



VC ECHOES

Valley Central Teachers' Association



Volume 8, Issue 2

October, 2005

Inside this issue:

Open Enrollment	2
"One Size"	3
Important Info	5
Attention New Members	6
Longevity Error Richard H. Aderson	7
Richard H. Aderson Award Nomination	8
VCTA Making Strides	9
Fall Fest 2005	10
Breast Cancer Walk Sandra Feldman	11
Teacher Nomination	12
Pre-Retirement Seminars	13
Mac's Musings	14
New Member Program	16
TRS Alert	19

VCTA Dress Down an Overwhelming Success!

The Valley Central Teachers' Association organized a district-wide "Dress down Day" on September 16, 2005 to raise funds to aid AFT victims of Hurricane Katrina. Vice President Patti Lunden contacted VCTA Building Representatives to collect donations and distribute Dress Down labels to wear. Those representatives: Diane Ruggles, HS; Mary Bleau and Kathy Manning, MS; Gail Nozell, Montgomery; Erin Davis, Berea; Sandy Tarallo, Maybrook; Holly Bacon, EC; and Lori Meyerson, Walden readily responded to the task. At the end of the day, a total of \$2875 was collected.



Contributors to Walden's amazing collection effort!

While all seven district schools participated, one school's contribution must be recognized in particular. Walden Elementary alone contributed \$1200 to the fund! VCTA Representative Lori Meyerson commented that many people in Walden contributed far more than the suggested donation of \$5. Vice President Rich Steger said, "All you have to do is ask the Walden faculty and staff to give and they do so generously, without question."

The money is being sent to the AFT Disaster Relief Fund through the NY-SUT Hurricane Relief Fund. The AFT will provide grants for AFT members affected by Hurricane Katrina. President Tim Brown said, "I am very proud of the generosity shown by the VCTA membership and the other members of the Valley Central family in this effort. Valley Central has long been known for its ability to reach out to others in need, whether locally, nationally or internationally."

—Patti Lunden (HS)

Vice President

October is Open Enrollment month...

The RATES for the HMO's will not be available until the coming weeks. As soon as they become available they will be distributed. This is beyond the control of the Association and the District. They are being held up by the State.

Making a Change

Before you make any changes be sure that you have checked with your physicians to be sure that they accept that insurance. Also compare the major points of the plan to your current plan. Be sure the services that you utilize are covered. If you decide that you want to change insurance plans, the enrollment form must be in Central Office by October 31st.

Changing to an HMO *

The VCTA Health and TSA Fair provided an opportunity for all VC employees to check out alternatives for Health Insurance. October is the month to change Health Care coverage if you would like to do so. If you picked up an information packet on one of the Health Care companies, then you will find an enrollment form inside. Once you have made a decision - Fill out the enrollment form, make a copy of it, and bring it to Central Office by October 28th. Ask for a date stamp on your copy when you drop it off. Applications go to the attention of Christina Howe/ Jan Phelps. Your coverage will become effective as of January 1, 2006 and continue until you make another change.

Although the Association invited only three Health Care

Companies to the Health Fair, by Federal Law you have the right to choose any HMO you prefer. You would need to contact that HMO on your own to arrange for enrollment.

Changing to OUSDHP

If you wish to change from an alternate health care company back to the Orange-Ulster Schools Health Plan, (OUSDHP) contact Mrs. Howe at 457-2400 x 8122 for an enrollment form.

5% Mandatory Contribution

As you are aware your mandatory 5% contribution is being deducted from your pay. The 5% represents the cost of the health plan you've chosen. If the plan costs LESS than OUSDHP, you are being charged 5% of the cost of the plan and the district is paying 95% of the plan. If the plan costs MORE than OUSDHP, then you are being charged 5% of the OUSDHP with the district paying 95% of the cost of the OUSDHP and **additionally** (as has been the practice) you will be charged the difference. Since the OUSDHP rates follow the school's fiscal calendar, while the other companies follow the January-December fiscal calendar, OUSDHP costs more than all the other plans until December. No one is being charged a difference. However the other plans' rate increases will take effect in January and then you will be responsible to pay the difference if the plan you enroll with costs more than OUSDHP. In July when OUSDHP rates are increased, your contribution will be readjusted. Because these are new rates, if you already have Empire,

GHI HMO or MVP, the 5% contribution will change with the new rate effective January 1st.

