓ Angelica Harris, Alburg Educational Center, and Shannon Walters, Grand Isle School, compiled the list for grades 5-8.

✓ Betty Rendino, Jericho Elementary School, compiled the list for grades k-4.

The 2001 booklist includes these award winners:

2001 Caldecott Award
St. George, Judith. SO YOU WANT TO BE PRESIDENT! Illustrated by David Small. Philomel.

2001 Newbery Award
Peck, Richard. A YEAR DOWN YONDER. Dial.

2001 Michael L. Printz Award
Almond, David. KIT'S WILDERNESS. Delacorte.

2001 Coretta Scott King Award
Woodson, Jacqueline. MIRACLE'S BOYS. Putnam. (Author)
Collier, Bryan. UPTOWN. Holt. (Illustrator)

Vermont-NEA election results

The Elections Committee reported at the May meeting of the Vermont-NEA Board of Directors that about 10% of Vermont-NEA members cast ballots in the Association's 2001 state-wide election. The Vermont-NEA Board approved the election results, as reported by the Elections Committee. There were no contests for state officers.

President

Angelo J. Dorta - 1083 votes

Vice President

Bonnie Tuscani - 1092 votes

Secretary-Treasurer

Jeff Isham - 1098 votes

Board Members

UniServ I, Area 1

Shelton Shepard - 58 votes

UniServ II, Area 1

Lydia Alexander - 65 votes

UniServ III, Area 2

Jay Burnell - 89 votes

UniServ VI, Area 2

Francis Trask - 61 votes

UniServ IV, Area 1

Thomas Gallagher

UniServ VI, Area 1

Corrie Palmer

NEA Representative

Assembly Delegate:

Bonnie Tuscani - 1039 votes

Jeff Isham - 1030 votes

Jay Burnell - 1027 votes

Eric Weiss - 1024 votes

Carol Hinchey - 1022 votes

Delia Clark - 1018 votes

Martha Allen - 1015 votes

Tom Gallagher - 1014 votes

Phil Bailey - 1011 votes

Lisa Champagne - 1010 votes

Laurie Lawrence - 1003 votes

Linda Howard - 994 votes

Lisa Boskind - 993 votes

Terri Vest - 983 votes

Write-ins

A.R. Trevino - 11 votes

N. Hensch - 10 votes

D. Larsen - 10 votes

A. Sylvester - 8 votes

G. Lerrigo - 7 votes

R. Raskevitz - 4 votes

J. Sullivan - 4 votes

First Day Incentive

The First Day Foundation is a Vermont-NEA Partner dedicated to promoting a First Day celebration where parents and guardians accompany their children to the first day of school.

First Day will award \$50 to the first five Vermont schools that register their First Day of School 2001 activities on the First Day website. Go to

www.firstday.org

to register your school's activities for autumn 2001 (by 5/30).

NEA Director's Report

Refugee Lieu Tran tells her story

By Wayne Nadeau

NEA Northeast Conference

Imagine this: A beautiful environment enhanced by professional development opportunities, Association training, and great networking with education employees from throughout the northeast. All of this can be yours by attending NEA's Northeast Conference in Newport, R.I. on January 25-27, 2002.

State Associations and NEA co-sponsor these regional conferences that are designed to meet the needs of all our members. Although the planning for the 2001 conference has just begun, at previous conferences there have been great speakers and workshops on union issues, professional development, legal issues, and mental health. There is always an opportunity to meet and speak with NEA's national leaders; NEA President Bob Chase usually attends and appreciates the opportunity to talk with members who are not national leaders.

I will have more about the costs and program at a later date. If this appears to be of interest to you, let your local president know so he/she can forward any information received from Vermont-NEA on this conference. You may also contact me and I will keep you informed as I receive information from the conference.

Friend of Education

Morris Dees is NEA's 2001 Friend of Education. Mr. Dees is a co-founder and chief counsel of the Southern Poverty Law Center. In 1991, the SLPCLC began the Teaching Tolerance project, offering teachers at all levels, free and low-cost curriculum resources that include video-and-text teaching kits promoting interracial and intercultural understanding in the classroom. The



Wayne Nadeau teaches at Lamoille Union High School.

video -- A Time for Justice -- won an Academy Award for best short documentary in 1995. The Teaching Tolerance project also offers grants of up to \$2000 for K-12 teachers and one-year research fellowships for educators with strong writing skills and an interest in equity issues. Mr. Dees will be formally awarded NEA's Friend of Education award at the 2001 NEA Representative Assembly (R.A.) in Los Angeles.

Lieu Tran meets NEA Board

At our May NEA Board meeting, I met a unique student, Lieu Tran. Some of you may remember her as the student from Utah who appeared on Rosie O'Donnell to receive \$10,000 to help defray her post-secondary education costs. She is an 18 year old who lived in Vietnam, was separated from her family by the Khmer Rouge, escaped and fled to the Philippines, and was eventually reunited with her family. They were granted permission to emigrate to the U.S. under refugee status and were relocated to Utah.

