



# SPEAK OUT

ISSUE 1

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2009

## From the President: Barbara Shapiro



“When great things happen in schools, miracles even, they happen incrementally in places where people work constantly and over the long term to build on their advances and correct their mistakes.” Al Shanker’s words have resonated with me over the years and as we embark upon the 2009-10 school year, they will be my mantra for PDTA as well. **As an organization, we must continually move forward.** We energize and enrich ourselves, create momentum, when we are able to focus on growth, improvement, experimentation, and discovery. When we focus our attention on staying the same, on maintaining a fixed position, we find ourselves stagnant, outdated and unmarketable. At a training workshop, the Executive Committee identified five goals for this year.

*Refine and Improve our Internal Communications*

Even though PDTA may be doing a great job, many members will not

*Engage newer members more effectively*

*Engage in Coalition Building*

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## Our Union’s Agenda

know about the union’s accomplishments unless we make a concentrated effort to promote PDTA and communicate with you, the membership. In order to effectively communicate, we must be visible and accessible.



Estimated to be almost as large as the baby boomer generation, the Internet generation – more commonly known as “millennials” – started in 1982. It is important that our outreach be responsive to the recent college graduate as well as the individual who may be joining our ranks later in their career.

*Develop future leaders for the PDTA.*

It is critical for the health and strength of our organization that we develop new leaders for the PDTA. Our changing demographics make it

essential that we do everything we can to prepare future leaders.

### Expand our Issue Resolution Skills

PDTA leaders are committed to improving their problem resolution skills and techniques. Whether we are dealing with an improper practice, a grievance, a gripe or a problem between two members, we believe it is part of our role to work towards real solutions to problems.

Every year, no matter what other goals we set, it is critical that we provide excellent support and service to individual members. Whatever problems or challenges you may face, PDTA should be there to assist you. I will keep these goals in front of me and the leadership of PDTA throughout the year. In June, we can assess together how successful we have been.

**For Your Benefit**  
 District-Wide Benefits Fair  
 And Flu Shot Clinic

October 8, 2009  
 2:30 pm-5:30 pm  
 Burgundy Basin Inn  
 1361 Marsh Road

Informative Presenters  
 Refreshments \* Raffles

# Know Your Contract: Susan Gager

## Details and Clarifications for the Start of the New School Year



As we begin a new school year, and receive our first paychecks, there are some details and clarifications to make note of:

- ◆ The sick leave bank is a service administered by PDTA and is intended for members who have exhausted their prolonged illness days and have 10 or less personal illness days. To be a member of the sick leave bank you must make a one-time contribution of 4 personal/ illness days. (For our new staff members, the days will be taken one per year for four years). Previous to last year, the required contribution for membership was 3 days. PDTA noticed that the reserve of days was very low, and our members were asked to contribute an additional day, with the option of giving up to 3 additional days, if desired. Your pay stub will state "Sick Bank Contribution-3.0" if you are a member, **even if you gave the additional day or more.** The ad-

ditional day(s) were deducted from your sick days last year, and were noted in the Adjustments column (-1.0). **Open enrollment to join the sick leave bank occurs in October.** Look for information at a booth at the Benefits Fair.



- ◆ Each year employees are given fifteen personal/illness days. Any unused days are carried over into the next year, and can accumulate to a total of two hundred. Twenty-five prolonged illness days are granted after the third, eighth, thirteenth, and eighteenth years of service, for a total of 100.

**The correct accounting of prolonged illness days has not yet been updated on our pay stubs.**

- ◆ If you are an Advisor for an extra curricular club or activity, don't worry if you haven't received your stipend agreement yet. On September 30<sup>th</sup> the Extra Curricular Committee will review the stipends for extra curricular clubs and activities. Advisors will receive contracts for their extra duties subsequent to that meeting.
- ◆ If you opted for payroll deduction for your PDTA dues, those deductions will not begin until November. Dues will then be taken out of 15 pay periods.
- ◆ The \$980 Health Fund for the 2009-2010 school year will be available beginning October 1<sup>st</sup>. If you carried funds over from last year, your balance is available to you now.

## About Our Members



Congratulations to Kim Marshall (PR) and Kris Fernandez (MC) on the births of their sons, and to Keith Pittinaro (TR) on the birth of his daughter, to Andy Radano and Ben Winter (SHS) on the births of their new babies and to

Lynn Lillie and Judy Sloan (MC) who are both new grandmothers.



We extend our condolences to Elise Connor (BRMS) on the death of her father-in-law, Steve Carrol (JR) on his wife's death, Barb Shapiro (SHS) and Marilyn Clarke (JR) on the deaths of their mothers, Kristen Malone (JR)

on the death of her step-dad, Sandy Mead-Allen (MHS) on the death of her father, and to the family of Marcia Molinich (SHS) who passed away.



We send best wishes to Angela (Lee) Carpenter (TR), Heidi (Rothfuss) Rasmussen (MHS) on their marriages. Congratulations to Brandon Marks (MHS) and Brett Lasser (SHS)

on their engagements.

