



SPEAK OUT

ISSUE 1

SEPTEMBER 2005

From the President:

By Barbara Shapiro

Get Involved, Stay Involved



Although we are only two weeks into the new school year, it seems as though summer is in the distant past and we are once again looking ahead to a very busy and challenging year. Thanks to all you for the very smooth opening in spite of a number of taxing situations. Your PDTA reps are working very hard to work with you on class size and workload issues, health and safety concerns, and other problems that staff faced as they returned to work. If you have a concern, problem, or question regarding your schedule or other work related situation, please contact your Building Rep or call me directly.

Your PDTA leadership team has set a number of goals for this school year, in addition to providing the highest level of service to each and every

member, and participating with other locals throughout the state on matters of importance to educators. We will be surveying all of you in an effort to determine what you want from PDTA and how we can better serve you. Our PDTA website is up and running, but still requires a great deal of work. We will be soliciting your input and assistance in completely developing www.pdta.org.

We are a powerful force in Pittsford because of the efforts of every member, every day.


The most important goal we have set for this year is to increase participation in PDTA by you, the membership, and to develop new leaders for the future. To me, increased participation means giving an hour or two in the course of the whole school year to a PDTA sponsored activity in an area of interest to you. That could mean making phone calls at school

budget time or walking with PDTA members in the Making Strides for Breast Cancer Walk or helping out with our website or attending the Benefits Fair. You get the idea. You don't have to do much just a little bit of your time to make certain that our organization continues to be strong and successful.

To our first-year members, I say welcome and get involved. To our more experienced members, the message is similar. Stay involved. We are a powerful force in Pittsford because of the efforts of every member, every day.

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Contact your building Rep or call the PDTA office to register with NYSUT for the walk



hope starts here

**Making Strides
Against Breast Cancer**

Celebrate our 10th Anniversary!

The Walk
Sunday, October 16, 2005
 Frontier Field - VIP Parking Lot
 Rochester, NY

1180 WHAM 13 WHAM Mix 100.5

**MAKING STRIDES
Against Breast Cancer**

American Cancer Society

DPT Update

By Len Chaput

The District Planning Team (DPT) met on August 9. The BOE and central office team joined us as we reflected on district value and vision statements and reviewed the status of our strategic initiatives. As a reminder, there were seven strategic initiatives brought forth last year. These initiatives fell under two umbrellas; “organization and structure” and “curriculum and instruction.” We listened to the status of both umbrella initiatives and then discussed what should be operational and what should continue as a stra-

tegic initiative. There will be more forthcoming with what is operational and what continues to need work as we meet again throughout the year.

As a collective whole, the group discussed what strategic initiatives we should bring forth for the current school year. Several ideas were brainstormed, but in the end the consensus seemed to be that we had enough on our plate in finishing up last year’s initiatives and to not bring anymore into the fold.



Photo left: NYSUT Leadership Conference August 2005. (Back to Front) Dan Sanfratello, Maryanne Maland, Barbara Shapiro, Karen Shield, Jeremy Duntley, Geri Drooz, and Andi Johnson-Credit

Know Your Contract:

By Brenda Gibson

Workload and Class Size Maximums



Welcome back to another school year. The beginning of a new year brings for each of us new class sizes and/or schedules. It is important to be familiar with our contract language and practices regarding workload and class size maximums. We do have specific maximums for both. Please take the time to reference **Section 6-1 of the contract on pages 18 and 19**. If you feel that your workload or class size is in excess, please contact me at extension **3328**.

Support Local Charities Purchase a 2006 Entertainment Book

PDTA is again supporting local charities by selling 2006 Entertainment Books. Last year we made donations to Pittsford Volunteer Ambulance, Pittsford Volunteer Fire Department and the Pittsford Food Cupboard, and contributed to the PDTA Student Benefit Fund.

A copy of the new 2005 book, which has savings for dining, shopping, services and family fun, is in each building. To order, fill out the order form and send it with \$25.00 per book (checks payable to the PDTA) to the PDTA Office at 1303 Marsh Road, or you can contact the following PDTA Public Relations Committee Member in your building.

Sari Middlebrook, AC
Leila Matthews, MC
Becky Nunn, TR
Ken Hubregsen, PMS West

Sharon Maragus, JR
Marcia Hunsinger, PR
Dana Brown, PMS East
Jerry Eckert, MHS
Lynn Drake, SHS

2006 Entertainment Book Order Form

Please send payment with this form to the PDTA Office, Marsh Road.

Name: _____

School: _____

of Books: _____ @\$25 ea.

Amount enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to PDTA

About Our Members

Our best wishes go to newlyweds: Jennifer Kunselman Montgomery (MC), Jen Carey (JR), Jessica D'Arienzo Buckpitt (MHS), and Shelly Fiorito Reed (SHS).

We congratulate the following new parents: Kelly Jordan (JR), Yolanda Thompson (JR), Johanna Mahan (TR), Mark Hurley (PMS-West) and Jessica Sabbour (PMS-East).