The VCTA does not recommend you choose any one company over the other; we encourage you to consider all your options and choose the coverage that best meets your needs. *You do not need a cover letter to make these changes. Your completed application is your notification. Remember to retain a copy for your records.*

FAQ's

- A true HMO is an insurance company which owns the medical practices within its network. The three choices the VCTA has made available are PPO's. **(Participating Provider Organization) The doctor's participate by accepting the insurance company rates, but are independent of the insurance company.**
- An INDEMITY plan is one which allows the insured to utilize doctors/services outside the network. A PPO requires the insured to utilize doctors/services within the network.
- Questions/ Problems?

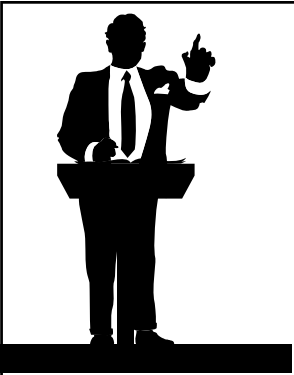
Contact:

VP Rich Steger, VM 5648

or

VP Patti Lunden, VM 7664

One Size Fits Few



The world has gotten a bit strange lately. It seems everyone is looking for a magical solution to virtually every problem we face today—whether the problem relates to personal behaviors, medical issues, politics, or education—to name a few. However, our desire to fix the world’s problems with a simple formula that applies to all situations is generally ineffective and, at times, catastrophic.

People are unique. If this premise is true—and I hope to God it is since a single copy of some currently existing entities on the planet would terrify even the strongest among us—If this premise is true—then different approaches or solutions would be required depending upon the individual or individuals involved. Let’s explore some basic concepts first. Following are some differences that we often take for granted:

- ❑ What if all clothes were the same size—no accounting for age, height or weight. We would probably look pretty silly. Then again, just look in the hallway between classes and you’re likely to see a reality show based on this very concept.
- ❑ If shoes came in one size your feet would either hurt or your shoes would be constantly slipping off your feet.
- ❑ Perhaps all cars and homes should be of the same design and dimensions regardless of family size.
- ❑ What if you could only vote republican—or the reverse—you could only vote democrat without regard to the candidate’s record or platform. In a free society most would consider this pretty short sighted—then again, many do vote party line without regard to a candidate’s record or platform.
- ❑ All sporting events must be uniform. Therefore, starting this year there will only be one weight class on the wrestling team. I suspect dual meets will end much faster.
- ❑ Perhaps all medications should be the same dosage for all patients irrespective of age, gender or weight.

As you can see, life is a very unique experience...and, although I am a strong proponent of standards, whether they be behavioral or academic...any concept taken too far is generally counter productive and, at times, dangerous. I say this with the full knowledge that I am a man of strong convictions that just might too often represent the thinking of this very extremist mindset. For example, some of my students seem to believe my campaign to replace the electric chair with electric bleachers to reduce electric bills, thus providing taxpayer relief, is unlikely to succeed.

Unfortunately, education has become the training ground for this “one size fits all” philosophy of life. The more we push unrealistic standards that cannot possibly apply to all children, the more children will become disenfranchised with education. In the book One Size Fits Few: The Folly of Educational Standards, Susan Ohanian reminds the “Standardistos who rely on skills charts and standardized test scores for their notions of children [that those charts and scores] aren’t children, those are numbers.”

If it was as simple as “one size fits all” every person in this room would be obsolete and overpaid. Anyone would be able to simply follow the prepackaged curriculum and children would naturally learn everything the pointy-eared education gurus have promised. Anyone would be able to teach as long as they followed the directions. If children do not attain mastery, the classroom teacher has obviously done something wrong. S/he did not follow the directions. What? You didn’t know children come with directions? You didn’t know that the same directions work perfectly for all children? Madeline Hunter speaks next.

(continued on page 4)

One Size Fits Few (*continued*)

Good teachers know that teaching is an art form—not an exact science. In our heterogeneous school cultures you might have within the same class:

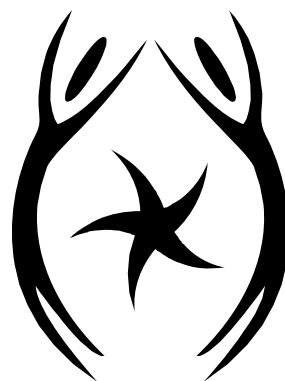
- ❑ children with IQs ranging from approximately 70 to 170;
- ❑ children who are well fed and children who are hungry;
- ❑ children who have known only love and children who have been abused;
- ❑ children who are so well behaved you wish they were your own and children who are so disruptive and annoying you would like to put an electric dog collar on them and keep the remote safely in your hand for the entire day.

