Oneida Teachers' Association

Partners for a Better Community

September/October Newsletter

Volume 44– Sept/Oct 2016

A Message from the President - Brian Mroczek

The new school year is well under way; it's hard to believe that 5 weeks have already passed. Hopefully, it has been a smooth start and things are going well.

While the beginning of a new year is always hectic, don't forget to take time to get your own affairs in order. Insurance, coursework, and investments need to be taken care of as most have applicable deadlines. Have you encountered a life changing event (given birth, gotten married, etc.) since last year? Make sure you have enrolled in the proper insurance program (family vs individual) for both Health and Dental. As a member of the Health program, you are entitled to free Family Vision coverage, even if you are enrolled in individual health care. If you have children who may be getting braces soon, don't forget that our dental plan allows $2000 per child for orthodontics.

If you are planning on taking courses this year, be sure to work within the timelines set forth in the contract. Apply on MLP and make sure that it has been approved before paying for the course. Don't hesitate to contact your investment/financial planner to make adjustments to your portfolio. The more you can invest now, the better retirement you will enjoy!

The OTA and the new administration have had several meetings to help open the door on communication. We have monthly meetings scheduled for the rest of the year and our relationship seems headed in the right direction. The Fall Fling will take place on Thursday, October 27th at the Marble Hill Inn. I am going to extend an invitation to all administrators to join us at that event.

The Presidential election is just over a month away. If the last year was exciting to watch, one can only wonder what's going to happen over the next few weeks. I would encourage everyone to get out and vote!!

Have a great school year…see you on the 27th.

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UPCOMING MEETINGS:

OTA Representative Meeting (First Wednesday of the month) ALL ARE WELCOME!

Next Meeting:	Oct 11th	3:30pm Rm. 126 High School
	Nov 8th	3:30 pm Rm. 126 High School
	Dec 13th	3:30 pm Rm. 126 High School
	Jan 10th	3:30 pm Rm. 126 High School

Any special meeting dates will be announced through e-mail.

Board of Education Meeting (Second Tuesday of the month)

September 13th	**Costello Transportation Center**	**6:00—8: 00**
October 11th	**Otto Shortell Middle School**	**6:00—8:00**
November 8th	**Willard Prior Elementary**	**6:00 – 8:00**
December 13th	**Durhamville Elementary**	**6:00—8:00**
January 19th	**Seneca Street Elementary**	**6:00-8:00**

Board of Education Meetings

The Oneida City School District Board of Education will meet on the second Tuesday of every month.

We all need to remember that it is our job, our livelihood, that is constantly under attack. Make every effort to attend a meeting to show solidarity in the OTA. Remember, it is in your best interest to know what is going on in your district.

Donations and Contributions

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to our Casual Fridays this past academic year. Whether you have participated in your schools own "charities" or participated with other buildings, your donations have gone a long way in showing your support of our Community.

THANK YOU!

TALES FROM THE CRYPT

As the 2016-2017 school year begins, 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.

On your first day of classes with students, over 40 of us gathered for breakfast to enjoy social time and catch up on some current issues. Unfortunately, one of those issues always involves the latest deaths among our numbers. Charles Kubecka, who retired from North Broad several years ago, recently died while on vacation in Maine. Chuck (as most of us called him) and his wife, Nancy, were long-time teachers in Oneida. They were both active OTA members, and Nancy especially was very active on the Executive Committee. As we discussed Chuck's teaching career in Oneida, Carole Valesky (retired from teaching in Durhamville) told me an interesting story, part of which highlights another in a long string of reasons the union has been so good for Oneida teachers. Carole said:

"Chuck and I shared a special bond, I feel, as he was hired by Oneida as my replacement (at Willard Prior) in 1966. I was pregnant with David who was due in April, but due to school policy was required to leave at five months when "one began to show." I had to get special permission from the Board of Education to remain until the end of the semester in January. It is hard to imagine such a discriminatory policy today thanks to the hard work of union members.

But that's not the end of the story. My last day was Friday, January 28. Chuck was to begin the following Monday. On Sunday the 30th the snow began to fall and did not end until Tuesday, Feb. 1st when it had reached 42 inches – the Blizzard of "66 was in the record book. The first week of Chuck's teaching career in Oneida consisted of 5 snow days! I think that's one for the record book also!"

Fifty years later...the baby in question is a NYS Senator, Carole is happily retired and enjoying traveling, being with her grandchildren and living the good life, and Mr. Kubecka is gone after a colorful teaching career and a rewarding retirement. Teaching women in the OCSD who have children are able to work up to an hour before they give birth if they so choose, thanks to the efforts of the OTA members who worked so hard for these benefits.

The OREA members express our deepest sympathy to our colleague Nancy Kubecka. We also want to wish you all a happy and successful school year. Keep up the good fight to educate our children and maintain a healthy and just working environment., no matter how great the odds against this may seem. We have high hopes for our new administration...we have met our new Superintendent and will meet our new Asst. Superintendent soon, and will keep in contact with both. We promise to keep in touch with you all...wishing you all the best!

Patricia Albaugh...Retired 2007, Oneida Castle School. Thanks to Carole Valesky.

Happenings in and around the OTA

Brittany Reals, Andy Barbano, Ashley Wilson, Melinda Feldman, Blaithin Loughrans, and Adrienne Torrey

Say hello to some of our newest members. On Wednesday, 9/21, the OTA had a social meeting at the Wagon Wheel in downtown Oneida. The meeting was lead by Brian Mroczek and covered things such as the contract, health insurance, membership in NYSUT to the sick bank. Please be sure to take the time to say "hello" to our newest members and make them feel at home in the OTA.