We give our sincere condolences to Cindy Merrifield (JR) and Pam Danger (SHS) on the passing of their mothers.

Congratulations to Carmine Peluso who begins as assistant principal of Pittsford Middle School on September 26.

We send our best wishes to Stephanie Tranquil (MHS) as she awaits the arrival of her baby.

For Your Benefit

District-Wide Benefits Fair

Thursday,

September 29

2:30-5:30 p.m.

Burgundy Basin Inn

1361 Marsh Road

Health and Safety

By Linda Khalil

I would like to start the 2005 school year out by thanking Tom Indiano for the guidance he has provided for the last two years as Health and Safety Chair. His knowledge and expertise in emergency preparedness and other safety-related issues assisted many PDTA members through the trials of renovation and construction. Even though he has left the PDTA Health and Safety District Chairperson position, he will continue to provide the committee with valuable advice as Health and Safety Representative for Sutherland High School. If anyone has been to Sutherland recently, you will know that Tom has his work cut out for him.

In any organization that relies on volunteers to support and promote its goals,

one challenge is to keep up with changing faces as each new-year begins. I have asked each of the building PDTA Health and Safety Representatives listed below, to make sure that you know who they are. Their role is to act as liaisons for health and safety issues in your building. They will share monthly updates received from the District Health and Safety Team. But more importantly, they will have the opportunity to network and problem solve ongoing health and safety issues with other building representatives. Our goal will be to find the best practices among each of the buildings and share those ideas so that all may benefit. Please remember that each building has **Health and Safety Concern Forms**

to document issues related to staff, student, or building safety. These forms are available in your school's main office.

Your Health and Safety Committee:

Linda Khalil, Chair, MC

Kathleen Roser, AC

Cindy Chambers, JR

Gail Ballard, PR

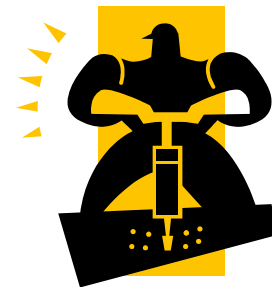
Jane Miroff, TR

Elise Connor, PMS East

Annie Hilton, PMS West

Debbie Galloway, MHS

Tom Indiano, SHS



SRP Newslink

By Karen Sheild

Welcome back all of my fellow SRPs to another exciting school year (Notice I said exciting). This leads me to the message that I want to convey for my opening column: having a positive attitude.

I know we have all heard about how important it is to approach life with a positive attitude. I would like to

take that one step further and say how important it is for SRPs to have a positive attitude in their jobs and responsibilities.

Too often I have heard SRPs say "I am just a para," or "What I think or do doesn't matter." That is far from the truth. If we don't think we matter, then we won't. If we don't think positively and command respect from our

colleagues, then we won't get it.

If our attitude says we are worthwhile, then that will shine through to others. If your co-workers see that you have a positive attitude, they will be more inclined to want to work with you to accomplish the important work we have to do in educating our children.

Continued on next page

SRP Newslink Cont...

In my over 20 years in Pittsford, we have accomplished much to improve working conditions for SRPs. We don't always get what we want or at the speed we want it, but that is reflective of life in general.

What is important is to feel good about ourselves and our contributions and continue to work successfully towards our goals with a positive attitude. Only **we** are in charge of our attitudes.

Student Benefit Fund

The "Student Benefit Fund" is once again up and running. If you have a student who is in financial need for supplies, field trips, etc., please fill out the appropriate forms available in your school's main office and return it to the PDTA office. The maximum allocation is \$50.00 per student.

SRPs SAVE THE DATE!!**SRP General Meeting****Monday, October 24****at 3:45 p.m.****First Floor Lecture Room****Mendon High School**

Shelly Clements (NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist) and Barbara Shapiro

New Member**By Caren Glassman**

Our New Member Orientation event was held at Locust Hill Country Club in August. It included an ice breaker activity, an information session about the union, a question and answer period and a luncheon. The orientation was a wonderful opportunity for all new members to meet many of the PDTA Executive Committee members as well as Administration. Our new staff members were given a Who's Who in PDTA booklet. Pictures of the Executive Committee members and the Building Representatives are in this booklet as a reference for our new members. We hope this will prove to be very useful. As conferences begin please keep these helpful hints in mind.

Tips for Parent-Teacher Conferences

- Greet parents warmly at the door.
- Begin the conference by sharing positive comments about their child. Summarize the student's strengths before raising any areas of concern.
- Rehearse what you want to say. Have notes (a checklist) prepared for key areas you want to cover.
- Use materials from each student's work folder to demonstrate progress or show parents concretely what a student needs to do to improve.
- Use positive, nonverbal behavior. Listen reflectively.
- Engage parents in planning best ways to help their child.
- Give parents something to take home with them so they can review materials more completely or refer back to after the conference.
- End positively. Set goals and review how parents can help. Let them know how much their support is needed and appreciated.

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