

**A Message from our President - Dave Dampf**

Summer is almost here. Before we know it, classes will be dismissed and yellow limousines will arrive to take the children home for the last time this school year. Their families will tend to them for a couple of months and we will tend to ours.

What will you do this summer?

For many teachers, summer is spent on educational pursuits and professional related activities:

- Learning new curriculum
- Experimenting with that new piece of technology or educational apps
- Teaching summer school
- Coaching student athletes
- Working toward a Master's Degree
- Attending conferences, workshops, and committee meetings

You might do some of these things – maybe even most of them. But remember that we are on the go for 10 months doing a job that is not for the faint of heart. And we make it look easy. That is what good educators do.

So, I'd like to suggest that you absolutely make some time for yourself and your family. Recharge those batteries for the next 10-month marathon that we will run starting in September:

- Go for a hike, a walk, or a stroll
- Visit a place you have never been
- Eat ice cream before dinner
- Fix the \_\_\_\_\_ that's been broken for months
- Sleep in and then have that extra cup of coffee
- Daydream
- Stay up late and nap the next day
- Binge watch Netflix or Hulu
- Read that book -- maybe next to a pool, lake, or ocean
- ...And don't forget to hydrate as needed.



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## **UPCOMING MEETINGS:**

**OTA Representative Meeting (Second Tuesday of the month) ALL ARE WELCOME!**

Next Meeting: Sept 11th 3:30 pm rm. @ Otto Shortell Middle School  
Any special meeting dates will be announced through e-mail.

**Board of Education Meeting (Second Tuesday of the month)**

July 10th	6:00 pm @ District Office
Aug 14th	6:00 pm @ District Office
Sept 11th	6:00 pm @ District Office



## **Summertime!**

**Offering everyone a chance to unwind, decompress and recharge their batteries.**

**Enjoy your time off from Teaching.**

## **Donations and Contributions**

**Thank you!**



**This past year, between our Casual Friday donations and our Special fund drives, the OTA and the OSEU donated almost \$5000. That is an awesome amount, and we need to remember that many of you contribute within your own buildings, as well.**

**Great Job Everyone!**

## TALES FROM THE CRYPT

The members of the Oneida Retired Educators Association remind you that we are alive and well and still active on the educational scene in Oneida. With over 160 members, we continue to be interested in the education of our children, the situations, rights and benefits of current and retired educators, and the state and federal legislation that affects us all.

Congratulations and THANK YOU for your recent overwhelming support of the concept of the union in general and the OTA specifically! We retirees were extremely heartened, to say the least, to learn that the OTA members remain Union Strong and will continue to believe in the strength and power of “teachers together”.

Our current Retirees Council 8 newsletter puts it all together. “A recent newspaper ‘letter to the editor’ scolds: ‘Unions may have been needed 107 years ago...but they have outlived their usefulness, especially the public sector unions. We have multiple government agencies that oversee working conditions. You don’t need unions.’ “ HA!!

“News was breaking. First ‘Teacher Strikes in West Virginia’. Guess they didn’t have those multiple government agencies working for them. Then Oklahoma, Kentucky...and Arizona and Colorado. Teachers need supplies, smaller classes, pay raises that have been put off too long. Teachers have mortgages and college loans, and families to raise. What’s going to keep America strong are good schools and professional teachers who are respected and paid as the professionals they are. And it’s not just teachers who are out stating their case. Parents and neighbors are out there with them.

A new NPR poll finds that large majorities of Americans believe teachers are underpaid and support their right to strike: Just 1 in 4 Americans believe teachers in this country are paid fairly. Nearly two-thirds approve of national teachers’ unions, and three-quarters agree teachers have the right to strike. That last figure includes two thirds of Republicans, three-quarters of independents, and nearly 9 in 10 Democrats. (April 26, 2018, Morning Edition.)

Lesson: Teachers shouldn’t have to struggle, wait for years and ‘put up and shut up.’ Teacher-led unions have long spoken up for student and teacher needs and have helped work for the best possible schools. No, we shouldn’t depend on ‘multiple government agencies that oversee working conditions.’ We surely do need our unions!”

Thank you for all your hard work this year. The OREA appreciates your contributions to the success and well-being of our city’s most valuable assets. Have a wonderful summer!

P.S. Thanks so much for the Spring Fling! Your retirees so appreciate your generosity and the chance to get together with the current staff...and we look forward to welcoming the next batch of those who have completed their teaching careers!

Patricia Albaugh--Oneida Castle School Sixth Grade, Ret. 2007

## Happenings in and around the OTA



**Sherri Staczuk**  
**Special Education**  
**Oneida High School**

I first started teaching in 1981, when I opened the first Resource Room in Mohawk, NY. After a hiatus from teaching to be a work-at-home mom in direct sales, I came to Oneida when we moved here in 1998. I substituted at many schools in CNY, but found OCSD to be the best fit for me. After a long-term sub position, I started working at OHS full time in the Special Education Dept. I didn't realize I would learn many life lessons here from colleagues, parents, and students. I was very passionate about the job program, Project LIFE, and still think some of the most important things we can teach our students are the skills to be able to look for a job, interview for a job, get a job, and hold a job. I hope I made a difference for those students in my program. Maybe someday job skills can become a priority again, especially for students not on the college track. Also, who knew that a job at OHS would lead me to find my forever friend and husband, Bob Straczuk? :) I've been blessed to work with many teachers and staff in all the buildings at OCSD, and you are talented, passionate, and caring. Stay that way, and remember to have fun in your career, too! I'm looking forward to this next chapter in my life of visiting our boys who are spread out from the United Kingdom to FL to SC (where my grandson Leo is!) and to CT. I'm also looking forward to a future of making a difference in the lives of women and their families, as I show them they have choices in their life, and how to have financial independence with a direct sales business.



