

The Springfield Teacher

The UNITY newsletter of the Springfield Education Association 1000 Wilbraham Road, Springfield, MA 01109
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S.E.A. Office Hours

Monday 9:30 - 5:00

Tuesday 9:30 - 5:00

Wednesday 9:30 - 5:00

Thursday 9:30 - 5:00

Friday 9:30 - 5:00

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helping teachers teach

President's Message

One of my favorite Irish blessings goes something like this:

May the good Lord bless all who love us.

May the good Lord turn the hearts of all who hate us.

But, if He can't turn their hearts,

may He turn their ankles so we will know them by their limp.

I hope that those who care about the education of the children of this nation can see the severe limp in President Bush's gait. Imagine, after his Secretary of Education Rod Paige calls the NEA a "terrorist organization," all Mr. Bush has to say is his job is safe! Am I now considered the leader of a terrorist cell because I exercise my democratic responsibility to engage in the debate on the harmful effects some of the provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (also known as No Child Left Behind) will have on the children in districts like Springfield? In this day and age, using the term "terrorist organization" to describe the teachers of this nation is unconscionable and totally irresponsible. The underfunding of the provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is creating the circumstances that will leave behind the children who are most in need of help.

In Springfield, and in districts like ours, the schools most in need of resources are being drained of what precious few resources they have. In our district's schools, and other schools that have not met their AYP, twenty percent of the Chapter I funds must be set aside and then diverted to either the transportation of students to other schools or to private-for-profit vendors for tutorial services. These private-for-profit vendors do not have to hire highly qualified, licensed teachers. They face none of the accountability our schools face under the provisions of the NCLB.

Over the last four years, I had hoped that a heart blinded by corporate greed and a giant ego could have been turned but now all I see is a limping cowboy. I intend to do everything in my power to see to it that he limps into the sunset and out of our lives and the lives of the children we teach.



GRIEVANCE UPDATE

Peter M. Dupont

The committee met on February 10, 2004 to review our outstanding grievances and consider actions on potential new ones. We spent nearly two hours going through the current crop of grievances discussing what, if any, progress had been made, and what future actions would most benefit the aggrieved member or members.

Working with the committee is a real pleasure. Coming, as they do, from all grade levels and disciplines, they offer a variety of ways to look at any issue. The advice they give comes from years of experience in the Springfield schools and on the grievance committee. The committee members are: Joao Alves, Putnam; Katherine Chang and Barry Sitek, Sci Tech; Kathleen Mallett, Boland; Ann Morello, Brightwood and Paula Young, Gerena. The Association is lucky to have them at work for us.

While I'm on the subject of advice, I should mention the invaluable input I get from SEA President Tim Collins and MTA Uniserve Representative Charles Baldwin. During the life of any grievance, there are numerous decisions to be made, usually in formulating responses to the School Department. Before I send any response to Dr. Burke's office, I always run it by Tim and Charles. Again, their combined wisdom and experience help me to make much better, more effective decisions towards resolving our grievances.

As most of you are probably aware, there is a new Executive Director of Human Resources for the Springfield School Department. At the beginning of January, Cornelia G. O'Hare took over what had been David Cruise's position. This is one of those "bad news-good news" situations for the Association.

The bad news is that Ms. O'Hare will have to spend some time getting acquainted with our school system and the people who make it what it is. During this period, it is not reasonable to expect our grievances to be resolved with the speed we had become used to with Mr. Cruise. The good news is that there is once again a steady hand at the control in the personnel office (now referred to as Human Resources). With the exception of a short period when Dr. Mario Cirillo was Acting Executive Director, there has been no one with whom we could deal directly in the resolution of grievances. I am sure that, once Ms. O'Hare becomes more familiar with the people, the schools, and our Agreement, we will be able to address and resolve issues much more expeditiously than we have over the past nine months.

During the month of February, the Association filed two new grievances and resolved one grievance. They are:

New Grievances

2003-16 This grievance was filed by a teacher who was recommended by the department to be department chair for the 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 school years.

