



The Beacon

Western Region PTA®

New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc.
-Branch of the National-

February 2010

Region Director Report

It's February and we (well, most of us) have taken down our winter holiday decorations. As much as I long for spring, it is good to be in the lull between the holiday rush and the wrap up of the PTA year end.

Since our last newsletter, we have had the opportunity to meet with our legislators at the Legislative Breakfast February 6th and have celebrated Founders Day February 10th. Articles within this newsletter will provide you with an overview of the events.

Looking to the future, we have many upcoming events. In order of occurrence, I begin with the New York State Legislation/Education Conference February 27th to February 28th. At this event, we educate PTA volunteers advocating for children on the changes in academics along with issues affecting our children's health, safety, and environment, and the professional staff surrounding them while they attend school. WRPTA Legislation Chair Debra Ritz and I will be attending and returning with information to be posted in the next newsletter. Debra will also be participating in "Lobby Day", March 16, 2010. Please be advised all may attend NYS PTA's Virtual Lobby Day in the comfort of your home on March 17, 2010. Please mark your calendars and check your email for more information. Get the word out to your members to participate.

Our Reflections reception is a time to honor our talented children and support arts in education. Whether you have a child who has a submission for the event or not, you are cordially invited to attend this free event and experience Western Region's finalists' work. The date is April 30, 2010 and will be held at Big Tree Elementary in Hamburg. (Please note: this date represents a change.) Again, more information will follow.

Spring Conference, our annual region meeting, is approaching. It is scheduled for Thursday May 20th in the Ken/Ton School District at Kenmore East High School. As a region, it is our responsibility to provide leadership training that not

only assists you with your PTA responsibilities but in life as well. Remember, this is a legitimate PTA expense which is usually about \$10 and includes supper. The delegate(s) you choose to send will be bringing back materials to present to and share with your units. Your comments from previous conferences are taken very seriously and we continually make changes to address them and keep up with the times. Please stay tuned for further details as we are expecting a great turnout

With regard to unit business, you should have your nominating committee in place. Check your bylaws regarding the timing, make up, and other requirements for your nominating, budget, calendar, and audit committees. These chores can be difficult to get organized if you wait until the end of the year.

A final reminder, please see the enclosed forms for the Newsletter Award and WRPTA's Ruth Huber Award, given in honor of a very special lady for her commitment to our organization.

I hope the 2010 year will bring new exciting plans for you and your families.

Maria Eagen
Region Director
Western Region PTA



REFLECTION RECEPTION
FRIDAY APRIL 30, 2010
Big Tree Elementary School

WESTERN REGION PTA CALENDAR – 2009–2010



March 2010

Mon	8	Board Meeting - Ken-Ton School District Building
Sat	13	Jenkins Scholarship Interviews
Wed	31	FINAL MEMBERSHIP PAYMENT DUE (NYS PTA)
Wed	31	DEADLINE WRPTA Newsletter Award

April 2010

Thu	29	Board Meeting - Hamburg Central High School, Hamburg School District
Fri	30	Reflections Reception - Big Tree Elementary School, Frontier School District

May 2010

Sat	1	DEADLINE for Ruth Huber and Spotlight on Youth awards (WRPTA)
Thu	20	Spring Conference (WRPTA Annual Meeting) - Kenmore East High School

June 2010

Fri	4	Board Meeting and Picnic – site TBA
Tue	15	DEADLINE ANNUAL OFFICERS CONTACT INFORMATION ("Form A")
Tue	15	DEADLINE Leadership (Skzypek) Award (NYS PTA)
Mon	21	President's Meeting – site TBA
Fri-Sun	11-13	National PTA Convention – Memphis, TN



August 2010

Wed	18	Summer Leadership Conference (WRPTA) - 7PM - site TBA
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ANOTHER GREATNORTH COLLINS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTA EVENT

North Collins Elementary PTA hosted Family Get Moving Night on January 14, 2010 at the Elementary School. Over 75 students, parents, grandparents, and community members participated in various healthy activities including jump rope, basketball, hockey, rock wall climbing, Wii fitness stations, and healthy food taste testing.

The evening included presentations and information by Active Minds by Jan Mathis and Healthy Eating Transition Program by Mary Jan Bolo.

A building wide scavenger hunt was held to locate healthy tips and those that completed the scavenger hunt were entered into a drawing for a \$20.00 Wal-Mart gift card. Our lucky winner was Rebecca Holmes. Congratulations to her and everyone that joined us.

