

# VC ECHOES

An AFTCA and *New York Teacher* Award Winning Publication

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 10

JUNE 20, 2001

## The VCTA Executive Council



The 2000-01 Executive Council and newly elected representatives enjoyed a lovely dinner at the Spruce Lodge on June 12, 2001 following their last meeting of the year.

**Pictured are:**

*President Tim Brown, Heather Ford, Toni Sperry, Treasurer John Bonagura, Gail Roberto, (2) Secretary Laurie Hey, Secretarial Rep. Lucy Fox, Arline Friedman, Carol DeMicco, Mary Goldberg, Mary Bleau, Pat Darney, Barbara Winchell, Sara Ackerson, Beth Como, Donna Lloyd, Robin Scott, (3) Kathy Manning, Joe Fracalossi, Bob Jurgens, Vice President Rich Steger, Chris Brand, Patty Joy, Diane Paolo, and Mike Steele.*

**2000-01 members not pictured were:** *Randy Sutter, Joe Collins, Paul Dedrick, Dana De-Masi, Jane Hillis, Glenn Eckert, Jean McMahon, Kevin McFadden, Orin Segall, Para Rep. Kathi Russo and Vice President Jay Sussdorff.*

***From the President***

### Thank Yous and Kudos

*(not to be mistaken for Thank Yous and cooties)*

**A**s the 2000-2001 school year ends, I wish to thank the Executive Council for all of their hard work on behalf of children and colleagues. Your union

officers have had another intense and eventful year dealing with various personnel issues, work load and impact issues, grievances, public relations, legions of meetings, etc. Jay Sussdorff (*V.P.*), Rich

Steger (*V.P.*), John Bonagura (*Treas.*) and Laurie Hey (*Sec.*) have carried the lion's share of the work load and have kept me in line with their insightful advice.

*(continued on page two)*

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**One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, and with gratitude to those who touched our human feelings.**

**The curriculum is so much necessary raw material, but warmth is the vital element for the growing plant and for the soul of the child.**

*~ Carl Jung*

## Thank Yous and Kudos (*not to be mistaken for Thank Yous and cooties*)

At the June 2001 Executive Council meeting Jay Sussdorff and Mary Goldberg were unanimously approved as CBA negotiators for upcoming contract discussions. Jay and Mary are veteran teachers with a history of active VCTA/union involvement.

Patti Lunden has once again brought honor the VCTA as editor of the *VC Echoes*. At NYSUT's Annual Representative Assembly held in Rochester on May 4, 2001 the *VC Echoes* won the following Journalism Competition Awards sponsored by the *New York Teacher*:

- Award of Merit for General Excellence
- Award of Merit for Best Report on Community Outreach

- Honorable Mention for Best Article on Education Reform  
In the AFTCA's National Journalism Competition the *VC Echoes* won:

- Best News Story-3rd place for "Kids Help Kids Learn" (Jan. 17, 2001 Edition)
- Best Column-2nd place for "Where Will All The New Teachers Come From" (Jan. 17, 2001)

These awards will be officially presented at the AFTCA Conference in July.

I would also like to thank all active and retired VCTA/NYSUT members residing in the Valley Central School District who actively supported this year's school budget. The VCTA mailed

over 700 post cards to NYSUT members living within our district. The results of this years budget vote speaks to the success of this community/colleague outreach and is indicative of the caring nature of public school employees.

I will not officially wish you all a happy June, since most of you are already frazzled and worn out from the overwhelming stress and work that we must all face at the conclusion of each school year. However, I will wish you all a happy and healthy July and August in the hopes that your recovery is fast and you can return with vigor and excitement to the profession we love and do so well.

~Tim Brown

### The Fifth Annual VCTA Health and TSA Fair

**Tuesday, September 4th**  
**7:00 am—8:25 am**  
**(before Convocation)**  
**In the HS Lobby**

***Representatives from Health Insurance Companies and Financial Advisors will be present.***

At the Fair, you can gather materials for review to make sure that you have the best health coverage for your family and yourself, and give you an opportunity to consider investment options that will help you save on taxes now while at the same time preparing for your retirement.

