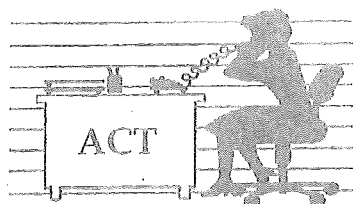


THE

The Newspaper of Local 1776
The Association of Catholic Teachers

SPIRIT '76 OF

1700 SANSOM STREET - SUITE 903 - PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103 - 215-568-4175 - VOLUME XXXIV- NO. 1
Fax 215-568-8270 - email (nacst.nacst@verizon.net) - web site (www.act1776.com) - September 2013



From The President's Desk

A CHALLENGING SCHOOL YEAR

One of the things I miss most about not being in the classroom is the excitement of starting a brand new year, of getting my class lists, meeting my new students, especially the freshmen. The scariest thing about starting a new school year was that I kept getting older while the students remained teenagers.

This will be a most important school year for all of us. It is a negotiating year. The years between 2011 and 2013-2014 have been a time of immense change, especially in the Secondary School System. We welcomed a new Archbishop. We saw an almost total replacement in leadership at the Office of Catholic Education. The Blue Ribbon Commission left and the Faith in the Future Foundation arrived. We must hope and pray that these changes in the educational area will result in an infinitely more positive outcome for the upcoming contract talks. We, however, must also keep in mind the often-quoted line that those who ignore history are destined to repeat it.

As we begin the 2013-2014 school year, there is some good news and some bad news. I always try to report the good news first. In June, 18 teachers left the Constriction Meeting with no permanent position. I am extremely happy to report that as of September, just about everyone is back to work, even teachers laid off in 2011-2012.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

FROM THE PRESIDENT. . .

There is good news also concerning evaluation data. The first year under the Danielson Framework found 94% of our teachers to be Distinguished or Proficient, showing, of course, what we already knew.

There is, unfortunately, some bad news. One week before the opening of school, Theresa Ryan-Szott, Director of Secondary Personnel, was terminated from her position in the Office of Catholic Education. Since administrators are employees at will, there is no grievance process or appeal when they leave their positions. What is available, however, is the contractual right to return to the bargaining unit and to a position in the classroom. OCE was informed that this is what she would be doing; OCE, however, refused to follow the contract.

The one bit of good news here is that with the immediate right to return to the bargaining unit comes the protection of the Labor-Management Agreement. Yes, Theresa Ryan-Szott can file a grievance and that is exactly what she did, two of them, in fact.

The Association offered to sit down with those at OCE in an attempt to resolve the problem before it became a grievance. No one from OCE would meet with us.

As we prepare for the upcoming negotiations, it is critical that the language that provides justice and equity for our teachers is protected. This becomes startlingly clear whenever, as in the case of Theresa Ryan-Szott, the contract is violated.

It is the Association's responsibility to ensure that the language, intent and spirit of the Labor-Management Agreement are upheld. That is what we have done and will, certainly, continue to do.

One last item as you return to the classroom: the recently-appointed Secretary for Catholic Education, Chris Mominey, will be visiting all of the high schools during the next month. He wants to meet with teachers at the end of the school day. I encourage all of you to be there to welcome the new Secretary.

Again, welcome back to what promises to be a most challenging school year. I wish you a productive and rewarding one, as well.

I hope to see you at the General Membership Meeting on October 24.



A Very Special Ed!

DEAR MR. UNION,

It doesn't make sense, does it? We struggle to figure it out. What's the Union without you? Your tireless dedication, even in the face of your illness. Your insane, off-beat, somewhat questionable sense of humor. Your personal integrity. Your determination to treat adversaries with respect long after they had surrendered any right to it. Your unquestionable commitment to the teachers and the Union.



We salute you, Mr. Union, for all you have been and continue to be to us. You are the "Best of Class" as a Catholic educator and a union leader. You are forever in our hearts.