At seven years of age Lieu Tran was working 18 hour days in a child

sweatshop for about a dollar a week. Her parents had been promised that she would get an education and work reasonable hours with a visit home on Sundays. When it became clear to her parents that her employer would not deliver on that promise, they pulled her out of the shop and the sordid story of her life in Southeast Asia intensified.

Lieu Tran and others hijacked a fishing boat to flee their imprisonment by the Khmer Rouge. In the process, they had to steal food to survive. They drifted for weeks and finally found themselves on a Philippine island where they were immediately detained in another camp. It is in this camp that she was finally reunited with her family. The meeting was accidental and Lieu had physically changed so much that it took several minutes to convince her mom that she was her daughter.

Lieu Tran spoke eloquently about life as a child laborer. I suspect that there were few dry eyes in the NEA auditorium when she finished her speech. In the evening I had an opportunity to sit with Lieu and talk with her about her experiences in Southeast Asia, in Utah and in applying to colleges. She has yet to be accepted at a school of her choice. But this has not discouraged her, for her message to students is, "You are lucky to live in America, where there are problems, but there are also great opportunities."

Lieu Tran did not want us to feel sorry for her. Lieu Tran did not ask for the notoriety that she has received, but she is willing to open her life if it will make it better for others.

I wish you all a great summer.

As always, if you wish to contact me: wfnadeau@yahoo.com; 802-888-4261 vm503(s); 860-6410(h)

Vermont Legislature

continued from page 4...

smart is it to consider paying public education tax dollars to families who already send their children to private schools, much less to consider violating Vermont's recent Supreme Court decision barring use of public funds for tuition in sectarian schools?

These are all proposals the House Education Committee has stated it wants to examine next year.

Some legislators in both Houses and both major parties have discussed "centralization" and "cost containment" in the context of education this year. The mantras are that cost increases in special education are not sustainable, that health insurance increases are too much to bear, that fuel costs are out of control, and that too much is spent on teachers -- that's usually a comment either on salaries or on teacher-student ratios, or both. We can expect this sort of discussion to continue.

Some legislators have introduced



bills limiting the freedom employees have. One would greatly extend the capacity of employers to subject employees to drug testing. It is under ac-

tive consideration by the House General and Military Affairs Committee.

As these issues gain dimension, the Association and its members will really need to work in concert to inform and educate legislators in the State House and in our own homes about what is important to schoolchildren in locally run public schools. The particular challenge will be to find those willing to hear the importance of strong financial support and good working conditions in our schools so they successfully can recruit and retain a high quality teaching corps for the foreseeable future. So, no matter what the results of this year's session ultimately are, consideration of an array of issues is already under way, setting the stage for the next session, beginning in just seven months.

We'll continue to keep you apprised of goings on, through our staff and Board, our electronic reports, and in the pages of *Today*. ■

Vermont-NEA Board supports ACLF/ARSP History & Liberties project



Pat Vana represents Vermont-NEA members in the Caledonia, Essex and Orleans County area. Here she considers the proposal to establish a study committee on advancing the Association's \$35/70K salary initiative.

MONTPELIER -- Listed here are some of the major actions taken at the May 5 meeting of the Vermont-NEA Board of Directors, along with important issues which were discussed.

This brief report on the activities of the Board appears in each issue of *Vermont-NEA Today*. Call your Board representative if you want to get more information or express an opinion.

Board members' names and phone numbers are listed in your Vermont-NEA pocket calendar; or you can call Vermont-NEA toll-free (1-800-649-6375) to find out your Board representative's phone number.

Board meeting dates are listed in

the pocket calendar. Meetings are open to Vermont-NEA members.

At their May 5 meeting, the Board:

- ❑ Adopted the Election Committee Report: Angelo

- ❑ Approved a Partnership/Sponsorship Committee recommendation that Vermont-NEA sponsor with a \$1,000 donation an American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of Vermont/Action Reconciliation Service for Peace History & Liberties Coalition project to bring Anja Bubab of Germany to Vermont for an 18-month visit. Bubab, who is trained in modern German history, will help teach Ver-

mont high school students the lessons of how a country graced with a long history of culture and learning could lose all of its liberties in about six years in the 1930s.

- ❑ Denied a request from the Vermont Workers' Center to send a fund-raising letter to Vermont-NEA local Association presidents.

- ❑ Asked that a Concerned Vermonters for Equal Education Opportunity funding request be channeled through the Partnership/Sponsorship Committee.

- ❑ Requested that the Board Policy Review Committee develop an explicit policy on fund-raising requests and the use of Association membership lists.

- ❑ Adopted the Vermont-NEA Teaching Excellence Award Selection Committee recommendation that CVU teacher/CSEA member David Ely receive the 2001 award and have his selection materials forwarded to the NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education for consideration for the national award.

- ❑ Increased the \$1,100 stipend for Vermont statewide delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly by \$350 each upon reimbursement request "...if Association funds are available."

- ❑ Established a study committee of staff, board members, and other invitees (including Chip Porter) to develop an action plan to advance the \$35/70K compensation initiative.

- ❑ Asked the Executive Committee to examine how money from other budget areas might be re-allocated to fund the \$0 Teaching and Learning line item.

