



Vermont-NEA

TODAY

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Celebrating Dr. Seuss's birthday

MONTPELIER — Dr. Seuss's birthday — March 2nd — is on a Saturday this year, so a lot of Vermont educators are planning their Read Across America celebrations for the following week. In **Brattleboro**, Irene Kreissle reports that the Oak Grove Elementary School will celebrate Read Across America during the week of March 4 with a Young Author's Night, a book swap and a Dr. Seuss day during which Dr. Seuss books will be read.

At **Poultney High School**, Linda Paquette plans a party for Dr. Seuss — she says students are never too old. She will invite elementary students or senior citizens school so the students and seniors can read to each other, wearing Cat hats, of course.

In **Dummerston**, Melissa Petroski will play a Dr. Seuss biography video all day in the library on Monday, March 4. The 6th grade library class, wearing Cat hats, will read to the kindergartners and first graders.

Nancy Bailey reports that **Barnet** will have a schoolwide Dr. Seuss celebration during the first week of March, with door decorations of the books' themes and characters and special readers each day, dressed as a book character, reading some of Dr. Seuss's books to students in other classes. Students also will email story reviews to penpals in Vermont and Colorado. At the end of the week, the students will put their names in a hat and five names will be selected to win a Cat hat!

Juliet Veve's Spanish students in **Chittenden East** will have a read-aloud of selected Dr. Seuss books that are translated into Spanish. Readers in Cat hats will read English and Spanish versions in turn, a page at a time.

Sally Van Dreser Cheney is going to wear a red striped Cat hat whenever she's about to read a book for her first graders at Herrick Avenue School in **Milton**. "It will be a sign for my class to be quiet and listen," she says.

In **Albany**, the superintendent and the principal are being invited to come and read their favorite Dr. Seuss book. According to Maria Charron, they also are having a birthday cake to honor Theodor Geisel.

Still other schools are planning Saturday events. In **Bennington**, the Cat (in full costume!) and young readers will march in a parade through downtown.

Free Cat-in-the-Hat hats available

In order to give local Association Read Across America planners a boost, Vermont-NEA is offering FREE red striped Cat-in-the-Hat hats (up to 5), while they last. Just send your request (members only!) via email to today@vtnea.org and tell us: 1) your name, address and phone number; 2) what Read Across America activity you are planning; 3) the date of your activity; 4) the number of hats you request; and 5) how you plan to use the hats. ■



Association members across the state are planning celebrations for Dr. Seuss's birthday, including these members of the Vermont-NEA Board: (L-R) Ann Lavery of Richford, Jay Burnell of Bennington, Phil Bailey of Brattleboro, Corrie Palmer of Vergennes and Vermont-NEA President Angelo Dorta. Ann says fifth graders at Richford will read Dr. Seuss books and cook a breakfast of Green Eggs and Ham. Yum!

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A New Federal Era in Education

It took nearly three years of often acrimonious Congressional wrangling to renew our nation's foremost federal education law, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). When the dust finally settled, it was the Bush Administration riding high in the saddle and leading at a gallop's pace into a new era of expanded federal involvement in our schools. Without question, the melange of compromise provisions will dramatically alter much of the public education landscape for years to come.

Now newly renamed the "No Child Left Behind" Act, the law was signed with much bipartisan ballyhoo on January 8th. President Bush and Democratic Senator Edward Kennedy barnstormed through several states that day touting the legislation. Meanwhile, education policy analysts and officials at the national, state, and local levels still are studiously sifting through 1,100 pages to more

fully understand it. And, the process of writing the many exact rules and regulations needed to guide the implementation of ESEA only has just started and necessarily will be lengthy.

"Right goals, wrong means" is a phrase being used by many right now to sum up the Bush plan. The law's primary goal is lofty and commendable: to boost overall student achievement and also to eliminate performance gaps commonly associated with factors such as poverty, limited English proficiency, gender, and racial/ethnic status. It relies on yearly, statewide student tests, increased school accountability, and higher standards of educator quality as the means to accomplish its purpose.

Student Testing: By the 2005-06 school year, states must begin annual, statewide math and reading tests for all students in grades 3-8 and at least once in grades 9-12. States may select or design their own assessments, but the tests must align with state standards. By 2007-08, states also must administer science exams once each at the elementary, middle, and high school years. Tests information must be available to teachers and parents for diagnostic use, and the results must be disaggregated and reported by income, race/ethnicity, and other categories to track subgroup progress.

A sample of 4th and 8th graders in each state also must participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in reading and math every other year. NAEP is expected to provide state-by-state comparisons and to help states analyze their own test results. Federal funding will pay for all of the required NAEP testing, but it only will partially cover develop-

ment and implementation costs of the annual tests. States may postpone the annual tests by one year for each year that Congress underfunds the appropriation required by the ESEA.