New Assistant Superintendent at Oneida City Scholl District.

Tina Lane was hired as the new Asst. Superintendent at Oneida. She comes to Oneida from the General Brown Central School District in the North Country. For the past 8 years, Tina was the Principal of the Junior-Senior High School in General Brown. Prior to that, she was the Instructional Technology Specialist within the District. Tina served in that capacity for about 7 years. She began her career in education as an elementary teacher within the General Brown School District. Let's welcome our new Assistant Superintendent to the Oneida CSD.

(Source: Linkedin)

Our Social Gathering in the Fall

On Thursday **October 28th**, the OTA will be hosting it's annual Fall Fling. The gathering will happen at the **Marble Hill Inn** in Sherrill. Festivities will begin around 4pm. Be sure to get in contact with your building rep for more details. The OTA has opened an invitation to our brothers and sisters in the OSEU as well. $10 donation will secure your spot at the Fling.

Happenings in and around the OTA

Who can you ask?

Wondering what is going on with your contract? How many personal days do I get again? Not sure who may have the answer to those questions? Maybe you could start with your Building Rep? These members of your Union try to stay current with all the happenings within the OTA.

Who is your Building Rep you ask?

Durhamville Elementary

Steve Paz
Stephanie Gwilt

High School

Dona Fiedler	David Wright
John Markle	Brian Myatt
Kristin Robinson	Bud Leo

North Broad Elementary

Jen Armlin	Colleen Jones
Shelly Crowley	

OSMS

Jackie Skibitski	Bob Ritchie
BeeAnn O'Herien	Dave Dampf

Seneca Street

Amy Mahardy	Cindy Smith
Kelly McCall	

Willard Prior Elementary

Craig Clarke
Mike Curro

New Hires at Oneida City School District!!!

Brittany Reals is a Special Education Teacher at Durhamville and Seneca Stree

Erika Newton is a 5th grade teacher at North Broad

Adrienne Torrey is a Special Education/Math teacher at Oneida High School

Blaithin Loughran is a Social Studies Teacher at Oneida High School

Erika Haggerty is a Guidance counselor at Oneida High School

Andy Barbano is a Health Teacher at Otto Shortell Middle School

Ashley Wilson is an Art teacher at Otto Shortll Middle School

Heather Grow is a Physical Education teacher at Otto Shortell Middle School

Melinda Feldmann is a Music teacher at Otto Shortall Middle School

Make sure to give them all a nice welcome to the OTA and Oneida City School District.

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

Happenings in and around your Union

Hello everyone, my name is Heather Grow. I am the newest Physical Education teacher at Otto Shortell Middle School as well as the girls JV soccer coach. I actually started my educational journey right over at North Broad back in kindergarten until 2nd grade when I was enrolled at Stockbridge Valley Central School, where I later graduated. I am truly thankful to have made it back to this district, but this time as a teacher. I completed my Bachelors Degree in Physical Education at SUNY Cortland in 2013 and I am certified to teach K-12. After finishing my undergrad I continued to substitute teach until I got a permanent job as a teaching assistant at OCM BOCES for 6 months then at Liverpool Central School District for the 2015-2016 school year. I am currently pursuing my Master's Degree through Trident University International in Health Education. In my free time I love to get outside and do anything active as well as spend time with those closest to me. I am excited to see what this year brings and I am grateful to be able to help our youth become physically educated individuals!

Hello, my name is Adrienne Torrey and I am the new Special Education/Math teacher at the High School. I recently graduated from Nazareth College (go Golden Flyers!) in Rochester, NY with a degree in Mathematics and Adolescent Inclusive Education. I'm currently working towards my Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction at SUNY Oswego. While at Nazareth, I was working part-time at a local grocery store as well as an on campus job at the IT desk. For my fun and leisure time, I like to run and spend time with my family and friends. I love to read and watch the Harry Potter movies. I also love to be outside on the water and take trips to the ocean whenever I can.

Hello, my name is Erika Haggerty and I am the new School Counselor at Oneida High School. I received my Bachelor's Degree from SUNY Cortland in K-12 School Counseling. I then went to SUNY Oneonta where I obtained my Masters in Education. Prior to coming to Oneida, I had spent the past three years in Clearwater, FL working as a school counselor at Anclote High School. I enjoy spending time with my family, friends, and my 9 month old baby girl, Ava! I also enjoy doing fall things and am excited to be back in New York so I get to experience the seasons!

Hi, my name is Blaithin Loughran. I come from an Irish-American community called Pearl River in Rockland County, NY. My father emigrated from Ireland in the 1980's and my mother's family came from Ireland in the 1960's. I received my undergraduate degree from SUNY Cortland where I majored in Political Science and minored in History. I received my Master's degree in Social Studies Adolescent Education from Binghamton University this past December. Currently, I am teaching 9th grade global studies and 12th grade government at the High School. When I am not teaching I like to play Irish traditional music with my family and my band Girsa.

2016 NYSUT Endorsements

United States Senate
Chuck Schumer

House of Representatives
Congressional District 24
Colleen Deacon

New York State Senate
John DeFrancisco
David Valesky

New York State Assembly
William Barclay
William Magee
Diane Dwire
Al Stripe
Pamela Hunter
William Magnarelli
Bob Oaks

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- **Two, free, hour-long consultations with a plan attorney**

Learn more by calling **800-626-8101**
or visiting ***memberbenefits.nysut.org***.

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