

MTA Today

*A publication of the Massachusetts Teachers Association
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UNIONS STAND UNITED IN FACE OF ATTACKS

ENTER THE MASSACHUSETTS
TEACHERS ASSOCIATION'S
RED SOX
SUMMER READING GAME



EAPC members pitch in to help a Sister City in need

By Bob Duffy

Members of the Education Association of Plymouth and Carver are doing all they can to help the city of Shichigahama, Japan, which was devastated by the recent earthquake and tsunami.

After the disaster struck on March 11, EAPC members wasted no time in beginning an outreach effort to Shichigahama, which is Plymouth's "Sister City." By the time *MTA Today* went to press, they had donated more than \$7,000 to fund the relief effort.

"We have had a 20-year connection with Shichigahama, so our thoughts are with the people of our Sister City," said EAPC President James Crosby.

The association played a key role in organizing a telethon on Plymouth Area Community Television on March 22 that raised \$75,000 for the relief effort.

The EAPC made an initial donation of \$3,000 to get the telethon started. In addition, Crosby appeared on the show, while other members provided assistance with logistics.

The effort did not stop there. Since the telethon, the EAPC — which represents teachers, secretaries and education support professionals — has collected over \$4,000 more for Shichigahama relief.

"This was a wonderful effort by our members, who responded incredibly well and were very generous with both their time and money," Crosby said.

The Sister City ties were also honored by students in the Plymouth schools, who have raised more than \$3,700 to help Shichigahama residents.

Shichigahama had 50 confirmed deaths as a result of the natural disaster, which struck a large area of northern Japan. Another 50 people were reported missing, and thousands of homes in the community were destroyed.

Many residents are living in evacuation centers until temporary housing can be built — an effort that could take up to a year.

Donations are still being accepted to assist Shichigahama. One way to help is to go to the main page of the Plymouth Area Community Television website, www.pactv.org, and use PayPal.

MTA Today

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MTA's Mission Statement

The Massachusetts Teachers Association is a member-driven organization, governed by democratic principles, that accepts and supports the interdependence of professionalism and unionism. The MTA promotes the use of its members' collective power to advance their professional and economic interests. The MTA is committed to human and civil rights and advocates for quality public education in an environment in which lifelong learning and innovation flourish.

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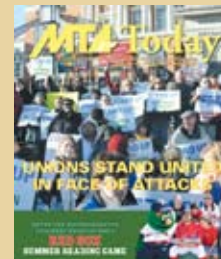
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On the cover

The MTA and other Massachusetts unions held a rally at the State House on Feb. 22 to show solidarity with public employees nationwide as collective bargaining rights came under broad attack. The event, which focused on the situation in Wisconsin, was one of many recent instances in which organized labor has demonstrated unity and resilience. As *MTA Today* went to press, educators and other public employees were working together to preserve their right to negotiate over municipal health care. The House passed a plan on April 26 over strong opposition from labor organizations, and the focus is now on lobbying members of the Senate. For coverage and commentary, see pages 4, 6 and 7.



Cover photo by James Sacks

Quote-Unquote

"In the United States, and elsewhere, unions are the main political players pushing leaders to address middle-class economic concerns and resisting policy changes that promote inequality."

— Excerpt from "Winner-Take-All Politics,"
by Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson

Innovation and collaboration

Revere school empowers teachers, produces 'amazing' results for students

By Jerry Spindel

Innovation is certainly one of the most overused words in education, but the Paul Revere Innovation School in Revere — the first Innovation School in Massachusetts — seems to be living up to the hype.

Last May, during the program's training year, when its new building was not yet completed, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan visited its temporary quarters in the city's Beachmont School and declared, "The progress and results here are amazing."

Then-MTA President Anne Wass and Vice President Paul Toner, who were also present, were equally enthusiastic.

"This is very exciting for us," Wass said, "because it is a living example of what can happen through union-management collaboration."

Toner, who succeeded Wass as MTA president last July, called it a "refutation of the image of teachers' unions as obstructions to innovation."

"The fact is," he said, "we care as much about our students as we do about our members. For, as we've often stated, students' learning conditions are teachers' working conditions."

In September, the K-5 school opened in a new building with approximately 400 students, 37 full-time faculty members and several part-time specialists.

Not long ago, an *MTA Today* reporter sat down with Revere Superintendent of Schools Paul Dakin, Paul Revere Innovation School Principal Barbara Kelly and Revere Teachers Association President Susan Lanza to find out more.

Flexibility and community

All three agreed that cooperation was key to putting the plan in place.

"The school committee and union agreed to readjust the contract to allow for certain experimentation," Lanza said. She cited "trade-offs of time" as an example.

"Teachers here work the same number of hours as their colleagues," Kelly explained, "but the time has been restructured so that every teacher does one hour per week of enrichment activities or academics before or after school. Four days a week we have programs that start at 7 a.m. Children stay for other programs that begin at 2:45 p.m., the end of the regular school day."

Programs include poetry club, homework club, jump-rope (with the school nurse), hip-hop club, math club, arts and crafts, computer club, chorus and others. Children can select new programs at the end of each trimester. Parents and local and area businesses also offer programs.

"It's another mission of the school to engage the community, to engage partners," Dakin said. "Also, the program lets kids see teachers in different roles



Photo by Bob Duffy

Allegra Marrone, left, and Marguerite Guide help a fifth-grade student put sensors on his robot to keep it from bumping into walls and other obstacles. The two teachers work with children in the Paul Revere Innovation School's Robotics Club one day each week.

'The school committee and union agreed to readjust the contract to allow for certain experimentation.'

— RTA President Susan Lanza

on different days. It makes them more receptive, more able to focus on core academic areas during the school day."

"There's also early release every Wednesday for professional development," added Lanza. "That probably wouldn't be able to be done across the district."

The teachers are under the control of the school committee but they are also "granted authority that normally would be held by the central office," Dakin said. "For example, they were instrumental in choosing their principal. Our regular process includes teacher participation, but not to this degree. The teachers at Paul Revere presented me with a principal.

"Teachers planned their curriculum, they planned their interventions and they planned their school day, all with the union's blessing," he noted.

The school's Governing Board, which is made up of educators, parents and community representatives, also participated in the hiring of new teachers.

An indication of parental involvement is the fact that in the last election, 10 parents ran for five spaces on the Governing Board and 102 parents voted.

"Just as you empower the teachers, you empower the parents and give them more say about what happens in their school, rather than just listening to the school committee and the superintendent," Dakin said.

Open Circle

Kelly said a key feature of the school is Open Circle, a 15-minute period at the beginning of the school day twice a week in each classroom, in which students are "free to talk about things that are bothering them."

"We felt that if we dealt with what was stressing them out first thing in the morning, we could get on with our academics," she said.

Teachers and specialists also participate, as well as anyone else among the staff who cares to join in.

The entire faculty trained for Open Circle over 14 hours during two days last summer, Kelly said, adding, "We felt it important that everyone in our

Please turn to 'Myth busters'/Page 37

We must all stay fully engaged

Newsweek columnist Ezra Klein neatly summarized what is going on for unions in Wisconsin when he wrote, “Gov. Scott Walker’s effort to end collective bargaining for public employees in his state was the worst thing to happen to the union movement in recent memory — until it unexpectedly became the best



Paul Toner
MTA President

thing to happen to the union movement in recent memory.”

We all know how bad it has been. Wisconsin has fiscal problems, so Walker pushed through tax breaks for the wealthy and for corporations — and made the problems even worse. Walker then moved to cut public employee benefits. When

employees said OK, Walker wouldn’t take “yes” for an answer and instead went after his real agenda: to gut collective bargaining and destroy the unions. When he couldn’t get his bill passed legitimately, his co-conspirators in the Senate rammed it through in the dead of night. Dirty politics and anti-union extremism have made this the worst of times in Wisconsin.

But it has also been the best of times in many respects. Tens of thousands of public employees and their private-sector supporters rallied at the Capitol in Madison day after day after day, with numbers swelling to an estimated 100,000 on March 12. Public opinion swung against Walker as the standoff continued. The political landscape

To accomplish what we must, we have to listen as well as talk. We can’t afford to reflexively say ‘no’ to any and all proposed changes. We can’t ignore the fiscal climate in which we operate.

has shifted in Wisconsin, with Republicans now on the defensive. Here in the Commonwealth, the MTA and our allies in the labor movement have been holding rallies in support of Wisconsin public employees and workers in other states — and in defense of our own collective bargaining rights. There is a good reason AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka nominated Scott Walker as “Mobilizer of the Year.”

But where does that leave us now? The crisis is not over. Similar sagas are being played out in Ohio, Michigan, Missouri, Indiana, Florida, Alabama, Texas, New Jersey, Maine and New Hampshire — to name just some of the battlegrounds.

In Massachusetts, we are in better shape than our counterparts in many states thanks in large part to the efforts of the thousands of MTA members who made phone calls, sent e-mails and talked to their friends and neighbors not long ago about the need to elect pro-education lawmakers and defeat Question 3, the ballot initiative to slash the state sales tax.

But we are not immune to the national turmoil. We face the same rhetoric, the same harsh fiscal reality and the same decline in private-sector unionization as other states.

At the MTA, our greatest challenge right now is responding to all that is happening in a way that is true to our dual mission. This

mission is to promote the economic well-being of our 107,000 members and to support quality public schools and public higher education. These goals are tied together. If we don’t provide quality services, the taxpayers will rebel against paying us good wages and benefits. And if educators aren’t compensated fairly, the pool of highly qualified applicants will decline.

To accomplish what we must, we have to listen as well as talk. We can’t afford to reflexively say “no” to any and all proposed changes. We can’t ignore the fiscal climate in which we operate. We have to be flexible, but we also have to identify core principles and fight for them as hard as we can. This involves education, training, organizing and mobilizing. At the MTA, member involvement is our highest priority.

Attacking unions is just a proxy for what is really going on. At a deeper level, we are facing an assault on the rights, the interests and the economic security of working- and middle-class people everywhere, whether they are unionized or not. If those who are attacking us win, the rich will get even richer than they already are and the middle class will continue to wither. We will no longer be a land of opportunity, but rather a land of *opportunists*. These inequities will have to be addressed by better laws and a fairer tax structure.

Because the MTA is the largest union in Massachusetts, we have a special responsibility to be leaders on behalf of working men and women. As the largest organization of educators in the Commonwealth, we have a special responsibility to advocate on behalf of excellent public schools and colleges. Stay informed. Stay engaged. Wisconsin has taught us we cannot afford to let our guard down.

MTA members are urged to choose whether they want to get *MTA Today* in print or receive a link by e-mail when the magazine is posted on the MTA website

MTA Today provides important news about your association, as well as vital information on leadership opportunities, professional development, member benefits, politics, policies that affect your school or campus, and much, much more.

As the result of a vote by the delegates to the 2009 MTA Annual Meeting, you are being asked to decide whether you want to receive hard copies or be notified by e-mail when the magazine is posted on the website.

Making your selection is simple, so please do not delay.

And don’t worry! You can change your mind at any time about whether you want to receive printed issues or be notified by e-mail when *MTA Today* is posted.

To sign up, you will need your MTA membership card or an issue of *MTA Today* that was mailed to you as a member. Once you have either your card or your *MTA Today* at your fingertips, take the following easy steps:

1. Go online to: www.massteacher.org/mymtatoday

A form will come up that requests your membership number and your ZIP code.

Your MTA member ID number can be found in two places:

- On the front of your MTA card in the box marked Individual ID#.
- On the back page of this edition of *MTA Today* or any other issue that was mailed to you as a member. Just look in the blue and white box for the number directly above your name.

2. Once you have filled in the requested information, click **CONTINUE**.

3. Another form will come up that shows the name, address and e-mail address that MTA has on file for you. You should examine the information, correct anything that needs updating and make sure it is complete.

4. Once your information is correct, click **SUBMIT**.

Letters to the Editor

Lack of alternative licensing program poses obstacle to career in education

To the Editor:

I am a public school teacher and am writing to highlight what a difficult process it can be to obtain a license to teach in Massachusetts. Since the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education changed the scoring requirements and passing point value of the General Curriculum Mathematics Subtest, I have not been able to pass.

I am employed as a special education teacher in the Needham Public Schools, teaching under a waiver. I have completed class work for two master's degrees. But I have a diagnosed math learning disability.

Despite having worked with tutors, taken prep classes and completed online diagnostic tests, I have not been successful on this portion of the MTEL.

The DESE has made it clear that there is no alternative licensing program for students with disabilities. In order to be able to teach, I have to receive the right amount of points; it has nothing to do with my actual skill level.

I want to continue teaching in the public school system, which is a system that I value. It has been a long journey, and I am saddened to know that this one thing may hold me back from teaching.

Sandra Watson
Needham Education Association

All teachers must take responsibility for the success of ELL students

To the Editor:

I would like to respectfully disagree with MTA colleague Nancy J. Swidler's letter to the editor ("Causes of low test scores are not easily remedied," January-February-March *MTA Today*) regarding factors that are and are not related to our skill level.

As an ELL teacher, I firmly believe that the ability to teach students of limited English proficiency is related to our skill as educators.

If mainstream teachers feel ill-prepared to deal with these students, they, and MTA as a whole, need to advocate for additional professional development,

category trainings and collaborative time with ELL specialists within each district.

ELL students are the fastest-growing population of students in our state, and all teachers need to take responsibility for their success.

Karen MacKenzie-Sleeman
Dedham Education Association

Letters policy

MTA Today welcomes letters to the editor from MTA members. Letters should be no longer than 200 words. Each letter submitted for publication must address a topic covered in *MTA Today*, must be signed and must include the writer's telephone number for confirmation purposes. Opinions must be clearly identified as belonging to the letter-writer. We reserve the right to edit for length, clarity and style. To submit a letter, mail it to *MTA Today*, 20 Ashburton Place, 8th floor, Boston, MA 02108 or e-mail it to mtatodayletters@massteacher.org. For additional information, please refer to the guidelines posted on www.massteacher.org.

AFTER YOUR RETIREMENT...

YOU CAN STILL STAY CONNECTED
TO YOUR LOCAL ASSOCIATION

BECOME AN
MTA/NEA RETIRED LIAISON!



MTA Retired Liaison Program

The MTA Retired Members Committee has established the Retired Liaison Program. MTA Retired members are a valuable resource. Their expertise, experience, willingness to volunteer and commitment to their active and retired colleagues can be a valuable asset to MTA local associations.

The goal of the Retired Liaison Program is to have a retired liaison in every local association.

FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS
OR TO REQUEST AN APPLICATION, CONTACT:

Jo Ann Fitzgerald
Retired members service specialist
Phone: 800.392.6175, ext. 8314
E-mail: jfitzgerald@massteacher.org

UNITY AND STRENGTH

Organized labor shows resilience in face of relentless attacks

By Laura Barrett

“We are here because we believe that all workers should have a say in their future,” MTA President Paul Toner declared as he addressed a crowd of several thousand union members and their supporters in front of the State House on Feb. 22. “We are here because we oppose the strong-arm, anti-union, anti-worker, anti-educator, anti-social-worker, anti-parks-employee, anti-trash-collector, anti-senior-advocate, anti-youth-worker actions of Governor Scott Walker of Wisconsin!”

Thus began the first of several rallies and lobbying activities sparked by the attacks on collective bargaining that started in Wisconsin and swept across the country.

Tracey Pratt, a special education teacher from Cambridge, told 300 union and community activists at a rally in Boston on April 4, “I stand before you today because I believe in the power of collective bargaining. The voice of educators must be heard. We must be at the table when decisions about the future of our students and our schools are made. It is key to the future success of our education system.”



Tracey Pratt

Other “We Are One” rallies took place that day in Springfield, New Bedford, Fall River, Greenfield, Pittsfield, North Adams and throughout the nation.

By mid-April, members had switched their focus to issues within Massachusetts and were fighting a House Ways and Means Committee proposal to strip municipal employees of their health insurance bargaining rights.

The House passed a plan on April 26 that was strongly opposed by the MTA, and action is now centered on lobbying the Senate to protect collective bargaining.

“Collective bargaining is under attack everywhere, including right here in Massachusetts,” Toner said after the health insurance plan was released. “We have to let the public and lawmakers know that collective bargaining is an essential part of our democracy. It is the fairest and most effective way to make sure working men and women have some say over their wages, hours and working conditions.”

Another hot spot for union activism is the pension bill filed by the governor. While this bill does not affect collective bargaining, it would reduce pension benefits for future employees. MTA members have been asked to contact their legislators to oppose it.

“We are often faced with proposals that affect our members either positively or negatively,” Toner



Photo by Meg Secatore

MTA President Paul Toner addressed a large crowd during a State House rally in February. Looking over his shoulder is MTA Executive Committee member Sheila Hanley. Richard Rogers, executive secretary-treasurer of the Greater Boston Labor Council, right, also spoke during the event.

said. “It is essential that we can respond quickly, effectively and in large numbers, when necessary.”

Taking a strategic approach

To increase effectiveness, the MTA is wasting no time in implementing two key components of its Strategic Action Plan: the Full Capacity Local Initiative and the formation of Legislative and Political Action Teams.

A full capacity local is one that successfully engages large numbers of its members to advance their interests as professionals. It welcomes members and lets them know that their participation is meaningful. The first step toward reaching an optimal state is determining strengths and weaknesses through a Full Capacity Local Assessment.

The FCLA is being beta-tested in 10 diverse local associations. It requires a local’s members to reflect on how effective they are in advocating through bargaining and other means, influencing policies through political organizing and establishing structures for accomplishing their goals.

After completing the survey, each participating local is being asked to send five members to a special two-day session at MTA’s Summer Conference in Williamstown in August. There they will discuss their results and take part in training. Expanded regional training will also be offered. The goal is to have approximately 45 locals participating in the FCLA process by the end of next year.

The MTA has established the LPAT structure to improve organizing to influence decision-makers. The association has hired 32 part-time LPAT coordinators and will hire eight more in the future so

that there is one coordinator for each of the state’s 40 senatorial districts. The goal is for each LPAT coordinator to recruit 25 members from among local association leaders and other activists.

“MTA members are urged to join the LPATs in their districts,” said Nancy Stolberg, MTA’s grassroots campaign manager. “LPAT members will become the voice of education in their communities, in their local media and at the State House. They can personalize to elected officials how legislation will affect their lives and the lives of their students.”

A similar structure is being implemented at the local level. Each local president is being asked to identify a Political Action Leader who will spearhead organizing and also participate in the regional LPAT. The PALs are charged with creating communications networks within their locals, organizing members and lobbying.

“With the legislative session now in full swing, serving as a PAL or member of one of the LPATs is a fantastic opportunity to give some of your time and make a big difference,” Toner wrote in a letter to local presidents.

Bound for the Midwest

While mobilizing busy teachers, faculty members and education support professionals is always a challenge, some members are drawn to activism even when it means a rigorous journey.

