

VC ECHOES

An AFTCA Award Winning Publication

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Kids learn to help kids in Technology

It began with a lesson to help seventh grade students from the Trinity Alternative Program gain some practical skills in Technology. But this lesson has taught so much more. Technology teacher John VanFradenburg, who has taught at the Middle School for sixteen years, brought in a bicycle in a state of disrepair for the four students in his ninth period class to repair. His objective was to have the students learn skills like welding, tool safety, gears and gear ratios. The students did an outstanding job with the bike and their success inspired Technology teacher, Mike Presutti, a twenty-two year veteran teacher, to encourage John to have the students continue repairing bikes and then donate the repaired bikes to needy children from

the



John Van Fradenburg and Mike Presutti had a show of the bikes for the Middle School Faculty in December.

VC community who don't have bikes.

They named the program "Kids Helping Kids" and began with

bicycles donated by the Middle School staff. (continued on page four) Presutti then contacted the Newburgh WalMart

Class of 1977 Time Capsule Opened

Assistant HS Principal Darryl Imperati was searching through a closet in his office when he noticed a large box wrapped in faded blue

paper. It bore a label calling the box "A Bicentennial Potpourri not to be opened until 2000". Imperati, who is advisor of the HS Student Government Association, had the SGA officers try to con-

tact the Class of 1977 officers (Jan Pierce, Alice Saunders, Jenny Korpics, Sue McIntyre, Lynn Earl, Kathy Brown and Billy Moran). Class Reunion coordinator, Robin (Birch) McPhillips

The classroom and teacher occupy the most important position of the human fabric...In the schoolhouse we have the heart of the whole society.

~ Henry Golden

Class of 1977 Time Capsule Opened *(continued from page one)*

was able to join HS Math teacher Debbie (Santora) Calvino who was the yearbook editor for the Class of 1977 in opening the box on Thursday, December 21, 2000 during post-session with the SGA officers in the HS auditorium. All students and faculty were invited to attend and a reception was held afterwards. The event was covered by Channel 6 News and aired that evening.

The capsule was opened and it contained the following: a 1976 and a 1977 yearbook; a handwritten list of the popular songs of 1976 which included The Hustle; the 1976 copy of Revelation, the art literary magazine; a mimeographed HS daily bulletin from June 15,

1976; a copy of the May 26, 1976 edition of the Viking Voice; and a July 4, 1976 edition of the Times-Herald Record, as well as the same edition of the now defunct Evening News. The capsule also contained a 1976 \$2 bill and some bicentennial coins, and a copy of the June 1976 English Regents that the Class of 1977 students would have had to pass to earn a Regents diploma.

Debbie Calvino said, "I can remember putting this box together during Senior Council meetings and it seems like only yesterday. Time does fly." Calvino was surprised to see three items that had slipped past the watchful eye of then Senior Class advisor, John Calvey. The box also contained a drink disc from Joe's East-West, a cigarette and the label from a package of rolling papers! Calvino was able to slip those items into her



Robin (Birch) McPhillips and Debbie (Santora) Calvino show the 1977 and 1976 Viking Log yearbooks.



Robin McPhillips examines the July 4, 1976 edition of the Times Herald Record.

"I can remember putting this box together during Senior Council meetings..."

pocket before the students present noticed what they were. The students seemed to get the biggest kick out of seeing teachers that they have today as they looked in 1976 and 1977 complete with long hair, knit ties and leisure suits when they flipped through the yearbooks.

Darryl Imperati says that he intends to have the 2001 SGA make a time capsule to be opened in 2025.

What Public Schools Need To Succeed

Fourteen school administrators last month confirmed the ingredients that teachers and their unions have championed to help underachieving schools succeed.

The Board of Regents last month heard from principals of elementary and secondary public schools serving communities with high percentages of academically at-risk students. The schools - including the Bronx, Buffalo,

Horseheads, Manhattan, Rochester and Yonkers - are beating the odds academically, they told the Regents.

Small class and school size, plus cooperative relationships with teachers union leaders were among the key ingredients cited for students' success. Other common themes expressed included: well-structured staff development; high expectations for students teachers and parents; strong parent and community relations; and more instruction time through a longer school

day, week and year.

Several principals also mentioned demonstrated education leadership, use of research-based model programs such as Success for All, and effective use of instructional time through block scheduling and looping that provide intensive instruction in English and writing.