Although I am a firm believer in standards, please tell me how I can fairly and effectively apply the same standard to each child. Where is the love and compassion in the creation and mandate of standards that are so challenging to some students that they can only pass by eliminating options such as industrial arts or auto mechanics. At the high school level, these courses can only be accessed through BOCES, which generally eliminates the possibility of participation by advanced students and now often eliminates struggling students who must now sacrifice a potential vocational education to retake classes they have failed. Some of these students will never make it and may now be without the classes and subsequent skills that might have given them an advantage in a vocational career.

I look back with fond memories of days when both Regents and RCT exams were offered to students. I look back with fond memories to days when elementary and middle school teachers could spend most of their time teaching, rather than preparing for some senseless test mandated by the business world and politicians with anti-public school bias.

If the trend of the future is to be concerned only with what looks best on paper—teachers will certainly rise to the occasion. We will learn and we will change. But what about the children? Who will stand up against the madness of overzealous standards and mandates that hurt children? For many children, we are their last, best hope. One Size Fits Few. Despite the madness that surrounds us, we must remember to always find a way to “put children center.” In closing I would like to remind you of Susan Ohanian’s words in reverse: “People, those aren’t numbers, those are children.”

—Tim Brown (HS)
President, VCTA



Attention New Members!

I hope that your school year is off to a great start. I also hope that you have been introduced to your union buddy. If you have not had any contact with your union buddy, please let me know immediately.

I would also like to take this time to personally invite you to participate in two upcoming events:

1. Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk 9:00 am October 16, 2005, Woodbury Commons

2. VCTA Fall Fest 3:00-6:00 pm October 21, 2005 at Stony Ford Clubhouse , Orange County Park , Rte. 416

These two events will provide you with an opportunity to meet and interact with VCTA members from your building as well as from other schools. The Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk is an opportunity to help raise money to find a cure for Breast Cancer.

As the year progresses, you

will find that the VCTA membership is very active in community activities and fundraising activities. I encourage you to become an active participant in the Valley Central Community.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at Walden Elementary School. My voice mail is ext. 5648.

–Rich Steger

VP (Walden)

How VOTE-COPE supports new teachers

So you are relatively new to teaching—and perhaps the ink is still drying on your union membership card.

Now you're wondering why you should donate to VOTE-COPE, New York State United Teachers' political action fund fueled entirely by voluntary donations from members.

Your situation is not unique, says Andy Avedisian, a VOTE-COPE coordinator and member of the Deposit Teachers Association, near Binghamton. To educate new NYSUT members on the importance of VOTE-COPE, Avedisian uses a memo produced by the Owego-Apalachin TA called "Why VOTE-COPE Matters to You."

The memo has three sections, depending on whether the potential donor has been teaching for fewer than 10 years, between 10 and 20 years, or more than 20 years.

For those with 10 years or fewer in the profession, the memo lays out six reasons VOTE-COPE needs their support. "It's important to present a series of benefits that come from contributions," said Avedisian. VOTE-COPE:

- Works for resources to help students who are striving to reach higher standards;
- Encourages smaller class sizes through legislation;
- Supports competitive salaries to recruit qualified teachers;
- Fights for state aid increases so newly hired teachers can be safe from financially motivated layoffs;
- Advocates affordable tuition at public colleges to keep graduate program costs down and
- Lobbies for mentor program legislation to provide critical

support to new teachers.

Last year, the VOTE-COPE fund topped \$5.3 million, which was used to pay for political activities on the local, state and federal levels. The continued financial success of VOTE-COPE depends on support from new and veteran NYSUT members.

"The goal of VOTE-COPE is to protect all of NYSUT's constituents, from our newest members to our retirees," said NYSUT Executive Vice President Alan Lubin.

For more information, contact your local VOTE-COPE coordinator.