Dedham Education Association President Timothy Dwyer and his wife, Debra, were so incensed by Governor Walker’s attacks on Wisconsin public employees that they packed up their three

Continued on next page

Educators fight to preserve bargaining rights

By Laura Barrett

MTA President Paul Toner vowed to take the fight to the Massachusetts Senate after the House of Representatives voted in the middle of the night on April 26 to significantly curtail collective bargaining over municipal health insurance.

"We are very upset, and we are angry," Toner said. "We deplore any vote against unions and collective bargaining."

The 113-to-42 House vote gives municipalities the unfettered right to force employees into the Group Insurance Commission or to make plan design changes that increase employee costs to GIC benefit levels.

Following the House action, members of education and municipal unions who had planned House lobbying events all week quickly shifted gears to focus on lobbying the Senate as well as letting state representatives know how they felt about the plan they had approved.

Toner praised the legislators who voted to preserve collective bargaining. "We are very thankful," he said, "for the 42 representatives who stood with us."

The MTA president also promised that the battle is far from over.

"As the fight now moves to the Senate, and after that to a conference committee of the House and Senate and then to the governor's desk, it is vital that legislators understand the importance of this issue to us and the extreme disappointment we feel in the actions of the House," he told local presidents in an e-mail urging them to proceed with their April 28 lobbying plans.

Members were asked to thank legislators who supported collective bargaining, to express their disappointment to those who didn't, and to bring the MTA message to their senators.

The showdown in the House came in votes on a union-backed amendment filed by Representatives Marty Walsh (D-Boston) and Jim O'Day (D-West Boylston) to require expedited bargaining over proposed plan design changes followed by a rapid dispute-resolution process to resolve differences.

The House-approved plan does require municipalities to discuss the changes with union Public Employee Committee representatives for



30 days, but then allows the municipality to impose the changes without union approval. It also requires municipalities to share either 10 percent or 20 percent of the first-year savings with employees, depending on whether they reach agreement through those discussions. In addition, unions would continue to have the right to bargain over the health insurance split.

Despite those provisions, Toner said the proposal did not serve the interests of working families. That is especially so, he said, because the MTA and other unions have offered a viable alternative that would allow public employees to have a real voice in the decision-making process while also saving \$100 million for Massachusetts towns and cities.

The Walsh-O'Day amendment would have allowed municipalities to reduce health insurance

benefits to the level of GIC benefits while defending three principles:

- Employees should have a right to bargain over how changes are made, with a neutral third party making the final determination if no agreement is reached.

- Retirees must be protected. They need to have a role in the process through Section 19 coalition bargaining, and municipalities should be required to provide them with supplemental insurance as they are moved into Medicare.

- Very sick people with high out-of-pocket expenses should be protected from exorbitant health insurance bills through the establishment of Health Reimbursement Accounts, funded in part with some of the municipalities' first-year savings.

Although the House bill does allow up to 20 percent of the first-year savings to go toward helping employees with high medical bills, it does not eliminate the current prohibition on HRAs for municipalities that join the GIC.

Boston Benefits Partners, a health insurance consulting firm, conducted analyses for MTA showing that, without an HRA, employees who have seriously ill family members with high medical costs could amass bills of \$4,000 to \$5,000 a year in copayments and deductibles under the GIC or comparable plans.

"We must stand by three principles: protecting our democratic right to collective bargaining, protecting people who are very sick, and ensuring that retirees have a voice in the process," Toner concluded.

Roll call vote details and updates are available at www.massteacher.org/actnow.

'It's not about the deficit; it's about taking away our power'

Continued from previous page

children — all under the age of 11 — and drove 25 hours straight to the state Capitol in Madison to join the protests.

"I think it's important for people in a struggle to understand that they aren't alone," said Dwyer, a high school history teacher. "I wanted to show solidarity with my brothers and sisters in Wisconsin."

They arrived on Feb. 19 and held a sign that read, "1,100 Miles to Support Wisconsin Workers." While they were in Madison, thousands of people remained in the Capitol day and night to protest Walker's actions. "There was such a sense of strength and solidarity there," Dwyer said. "You couldn't help but be uplifted."

The Brookline Educators Union also showed its solidarity when its executive board voted to pay for BEU President Jody Curran to go to Wisconsin and Indiana in late March to join the protests in both states and see firsthand how organizing efforts were working.

"Being there gave me a different perspective," Curran said. "All we see are the big rallies, but there are a lot of discussions and different perspectives on how to proceed before it reaches that point. There are a lot of internal debates among the unions in those states."

"I was inspired by my trip," she continued. "I've been watching the news a lot, and it was important to me to be there and see it up close and personal. It's a horrible thing that Scott Walker has done, but I was inspired to see the fighting spirit. It's a wake-up call for all of us."

Assisting WEAC locals

A number of members of the MTA field staff also went to the Midwest to help their colleagues at the Wisconsin Education Association Council, the NEA affiliate there. They were assigned to specific WEAC locals to assist with whatever was needed. Cindy Polinsky, who works in MTA's Pittsfield office, ran phone banks to generate support for recalling a state senator who backed the Walker proposal.

To see more photos of the Massachusetts rallies and other events involving MTA members, please visit:
flickr.com/mtacommunications

"I was really impressed by both the willingness of members to come in and phone bank and the effectiveness of the phone calls we made," Polinsky said. "People who had never been active in their union before were rising to the occasion and reaching out to their colleagues to discuss politics. They were holding politicians accountable in a profound way. I think this kind of activism was very new to people."

"They had never ever dreamed that their union could be taken away from them, that their rights at work would be stolen," she added. "We need to all learn from that. It's not about the deficit; it's about taking away our power."



Photos by Bob Duffy

Preserve America History Teacher of the Year Kelley Brown, left, and Massachusetts Teacher of the Year Floris Wilma Ortiz-Marrero, pictured with student Genesis Rosario, are both dedicated to connecting what happens in their classrooms to what is happening in the outside world.

Top teachers have high hopes for students

By Bob Duffy

Massachusetts Teacher of the Year Floris Wilma Ortiz-Marrero and Massachusetts Preserve America History Teacher of the Year Kelley Brown have a lot in common.

They share an intense passion for “paying it forward” by providing professional development to other educators. Both also voice a desire to connect their lessons to the larger world outside the classroom and to provide a nurturing but very challenging environment that stretches their students’ abilities.

The two top teachers were named last June. Both are now serving in roles that involve school visits around the state, speaking and taking on other responsibilities.

In interviews with *MTA Today*, they talked about their profession, their hopes for their students and their goals.

Teacher of the Year

Floris Wilma Ortiz-Marrero has been an ESL teacher at the Amherst Regional Middle School for the last 17 years. She also teaches at the University of Massachusetts and serves as the coordinator of the English Language Learners Initiative of the Western Massachusetts Writing Project.

An energetic optimist, Ortiz-Marrero tries to instill self-confidence in her students along with language skills. She encourages students to be proud of their backgrounds while also

seeking to inspire them to achieve at the highest level.

When one of her students from El Salvador was struggling, for example, she told him he could one day become a doctor and go back to his native country to help people.

She said that she believes in a “holistic approach to teaching.” She is engaged with and concerned about what is going on with her students both inside and outside the classroom.

“You have to be cognizant of what is going on in their lives, so I build a connection and relationship with my ESL students,” Ortiz-Marrero said. “It is not just about academics. It is about building their confidence and self-esteem so that they are confident in themselves.”

She said that despite the many challenges educators face in these difficult times, they need to maintain a positive attitude — for their own well-being as well as the well-being of their students.

“Every day I wake up in the morning and I say to myself that in spite of the difficulties from budget cuts, my kids are the reason I go to school,” Ortiz-Marrero said.

As the Massachusetts Teacher of the Year, Ortiz-Marrero, who came to the United States from Puerto Rico and is from a family of teachers, is currently giving speeches and conducting workshops throughout the state.

When she traveled home to Puerto Rico last summer, she was interviewed

on a local television station and contacted by an old friend who had read media coverage of her selection for the honor.

Ortiz-Marrero explained that maintaining resilience in the face of adversity is a key part of how she deals with the current teaching environment.

“We need to come from a perspective of hope and love and remember why we are teachers,” she said. “There are always going to be ways to open doors for students despite the difficulties and obstacles we may be facing, and we have to maintain hope.”

Ortiz-Marrero has been serving as one of the members at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Task Force on Teacher and Administrator Evaluation. In addition, she trains fellow teachers at several vocational schools in western Massachusetts.

Her duties at UMass Amherst involve teaching graduate courses in language literacy and serving as a mentor.

As the Teacher of the Year, she is using her voice to lobby for a change that would exempt English language learners from having to pass the math and science MCAS tests during their first year in the country.

“If they are exempt from the ELA MCAS, why aren’t they exempt from the math and science tests?” she said. “I always ask people to think about going to another country and within the first year of being there

being required to take a standardized test in math and science in the new language.”

Preserve America honoree

Massachusetts Preserve America History Teacher of the Year Kelley Brown encourages her students to “reach outside their comfort zones.”

Being the recipient of the honor, she noted, continues to inspire her to do first-rate work. “The award reminds me to keep my focus on my students and the classroom,” said Brown, who teaches at Easthampton High School.

“I like to have them do hands-on work using authentic sources that are often outside of the classroom,” she added.

For example, each year she assigns her 10th-grade class to take on a project called “A Local Lens: Histories of Easthampton.”

As part of the assignment, each student makes his or her own original contribution by producing a 15-page research paper that is later archived at the local historical society.

Brown originally thought that she wanted to be a math teacher, but realized that she had a love of the social sciences when she was in college. She believes that having an understanding of history helps students become more engaged citizens.

“It’s incredibly important to understand the past when you interpret the present and current world issues,” Brown said. “Social studies has the

Please turn to **History**/Page 36

Coalition supports revenue legislation

By Laura Barrett

There was a classic moment during a town hall meeting about President Barack Obama's health care bill back in 2009 when a defiant constituent stood up and told his U.S. representative, "Keep your government hands off my Medicare!"

This story has been told and retold not to make fun of one confused senior citizen, but because it is a powerful example of the difficulty so many people have in connecting the dots between taxes, government and public services.

"Our members understand that their jobs, their raises and the quality of services they are able to provide depend heavily on whether there are enough revenues to adequately fund our public schools and our public higher education system," said MTA President Paul Toner. "We need to reinforce that message with our members and our friends and then work with other groups to educate the public and legislators about these issues."

The MTA is part of a larger coalition called the Campaign for Our Communities that is working to pass a new revenue bill. Members of the coalition worked together in 2010 to defeat Question 3, the initiative to cut the state sales tax, and in 2008 to defeat Question 1, the initiative to eliminate the income tax.

'Our challenge is to first educate our members and then the public and policymakers about the negative effect that looming budget cuts will have on families, schools and communities. We also need to explain that this bill is the fairest way to raise revenues without squeezing those who are least able to pay.'

— MTA President Paul Toner

"It was essential for all of us to work together to stop these drastic tax cuts," said Toner, "but now it's time to move from defense to offense. We need to work together on behalf of a fairer tax system that will provide the state and our communities with revenues that can sustain public education and improve the quality of life throughout our Commonwealth."

As has been true in the past, many cities and towns, along with our public higher education system, are facing the prospect of cuts that will take a severe toll. The state faces a \$2 billion budget deficit because of the recession, and federal stimulus funds are running out. While Governor Deval Patrick's budget proposal protects Chapter 70 school funding, other local aid accounts, along with school grant programs and public higher education accounts, are being hit. The Legislature has warned that more reductions may be coming.

The solution proposed by the Campaign for Our Communities is "An Act to Invest in Our Communities," a bill that raises \$1.2 billion in annual revenue for public education and other vital services from those most able to pay, while limiting the impact on middle- and lower-income families.

The legislation — House Bill 2533 and Senate Bill 1416 — would:

- Raise the state income tax rate from 5.3 percent to 5.95 percent while substantially increasing the personal exemption to ease the burden on low- and middle-income families.

- Raise the state tax rate on interest, dividends and long-term capital gains from 5.3 percent to 8.95 percent while protecting middle-class seniors and disabled persons from paying more.

Low- and moderate-income taxpayers typically will either be

unaffected or will pay less under this plan. Middle-income families will see little change overall, with some paying more and some paying less than under the current system. Those with the highest incomes will pay the most. The steepest increases will affect the top 1 percent of families — those making more than \$500,000 a year.

MTA lobbyists and other coalition members are already talking to legislators about the need for new revenues and the need to pass the bill.

"Some legislators tell us they agree that new revenues are needed, but they don't see an appetite for them yet," Toner said. "Our challenge is to first educate our members and then the public and policymakers about the negative effect that looming budget cuts will have on families, schools and communities. We also need to explain that this bill is the fairest way to raise revenues without squeezing those who are least able to pay."

"Yes, it does ask more of the wealthiest residents of our state," Toner continued. "But the increase in state taxes they would pay under this bill is much smaller than the cut in federal taxes they just received when Congress voted to extend the Bush-era tax cuts for high-income earners."

For further information about the revenue campaign and updates on planned activities, please visit www.massteacher.org/revenue.

JOIN THE BOSTON RACE AMITY DAY CELEBRATION ON JUNE 12

MTA members are urged to gather their co-workers, family members and friends and take part in the inaugural Boston Race Amity Day Celebration, which will run from noon to 6 p.m. on June 12 on the Rose Kennedy Greenway. Those who attend will have the chance to join Governor Deval Patrick and Boston Mayor Tom Menino, who are serving as honorary co-chairs, for an afternoon filled with family entertainment, cultural cuisine, enjoyable exhibits and a host of other attractions. Vice President Joseph Biden is an invited guest, as well. The MTA is a co-founding sponsor of the event, which is being staged by the National Center for Race Amity. The celebration is free to all!



For more information, please visit wheelock.edu/ncra.

MTA opposes cuts to future pensions

By Laura Barrett

The MTA Board of Directors voted on April 2 to oppose the governor's new pension bill as currently drafted due to its impact on the benefits of future public employees.

MTA President Paul Toner has testified against the bill, staff members are lobbying against it and MTA members will be asked to send postcards to their legislators expressing their opposition.

The legislation does not affect current retirees and would have only a limited impact on a small number of current employees. The biggest changes would reduce benefits for future employees — those hired after the bill's enactment.

Proposed changes for them include modifying the formula used for calculating benefits, increasing the earliest age at which employees may retire and increasing from three to five the number of years used to calculate the average final salary. The bill would, however, also cut by half a percentage point how much they would have to contribute toward their own pensions.

If enacted as proposed, it would essentially undo the benefits won by passage of the RetirementPlus bill in 2002, according to an actuary hired by the MTA to analyze the plan.

While opposing the cuts for future employees, the MTA did support the governor's proposal to extend from 2025 to 2040 the date by which the pension plan will be fully funded, along with a few smaller reforms designed to make the current system more equitable.

Teachers and administrators hired after July 1, 1996, currently must pay 11 percent of their salaries toward their own pensions, while new public higher education employees and education support professionals — among other Group 1 employees — must pay 9 percent on the first \$30,000 of income and an additional 2 percent on the portion over \$30,000.

At those rates, new teachers are currently funding more than 90 percent of their own pensions, according

'The system here is a bargain for the taxpayers.'

— MTA President Paul Toner

to the Special Commission to Study the Massachusetts Contributory Retirement Systems. Other new Group 1 employees are funding about 84 percent.

"Educators in Massachusetts fund a higher share of their own pensions than educators in any other state," said Toner. "The system here is a bargain for the taxpayers."

If the governor's bill is enacted as filed, future teachers would be fully funding the projected costs of their own pensions.

Because employees are paying so much, the state contributes a relatively small — and declining — percentage of employee pay toward pensions. For example, in 2000 the state contributed 5.2 percent of payroll toward the normal cost of all public employee pensions. By 2010, this had decreased to 2.7 percent. As more new employees are hired to replace those who pay at lower rates, the state's share will continue to decline.

By comparison, a typical large private-sector employer pays about 9 percent of payroll toward employee retirement benefits: 6.2 percent into the Social Security retirement system and, on average, another 3 percent toward a 401(k) or pension plan.

"There is a huge misconception that public employee pensions are more costly than the retirement benefits offered in the private sector," Toner said. "This is simply not true."

Administration officials acknowledge that public employees in Massachusetts shoulder a larger share of their own pension costs than employees in other states. Their argument on behalf of the bill is twofold.

First, they note that the state is taking all of the risk by providing a defined benefit plan, and this risk doesn't always pay off if investment returns fall short of projections, as occurred in 2008 and 2009. Second, the state has a huge unfunded liability from past decades that must be funded somehow. If it is

not taken from future employees' benefits, it will have to come from the general operating budget or new taxes. The unfunded liability will cost the state \$1.5 billion in fiscal year 2012 if, as expected, the Legislature extends the payback period to 2040.

The MTA's response is also twofold.

"We do recognize that our members benefit from having a defined benefit plan in which the state assumes the risk for poor investment returns," Toner said. "That is why we agree it is fair for public employees to pay a somewhat larger share of their own benefits than those in the private sector. But 80 or 90 percent is more than enough."

The administration has expressed willingness to discuss changes that would reduce the impact of the proposed bill on future teachers.

As for the second argument, Toner said that it is unfair to ask future employees to pay off an unfunded liability they had nothing to do with creating.

"We understand that poor planning in the past by municipalities and the Commonwealth created this unfunded liability," he said. "This is unfortunate and must be addressed. But there is no reason it should be solved on the backs of future employees, many of whom were not even born when the liability was incurred. The governor's own special commission concluded, 'In all cases, the burden of amortizing the unfunded liability from past service should be spread broadly among taxpayers and not borne by today's public employees.'"

In addition to supporting the portion of the bill extending the amortization period, the MTA supports three smaller provisions that affect some current employees, if one of them is amended as the administration has agreed it should be.

They are as follows:

■ **Anti-spiking.** This would limit the annual increase in pensionable earnings to no more than 7 percent over the last two years, plus inflation. It would not apply to bona fide promotions, but as drafted it would apply to contractual raises. *The MTA*

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Toner says judgment must guide evaluations

By Laura Barrett

Draft regulations governing educator evaluations were being sent out for public comment as *MTA Today* went to press.

The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, acting on a request from Commissioner of Education Mitchell Chester, voted on April 27 to issue the proposed regulations and set a comment period that will last through June 10.

“We will take a very close look at the proposed regulations and will comment on them in detail,” said MTA President Paul Toner. “We continue to stand by our position that educators and students will benefit from a fair evaluation system that is effective in helping teachers and administrators improve their practice.”

Several sections of the new proposed regulations were already drafted as of the *MTA Today* deadline, while others were still under discussion.

The proposal would require that all teachers and administrators be given a rating of Exemplary, Proficient, Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory based on the evaluator’s observations and other measures. Those ratings would then be cross-referenced with measures of student learning that must include MCAS growth scores, where available, and at least one district-based measure of student learning “comparable across grade or subject district-wide.”