## Health and Safety: Linda Khalil



The PDTA Health and Safety Committee welcomes you back to an exciting and healthy school year.

### Health and Safety Committee:

Linda Khalil, Chair, MC; Kathleen Roser, AC; Esther Marino, JR; Spencer Jones\*, PR; Sarah Shepard\*, TR; Usha Ramanath\* BRMS; Kathy Harriff, CRMS; Todd Benz\*, Larry Wirth\*, MHS; Ben Winter, Irene Steele\*, Jenifer Lonardo\*, SHS (\*new)

Their role is to act as liaisons for health and safety issues in your building. We will also be looking at wellness and positive health behaviors. They will share monthly updates, but more importantly, they will have the opportunity to network and problem solve ongoing issues. Our goal will be to find the best practices and share those ideas so that all may benefit.

Please take the time to look at the Employee Center on the PCSD website for information on:

✦ **Wellness** for your students, with resources on: Alternative/Non-food Rewards, Fundraising Ideas and Healthy School Snacks and Ideas for Parties.

✦ **Environmental Action.** These include: The Environmental Leadership Award, Energy Performance Contract, Recycling Efforts and Staff and Student Initiatives, which are taking place at various schools.

✦ **Health and Safety** including: H1N1 Flu, Emergency Preparedness, Guidelines for Animals, Health and Safety Concern Form, Student Code of Conduct on School Grounds, Wellness Policy and Brochure.

✦ **Global Compliance** Log on and Instruction Site-**updated** and ready for your viewing pleasure.

### October brings many health promotion events including:

Fire Prevention Week 10/4-10/10  
[www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)

PDTA Benefits Fair 10/8 (Flu shot!)  
[www.pdta.org](http://www.pdta.org)

Red Ribbon Week 10/26-10/30  
<http://cmnfp.pictco.org>

National School Lunch Week 10/12-10/16  
<http://www.schoolnutrition.org>

Breast Cancer Awareness Month  
[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

### What's New With The Flu

Up to date information regarding the Flu is on the District Website. CDC guidelines include:

- ◆ Stay home when ill and remain home for 24 hours after fever and/or symptoms have abated.
- ◆ Wash hands or use an Alcohol Based Sanitizer.
- ◆ Consult with your physician regarding vaccines.

Our committee will continue to monitor H1N1 activity and plan appropriate response.

### Fire Safety Facts:

Each year an average of 5,500 structure fires occur in schools. These fires are responsible for approximately \$50.1 million in fire loss and associated injury. To maximize safety for yourself and students follow fire safety codes in your classroom:

✦ **Doors** should be kept closed unless held open by an approved device. They cannot be "propped" open. Classroom doors cannot have anything stuck to, hanging from or above them.

✦ **Rescue windows** must be kept **completely** clear. Window shades are permitted. The windows should have a sign which says: RESCUE WINDOW on the window and/or on any shades which would cover it.

✦ **Curtains/decorative materials hanging from walls** and ceilings must be fire resistant.

✦ **Artwork and decorations** should not be hung from light fixtures in classrooms and limited to no more than 20% of the corridor wall area. Hanging or stored items must be 24" from the ceiling.

Sources: NFPA and NFIRS

## SRP Newslink: Karen Shield



I would like to welcome all of you to the start of the new 2009-2010 school year, including our new colleagues who will be joining us for the first time. I hope all of you are off to a good start and I extend my best wishes for a successful year ahead. The SRP group is comprised of para-professionals, tutors, school nurses, health office assistants and auxiliary staff members.

I will be your SRP representative again this year on the Pittsford District Teachers Association Executive Committee and Representative Assembly. The Assistant SRP representatives, also representing you on the PDTA Representative Assembly, will be Maryanne Maland (JR), Gail Mulkeen (MHS/SHS), Mary Hamblin (CRMS), Constance Bader (BRMS), Sherry Tontarski (MCE), Tracy Stubbs (AC) and Suzanne Kaier-Tuttle (MCE). *(Continued on Page 5)*

+ If we could lower your gas prices we would.

Here are some ways we've lowered the cost of your commute.



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- Costs up to 50 percent less than AAA Plus.
- AFT members receive two months free the first year.

buy where it counts!  
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*A Union of Professionals*

**AFT +**

Member Benefits

AFT has an expense reimbursement and/or endorsement arrangement for marketing this program. For more information, please contact AFT Financial Services at 800/238-1133, ext. 4493; send an e-mail to [disclosureinfo@aft.org](mailto:disclosureinfo@aft.org); or visit [www.aftplus.org/disclosure](http://www.aftplus.org/disclosure).

**Open Enrollment for Sick Leave Bank Important Changes**

The Sick Leave Bank is only available to members who have enrolled and contributed sick days. To qualify for using Sick Leave Bank days a member must be out for more than 15 consecutive days and have exhausted all but 10 of their own personal and prolonged illness sick time. If you are not a member please consider joining. Open enrollment is during the month of October.

**Public Relations: Jill Drake**

**Entertainment Books** are NOW ON SALE!!!. They are \$25.00 each, and make GREAT holiday presents! Sample books are available for viewing in every building. They will also be available to purchase at our upcoming Benefits Fair October 8th. Look for us there!