–Kevin Hart

New York Teacher

September 8, 2005

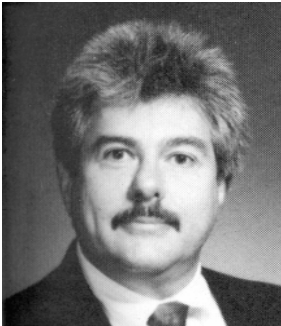
Longevity Error

VCTA teacher bargaining unit members on steps 22 and 23 will see a \$500 adjustment/increase to the longevity listed on their salary agreement this year. This adjustment is a result of my (Tim Brown) error in recording the longevity on the original spreadsheets utilized

during negotiations. This correction will result in an exact \$500 change for this year but will also affect steps 22 and 23 as listed in the CBA for the 2006-7 and 2007-8 school years. These steps should have been increased by \$500 compounded by the percentage

increase due to longevity being added to the salary schedule during these years. If you have any questions, see your building representative after our October 18th meeting.

—Tim Brown
President



Richard H. Aderson *“Make A Difference”* *2005 Award*

Orange-Ulster BOCES is seeking nominations for the Richard H. Aderson Award.

Richard H. Aderson was Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services and Personnel in the Valley Central School District. He tragically lost in life, and is remembered as an outstanding administrator and a prominent voice for all children and their educational needs.

The “Make A Difference” Award recognizes the accomplishments of an outstanding educator in our BOCES region.

1. The award recipient must have demonstrated genuine contribution to the field of education, and a humanistic concern for faculty, students and all persons in education.
2. The award recipient must have a strong record of the achievement of excellence in educational related service to children.
3. The award recipient must be a “living” example of commitment to “Making A Difference” in children’s lives.

Nomination Form on Page 8

ORANGE-ULSTER BOCES

Richard H. Aderson

"MAKE A DIFFERENCE"

2005 AWARD

NOMINATION FORM

NOMINEE: _____ DISTRICT: _____
 SCHOOL NAME: _____ POSITION: _____
 SCHOOL ADDRESS: _____

Using the selection criteria as a guide, please indicate your rationale for this nomination:
(You may use additional paper, as needed.)

NAME OF NOMINATOR: _____ POSITION/ROLE: _____
 ADDRESS: _____
 PHONE #: _____

All nominations must be submitted by **November 15, 2005.**
 Please attach all supporting documentation.
 Awards will be announced in **January 2006.**

Return to: Kathleen Heloski
 Assistant Director of Professional
 Development
 BOCES Technology Learning Center
 163 Harriman Heights Road
 Monroe, NY 10950
 Phone: 781-4356 Fax: 774-7323

VCTA is Ready to Make Strides Against Breast Cancer!

VCTA Team Coordinators:**HS- Patti Lunden, MS- Maddie Brooks, Montgomery – Christine Giudice,****EC- Holly Bacon, Maybrook-Donna Lloyd, Berea- Robin Scott, Walden- Rich Steger**

On Sunday, October 16, 2005 the VCTA will join thousands of walkers at Woodbury Commons to help fight breast cancer by joining in the American Cancer Society's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk. This is the tenth anniversary of this non-competitive 5K Walk. About 170 people, including many students, are part of the VCTA team.

There is still time to join the VCTA team if you would like to participate in this event. Simply contact the Team Coordinator in your building and get a registration form. Collect donations from friends and family to sponsor your walk. You may even register online at the American Cancer Society web site. Ask your team coordinator for more details. On October 16th, turn in your donations to ACS Registration and join the rest of the VCTA team by the NYSUT tent. The Walk begins at 9:00 am and takes about an hour to complete. Walkers receive a coupon book for many stores at Woodbury Commons.

If you are unable to walk, you can still help by sponsoring the VCTA team. Find out who is on the team in your building and sponsor their walk. Ask your team coordinator how to purchase a ribbon card.

The funds raised by the American Cancer Society through this Walk are designated to fight cancer on four fronts: research, education, advocacy, and patient services. As the nation's largest nongovernmental breast cancer research supporter, the American Cancer Society has invested more than \$246 million since 1972 to give those touched by breast cancer more reasons for hope. When you get involved in Making Strides, you help ensure progress against breast cancer continues and more lives are saved.