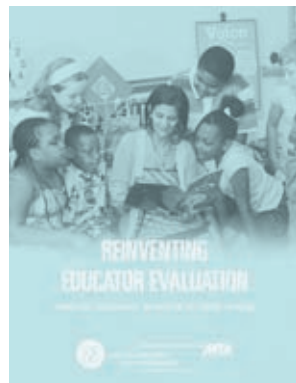
The regulations will call for different consequences depending on the results of both measures. Various kinds of growth or improvement plans will be in place for those who fall short.

In a redraft of its initial set of regulations, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education appeared to be moving away from a plan described in a front-page article in the April 17 *Boston Sunday Globe* that would have required serious negative consequences for teachers who were given positive evaluations based on an evaluator’s judgment but had low ratings based on student growth measures.

The MTA strongly objected to that earlier plan and is continuing to work with the DESE to implement a system that is as close as possible to the

one recommended by the Statewide Task Force on the Evaluation of Teachers and Administrators.

The MTA and the task force as a whole advocated for an evaluation system that includes measures of student learning, but does not make high-stakes decisions based on those measures.



The MTA’s recommendations were contained in a report titled *Reinventing Educator Evaluation* that was released in January and helped the task force frame its own proposals.

“How well students are learning is very important and should be assessed,” said Toner. “But the

teacher’s role in student outcomes is hard to quantify, which is why student learning measures should inform the evaluation but not determine it.

“If there is a significant discrepancy between student results and the evaluator’s judgment of that teacher’s performance, that should trigger another look at what’s going on in that classroom,” he continued. “The evaluator should be required to reconcile the discrepancy between student results and what was observed in the classroom in making the final overall evaluation.

“The research is very, very clear on the limitations of student growth scores,” Toner said. “Those scores can jump up and down from one year to the next depending on which students are in the classroom, not because the teacher’s ability to teach changed from good to bad to excellent to fair from year to year or from classroom to classroom.”

In an interview with *MTA Today* in February, Education Secretary Paul Reville expressed a similar view. “We should not be overly invested in these (MCAS growth) scores,” he said. “I’m not sure we’re yet at the point in terms of the scope or the validity and reliability of

‘If there is a significant discrepancy between student results and the evaluator’s judgment of that teacher’s performance, that should trigger another look at what’s going on in that classroom. The evaluator should be required to reconcile the discrepancy between student results and what was observed in the classroom in making the final overall evaluation.’

— MTA President Paul Toner

these measures where we can base consequential decisions on these scores.”

MCAS Student Growth Percentiles currently exist at the school and district levels but not for individual teachers. The DESE says they will eventually be developed for about 17 percent of all teachers. Some districts have other measures of performance — such as end-of-course tests — in certain subjects, but none has them for all grades and subjects.

The MTA will post updated comments on the proposed regulations on www.massteacher.org and will provide a link to the DESE website for members who want to write their own comments on the plan.

HEALTH INSURANCE REMINDER FOR GROUP INSURANCE COMMISSION MEMBERS

If you are a state employee enrolled in the GIC, don’t forget to re-enroll for your health insurance by May 9 for the plan year that begins July 1, 2011.

Failure to re-enroll — even if you do not wish to change your current health plan — will result in the conversion of your coverage from your current plan to a less expensive “limited network” plan that could provide a smaller network of providers and different co-pays.

The GIC is encouraging state employees to consider one of these cheaper plans and is offering an incentive of three months of

premium-free coverage to those who voluntarily enroll in them. Those who are involuntarily enrolled because they failed to fill out their re-enrollment forms will not receive the premium holiday.

This re-enrollment requirement only applies to active state employees, not to municipal employees or to retirees enrolled in the GIC. Employees enrolled in the GIC should have already received their GIC Benefit Decision Guide through the mail at home instead of through the GIC coordinator in your benefits office. Be sure to return the form with your coverage selection to your benefits coordinator no later than May 9!

'Amazing' ESP is 2011 honoree

Conference features array of workshops and networking opportunities

By Sarah Nathan

Jean Fay, a kindergarten paraprofessional at the Crocker Farm School in Amherst, is the new MTA Education Support Professional of the Year. She received the award on April 2 at the annual ESP Conference before an audience of more than 350 MTA members from all over Massachusetts.

Fay, a highly regarded union, political and community activist, is a member of the Amherst-Pelham Education Association. She chairs the paraprofessionals unit of the APEA and is also a member of the MTA Board of Directors.

"I am so honored to be receiving an award for doing a job I truly love, working with children," Fay told the conference audience at the Cape Codder Resort in Hyannis. "They make me laugh. Sometimes they make me cry, but they always make me proud. This award tells me, tells all of us in this room, that we are respected for the work we do with children every day."

In letters from colleagues and community members to the ESP Committee, which actively solicits nominations for the ESP of the Year award, Fay is described as a consummate professional, a caring and intuitive educator and a passionate advocate for ESPs.

"I've had the good fortune to work with Jean Fay in kindergarten for three different years. She is, in a word, amazing. From the time she arrives till she tucks the last kindergartner into his backpack, Jean is busy taking care of the many details of running a kindergarten classroom," wrote kindergarten teacher Jan Demers. "What makes Jean even more valuable is her ability to engage with the children. She is so warm and funny and genuine that the children are naturally drawn to her and remain close to her as they move on through the grades."



Jean Fay

"There's another aspect of Jean Fay's work with children that is not as well known," Demers continued. "As she meets the buses each morning, she recognizes the child who is hungry or not dressed warmly enough or who doesn't have boots. Then she makes sure that these conditions are remedied."

Fay, who is active in Democratic politics at the state and local levels, urged ESPs to reach out to their local legislators to tell their stories and advocate for issues that matter to educators.

"The Massachusetts House of Representatives will soon be taking up the state budget, and our state reps will be making decisions about our health insurance — decisions that will affect all of us," Fay said. "They need to hear from you — the person who votes for them on Election Day — on how proposed changes to the health care system for public



Photos by Sarah Nathan

Patricia Kahler, left, and Lois Powers, both members of the Classified Staff Union at UMass Boston, shared a "high five" after Kahler's name was drawn in a raffle sponsored by MTA Benefits during the ESP Conference on Cape Cod. More than 350 MTA members attended the event.

employees could be devastating to those of us who earn low wages or have a chronic illness.

"What happens in the voting booth directly affects our schools, our communities and our lives," she added. "We all need to remember that the votes of those of us who earn less than \$20,000 a year are just as powerful and just as meaningful as the votes of the corporate CEOs who make millions."

During the two-day conference, which began on April 1, Plainville ESP Carolyn Greene took charge of cyber-lobbying. Greene, a member of the ESP Committee, set up a computer station and invited ESPs to e-mail their state representatives and senators in support of a compromise bill on municipal health insurance that has been proposed by a coalition of public employee unions that includes the MTA.

"A good number of people have come up to me during this conference wanting to make sure that their voices are heard on this issue," Greene said. "The response has been fantastic. The computers have been going nonstop since the conference began."

On Friday afternoon and Saturday morning, ESPs had the opportunity to attend workshops on a variety of topics, including conflict resolution, workplace bullying, stress reduction, running effective meetings, behavior management, union leadership and online surveys.

MTA Vice President Tim Sullivan gave the keynote address on the opening night, offering heartfelt words about the important work of ESPs

and the ESPs who have played significant roles in his own life. Among the ESPs he mentioned were Lorraine Niccoli, the president of the Brockton Paraprofessionals Association; a Weymouth bus driver named Mike who has inspired his fourth-grade son, Timmy, to look up words in the dictionary; and a retired cafeteria worker named Winnie, now in her 90s, with whom Sullivan first made a connection when he was a student in the Braintree Public Schools, where she worked.

"The ESPs are the glue that holds everything together," Sullivan said. "Without the bookkeepers, mailroom clerks, food service personnel, bus drivers, secretaries, library assistants, financial aid office assistants, classroom aides or custodians, our schools and colleges would not function."

After his speech, Sullivan, the MTA's own "Irish Tenor," led the audience in renditions of "This Little Light of Mine" and "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling."

The Friday dinner was followed by an open conversation with MTA President Paul Toner and Sullivan, who fielded a range of questions posed by MTA members.

"I'm really proud of the ESP Conference," said Donna Johnson, who co-chairs the MTA ESP Committee. "We've worked hard to create a warm and welcoming environment to help MTA members to learn and grow, examine issues, meet new people and reconnect with old friends. It's not easy to maintain that kind of intimacy when you are hosting a few hundred people, but we've managed to do it year after year."

An evening with the BGMC



Photo by Steve Sykes

MTA Night at the Boston Gay Men's Chorus drew a big crowd to Jordan Hall on March 26. Pictured from left to right are Al Ingram, president of the BGMC Board of Directors; Pedro Carrasquillo, who sings with the group and chairs the MTA Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender Issues Committee; Reuben Reynolds, artistic director of the BGMC; Paul Toner, MTA president; Tim Sullivan, MTA vice president; and Jon Simon, president of the Wellesley Teachers Association. The evening gave educators a chance to support GLBT youth, who too often face bullying or commit suicide. Now the committee is hoping for a large presence at the Boston Gay Pride Parade on Saturday, June 11, and is actively seeking MTA members to march. On parade day, members will gather between 11 and 11:30 a.m. near the starting line on Tremont Street in the South End. For more information, contact Bernadette Marso at 508.753.8359 or Bmarso@charter.net.

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Technology educators aren't waiting to focus on the needs of the future

By John DeCicco

Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray recently called on the members of the Technology Education Association of Massachusetts to make a strong commitment to a curriculum focused on science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Murray, who addressed educators taking part in TEAM's 33rd annual curriculum development conference at Fitchburg State University, said that building corporate partnerships is a key element of the state's STEM initiative, which was introduced last fall and is progressing well. He also praised the teachers in the audience for their dedication to students.

Murray's remarks were greeted warmly by the 100 association members in attendance.

TEAM President and Technology Advisory Council Chair Susan Sanford said she welcomed the "energy and passion that the governor and lieutenant governor have brought to STEM



Photo by John DeCicco

Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray speaks at the TEAM conference.

through their continued outreach to those teaching in the field for input and advice for implementation."

"Technology engineering teachers already know the importance of connecting the dots between science, technology, engineering and mathematics for all students," Sanford said.

Massachusetts, following up on its many past successes, is currently leading the way in advancing STEM opportunities for students by partnering with allied industries. Not long ago, the Commonwealth took an important step forward by hiring a statewide coordinator who will oversee the plans for implementation of the initiative throughout the state.

The STEM initiative was one of many topics TEAM members focused on during the conference, which was held on March 11.

Throughout the morning and early afternoon workshop program, TEAM members and industry partners presented "best practice" examples of instruction, including hands-on activities designed to engage students' problem-solving skills. TEAM members, who were drawn to the event from every corner of the Commonwealth, were provided with examples of a range of activities that spanned the middle school and high school levels. An interdisciplinary approach was woven throughout.

One common theme was the future. TEAM members said they find it both challenging and inspiring to realize that the next generation of students entering the work force and post-secondary education must be well prepared for jobs that haven't even been created yet.

John DeCicco, who teaches at Oakmont Regional High School, is vice president of the Technology Education Association of Massachusetts and a member of the MTA Executive Committee.

Obituaries

Michael W. Barden, 76, of Haverhill. Was the principal of Norfolk County Agricultural High School for over 22 years. Also taught in Braintree and was an assistant dean of faculty at Massasoit Community College and an instructor at the University of Rhode Island. Jan. 7.

Francine M. Croteau, 59, of Oxford. Was a kindergarten teacher at Charlton Elementary School for 21 years. Feb. 8.

Violette T. Dubois, 88, of Chelmsford. Was a teacher in Lexington for 36 years and retired as an assistant principal. Feb. 13.

Kim Forte, 51, of Wilmington. Served as an adjunct professor. Taught prep for college math classes and fundamentals of math at Middlesex Community College. Feb. 23.

Laurie Gelati-Armell, 59, of North Attleboro. Was an elementary teacher at the Allen Avenue School for over 17 years. Feb. 26.

Irene L. Lidwin, 90, of Methuen. Taught elementary school in Southbridge and middle school in

Haverhill. Retired in 1985. Jan. 24.

Joanne M. Martin, 60, of Brockton. Was a teacher's aide at the Huntington School in Brockton for many years. Jan. 19.

Donna Needham, 65, of Truro, formerly of Ipswich. Was an English teacher at Danvers High School until she retired in 2001. Served as vice president and a member of the negotiating team for the Danvers Teachers' Association. March 19.

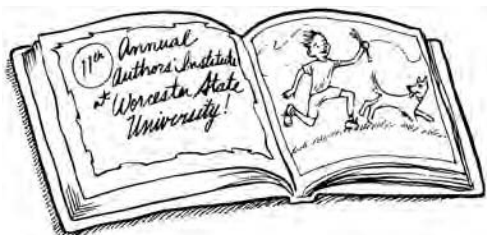
William P. Ormond, 76, of North Grafton. Was a teacher at Burncoat Senior High School in Worcester for many years, retiring in 1991. Feb. 21.

William L. Quattrucci, 75, of Worcester. Was an elementary school teacher in the Douglas Public Schools for 34 years. Feb. 28.

Estelle T. Thompson, 78, of Danvers. Was a specialist and school psychologist for over 30 years in Danvers. March 12.

Mary Veale, 83, of Brockton. Was a teacher for 30 years at both the Huntington and Keith elementary schools. Dec. 30.

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**The Ed.S. (Education Specialist) is 30 credits beyond the master's degree.

Higher ed members gather in Boston

By Sarah Nathan

Massachusetts was well represented at the NEA's recent Higher Education Conference.

The list of speakers included many familiar names: Congressman John Tierney, Massachusetts Community College Council President Joseph LeBlanc and MTA President Paul Toner. The event was held in Boston for the first time in a number of years.

To many, it felt as though the conference — which was held March 25-27 — couldn't have come at a better time. It provided higher ed members from all corners of the country with an opportunity to reflect and connect during a tumultuous time for public employees.

"This conference gave members a forum to learn and discuss issues during an incredibly intense time in our history," said Jim Rice, president of the NEA's higher ed caucus, the National Higher Education Council, and a longtime professor at

Quinsigamond Community College. "With all that is going on right now, people seized the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the issues of the day, meet new colleagues and renew acquaintances, and recharge and get ready for future battles."

Toner welcomed participants on the first night of the conference. He spoke about the challenges facing Massachusetts public employees during a time when collective bargaining rights are under attack in many states.

"Here in Massachusetts, we are in better shape than our colleagues in Wisconsin or Ohio or so many other states, but we are still in the thick of it and beating back attempts to limit our rights and cut back on our benefits," he said. "We face the same rhetoric, the same fiscal reality and the same decline in private-sector unionization that the rest of the country is experiencing. We are fighting off attempts to reform our pension laws and take away our ability to bargain over health insurance at the municipal level."



Photo by Sarah Nathan

Candace Shivers, left, who teaches at Mount Wachusett Community College and is vice president of the MCCC chapter at MWCC, and Janelle Quarles, an ESP at UMass Boston and a steward in the Classified Staff Union, are new graduates of the Emerging Leaders Academy.

On Saturday, Representative Tierney, a Democrat representing the Sixth Congressional District, offered some insights on the agenda of right-wing Republicans who are pushing for tax cuts for the very wealthiest that would be financed partly through cuts in education at all levels. He also warned that these same

elected officials "are more interested in making money for their pals than anything else."

Tierney urged higher ed employees to tell their stories to their own legislators and lobby their representatives and senators at face-to-face meetings.

"It makes a difference," he said. "More than writing an e-mail or letter, it's getting in there, getting an appointment and making them listen."

Equality for contingent faculty, health and safety hazards, trends in faculty salaries and retirement benefits, organizing and recruiting were among the workshop topics during the conference. There were also several forums centered around the conference's theme, "Radical Transformations in Higher Education."

A large contingent of MTA members was present, including an estimated 60 faculty and staff members from the MCCC.

The conference was especially significant for Mount Wachusett Community College Associate Professor Candace Shivers and UMass Boston education support professional Janelle Quarles, who graduated from the 2011 Emerging Leaders Academy during the conference's opening session.

"Going through this academy has inspired me to take on more leadership opportunities and do more as a union member," Shivers said. Quarles added, "I want to do even more in my union and possibly run for national office at some point down the road."

The graduation came 11 months after Shivers and Quarles first began the leadership program.

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DESE announces changes in licensure process

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has announced changes in two areas: redesign of the licensure application review process and a new policy interpretation of the “12-credit rule.”

The department says that due to staff cutbacks, a need to operate more efficiently and a desire to be more environmentally conscious, its licensure office is moving to a process that eliminates paper communications

and instead will rely on e-mail and the DESE website. Call center hours were reduced in August from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. to 2 to 5 p.m.

The latest changes affect several areas of the licensure process. The following information has been provided by the DESE.

Application review

Previously the DESE has reviewed a large number of applications that were not complete. Going forward,

applications will not be reviewed until the department has received payment, official transcripts and notification of passing scores on the MTEL Communication and Literacy Tests.

Upon completion of an application review, if subject matter tests are necessary, the candidate will be informed. The application will not be reviewed again until the DESE has received notification of passing scores on required subject matter tests. Exceptions will be made in cases of waivers or course pre-approvals.

781.338.3000 and pressing 2. The caller needs either the Social Security number or the license number to access an individual’s licensure status.

The 12-credit rule

Some candidates for Professional stage licenses — both Teacher and Specialist Teacher licenses — who already possess master’s degrees may use the “12-credit option” (12 credits of graduate-level courses in the academic discipline appropriate to the instructional field of the license sought). Formerly, only those content courses completed within a graduate content department were recognized. From now on, content courses completed within and outside a graduate-level program will be recognized.

Graduate-level courses that combine content and pedagogy will not be accepted unless pedagogy is listed in the subject matter knowledge requirements (603 CMR 7.06 and 7.07) for the license sought.

For updates and further information, visit the DESE website, <http://www.doe.mass.edu/>.

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No more paper licenses

The licensure office discontinued issuing hard-copy licenses as of April 28. The online Educator Licensure and Recruitment system will serve as the official record of educator licensure.

Districts and educators may verify licensure on the ELAR profile page. Educators may print unofficial copies of their licenses from their ELAR profiles or request paper duplicates for a fee, currently \$25.

The department has a 24-hour automated system accessible by calling

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Marriage and divorce

If you're planning to be married, you'll likely be combining two separate auto policies and probably save money in doing so. If you're also buying a house, adding a home policy to your auto policy may create more savings. If the two of you will rent, you could see savings in your renter policy.

Whether you rent or own, marriage inevitably involves accumulating valuables such as television sets, electronics, furniture, jewelry and artwork. Some of these things may be covered under your home or renter policy, but you may also need to add some as "scheduled" items in a separate endorsement.

While a standard policy may provide some coverage for such items, the dollar limits of standard policy coverage may be much lower than the amount it will cost to replace them. Your insurance agent can help guide you toward a policy tailored to your new life situation.