In September, the teacher was informed by the principal that Dr. Burke had not approved the recommendation and the teacher could not assume the duties of chairperson for that department.

To date, Superintendent Burke has failed to either approve the recommendation or honor the Agreement by going to the school and explaining to the department why their recommendation was denied. This evasion has caused both the teacher to be personally and professionally demeaned and has had a yearlong negative impact on the members of the department and the students they serve.

At this time, the Association has submitted a date by which we expect to have a hearing to resolve this grievance. If, by that date, we have not had that hearing, I will request the Grievance Committee approve Arbitration actions to be instituted against the School Department.

2003-17 The Association filed one new grievance regarding a high school teacher who has been assigned three separate subjects requiring daily preparation. *Article 5 Section L-7*

Grievances Resolved

2003-03 Teachers who had been re-assigned in what seemed to be retribution for Association activities. The School Department denied the grievance, saying the principals have the right of assignment within their buildings and therefore no grievance occurred. The Association responded by closing the grievance with the caveat that we would continue to monitor the situation and, should the pattern re-emerge, take what ever actions necessary.

ARE YOU REQUIRED TO TAKE THE MASSACHUSETTS TESTS FOR EDUCATOR LICENSURE? HELP HAS ARRIVED!

What kind of help? Tutors will conduct help sessions to prepare you for the Communication and Literacy Skills portion of the test. The focus of the sessions will be on reading comprehension, writing, vocabulary, and dictation.

Where? All of the tutorial sessions will be held at the Meline Kasparian Professional Development Center.

When? See the schedule for 2003-2004 below. The sessions will run from 3:30-5:00. You may come in at any time during those hours.

What is the cost? FREE!

SCHEDULE OF TUTORIAL SESSIONS 2003-2004

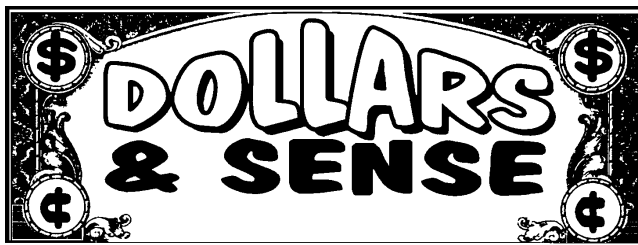
TEST: **May 15** **(Register by April 2 to avoid late fee.)**

Tutorial Sessions: May 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14

TEST: **July 24** **(Register by June 11 to avoid fee.)**

Tutorial Sessions: June 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11

Test Registration Bulletins are available at the Office of the Licensure Mentors located at the PD Center, area colleges, or can be sent to your home if you call (413) 256-2892. If you have any questions, please contact Mary Chamberlain or Linda Christofori (750-2148).



SEA/MTA/NEA - Dues for Year 2003

January – June

13 Pay Periods @ \$27.87 = \$362.31

August – December

10 Pay Periods @ \$28.14 = \$281.40

TOTAL \$643.71

When comparing dues paid from previous years, please note that dues for August – December 2003 reflect ten pay periods (because of the Wednesday, December 31, 2003 payday) not the typical nine pay periods reflected in most yearly dues.

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMITTEE

The Superintendent's Committee is a committee of five teachers appointed by the SEA President, representing a cross section of membership, who meet with the Superintendent once a month. The purpose of this committee is to discuss matters of educational policy, curriculum, and improvements of educational climate in the Springfield Public Schools.