*If you wish to change your health coverage, you can sign up for the new coverage in October 2001 and the change will take effect in January 2002. If you wish to open a TSA or change an existing TSA deduction, your window of opportunity is from September 2001 – December 2001.*

**The best way to prepare for the Fair is to take some time this summer, to review your current health coverage and financial investments and be sure that they best suit your needs.**



## At Politically Correct High School . . .



Students don't fail a class anymore, they're merely "passing impaired."

Students don't have detention, they're just "exit delayed."

These days, student's aren't lazy. They're "energetically declined."

A student's locker isn't overflowing with junk, it's just "closure prohibitive."

They're homework isn't missing, its just having an "out-of-notebook experience."

Students are not sleeping in class, they are "rationing consciousness."

Students are not late, they just have a "rescheduled arrival time."

Students don't have smelly gym socks, they have "odor-retentive athletic footwear."

Students don't talk out of turn. They're just "abundantly verbal."

Students weren't passing notes in class. They were "participating in the discreet exchange of penned meditations."

A student is no longer sent to the principals office. They're "going on a mandatory field trip to the administrative building."

It's not called gossip anymore. It's "the speedy transmission of near-factual information."

The food at the school cafeteria isn't awful. It's "digestively challenged."

## APPR Committee Calls for Feedback



The Valley Central APPR plan was written a year ago and approved by the Board of Education for our use this past school year. The plan included an Alternate Means of Assessment for tenured teachers which replaced an administrator's observation with a teacher's initial

observation. All plans were discussed and mutually agreed upon by each teacher and administrator during Fall 2000. By May 15, 2001, all classroom observations and alternate plans were to be completed.

Now is the time to let the members of APPR team know how the plan worked. Both positive and negative comments will be appreciated. Our plan can be fine tuned as needed.

Thanks in advance for your input.

~ John Bonagura,  
Treasurer

*Thanks to the VCTA members of  
the APPR committee for your  
hard work!*

Teachers are reminded as they prepare for next year's alternate assessment:

**Whatever you choose to utilize as your alternate assessment should take no more preparation for presentation than you would spend preparing for a lesson to be observed.**

## ***On Good Health and A Safe Environment*** **District-Wide (mandated) Health and Safety Committee**

**A**s per the State Education Commissioner's regulations under the Uniform Code of School Building Inspections, a committee has been formed and appointed by the Board of Education as a standing committee. The members of that committee are:

Nancy Brother, Wilson Bunting, Clare Ciardullo, Harvey Gregory, Karen Gross, Carol Jacob, Steve Puntar, Kevin Reidy, George St. Lawrence, Jay Sussdorff and Mark Tierney. These appointees represent all the constituents required by the aforementioned law. The law states that the committee is responsible for monitoring the condition of occupied school buildings to assure they are safe and maintained in a state of good repair. During construction, the committee also must include the site manager, in our case, Scott Call.

The second requirement of the committee is to see to the develop-

*...the committee is to see to the development of a district-wide school safety plan designed to prevent or minimize the effects of serious violent incidents and emergencies...*

ment of a district wide school safety plan designed to prevent or minimize the effects of serious violent incidents and emergencies and to facilitate the coordination of the district with local and county resources in the event of such incidents or emergencies. (This is based on the SAVE legislation and is tied into the Code of Conduct regulations which are also a part of that same legislation. See companion article by G. Eckert in this issue.)

At our first meeting the requirements of these regulations were compared to our existing plans and policies. Where there was compliance, no changes were necessary.

Where there were gaps or adjustments to be addressed, those issues were reviewed, discussed and a plan of action arrived at. The plan is in compliance with the law and was adopted by the

BOE at its last June meeting. We feel confident that the various groups involved in this process have, in good faith, conceived a suitable document to address the SAVE legislation.