Questions immediately arise: Are students already being overwhelmed by too many local and state tests, and will the ESEA demands exacerbate the problem? What about Vermont's current, 6-year-old student assessment system based on the New Standards Reference Exams (NSREs)? Will it simply be replaced, or will it somehow be incorporated in a new set of testing protocols? Estimates of an ESEA funding shortfall for student assess-

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Jerry Carruba joined the Vermont-NEA UniServ staff at the start of the new year.

Welcome Jerry Carruba to the Vermont-NEA UniServ staff

MONTPELIER — Gerald (Jerry) Carruba has been a teacher and Association activist in Vermont for more than 25 years. He holds a BA, MA and Ph.D. ABDD in philosophy and has earned minors in French, psychology, Russian studies, and mathematics. He has taught English, social studies, French, Spanish, Latin, a little Greek and math at the high school level, English and logic at Community College of Vermont and philosophy at Norwich University.

Jerry knows from experience Vermont-NEA's important place in the professional lives of educators. He served the Association in Williamstown and Northfield in leadership roles, including six years as president, 18 years as grievance representative and 21 years as chief negotiator.

In January, Jerry left his position teaching math and foreign languages at Northfield High School to join Ver-

mont-NEA's seven-member UniServ staff. He now advises and represents Vermont-NEA members and local Associations in Central Vermont.

Jerry explains that his job for members is to "do for them what they shouldn't be expected to do for themselves." Impasse negotiation, arbitration, leadership training, and coordination of regional bargaining will be among his responsibilities. "We can't expect local members to become experts in everything," he says.

In his new work, Jerry sees himself as both a mentor and a partner. He explains: "One thing I'd like to say when I leave this job is 'People needed me less than they did when I started.'" A major challenge he'll be taking on for the Association in Central Vermont is "teachers learning to defend themselves." He wants to help educators handle work issues with a confidence "every bit as strong" as the confidence behind their excellent

work in the schools.

Jerry says it's up to Vermont-NEA to provide the "kind of support and leadership that gets teachers to a truly competent, professional level where they receive the acclaim and respect they deserve."

As he gets down to work helping Vermont-NEA fill this tall order, Jerry says what he will miss most is kids and the "immeasurable rewards and challenges of teaching."

Jerry lives in Northfield. He loves the outdoors, fly-fishing, snow shoeing, cross country skiing, and hunting. He has two bird dogs. He is a builder and a blacksmith, and most years he runs the blacksmith shop at the Tunbridge Fair. What excellent credentials!

We welcome Jerry Carruba to Vermont-NEA and to the new challenges — and rewards — of work with the members of the Central Vermont UniServ District. ■

New Federal Era in Education

Continued from page 2...

experiment with forever-flawed merit pay proposals, so-called "tenure reform" infringements on teacher rights, and paper-and-pencil testing of all current teachers.

Paraprofessional Issues: Revised language explicitly states that paraprofessionals must work under the direction of a teacher. New paras hired with Title 1 money now must have at least two years of post-secondary educa-

tion, an Associates degree or higher, or passed a local standard that includes an assessment of reading, writing, and math skills. Current Title 1 paras have four years to meet one of these qualifications.

Schools that do not meet AYP and teacher quality goals after three years cannot hire new paras except to fill vacancies. However, schools able to verify extenuating factors (significant enrollment increases or high numbers

of students with limited English ability, for example) may be released from the hiring freeze.

With so much at stake for our students, our public schools, and our profession each and every day, many wonder whether this unprecedented federal role will support our constant efforts or inevitably become a set-up guaranteed to produce national evidence of "failing schools."

Angelo J. Dorta, President

Central Vermont UniServ District

These are the locals UniServ Director Jerry Carruba serves:

Barre SU

Barre EA and ESP Unit
Barre Town EA
Barre Town ESP Association

Montpelier SU

Montpelier ESP Association
Montpelier EA

Orange North SU

Orange North-NEA and ESP Units

Orange
Washington
Williamstown

Orange Southwest SU

Orange SW TA and ESP Unit
Braintree
Brookfield
Randolph
Randolph UHS

Orleans Southwest SU

Orleans SW SU EA
Craftsbury EA and ESP Unit
Hardwick EA
Hazen Union ESP
Hazen UHS EA
Lake View Union EA
Wolcott TA
Woodbury EA

Washington Central SU

U-32 HS Association and ESP Unit
Washington Central TA and ESP Unit

Berlin
Calais
East Montpelier
Middlesex
Worcester
Supervisory Union

Washington Northeast SU

Cabot ESP
Cabot TA
Twinfield EA
Twinfield Staff Association

Washington South SU

Washington South EA and ESP Unit

Northfield
Roxbury

Windsor Northwest SU

Windsor Northwest EA
Bethel
Granville
Hancock
Rochester
Stockbridge
Windsor Northwest SU

Washington West SU

Harwood EA and ESP Unit
Valley EA
Fauston
Moretown and ESP Unit
Waitsfield
Warren
Waterbury-Duxbury EA

Bring the community to school

Here are a few public relations ideas to help you and your local Association reinforce the good relationship between your public school and your community. They are also a surefire way to bolster citizens' respect for educators.