In contrast, a divorce inevitably leads to a division of property and assets so that the two individuals probably no longer need the same degree of coverage. In situations where one spouse retains a house and the other becomes a renter, it may be



that the coverage needs of the house and items in the house remain largely intact post-divorce. One spouse may be able to retain the savings associated with a combined auto and home policy.

A key element of the post-divorce auto policies is a policy review to establish the correct cars to be included, as well as to confirm the drivers of those cars.

Buying a house or remodeling

Unless you're fortunate enough to pay cash for your new home, you'll need a loan, and the financial institution is likely to require insurance on the property to protect its interest until the loan is paid off. The bank may offer you coverage of its own, but you may benefit by seeking your own coverage ahead of time with your own insurance agent.

Homeowners often have lists of remodeling projects to tackle over several years. It's usually beneficial from a liability perspective to engage

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licensed contractors rather than try to do the work yourself. Remodeling is likely to increase the value of your house, so it's important to adjust your policy accordingly.

Changing jobs or losing a job

As jobs change, commutes usually change as well. Since there is a relationship between the mileage you drive to and from work and the price of your insurance policy, you may have to pay more or less than before. If you can now take public transit to work, that's even better, since some insurers offer a discount on your auto policy.

Whether or not you're facing a major change in your life, policy reviews can highlight existing gaps and missing coverage that can affect your finances in a major way.

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Is a better NCLB in our future? That's partly up to us ...

By Alain Jehlen

Next year, the Alice-in-Wonderland rules of No Child Left Behind will flunk 82 percent of America's schools. That's the prediction of the U.S. Department of Education, as stated by Secretary of Education Arne Duncan in testimony to Congress on March 9.

Five days later, President Barack Obama referred to Duncan's 82 percent prediction as he urged Congress to come up with a new education law by the beginning of the next school year.

"That's an astonishing number," Obama said. "We know that four out of five schools in this country aren't failing. So what we're doing to measure success and failure is out of line."

You might think NCLB — the current version of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act — is ripe for a radical makeover, now that a decade of bad experience has exposed its flawed assumptions and a new administration is pushing for change.

But many Washington observers say quick action is not likely. "We need to take the time to get this right," said John Kline, the Republican chairman of the House Education and the Workforce Committee. "We cannot allow an arbitrary timeline to undermine quality reforms that encourage innovation, flexibility and parental involvement."

Yes, there's a growing consensus that NCLB is crazy and dysfunctional, but that's not enough.

There has to be an alternative. Simply repealing the law is not attractive because NCLB is much more than its testing mandate. It's also the biggest vehicle for federal education funds, including money for the Title I program, which helps schools educate low-income students.

So somebody has to come up with a new law before the old one will rest in peace.

Secretary Duncan has big plans for that new law. He published a "blueprint" last year. Unfortunately for those who shoulder the actual work of educating students, that blueprint keeps NCLB's focus on test scores, although the new measure of success would be growth in student scores rather than the absolute scores themselves.

Duncan also wants to extend his highly successful strategy for persuading states to toe the federal line by dangling money in front of them.

He wants to put more federal money into competitive grants. Do what we suggest and we might give you some of it — that's the line coming from Department of Education headquarters. In the DOE's \$4 billion Race to the Top program, states had to agree to use test scores in evaluating teachers. All across the country, legislatures raced to comply — even in states that didn't get the money.

The NEA has criticized the move toward more competitive grants, pointing out that this approach will produce winners and losers among low-income students. Even the winning schools won't have a

dependable funding stream, so they'll have to use the money for short-term projects. More churn is not what these schools need.

More fundamentally, NEA has taken the position that running the schools should be up to states and local districts. The federal role should be mainly to guard against discrimination and ensure equitable funding. Centralized planning for complex local situations doesn't work — NCLB should have taught us that.

This position has considerable support in Congress, but so does the administration's perspective, and it's not clear how long it will take to sort it all out.

So don't hold your breath.

But there's no slowing down the calendar. NCLB's 2014 deadline for all students to be "proficient" is rapidly approaching, and that deadline isn't just an abstract goal. Failing to meet it is followed by increasingly damaging sanctions.

What can be done to avoid this train wreck?

Impress on our U.S. representatives and senators — all of them — that educators need a federal school aid law based on the realities of school life. Tell them what should be in that law. To change NCLB, Congress will need an alternative that can win a majority.

Alain Jehlen is a member of the staff of NEA Interactive Media. He produced this analysis especially for publication in MTA Today.

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Librarians call on legislators to provide resources

By Bob Duffy

Hundreds of supporters of school and public libraries gathered recently at the State House to call for adequate funding and give legislators a clear sense of the toll that budget cuts are taking.

They came to Boston on March 28 to take part in the annual lobby day sponsored by the Massachusetts Library Association and the Massachusetts School Library Association.

The mission of a school library is to provide instruction to students, foster collaboration with teachers and develop a collection of materials that support the curriculum, they told their representatives and senators. And while school and public libraries have different missions, they said, both are essential for students and for communities as a whole.

Library supporters have a 25-year tradition of holding lobby days. In the last four years, the MSLA and the MLA have set out to make a stronger case for resources each spring by joining forces to remind lawmakers about the importance of the services they provide.

"It's an opportunity for members and students from around the state to speak to lawmakers about the importance of all libraries," said MSLA President Gerri Fagan, who is a librarian and media specialist at the High Plain Elementary School in Andover.

The librarians' day on Beacon Hill started with the presentation of awards to students who won an annual bookmark contest that drew hundreds of entries. Those who entered were asked to design bookmarks based on the theme: "Think, Share, Create, Grow."

"They're judged by local authors and illustrators and other members of the library community, and for the winning bookmarks we have copies printed that we distribute widely," said MSLA Executive Director Kathy Lowe.

As part of the State House effort to highlight libraries, each winning student was provided with 500 copies of his or her design, an enlargement of the bookmark, a gift certificate to a local bookstore, a framed award certificate and a legislative commendation. All of the students who submitted winning entries or received honorable mentions were invited to the award ceremony, along with their

families, collaborating teachers and school administrators.

During a lunch break in the Hall of Flags, attendees and their guest legislators heard a rousing call to support all Massachusetts libraries, and librarians posed for pictures with their representatives and senators. The session also featured remarks from award-winning author Moying Li.

Sporting bright purple "Choose Libraries" stickers, the librarians and

Please turn to **Librarians**/Page 34



MSLA President Gerri Fagan met with state Senator Marc Pacheco to discuss the needs of school libraries throughout the Commonwealth. They talked about the impact of funding shortfalls and the need for professional staff to be available to help students.

Photo by Bob Duffy



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'Better Commonwealth' is theme of meeting

By Meg Secatore

The 2011 MTA Annual Meeting of Delegates opens May 13 with ceremony, song and business items and will close a day later with a Rally for a Better Commonwealth.

"We're organizing the rally with other progressive organizations to call for a true and open dialogue about the necessity to increase revenue in Massachusetts and protect the middle class," said MTA President Paul Toner. "As President Barack Obama reminded us in his recent address on the federal budget, we are a great nation because of the social compact forged by past generations. It's an agreement that ensures that in this nation, no one will go hungry or without health care or with limited educational opportunities.

"In Massachusetts, we live in a Commonwealth, which is more than just a quaint way to say 'state,'" Toner continued. "It's an acknowledgement that as citizens of Massachusetts, we will work for the 'common good.' The Rally for a Better Commonwealth — like so many of the actions we have engaged in and supported this spring — will be an opportunity to revitalize the spirit of this social compact in Massachusetts and celebrate the role of unions and collective bargaining in the formation and continued prosperity of the middle class."

The theme will be set early in the Annual Meeting proceedings. On May 13, which is a Friday, NEA President Dennis Van Roekel will bring the delegates news from Washington, D.C., and from state capitals such as Madison, Wis., and Columbus, Ohio, which have been the scenes of fierce battles over education funding and public employees' collective bargaining rights.

Van Roekel's keynote will be followed by an issues forum with Barry Bluestone, dean of the Northeastern University School of Social Science, Urban Affairs, and Public Policy. Bluestone will outline 10 challenges that Massachusetts faces, including an aging population, rising income and wealth inequality, the need for continued improvement in education and training and the need for more investment in infrastructure and sustainability. Bluestone will also address what he calls "the new grand bargain" for unions. His presentation will be followed by a Q&A session.

Also during the Friday session, delegates will vote on proposed additions and amendments to the association's bylaws and resolutions and consider several new business items.

The business session segment on Saturday, May 14, opens with awards and honors. Delegates will recognize Jean Fay, a paraprofessional from the Amherst-Pelham Education Association who was named ESP of the Year at the annual Education Support Professionals Conference in April. A special recognition award will be presented to Dr. Floris Wilma Ortiz-Marrero, the Massachusetts Teacher of

the Year. Ortiz-Marrero, who is also a member of the APEA, will offer remarks.

U.S. Representative John F. Tierney will receive the MTA Friend of Education Award.

"It was thanks in part to the congressman's leadership on the House Education and Workforce Committee that billions of dollars of stabilization funds were sent to the states to forestall layoffs and keep class sizes small," Toner noted.

In August 2010, Tierney helped pass the Education Jobs Bill, which provided an additional \$10 billion in education aid to the states. Massachusetts retained thousands of jobs with the support of the legislation.

Last year, Toner — who was then serving as MTA vice president — surprised then-President Anne Wass with the first MTA Friend of Labor Award. The honor will be conferred this year on Robert J. Haynes, president of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO. Haynes has been an officer in the AFL-CIO since 1987, but joined his first union more than 40 years ago as a young ironworker. He has played a major role in the state's labor movement.

"Bob is a well-known figure in the labor community," Toner said. "What some people may not know about him is how hard he has worked to build partnerships and coalitions to achieve our mutual goals. I credit Bob with the success of Working Massachusetts, a coalition that is making a difference as the voice for public-sector workers and public service."

Harris Gruman, executive director of the Service Employees International Union's Massachusetts State Council and SEIU's Massachusetts political director, will be honored with the MTA President's Award.

Gruman started his career as a community and labor organizer, working on campaigns for child care funding, progressive taxes and affordable housing, as well as health care for oil, chemical and atomic workers. More recently Gruman has served as chair of the Massachusetts Stop the Cuts Coalition and in leadership roles for the Massachusetts Coalition for Our Communities, which successfully fought against two anti-tax ballot measures: Question 1 in 2008 and Question 3 in 2010.

The coalition — now called the Campaign for Our Communities — is taking the lead in the fight to increase state revenue. "Who better to co-chair this effort than Harris Gruman, whose entire career has been focused

More information about the Annual Meeting of Delegates appears on pages 22 through 33.



John F. Tierney



Robert J. Haynes



Harris Gruman

on securing and improving the quality of life for his neighbors?" said Toner.

The Rally for a Better Commonwealth will kick off at 4 p.m. on Saturday. MTA members who are not attending the Annual Meeting are encouraged to join the delegates in Boston for the event.

Details were still being finalized as *MTA Today* went to press and will be posted on the MTA website, www.massteacher.org, as they become available.

This year's Human and Civil Rights Awards Banquet will be held on Friday evening, instead of kicking off the events on Thursday as it has in the past. The event, sponsored by the MTA Human Relations Committee, will honor three area women.

Caroline Hunter, who, along with her late husband, Ken Williams, challenged the South African investments of their employer, Polaroid, will receive the Louise Gaskins Lifetime Civil Rights Award.

The couple's Cambridge-based protest quickly became a national story when Polaroid fired Hunter for her activities. By 1977, Polaroid had completely pulled out of South Africa, and the international divestment movement hastened the demise of apartheid. Nelson Mandela personally recognized the couple's work when he came to Boston in 1993 before his election as president of South Africa.

The award is named for Louise Gaskins, a pioneer for involvement of women and people of color in education, the MTA and the NEA.

The committee will confer the Kathleen Roberts Creative Leadership Award on Ann Marie Dooley and Susan Mendoza Friedman.

Dooley teaches in a vocational program at Harwich High School that serves students from 14 to 22 years of age with moderate special needs. She developed a strong Best Buddies chapter at the school, created an official Special Olympics day and started the Special Needs Prom, which is held in Harwich and hosts many other Cape Cod High school students.

Friedman initially set out to help a friend who had been diagnosed with ovarian cancer. The fundraising project she created through her Cape Cod dance studio, Dancing for a Cure, blossomed into an official arm of the Friends of Dana Farber Cancer Institute. Five years later, the project's efforts have raised almost \$100,000 for cancer research.

The Roberts award is named for Kathleen Roberts, an MTA leader whose strong commitment to service has made her a tireless advocate for public education, communities and the education profession.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

THURSDAY, MAY 12

2 – 4 p.m. Hynes Hall A, 1st Floor
MTAB Sponsors' Registration

2 – 4 p.m. Hynes Hall A Reception Area, 1st Floor
MTA Candidate Booth Registration

FRIDAY, MAY 13

8 – 9:30 a.m. Hynes Hall A, 1st Floor
MTAB Sponsors' Registration

8 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. Hynes Plaza Level, Main Lobby
Emergency Medical Technician

10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Hynes Hall A, 1st Floor
Delegate and Non-Delegate Registration

10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Hynes Hall A, 1st Floor
Retirement Consultations

10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Hynes Hall A, 1st Floor
MTAB Sponsors

10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Hynes Hall A Reception Area, 1st Floor
MTA Candidates' Booths

10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Hynes Hall B Reception Area, 1st Floor
Boston Concierge Service Desk

10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Hynes 107, 108, 109, 110, 1st Floor
Caucus Rooms

10 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. Hynes Hall B Reception Area, 1st Floor
Information Booth/Message Center

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Hynes Hall B, 1st Floor (Bylaws and Rules Committee Table)
Final Deadline: Submit Proposed Amendments to the Standing Rules

Noon – 12:20 p.m. Hynes Hall B, 1st Floor
MTA Chorus

12:30 p.m. Hynes Hall B, 1st Floor
Business Session Convenes

4 p.m. on Sheraton Boston Hotel
Hotel Registration for Local Presidents

Prior to Recess Hynes Hall B, 1st Floor (Podium)
*Friday Deadline: New Business Items **without** Budgetary Implications*

Prior to Recess Hynes Hall B, 1st Floor (Podium)
*Final Deadline: New Business Items **with** Budgetary Implications*

Prior to Recess Hynes Hall B, 1st Floor (Resolutions Committee Table)
Final Deadline: Proposed Resolutions

6 p.m. (Approximately) Hynes Hall B, 1st Floor
Business Session Recesses

6 p.m. Sheraton Boston Hotel
Hotel Check-In for Delegates

6 – 7 p.m. Hynes 101, 1st Floor
Resolutions Committee Meeting

6:15 – 7 p.m. Hynes 1st Floor
Candidate Speeches for Contested Seats

District 5A: Room 102

District 27D: Room 104

District 18G: Room 107

Retired Members Committee: Room 108

6:30 – 7:30 p.m. Hynes Hall A Reception Area, 1st Floor
Dismantling of MTA Candidates' Booths

7 – 7:30 p.m. Sheraton Boston Hotel, Republic Ballroom, 2nd Floor
Human and Civil Rights Awards Cocktail Reception

7:30 – 10 p.m. Sheraton Boston Hotel, Republic Ballroom, 2nd Floor
Human and Civil Rights Awards Dinner and Recognition of Local Presidents

SATURDAY, MAY 14

8 a.m. Hynes Hall B, 1st Floor
Business Session Doors Open

8 – 11 a.m. Hynes Hall A, 1st floor
Delegate and Non-Delegate Registration

8 – 11 a.m. Hynes Hall A, 1st Floor (Voting Area)
Election: Polls Open

8 a.m. – Noon Hynes Hall B Reception Area, 1st Floor
Information Booth/Message Center

8 a.m. – Noon Hynes Hall B Reception Area, 1st Floor
Boston Concierge Service Desk

8 – 11 a.m. Hynes Hall A, 1st Floor
MTAB Sponsors' Booths

8 a.m. – Adjournment Hynes 107, 108, 109, 110, 1st Floor
Caucus Rooms

8 a.m. – Adjournment Hynes Plaza Level, Main Lobby
Emergency Medical Technician

9 a.m. Hynes Hall B, 1st Floor
Business Session Reconvenes

9 – 9:30 a.m. Hynes Hall B, 1st Floor
Presentation of Awards

10 a.m. (Approximately) Hynes Hall B, 1st Floor (Podium)
*Saturday Final Deadline: New Business Items **without** Budgetary Implications*

10:55 a.m. Hynes Hall A, 1st Floor (Voting Area)
Admittance/Briefing of Observers

11 a.m. Hynes Hall A, 1st Floor (Voting Area)
Election: Polls Close

11 a.m. Sheraton Boston Hotel
Hotel Checkout

11 a.m. – Noon Hynes Hall A, 1st Floor (Voting Area)
Election Tabulation

11 a.m. – 1 p.m. Hynes Hall A, 1st Floor
Dismantling of MTAB Sponsors' Booths

11:15 a.m. – Adjournment Hynes Hall B Reception Area, 1st Floor
Non-Delegate Registration

11:15 a.m. – Adjournment Hynes Hall B Reception Area, 1st Floor
Late Delegate Seating

12:15 p.m. (Approximately) Hynes Hall B, 1st Floor (Podium)
Election Results Announced

1 – 1:30 p.m. Hynes Hall A, 1st Floor (Voting Area)
Runoff Election: Polls Reopen (if Necessary)

1:25 p.m. Hynes Hall A, 1st Floor (Voting Area)
Admittance of Observers (if Necessary)

1:30 – 2 p.m. Hynes Hall A, 1st Floor (Voting Area)
Runoff Election Tabulation (if Necessary)

2 p.m. Hynes Hall B, 1st Floor (Podium)
Runoff Election Results Announced (if Necessary)

3 p.m. (Approximately) Hynes Hall B, 1st Floor
Business Session Adjourns

4 – 5 p.m. Location Pending
Rally for a Better Commonwealth

BUSINESS SESSION AGENDA

FRIDAY, MAY 13

1. **Call to Order (12:30 p.m.)**
Paul Toner, President, Presiding
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
Tim Sullivan, Vice President
3. **"The Star-Spangled Banner"**
MTA Annual Meeting Chorus
4. **Moment of Remembrance**
5. **Announcements**
Paul Toner, President
6. **Adopt the Preliminary Credentials Report (Quorum)**
Maurice Bracken, Chair, Credentials and Ballot Committee
7. **Adopt the Order of Business**
8. **Act on Proposed Amendments to the MTA Standing Rules**
Gary Gilardi, Chair, Bylaws and Rules Committee
9. **Report on Certified Candidates**
Maurice Bracken, Chair, Credentials and Ballot Committee
10. **Presentation**
Grant for MTA Red Sox Reading Game
11. **Video**
Members in Action
12. **MTA Leadership Reports**
 - a. *Paul Toner, President, and Tim Sullivan, Vice President*
 - b. *Ann Clarke, Executive Director-Treasurer*
13. **Act on Proposed Resolutions**
Diana Marcus, Chair, Resolutions Committee
14. **Greetings**
Tom Gosnell, President, AFT Massachusetts
15. **Act on Proposed Amendments to the MTA Bylaws**
Gary Gilardi, Chair, Bylaws and Rules Committee
16. **Act on Proposed New Business Items**
17. **Keynote Address**
Dennis Van Roekel, President, National Education Association
18. **Issues Forum**
Barry Bluestone, Dean, School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs, Northeastern University
19. **Report on the Public Relations/Organizing Campaign**
Tim Sullivan, Vice President and Co-Chair of the Public Relations/Organizing Campaign Committee
20. **Adopt the Supplemental Credentials Report**
Maurice Bracken, Chair, Credentials and Ballot Committee
21. **Recess**

