



NEOEA -- Retired

A publication of the North Eastern Ohio Education Association -- <http://www.neoea.org/> -- retired@neoea.org
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Hank Haynes, Editor

**Miss Your NEOEA News & Views?
Go to the NEOEA Website
NEOEA.org**

**Stay Up to Date with the
OEA and NEOEA-R Websites**

Make a habit of visiting the **OEA website** - www.ohea.org and the **NEOEA-R website** - <http://neoea-r.ohea.us/> every week.

For links to up to date OEA and Retirement System reports visit the **Reports and Updates** page on the NEOEA-R website at: <http://neoea-r.ohea.us/reports-updates/>.

Union!

by Mary Alice Conkey, NEOEA President

So you may ask, why am I in this darn union? Is it to work toward changing the rules? Is it to serve my individual needs? Is it to be with a group when the ship goes down? Unions exist to serve the needs of the membership and the needs of the masses, as a whole. They exist to make the work environment cooperative, in order to meet the mutual goals of the union and the administration or management. Sometimes that means not winning at all costs each and every time. Other times it may mean not always taking a position which is totally contrary to the administration or management of the organization. Being in a union means we buy a membership in the union, not a service, through our dues deduction. The membership we purchase is much like a gym membership. We pay dues to become part of a larger group with similar interests and goals.

Education employees should realize they have bought a membership in today's union and, therefore, have a right to participate in the decision-making process for the group. We are all then governed by common rules for the work environment set out by the contract and laws governing the profession. The membership affords us the rights which are agreed upon by the group and the administration. If I find a right is being violated, I have a process to file a grievance, also outlined in the contract. If I have a complaint, there is a different process. I have a right to participate in the union's processes for grievances and complaints because of the dues deduction. No one wants a membership with no participation. Unions offer a reliable way to have an authentic voice in concerns.

There is no room for self-centered attitudes in a union. We should hold true to the belief "one for us all and all of us for one." This mantra will bring about strength and unity for the good of all members. It is important to hear all the voices of the membership and to select the

road which best serves us all. The union does not serve individual needs; rather it hears my voice amongst the voices of the membership, and the union selects the course of action that best serves us all. Once a deal is made, members need to respect the leadership, work toward spreading the good of the whole to colleagues, and move the union forward. It is not our role as members to be after-the-fact quarterbacks. The ultimate goal is equity. I may not appreciate every decision made or agree with everyone whose voice gets heard, but we're in this together.

Membership in a union means we do not leave any of our members "out on a limb alone." Unions protect and defend the rules, regardless of the person. The union's responsibility is to protect the rights, bargained or legislated, of the members. The union should engage in collective behaviors that ensure the stability and viability of the profession. Working against individual needs is required to guarantee the survival of the agreement and the health of the workplace and the profession.

As a union we need to be ready to dust ourselves off and continue our efforts to ensure the stability of our profession, the value of our workplace, and the cohesiveness of our group. In the current political atmosphere, we can't be angry or complacent in our union. Change may be necessary for the health of the organization, but it takes each of us to bring about that evolution. We cannot be braced to watch the downfall of the union—because the union guarantees our future. We must have an active, ongoing presence in, and influence on, the profession we have chosen.

Who is the union—we are the union! Engage in wearing our union on our sleeve as a badge of honor. If you are still asking "why am I in this darn union," I say to you—you bought a membership and it is time to show up, invest your time, and participate. You must participate fully, no matter what conflict arises. Strength in numbers, growth through community. We organize, because without such allied strength, we have even less control over the difficult work for which we must accept accountability.

Election 2012 Results

by William S. Lavezzi, NEOEA Executive Director

The campaign ads, the mailing, and the robocalls have stopped, and now that the election results have finally been certified, it's time to report on Campaign 2012.

It should be noted here that NEOEA doesn't make endorsements: endorsements are actually made by the NEA and OEA Fund for Children and Public Education. However, since all NEOEA members are members of OEA and NEA, and Association endorsements are member-driven, NEOEA members are involved in the endorsement

process. For simplicity, we'll refer to these as "our" or "Association" endorsements.