Missing U,
ACT 1776

"Ask Mr. Union" was one of Ed's signature pieces when he was Editor of *The Spirit of '76*. This particular one was written by Mary Edwards in 2003 when our dear friend, Ed Stehle, retired from the ACT Staff and the Secondary School System. In her words, Mary, now retired from Archbishop Ryan High School, captured all that was Ed Stehle.

On August 27th, Ed passed away after being ill for at least the last 10 years. He fought until the end, always defying his doctors' predictions on how long he would live.

While funeral arrangements were private, Ed's family will be holding a celebration of Ed's Life on Saturday, October 26th, 1-4 P.M. at Gwynedd Friends Meeting, 1101 Dekalb Pike, (corner of Sumneytown Pike and Route 202), in North Wales, PA 19454.

(Continued on Page 5)



More Notes of Thanks!

From: John J. Reilly Scholarship Award Winners

“Each year, the Association’s Executive Board awards a \$500 Scholarship to the 9th grader in each Archdiocesan high school and at Holy Cross High School, Delran, New Jersey who has the highest general average as of the end of the first semester. If that student is already on scholarship, it is given to the highest student not receiving financial assistance. The \$500 Scholarship is sent to each school to be applied to the student’s 10th grade tuition.”

Dear Rita,

The check for Julian Hart’s tuition came today. I wish to express my thanks to the Association for the generosity in helping those students who work hard in their freshman year.

Hope that your summer has been restful.

Sincerely,

Sr. Mary E. Bur, IHM

Principal

West Catholic Preparatory High School

Rita,

Thank you for your letter of July 30, 2013 with the \$500 check for the tuition of Henry Garant. I appreciate your support in these financial matters. Together we work to promote Catholic Education.

Fr. J. Dalton

Principal

Father Judge High School

Dear Rita,

On behalf of our school family, I thank you for this very positive gesture to one of our students and their family of offering them this \$500.00 scholarship to be used to defray the cost of tuition. I know the families who receive such a generous consideration are most grateful in these very challenging economic times.

Personally I thank you for sponsoring this very positive program. I do appreciate it.

Sincerely,

Robert P. O’Neill

Principal

Roman Catholic High School

(A Very Special Ed!
Continued from Page 3)

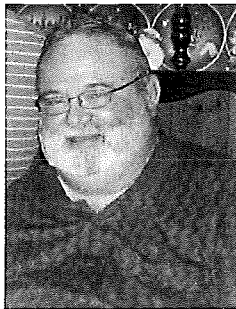
Ed's family has asked that any teacher planning to attend the Memorial Gathering please contact the ACT Office.

Ed's family has also asked that scholarship donations in his name be made to the ACT Education Fund.

Thank you, Ed, for all you have given us during your lifetime. We will miss you always! Rest in peace. You deserve it!

Lancer's Local

Issues or contractual items of interest to
Holy Cross H. S. (Delran, NJ)



The faculty is mourning the
sudden loss of long-time teacher and colleague,

DENNIS DRANCHAK.

May he rest in peace!

Education Grant Application Due

Teachers who wish to apply for an Education/Study Grant under the Labor-Management Agreement (Art. XIII, Sec. 7) must do so by October 15th. The grant offers 50 percent tuition reimbursement up to a maximum of \$1800 per year for undergraduate coursework, \$2100 for Master's Degree coursework, and \$2400 for Doctoral coursework. Teachers who have received a study grant for two (2) consecutive years are not eligible to receive for the following year.

Grants are awarded on the basis of system seniority and are available to any teacher with at least one year of teaching in the System.

Forms to apply for an Education/Study Grant are posted at the local school or can be downloaded from the home page of the ACT web site at www.act1776.com.

Additional credits?

If you have received an advanced degree or additional credits over the summer which qualifies you for payment under a different column of the salary scale, notify your school accountant immediately.

You must also send proof (an original transcript) of the degree/credits to Dr. Carol Cary at the Office of Catholic Education so that the change in degree/credits can be verified.

For your records, it is highly recommended that all documents be sent via certified mail, return receipt requested.