**Steve Dunckel**  
**Physics Teacher**  
**Oneida High School**

As I think back on my time in public education and specifically on my stint at OHS, I smile. I have had a great time working with teachers and students across NYS. I started in the Bronx, moved to Horseheads, then Oneida, onto Morrisville- Eaton, and back to Oneida. I am thankful that the administration was willing to hire me back and more thankful that I was able to convince Rob Price that I did not need to take APL training. I do not believe in advice as someone once said it is what you ask for when you know the answer, but wish you did not. However, I will offer some anyway. As teachers in the building, get involved with the building. Walk around and see what great things your colleagues are doing. If you stop by Bob Straczuk's room, you might even learn something useful. Join the lunch group in the Faculty room; I have learned so much eating with members of other departments. My wife says I am much more enlightened because of hanging out with the young in crowd. Most of all go to a union meeting. See how hard others are working on your behalf. I end with this, Public Education like Democracy may be bad, but they are still better than all the other options. Enjoy the rest of your career.



## Happenings in and around the OTA

### Negotiations

The negotiating team and the District have met four times. On June 6<sup>th</sup>, the District gave the negotiating team their proposal. On June 13<sup>th</sup>, the team will met to discuss the District's proposal. The District and the negotiations team will meet again June 27<sup>th</sup>.

### Annual Spring Fling

The OTA hosted its annual Spring Fling on Friday June 8th at Back Roads Tavern in Wampsville. About 50 former and current OTA members enjoyed a pleasant evening of conversation mixed with food and beverage. A good time was had by all!

### Vote COPE and the OTA

Ed Blake, a NYSUT representative for Vote COPE, presented the OTA with the 2017 "most improved amount collected" award. The OTA has about an 80% membership enrollment in Vote COPE but our members 'upped' their contribute amount. Great Job Oneida Teachers Association!



Dave Dampf and Brian Myatt accept the "most improved" award .

### OTA Scholarship Awards

The Oneida Teachers' Association presented four \$500 scholarships to graduating seniors. Every year, four students are chosen to receive the OTA Scholarship. The scholarships are distributed over a two year period with the students receiving \$250 the first year, and upon a written request, will receive the second \$250 at the start of their sophomore year in college.

This years recipients were:

- ◆ Drew Fiedler who will be attending MVCC for General Studies with a goal of Sports Management
- ◆ Daniel Myatt who will be attending Siena College for Computer Science
- ◆ Madelyn Webb who will be attending University @ Buffalo for Biomedical Engineer
- ◆ Nathaniel Winchell who will be attending Utica College for History/Education

Congratulations to these students and good luck in their academic careers.

### Thinking About Retirement?

Whether you are 1, 3 or 5 years out, you want to check out NYSTRS. There is an abundance of information for you to collect, digest and use to your benefit. Don't forget to sign up for one of their retirement seminars. There's still time!!!



NYSUT Retirement Seminars - go on NYSTRS to sign up for one

## Financial advice shouldn't be a one-size-fits-all approach!

Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. -- the program provider of the NYSUT Member Benefits Corporation-endorsed Financial Counseling Program -- understands the unique benefits and retirement options of NYSUT members and how to address your specific financial needs.

**There are two types of services available: a Full-Service Program and a 403(b) Advisor Option.**

### Financial Planning Center

Member Benefits also offers NYSUT members access at no charge to an online Financial Planning Center. Choose from more than 100 modules on a variety of financial topics.



### **NEW! -- Student Loan & Debt Consolidation Services**

The NYSUT Member Benefits Corporation is pleased to announce the endorsement of Cambridge Credit Counseling as a provider to assist NYSUT members and their loved ones with better understanding their student loan re-payment options and/or debt consolidation. **Learn more about this new endorsed program by visiting [memberbenefits.nysut.org/cambridge](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org/cambridge).**

## Expert legal assistance for NYSUT members

### The program offers:

- Low annual cost of just \$85 (\$55 for retirees)
- Unlimited toll-free legal advice
- Includes Simple Will, Power of Attorney, Health Care Proxy & Living Will
- Two, free, hour-long consultations with a plan attorney

Did you know NYSUT members have access to expert legal assistance for everything from preparing crucial estate planning documents to dealing with traffic violations?

Provided by Feldman, Kramer & Monaco, P.C., the NYSUT Member Benefits Trust-endorsed Legal Service Plan offers access to a national network of attorneys that deal with personal legal matters.

For an additional fee, Plan participants can add an Elder Law Rider and/or Business Protection Rider that provides access to attorneys who specialize in these areas.



Learn more by visiting [memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org) or calling 800-626-8101.

For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.