This article is the second in a series suggesting effective and easy-to-accomplish public relations activities.

Celebrate Dr. Seuss's Birthday

Getting parents and other citizens in your community to visit school and, better yet, roll up their sleeves to work with the children, is rewarding for everyone. Our nation's Read Across America celebration occurs each year in March, on Dr. Seuss's birthday. It is a perfect opportunity to include parents and townspeople in school activities aimed at promoting the joy and benefits of reading. Here are some tried and true ideas from Vermont teachers:

- Invite guests into your classroom. Give each a red striped Cat-in-the-Hat hat and a book to read to students, and share a birthday cake for Dr. Seuss.

It is always fun to ask members of the school community: older students, the office secretary, the superintendent, bus drivers, high school basketball or hockey players, school custodians, or school board members.

But it's especially important to include people who don't often witness the wonderful activity inside your school. Invite grandparents, state or local police officers, members of the select board, the mayor, local business people. And don't forget the local newspaper editor or radio personality.

- Bring students to a local hospital or nursing home to read to patients and residents.

- Ask your Vermont senator or State House representative to lead a Dr. Seuss read-aloud in the school auditorium.

- Visit local firefighters or volunteers at the firehouse. Ask them to read to the children, on the firetruck.

- Organize a parade around the school or through downtown, with books and young readers and Dr. Seuss characters and dignitaries in Cat-in-the-Hat hats.

For more ideas, go to:

www.nea.org/readacross

David S. Ely receives the Horace Mann-NEA Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence

WASHINGTON, D.C. — At a black-tie gala in the nation's capitol on December 6, David S. Ely, a member of the National Education Association (NEA) from South Burlington, Vermont, received one of five Horace Mann-NEA Foundation Awards for Teaching Excellence. The awards, given to the finalists for The NEA Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence for the first time, were each accompanied by a \$10,000 gift from The Horace Mann Companies, and a commemorative certificate.

The honor recognizes teaching excellence and the 2.7 million members of NEA. David Ely was the nominee of Vermont-NEA and the Chittenden South Education Association. "It is a great honor to have been selected for this distinguished award," Ely said. "I firmly believe that professional development is very important in teaching. It is the source of energy that sustains you and challenges you to grow."

At the celebration, Fred Rogers, creator and host of Mister Rogers' Neighborhood and founder and chairman of the board of Family Communications, Inc., was presented with The NEA Foundation Award for Outstanding Service to Public Education. The honor recognized Mr. Rogers for his life-long commitment to the emotional and psychological health of children, and for helping generations of early learners to acquire the skills that are the foundation for learning readiness.

Ely was recognized by his fellow educators as "an expert teacher who delivers the highest quality science education while laughing with and car-



Senator Jim Jeffords attended the D.C. gala celebrating Dave Ely of Champlain Valley UHS and the four other winners of the NEA Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence.

ing deeply about his students." He has received numerous honors recognizing his teaching excellence, including Vermont's Outstanding Biology Teacher (1978) and The New England College Board Outstanding A. P. Teacher (1999). He is the first recipient of Vermont-NEA's Award for Teaching Excellence (2001).

Ely also has been active in professional associations, and is noted for contributions to science education and for his peer leadership and mentoring. He is past president of the Vermont Science Teachers Association (1986-89), and currently serves on the Committee for Advanced Study in Mathematics and Science in American High Schools sponsored by the Na-

tional Academy of Sciences.

Since 1985, Ely has participated in more than 50 summer workshops. These professional development opportunities are designed to update his subject knowledge and to enhance student learning. Many courses have focused on working with youth who have physical and learning disabilities. He has received numerous grants for the purchase of science supplies and equipment, and consistently shares the new knowledge and the supplies with peers to benefit teachers and students "beyond the walls of his own high school."

Go to www.nfie.org for more information about the NEA Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence. ■

Rutland Support Staff settle four years

RUTLAND — The 125 school employees of the Rutland Support Staff Association have achieved a four-year deal that raises the starting wage for support staff this year from

\$6.80 an hour to \$8.75, retroactively. That's a 29% increase in the starting salary in the first year of the contract. New money increases 7.25% in 2001-02, 3.5% in 2002-03; 3.5% in 2003-

04, and 3.75% in 2004-05.

The RSSA has been working hard for months. Under the leadership of Co-Presidents Carolyn Godbout and Maryann Black, and chief negotiator Donna Louiselle, they pressed their case for improved salaries before the school board and community.

Other significant contract improvements include: locking in the health care premium contribution at 10% of dual option (vs. the variable formula in the old contract), which results in a 1% decrease this year; improved dental coverage; increased sub pay for paras asked to sub; increased professional development; improved sick leave and establishment of a sick bank; increased severance pay; increased stipend for those working with special needs kids; and establishment of a mentor program for new hires. Wow!