SATURDAY, MAY 14

- The Saturday Session Lasts through Adjournment with No Lunch Break*
22. **Call to Order (9 a.m.)**

23. **Announcements**
Paul Toner, President
24. **Adopt the Supplemental Credentials Report**
Maurice Bracken, Chair, Credentials and Ballot Committee
25. **Presentation of the MTA Friend of Education Award**
Congressman John F. Tierney, Massachusetts Sixth District
26. **Presentation of the MTA Special Recognition Award for the 2011 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year**
Dr. Floris Wilma Ortiz-Marrero, Amherst-Pelham Education Association
27. **Presentation of the MTA Friend of Labor Award**
Robert J. Haynes, President, Massachusetts AFL-CIO
28. **Presentation of the MTA President's Award**
Harris Gruman, Executive Director, Massachusetts State Council, and Massachusetts Political Director, SEIU
29. **Act on Proposed New Business Items with Budgetary Implications**
30. **Act on the Recommendations of the MTA Board of Directors on the Annual Budget in Two Parts from Which the Annual Dues Will Be Determined for FY 2011-2012**
Tim Sullivan, Vice President and Chair of the Advisory Budget Committee
 - a. Presentation and Discussion on the Recommended Operating Budget
 - b. Act on the Annual Operating Budget
 - c. Presentation and Discussion of the Public Relations/Organizing Campaign Budget
 - d. Act on the Proposed Public Relations/Organizing Campaign Budget

*Article IV, Section 1C of the MTA Bylaws:
"...The adoption of the budget will automatically determine the annual dues for active members rounded to the next higher dollar amount."*
31. **Adopt the Results of the Election**
Maurice Bracken, Chair, Credentials and Ballot Committee
32. **Act on Additional Proposed Resolutions (if Necessary)**
Diana Marcus, Chair, Resolutions Committee
33. **Adopt the Results of Any Runoff Election (if Necessary)**
Maurice Bracken, Chair, Credentials and Ballot Committee
34. **Adopt the Final Credentials Report**
Maurice Bracken, Chair, Credentials and Ballot Committee
35. **Act on Proposed New Business Items without Budgetary Implications**
36. **Announcements and Points of Personal Privilege**
37. **VOTE Giveaway**
38. **Adjournment**

Contests emerge for three Board seats

All candidates for the MTA Executive Committee and many candidates for the Board of Directors have been declared elected under the association's election waiver, but the Annual Meeting will feature three two-way contests for Board seats.

The contests are in District 5A, where Shirley Peaks and Peter J. Reese, both members of the Springfield Education Association, are running; in District 27D, where Jody Curran of the Brookline Educators Union and Nicole Prevost of the Quincy Education Association are running; and District 18G, where Debra King of the Watertown Teachers Association and Cheryl Turgel of the Newton Teachers Association are running.

The election waiver in the MTA Bylaws provides that if there is only one candidate for an open position, the election will be waived and the candidate is declared elected.

The candidates declared elected because of the election waiver are:

Executive Committee

Region A — Sharon A. Carlson, Northampton.

Region C — Beth M. Stafford, Whitman-Hanson.

Region F — Elizabeth Shevlin, Methuen.

Region G — Kimberly Auger, Everett.

Statewide Retired Region — Mary J. Gilmore, Retired.

At-Large ESP — Millie Ficarra, Weymouth.

Board of Directors

District 2A — Janice Tingley, Southwick.

District 4A — Jean Fay, Amherst-Pelham.

District 26A — Donna V. Moran, Chicopee.

District 8B — James M. Boland, Tantasqua Regional.

District 11B — Michael Whittier, Sutton.

District 34C — Nancy Chadwick, Duxbury.

District 15D — Merrie Najimy, Concord.

District 37E — Janet Anderson, Taunton.

District 38E — Jeanne Dyer, Attleboro.

District 22F — Kerry A. Costello, Andover.

District 21G — Bonnie Page, Malden.

District 44H — Diana (Donnie) McGee, MCCC.

District 45H — Ron Colbert, MSCA.

At-Large ESP — Donna Johnson, USA.

There are no candidates in Districts 3A and 43C. The new Board and Executive Committee terms begin July 1 and last for three years.

Note: Candidates who supplied photos are pictured with this article. The biographical statements of candidates who supplied them appear on pages 25, 26 and 27. Executive Committee bios are on page 25; bios for candidates in contested Board races are on page 26; and bios for other Board candidates are on pages 26 and 27.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – DECLARED ELECTED



Beth M. Stafford



Kimberly Auger



Mary J. Gilmore



Millie Ficarra

Not pictured: Region A, Sharon A. Carlson; Region F, Elizabeth Shevlin

BOARD OF DIRECTORS – CONTESTS

▼ Contest for District 5A ▼



Shirley Peaks



Peter J. Reese

▼ Contest for District 27D ▼



Jody Curran



Nicole Prevost

▼ Contest for District 18G ▼



Debra King



Cheryl Turgel

BOARD OF DIRECTORS – DECLARED ELECTED



Janice Tingley



Jean Fay



James M. Boland



Michael Whittier



Nancy Chadwick



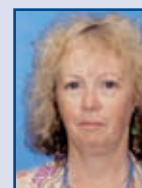
Merrie Najimy



Janet Anderson



Jeanne Dyer



Kerry A. Costello



Bonnie Page



Diana (Donnie) McGee



Ron Colbert



Donna Johnson

Not pictured: District 26A, Donna V. Moran

Candidates' biographical statements

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

REGION C

Beth M. Stafford, Whitman-Hanson

I am running for re-election to the Executive Committee representing Region C. I am on the Retirement Plan Committee and serve as vice chair of the Board Bargaining Team and chair of the Investment Committee. I am a social studies teacher and chair of the negotiating team at Whitman-Hanson. I was a selectman and School Committee member. These are critical times for MTA members, and I will work to make sure that we are proactive and at the forefront of legislative issues and decisions. We must work together to ensure that our voices are heard. Thank you.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

REGION F

Elizabeth Shevlin, Methuen

Thank you for the opportunity to serve on the Executive Committee. I have served on the Board of Directors in Region 22F for the past three years. I have also been first vice president of the Methuen Education Association and worked on various committees. In the coming years, I pledge to improve communication between the MTA and its members by being available to all members and bringing concerns to the MTA leadership. I look forward to protecting our collective bargaining rights and finding solutions to rising health care costs, as well as shaping our schools in the 21st century. Thank you.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

REGION G

Kimberly Auger, Everett

I am running for the position of Executive Committee for Region G. I am currently the president of the Everett Teachers Association. I represented Region 20G from 2002 to 2010 on the MTA Board of Directors. During that time I served on the Public Relations/Organizing, Communications and Professional Ethics committees. I am currently the chair of the Student Membership Committee and co-chair of the Large Locals Task Force. For the past two years I have served on the Bylaws and Rules Committee. I look forward to working with my Board members, local presidents and the members of the communities that make up Region G.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

AT-LARGE ESP

Millie Ficarra, Weymouth

I became an ESP in Weymouth in 2000. I served on the WTA Executive Committee and serve on the WTA bargaining team. I graduated from the MTA Emerging Leaders' Program and the ESP Leadership Action Program. Since 2003 I have attended the ESP Conference, the Summer Conference and NEA ESP conferences. I have represented Massachusetts at the NEA RA as a delegate and state contact co-chair since 2006. I am MTA ESP director at large and a member of the Advisory Budget and Bylaws and Rules committees. I am co-chair of the MTA ESP Committee. In addition, I have been elected to the MTA Executive Committee.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

STATEWIDE RETIRED REGION

Mary J. Gilmore, Retired

I would like to thank you for all the support you have always given me, especially the privilege of running unopposed. Please contact me if I can ever be of assistance.

SAVE THE DATE

10th Annual MTA Retired Members Gathering

Tuesday, September 27 | Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel, Marlborough



Registration materials will be available by mid-July on the MTA website, www.massteacher.org

DON'T BE LEFT OUT!

Candidates' biographical statements

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 5A

Shirley Peaks, Springfield

I am an experienced, vocal MTA advocate. Vote for me to represent you as district director. As your voice, I would be committed to ensuring a quality public education for our students and advancing the goals of all 5A members to shape the future of education for years to come.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 5A

Peter J. Reese, Springfield

Teacher 16 years, building representative, vice president SEA, bargaining team, finance chair, scholarship chair. Here to demand teacher-driven decisions. Want to know where I'm coming from? Go to seateachers.com, click on "The Springfield Teacher" (written by me since 12/2007) and read "What's Our Union Doing for Us?" in any issue.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 27D

Nicole Prevost, Quincy

I have been an active member of the QEA and a member of the MTA New Member Program for six years. I have been a delegate to the NEA RA. I will bring fresh ideas to the Board with an emphasis on communication with all members. I appreciate your vote!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 27D

Jody Curran, Brookline

I am president of the Brookline Educators Union and an ELL teacher with 22 years of experience; before that I was a union-member machinist. I come from a union family. I've led my local in supporting unlimited collective bargaining rights, no mandatory test scores in teacher evaluations and dignity for paraprofessionals.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 18G

Cheryl Turgel, Newton

Through my eight years as a local president (NTA), I have gained a solid grasp on the issues that are facing our members in today's political environment. MTA must navigate these waters skillfully. I ask you to vote for me to apply my knowledge and experience in representing our region.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 18G

Debra King, Watertown

As a strong advocate for members' rights and a tireless proponent of teachers' unions, I've worked to strengthen my local union and have fostered collegiality among regional associations. Dedicated to both the teaching profession and the democratic process, I'd be honored to represent you as your district director.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 4A

Jean Fay, Amherst-Pelham

I am a 2010 graduate of the NEA ESP Leaders for Tomorrow Program, the 2011 MTA ESP of the Year and a member of the Executive Board of the Amherst-Pelham Education Association and the Amherst Insurance Advisory Committee. I have served as interim district director for Region 4A since October.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 11B

Michael Whittier, Sutton

My name is Michael Whittier, and I represent District 11B. I teach social sciences and technology at Sutton High School, where I am also a former paraprofessional, department head and administrator. I have been an NEA RA Delegate and serve on MTA's Government Relations Committee.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 8B

James M. Boland, Tantasqua Regional

I have been an active MTA member for over 25 years. I have three more years to offer my services, and would be honored to finish as a member of the Board of Directors. There is much work to do, and I am still inspired by this awesome association. Thanks.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 34C

Nancy Chadwick, Duxbury

President, Duxbury Teachers Association. Member, MTA Professional Ethics Committee. In times of societal and fiscal uncertainty, those understanding issues and the ramifications of decisions, plus creative consensus-building, must step forward to serve. I ask for and greatly appreciate your vote for District 34C. Thank you.

Candidates' biographical statements

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 15D

Merrie Najimy, Concord

A veteran Concord Public Schools teacher and union organizer for a decade, I'm concerned over the political attack on teachers and unions nationally and locally. We must take back the narrative and power. As an MTA Board member, I'll be in regular communication with 15D. Effective representation is my priority.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 37E

Janet Anderson, Taunton

Currently serving as president of the Taunton Education Association. I have also served as vice president and grievance chair and have been a delegate to Annual Meeting several times. I am a strong advocate for workers' rights to collectively bargain.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 38E

Jeanne Dyer, Attleboro

I am grateful for having the opportunity to serve District 38E these past three years. My district has benefited from the bountiful resources and the experience that derive from the Board. I ask that you vote to retain that experience by voting for me once more as district director.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 22F

Kerry A. Costello, Andover

I am the current Executive Committee member for Region F, and my term will end in June 2011. I am looking forward to returning to my roots as a Board member from District 22F. You can rely on me to voice your concerns and advocate for you.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 21G

Bonnie Page, Malden

Taught in Malden, Mass., for 24 years. Union experience: Local — negotiations chair for Malden Education Association, MEA building rep. for 20 years. State — district director for Region 21G, delegate to MTA Annual Meeting for 22 years. National — delegate to NEA RA for 16 years.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 44H

Diana (Donnie) McGee, MCCC

As MCCC vice president, I have advocated for college funding, effective contract funding legislation and optimal benefits for educators ("03" law, ORP, adjunct pension and health insurance bills). I have represented the MCCC/MTA at the GPO/WEP hearings in D.C. and at MTA's Annual Meetings, the NEA RA, and NCHE conferences.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTRICT 45H

Ron Colbert, MSCA

I am seeking re-election to represent our MSCA faculty and librarians as your MTA Board director for 45H. I am committed to embracing present and future challenges by providing leadership needed to promote our public higher education causes while working to improve the MTA's organizational health.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

AT-LARGE ESP

Donna Johnson, USA

I have been a strong advocate for ESPs for 12 years. As president of the University Staff Association and co-chair of the ESP committee, I have represented ESPs and their issues. I would appreciate the opportunity to work for ESPs as the MTA statewide Board member.



A gift to The Massachusetts Child is a great way to say:

For information, please call 800.392.6175, Extension 8265

- ☐ Happy Anniversary!
- ☐ Congratulations!
- ☐ Good Work!
- ☐ Happy Birthday!
- ☐ Enjoy Your Retirement!

Amendments to resolutions are recommended

MTA Resolutions are the association's statements of principle on issues relating to members, public education, the welfare of students and human and civil rights.

Resolutions may be submitted by any member to the Resolutions Committee by the second Friday in January. They also may be submitted by the end of business on Friday at the Annual Meeting of Delegates. In addition, the committee may propose resolutions.

All resolutions submitted are considered by the committee, and those submitted by the January deadline are also brought before the Board of Directors. To become an official position of the MTA, a resolution must be adopted by the delegates at the Annual Meeting.

The resolutions printed here have been approved by the Resolutions Committee and recommended for adoption by the Board of Directors.

In instances where the proposal is to amend an existing resolution, the current version is shown first and the proposed modifications are shown below it. A section that has a line through it is proposed for elimination; a section that is underlined is a proposed addition.

For a copy of all current resolutions, go to the MTA website, www.massteacher.org, and search for "Resolutions."

Proposed New Resolution C-7 and Renumber Remainder of C **C-7 School Facilities: Design, Construction, and Function**

The Massachusetts Teachers Association believes that school facilities must be conducive to teaching and learning. The physical environment must allow for a variety of needs, including the number of students, physical characteristics of students, changes in teaching methods, presentation of instruction, and an increased use of school facilities. The Association also believes that all school facilities must be well constructed, safe, energy-efficient, aesthetically pleasing, accessible, functional, and adaptable to persons with disabilities.

The Association supports ecologically conservative facility designs including heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems.

The Association believes that the community, parents/guardians, and education employees should play an advisory role in designing these facilities.

The Association also believes that stable and sufficient funding must be provided for the design, construction, adequate and ongoing maintenance, and operation of the school facility. These principles should apply equally to PreK-12 schools and buildings used by public higher education institutions. (11)

Current Resolution E-1 **E-1 Academic Freedom**

The Massachusetts Teachers Association believes that academic freedom is essential to teaching and learning.

The MTA further believes that academic freedom includes the right of educational professionals to determine the content, sequence and organization of programs of learning (curriculum).

Therefore, the MTA opposes any attempt to restrict or legislate the selection of educational materials for classroom and library use. (92)

Proposed New Resolution E-1 **E-1 Academic Freedom**

The Massachusetts Teachers Association believes that academic freedom is essential to teaching and learning.

The MTA further believes that academic freedom includes the right of educational professionals to determine the content, sequence and organization of programs of learning (curriculum and/or syllabi).

Therefore, the MTA opposes any attempt to restrict or legislate the selection of educational materials for classroom and library use. (92, 11)

Current Resolution E-4 **E-4 Time to Teach**

The Massachusetts Teachers Association believes that "time to teach" refers not only to those hours during which an educator is actually teaching but also applies to those conditions that contribute to the student-teacher relationship. There should be a reasonably defined workload and unencumbered planning time during the student day for employees to meet their responsibilities.

The MTA also believes that, at all levels and in all disciplines, additional common planning time should be provided during the student day for employees to meet for such purposes as, but not limited to, planning interdisciplinary activities/units, team planning times, and coordinating with special education and support professionals.

The MTA further believes that, in order for the educator to spend adequate time on instructional duties, the paperwork burden on the practitioner must be reduced. (07)

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special education and support professionals.

The MTA further believes that, in order for the educator to spend adequate time on instructional duties, the paperwork and electronic communication burden on the practitioner must be ~~reduced~~ taken into consideration in defining a reasonable workload. (07, 11)

Proposed New Resolution F-3 **F-3 Respectful Work Environment**

The Massachusetts Teachers Association supports a respectful work environment, one that is free from bullying, retaliation, and harassment. (11)

Current Resolution F-20 **F-20 Employee Assistance Program**

The Massachusetts Teachers Association recognizes that substance abuse, mental health problems, family problems and smoking affect education personnel both in the workplace and in their personal lives.

The MTA strongly urges the adoption of substance abuse education programs for all school personnel.

The MTA further urges all school committees and the governing boards of higher education to establish confidential employee assistance programs for all personnel and that all educational employees be represented in the establishment of such programs. (85, 88, 94)

Proposed New Resolution F-20 **F-20 Employee Assistance Program**

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Please see **Amendments**/Page 29

Amendments to resolutions are recommended

Continued from Page 28

Current Resolution F-28

F-28 Diversity

The Massachusetts Teachers Association believes that the diversity of our society enhances the lives of all individuals. The similarities and differences among people in regard to race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, language, gender, sexual orientation, transgender, age, physical ability, size, occupation and marital, parental or economic status form the fabric of our society.

The MTA also believes that education should raise the awareness and understanding of the qualities that individuals and members of a group possess. The MTA urges that inaccuracies and biases be identified and corrected.