To date, the committee has discussed the following issues with Dr Burke:

- Visibility of the Superintendent in Schools
- Fire Code
- Summer School
- School Cancellation Due to Weather Conditions
- Special Education Satisfying IEP Criteria
- Kindergarten Report Cards
- Consistency with Implementation of the Discipline Policy

Prior to meeting with the Superintendent, the committee holds a pre-meeting at the SEA office to set an agenda. The committee invites members to bring issues and concerns to the pre-meeting. Oftentimes, a member will be asked to join the committee at the regularly scheduled meeting with the Superintendent to speak on their own behalf. Please take advantage of these opportunities by contacting a committee member or by sending an e-mail addressed to the Superintendent's Committee to contact@seateachers.com. The committee's next meeting with the Superintendent is scheduled for April 6, 2004. The pre-meeting will be held March 30, 2004 at 3:45 p.m. in the SEA Office. The committee members are: Co-chairs Jose Bahamonde and Debra Forni, Sci-Tech; Diane Ascioti, Springfield High; Diane Brouillard, Dryden; Joanne Garstka, Indian Orchard; and Mary Hough, Forest Park.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Nancy S. Fitchin

The SEA would like to remind its members to recertify as early as possible. Since the last newsletter, the lead-time between recertifying on-line and receiving a license in the mail has increased from three to five business days to approximately four weeks. This delay in receipt of a license could increase as the volume of requests becomes heavier. It is imperative that a teacher's certification not lapse for several reasons. First, if you allow your license to lapse, you will need additional coursework to reactivate it (150 PDP's for a primary certificate and 30 for any others). Secondly, you must maintain currently held certificates to continue to hold your job. Finally, to be or become highly qualified under NCLB, you must have a license. (More on NCLB in future newsletters.) Please be advised that Central Office will begin to compile a list of which teachers hold licenses in early May. If you have already renewed your license, please mail a copy to Personnel at the Springfield Public School's Central Office.

Medication Education Services Inc. of the Professional Development Network will offer a workshop called "ADHD, Aspergers, Classroom Interventions, and Tourettes, Assessments and Clinical & Classroom Interventions for Children & Adolescents" in Springfield on April 13, 2004. The presenter is Emily L. Stevens, Ph.D., a psychotherapist with a specialty in neurophysiology. She is currently in private practice. To register please call (715) 836-9900 or email www.meds.pdn.com.

WHAT'S OUR UNION DOING FOR US?

Mary Chamberlain

Your dues dollars ARE working for you. On Tuesday, February 25, 2004, Nora Todd, Professional Development Specialist for the MTA, came to Springfield with Carol Gilbert, DOE Representative. They met with the Educator Licensure Mentors, Mary Chamberlain and Linda Christofori; representatives from the Professional Development Office, Kate Fenton, Margaret Kelliher, and Margaret Ashe; Human Resources representative, Diane Panico, and the Curriculum Coordinator from Central Berkshires.

The purpose of the meeting was to review the new DOE regulations for licensure and to identify problem areas or unclear sections of the regulations. Through thoughtful facilitation, Nora Todd led the conversation and guided the give-and-take discussion among the different stakeholders in the licensure process. She worked with Carol Gilbert to help explain licensure dilemmas and lead participants to suggestions that could remedy the problematic issues.

As stated in the *MTA Today*, Commissioner of Education, David Driscoll, has authorized the DOE Licensure Office to review the regulations in a consultative process with the MTA, MFT, and other parties affected by the regulations. Nora Todd is right on top of this and has our interests at heart. However, she asks that we pay attention to the MTA Web site: www.massteacher.org.

As early as April, the Board of Education will review proposed amendments and seek public comment. The MTA Web site will keep us up-to-date on this process of public comment. Please stay tuned to the MTA Web site to learn how you can be part of the review and revision process.



Meline Kasparian Scholarship

The SEA Scholarship Committee wishes to announce the availability of applications for the Meline Kasparian Scholarship Fund. To be eligible for this scholarship one must be related to an SEA member. Up to six \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded. Because of a donation from David Cruise, we are able to award an extra Scholarship this year. **The deadline for completed applications is May 1, 2004.** Please keep in mind, this year, May 1st falls on a Saturday. The SEA office hours are Monday through Friday. **Applications delivered to the SEA Office on Monday, May 3, 2004 will be considered late.**

If you would like an application, **one can be downloaded from the SEA web site at www.seateachers.com or please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope, along with your request to: Springfield Education Association, 1000 Wilbraham Road, Springfield, MA 01109, or stop by the office.**

ROMNEY PROPOSES MAJOR CHANGES TO PENSION PLAN

From: Catherine Boudreau, MTA President, Anne Wass, MTA Vice President

Since he assumed office, Governor Mitt Romney has been talking about various schemes to undo the current pension system for public employees. He has cited examples of individuals he believes have received “unfair” pensions and used these few selected cases to call on the Legislature to “reform” the system.