The next Vermont-NEA Board meeting is scheduled for Saturday, June 2, at the Association's office in Montpelier. ■

Coming Events

June 2
Vermont-NEA Board meets in Montpelier

July 2-7
NEA Representative Assembly in Los Angeles

July 16
Deadline for the August issue of *Vermont-NEA Today*

July 31
Summer Leadership Conference at Mt. Snow

August 1
Summer Leadership Conference at Killington

August 7
Summer Leadership Conference at Stowe

August 8
Summer Leadership Conference at St. Johnsbury

August 6
Deadline for the September issue of *Vermont-NEA Today*

What's new on the Vermont-NEA Website...



www.vtnea.org
Summer Reading for Kids 2001

Books recommended by Vermont school librarians for summer reading for kids K-12 are listed on the Vermont-NEA website. Go to www.vtnea.org/blist-14.htm to view or print out the 2001 list.

Let's honor our retiring members!

Vermont-NEA's traditional Honor Roll of Retiring Association Members will appear in the August issue of *Vermont-NEA Today*. If you or someone you know is retiring this year, 2000-2001, please let us know! We'd like this information:

- 1) Name of Retiree
- 2) Local Association
- 3) Total Years of Service

The deadline for the August newspaper is July 16. **YOU are our only source for this information.** Please be sure that neither you nor any colleague of yours is omitted from this listing!

Mail the information to *Vermont-NEA Today*, 10 Wheelock Street, Montpelier 05602.

Email: today@vtnea.org
FAX: (802) 223-1253

Add these members' names to the 2001 Honor Roll of Retiring Vermont-NEA Members...

Member's Name: _____

Local Association: _____ Total years of service: _____

Member's Name: _____

Local Association: _____ Total years of service: _____

Member's Name: _____

Local Association: _____ Total years of service: _____

Developing America's Talent: A New England Response Beacon for the Future Focus on the Arts

The state gifted education and advocacy organizations and the State Departments of Education of the six New England states invite you to the 7th annual New England Conference on Gifted and Talented Education on Friday and Saturday, October 12 and 13, 2001 at Holiday Inn by the Bay, Portland, Maine.

Conference Highlights Thursday, October 11

A pre-Conference: Developing and Implementing Programs for the Gifted and Talented in the Arts

Friday, October 12

Keynote: "Creative Keys to Gifted Teaching."

Dr. Jon Pearson from Creative Learning Programs in Los Angeles, California will turn your teaching into a creative art. He will actively engage the audience with his lively presentation and leave participants with new skills for enhancing learning.

Saturday, October 13

Keynote: "Once upon A Pedestal: The Struggles and Surprises of Growing Up Gifted."

Dr. Felice Kaufmann from Bethesda, Maryland will describe a unique group of gifted adults named

as Presidential Scholars in their youth. The case studies will provide thought provoking insights about the challenges these students have faced and some specific directions for parents and teachers.

More than 50 workshops for parents, teachers (k-12), counselors and administrators are scheduled, including such topics as: Creativity, Brain-Based Learning, Underachievement, Best Practices, Parenting, Grouping Issues, Mentoring Developing Creativity, Curriculum Design, Talent Development in the Regular Classroom, Differentiated Instruction, Special Needs - Gifted & Talented, Questioning Strategies, Research Skills, Home-School Connections, Math Connections, Advocacy

Registration Fees

Thursday, Pre-Conference and lunch: \$50.00

Friday, including lunch, dinner, and conference binder: \$125.00

Saturday only, including conference binder: \$75.00

Full Conference (Friday and Saturday): \$175.00

For more information, go to <http://www.NECGT.org/>

VASE award recognizes outstanding K-12 science teaching in Vermont

The Vermont Academy of Science and Engineering (VASE), commissioned in 1995 by Governor Howard Dean, was established to recognize outstanding achievements in, and contributions to, science and engineering by Vermonters. The Academy is dedicated to fostering the understanding of scientific and technical matters amongst all Vermonters.

The members of the Academy believe that the remarkable achievements that have occurred in science and engineering over the last millennium began with students who were stimulated to be curious at the elementary and high school levels. In recognition of the teacher's crucial role in this process, VASE has established an annual award to honor outstanding science teachers in the State of Vermont.

Judith L. Allard, biology teacher at Burlington High School, was honored last year as the first recipient of the VASE award. She epitomizes the dedication and talent sought as crite-

ria for this award.

Call for nominations

The application should include a letter with the reasons you believe this person should be so honored. Also submit his/her curriculum vita, a letter of recommendation from a second person, and a one page statement from the candidate on his/her philosophy of teaching.

A committee of K-12 teachers will make the initial selection of awardees, followed by final selection from the members of VASE.

The award consists of a commemorative plaque and a monetary gift of \$1,000 to be presented at a public forum early in September. The awardee and a guest will be invited to a dinner in his/her honor with VASE members following the public forum.

Contact Dr. Paula Fives-Taylor, President of VASE, no later than July 15, 2001 to make nominations or to apply for the 2001 VASE Award. Dr. Fives-Taylor can be reached at 802-656-1121 or by email at pfivesta@zoo.uvm.edu

1/4 page VALIC ad

1/4 page Canter ad - color