The committee will continue to meet (three dates are set during the 2001-02 school year) to discuss and respond to any necessary reviews of the safety plan. If you would like more detailed information regarding this plan, contact me at the

high school or at home over the summer (883-7204).

Wishing you a safe, relaxing and rewarding summer,

*~Jay Sussdorff,  
Vice President*

## **Valley Central Writes a Code of Conduct**

**S**chools must adopt a Code of Conduct by July to comply with SAVE Legislation (NYS Ed. Law, Section 280.2) The code that has been proposed for Valley Central addresses the following: Appropriate conduct, dress, and language; respectful treatment of teachers and administrators on school property and at school functions. It also includes a range of disciplinary measures which may be imposed for violation of the Code. The role of teachers, administrators, and parent/guardians are also explained. Pending BOE approval, the code will become part

of the teacher handbook.

The aspect of most interest of the VC Code is Section C:

“Provisions for the removal from the Classroom and from School Property Including a School Function of Students and Other Persons who violate the Code.” Teachers will have authority to remove disruptive students for up to two days. This will require that a specific sequence of events occur. Student removal will follow 1 of 2 paths:

A) Student removal from a particular class can addressed via the current referral process .

- or -

B) The following 2 day removal procedure can be followed. The choice is up to the discretion of the teacher.

### The Two-Day Removal Process

- 1) Student can be removed if he/she is either a danger, or poses an ongoing threat of disruption. Teacher gives student an opportunity within 24 hours to present his/her version of

*(continued on page five)*

## Fire, Fire! What to do if disaster strikes at school...

The June 6 New York Teacher featured an article about the efforts of teachers to maintain a learning environment after a fire at New Lane Elementary School in Middle Country, Long Island, forced the relocation of classes.

On April 18, an electrical fire ripped through the 1,200-student elementary school. The students plus a staff of more than 100 have been relocated to other schools, teaching in converted closets, auditoriums and gymnasiums to finish the school year.

The Middle Country Secretaries Association, led by Anna Rung, and the Middle Country Teachers Association, led by Vernon Lambert, have offered some thoughts to help colleagues think

about the implications of a school fire.

Before a disaster strikes:

- Check into your homeowners or rental insurance policy. Are your personal items covered for damages sustained at work?
- Teachers should keep records on what they spend with district funds and what comes out of their own pockets.



"I've heard people give the advice that you shouldn't bring anything you really care about into school," said Liz Raimondi, a fifth-grade teacher. "We're teachers. We

bring so much of ourselves into our classrooms, that's not realistic." But making a list, and keeping copies and receipts in a safe place, is a good idea.

After a disaster strikes:

- Set up a committee to deal with donated materials. You'll be overwhelmed with requests once anything happens.

- Meet with administrators on developing procedures to notify teachers as well as parents on decisions.

~ NYSUT's Bottom Line

## Valley Central Writes a Code of Conduct *(continued from page 4)*

events.

2) If student does not present a danger or ongoing threat of disruption before removal teacher must provide student with explanation as to why he/she is being removed, and an opportunity to present his/her version of events.

3) Principal must notify parents of removal within 24 hours.

4) Informal conference with parents is set within 48 hours if student denies the charge.

5) Principal's Determination: Principal must make a determination by the close of business on the day following the informal conference to either uphold or reverse determination. Reversal can only occur under the following conditions: lack

of substantial evidence, inconsistent with code of conduct violation of law or if conduct warrants suspension.

Summary:

*It was also generally agreed upon that the outlined procedure would probably be employed in a last resort type of scenario.*