Romney unveiled his “reform” proposal in his version of the FY2005 State Budget (House 1), which was filed at the end of January. Should this proposal be enacted, it would completely change the current pension system—changing it from a fixed system to one subject to uncertainty, unpredictability, and political whim. It would take away public employees’ pension security and place at risk their currently guaranteed pension benefits. It adversely impacts thousands of MTA members with an initial devastating impact on higher education faculty.

If passed, the Romney proposal negatively impacts *every* public employee. It leaves public employees’ pensions subject to the vagaries of the financial markets and the political temper of the time in which the employee assumes the risk.

Magnani/McGee Proposal - The Legislature’s Public Service Committee held a hearing on February 12, 2004, to take testimony on a bill (SB 2138) filed by Sen. David Magnani (D-Framingham) and Sen. Thomas McGee (D-Lynn). This proposal is designed, as well, to address those publicized cases that the press has labeled as “pension abuses.”

MTA, other public sector unions and the state’s largest retiree organization testified in opposition to SB 2138 chiefly because it sets a precedent to further erode the traditional guaranteed employee defined benefit plan. At this time, the bill is being redrafted. MTA will provide members with information about the bill when it is redrafted.

Action Needed Now - It is likely that the pension issue will be discussed as the Legislature considers the FY2005 state budget in late April and early May. However, the pension discussion could take place as part of a separate bill. The governor has made pensions a key part of his “reform agenda” and will use it against candidates who do not support his pension “reforms” in this election cycle.

It is crucial that MTA members contact their state representatives and state senators and ask them to oppose the Romney pension plan and to lobby the House and Senate leadership to oppose it as well. It is important that legislators are contacted in March and early April, since the House Ways and Means is expected to release its budget mid-April. Debate on the House budget should begin around the end of April. The Senate is expected to debate the budget in mid to late May.

If you are unsure who your legislators are, please check MTA’s web site www.massteacher.org where there will be suggested messages, legislators’ phone numbers and email addresses.

MTA will work continue to work with members of the Public Service Committee to oppose the harmful impact of the Magnani/McGee proposal

Thank you for your help.

Current Pension Plan	Romney Plan – MTA Opposes
Defined benefit plan that is fixed and guaranteed, based on years of service, on age and on highest three consecutive years’ salary average.	A person, upon retiring, would receive the lesser of two options – either current defined benefit plan or calculation of a defined contribution arrangement proposed in Romney plan. Governor’s calculation based on what theoretical lifetime annuity would yield annually upon retirement. Calculated on 15 percent of one’s annual salary for each year worked when invested at a certain rate of return. Calculated on salary over entire career.
	Will apply to current employees, if enacted.
Pension predictable.	Built on variable investment rate of return set by Legislature and Governor. If rate lowered (a likely scenario), individual’s pension is substantially less than under current pension plan. Particularly negative impact on members who receive substantial raises through negotiations, promotions, or advanced degrees.
	Other changes include: 1)significantly increases the cost of “buying back” any creditable service. 2)repeals involuntary job lost retirement benefit. 3)significantly increases the costs of making benefit improvements—such as increased COLA and vocational education creditable service.
	Status: If considered, will occur during FY05 budget debate

POP QU?Z

by
Peter Dupuis



1. I am planning to take some courses to apply for a column raise. What steps should I take to insure the courses I choose will be accepted when I apply?