This is NYSUT's fourth year participating as a flagship sponsor of the event throughout New York State. Last year, NYSUT members helped to raise \$650,000. This year, the walk takes on special meaning for many NYSUT members as former AFT President, Sandra Feldman recently lost her battle against breast cancer. Feldman was AFT President from 1997-2004 when she stepped down due to her breast cancer. She passed away on September 18, 2005. (See related piece on page 11)

Two hundred thousand women (and one thousand men) this year will be diagnosed with breast cancer. Forty thousand of them will die of the disease. The Making Strides Walk helps to fight these statistics through its efforts—especially, the effort it makes to encourage women to have an annual mammogram beginning at age 40. Research has shown that early detection saves lives. If a woman in your life has turned forty this year, encourage her to have a mammogram. That one act alone may be the greatest thing you can do to fight breast cancer this year.

Upcoming VCTA Events...



VCTA FALL FEST 2005

Date: Friday October 21, 2005

Time: 3:00 pm—6:00 pm

Place: Stony Ford Clubhouse
at Orange County Park

This event is free for all active and retired members
and their spouses or significant others.

Hors d'oeuvres, Cash Bar, Prizes!!!

Please Join Us!

A good time will be had by all!

See you there...

Directions: Stony Ford Country Club is located in Orange County Park. Take 17K through Montgomery to the intersection of 17K and 211. Turn LEFT on to 211, follow through village to Rt. 416 (LEFT at the airport). Take 416 and watch for signs for the Country Club which is located at the top of the hill.



Upcoming VCTA Events... (cont'd)

Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk— October 16, 2005 at Woodbury Commons

It's not too late!! If you are interested in walking or contributing, please contact your team coordinator.

Please join us in the fight against this deadly disease!

Remember Sandra Feldman and all the other women who have lost their brave struggle against this devastating illness.

You can make a difference.



NYSUT statement on the death of former American Federation of Teachers president Sandra Feldman

September 19, 2005

"Sandy Feldman's courageous battle against breast cancer was yet another remarkable chapter in a remarkable life.

"In her every action, Sandy Feldman defined courage. She stood tall for children, for education, for social justice and fairness, and she never wavered no matter how high the odds or how seemingly insurmountable the obstacle.

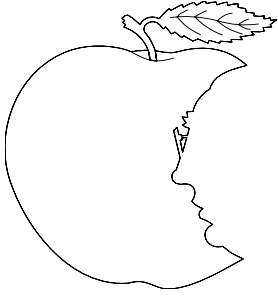
"Our memory of Sandy Feldman will be that of a fighter who lived a life marked by strength, grace and dignity.

"She was loved. She will be missed."



*Richard C. Iannuzzi, President
New York State United Teachers*

Taken from www.nysut.org



***We're looking for a few great teachers...
And we know they're in VC Classrooms.***

Each year the District
in conjunction with the Association
nominates a teacher to be considered for
NEW YORK STATE TEACHER OF THE YEAR.

Nomination requires nominator to fill out paperwork.

*Please submit the name of a colleague who you believe
exemplifies the phrase "Great Teacher."*

Colleague's Name _____

Colleague's Building _____

His/Hers Years teaching _____ His/Hers Years at VC _____

Why should this person be VC's candidate for Teacher of the Year?

Your Name _____, VM _____

Return this form to your building rep. by October 28th.

Pre-retirement Planning Seminars

NYSTRS' daylong Pre-retirement Planning Seminars – open to active members age 45 and older and their spouses/companions – are designed to help members prepare for retirement. Among the topics discussed during these group sessions are:

- **Retirement Income:** Your NYSTRS pension, Social Security, and savings.
- **Payment Options:** A review of your pension payment choices, including a comparison of option selections and private life insurance.
- **Adjusting to Retirement:** Acclimating to the emotional and physical changes you face in retirement.
- **Legal Considerations:** Maintaining essential estate planning documents and planning for possible long-term care.
- **Financial Planning:** Comparing income and expenses before and after retirement; the basics of tax-deferred annuity accounts; and, getting financial planning assistance.

Please note: These seminars are not designed for one-on-one retirement counseling.

The following schedule provides dates for fall 2005 seminars. The seminars are held from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., with registration from 8 to 8:30 a.m. **There is no fee to attend; however, advance registration is required.**

Fall 2005 Schedule

Fishkill– Holiday Inn	October 28	Rte. 9 off Exit 13 I-84 Fish-kill
Albany– NYSTRS Headquarters	October 19 November 16	10 Corporate Woods Drive Albany
Tarrytown–Westchester Marriott	December 2	670 White Plains Rd. Tarrytown

Making a Reservation:

Call NYSTRS at **800-356-3128, Ext. 6180** weekdays between 8:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. to make a reservation for the seminar you wish to attend. When calling, please indicate if your spouse/companion is attending and provide the following information:

- Your Social Security number;
- Your date of birth;
- Your home address; and,
- Your home and work telephone numbers.