**2009 Entertainment Book Order Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Books x \$25.00 each

Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

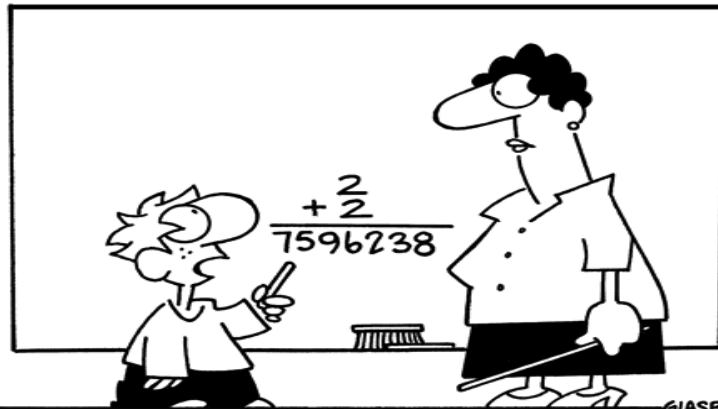
*Send this form with a check payable to PDTA to the PDTA Office, Lomb Building*

**Pittsford Food Cupboard** monthly collections are underway. Let's fill those shelves! Jefferson Road will be collecting in the month of October. If you have any questions see your Public Relations Building Rep.

**Making Strides Breast Cancer Walk - October 4,**

Please remember to register at the NYSUT table so we get credit for all walkers. Over \$3 billion has been raised so far and 100% goes to research.

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**"In an increasingly complex world, sometimes old questions require new answers."**

**SRP Newslink**

*(Continued from Page 3)*

Our PDTA negotiators are Gail Mulkeen and Sherry Tontarski.

In addition to your SRP leaders, the following people are your PDTA representatives in your respective buildings. I encourage you to feel free to direct questions or concerns to them as well as to your SRP leaders. They are:

Dennise Zobel, AC; Becky Girouard, JR; Sue Ann McGrath, MC; Marcia Brown, PR; Bernadette Canfield, TR; Jolene DiBrango, BRMS; Pam Metzler, CRMS; Steve Smith, MHS; Dwayne Cerbone, SHS

Our SRP Advisor Program will continue again this year. This program was instituted to assist new SRPS in orientation to the district and their buildings. New SRP Orientation took place on Wednesday, September 16. Each new SRP has been assigned to an advisor in their building. The advisors for this year are as follows:

Annie McCarthy, AC; Maryanne Maland, JR; Chris Burton, MC; Marcia Brown, PR; Mari Wolk, TR; Mary Hamblin, CRMS; Beth Murray, BRMS; Maggie Ashley, MHS; Karen Shield, SHS.

I encourage all of you to become familiar with your PDTA contracts. Often questions that arise can be

answered simply by referring to your contract. Be sure to visit the PDTA web site at [www.PDTA.org](http://www.PDTA.org) as well. Our PDTA newsletter, "SPEAKOUT", is another important source of union information. Be sure to read our regular SRP News-Link column. I will also communicate through e-mail memos during the year.

According to the PDTA Constitution our SRP unit will be holding two general meetings during the year. The first one will be held on Wednesday, October 21 at 3:45 p.m. at Sutherland HS in the Large Group Instruction Room (LGI) on the second floor. The second one will be held on Thursday, May 6, at 3:45 p.m. at Sutherland HS in the LGI. Other meetings may be held throughout the year if the need arises. These meetings are valuable informational sessions, which I encourage you to attend. Mark your calendars now.

Also, mark your calendars for SRP Recognition Day on November 19, 2009. Our state legislators have instituted the third Tuesday in November as a permanent SRP Recognition Day.

If you have any questions or concerns arising during the year, please contact me (267-1117), any of the other assistant SRP reps or your building rep. We are all happy to help. Have a great year!

**Student Benefit Fund**

If you have a student who is in financial need for supplies, field trips, etc., please fill out the Student Benefit Fund forms available from your school's main office, counseling office, or Building Representative and return it to the PDTA Office. The form is also available at [www.pdta.org](http://www.pdta.org). The maximum allocation is \$50 per student.

**Professional Standards Review Board**

The terms of Suzanne Johnston and Lina Maine ended last June. PDTA is asking you to nominate an individual who exemplifies professionalism to fill these openings. Current members can be nominated again. Nominating a colleague is one of the few ways that we can bring recognition to the outstanding people with whom we work.

**We must have our most qualified and respected colleagues on this very important board.** The PDTA Executive Committee will use your nominations in making its selection. They will make every effort to balance membership in terms of level, experience and gender.

Please email your nomination to [barbara\\_shapiro@pittsford.monroe.edu](mailto:barbara_shapiro@pittsford.monroe.edu) by October 9, 2009, and include a brief explanation of why you believe your nominee

**Don't Forget!**

**October 8, 2009**

**Mingle with friends**

**and**

**Get your Flu Shot!**