Vermont-NEA UniServ Director Sean Leach and Organizer Jason Winston advised RSSA. ■



RSSA co-presidents Carolyn Godbout and Marianne Black shake hands over their contract settlement.

Washington Central staff authorize strike

MONTPELIER — Months of organizing effort built up to a strike authorization vote December 12 for support staff in Washington Central, which includes elementary schools in Berlin, East Montpelier and Calais.

When the Washington Central School Board imposed a contract earlier this year that support staff could not accept, the teaching assistants got to work rallying support in the community. Their goal is to convince the school board to rescind the imposition and bargain a more reasonable settlement.

"I spent all day Sunday on the phone," said one of the 20 support staff gathered in December for the strike vote. "It wasn't easy, but I did it."

"That's the key -- you gotta get out there and talk to the parents," said Ruth Farnham of East Montpelier, adding: "If we give in now, we've lost everything we've worked for 13 years."

The Washington Central staff did not give in. They voted overwhelmingly (only one abstention) to authorize a strike, date to be determined. And they continue to pressure the school board for a better contract. As this issue of *Today* goes to the printer, there is word the school board wants to talk. Let's hope for the best! ■



The members of the Washington Central ESP bargaining team shared a moment before their local voted to authorize a strike. L-R: Jane Badger of East Montpelier, Carolyn Ballentyne of Calais and Ruth Farnham of East Montpelier. (Becky Pelligrini of Berlin missed the photo.)

Montpelier staff achieve contract, avert strike

MONTPELIER — Good news for the 72 Instructional Assistants and three Aides represented by the Montpelier Education Support Staff Association (MESSA): Their negotiators reached an agreement with the school board early in January, and the hard-won contract pays nearly 80% of the employees a livable wage by the end of the second year.

The settlement also protects current single-person health insurance benefits, and increases the board's premium coverage to 75% (up from 50%) for two-person and family coverage for employees who have worked at least 4 years.

"I can honestly say that our team is satisfied with the agreement and feel that it is an offer we can bring back to the membership," said local President Cindy Bubrowski in a thank you message to community supporters. She led her local through months of tough bargaining and community organizing, including a strike vote. She added: "Although we did not reach a livable wage immediately, the starting wages were boosted, the majority of IAs will reach the livable wage benchmark this fall."

The settlement of this contract came at mediation just days before the IAs were scheduled to go on strike.

The Association had voted 61-4 to authorize a strike. Had the mediation failed, this would have been the first ever "stand alone" strike for support staff union in Vermont. (Three years ago, the Hyde Park support staff and teachers went out together.)

Community support and a clear statement by teachers that they had no intention of covering IA work during a strike, helped convince the school board that a respectful settlement was better than continued stonewalling.

Organizing campaign

Six months ago, a discouraged negotiations committee wondered whether they could do anything to change the position they were in. They'd been bargaining for a year, but were still facing offers from the board that would leave them the lowest paid employees in the district, with the leanest benefit package. It looked very bleak, but they weren't prepared to declare defeat.

For months, President Cindy Bubrowski and other members of the committee had been participating in a Support Staff Regional Bargaining Council for local unions in Washington County. UniServ Director Mark Hage had been working with a number of locals — including Barre City, Twinfield, U-32 and Washington Cen-

tral — on the concept of a "livable wage" contract.

Since authorization of a Livable Income Study by the Vermont Legislature in 1999, more and more support staff locals have been looking at the reality of what it costs to support one's self in Vermont. The study concluded that a minimum of \$10.37 per hour is necessary for a single person working full-time, with no dependents. With this impartial information in hand, the Montpelier negotiators set their sights on this goal.

The school board, not unlike many throughout the state, had become used to bargaining wage rates and benefit packages well below this livable level for support staff. It took a long and concerted effort to change their minds.

The MESSA began building a firm foundation by educating IAs about the livable wage, and recruiting members to increase their strength in the district. They reached out to teachers and found tremendous support.

Montpelier Education Association President Carolyn Kiniry organized petition drives and building meetings among teachers to help convince the school board to relent. Teachers informed administrators of the destabilizing impact that would result from a strike, and reminded them of the value

of IAs to the educational process. MEA Chief Negotiator Kaiya Korb joined the MESSA negotiations committee, indicating solidarity between teachers and IAs that the board couldn't ignore.

With the assistance of the Montpelier based Vermont Workers Center, parents, residents and members of other unions were mobilized to attend informational picket lines, write supportive letters to the newspaper, and speak on behalf of the IAs at school board meetings. The support staff union bargaining next door in the Washington Central (Berlin, Calais and East Montpelier) — who had also taken a strike vote when their school boards imposed an unacceptable contract — worked in concert with MESSA.