North Collins Elementary School PTA has more family fun events planned. Thanks to everyone who donated items, volunteered, and participated in the fun event.

Brenda Musacchio, Vice President
North Collins Elementary School PTA

Save the date....



Western Region PTA

≡Lighting the Way≡

SPRING CONFERENCE
&
ANNUAL MEETING
THURSDAY, MAY 20, 2010

KENMORE EAST HIGH SCHOOL
350 Fries Rd., Tonawanda, NY 14150

6:30 PM

\$10.00 per person

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DINNER

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WORKSHOPS

**

AWARDS

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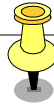
ELECTIONS

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For more information
contact Patty Frazier at 634-4340
pattyfrazierpta@msn.com



everychild.onevoice.



Western Region PTA is "Lighting the Way" for our units at the 2010 Spring Conference and Annual Meeting. All members are welcome to attend. Each unit should plan on sending their president or an alternate and 1 delegate for each 50 members (or major fraction thereof).

The evening opens with dinner & displays. WRPTA chairs will be there to answer questions & exchange ideas. Informative workshops are being offered. During the annual meeting, delegates will vote on new region officers, hear the reports of committee chairs, & adopt the calendar and budget for 2010-2011. NYS & region awards will be presented.

Patty Frazier
WRPTA, Spring Conference
Chair



BYLAWS NEWS

Congratulations to the following Units for completing their bylaws and getting approval from New York State PTA

Hamburg Central PTSA
Maplemere PTA

Congratulations to your Bylaws committees for a job well done!

Karen Whitelaw,
Western Region Bylaws Chair



Congratulations to Dolores Mason, dedicated PTA volunteer and mother of WRPTA's Diane DeJoseph, for earning an Honorary Lifetime Membership.

Congrats to Diane DeJoseph for earning the PTA Distinguished Service Award.

Awards were granted at the 2010 Founders Day, the celebration of 113 years of PTA leadership.



Do you know your AD?

My name is George Kimble. I am Western Region PTA's Associate Director of Assistant Directors. Associate Directors are members of the Region Board and as officers, serve on the Executive Committee of the Region Board. My job is to oversee the Assistant Director assigned to your PTA.

Assistant Directors (ADs) are also on the Region Board. They serve as a liaison, advisor, and resource to the units and councils assigned to them. Every unit/council has been assigned an AD. Please see the list on this page.

You need to form a working relationship with your AD. Keep your AD up to date on any issues your unit is facing as well as news of your successful programs. Your AD reports to me. I am available to assist your AD or your unit directly if needed.

You can communicate with your AD or any other PTA Board member through the "contact us" link at WRPTA's website westernregionpta.org.

Remember, your other valuable resource is the NYS PTA Resource Guide. It is available online at www.nyspta.org. Click on the Members Only tab. Enter the password and username that appear on the back of your membership card. The Resource Guide can be consulted or downloaded from the page that appears.

Western Region offers officer training workshops during conferences several times a year. We are also available to do on site training if you feel you need help with operating your unit. The trainings may be set up by contacting your AD.

Western Region's Board members are here to help your units and councils thrive and succeed.

George Kimble
WRPTA, Associate Director of ADs

Assistant Directors 2009-10

Please write the name of your AD in your 2009-2010 Directory.

Sue Andrijczuk—Frontier Council, Ken-Ton Council, Sweethome Council, Williamsville Council, Big Tree, Cloverbank, Blasdel & Pinehurst Elementary Schools, Frontier Middle and Frontier Central High School, Frontier SEPSTA

Etta Czaja—Buffalo Elementary School of Technology, Winchester Elementary, West Seneca West Elementary, George E. Blackman ECC #54, Community School #53

Anne Ehrlich—North Collins, Anthony J. Schmidt, Lakeshore Middle, Springville Elementary, Colden Elementary, Eden

Patrice Freeman—Transit Middle, Casey Middle, Mill Middle, Maple East, Heim Middle, Williamsville North, South, and East High Schools, Clarence SEP-TSA, Williamsville SEPTSA

George Kimble—Oracle, Community, Enterprise, Maritim, Global Charter

Shirley Lam—Cheektowaga Central Middle, High School, Pine Hill Pre-K, Union East Elementary, Cleve Hill District

Linda Leising—Heim, Dodge, Forest, Maplewest Elementary Schools, Country Parkway

Liz Sloan—Amherst Middle/High School, Smallwood Drive, Sweet Home High School, Glendale Elementary, Maplemere Elementary, Windermere Elem., Heritage Heights, Sweet Home Middle, Alexander Elementary, Akron Elementary

Kelly Stephenson—Hamburg Central

Karen Whitelaw—Alexander Hamilton, Ben Franklin, Thomas A. Edison, Charles Lindbergh, Theodore Roosevelt, Ben Franklin Middle, Thomas Jefferson, Kenmore Middle, Kenmore East and West High Schools, Ken-Ton SEPTSA

Directors: Assistant or Associate????