The MTA further believes that basic education should reflect our multicultural society. In addition, the MTA believes that the contributions of diverse ethnic groups should be recognized and become a part of the established curriculum. (00, 07)

Proposed New Resolution F-28

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Current Resolution F-29

F-29 Non-Discriminatory Practices

The Massachusetts Teachers Association believes that discrimination because of race, color, creed, size, national origin, religious belief, residence, physical disability, mental disability, political activity, professional association activity, age, marital status, family relationship, gender, or sexual orientation should be eliminated. The MTA supports the development and implementation of programs to eliminate such discrimination in public education at all levels. (79, 80)

Resolutions Committee members

Diana Marcus, Chair

JoAnn Evans

Susan Karb

David McGlothlin

Tiffany Magnolia

Sandra Moriarty

Dorothy Scally

Deanna White-Hebert

Laura Barrett, Staff Consultant

Janice Morrissey, Staff Assistant

Proposed New Resolution F-29

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Current Resolution I-2

I-2 Bullying

The Massachusetts Teachers Association believes that the school environment must be free from all forms of bullying. Bullying is the systemic and chronic infliction of physical harm and/or psychological distress on one or more individuals. The Association recognizes that bullying in schools is not limited to students but can include members of the entire school community.

The MTA encourages its affiliates to work with their school districts and institutions of higher education to develop comprehensive school-wide programs including all stakeholders to address bullying. Such programs should:

- Establish strong policies prohibiting bullying that include the definition, consequences, and procedures for reporting and appeals.
- Develop and implement educational programs designed to help students recognize, understand, prevent, oppose, and eliminate bullying.
- Provide training for all school employees in bullying prevention and intervention.
- Provide professional development materials and resources.

These programs should be reviewed, revised, and updated to reflect changing needs. (07)

Proposed New Resolution I-2

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The Massachusetts Teachers Association believes that the school environment must be free from all forms of bullying and retaliation. Bullying is the systemic and chronic infliction of physical harm and/or psychological distress on one or more individuals. The Association recognizes that bullying and retaliation in schools is are not limited to students but can include members of the entire school community.

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- Develop and implement educational programs designed to help students and staff recognize, understand, prevent, oppose, and eliminate bullying.
- Provide training for all school employees in bullying prevention and intervention.
- Provide professional development materials and resources.

These programs should be reviewed, revised, and updated to reflect changing needs. (07, 11)

Proposed New Resolution I-4 and Renumber Remainder of Section I

I-4 Conflict Resolution

The Massachusetts Teachers Association supports the adoption and use, at all educational levels, of proven conflict-resolution strategies, materials, and activities by school districts, education employees, students, parents, guardians, and the school community to encourage nonviolent resolution of interpersonal and societal conflicts.

The MTA recognizes the importance of students having the appropriate social skills necessary to participate in a democratic society. Strategies that promote the skills of positive social interaction should be incorporated into academic instruction. (11)

Proposed New Resolution I-20

I-20 Use of Union-Made Products and Services

The Massachusetts Teachers Association recognizes the historical role of organized labor in its struggle for economic and social justice. The Association advocates the use of union-made products and services. (11)

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE MTA BYLAWS

PRESENT TEXT

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS *Bold and Italic Portions Only*

1. Proposal to Permit Charter School Employees to Join MTA as Active Members

ARTICLE III Membership

Section 2. Individual Membership — Active

A. Eligibility

Active membership is available to:

(1) Persons who are:

- a. employed in work of a professional nature in the field of education, including employment in public schools, in institutions of public higher education, and by public and private employers providing early childhood education.
 - who, as new applicants for membership after August 31, 1965, hold a baccalaureate degree or higher; and who hold a certificate, or are eligible to hold same, from a proper certifying authority where such is required, or
 - who are appropriately licensed, or
 - who are qualified and approved as teachers by the Division of Occupational Education in the Department of Education, or
 - who are school nurses.

- b. education support employees employed in public schools, in institutions of public higher education, and by public and private employers providing early childhood education.

Section 3. Individual Membership — Additional Categories

A. Categories

- (1) Associate members are those persons interested in the advancement of the cause of education who are not eligible for active membership.

Individual employees of charter schools and private schools other than employees of private employers providing early childhood education shall be eligible only for associate membership unless otherwise determined by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE III Membership

Section 2. Individual Membership — Active

A. Eligibility

Active membership is available to:

(1) Persons who are:

- a. employed in work of a professional nature in the field of education, including employment in public schools, ***in public charter schools***, in institutions of public higher education, and by public and private employers providing early childhood education.

NO CHANGE

NO CHANGE

NO CHANGE

NO CHANGE

- b. education support employees employed in public schools, ***in public charter schools***, in institutions of public higher education, and by public and private employers providing early childhood education.

Section 3. Individual Membership — Additional Categories

A. Categories

- (1) NO CHANGE

Individual employees of ***charter schools and*** private schools other than employees of private employers providing early childhood education shall be eligible only for associate membership unless otherwise determined by the Board of Directors.

DELETE: charter schools and

PRESENT TEXT

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS *Bold and Italic Portions Only*

1. Proposal to Permit Charter School Employees to Join MTA as Active Members

ARTICLE III Membership

Continued from previous column

Application for said membership shall be made to the Executive Committee in writing.

NO CHANGE

SUBMITTED BY:

Kerry Costello, Andover Education Association
Gary Gilardi, MTA Retired
Lois Jacobs, Methuen, MTA Retired
Andrei Joseph, Concord-Carlisle Teachers Association
Max Page, MSP, UMass Amherst

MTA BYLAWS AND RULES COMMITTEE:

Recommends Adoption (8-0)

MTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Recommends Adoption (53-4)

IMPACT STATEMENT:

This amendment would eliminate the limitation on the membership status of Commonwealth charter school employees to associate membership only, but instead extend individual active membership to educators and education support professionals who are employed at Commonwealth charter schools.

Five candidates seek seats on Retired Members Committee

Four vacancies — two-year terms commencing July 1, 2011
Numbers reflect ballot lottery order

1. Margaret "Peggy" Kane
2. Nancy L. Green
3. Robert A. Lague
4. Eileen A. Cleary
5. Louise A. Russell



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PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE MTA BYLAWS

PRESENT TEXT

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS
Bold and Italic Portions Only

2. Proposal to Change Part-Time Dues & Minimal Base Salary Dues

ARTICLE IV
Finance

Section 2. Dues

Full-time dues and part-time dues percentages are based upon membership category.

A. Active Members

(1) Full-Time Dues

Except as provided herein, the annual dues of active members shall be the amount approved by the Annual Meeting of Delegates.

(2) Part-Time Dues

- a. The annual dues of an active member who presents evidence of part-time employment, which is at one-half (1/2) or less than one-half (1/2) of a full-time position in a given school system, shall be 50% the annual dues of full-time active members.
- b. The annual dues of an active member who is employed by the University of Massachusetts Trustees or the Board of Higher Education who presents evidence of part-time employment, which is less than one half (1/2) of a full-time position, shall be an amount equal to 30% of the annual dues of full-time members, except that the dues for part-time active members who teach less than three (3) credits per semester shall be 15% of the annual dues of full-time active members

- c. The annual dues of an active member who presents evidence that his or her employment was terminated prior to February 1 of a school year in a given school system shall be 50% of the annual dues of full-time active members.

ARTICLE IV
Finance

Section 2. Dues

Full-time dues and part-time dues percentages are based upon membership category.

A. Active Members

(1) Full-Time Dues

Except as provided herein, the annual dues of active members shall be the amount approved by the Annual Meeting of Delegates.

(2) Part-Time Dues

- a. The annual dues of an active member who presents evidence of part-time employment, which is at one-half (1/2) or less than one-half (1/2) of a full-time position in a given school system, shall be 50% the annual dues of full-time active members.
- b. The annual dues of an active member who is employed by the University of Massachusetts Trustees or the Board of Higher Education who presents evidence of part-time employment, which is less than one-half (1/2) of a full-time position, ***and whose base salary is eighteen thousand dollars (\$18,000) or more***, shall be an amount equal to 30% of the annual dues of full-time members, except that the dues for part-time active members who teach less than three (3) credits ***whose annual income from employment that qualifies him or her for active membership is less than eighteen thousand dollars (\$18,000), but more than four thousand five hundred dollars (\$4,500)***, shall be 15% of the annual dues of full-time active members, ***except that the dues for part-time active members whose annual income from employment that qualifies him or her for active membership is less than four thousand five hundred dollars (\$4,500) shall be 7.5% of the annual dues of full-time members.***

- c. The annual dues of an active member who presents evidence that his or her employment was terminated prior to February 1 of a school year in a given school system shall be 50% of the annual dues of full-time active members.

PRESENT TEXT

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS
Bold and Italic Portions Only

2. Proposal to Change Part-Time Dues & Minimal Base Salary Dues

ARTICLE IV
Finance

Continued from previous column

(3) Members Earning Minimal Base Salary or Minimal Annual Income

- a. An MTA active member whose base salary for the employment that qualifies him or her for MTA active membership is less than twelve thousand dollars (\$12,000) or an active MTA member whose annual income from the employment that qualifies him or her for active membership is less than twelve thousand dollars (\$12,000) due to an unpaid leave of absence shall pay thirty percent (30%) of the annual dues of a full-time active member.
- b. An MTA active member whose base salary for the employment that qualifies him or her for MTA active membership is less than six thousand dollars (\$6,000) or an active MTA member whose annual income from the employment that qualifies him or her for active membership is less than six thousand dollars (\$6,000) due to an unpaid leave of absence shall pay fifteen percent (15%) of the annual dues of a full-time active member.

ARTICLE IV
Finance

(3) Members Earning Minimal Base Salary or Minimal Annual Income

- a. An MTA active member whose base salary for the employment that qualifies him or her for MTA active membership is less than ***eighteen thousand dollars (\$18,000)*** or an active MTA member whose annual income from the employment that qualifies him or her for active membership is less than ***eighteen thousand dollars (\$18,000)*** due to an unpaid leave of absence shall pay thirty percent (30%) of the annual dues of a full-time active member.
- b. An MTA active member whose base salary for the employment that qualifies him or her for MTA active membership is less than ***nine thousand dollars (\$9,000)*** or an active MTA member whose annual income from the employment that qualifies him or her for active membership is less than ***nine thousand dollars (\$9,000)*** due to an unpaid leave of absence shall pay fifteen percent (15%) of the annual dues of a full-time active member.

SUBMITTED BY:

Gertrude E. Tynan, MCCC

MTA BYLAWS AND RULES COMMITTEE:

Recommends Rejection (8-0)

MTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Recommends Rejection (55-0; 2 abstentions)

IMPACT STATEMENT:

A(2)b. Part-time Dues

This part of the amendment would reduce the dues paid by part-time and adjunct Higher Education employees, would change credit hours to base salaries, would require knowledge by MTA treasurers of each individual's base salary, would add an additional dues percentage, would increase dues for all members to make up the deficit, and would reduce MTA dues revenue.

A(3)a & b. Minimum Base Salary or Minimal Annual Income

This part of the amendment would change the amount of dues for PreK-12 and Higher Education members so that more members would be eligible to pay less, creating an MTA dues deficit. An increase in MTA dues for all other members would be necessary to make up the deficit.

Annual Report of the Executive Director-Treasurer

We are fighting hard for public education

The past year has been one of the most exhilarating and rewarding times in my life. Since becoming the executive director-treasurer of this great union, I have gained a fresh perspective on what we do, how we approach our challenges, and what we must achieve in this extremely difficult era for our students, our members and public education as a whole.

I have also developed a new and deeper sense of the road ahead — of the battles we must fight and win, the obstacles we face in seeking to reach our strategic potential, and the need to uphold the MTA's rightful role in shaping the future of our Commonwealth.

The months in the rearview mirror have featured many proud moments for members and staff alike, including our successes on Election Day, our steps forward in the policy arena, and our work on building the alliances that are so important to the future of the labor movement and the well-being of families and communities throughout Massachusetts.



Ann Clarke
Executive Director-Treasurer

Here are some of the items on my list:

- We are off to a fine start on implementing the MTA Strategic Action Plan, which projects a path for us to organize our way to full empowerment in every respect.

- We helped keep an education-friendly governor in the corner office at the State House through an unprecedented member-to-member campaign and a series of highly effective television and radio ads.

- We fended off a ballot initiative seeking to cut the sales tax that would have proven disastrous for our schools, colleges and universities.

- We have fought to protect our members' collective bargaining rights at every possible turn.

- We have helped our locals and chapters hold the line on their contracts during the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.

- We have thrown down a marker demanding fairness in the way educators are evaluated.

- We have initiated a Revenue Campaign so we can begin to address the unceasing budget shortfalls that plague our state.

- We have formed a network of Legislative and Political Action Teams — LPATs — to encircle our elected representatives and make sure they understand what is best for students, then act accordingly.

- We have launched a Full Capacity Local Assessment project that will help our locals determine their needs and then realize them through training and expanded activism.

- We have participated in rallies to proclaim the value of public education and working people, including one at the State House that was led by MTA President Paul Toner.

- We have taken the initiative on municipal health care, joining with a coalition of other unions to propose a plan that is both realistic and innovative in protecting the interests of public employees.

All of this has been accomplished by building the grassroots strength of our organization, relentlessly pressing our case in the Legislature and at the bargaining table, and pushing our communications capacity to the limit. Our advances — and our ability to hold our own in the face of attacks, which sometimes goes unremarked — have been carried forward by tireless and courageous leadership at every level.

To all of you who have been part of our victories and achievements on behalf of our students and members, I offer my thanks and my admiration. But I also must be forthright in cautioning that we have merely gained a foothold on the first step of a staircase that rises sharply and must be ascended without taking time to catch our breath.

We are now engaged in nothing less than a campaign to preserve our country's soul. Our democracy — with public education at its heart — hangs in the balance and will thrive or fail depending on what course we and many thousands of others choose to take in the coming days, months and years.

If that sounds daunting, it should.

A few examples serve to indicate the severity of what is going on:

- In Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan, New Jersey, Alabama and other states, unions and workers' rights have been targeted for elimination. If those arrayed against us have their way, both the MTA and its national affiliate, the NEA, will first be rendered powerless and then destroyed.

- In the latest plan to emerge from the Republican leadership in the U.S. House of Representatives, Medicare would become a voucher system, leaving elderly Americans at the mercy of a merciless marketplace for their health care. Medicaid would be turned over to states that in some instances have demonstrated that they care little for the health of the poor.

- These same politicians and their allies in Congress and state legislatures, acting under a sham of a mandate, have no plans to stop there. Under their proposals, environmental protection efforts would diminish. Police and fire service would be decimated and, not surprisingly, funds that help schools educate children and pay students' college tuition would be

on the chopping block. Make no mistake: Social Security will be next.

Meanwhile, as *The Boston Globe* deadpanned in a news story printed while readers waited to see whether a threatened government shutdown would materialize: "The GOP budget proposes whittling the current 35 percent top tax rate on individuals and businesses to 25 percent."

The words throughout my report must be read, however, as a call to action rather than any cause for despair.

Indeed, it helps to consider the yin and yang of what we are experiencing today as we gather our resources to support children, the frail, the sick, the elderly and others in our society who need public help.

The fabric of our country is certainly subject to being torn in ways that are hard to mend, but it is also made up of many threads that are too resilient to be easily cut.

Each passing day highlights the danger that all we have won in our quest to provide every student with a great education can be rapidly taken away, but also provides indications of how we can prevent that from happening.

We are subject to an unstinting assault that is being conducted by those who are interested in their own good rather than the common good, but we can overcome them if our will is strong and our actions are intentional and decisive.

So let's turn back to what we have done and what we plan to do to climb that steep staircase.

This year's MTA budget, which will be considered by the delegates to the Annual Meeting on May 14, is constructed with the Strategic Action Plan as its principal focus. It will drive us ahead as we continue to build powerful, member-driven locals that are capable of meeting any challenge that arises. It will also allow us to continue to develop the LPAT program at the Senate district level while ensuring that every local can have a Political Action Leader to engage with the larger teams.

The proposed budget for the MTA Public Relations/Organizing Campaign is similarly aligned, providing much-needed resources to help us enhance our stature as the voice of education.

The upcoming MTA Summer Conference — reshaped from past years — is built substantially around plans for Full Capacity Local Training. "Beta" associations have been identified, and a year from now our hope is to have 45 locals taking part in the initiative.

Although these steps may appear to focus on process, they are about people and power; they will help create a structure that can stand strong on the foundation we have built together as educators since the MTA was founded in 1845.

There will be more elections, more ballot initiatives and more pension battles. We will prevail

Continued on Page 33

We must fulfill our mission for public education

Continued from Page 32

at every turn if teachers, ESPs, higher education faculty and staff and all of our MTA colleagues work collectively — and work strategically — to gain even an inch at a time.

Educators of all races, ethnicities, genders and political persuasions must be called on to devote at least a few minutes of their time each year to advocating for our pro-student agenda. We will need to engage our friends, family members, neighbors and other people we meet in the interests of public education, which in fact are their own interests and those of society at large. Stories must be shared, and we will shout from the rooftops if that is what's required.

A. Philip Randolph, the legendary organizer of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, once offered the following thought: "At the banquet table of nature, there are no reserved seats. You get what

We will need to engage our friends, family members, neighbors and other people we meet in the interests of public education, which in fact are their own interests and those of society at large.

you can take, and you keep what you can hold. If you can't take anything, you won't get anything, and if you can't hold anything, you won't keep anything. And you can't take anything without organization."

In the past year, as part of our mission to help students succeed, we have won political

contests, built bridges, formed coalitions, held rallies, bargained to improve conditions in our classrooms, protected resources for our schools and higher education institutions, and put many other substantial accomplishments on the scoreboard. Just think of what we can achieve as our members, leaders and staff devote more of their time, creativity and energy to organizing around their values, their principles and their goals for public education.

Activism and inspiration must be our watchwords, and we must go forward together from here.

A longer version of the Annual Report of the Executive Director-Treasurer, including sections on the work of each MTA division and department, is included in the 2011 Delegate Handbook. The full report is also posted in the members' area of the MTA website. To access it, please visit <http://bit.ly/e50Sbx>.

The MTA Human & Civil Rights Awards Banquet

Will be Held on a Friday Evening This Year

Since 1983, MTA's Human Relations Committee has reviewed and selected nominees for the Annual Human & Civil Rights Awards. The Human & Civil Rights Awards Banquet, attended by educators throughout the state, honors MTA members and others who have put their lives, employment or professional careers on the line in defense of human and civil rights. Honoring those who dedicate themselves to equality for all has become a proud organizational tradition for MTA.

2011 MTA Human and Civil Rights Awards Recipients

Kathleen Roberts Creative Leadership Award

Ann Marie Dooley
Harwich High School

Susan Mendoza Friedman
Dancing for a Cure

Louise Gaskins Lifetime Civil Rights Award

Caroline Hunter
*Educator and Civil Rights Activist
Cambridge*

Online Registration: www.massteacher.org/am2011

You can also use the form at right.

Deadline for event Registration is Friday, May 6.

Telephone reservations will NOT be accepted.