Finally, the school board, faced with the tide of support for IAs, plus the serious potential impact of a strike, invited MESSA back to negotiations and settled in a long evening session with a federal mediator on January 2.

The reverberations of this successful organizing campaign should be felt at bargaining tables throughout the state, as support staff employees elevate their efforts to achieve livable wages, decent benefits, and respect on the job. ■

Celebrate Law Day 2002

The Vermont Bar Association is inviting schools to celebrate Law Day 2002. If you would like a lawyer or judge to visit your classroom during the week of May 1, 2002, you can use the online sign-up form at www.vtbar.org in the section called "For the Public." A local lawyer or judge to contact you directly to arrange the details of the visit.

The deadline for signing up is February 15, 2002. Questions? Contact Faith Copeland, VBA Law Day Coordinator, at (802)223-2020, or by email at fcopeland@vtbar.org.

More background about Law Day, including a planning guide for 2002, is available at www.abanet.org/publiced/lawday/history.html. Plus, the Vermont Bar Association's Public Education Center offers free copies of law-related curriculum for grades K-12. To request copies, contact Deb Ormsbee, Director of the Public Education Center, at (802)223-2020 or by email at dormsbee@vtbar.org

Background

In 1961, May 1 was designated by joint resolution of Congress as the official date for Celebrating Law Day:

"The first day of May of each year is hereby designated as Law Day, U.S.A. It is set aside as a special day of celebration by the American people in appreciation of their liberties and the reaffirmation of their loyalty to the United States of America; of their re-dedication to the ideals of equality and justice under law in their relations with each other as well as with other nations; and for the cultivation of that respect for law that is so vital to the democratic way of life."

More background about Law Day, including a planning guide for 2002, is available at www.abanet.org/publiced/lawday/history.html.

Saturday Specials 2002

Workshops presented by the Vermont Council of Teachers of English Language Arts

Saturday Special, February 9 (snow date, Feb. 16)

- Not Car, Corolla; Not Fruit, Peach
- Using Catalogue Writing with At-Risk Youth

Saturday Special, March 16 (snow date, Mar. 23)

- Declaring Independence: A Standards-Based Unit in American History.
- Integrated Writing.

The Saturday Specials are co-sponsored by the Bread Loaf Teacher Network, the National Writing Project in Vermont, and the Vermont Council of Teachers of English Language Arts (VCTELA).

Both Specials will be held on the UVM campus in the Waterman Building on the corner of Prospect and College Streets. The Specials will be held in the Coolidge Dining Room, Waterman 501, from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Credit certificates are available.

Registration is \$20 for one or \$35 for two Specials. Lunch and VCTELA membership are included in the registration fee. To register, send a check for the correct amount, payable to VCTELA, to: Margaret Riter and Nancy Goodale VCTELA Conference Chairs Fair Haven UHS 33 Mechanic St Fair Haven, VT 05743

If the weather is questionable, call 802-878-9075.

Saturday Special Workshop/ Demonstration Descriptions

All the workshop demonstrations are adaptable to all grades and all disciplines.

Not Car, Corolla; Not Fruit, Peach with Scottie Brower

We will look at a way to structure a mini-lesson which will help young writers revise their work to add de-

tail. Young children are often reluctant to revise, and anyone working with them on their writing soon comes to recognize the ubiquity of the word *nice*. This demonstration will show some ways to eliminate *nice* from talk about writing and replace *nice* with "language that paints a picture for readers." We will look at ways to go deeper into memory and observation to find ways to paint that picture. Come prepared to write and revise!

Scottie teaches a first-second grade combined class at Rumney School, where she has taught for 20 years. She has worked with writing processes for a long time and is a Teacher Consultant for NWP/VT. Using Catalog Writing with At-Risk Youth with Douglas Boardman

This workshop-demonstration will give educators a new perspective on working with at-risk youth, specifically in the area of writing. It examines some of Brendtro's theories on troubled adolescents and gives several proven writing activities that can be used to strengthen the relationship between teacher and students and to give students a starting point for more detailed writing assignments.

Douglas is the moderator of the Bread Loaf Teachers Network in Vermont, is a Teacher Consultant for the National Writing Project in Vermont, and is a teacher of grades 9-12 at Lamoyille Union High School. Declaring Independence: A Standards-Based Unit in American History with Rebecca Reimers

When I create a unit, I try to frame at least one essential question that students will be able to answer, at least in part, based on their own lives, opinions, and beliefs. A major influence in my thinking about unit questions came

from a workshop I took on Standards-Based Unit design. Even more important for me was the work of Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe in *Understanding by Design*. From these sources I came up with a "checklist" for unit questions: Are they important to the field of study? Are they appropriate for the level of my students? Are they relevant to my students' lives? Relevant questions are more engaging for students and give them hooks from their own lives on which to hang new content and understanding.

The essential questions for this unit are: What does it mean to be "independent"? Why did the American colonies declare their independence from Great Britain?