The 2012 elections were the first using the new districts based on the 2010 census. In the new arrangement, the NEOEA counties will be represented by 8 of Ohio's 16 US Representatives, 5 of the 11 elected Ohio Board of Education members, 12 of the 33 Ohio Senators, and 34 of the 99 Ohio Representatives.

Among federal offices, our endorsed candidates did well statewide: voters re-elected Barack Obama for President and Sherrod Brown for Senator.

Unfortunately, the same can't be said for Congressional seats: of the seven endorsed candidates for US Representative in northeastern Ohio districts, only three were elected.

Voters statewide rejected the OEA-supported redistricting amendment (this year's Issue Two). Voters elected Association-endorsed William O'Neill to the Ohio Supreme Court, but defeated our two other endorsed candidates.

In recent years, the Ohio Education Association has made a concerted effort to recruit and train educator candidates for public office. Four of those candidates ran in northeastern Ohio; one, John Patterson, was successful in winning the election for House District 99, which includes parts of Ashtabula and Geauga Counties.

In 2012, the even-numbered Ohio Senate positions were up for election. (In 2014, the odd-numbered districts will have their turn.) Of the five Ohio Senate races in which we had a position, our endorsed candidates won in four. Eighteen of our twenty-eight endorsed candidates for the Ohio House of Representatives won their races.

The Ohio Board of Education includes eleven elected members; each OBE district includes three Ohio Senate districts. The odd-numbered OBE districts were up for election in 2012; one of our three endorsed candidates was elected.

"Batting averages" aren't particularly meaningful in this sort of calculation because these offices aren't equal in influence, but if you add up everything I've reported here, you come up with a success rate of 64%, which is

up from 53% in the 2010 election.

With the new redistricting, chances are good that one or more of your representatives to the US Congress, the Ohio Senate, the Ohio House of Representatives, and the Ohio Board of Education has changed. To find out where your new district is, check the links provided on NEOEA's web page at http://neoea.org/committees_legislative.aspx.

OEA-R Delegates from NEOEA

OEA-R Delegates to the OEA RA and NEOEA RA were elected in October and attend the Spring and Fall Representative Assemblies of both NEOEA and OEA.

The 2012-2013 OEA Representative Assemblies will be held in Columbus OH on December 1 and May 10-11. The 2012-2013 NEOEA Representative Assemblies will be held at Elyria HS on November 17 and at Warrensville Heights HS on April 20.

OEA-R Members serving on the OEA Advisory Council are delegates by virtue of office:

- Beryl Burkle, BedfordEA-R – NEOEA Representative, OEA-R Advisory Council
- Adele Matias, Mayfield EA-R – ESP Representative, OEA-R Advisory Council

Twenty-six delegates were elected at-large statewide. The 2012-2013 OEA-R Delegates and Alternates from NEOEA-R are listed here by votes received:

Delegates:

- William Dorsey, PainesvilleCityTA-R
- Nancy Wonson, LakewoodTA-R
- Homer Adams, ParmaEA-R
- Gary Hollow, Bristol-R
- Hank Haynes, ACCESS-R
- Peg Ham, LorainEA-R
- Marsh Buckley, MentorTA-R
- Patricia Sharkey, North RidgevilleEA-R
- Hazel Haffner, Willoughby-Eastlake-R
- Marti Franks, Twinsburg EA-R
- Norm Hillstrom, MentorTA-R
- Bob Dengler, AkronTA-R
- Warren Hershberger, BarbertonEA-R
- Pat Wagar, Mayfield EA-R

Alternates:

- Donna Smoot-Walters, BarbertonEA-R
- Audrey Scuba, StowTA-R

2013 NEOEA-Retired Spring Conference

Mark your calendars. NEOEA-R will hold its fourth **Spring Retired Conference** at the NEOEA Conference Center on April 10, 2013. All NEOEA-R and ORTA members in northeastern Ohio are invited.

Tentative Schedule: 9:30 - Registration & Continental Breakfast; 10:00 - Introductions & Welcome; 10:30 - First Breakout Session; 11:35 - Second Breakout Session; 12:30 - Lunch. Tentative Breakout session choices: (A). Legislative update, (B). STRS, (C). Member Benefits, (D). hopefully an Apps workshop.