Human & Civil Rights Awards Dinner Reservation Form

Friday, May 13
Sheraton Boston Hotel and Towers
Republic Ballroom, 2nd Floor

7:00 p.m. – Cocktail Reception
7:30 p.m. – Dinner
8:30 p.m. – Awards

\$60 per person.
Evening attire is suggested.

Name: _____

Local Association: _____

Membership ID#: _____

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Work Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

_____ Tickets X \$60 = Total Due: \$ _____

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Celebrating teaching excellence



NEA directors from Massachusetts and other MTA members were among the educators who attended a banquet in February to celebrate the presentation of the NEA Foundation's Awards for Teaching Excellence. Carol Margolis of Dedham, the MTA nominee, joined her Bay State colleagues for the event, which was held in Washington, D.C. Margolis is seated in the front row along with her husband, Andrew Heilpern, center, and NEA Director Robert V. Travers, Jr. Standing behind them from left to right are NEA Director Catherine A. Boudreau; Jim Rice, president of the National Council for Higher Education, the NEA's higher ed caucus; MTA Vice President Tim Sullivan; NEA Director Robert Gillies; Alternate NEA Director Kerry Costello; and NEA Director Maureen Carlos.

Librarians visit Beacon Hill

Continued from Page 20

their supporters then fanned out to visit legislators in their offices.

In addition to trying to preserve library funding, the MSLA is working with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop minimum staffing and instruction standards for school library programs. The DESE currently has no standards in place for such programs. The MSLA points out that almost half of the schools in Massachusetts lack full-time librarians, even though studies clearly demonstrate that their presence increases student achievement.

In an effort to address that need, the school librarians and community librarians were delivering a unified message to lawmakers: Please ask the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to add a person in the DESE who will be responsible for monitoring and promoting libraries in the Commonwealth's schools.

"There is no one assigned to be in charge of school libraries at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and we insist

MSLA President Gerri Fagan noted that despite popular opinion to the contrary, the Internet and the arrival of the digital age have made libraries even more vital than they were in the past.

that every student is entitled to a qualified school librarian," Fagan said during a meeting with state Senator Marc Pacheco (D-Taunton). She also addressed funding concerns and talked about the "troubling" trend of trying to replace professionals in both school and in community libraries with volunteers.

"You have to have a certified professional in the library — not just someone who checks out books," Pacheco replied.

"It's particularly important to make the case for libraries during these very difficult times because it's going to be a tough year," the senator told his visitor. "The more you can make your voice heard by lawmakers, the better."

The MSLA and the MLA note that libraries are struggling to survive an onslaught of cuts in municipal and statewide funding at the same time that demand for their services is escalating. That has been the case every year for the last decade, they say.

Fagan said that despite popular opinion to the contrary, the Internet and the arrival of the digital age have made libraries even more vital than they were in the past.

That perspective was shared by state Senator Katherine Clark (D-Melrose) in a meeting she held with several librarians. She told the group that she has personal knowledge of the key role they play because her mother is a retired librarian.

"With all the technology today, the librarian has actually become more important so that there are people available who know how to do research and who can help people use technology appropriately," Clark said.

She added that librarians also help promote literacy among students and the public.

"Libraries are a key piece of our communities," Clark said. "I know how much families depend on libraries not only for books, but also Internet access and so many other things."

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REGIONAL RETIREMENT CONSULTATIONS AVAILABLE

The MTA conducts retirement consultations throughout the state to assist members. Proof of membership must be submitted when requesting retirement services. This schedule is in effect from September to June, except in the Boston office, which is staffed during the summer months and school vacations. In the event of inclement weather, it is advisable to call consultants in advance.

ASHBURNHAM — Robert Zbikowski: second Thursday of each month (walk in), 4 to 8 p.m., Overlook Middle School library, front entrance, 10 Oakmont Dr., Ashburnham; 978.827.1425, or at home, 978.297.0123; e-mail: zibstar702@verizon.net.

AUBURN — Louise Gaskins: first and second Saturdays of each month (walk in), 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Central Office, 48 Sword St., Auburn; 508.791.2121, or at home, 978.448.5351.

BOSTON — Harold Crowley: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays (by appointment only), 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., MTA, 20 Ashburton Place, Boston; 617.878.8240 or 800.392.6175, ext. 8240.

BRAINTREE — Mary Hanna: second Saturday of each month (walk in), 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Metropolitan Office, 100 Grandview Road, Braintree; 781.380.1410, or at home, 781.545.2069.

CAPE COD — Lawrence Abbruzzi: second Saturday of each month (walk in), 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Barnstable Teachers Association (BTA), 100 West Main St., Suite #7, Hyannis; 508.775.8625, or at home, 508.824.9194.

HOLYOKE — Ron Lech: third Saturday of each month (walk in), 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Western Office, 55 Bobala Road, Suite 3, Holyoke; 413.535.2415, or at home, 413.566.3039.

LYNNFIELD — Mary Parry: third and fourth Saturdays of each month (walk in), 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Northeast Office, 50 Salem St., Building B, Lynnfield; 781.246.9779, or at home, 978.372.2031; fax, 978.372.2035.

PITTSFIELD — Ward F. Johnson: second Saturday of each month (walk in), 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Berkshire Office, 188 East St., Pittsfield; 413.499.0257, or at home, 413.443.1722; e-mail: wardman33@aol.com.

RAYNHAM — Sandra Stephenson: third Saturday of each month (walk in), 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Southeast Office, 90 New State Highway (Rte. 44), Raynham; 508.822.5371, or at home, 508.747.2234; e-mail: rockowl@aol.com. Edward Nelson: fourth Saturday of each month (walk in), 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., MTA Southeast Office, 90 New State Highway (Rte. 44), Raynham; 508.822.5371, or at home, 508.853.5769.

HIGHER EDUCATION AT-LARGE — Edward McCourt, Massachusetts Bay Community College, Wellesley; 781.239.2207; e-mail: emccourt.mccc@gmail.com.

Note: If you or your association would like to have a retirement workshop at your school, your local president should call Harold Crowley at 800.392.6175, ext. 8240. Please be aware that the MTA does not have a record of your service, so members are advised to bring that information along to meetings.

Many changes sought in pension legislation

Continued from Page 10

is working with administration and legislative leaders to ensure that contractual raises, such as longevity pay, annual raises and lane increases, will not be counted toward the 7 percent limit.

■ Creditable service buyback.

This provides a financial incentive for members to buy back creditable service within one year so that the funds can be invested. The interest rate charged for service bought back within one year would be 4.125 percent; after one year, it would be 8.25 percent. *The MTA accepts this provision as justified from an actuarial perspective.*

■ **Survivor benefits for same-sex marriages.** This provision allows retirees who married same-sex partners in the first year after same-sex marriage became legal to change their retirement options in order to provide benefits to their spouses. *The MTA supports this provision as equitable.*

An FAQ on the current pension system and more information on the pension proposal are available on the MTA website, www.massteacher.org.



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History teacher helps students learn value of civic involvement

Continued from Page 8

power to allow students to better understand their selves, to better understand their place in the world and where they fit in the larger scheme of things.”

She said that her classes are all based on five core principles: authentic application, critical thinking, rigor and writing, innovation, and student-centered exploration.

“The key is to make things exciting and fun, to engage students in authentic assessment and get them out of the classroom to push their thinking skills,” said Brown, who was named a Disney Teacher of the Year in 2006.

In her view, her work with students improves the chance that they will be involved in civics when they are adults.

“In a democratic republic, I think it’s important to be educated about what type of government we live under,” Brown said. “It allows students to understand why it’s important to be involved in the process.”

Like Ortiz-Marrero, Brown finds

Like Ortiz-Marrero, Brown finds it rewarding to conduct professional development activities for other teachers.

it rewarding to conduct professional development activities for other teachers. She is particularly proud of the training she provides to those who work in juvenile detention facilities.

“That work is incredibly meaningful to me,” she said.

The Preserve America History Teacher of the Year program honors outstanding teachers of American history across the country. The award is sponsored by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History and Preserve America.

“We have a wonderful school community at Easthampton High School. There is also a lot for me to learn from other history teachers around Massachusetts, so I am honored to represent all of them and recognize that we all have something to learn from each other,” Brown said.

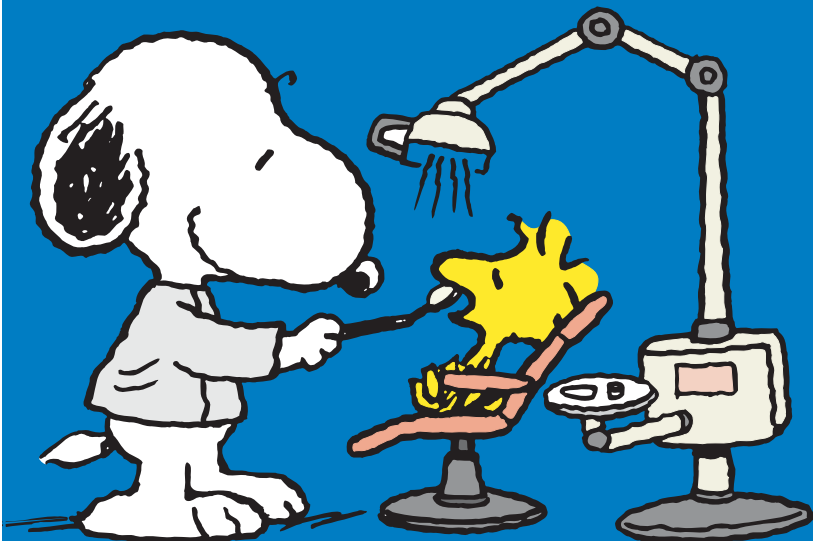
For the love of books



Photo by Bob Duffy

MTA President Paul Toner, assisted by his daughter, Grace, reads *Hello, Wally* to children at the Andrew Peabody School in Cambridge. Grace is a Peabody sixth-grader, and Toner’s son, Jack, attends kindergarten at the school. The MTA president is a graduate of the M.E. Fitzgerald School, which was once in the same building. Toner was joined by Wally himself for the visit, which took place on Read Across America Day. RAA Day is celebrated annually on or near March 2, the birthday of children’s author Theodor Geisel — better known as Dr. Seuss. For more information, visit www.nea.org/readacross.

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'Myth busters' cultivate mutual trust and respect

Continued from Page 3

building — from the nurse to the classroom teacher to the art teacher to the music teacher to the gym teacher — be using the same vocabulary.”

The training, funded by grants, was based on a curriculum developed at Wellesley College.

“It’s really working,” Kelly said. “Kids like feeling they can say anything. No one’s teasing them; everyone’s listening. They also like it when adults join in the circle. It sort of breaks the ice for students if teachers have gone through a situation that they also have.”

Occasionally, students reveal things that have to be followed up on. “When that happens,” Kelly explained, “we have a social worker, a nurse — everyone in place to deal with that. That’s part of our training, how to deal with extended issues that can come up and do.”

“I should add here,” said Dakin, “that a building this size would normally not have a full-time nurse. But these programs call for one.”

Continuing staff training in Open Circle was held in February and March.

Three-tier learning

Turning to academics, Kelly said, “We have a math coach, a reading coach, literacy centers and math centers, and they’re working wonderfully. Every class has a three-tier learning model: First tier

is the whole classroom, second is smaller groups, and third is individual intervention. Teachers are at one table, coaches at the second and special ed teachers at the third.”

Students are given MCAS-like tests, corrected by an outside provider.

“Teachers receive results in 48 hours,” Kelly said, “and they can see where the challenges are and the strengths are and adjust their instruction accordingly.” Aiding this process are four-hour breakdown meetings on the data.

“And it’s not just a one-shot deal,” Kelly said. “We’re going through this assessment five times in five years.”

The assessments and other parts of the Innovation School program are supported by grants from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and other organizations, as well as federal Race to the Top money.

'Ownership'

Kelly emphasized teacher “ownership” of the new system. She noted that teachers in the old Paul Revere School voted on the new Innovation School concept and were able to opt out if they wished. Only one did, and that was because of a time conflict with her personal obligations.

“There are no secrets, no hidden agendas,” Kelly said. “Everyone knew what was going on from day

one. Transparency — we use that word a lot, but it’s very important to the teachers. They were a big part of every program we brought in here. We sent teachers out to visit other schools and bring back the best practices, what they wanted. They own it and they believe in it.”

“When we went down this route,” Dakin added, “we went with the belief that teachers are the best decision-makers for what kids need.”

Kelly also stressed the students’ positive feeling for their school and illustrated her point with a story.

“We had a broken window; it was an accident,” she said. “Everyone was upset. The kindergartners were crying, ‘Look what they did to our school!’ And the kids who did it didn’t want to go home. I had to call their parents and explain that it was an accident. They were all concerned about a broken window in their school building.”

“We have cultivated a mutual trust and respect, or this never would have worked,” said Lanza. “You hear about adversarial relations between the union and central office. We’re showing that instead of wasting energy on bickering, you can make amazing things happen when you combine your energies. We’re real myth busters.”

To see a video of the Paul Revere Innovation School teachers working on a robotics project, please visit youtube.com/massteacher.

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Holly and Patrick Maloof
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Classifieds

EDUCATION/LICENSURE

ADMINISTRATOR LICENSURE PROGRAM — If you are looking for a district-based, cost-effective program for licensure as an administrator, consult the website of The Education Cooperative (TEC), www.tec-coop.org, and click on “Professional Development and Licensure.” Courses are offered in Dedham in cooperation with Boston University.

TEACHER LICENSURE — Ready to move from Initial to Professional licensure? The Norfolk County Teachers Association and Framingham State University offer DESE-approved programs in elementary, early childhood, moderate disabilities and middle school math and/or science. Call 617.733.1782, e-mail ntcalicensure@comcast.net or go to www.myncta.com. May 15 application deadline.

JOIN THE NEXT GENERATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS — K-12 Principal/Asst. Principal, Supervisor/Director. *The Leadership Licensure Program* (LLP) is a high-quality one-year MDESE-approved licensure program supported by three professional organizations: MSSAA, Teachers21 and MASCD. Program information is available at: www.leadershiplicensure.org or www.mssaa.org/LLPhomepage.htm. Or call 508.541.7997.

TEACHER LICENSURE PROGRAM — If you have Preliminary licensure at the secondary level and are seeking Initial licensure, The Education Cooperative (TEC) has a program for you. Go to www.tec-coop.org and click on “Professional Development and Licensure.” Courses are offered on weekends and during the summer at our Dedham site.

BECOME AN EDUCATION LEADER! Attend an informational session about UMass Dartmouth’s Doctorate/Educational Leadership and Policy Studies programs and the Leading for Learning Principal/Assistant Principal Licensure Program. Open House: May 11 and May 26, 4 to 5 p.m. Visit www.umassd.edu/cusp/lfl or call 774.929.3002.

READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP? Obtain a master’s degree while becoming licensed as a school administrator through our one-year MDESE-approved program. The Leadership Licensure Program (LLP) prepares you for educational leadership in partnership with Endicott College. Sponsored by MSSAA, Teachers21 and MASCD. Interested? Call 508.541.7997 or visit: www.leadershiplicensure.org or www.mssaa.org/LLPhomepage.htm.

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NEED ADDITIONAL INCOME? Could you provide full room and board and teach English to a foreign student in your own home (within two hours of Boston)? Rates from \$550 per student per week. More info: www.fourwinds-nahant.com/HLI. E-mail: mia.corinha@yahoo.com.

FIELD TRIPS

LOOKING FOR A “SCOOPER” year-end field trip? Participate in The Jimmy Fund Scooper Bowl® Scooper Schools Program. Fund raise for The Jimmy Fund and earn free admission to the Scooper Bowl June 7-9! For more information, visit ScooperBowl.org or e-mail scooper_bowl@dfci.harvard.edu.

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PARIS FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP — Own a share of a beautiful Parisian apartment — carefree,

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MISCELLANEOUS

NEED A RELIABLE CAR TO GET TO WORK? Whether you have good credit or need help, the car-buying experts at nonprofit More Than Wheels can help you get a reliable car at a preferred interest rate. Call toll-free today: 866.455.2522. Or visit us at www.MoreThanWheels.org.

PD

32nd CAPE COD INSTITUTE — June 20 to August 26. Choose from 27 week-long timely/lively courses taught by master teachers. Sessions Monday-Friday mornings, leaving the afternoons free for leisure and study. Call 888.394.9293, e-mail institute@cape.org or visit www.cape.org.

CAPE COD INSTITUTE — July 4-8. Karen Levine workshop: *Autism Spectrum Disorders*. Study the range of current interventions for ASD in therapy and the classroom through lectures, discussions and video illustrations. Call 888.394.9293, e-mail institute@cape.org or visit www.cape.org.

CAPE COD INSTITUTE — July 11-15. George McCloskey workshop: *Autism Spectrum Disorders: Assessment and Intervention for Child and Adolescent Executive Function Difficulties*. Call 888.394.9293, e-mail institute@cape.org or visit www.cape.org.

FOURTH ANNUAL SUMMER STORY-TELLING INSTITUTE RETREAT in Western Mass., August 12-14, with international storyteller and certified teacher Rona Leventhal. Learn the art of storytelling and why it’s such a successful tool for motivating kids and promoting language and learning. 20 PDPs! May 30 Early Bird! Call 413.586.0624 or visit www.ronatales.com.

PD/TRAVEL

GREECE IN APRIL 2012 — JOIN US! *The Examined Life: Greek Studies in the Schools* (Exl) encourages K-12 educators to apply for Greek study fellowships. CEUs, PDPs, graduate credit. Stipends available. Please inquire by contacting connie_carven@teachgreece.org or calling 781.405.6094.

TRAVEL

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AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND — 17 days, leaving Aug. 1. Los Angeles, Sydney, Great Barrier Reef, Melbourne and Auckland, New Zealand. Hotels for 14 nights; 6 flights, including round trip to Australia; tours each day. \$2,869. Contact MeandBobMcGee@aol.com.

TRAVEL/STUDY

SEMINAR — Education in Ireland (six graduate credits) June 30-July 23. National University of Ireland, Galway, Ireland. Study aspects of the Irish education system and history, literature and culture of Ireland. Write Barney Keenan, NUI coordinator, 127 Glen Road, Gorham, N.H. 03581; call 603.466.2972; or e-mail Lilysky@ncia.net. The Trip of a Lifetime!

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PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND, CANADA — Fully equipped two-story cottage on private four acres. Sleeps five. Two full bathrooms. Living room with open fire. Satellite TV. Front and back decks. Sweeping ocean view. Cycling, golf and safe, warm swimming. Available May-September. U.S. \$975 weekly. Please call 661.860.6931 or e-mail vcjohnston@aol.com.

RELAX ON DEER ISLE, MAINE — Three-bedroom/two-bath. Spring/fall: \$900/wk; July/August: \$1,000/wk. For slideshow, e-mail moonpenny@yahoo.com.