Activities include brainstorming and free-writing, interviewing, reading and analyzing textbook accounts and primary source documents, organizing information into charts and outlines, cooperative learning, and persuasive writing. The culminating project is a personal Declaration of Independence written by each student.

Rebecca teaches social studies at Middlebury Union High School and is a Teacher Consultant for the National Writing Project in Vermont.

Integrated Writing

with Cate Lamb

Cate will show the many ways to integrate writing in all curriculum areas including science, math and social studies. Students in her sixth grade class write portfolio pieces (reports, responses, personal essays, persuasive pieces, procedures, and narratives) in all curriculum areas. She will show multiple intelligence and individual-choice methods of writing integration.

Cate teaches grade six at Browns River Middle School and is a Teacher Consultant for NWP/VT.

Vermont State Debate Championships Saturday, March 2, 2002

Preliminary Rounds - Montpelier High School 8:45 am to 2:30 pm

Final Championship Rounds - Vermont State House - 3:30 pm

In eight sponsored competitions, Vermont high school students have been debating the proposition that the United States federal government should establish a foreign policy significantly limiting the use of weapons of mass destruction. Owing to the events of September 11, this national topic has brought focus to one of the most critical questions of our times.

Saturday, March 2, 2002 marks the end of the debate season in Vermont. One novice and one varsity team will be declared the Vermont State Champions for 2002.

Throughout this school year debaters have had to develop the ratio-

nale and create a plan for their affirmative case. In addition, because Vermont debate is switch-sides, they also have had to defend the basic negative position that there's no need for a change. As part of the policy debate format, students have to participate in cross-examination questioning and also develop final rebuttals.

Teachers and school administrators interested in developing policy debate at their schools should plan to attend these finals and contact Bill Haines, President of the Vermont Debate and Forensics League (VDFL) 802-229-9303.

Vermont-NEA is a partner with

the VDFL, which sponsors and coordinates this interscholastic activity. ■

HELP WANTED

Policy Debate Judges are needed for the Vermont High School State Debate Championships on Saturday, March 2, in Montpelier

Qualifications needed:

- Knowledge of policy debate structure and process
- Experience in debate at the high school or college level

Interested? Contact:

If you are interested and would be available for all or part of the day (Saturday, March 2, 2002) please contact Bill Haines at bill@mhs.mps.k12.vt.us or call (802) 229-9303

NEA Director's Report

Congress passes "No Child Left Behind Act of 2001"

By Wayne Nadeau

You may have heard the news that the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), now the "No Child Left Behind Act of 2001," overwhelmingly passed Congress. President Bush signed it on January 8, 2002.

The President took to the air to tout the new education law. He signed it in Ohio, then flew to New Hampshire and on to Massachusetts where he spoke at our nation's oldest public school, Boston Latin. He lauded Senator Kennedy for his bipartisan efforts. There is much speculation as to why Senator Kennedy capitulated on full funding of Special Education, especially when the Senate voted unanimously, earlier in the session, for fully-funded Special Education.

I am quite proud that our congressional delegation — Senator Leahy, Senator Jeffords and Congressman Sanders — voted NO! Our National Education Association did not take a position on the final vote, so, not as your NEA Director, but personally, I just had to thank these folks one more time. Although obviously a very controversial vote, our congressional delegation identified the lack of funding and the negative impact that it will have on public schools as too much to ac-

cept. Our Association's position up to the final vote was that, at a minimum, we must fully fund Special Education, we took a no position on the final vote.

The other major non-fully funded federal mandate out of this legislation is mandatory testing. In a recent Vermont Public Radio commentary, Madeleine Kunin lauded "No Child Left Behind Act of 2001" as a great piece of legislation with a few funding drawbacks. As in the opening of China, it could only be done by a Republican President, she commented. The "No Child Left Behind Act of 2001" is an expansion of federal authority over education. This is a far cry from the days when there was talk of dismantling the federal Department of Education.

Let me state unequivocally, I agree with our congressional delegation that this new law goes a long way in identifying and providing remedies to help our schools meet the challenges of today and tomorrow. It is for the laudable components of this law, and there are many, that our NEA took no position. If we can assure that "all students will be able to read," then much will have been accomplished. We have backed away from "shining the light of shame" on our schools that don't meet the new federal standards. The

next phase of this law is regulatory implementation; we will all come to know what is meant by the promise that "all children will be able to read." As with Vermont's Act 60, the federal government will establish support systems for those schools that don't meet the new federal standards. As we await the regulatory process, you can be certain our NEA will be there to help fashion regulations that will be supportive of our nation's public schools.