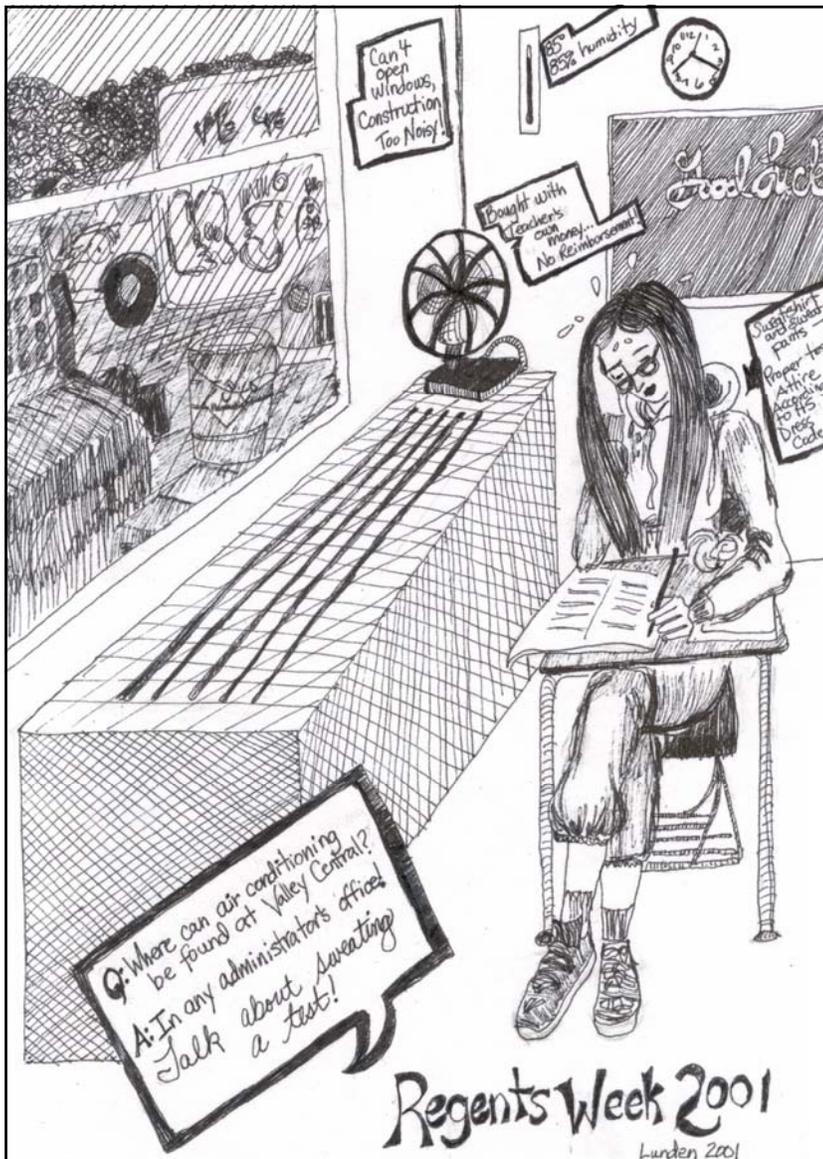
The code of conduct committee met on April 10, 2001 and May 2, 2001. Most of the discussion on May 2nd revolved around student removal process.

It was generally agreed upon that VC disciplinary procedures meet the SAVE legislation requirements. It was also generally agreed upon that the outlined procedure would probably be employed in a last resort type of scenario. It seems the legislation was passed with a non-functioning school in mind. Rich Steger and I both agreed the student

removal is a paper tiger. It doesn't give teachers much more power than they currently have. It also generates a lot of paperwork and wasted time for only a 48-hour removal.

~ Glenn Eckert,  
High School Rep./ Member  
Code of Conduct Committee

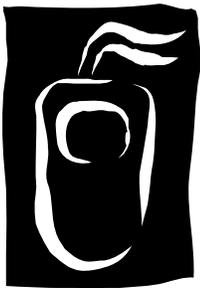




*“The teacher’s task is not to implant facts but to place the subject to be learned in front of the learner and, through sympathy, emotion, imagination, and patience, to awaken in the learner the restless drive for answers and insights which enlarge the personal life and give it meaning.”*

*~ Nathan M. Pusey*

**Congratulations  
to the  
25 teachers  
who received  
their tenure this  
year!**



**Connecting Education, Careers and the Workplace**  
**Preparing Youth and Adults for the 21st Century**

*The State Education Department will host a  
one-day regional conference on the new Regents policy  
on Career and Technical Education,  
and the learning standards.*

**October 22, 2001 8:00 am—3:00 pm**

**Crowne Plaza, White Plains**

*For information, call the Two-Year College Development Center of SED's Office of Workforce Preparation and Continuing Education at (518) 442-5590, or visit the Web site at*

## New Member Surveys

The end of the school year brings joy to students and teachers. New teachers will experience relief and a time to reflect on the past school year. While you are reviewing the positives and negatives of the past year, the new member committee is busy preparing for next year. We are asking for your assistance in making improvements to the new member program for next year.