If your spouse/companion is attending and is also a member, please have the above information available for him/her as well.

Mac's Musings (from the Retiree Side)...

Greetings!
September brings "regular order" back to our lives. Active teachers are back in the swing of things and are hopeful that their students are also in that September swing. We retirees continue our endless summer or return to whatever activities we have taken on—volunteer work, part-time or full-time jobs in and out of the teaching field. I'm always amazed at the level of activity of our ever-feisty retirees. I believe that it is the relatively active lifestyle that makes retirement such a joy. Examples are coming up before this epistle is concluded!

--Luncheon Report

The luncheon was a success once again. 96 retirees enjoyed the event at the Crossroads. As always Chris Camillo and his crew prepared a wonderful buffet. 250 announcements were sent out to all VC retirees: teachers, paras, secretaries, cafeteria workers, custodians, administrators, counselors—every group was represented. 140 responses were received. Many of those who could not attend took the time

to write a note or send an e-mail. John Mirola, once again for the 23rd time, did a great job as M.C. — even though Mac forgot to get a microphone, etc. John is a real trooper and still has the commanding voice known to all those who fondly remember him as a teacher and coach. (I'll remember that P.A. stuff next year, Darryl.) It must be noted that Table 8 (or 5 or 6 or 2— whichever number eats first!!) was on its best behavior and celebrated by wearing angelic haloes during my few announcements! I'm always amazed at the genuine closeness of our retiree crew and feel privileged to be a part of it. One final note: we had retirees now retired for two months all the way up to a retiree of 32 years. I'm looking forward to luncheon #24 in 2006!

--Nobody asked me, but...

Wednesday mornings are my favorite mornings. September also means the resumption of the Breakfast Club (AKA ROMEO—Raunchy Old Men Eating Out), and once again the 84 Diner is louder than ever. The group has been meeting every Wednesday since

1991 when then-recent retirees Tony Gesso (MS) and Doug Jessup (HS) started having breakfast out. They were joined by Jack Matikiewicz (HS/MS) then Mac (HS), Orin Segall (HS), Pat Iorlano (HS) over the course of the years. The most recent member is John Cosco (HS). I have more laughs each time one of the old stories is told. Great to be back.

The new group of VC teachers were a pleasure to address at their orientation/induction. We wish them well and welcome them to our VC family. The administration and union did a great job of organizing this event. Special kudos to Jane Malley for a job well done.

My heart goes out to all the Gulf Coast hurricane victims and especially to the uprooted kids and their teachers. I think of the effect it would have on my own grandkids.

Meghan, great first issue! Ad multos annos!

continued on page 15



Congratulations to Mac on another successful retiree luncheon!!



"I'm always amazed at the genuine closeness of our retiree crew and feel privileged to be a part of it."

Mac's Musings (from the Retiree Side)...(cont'd)

—Life after VC

The following info is gleaned from notes, e-mails, and calls from our retired colleagues, especially from many whom distance, etc. kept from the luncheon.

—Bill Tucci (HS) has taken a new position at NC State University as director of K-12 programs at Kenan Institute for Engineering Technology and Science. He states that he and Becky are “actively pushing back the barriers of ignorance.” Bill is also working on an Ed. D. at NC State.

—Tony Cimorelli (B) reports that South Carolina is still Paradise.

—John Napolitano (HS) has returned to his plantation at Myrtle Beach from Long Island. Frank and Mary Digilio (both HS) check in from BocaRaton.

They had been back for a family reunion in July. Both are well.

—Quick calls from Marlea Smith (Mont.), Jean Killin (CO), Frank Wallner (HS)

—Bruce Seguin (MS) was too busy this year with his volunteer work and regular work to make a long trip from Champlain for the luncheon

—Chris Cuomo (HS) sends regards to all from her retirement home in Jersey.

—Chris Weslowski (B) sends a great letter with news of her new home at Conesus Lake and the arrival of two grandchildren.

—Pat Darney (B) and Val Terwilliger (B) were off on vacation at luncheon time.