With reading identified as a new major initiative by the federal government I am hopeful that First Lady Laura Bush will join Garth Brooks, National Chairman of NEA's **Read Across America**, in celebrating reading by reading to students with Mr. Brooks. March 2 is the birthday of Dr. Seuss and therefore has been selected by NEA as the day to celebrate reading via NEA's **Read Across America** program. This year March 2nd falls on a Saturday, so many schools in the nation will celebrate **Read Across America** March 1st. Whenever you choose to celebrate, let us all appreciate that one day is never enough -- Reading is fundamental.

If you should have questions or comments, please contact me at wfnadeau@yahoo.com ■

Upcoming Association events...

February 1

Candidate petitions due for Vermont-NEA office

Applications due for Vermont-NEA/Maida F. Townsend Scholarships

February 2

Vermont-NEA Board of Directors meeting in Montpelier

February 4

Deadline for March issue of *Vermont-NEA Today*

February 5

Vermont-NEA Committee Reports due

March 1

Deadline for nominations for Vermont-NEA Human and Civil Rights Awards

March 2

The birthday of Theodor Geisel (Dr. Seuss)

March 4

Deadline for April issue of *Vermont-NEA Today*

March 5

Town Meeting Day

March 22-23

Vermont-NEA ESP Leadership Conference

March 23

Vermont-NEA Board of Directors meeting at the Radisson Hotel in Burlington

Nominate now for Vermont-NEA Human and Civil Rights Awards

MONTPELIER — The Human and Civil Rights Committee of Vermont-NEA will announce its annual awards at the Vermont-NEA Representative Assembly on April 5 at the Capitol Plaza in Montpelier.

These are the three categories in which an award may be given:

- 1) To that person whose activities have protected and/or enhanced the rights of teachers and the teaching profession in a significant way.
- 2) To that member of the profession whose professional activities have protected and/or enhanced the rights of teachers and students.
- 3) To a K-12 student or group of students whose activities have served to enhance the rights and self-esteem of her or their peers.

The Vermont-NEA HCR Committee looking for nominations for the award. Please use the application on this page.

In addition to the application form, the committee requires a letter, minimum one page, from the nominator

stating the reasons why the nominee is being put forward. This information should reach Vermont-NEA Headquarters by March 1, 2002. The address is 10 Wheelock Street, Montpelier, VT 05602. Nominations may be faxed: 8020223-1253.

Vermont-NEA will accept nominations without regard to race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, or national origin and will present the awards to the nominees selected by the Human and Civil Rights Committee and approved by the Board of Directors.

The nominators must be Vermont-NEA members, must make nominations for specific awards, must submit the nominations according to the committee's guidelines and format, and must have the nominations in on time.

Nominees may be individuals, affiliates, groups, or organizations working in some area of human and civil rights. Individuals nominated in category 2 must be Vermont-NEA members. ■

Vermont-NEA Human and Civil Rights Award

- 1) Awarded to that person whose activities have protected and/or enhanced the rights of teachers and the teaching profession in a significant way.
- 2) Awarded to that member of the profession whose professional activities have protected and/or enhanced the rights of teachers and students.
- 3) Awarded to a K-12 student or group of students whose activities have served to enhance the rights and self-esteem of her or their peers.

**All information due at Vermont-NEA Headquarters —
10 Wheelock Street, Montpelier 05602 — by 4:00 pm, March 1, 2002**

Nomination Form

Nominee Information

For which of the awards is the nomination made? Circle one: **1** **2** **3**

Name of nominee(s): _____

Is the nominee a Vermont-NEA member? Check one: yes no

Home Address: _____

Local Association: _____

Local President: _____

Work Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

Nominator Information

Name of nominator: _____

Is the nominator a Vermont-NEA member? Check one: yes no

Home Address: _____

Work Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

TRAINING

*Invitation for Vermont-NEA Members:
Paraeducators, Secretaries, Custodians, Cooks & Bus Drivers*
**2002 Education Support Personnel
Leadership Conference**

Friday, March 22nd to Saturday, March 23rd
Radisson Hotel in Burlington

Vermont-NEA's annual Education Support Personnel (ESP) Conference — being held this year on March 22nd - March 23rd at the Radisson Hotel in Burlington — is becoming *the* place where school staff can learn — and play — together for that needed boost during Mud Season. An exciting group of presenters has been assembled to provide workshops. And we know, from past experience, that you will provide the enthusiasm, curiosity, energy and commitment to make this a wonderful event! At this Conference you can...

☆ Enjoy yourself in a lovely hotel with nice amenities, pool, fitness center and hot tubs.

☆ Meet, learn from, and have fun with ESP colleagues from throughout the state.

☆ Spend time with Vermont-NEA staff, and get answers to those questions you've been meaning to ask.

☆ Sharpen your skills, and gain new ones, for personal and professional development.

Please plan on joining us. If you have questions, call Sheree Parker or Ellen David Friedman at 1-800-649-6375.

This year... No Registration Fee for Vermont-NEA Members!!

This year, Vermont-NEA is paying all costs: Lodging in a double, triple or quad room, Friday banquet, Saturday breakfast & lunch, hotel amenities, conference registration and materials.