Get a copy of the **APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF PROPOSED ACTIVITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT** from the main office at your school. If there are no copies at your school, call the Human Resource Office at 787-7185 and request the form be sent to you. Be sure you stipulate this is for a salary increase. Fill out the form and submit it to Human Resources at Central Office. Wait until the form is returned to you with the courses or activities approved. If you put money into a course before you receive approval and the course is not approved, the money cannot be recovered. Generally, they will be looking for courses that improve your ability to teach/counsel or courses that are related to your area of certification. **Remember, this particular form only seeks the approval that the credits you earn will be acceptable for salary increases. There is a separate application for the actual salary increase request.**

2. I read in *Table Talk* that we would be ratifying a contract which includes both dues and an agency fee. Am I reading this incorrectly; does this mean we are paying both?

No, you are not paying both. Article 24-A of the Agreement clarifies the difference. I know the paragraph in *Table Talk* is somewhat vague, but we are required by law to include it in any notice of an upcoming Contract ratification vote.

3. I had a discussion with another staff member regarding our working conditions. Neither of us knows the exact language of the Contract. Where can I look up Contract language?

New Unit A employees are given a copy of the Agreement (Contract) when they begin working for the Springfield Public School system. If you have misplaced your Agreement, the Association Representatives in your building should have a copy. If you cannot connect with an Association Representative in your building, the Agreement can be accessed through the SEA web site in its entirety or by a specific topic. Go to www.seateachers.com and follow the procedures below.

- Click on Members' Area
 - Click on Enter SEA Members' Area
 - Enter your User Name (the initial of your first name and your entire last name as it appears on your MTA membership card with no spaces)
 - Enter your password (your MTA member number as it appears on your MTA membership card)
 - Click on Log In
- Scroll down and click on Contract, July 1, 1998 through June 30, 2001

MTA/NEA CONVENTIONS 2004

Just a Reminder

Voting for convention delegates will take place at your school on Monday, March 15, 2003 or Tuesday, March 16, 2004 during extended day.

All ballots must be returned to the SEA office by 5:30 on Tuesday, March 16, 2004.

TIPS FOR TEACHERS

The following tips for the month were taken from the MTA's published Teachers' Calendar/Planner.

Stress Management:

- Enjoy your weekends.
- Exercise and eat well.
- Do your toughest work when you are strongest
- Decide if you will arrive at work early, stay late, or take work home, but do not try to do all three.
- Don't sit on problems; resolve and move on.
- Stay connected to family and friends.
- Concentrate on the positive.

HAS YOUR ADDRESS CHANGED?

If your address, telephone number, or e-mail address has changed, please e-mail the SEA office at contact@seateachers.com or call us at 782-8300.

*The following letter was sent out to
the MTA Annual Meeting delegates.*

February 27, 2004

Dear Delegate,

As a member of the MTA Board of Directors and the President of the Springfield Education Association, I am asking for your help in seeing to it that the MTA sponsors and organizes a rally in Boston in the spring.

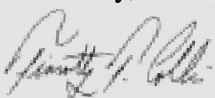
During the deliberations at the last MTA Board meeting, as to whether or not to hold a rally, those that argued for postponing the rally said there are no issues which will motivate our members to attend a rally. My response is:

- All you have to do is read the current issue of the *MTA Today* and you will find there are thousands of your brothers and sisters in locals that are struggling to stave off the dismantling of the public schools in their districts due to an inadequate State Budget.
- All you have to do is read the news and you will see the nation's Secretary of Education calling our union a "terrorist organization" because we dare to criticize the President's under-funded mandates in NCLB.
- All you have to do is follow Governor Romney's budgets over the last two years. Each year he mounts an attack on our collective bargaining rights, cuts funding, and now he wants to tamper with our pensions.

MTA members in Springfield and other seriously at-risk locals need your help now. The MTA standing together in solidarity is the only way to prevent other locals from finding themselves in the same at-risk situation.

MTA will be sending ballots to the 2003 convention delegates. This ballot will be asking you to overturn the vote you made at the May 2003 Annual Meeting to hold a rally. Please vote in favor of the rally.