Teachers with 1 or 2 years of service can complete both surveys. All teachers, regardless of years of service can complete the "New Member Program Survey." Congratulations on completing the school year! Have a relaxing summer!

~ Rich Steger, Vice President

### **New Member Program Survey**

Years of Service \_\_\_\_\_

Below is a list of activities and topics. Please rank their importance with 1 being most important. There are blank lines for you to add new ideas- feel free to rank them as well.

RANK

_____	Contractual issues (check topics below that are of interest)
_____	Leave time
_____	Sick bank
_____	Evaluation procedure
_____	Professional development
_____	Work day, work year
_____	Professional development workshops (check topics below that are of interest)
_____	Parent-Teacher Conference
_____	Classroom Management
_____	Discipline with Dignity
_____	Study Skills
_____	Introduction to Cooperative Learning
_____	Student Success: Find and Play to Their Strengths
_____	Creating a Positive Environment
_____	Developing a Lesson Plan
_____	Classroom Setup
_____	Health & Safety
_____	Business Writing
_____	Benefit Issues (check topics below that are of interest)
_____	Health Insurance
_____	Benefit Trust Plan
_____	IRS 125 Flexible Spending Accounts
_____	Member Benefits (NYSUT endorsed programs)
_____	Other Activities (check topics below that are of interest)
_____	New member social
_____	Time to meet with other new members and their partner/buddies to share experiences
_____	Community activity sponsored by union
_____	_____
_____	_____

**All surveys should be sent to Rich Steger at Walden Elementary School.**

**PROFESSIONAL PARTNER/BUDDY PROGRAM EVALUATION**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

PARTNER/BUDDY'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

My experience with the New Member Program was (please circle one):

*Extremely helpful   helpful   not particularly helpful   not helpful at all*

My experience with the Partner/Buddy Program was (please circle one):

*Extremely helpful   helpful   not particularly helpful   not helpful at all*

I found the New Member orientation to be (please circle one):

*Extremely helpful   helpful   not particularly helpful   not helpful at all*

I found the New Member packet materials to be (please circle one):

*Extremely helpful   helpful   not particularly helpful   not helpful at all*

The most worthwhile New Member activity (orientation, social, workshop, etc.) I attended was:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The most worthwhile aspect of the Buddy Program was:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I would like to continue in the Buddy Program next year because:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other activities I would recommend be included in the New Member Program are:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please return survey to Rich Steger at  
Walden Elementary School.**



## News from Your Professional Development Team

The new Valley Central Professional Development Team (PDT) has been actively working to formulate a professional development plan for our district. The PDT has met monthly for about two years, sometimes twice monthly during the first year. The first year was devoted to writing our district plan, and this year we concentrated on fine tuning it and planning our May 25th Conference Day. We wanted to make sure the focus of the day was based on your numerous requests and suggestions for more computer training actually working on the computers and time for grade-level articulation to discuss problems, solutions, and concerns.

Since the district was in the process of outfitting the computer labs with new computers and programs, it was important to have at least a half-day technology train-

ing on Conference Day. We asked that the VC staff sign up for their own appropriate mastery level of computer savvy. That is how each person was assigned. We couldn't help but notice how actively involved people in the labs were as we walked around during the morning session. Although there were some minor "glitches", your overall comments regarding the technology part of the day were positive.