*~ NYSUT Publication,
The Bottom Line*



The
Valley Central
United Way
annual
contributions
totaled \$7,365
with
117 staff members
contributing!



**New York State United Teachers
2001
Community Service Award
Nomination**

**NYSUT is seeking nomination of
an in-service member (members)
from our local who you feel has rendered
outstanding volunteer service to the community.
An award is given to members in their contiguous election district.**

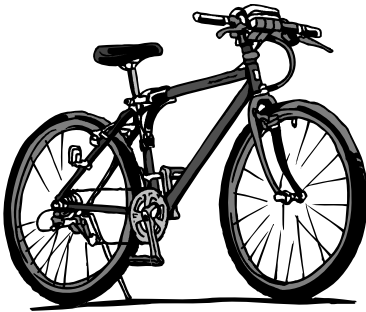
*Marc Newman (HS) was awarded the
2000 Community Service Award for Election District 13-14.*

**Any union member in good standing, who has rendered outstanding volunteer service
to the community during the 2000 calendar year is eligible.**

**The nomination form requires the listing of the volunteer activities, dedication, and
creativity of services initiated, expanded or changed. Nominations must be accompa-
nied with at least one and no more than six letters of endorsement regarding the volun-
teer accomplishments for which the individual is being nominated.**

**The nomination form can be obtained from the Union office (457-5899).
The nomination must be sent to President Tim Brown for endorsement by January 31st.**

Kids learn to help kids in Technology *(continued from page one)*



store hoping to get a discount on bicycle parts to repair the bikes. Jackie Burgos from the store's personnel department went one better and offered to give them damaged bicycles free of charge. On the day they were to pick up the bicycles, Burgos called to tell Presutti to,

"bring at least two trucks".

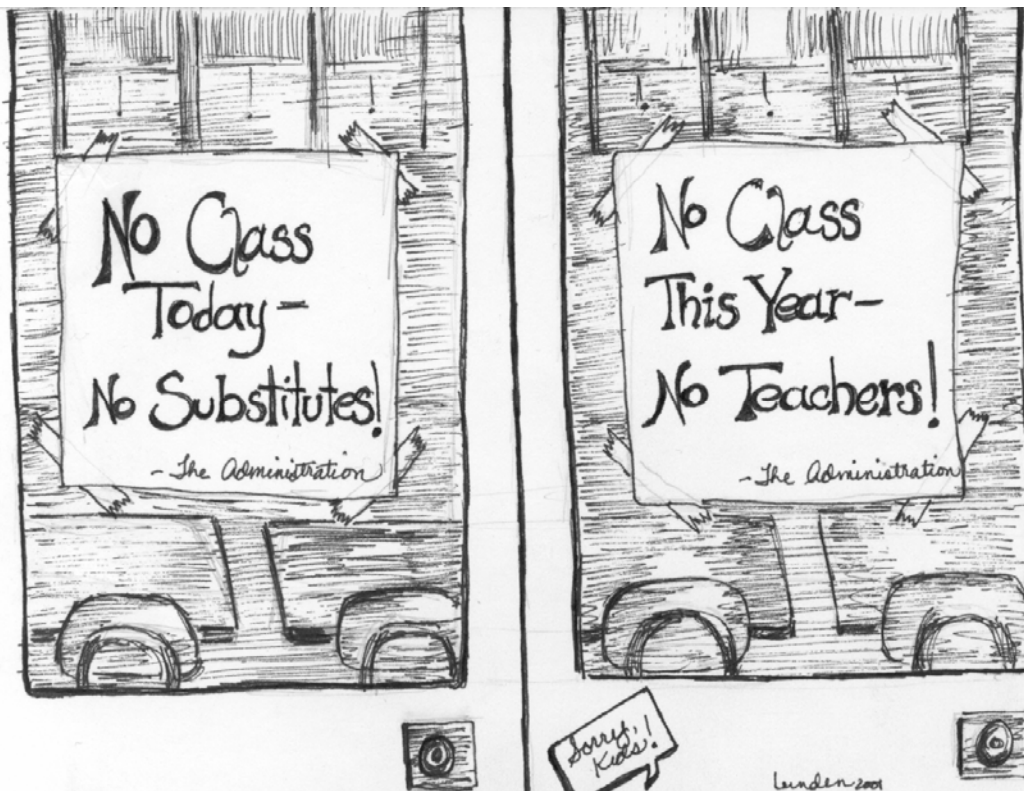
They received 24 bikes, all in different stages of disrepair from needing some tender loving care to some needing major overhauls and everything in-between. By the Winter Break the students had completed 18 of those bikes and plan to continue working on the bikes until all 24 are complete. The 18 finished bikes were donated to kids in time for the holiday season.