—Gene Martin (W) was honored by the Rockland County Track and Field Hall of Fame at his induction for his many accomplishments, but

especially for his championship in NY State in the mile run in 1955—his record stood for sixteen years! He was also Eastern States and NY State Cross Country champ. Gene's plaque was presented to him by his brother, Dennis (see pictures below!). Both were super athletes at Tappan Zee HS. My thanks to old friend and Gene's wife, Marilyn, for the info and the pictures. As always, Gene, we are proud of you.

—Much more of Life after VC next time!

—Amen

Thanks again for turning to the back pages. Until next time, keep pushing back the barriers of ignorance in whatever venue life finds you. Peace.

—Kevin McFadden

Retiree Rep.



On May 7, 2005, Gene Martin received his Hall of Fame Plaque from his brother, Dennis! Congratulations!

* * * * *
 * * * * *
 * Kathy Lennon is our Paraprofessional Unit President and the Paraprofessional Representative on the VCTA Executive Council. Kathy's name was inadvertently left off of the Executive Council page published in our New Member handbook. Kathy's representation on Executive Council and her efforts as Paraprofessional President are greatly appreciated by her unit members and the VCTA Officers!
 * * * * *
 * * * * *

VCTA New Member Program

For many years the VCTA has had a “Buddy” program in place to help our newest members become accustomed to our schools. Each year building representatives ask veteran teachers with at least five years of experience and a strong sense of the union to take a new teacher “under their wing” as their buddy. Generally, buddies are paired by grade level or subject assignment. The veteran teacher becomes the “go to” person for their buddy—answering questions regarding building procedures, contractual questions, forms and contacts as well as helping with teaching questions and classroom management. This program differs from the district mentoring program which all new teachers are required to attend. The district model provides more of a coaching ap-

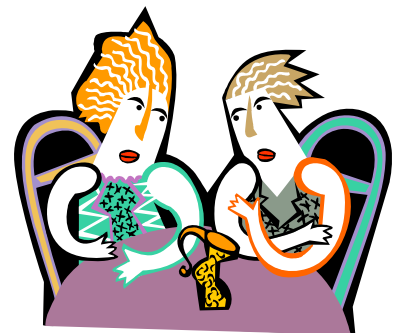
proach, while the union model is one to one. The district mentoring program is required as a condition of employment, the VCTA buddy program is voluntary.

It is hoped that the buddy program gives our newest members a comfortable resource to use as they become acclimated to our district. If you are a first year teacher and have not been assigned a buddy, please contact VP Rich Steger (5648).

Whether you have been asked to be a buddy or not, please help to welcome our newest members. We were all new to the district once and can remember how overwhelming the first year can be. Please be sure to make our new members feel welcome. Help them find their way around; go out of your way, de-

spite how busy you are, to let them know we support one another—the VCTA is proud that our teachers stay with the district for a long time. We feel that making connections that first year is crucial to our new members success.

*—Patti Lunden (HS)
Vice President*



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 Meghan Riley, 457-5899 for rates.



R.J. Smith Realty

Bus. (845) 561-2095 x-402

E-mail: markjtierney@rjsmithrealty.com
730 Broadway, Newburgh, NY 12550

MARK J. TIERNEY
Associate Broker



Valley Central FEDERAL CREDIT UNION



Valley Central Federal Credit Union

is a non-profit organization owned by you and operated solely, "For Your Best Interest".

Here at the credit union you will receive personalized service. We are here to address all your financial needs, so be sure to take advantage of our services. If you are not a member, we invite you to fill out a membership application to join our credit union family.

"Where people are worth more than money."

17 Walnut Street
Montgomery, NY 12549
(845) 457-5592/457-5862
FAX: (845) 457-3197
HOURS: 8 AM—5 PM
(M-Thu)
FRIDAY until 5:30 PM



MARY KAY®

Gheri Cola
Independent Beauty Consultant

60 Maple Ave
Rock Tavern, NY 12575-5007
(845) 567-6306
gcola@marykay.com



Robin Briand
INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT
459 Goodwill Road
Montgomery, NY 12549
Home: (845) 457-4063
Office: (845) 457-2400 Ext. 6610
rbriand@HVC.RR.com

Memory Keeping at Its Best

"Old teachers never die, they just grade away."

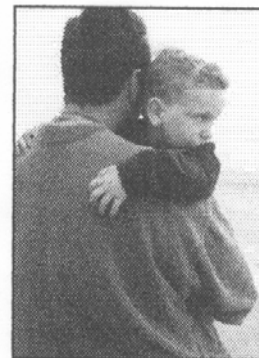
—Henny Youngman

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 Meghan Rilley, 457-5899 for rates.