ASSOCIATE Director **O**ver sees Assistant Directors, chairs, or programs.

ASSISTANT Director deals with **I**ndividual units or councils.





Western Region PTA Reflections Program 2009 -2010 Winners “Beauty Is...”

All of the following entries have been sent on to State level competition. Winners at the State level will be announced in early Spring. Please help us congratulate all of our Western Region PTA Reflections winners. The winners listed below are currently being judged at the State level. We will contact any State winners once we are notified by NYS PTA. A reception for all the winners, their families, and our Reflections Unit Chairs will be held on Friday, April 30th 2010, at 7pm at Big Tree Elementary School. Invitations will be sent out in March. Thank you to all our participants and Unit Reflections Chairs. We are so proud of all our talent students!!

Diane DeJoseph, WRPTA Reflections Chair



Literature

Primary Division

Daya Iyer – Heim Elementary
Sarah Feely – Pinehurst Elementary

Intermediate Division

Rachel Valente - Charles Lindbergh Elementary
Jamie Carlson – Hamburg Central

Middle/Junior Division

Shruti Bidani – Heim Middle School
Kara Marzo – Transit Middle School

Senior Division

Chester Hochreiter – Akron PTA
Sarah Nizinkiewicz – Williamsville South HS



Musical Competition

Primary Division

Luke Schriver – Heritage Heights Elementary
Emma Rothkopf – Heim Elementary

Intermediate Division

Jamie Hanrahan – Hamburg Central
Louis Schriver – Heritage Heights Elementary

Middle/Junior Division

Teagan Faran – Transit Middle
Joseph Wandass IV – Hamburg Central

Senior Division

Benjamin Sternberg – Williamsville South HS
Shelby Lamond – Williamsville East HS



Photography

Primary Division

Reaghan Broadbent – Cloverbank Elementary
Nicholas Sanderson – Maple East Elementary

**A.J. Petri – Pinehurst Elementary

Intermediate Division

Alanna Krug – Charles Lindbergh Elementary
Juliana Newberry – Hamburg Central
**Caitlyn McNally – Alexander Hamilton

Middle/Junior

Eleni Casseri – Heim Middle
Allie Scumaci – Transit Middle

Senior Division

Stefanie Schmigel – Akron PTA
Rebecca Searns – Williamsville East HS

**Denotes Special Education winners



Dance Choreography

Primary Division

Natalie Pitillo – Hamburg

Intermediate Division

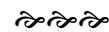
Emilee Davis – Maple East Elementary

Middle/Junior Division

Calista Athans – Transit Middle

Senior Division

Molly Kirwan – Williamsville North HS
Jessica Calzi – Williamsville East HS



Film Production

Intermediate Division

Gayle Petri – Pinehurst Elementary
Theodore Schulefand – Mill Middle

Middle/Junior Division

Lindsey Maclay – Transit Middle
Jack Jibb – Heim Middle
Cory Rusch – Casey Middle

Senior Division

Addison Sachse – Hamburg Central
 (“Youthful Spirit”)
Addison Sachse – Hamburg Central (“The Summer”)
Brianna Blank – Hamburg Central



Visual Arts

Primary Division

Jeanie Kim – Dodge Elementary
Victoria Birk – Pinehurst Elementary

Intermediate Division

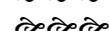
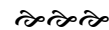
Ryan Bohem – Big Tree Elementary
Gayathri Varavenkataraman – Transit Middle

Middle/Junior Division

Maxine Riter – Transit Middle
Sherry Yao – Mill Middle

Senior Division

Rebecca Searns – Williamsville East HS
Krista Syracuse – Hamburg Central



Editor: Reset Mindset

I am on my local school board and on my BO-CES board. It's Budget Season and we are trying to crunch numbers that we made crumbs of last year. We have heard from our accountants, auditors, legislators, and lobbyists that the scarcity of state funding we face is bad, will be much worse next year when stimulus money is gone, and may never get better.