What began with one lesson plan in September has become an in-depth project in which these students have worked very hard in class and have volunteered to work during their lunch periods. They have gained those valuable technol-

ogy skills that VanFradenburgh had wanted to teach them learning welding skills, tool safety and understand gears and gear ratios and have gained self-esteem as well.

"These kids now understand the importance of giving to others which is the most valuable skill they will take with them," stated Presutti.

Is the Handwriting on the Door?



2001

2010

By
2010
over
half
of
the
teachers
in
class-
rooms
today,
will
be
retired.

~ Newsweek

*On Good Health and a Safe Environment ...***Updating your Records**

The beginning of a new year is a good time to ensure that all of your coverages and files are up to date.

If you had any changes in your marital status, if you added to your family's nest or if your nest emptied, if you came back to work or if you moved; you should make sure that your health coverage, dental/optical coverage, retirement system, NYSUT, and the district are up-to-date on your information.

The district needs to be notified as they report to the IRS. Contact Personnel and Payroll at Central Office (457-3171) to make any needed changes.

If you have Orange Ulster School District Health Plan for your health coverage, you can update your information by contacting Polly Coniglio in Central Office. If you have selected one of the HMO's as your coverage, you should contact the company to update information on address or de-

pendents. If you have married and your spouse needs coverage then you must go through Central Office as you are changing from single to family coverage. If your spouse has changed jobs and also changed health insurance, you must go through the process of comparing coverages to determine if you must take the buy-out mandatory by contract. If you have any questions on this topic, contact VCTA VP Rich Steger at 457-5899.

To update your information for dental/optical coverage you should send changes to Sandy Strauss, MS.

The NYSTRS should be contacted to update address and beneficiary information. A form can be obtained through Payroll at Central Office to accomplish this. Be sure to check the accuracy of your annual statement from the NYSTRS that will be mailed to you this month.

To update your address



with NYSUT (which will ensure you continue to receive the *New York Teacher*), send changes to VCTA Treasurer John Bonagura at EC.

Until next time, may you enjoy good health and a safe environment!

If you have any topics on health and environment that you would like to see covered, send your question, issue or topic to Editor, Patti Lunden, HS.

Is time spent preparing students for standardized testing and writing evaluations and grading the same impacting your work load?



The VCTA would like to discuss future compensation for this added work with Central Office, but to do so we must have facts from you.

Please describe in writing how your work load has been affected, and forward it to VP Jay Sussdorff, HS

Why you should fill out the surveys....

Recently the VCTA has passed out a lot of surveys.

Surveys are an effective tool for us to stay in touch with our membership and to ascertain information needed in discussions with Central Office.

Please return the Testing Survey, the Conference Day and the Computer Survey ASAP.

Please continue to keep a record of the classes that you are asked to cover during plan or duty times or instead of teaching your own classes. This survey will be collected in June.

Highlights from the December VCTA Meeting

The grant from Mid-Hudson Labor Council continued to be discussed from previous meeting.

Grievances- Laurie Hey Personal Day Grievance- Delayed. The VCTA is working on a rebuttal. Jane Dionne Personal Day Grievance- Denied. The arbitrator's ruling: consecutive days (*the denied conference days and the requested personal days*) must be viewed in context, as a block, and also took into consideration the district's inability to hire a substitute because of the special nature of Ms. Dionne's teaching assignment. Another Superintendent may have handled this personal day request differently.

Katie Baloga Personal Day Grievance- Decision pending.

VCTA members are advised that they should not, under any circumstances, give (*or even share with other staff*) the reason for an absence other than 'personal business', 'sick', 'death in family'. Do not elaborate. The VCTA does not condone using days for anything other than for what they are contractually intended.

Grievances regarding TSA (*multiple companies*), the Master Schedule, AIS, and Marie Marino's class schedule are at step 3. Discussion followed.

Meetings after school (*faculty vs. others*)- Faculty meetings are an "industry standard". Therefore, these once per month meetings are obligatory. In regard to other types of after school meetings, you are not obligated to phone anyone if you are not available.