Your evaluations of the conference day have been read and suggestions and requests are seriously discussed. The PDT will do its best to include them in future conferences. Also, be aware that some of your requests for professional development can be met through in-service courses offered both at BOCES and at Valley

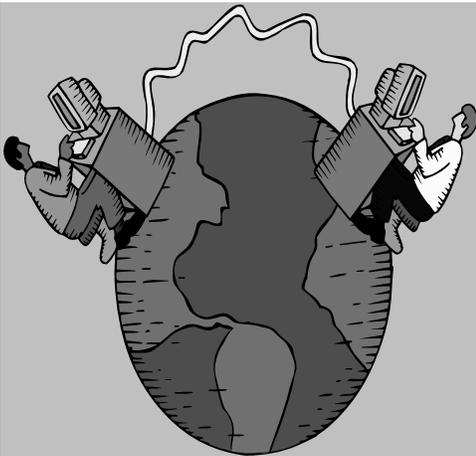
Central.

The VCTA members of the Professional Development Team are: Ruthanne Giattino, Jane Hillis, Mary Bleau, Laurie Hey, Eileen Panagiotopoulos, Rich Steger, and John Bonagura. Dr. Nugent, Mr. Hunter, Mrs. Feldman and Mr. Imperati are the administrative members. Please feel free to let us know your concerns and ideas regarding professional development.



*~John Bonagura,  
Treasurer*

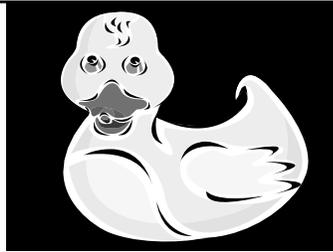
*Thanks to the VCTA members of  
the PDT for giving of yourselves  
to the improvement of us all.*



**The VCTA is  
seeking a  
WEB MASTER  
to improve, maintain, and  
update the VCTA Web Page.  
*This will be a paid position.***

**If you are interested,  
contact President Tim Brown, 457-5899**

**Rubber Ducky,  
you're the one!**



**The Million Dollar Duck Race  
Thursday, June 28, 2001  
6:00 PM—9:30 PM**

*To Benefit Special Olympics New York  
Drop Zone: Brooklyn Bridge  
Finish Line: South Street Seaport, Pier 17*

Adopt a duck for a \$5 donation to Special Olympics New York and win great prizes! For more information, call (212) 490-1062 or log on:  
[www.specialolympicsnewyork.org](http://www.specialolympicsnewyork.org)

### **Walk For Juvenile Diabetes**

Gail Roberto (*Berea*) is seeking VCTA members who would be interested in participating in a walk for Juvenile Diabetes.

Each walker is required to collect

\$75 in pledges.

The walk is being held on September 30th.

If you are interested, contact Gail at Berea Elementary.



**The first meeting of the  
VCTA Executive Council  
for the 2001-2002 school year  
will be on  
Tuesday, September 11  
at 3:45 pm in the  
VCHS Professional Library.**

*Executive Council meetings are general meetings and open to the VCTA membership. Members may address the Council at the end of the agenda.*

Please note the following address for Workman's Compensation Claims in the Valley Central School District:

**Wright Risk Management, 377 Oak Street, Garden City, NY**

**For help with Workman's Compensation, call Marvin Anderman, 212-227-2300 (by advice of NYSUT)**



### **The New Requirement for Teachers Seeking Permanent Certification**

*As of Feb. 2, 2001 provisionally certified teachers seeking permanent certification or teachers seeking an additional certificate are required to complete a two-hour School Violence Prevention Training workshop.*

**According to Section 100.2 of the commissioner's regulation's of last year's safe schools law, school districts and BOCES must include annual training in school-violence prevention and intervention in their required professional development plans for teachers and other certified employees.**

**Upon request of the employee, the district or BOCES provides the employee with a certificate of completion.**

**This certificate may then be mailed to the State Education Department to fulfill the requirement.**

## Teacher Salaries Lag Behind Inflation

**T**eacher salaries nationwide failed to keep up with inflation last year, according to American Federation of Teachers' 1999-2000 salary survey just released and available at [www.aft.org/press/2001/051601.html](http://www.aft.org/press/2001/051601.html). The average teacher salary increase was among the smallest in 40 years, while the average beginning salary increase actually was less than the year before.