Financial obligations don't end at retirement... Neither should your life insurance!

The NYSUT WrapPlan® Supplemental Life Insurance Program complements term life insurance coverage available to members. The plan coordinates easily with the NYSUT Term Life Insurance Plan and any term life insurance coverage provided to members from their local union affiliation or employer.



The common characteristic of term life insurance is that coverage typically terminates or dramatically decreases at upper ages or at retirement. When this loss of coverage occurred in the past, the options were limited. Members could apply for an expensive conversion policy, apply for fully underwritten coverage if they were healthy, or simply forgo the needed protection.

The WrapPlan allows members and spouses who are age 65 or younger to apply for a lesser amount of coverage (as little as 50 percent of their current term benefit), and have the protection increase when their term insurance decreases or terminates. This benefit, which can be custom designed for a member's individual family, financial and career needs, includes the following features:

- Coverage may be continued to age 95.
- Premiums may be set to produce as much or as little cash value as desired.
- Up to \$200,000 of coverage is available without a physical examination or blood test.
- Retirees (up to age 65) are eligible to apply for up to \$100,000 of coverage.
- Coverage amounts and increase dates may be adjusted to meet a member's changing financial picture.
- Account values accumulate at competitive interest rates on a tax-deferred basis.

You must live or work in the state of New York to participate in this program.

NYSUT Member Benefits negotiated several other features that make this plan unique. To find out more, call the plan administrator, Future Planning Associates, Inc., at 1-866-697-8897.

For more information about this program or for disclosure information about contractual expense reimbursement arrangements with endorsed providers, please call NYSUT Member Benefits at 800-626-8101, e-mail benefits@nysutmail.org, or visit www.memberbenefits.nysut.org.

VALLEY CENTRAL
TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

putting children center
vcta



1175 State Route 17K
Montgomery, NY 12549
Tel./Fax: (845) 457-5899

WE'RE ON THE WEB!!
WWW.VCTA.NET

President, Timothy Brown (HS) VM 7613
Vice President, Richard Steger (Walden) VM 5648
Vice President, Patti Lunden (HS) VM 7664
Secretary, Laurie Hey (MS) VM 6646
Treasurer, John Bonagura (EC) VM 2604

VCTA Executive Council
Building Representatives

Berea: Donna Clark, Erin Davis, Robin Sinclair-Scott, Carol DeMicco (alternate)

East Coldenham: Holly Bacon, Elizabeth Como

Maybrook: Donna Lloyd, Sandy Tarallo

Montgomery: Chris Brand, Gail Nozell, Toni Sperry, Mike Gonzales (alternate)

Walden: Kathy Bordone, Patricia Joy, Mary Ellen Mangiamele, Lori Myerson

Middle School: Mary Bleau, Tammy Coleman, Joe Collins, Joe DeVenuto, Linda English, Sandy Strauss

High School: Glenn Eckert, Bob Jurgens, Mindy Kane, Eileen Purcell, Meghan Rilley, Diane Ruggles, Doug Straebler, Carolyn Zayas, Glenn Taylor (alternate)

Secretarial Representative: Lucy Fox (HS)

Paraprofessional Representative: Kathy Lennon (W)

The VC Echoes is the official publication of the Valley Central Teachers' 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 Meghan Rilley, HS, by November 23, 2005.

Any articles submitted to the VC Echoes will also be posted on the VCTA web site.

Article 19 of the Retirement and Social Security Law ceases the 3% contribution for Tier 3 and 4 members after 10 school years of participation of service credit.

This is a direct result of your VOTE-COPE Contributions.

If you have 10 years of service credit, check your pay stub to be sure that you are not making contributions to the retirement system (TRS).

Extra payments do not increase your retirement benefit.

If you are still having the 3% deducted from your pay, please contact Christina Howe, Assistant Superintendent for Business at chowe@vcsd.ouboces.org and contact

Patti Lunden, plunden@vcmil.ouboces.org.



Upcoming VCTA Executive Council Meetings will be held on:

October 18th, 2005
November 15th, 2005

All VCTA Executive Council Meetings are General Meetings to which the entire membership is invited. The meetings are held on Tuesdays, in the Professional Library at the HS, and are called to order at 4pm.