Tim Brown reminded VCTA members to use the class coverage forms from ECHOES.

Conference surveys from ECHOES- Please return these forms. Central Office and the Board of Education think the November conference day was a success. Discussion followed.

Tim Brown requests that teachers take notes on the time spent on standardized testing and writing evaluations. Please forward to Jay Sussdorff

Jay Sussdorff will represent the VCTA at Faye's retirement party. It was decided that, in keeping with previous decisions, a gift would not be sent.

Defensive Driver Course- Toni Sperry volunteered to make arrangements for a course, to be held in March.

Labor Religion Coalition- A do-

nation was requested. Discussion followed. Although Patti Lunden pointed out that this non-denominational organization is supported by NYSUT, some members present felt that they would feel more comfortable in making a decision at our next VCTA meeting, after they speak with their buildings.

United Way letter and statistics from Central Office- Annual contributions (*from 117 staff members*) totaled \$7,365.

OUSDHP Minutes from October 17, 2000 were distributed. INDECS turn-around time should be down to 10 days or less.

Sweatfree Schools Poster Contest- entry information provided. This year, the theme is: What are the things you and your school can do to stop sweatshops and child labor?

Teacher Conference Approval Process- Due to a shortage in substitute teachers, Dr. Nugent will approve participation for teacher conferences on a one per building, per conference basis.

2001-2002 School Calendar (*draft*) was distributed. Tim Brown asks that suggestions for parent conferences be discussed at our next VCTA meeting.

Kevin McFadden has asked retirees to



Meet the VCTA Executive Council

**Randy Sutter
and
Barbara Winchell**

Walden Elementary Representatives

Randy Sutter has been a building rep. for two years. He serves on the Public Relations committee. He has taught 4th grade for 16 years at Walden.

Barbara Winchell has been a building rep. On and off for twenty years. She is the New Member Buddy Coordinator for the Elementary level. She has taught 5th grade for 29 years at Walden.

let him know about any community work or volunteer work in which they may be involved.

Rich Steger will clarify any questions regarding the new APPR forms. Rich and John Bonagura need VCTA feedback on these forms.

There was a motion to approve the work done by the APPR thus far, with the exception that it is approved based on the fact that there will be five criteria for evaluation and that a rubrics will be developed and will meet the approval of Rich Steger and John Bonagura. The motion carried.

The next Executive Council meeting will be held January 16, 2001 at 3:45 PM at the VCHS Professional Library, Montgomery.

Mac's Musings (from the Retiree side)



98, ten million dollars was available to districts which applied for teaching mentoring programs. In 2000-01, the amount was five million. More than half of the 92 school districts which applied for funding were turned down. Two thoughts come to mind. The state bemoans young teachers leaving the profession and show its concern by cutting funding for mentoring programs. Am I missing something? My second thought is that I hope VC is applying for these funds. The good news is that both NYSUT and the Board of Regents are pushing for more funding next year. We shall see. Perhaps this is another area that we as a local and as individuals can lobby for with our legislators. Remind them that retirees and active personnel vote... and remember.

NY Teacher quotes Niagara BOCES special ed. Teacher Kristin Sterling, re: higher standards for special education students: "We want special ed students to have access to Regents curricula and to participate in classes, but not at the expense of losing a local diploma if they can't pass one exam." This makes sense. Commissioner, are you listening?

Some sightings, Some epistles

Frank and Mary Digilio (HS) are already in residence in their Boca Raton, FL winter abode. They are well and send regards.

Nice notes from South Carolina contingent. Dee Reisert and Joan Holland live close to one another. Berea's loss is SC's gain!

Missive from Bill and Becky Tucci in North Carolina. Both are well. Becky continues teaching; Bill is with State Ed. Dept.

I ran into Phil Shafer (HS), Ed Kubina (Berea), and George

Heitz (Walden). All are well and report being busier than ever. I get tired just listing Phil's activities. He is teaching part-time at Chapel Field, doing private tutoring, and teaching homebound students through the district.

Leaving December's VCTA meeting, I had a chance to chat with Petrina Tersillo, who works part-time with the alternative ed. Program with the high school. Trina retired from the middle school. Tom Moreau (HS) also puts in some time with the alternative program.