Sincerely,



Timothy T. Collins
President

cml/mta delegates and rally

HEALTH & LIFE INSURANCE OPEN ENROLLMENT

The Open Enrollment for the City's Health/Life Insurance will **be May 1, through May 21, 2004**. For any member who is not enrolled in any health plan or wishes to switch plans, this is the time to do so.

Enrollment is also open to eligible employees who wish to register their domestic partner/household member. Domestic partners and household members **must** have shared their principal domicile with the city employee for the past twelve months. Benefits are available in accordance with city policy, city ordinance, and/or the respective collective bargaining contract.

**The Personnel Office at
City Hall is open from
8:15 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

**Additional sign-ups may
be done at the Meline
Kasparian Professional
Development Center**

**May 4, May 12, and
May 18, 2004 from
3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

**You may also go to the
Tapley Annex**

**70 Tapley Street, Room 7
Tuesday & Thursday
7:45 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

**Wednesday
7:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**

**YOU ONLY NEED TO
COME TO THE OPEN
ENROLLMENT IF YOU
WANT TO ENROLL OR
MAKE CHANGES TO
YOUR PLAN**

For more information call
Linda at 787-6057, Gloria at
787-6028, or Paul at 750-2777.



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Total	\$1471	\$645

Total Monthly Savings \$826



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This course is appropriate for all K-12 Educators

FIVE SATURDAYS

May 1, 8, 15, 22

June 5, 2004

For information and registration call:

(413) 562-4647

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PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

Proposed amendments to the bylaws shall be submitted in writing prior to 5:00 p.m. on March 15, 2004 to the Committee on Bylaws, SEA Office.

Proposed amendments to the bylaws, submitted by individual members, shall be reviewed, and, if necessary, combined and/or edited without substantive change by the Bylaws Committee and then submitted to the membership at the Annual Meeting.

The Bylaws Committee shall, within 30 days of taking action on a proposed amendment, issue a report of its action to the submitter of the amendment.

Prior to the March deadline, the committee will make reasonable effort to assist interested members in achieving their intent so that proposals are legally worded and are consistent with other sections of the bylaws.

The Bylaws Committee shall recommend to the Annual Meeting procedures for consideration of amendments to the bylaws.

All bylaws must be in accordance with MTA-NEA bylaws.

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

- **Special Education Funding Holding Congress Accountable** Urge your Representatives to become a co-sponsor of the **Mandatory IDEA Funding Compromise Act (H.R. 3802)** introduced by Representatives Bass (R-NH), Bradley (R-NH), Ferguson (R-NJ) and Simmons (R-CT). This important legislation would put Congress on an eight-year path to meeting its commitment to students with disabilities. Since 1975, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has opened up the doors of general education to over 6.5 million students with special needs, giving them access to general curriculum and a more diverse student body. The law requires that students with disabilities have access to a “free, appropriate public education,” sets out requirements for state and local services, and authorizes federal funding for such services. For some 30 years, Congress has **never** met its commitment to provide 40% of the funding. This hurts **everyone**. The underfunded federal share now totals some \$11 billion. Schools are forced to dip into the General Fund to make up the shortfall, affecting all students in general and special education. IDEA funding has increased over the last several years, but progress has been like spooning sand on the beach. For this budget year, Congress is funding only some half the promised 40%. And, at the rate of increase sought by the Administration, another 30 years will pass before full funding of the federal share of the nation’s special education program is accomplished. Thirty years of leaving special education funding to Congress’ discretion has brought us to where we are. Our students deserve more than an empty promise. H.R. 3802 would earmark the federal dollars needed for IDEA and guarantee the money could not be diverted to other programs. Send a message to your Representative. Tell them how IDEA shortfalls, year after year, affect our students. Urge them to co-sponsor H.R. 3802.
- Are you committed to implementing or supporting innovative HIV prevention education? NEA will honor an NEA member or affiliate with the Ryan White HIV Prevention Award at the 2004 NEA Representative Assembly in Washington, D.C. Call 202-822-7787 for a nomination form. The application deadline is May 1, 2004.