NEOEA Megaconference!

Come join us at this year's **Megaconference** on Saturday, February 23. It will be presented at Corporate College East, located in Warrensville Heights at 4400 Richmond Road. Registration and refreshments begin at 8:30 a.m., and workshops begin at 9:00. The \$15 registration fee (\$25 for nonmembers) covers a continental breakfast, lunch, and parking.

Megaconference features twelve simultaneous breakouts in three one-hour time slots. Topics offered fall into the following three themes: Leadership Development, Persona Development, and Professional Development with plenty of sessions for retirees. Download a schedule and registration form at; <http://www.neoea.org/Megaconference.pdf>

This year's **Megaconference** features a new Member Mobilization School, the NEA Bullying Cadre, and workshops on food and fitness. Hope to see you there!

OEA Member-Candidate Development Program

The Third Member-Candidate Development Program Academy was held Friday evening through Sunday afternoon, January 11-13, 2013 in Columbus.

OEA-R had six members attend: Debbie Bernauer, Brecksville; Judy Buschle, Lakota; Kathleen Purdy, Plain Local (Stark); Lee Schreiner, South-Western; Donna Smoot

Walters, Barberton; and Joyce Hawkins Williams, Canton City.

This was a comprehensive and collaborative effort to assist our members to put together a Campaign Plan to seek public office. John Patterson, an OEA retired member who attended the same training January 2012 and retired from teaching in the Ashtabula area at the end of the 2012 school year, ran against an incumbent for the 99th House District and won! This training helped him to secure his victory.

Retired educators that are interested in running for public office at any level of government should contact OEA Governmental Services for more information on this valuable training.



Pictured above: NEOEA Past President Nanci DiBianca and KSEA President Marissa Manocchio.

Intergenerational Mentoring Program

The **Intergenerational Mentoring Program** began its fifth year on the Kent campus. The program began with a "Meet and Greet" where they students and retired members meet each other face-to-face for the first time.

There are 18 junior and senior education students participating this year along with 16 OEA-R members as their mentors. The pairs stay in communication using phone, email and texting. It is encouraged that the pair attempt to meet on their own, possibly for coffee or ice cream, lunch or dinner.

At the conclusion of the school year a celebration of the successes will be held as we say good-bye to the seniors. But, this is not the end of the mentoring. If the student is still continuing their studies, the same pair continues to communicate until the student graduates. Sometimes the relationship

continues even as the student begins their journey as a teacher.

For more information, contact Nancy Wonson through the NEOEA-R website Contact Us page.

Is Your School Green?

Created in 2010 by the Environmental Concerns Committee, NEOEA's Green School Award honors schools within local affiliates that are leaders in environmental education. To receive the NEOEA Green School Award, a school building that is part of a local association needs to demonstrate having met at least one criterion in certain objective areas.

For more information and to download a nomination form go to the NEOEA website at: <http://www.neoea.org/NewsDetail.aspx?a=661>. The deadline is Friday, March 29.

ESP News

by Adele Matias, OEA-R ESP Rep

Retired custodians, bus drivers, education aids and many more retired ESP are contacting SERS to ask that the Silver Sneakers Program <http://www.silversneakers.com/> be included in the Health Care packages. Health plans around the country offer the Silver Sneakers program to people who are eligible for Medicare or to group retirees. Silver Sneakers provides a fitness center membership to any participating location across the country. Many community centers offer free membership and classes for Silver Sneakers members. Also on-line support for diet, to quit smoking and dealing with stress are available through this program. You can contact SERS at www.ohsers.org.

The NEA ESP Conference will be held March 8-10, 2013 in Louisville, Kentucky. Plan to attend and link-up with other retired ESP to see what is happening in other parts of the country. Congratulation to Pat Ramion, President of Brunswick ESP Association, selected as OEA ESP of the year 2013. Pat will attend the conference representing OEA ESP. For more information about the NEA ESP Conference go to the NEA website, <http://www.nea.org/>, click on "members" then select Education Support Professionals. I hope to "twitter" from the conference.