I received a great Christmas letter from Bro. John Calvey, a Franciscan at Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio. John is director of career Services at the University and a former 20 year VCHS teach of English.

Had a very enjoyable time at the retirement celebration for Faye Goldstein. Other retirees present included Rose Meyer, Maryellen Whitmore and Ron Revelle.

Had lunch with long-time Super and dear friend, Bill Moran.

Thanks...

As always for reading this far.

And until next time, keep pushing back the barriers of ignorance in whatever venue life finds you.

Peace.

~ Kevin McFadden

2001 (Already!)

Happy New Year! Even millennial grinch Tom K. agrees with the new year greeting. His Christmas greeting to me included the following: "Now it can be said. Happy New Century. Happy New Decade. Happy New Millennium and Happy New Year." Now that all the retirees are in the same time frame, I can be at peace.

Nobody asked me, but...

Fairport Central Schools (Rochester area) utilizes the following sentence in its ads to attract new teachers to the school district: **"Strong mentoring program is provided."** New teachers, desiring to be nurtured and to grow in the complexities of the teaching life, will certainly find that both comforting and attractive.

Editor's Note: Rochester CSD offers a mentoring program in which mentors do just that — mentor only and receive 5% of their base on top of their pay as stipend.

Two strong editorial pieces, well thought out and well written appeared in December's edition of the Echoes. Tim and Jay are to be congratulated for speaking out on issues of importance to district employees. It is the hope of this scribe that the result of these pieces will be a meaningful and ongoing dialogue.

Here I go again! In 1997-

VCTA Computer Survey*Circle One*

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| Do you have a computer? | YES | NO |
| Do you know how to use a word processing program? | YES | NO |
| Do you know how to use a spreadsheet program? | YES | NO |
| Do you know how to use a data base program? | YES | NO |
| Do you know how to make use of the internet? | YES | NO |
| Do you use a computer for lesson plans? | YES | NO |
| Do you use a computer grade book program? | YES | NO |

Please return completed survey
to Rich Steger at Walden Ele-

Line Dancing
comes to VCHS

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PTSA



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7 pm—9 pm

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\$7 for walk-ins

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(payable to VCHS PTSA)

PTSA
Valley Central High School
1175 RTE 17K
Montgomery, NY 12549

Questions: Contact Robin Dambrot at 457-3772

**VCHS
All Night Grad
Party**

**LOTTERY TICKETS
For February 2001**

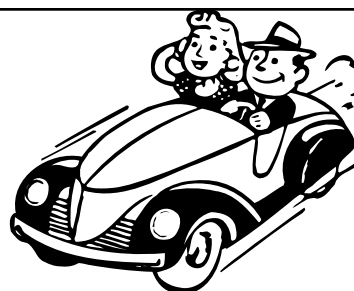


On Sale Now!

Contact
Joan Horton,
Main Office
VCHS
457-3122 x 301

Only \$5 for the month!
*You've got to be in it,
to win it!*

*Would you like to reduce your insurance premiums?
Do you have points on your license you want to remove?
Do you have teenage drivers in your household?*



If you answered yes to any of these questions, read on.

The **Valley Central Teachers' Association** is sponsoring
a **Defensive Driving Course**
for all employees of the Valley Central School District
and their family members who drive.
The course will be offered
in the **Middle School Cafeteria**
on **March 14 and 15**, from **4:00 to 7:00 p.m.**

The cost of the program is \$28.

*These courses are generally priced anywhere from \$35 to \$70.
Light refreshments will be provided.*

**Participants will receive a reduction in their insurance premiums
of approximately ten percent each year for three years.**

This reduction applies to a vehicle when the principal operator of that vehicle completes the course. The insurance provider will apply the reduction if the course is completed 30 days before or after the premium renewal; otherwise it will apply at the next renewal.

Four points will be removed from the participants' licenses.

Registration will be handled on a first come, first served basis.

The course can accommodate a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 36 participants. To register, please tear off the registration form below and return it to Toni Sperry at Montgomery Elementary by March 2, 2001.

Date: March 14 & 15 Time: 4:00 - 7:00 p.m. Location: Middle School Cafeteria

Name: _____ Position / Building: _____

Phone #: _____ Names of family members attending: _____

Please make your check payable to : **VCTA Defensive Driving Course**

**The cost is \$28 per person. Please return this form and your payment to
Toni Sperry at Montgomery Elementary by March 2.**

Advertising Section

These ads will be seen by over 750 members of the VC Educational Community and their households. If you would like to advertise in the next issue of the VC ECHOES, contact Patti Lunden, 457-5899 for rates.