The five lanes of the salary scale are:

- Bachelor's Degree
- Bachelor's + 18 or Certification
- Master's or 30 Graduate Credits
- Double Master's
- Doctorate

Where's Scott Milstein?

For those of you who have been wondering where former financial representative for VALIC, Scott Milstein, is working, he is now a financial representative with Lincoln Investment Planning, Inc. Lincoln Investment is one of the tax-sheltered annuity programs available to teachers in the Archdiocesan high schools. Scott's contact information is

215-885-7115
or
smilstein@lincolninvestment.com.

Welcome back, Scott!

Representation May Be Crucial

Article III, Section 2 of the Labor-Management Agreement is short but extremely important. Please pay particularly close attention to what it has to say.

No teacher may be asked to attend a meeting with the school or diocesan administration without a representative of the Association being present if the teacher reasonably feels the meeting could result in disciplinary action against him/her.

Disciplinary action cannot be taken against any teacher unless the teacher has been apprised in writing of his/her right to union representation.

Should you “reasonably feel” the meeting could turn into one that involves you in disciplinary action, immediately get to your Senior Delegate for advice or call the ACT Office if you choose. Don’t let a relatively minor situation turn into a major one because you decided you could “handle” it yourself.

REMINDER

This is a reminder that the ACT Office has gone green. Teachers who have provided us with a personal email address have been receiving information such as Executive Board Minutes and other updates via email.

Each teacher was provided with a username and password for the ACT Webpage where they can log in and update their personal information. Please check your information and make sure it is accurate. If you do not have your username and/or password, please contact Ginny at the ACT Office and she can provide you with this information.

ACT MEMBER SERVICE PROGRAM

The following tickets are available to purchase from the ACT Office.

| | |
|----------------------|---------|
| AMC Movie Tickets | \$ 6.50 |
| Regal/United Artists | \$ 7.00 |

To request tickets, send a check made payable to the Association of Catholic Teachers with a note indicating what tickets are being ordered and in what quantity.

FREEDOM CREDIT UNION

The Freedom Credit Union offers teachers and their families a wide range of financial opportunities. Savings accounts, checking accounts, loans, MAC, IRAs, to name a few, are available to members of the credit union.

The Freedom Credit Union has four Philadelphia locations, as well as an office in Abington, Lansdale and Warminster. For more information visit the credit union's website at www.freedomcu.org. You may also call the ACT Office at 215-568-4175 or the Freedom Credit Union at 215-612-5900.

ACT School Visit Schedule 2013-2014 School Year

| NAME OF SCHOOL | ACT VISITOR | DATE | DAY |
|-----------------------|--------------------|-------------|------------|
| Bonner-Prendergast | Rita | November 5 | Tuesday |
| Carroll | Irene | November 12 | Tuesday |
| Conwell-Egan | Irene | December 3 | Tuesday |
| Hallahan | Irene | January 15 | Wednesday |
| Holy Cross | Irene | December 11 | Wednesday |
| St. Hubert | Rita | February 4 | Tuesday |
| Fr. Judge | Irene | January 28 | Tuesday |
| Lansdale | Rita | December 10 | Tuesday |
| Little Flower | Rita | February 25 | Tuesday |
| McDevitt | Irene | November 20 | Wednesday |
| Neumann-Goretti | Rita | March 18 | Tuesday |
| O'Hara | Rita & Irene | December 17 | Tuesday |
| Pope John Paul II | Rita & Irene | October 22 | Tuesday |
| Roman | Irene | February 5 | Wednesday |
| Ryan | Rita & Irene | March 4 | Tuesday |
| Shanahan | Irene | October 29 | Tuesday |
| West Catholic | Irene | February 12 | Wednesday |
| Wood | Rita | January 7 | Tuesday |

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**THURSDAY
OCTOBER 24, 2013**

4:00 P. M.

**Crowne Plaza
Philadelphia Main Line**

**AGENDA
State of the Union
Negotiations 2014**