President’s Notes, on page 10

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT, con't

- For the definite word on NEA's policy goals for the 108th Congress, request *Keeping the Promise: What It Truly Takes To Leave No Child Behind*. The guidebook identifies NEA's initiatives from early childhood to higher education, state fiscal crises, teacher quality, student achievement, and the so-called "No Child Left Behind" law. E-mail rdepp-tyler@nea.org for a copy.
- NEA is encouraging members to seek nomination to the 2004 All-USA Teacher Team. Twenty teachers who have excelled in a variety of teaching situations will receive a trophy and a \$2,500 cash award. The sponsor, *USA Today*, is now accepting nominations. For more information, go to www.nea.org/membrs/allusanom04.html.
- Do you work in a quality school? Find out how your school measures up to the KEYS principles by ordering *KEYS to Excellence for Your Schools: KEYS 2.0 Action Guide* at 202-822-7350. The guide is based on research that identifies quality indicators ranging from communication to curriculum. Learn more at www.nea.org/schoolquality.
- The 1994 Assault Weapons Ban that keep military-style assault weapons off the streets will expire in September if Congress does not renew it. Tell your Senator that any firearms legislation must renew the ban (S. 1034) and close the gun show loophole (S. 1807) to stop illegal buyers at gun shows. Lawful gun owners are protected. Go to www.nea.org/lac.
- Just as the North Star guided African Americans escaping slavery, equal opportunity to a quality education remains a beacon to public school advocates. To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the May 17, 1954, Supreme Court ruling, *Brown v. Board of Education*, NEA posted events, timelines, and resources at www.nea.org/brownvboard.
- WESTERN MASS *WILD in the Winter* "Election '04: What's A Working Woman's Agenda?" is being held Saturday, March 20, 2004 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Sheet Metal Workers' Local 63, 32 Stevens Street, Springfield. The event features *WILD Women Live!!* – the ever popular union women's talk show, and Workshops – Basic Unionism, It's Our Vote – Let's Use It, and Assertiveness 101. The cost is \$40.00 with pre-registration or \$45.00 at the door. The fee includes materials and lunch. Registration and payment must be made by March 17, 2004. For further information contact Dale Melcher at 413-545-6166 or by e-mail at dmelcher@Irrc.umass.edu.
- The Five College Women's Studies Research Center has published its upcoming events for Spring 2004. For more information call their event line at 413-538-2527.
- SEA members have an opportunity to apply to become a contestant on an innovative new political television series by Showtime. *American Candidate* is a reality series in which the viewing public will select a People's Candidate who will have the chance to run for President of the United States. Twelve Americans from all walks of life will be selected to participate in an unscripted nationally televised political forum. *American Candidate* will debut in the summer of 2004. For more information, qualifications, and application go to www.AmericanCandidate.com or call Leah Gillis at 310-945-3390.
- MegaMath is a project of the Computer Research and Applications Group at Los Alamos National Laboratory that aims to make mathematics accessible to young children. An image map is used to invite viewers to explore topics in mathematics and try out games. Teachers will find some interesting activities posted along with related materials. Go to www.c3.lanl.gov/mega-math/
- Math Forum hosts a web site of materials from the MathMagic K-12 telecommunications project developed in El Paso, Texas by Alan A. Hodson. The project aims to provide motivation for students to use computer technology while increasing problem-solving strategies and communication skills. Each grade section includes over twenty documents with sample problems and games to try out. Go to <http://www.mathforum.org/mathmagic/>
- Try interactive Mathematics Miscellany, and Puzzles at www.cut-the-knot.org. The author, Alexander Bogomolny, describes the purpose of this web site as a call for mathematics appreciation in response to math anxiety and stereotypes. The Mathematics Miscellany and Puzzles are intended to initiate curiosity to foster learning of Mathematics.