A long-term financial plan for people who are short on time.

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goaheadvacations.com



Call today for a free catalog and Group Leader Guide.

Please mention AFT when calling

VALID THROUGH 7/01

Advertising Section

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VALID THROUGH 7/01



*There are no greater advocates
for children and education
than teachers and teacher unions.*

Valley Central Teachers' Association
1175 Rte. 17K
Montgomery, NY 12549
Tel./Fax: (845) 457-5899

President, Timothy Brown (HS)
Vice President, Jay Sussdorff (HS)
Vice President, Richard Steger (Walden)
Secretary, Laurie Hey (MS)
Treasurer, John Bonagura (EC)

Building Representatives

Berea: Carol DeMicco, Sara Ackerson,
Gail Roberto

Maybrook: Donna Lloyd

East Coldenham: Beth Como, Sandy Carroll

Walden: Barbara Winchell, Randy Sutter,
Brenda Newman

Montgomery: Toni Sperry, Chris Brand

MS: Mary Bleau, Mary Goldberg, Dana DeMasi
Paul Dederick, Joe Collins, Mike Steele
Kathy Manning

HS: Arline Friedman, Jane Hillis, Peter Meisel,
Glenn Eckert, Joe Fracalossi,
Jean McMahon, Bob Jurgens

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NYSUT
www.nysut.org
AFT
www.aft.org
AFL-CIO
www.aflcio.org

Mid-Hudson Teacher Center:
(845) 255-2885
<http://www.mhtc.dcboces.org>
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*The VC Echoes is the official
publication of the Valley Central
Teacher's Association – Local
3076 and is published regularly
throughout the school year.*
**Article contributions or Letters to
the Editor for the next issue
should be sent to Patricia Lunden
at the HS by January 30, 2001 .**
*Any articles submitted to the VC
Echoes will also be posted on the
VCTA Web page.*

Credit Hours

Teachers receive \$42.00 per credit hour for all approved courses beyond the Bachelor's to a maximum of 30 hours and beyond the Master's to a maximum of 60 hours . Credits beyond the Bachelor's are paid in blocks of six credits. Credits beyond the Master's are paid in blocks of three credits. The differential for the doctorate shall be the same as the difference between the BA + 30 and the Master's Degree. Teachers taking hours beyond the MA + 60 schedule may be paid for those hours provided that they are approved by the Superintendent and are taken in the teaching field of the particular teacher.

Where will all the new teachers come from?

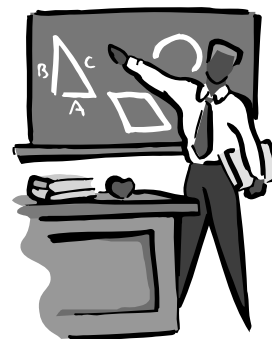
Walk outside your classroom door . Look to your left, look to your right. By 2010 one of those people will be retired—Who will replace them?

Anyone in this year's senior class who wants to become a teacher will face a longer road to reach the classroom as the requirements change to meet the Commissioner's new regulations commencing February 2004. Once graduated and employed as a teacher, he/she will be required to complete 175 hours of in-service instruction every 5 years (35 hours a year). All this for a base salary still under \$40,000. Where will all the new teachers come from?

This generation has grown up in a society that has shifted from a

focus on service to personal gain. And there seem to be more opening level positions than workers. Add to that a business world that often offers more money for less degree—and what encouragement will there be for a kid who wants to become a teacher to stay the course? The Commissioner, of course, believes that making it harder to be a teacher will yield better teachers, therefore better students. While the logic behind this makes sense in theory, in practice isn't this just another attempt to improve education through teacher accountability rather than student accountability and the result will probably be less teachers rather than more as we face a major teacher shortage.

So, what can those of us in the field do to change this situation? What those before us did



for us—speak out. There is a reason that we no longer have to bring a piece of coal to work so we will have heat in a classroom; why pregnant teachers can work until their due date rather than being forced to leave once they begin to show; why our step raise is more than 25 cents a week...because those teachers who stood in our classrooms before us were willing to speak out on ludicrous practices on our behalf. We owe no less to the next generation of teachers.

~ Patti Lunden