EAST FALMOUTH — Sunny three-bedroom, one-bath Cape. Cathedral ceilings w/deck, outside shower, washer/dryer. Stroll to secluded bay, picturesque walkway and public boat landing. Less than a mile to Bristol and Falmouth Heights beaches. \$1,100 weekly. 508.872.5870.

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setting. Spacious, nicely appointed villa; spiral staircase to large loft; two baths, sleeps six. Excellent location within resort, steps from indoor/outdoor pools, tennis. Nearby beaches, shopping, bike trails and more. Owned/offered by MTA member; summer weekly, off-season weeks or weekends. 413.594.4056; dr_jim_c@hotmail.com.

HAMPTON BEACH, N.H. — Ocean beachfront penthouse with rear deck for sunset views at #404 Ocean Blvd. Sleeps 6; 2 bedrooms, 2 full baths. New mattresses and furniture. Walk-in ready for your vacation. \$1,000 per week, June-September. October \$500. Owned by MTA member. Call Leo at 978.490.7453 or e-mail leogregorydunn@gmail.com.

NANTUCKET ISLAND TOWNHOUSE — fully furnished, including linens. Two decks, two bedrooms, 2.5 baths and full kitchen. Sleeps 6. Short walk to beautiful beaches. Near bus route and bike paths. Ideal for small family. By the week June through September. Brochure available. Call 978.256.5044 or e-mail wtam@aol.com.

MARTHA’S VINEYARD — Apt. available May-September. Located above artist studio; sleeps two; clean, nicely decorated. Walk to harbor, beach, shops, restaurants, public transportation and bicycle paths. \$500/wk; no smoking, no pets. Call 508.693.9054.

OGUNQUIT, MAINE — Rent one-bedroom 7/23-7/30 at Seacastles. Call Ken for more info. 781.331.9318.

DEER ISLE, MAINE — Spacious country house near the sea; 1.5 acres; sleeps six. Sparkling clean. Three bedrooms, two baths; stroll to beach, boat landing, conservation land. Hardwood floors, fieldstone fireplace, wi-fi, fully equipped kitchen, three decks, picnic table, grill, many extras. Dogs by arrangement. \$950-\$1,200/week. Details at www.hardyshillhouse.com. Call 978.283.3738. E-mail hardyshillhouse@verizon.net.

YORK/OGUNQUIT LINE, MAINE — Walking distance to Perkins Cove and Marginal Way. Two-bedroom, large-living-room cottage. Kitchen area, deck, parking for three cars. Sleeps 4. \$900 per week in season. Call 508.865.3156 for details or e-mail ericks4858@aol.com.

CAPE COD, ONSET — Quiet cottage water view. Enclosed porch and back yard. Gas grill, outside shower. 3 bedrooms, sleeps eight. \$775/wk. Call 978.855.8886 or e-mail dndavan@comcast.net.

WELLFLEET ROOMS FOR RENT — One or two bedrooms; \$80 a night for one room, \$150 for two rooms. Whole house available 8/12-8/20. \$1,200 for two bedrooms, two baths. Each room sleeps two. Call 508.349.5848 or e-mail rakulo@comcast.net.

SO. DENNIS, CAPE COD — Three-bedroom, two-bath. \$900/wk. Please call Nancy at 413.259.1403 or 413.687.4212 (cell). Or visit www.ccvacationhome.weebly.com.

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Massachusetts Teachers Association

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Most Valuable Educator program expands as summer reading game opens season

By Bob Duffy

The MTA Boston Red Sox Most Valuable Educator program is expanding this season. The program, which has saluted outstanding teachers and education support professionals in grades nine through 12 for the past several years, is now open to educators in all grades. In addition, the field of potential honorees has been widened to include a variety of people who work or volunteer in Massachusetts public schools.

An MVE nominee can be a teacher, an ESP, a library media specialist, a counselor, a social worker, a coach, a school nurse or anyone else who has gone above and beyond the call of duty to promote student achievement. A potential MVE can be suggested for teaching a unique lesson, managing a noteworthy after-school program, coordinating a special event or doing virtually anything else that has a positive impact on students.

Nominations should be submitted directly to the Red Sox. Each must be accompanied by an essay of 400 words or less detailing how the nominee helps establish a positive educational climate and develop a love of learning among students.

Those selected as MVEs will have the chance to go out onto the baseball field at Fenway Park to be greeted by the fans, while the people who send in winning essays will receive tickets to a game.

"Everyone who works in our schools welcomes a round of applause now and then, but this honor is really special," said MTA President Paul Toner. "The educators who are selected for this award will get a once-in-a-lifetime chance to have the crowd at Fenway Park cheer for them and their hard work, and that is something they will never forget.

"Recognition programs such as this one are great because they give the people who dedicate their lives to Massachusetts students a renewed sense of pride," Toner added.

As the MVE program enters a new season, the MTA Boston Red Sox Reading Game is also getting under way for 2011. Both are sponsored by The



Hanover Insurance Group Foundation as part of its long-running partnership with the MTA.

"Our company and our employees are proud to support the MTA Red Sox Reading Game for the fourth consecutive year," said Jennifer Luisa, assistant vice president of corporate community relations for The Hanover Insurance Group. "This program fits well with our foundation's mission — to support a wide range of needs in our home communities, with a special emphasis on the issues of education and youth."

Any student in kindergarten through eighth grade can enter the contest by pledging to read nine books over the summer — one for each position on the baseball field — and listing them on an entry form that is then signed by a parent or guardian and sent to the MTA by July 15. After all of the forms are in, a drawing is held, and 100 students — along with

Any student in kindergarten through eighth grade can enter the contest by pledging to read nine books over the summer — one for each position on the baseball field — and listing them on an entry form that is then signed by a parent or guardian and sent to the MTA by July 15.

their teachers — win tickets to Fenway Park for a Sox game in September.

Five grand prize winners, like the MVE award recipients, have the chance to step out onto the field for special recognition.

Once again this year, Red Sox catcher Jason Varitek has agreed to serve as the spokesman for the contest. He is also appearing on reading game posters and entry forms, which will arrive by the thousands at schools across the Commonwealth in the weeks ahead.

"You've got to read to learn," Varitek remarked. "It really is the key to success for every child."

To enter the MTA Red Sox Reading Game, please send in one of the forms that are being mailed to kindergarten-through-eighth-grade schools in May or download an entry form from the MTA's Reading Matters website, www.readingmatters.org. Contest entries must be postmarked by July 15. To nominate someone to be an MTA Red Sox Most Valuable Educator, send an essay of 400 words or less to: Most Valuable Educator, c/o Red Sox Community Relations, 4 Yawkey Way, Boston MA 02215. Be sure to include your contact information and contact information for the educator you are nominating. You can also find information and nomination forms on www.readingmatters.org. MVE nominations must be postmarked by July 31.

The MTA Advantage is a publication of MTA Benefits, a subsidiary of the Massachusetts Teachers Association

MTAB partners with Life Line Screening

MTA Benefits is pleased to announce a new potentially life-saving benefit for members. MTAB and Life Line Screening, the nation's leading provider of preventive health screenings, have partnered to offer these health services at a discounted rate to MTA members and their families. We feel strongly about the importance of prevention in health care, and this collaboration with Life Line Screening is a tangible example of our commitment to the wellness of our members and their families.

Costing only \$135, these four screenings could help save your life:

1. **Stroke/Carotid Artery Screening** – This ultrasound evaluation of the carotid arteries screens for buildup of fatty plaque, the leading cause of strokes.
2. **Heart Rhythm Screening (Atrial Fibrillation)** – This quick and easy test uses

EKG electrodes placed on the arms and legs to identify the presence or absence of an irregular heartbeat. Atrial fibrillation is the most common type of heart arrhythmia and can cause a clot that travels to the brain, where it results in a stroke.

3. **Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening** – This ultrasound screening detects the presence of an aneurysm in the abdominal aorta that could lead to a ruptured aortic artery. A rupture can cause blood loss, shock and death.
4. **Peripheral Arterial Disease Screening** – This screening evaluates for peripheral arterial disease (plaque buildup) in the lower extremities. It is four to five times more likely you will die from heart disease if you have peripheral arterial disease.

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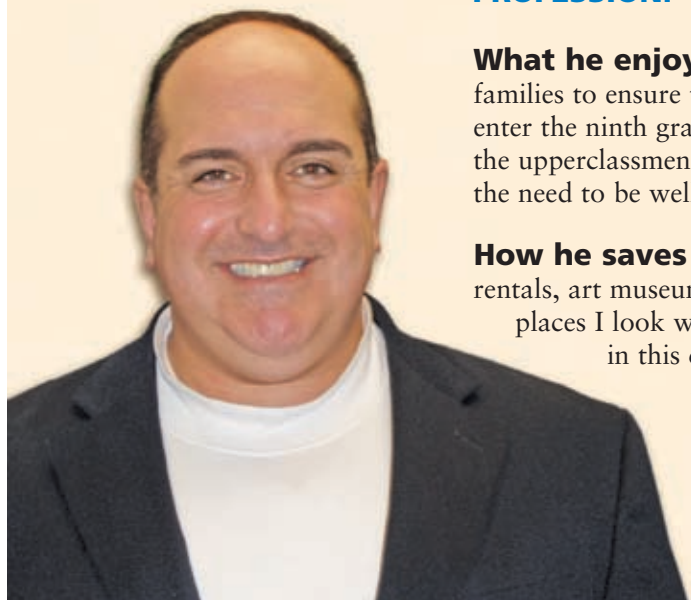


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ERIK CHAMPY ~ another fan of MTA Benefits

ASSOCIATION: Triton Regional Teachers Association

PROFESSION: Guidance Counselor at Triton Regional High School in Byfield



What he enjoys about his work: “I find it very rewarding to work with students, teachers and families to ensure they all have the very best experience possible with Triton Regional. When students enter the ninth grade, my goal is to see that they quickly acclimate to the high school environment. For the upperclassmen, my emphasis is on college preparedness and lifelong learning. With all students, I stress the need to be well-adjusted, balanced citizens – qualities essential for success both in school and life.”

How he saves with MTA Benefits: “I am an avid user of the Discount Directory to save on car rentals, art museums, bookstores and many other things. The MTA Vacation Center is one of the first places I look when planning my travel, which is usually five or six weeks each summer to destinations in this country and abroad. I find the best rates through the Vacation Center – as well as significant MTA discounts.”

Why members should look into MTAB programs:

“MTA Benefits is like the icing on the cake for MTA members. MTAB offers so many programs that enhance our lives and save us money – from auto insurance to mortgages – plus discounts at more than 1,000 places listed in the Discount Directory.”

Hot new listings and old favorites

FIND THEM ALL IN THE ONLINE MTA DISCOUNT DIRECTORY

Want to save time and money – and see the latest updates to the MTA Discount Directory? Then go to www.mtabenefits.com and click on Discount Directory under 1000+ Discounts.

Here are just a few examples of new listings and longtime favorites you'll find online:

New listing!

Marini Farm, Ipswich

For three generations, the Marini family has grown some of the best and most flavorful fruits and vegetables available on the North Shore. The **Marini Farm greenhouses** open in May of each year with an abundance of color and variety, including annuals, herbs, vegetables, perennials and hanging plants. The **farm stand** officially opens in June with a full selection of vegetables, fruits, local bakery items and other specialty foods. June is also **U-Pick Strawberries** month, during which a festival is held and 12 acres of strawberries are yours for the picking. In the fall, you can explore "trails" cut through thousands of living cornstalks in the eight-acre life-size **Corn Maze**. MTA members and up to six guests get a 10 percent discount on general admission to the Corn Maze. Other special events include **Dinner on the Farm** and **Christmas on the Hill**. For more information, visit www.marinifarm.com.



A favorite outing! Pawtucket Red Sox MTA Nights

Visit **McCoy Stadium in Pawtucket, R.I.**, this summer and enjoy the most affordable family entertainment that the area has to offer. And best of all, MTA members enjoy a special discount on select PawSox MTA Nights! The team features many top prospects in the Red Sox organization, such as outfielders Ryan Kalish and Josh Reddick, pitcher Felix Dubront and first baseman Lars Andersen – all of whom showed their talents at Fenway Park last season! In the past five years, PawSox fans have been treated to Clay Buchholz, Dustin Pedroia, Jacoby Ellsbury and others as they made their journey to the big leagues. Be sure to take advantage of your MTA membership and come on out to McCoy Stadium to cheer on the PawSox and the Red Sox stars of tomorrow! Visit www.mtabenefits.com for more information on special MTA member games.

New listing!

More than Wheels, Boston

Join More than Wheels – at an MTA discount – and let experts find and negotiate a reliable, fuel-efficient car with a low sticker price and low interest rate. You end up with an affordable car and an extended bumper-to-bumper warranty. More than Wheels also offers financial planning and guidance that help people with poor credit or money concerns buy a good car at a price they can afford. MTA members get a 25 percent discount on the \$68 More than Wheels enrollment fee. For more information, visit www.morethanwheels.org.



ZIPPING THROUGH THE TREETOPS

Imagine an adventure where you soar through treetops, cross sky bridges, rappel descents and hike across wooded terrain in the Deerfield River Valley. Along the way, you enjoy views of the valley and the northern Berkshires and discover interesting facts about the trees, landscape and history of the area. You'll experience it all with **Deerfield Valley Canopy Tours**. Canopy tours are one of today's hot new recreational thrills. You wear a helmet and a harness that your guide clips to a zip line and then you're off! As you pick up speed, the forest canopy opens up before you and you feel the exhilaration of the wind whipping by your face. The first zip is slow and short to give you a chance to get acclimated to flying through the trees. The second zip leads to a spectacular view of the Deerfield River Valley and the northern Berkshires. As you travel down the course, the zips get longer and faster.

Before you start your canopy tour, you are given instructions and go through a practice session. Deerfield Valley Canopy Tours are open to anyone age 10 and older; certain restrictions apply. Tours last about three hours and are available from April through October. MTA members and immediate family members get a \$5 discount on weekend tours. On weekday tours in May, June, September and October, the discount is \$10. For information, visit www.deerfieldzipline.com.



Photo courtesy of photographer Chuck Choi and the Museum of Fine Arts.

Breathtaking new wing at the MFA



Featuring 53 galleries, the new Art of the Americas wing at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston displays one of the country's largest collections of works from North, Central and South America. Architecturally stunning, the five-level wing features a central glass building flanked to the north and south by pavilions made of glass and granite. In addition to nine period rooms and four Behind the Scenes galleries, the new wing includes an auditorium, two studio arts classrooms and a seminar room. Adjoining the wing is the new **Shapiro Family Courtyard**, one of the most distinctive architectural spaces in Boston, which serves as a gathering place for MFA visitors and a venue for special events.

Focusing on the last three millennia up to the late 20th century, the collection embraces all media – paintings, sculpture, furniture, decorative arts, works on paper, musical instruments, textiles and costumes. In addition, space has been created for monumental paintings, most appearing for the first time with the American collection.

You can receive a \$2 discount on general admission by presenting your MTA card at any ticket desk. For more information, visit www.mfa.org.

A ride through history



Concord Bike Tours feature excursions through famous historic and literary periods. The Revolutionary War Tour takes you back to the beginning of the war, to the North Bridge, Minute Man National Park, Hartwell Tavern and historic Concord Center. On the Concord Authors Tour, you experience the literary renaissance of 18th-century authors Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau and Nathaniel Hawthorne, as well as the Alcott family, viewing their homes and memorials and learning how their surroundings inspired their great works. You can also customize tours.

Most tours are about two and a half hours and include a bike and helmet rental, snack or lunch and drink. MTA members get a 10 percent discount on the total booking price for themselves and one guest. For more information, visit www.concordbiketours.com.

Exotic flowers and fruits all year long

Dating back to 1804, the **Lyman Estate Greenhouses** in Waltham are among the oldest surviving ones in the United States. A visit during any season is a treat. Rare orchids bloom throughout the year. During the summer, Black Hamburg and Green Muscat grapevines are covered with enormous clusters of fruit. Autumn in the greenhouses arrives with the sweet scent of citrus plants in bloom. In winter, the magnificent century-old camellia collection is a profusion of beauty.

The sales greenhouse specializes in orchids, exotic house plants, citrus fruits, camellias and herbs, with five large specialty plant sales held during the year. Expert horticultural staff members offer advice and assistance with plant selection and culture. Admission to the greenhouses is free; donations are accepted. For more information, visit www.historicnewengland.org.



MTAB partners with Life Line Screening

**Life Line Screening
Seen on Dr. Oz**

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For an additional \$10, you may choose to add the following screening:

5. **Osteoporosis Risk Assessment** – This ultrasound measurement of the heel bone determines abnormal bone mass density. Osteoporosis is painless and silent in its early stages. Bone mineral density is a powerful predictor of skeletal strength and fracture risk, especially when considered along with other factors such as gender, age and family history.

These tests are easy because they take about an hour and you can be screened with painless, non-invasive ultrasound technology for stroke, aneurysms and heart disease. Life Line Screening health care professionals use the latest technology to provide accurate, hospital-quality preventive screenings. Board-certified physicians carefully review results, which are then given to you and your doctor, providing you with the information you need to improve your health.



Life Line Screening was recently featured on The Dr. Oz Show, demonstrating how preventive health screenings can help save lives.



A client reads her Life Line Screening results.

A technician performs a stroke/carotid artery screening.

As a member of the MTA, you have the opportunity to receive these convenient and easy to obtain health services at a discounted rate in your local area. Because Life Line Screening is a community health screening company, you can choose to be screened in area churches, health clubs and other community spaces when it fits your schedule.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call **888.753.1137** toll-free. To search for a screening site near you and to make an appointment online, visit www.LifeLineScreening.com/MTA.

MAY COULD BE YOUR LUCKY MONTH You might win a \$100 Best Buy gift card!

Three \$100 Best Buy gift cards will be given away in the MTA **May** online **giveaway**. If you're a winner, you'll have the thrill of shopping for \$100 worth of electronics, computers, appliances and more – at no cost to you!



Mark your calendar to sign up for the giveaway between **May 9** and **May 20**.

Go to www.mtabenefits.com, click on "Members Only," then "MTAB Giveaways" and follow the easy instructions. Check the website May 27 to see if you're a winner.



Darcie Lenhart (center) of the Andover Education Association was a recent giveaway winner of a \$300 gift card for Wrentham Village Premium Outlets.

Mortgages made easier

Matt Russo, a doctor of audiology, and his wife, Nelly, a speech and language pathologist and member of the Stoneham Teachers Association, talked about their experiences with Greenpark Mortgage, partner in the MTA Home Mortgage Program:

"We've used Greenpark Mortgage multiple times and were always happy with the results. Greenpark representatives really worked closely with us and were very responsive to our questions. Their efforts helped the process move quickly and smoothly, which is what you need when buying, selling and refinancing. We did all three with their help and that of their legal associate. We've recommended Greenpark to several friends, relatives and other MTA members."



All program and pricing information was current at the time of publication (April 2011) and is subject to change without notice. To find out what may have changed, please call MTA Benefits at 800.336.0990.