We'll send driving directions and a confirmation (via mail or e-mail) when you register. If requesting a single room, please remit \$100 to Vermont-NEA with your registration form.

STRATEGIC RETIREMENT PLANNING SEMINAR

A VALUABLE WORKSHOP FOR VERMONT EDUCATORS
WHO ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR RETIREMENT

This 1 hour workshop offers valuable information useful in planning for your retirement. Learn strategies to achieve financial security. We will provide you with sound financial strategies that will help you make the best decisions for your situation. Now is the time to start making the most out of your

Learn How To: Presented by the Associates of: **New England Financial**
A Vermont-NEA Endorsed Provider of 403(b) Plans

- ✓ Invest Wisely for Your Retirement
- ✓ Keep More of What You Earn & Pay Less in Income Taxes
- ✓ Manage Your Money in a Volatile Market
- ✓ Maximize Your Retirement Income
- ✓ Understand Your Benefit Options

Your instructors will be associates of **New England Financial**, endorsed by the Vermont-NEA to provide 403(b) and 403(b)(7) Retirement Plans. With over 50 combined years of experience, the New England Financial Retirement Team has been helping many Vermont educators and their families increase their financial security through effective investment and insurance strategies.

Date:	Town:	Place:
February 7, 2002	Morrisville	Charlmont Restaurant
March 14, 2002	Quechee	Black Angus Cafe
March 21, 2002	Mt. Snow - Wilmington	Grand Summit Hotel
April 11, 2002	Newport	Eastside Restaurant
May 2, 2002	Rutland	Holiday Inn

**All Participants
Are Entitled
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All Seminars are held on a Thursday from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. and are followed by a Complimentary Dinner.

Seating is Limited so...Register Today!!!
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108 Cherry Street, Suite 207
Burlington, VT 05401
Phone: (802) 863-2801
Toll-Free: 877-313-2801
E-mail: info@burlington.neff.com

Website: www.neffirm.com/burlington



William J. Wensley



Michael O. Quinn,
LUTCF

Vermont-NEA ESP Conference Agenda

Radisson Hotel — Burlington
Friday, March 22nd

4:00 PM - 6:00 PM Registration & Refreshments
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM Banquet
7:00 PM - 8:00 PM Building Teacher-ESP Ties
8:00 PM 2002 ESP Awards

Saturday, March 23rd

6:30 AM - 8:00 AM Breakfast
8:00 AM - 10:00 AM Workshop Tracks
10:00 AM - 10:15 AM Break
10:15 AM - 11:45 AM Workshop Tracks
11:45 AM - 12:00 Noon Break & Hotel Check-Out
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Lunch
1:15 PM - 2:45 PM Workshop Tracks
2:45 PM - 3:00 PM Evaluations & Certificates
3:00 PM Depart

Registration Form

Return by March 7th, 2001 to Vermont-NEA
10 Wheelock St., Montpelier VT 05602

Name _____
Association _____
Home address _____
E-mail (s) _____ (h) _____
Phone (s) _____ (h) _____

Check your preferred rooming choice:

- SINGLES: available at a charge of \$100 (pay to VT-NEA)
 DOUBLES: All hotel rooms are doubles (2 double beds), unless requested. Please list your preferred roommate:

- TRIPLES & QUADS: If you wish to have 3 or 4 people in your room, you will be sharing a bed. Please indicate your choice of roommate(s):

1st: _____
2nd: _____
3rd: _____

Check your preference:

- Non-smoking room Smoking room No preference

ROOMING FEE
There is no rooming fee for doubles, triples or quads.

- If requesting a single room, \$100 is enclosed.

Workshop Schedule

Check One Workshop Track Only →

Advocating for Wages & Benefits

- wages • salary schedules • percentage & across-the-board raises
- hiring placement language • health insurance • dental insurance
- bargaining math • long-term disability • municipal retirement
- other forms of retirement • overtime • comp time • shift differential

Advocating for Working Conditions & Rights

- agency fee • leaves • seniority • just cause • evaluations • mentoring
- lay-off • recall • sub-contracting • work day • work year
- professional development • in-service training • strikes
- ban on permanent strike replacements • Fair Labor Standards

Bargaining Skills & Behavior

- what to say & when to say it • the bargaining process • timing
- overall bargaining strategy • how to get out of jams • bargaining language
- how to organize the bargaining team • bargaining simulation
- bargaining skills at the table • keeping your members informed

Organizing Winning Campaigns

- livable wage campaigns • contract crisis campaigns • public relations
- organizing to prevent strikes • internal membership campaigns
- outreach to teachers • school board elections • community organizing
- public speaking • gaining support from other unions • communications

Building a Strong & Effective Association

- self-assessment of your Association • membership potential
- membership recruitment • membership participation • identifying leaders
- leadership development • internal communications • annual planning
- Association responsibilities • division of labor • Association program