At every legislative conference we discuss unfunded mandates, what state, federal, local, or NYSED law tells us we have to provide to our students and schools but does not give us a bag of gold to pay for. Unfunded mandates are misnamed: they are indeed funded, in NY by our property taxes. I cannot explain in 500 or 5000 words the fairness or efficacy of education funding but do think it is time for smart people to come up with some better ideas. In my district we lost out on grants to decrease class size because we already had small classes. Now, that is about the only place we can look for savings. Meanwhile, we are required to have a principal in every school building.

I believe small classes are good for kids. I believe teachers should make enough to be middle class. I believe music, art, and phys ed should be taught by specifically trained and certified teachers and that these subjects are critically important in child development. I don't believe it is a good thing to return to what I experienced: overcrowded classrooms, special subjects taught by a classroom teacher with a tambourine, a jump rope, and construction paper, disabled children imprisoned in state hospitals.

I remember my 5th grade teacher: she looked 75. There were 40 kids in the room and they gave her an assistant in the afternoon. She would send one of us to the water fountain with a paper cup, take 2 aspirins, and fall asleep at her desk. I recall her wispy white wig slipping down over her forehead but that can't have really happened, can it? The

classroom mayhem was not educational and I hope we never return to an era when teachers cannot afford to retire.

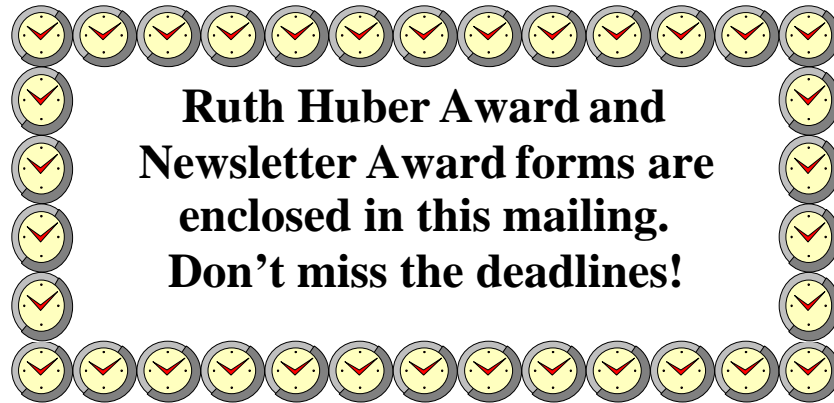
The PTA issue here is what we are experiencing in our units. Our cash strapped schools expect us to come up with money for computers, books, field trips, playgrounds, receptions, awards, music competition registrations, band instruments, sheet music, prom parties, yearbooks, photographs, honor society, team uniforms, band uniforms, and on and on. None of these is essential for our kids' education and all of them enrich their lives. None of these is appropriately provided by the PTA and most of them at one time or another are. PTA is a cash cow and should not be. Meanwhile, membership is down everywhere.

At Founders Day, we played parlor games. One of the games consisted of a quiz to determine personality type. The types were given the name of a color. I was green: bossy, action oriented, always right. We met in groups by color and had to come up with a story. The green team's story: Some day there will be a PTA that advocates for children, educates parents, and isn't a bank. The End. What if we all stuck to the Three-to-One rule: one fundraiser for 3 PTA mission-oriented programs? We would get volunteer speakers, we would give 40 people coffee and cookies, we would stop buying a mug and meal for every appreciated teacher every year. We would have to raise \$600 per year. The parents complaining about sending \$3.50 per person to State and National PTA and clamoring for a PTO could run their own candle sales to fund the playground and the other programs the school should pay for and deal with the liability on their own. And to learn leadership and advocacy, partnering with the Board of Ed, what parenting is about, the importance of arts in education, good health, and community involvement, the PTO parents would join PTA.

**Anne Ehrlich Beacon Editor
WRPTA**

*Call, text, leave a message: 961-8986 or email me:
annehrlich@yahoo.com .*





**WESTERN REGION PTA®
2009-10 OFFICERS**

Director: Maria Eagen
Associate Directors:
Diane DeJoseph
Patty Frazier
George Kimble
Recording Secretary:
Shirley Lam
Corresponding Secretary:
Sue Andrijczuk
Treasurer: Anne Ehrlich
Immediate Past Director:
Etta Czaja

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