NEA/OEA Read Across America

by Beryl Burkle, NEOEA-R Rep, OEA-R

"Grab your Hat and Read with the Cat" will be the 2013 theme of NEA's Read Across America celebration as we return to the beloved Dr. Seuss tale of mischief and celebrate the joy of reading across the nation starting on Friday, March 1, this year's official Read Across America Day and continuing through March 8.

The NEOEA-Retired Organizing Committee will help you organize an event in at your local school or library. Contact the NEOEA office to get started and visit the OEA Read Across America page for tips and resources at <http://www.ohea.org/2013-read-across-america>.

STRS Board Candidates

by Bill Sears, OEA-R Rep, OEA BoD

At its last meeting, the OEA Board of Directors voted to endorse **Jim McGreevy** and **Bob Stein** for reelection to the retiree seats on the STRS Board. The STRS Board election will be conducted throughout the month of April.

We need to ensure that Ohio's retired teachers are represented on the STRS Board by knowledgeable and dedicated board members. As current members of the STRS Board, both candidates have valuable experience in advocating for retirees. McGreevy and Stein are committed to making sure that STRS is able to meet its long-term obligations to offer economic security and access to meaningful health care.

In order to gain ballot status for the April election, each candidate must submit signatures of at least 500 retirees with 20 or more signatures from at least ten different counties.

All STRS retirees, including re-employed retirees, are eligible to sign nomination petitions. If you are interested in signing a petition and are looking for a circulator, please contact Bill Otten, OEA-R Staff Liaison, at 800.686.4632 or ottenb@ohea.org no later than February 10, 2013. You can help ensure that these strong advocates for you gain ballot status. Every signature counts!



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NEOEA-R Organizing Committee

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- Nancy Wonson, Vice-Chair
- Adele Matias, Secretary
- Beryl Burkle, Board Liaison
- Hank Haynes, Newsletter/Web Editor
- Homer Adams
- Denise Bartholomew
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- Peg Ham
- Norm Hillstrom
- Nancy Javorek
- Richard Javorek
- Dennis Lewis
- Shelley Marchand
- Patricia Sharkey
- Pat Wagar
- Karen Wood

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NEOEA Discounts

Check the **NEOEA.org** website for complete information on these valuable discounts:

- **Dollar Bank** - Great discounts. <http://www.dollarbank.com/neoea/>
- **Liberty Mutual** - Special Rates. <http://www.libertymutual.com/neoea>
- **Best Benefits Club** - excellent discounts on quality products and services. Our password is NEOEA0613.
- **Cleveland Cavaliers** - are offering discount tickets!
- **Direct Energy Direct Choice** savings program.
- **Dominion East Ohio Gas** - home energy savings program to help homeowners reduce their utility bills, make homes more comfortable, and energy efficient.
- **Great Big Home and Garden Show** at the I-X Center - Members save \$5 per ticket when you order tickets online with promo code NEOEA2013. Please visit www.greatbighomeandgarden.com.

- **Honeybaked Ham** - Best Benefits Club (password: NEOEA0613) Save 12% on Honeybaked Ham gift certificates. Menu at www.honeybaked.com.
- **Park Place** - (discount airport parking).
- **PlayhouseSquare** - be sure to use the promotional code FAMTIX).

NEOEA Calendar

- Feb 15** NEA-R Delegate & OEA-R Advisory Council forms due
- Feb 23** NEOEA MegaConference Corporate College East, Warrensville Heights
- Mar 1-8** OEA/NEA Read Across America, Various Locations
- March 21-23** NEA-R Organizing Conference, Double Tree Hilton, Orlando, FL
- Apr 8** NEOEA Legislative Dinner, TBA
- Apr 10** NEOEA-R Spring Conference NEOEA Conference Center , Garfield Heights
- Apr 13** NEOEA Environmental

- Apr 20** Concerns Green Tour, TBA
NEOEA Representative Assembly, Warrensville Hts HS
- May 10-11** OEA Representative Assembly, Vets Memorial Hall, Columbus
- May 18** NEOEA All-Committee Conference, NEOEA Conference Center , Garfield Heights



<http://www.ohea.org/advocates-for-children-and-education-ace>