"Given the continuing teacher shortage and heightened pressure for better student performance, it's startling that school districts aren't tearing out a page from corporate handbooks," said AFT President Sandra Feldman. "When teachers are paid as the professionals they are, the 'Help Wanted' signs will come down."

In New York state the me-

dian teacher salary (*half make more and half make less*) for the 1999-2000 school year was \$51,020, with Connecticut's average teacher pay ranked number one at \$52,410. The national average was \$41,820. The state median was up 3.1% from the previous year, while the national average teacher pay increased 3.2%. The national inflation rate for the same period was 3.4%.

The AFT study said the average salary for new teachers last year was \$27,989. This compares with a \$31,910 average paid new teachers in New York

state. Beginning teachers contin-

ued to lose ground to beginning salaries paid for other white-collar professions: engineering, \$47,112; math/statistics, \$46,744; and computer science, \$46,495.



~ NYSUT  
Bottom Line

## Secretarially Yours...



**J**ust an update of our Conference Day and our new contract. ...

I want to thank Diana McElroy for helping me negotiate the new contract with the District. We have never known such a wonderful and smooth transition between contracts. It was a pleasure to come to closure so quickly.

The District has enabled us to help them choose programs for our Conference Days. A first at Valley Central is the articulation between school secretaries for a smoother transition between schools and school years. We were given time to articulate during the last two conference days. I credit Ms. Maryann Wilson, Assistant Superintendent of Personnel, whose creative ideas have helped us plan these wonderful days.

The apprehension of a new computer program was addressed by providing the Secretaries and Paraprofessionals with a workshop.

The workshop was given by the BOCES Regional Information Center. It addressed concerns of transition and usage of the Sasi-xp program to Valley Central.

Training is an integral part of a secretary's job. We want to bring to your attention the BOCES Regional information Center provides for training for many of the new programs you will be getting on your new computers. You should check with your principal about the times you would like to attend these training sessions. If you internet access, you can obtain information and register at [www.mhric.org](http://www.mhric.org).

Have a great summer!

~ Lucy Fox

Secretarial Representative

## Highlights of the May VCTA Executive Council Meeting

John Solan (*HS*) and Kathleen Takvam (*Mont.*) were elected as NYSTRS delegates. Diana Shiner (*Walden*) was elected as alternate delegate.

Summer learning calendars were distributed to elementary building representatives.

There was discussion that this year's date for the retiree celebration was in conflict with college graduations. Retirees will receive a NYSUT handbook, pin, certificate and a VCTA certificate.

Arline Friedman (*HS*) made a motion to donate \$100 to the All-Night Grad party. Motion carried.

A schedule of VCTA executive council meetings for 2001—2002 was distributed.

The dues calculations sheet was distributed. Local dues are remaining the same, but AFT and NYSUT dues are increasing.

Carol DeMicco (*Berea*) made a motion to accept the VCTA budget as presented. Discussion followed concerning the pros and cons of various bargaining units within the VCTA. Motion carried.

The VCTA budget and building representative vote will be held June 12th. New reps will be invited to the June dinner meeting.

The VCTA is mailing a postcard to NYSUT members in the district to urge them to vote for the budget.

A memo concerning the OUSDHP was distributed. The memo outlined basic plan benefits. Information can also be accessed on the website ([www.ousdhp.com](http://www.ousdhp.com)). Minutes from the OUSDHP board meeting were also distributed.

A memo from Election District 14 was distributed.

An article from the NYS Labor-Religion Coalition concerning minimum wage was also distributed.

Information was distributed concerning the Summer Leadership Conference.

The BOE passes the Code of Conduct and Safety Plan and approved six textbooks.

Five teachers have resigned from the District and six have requested leaves of absence.

During public participation of a BOE meeting a parent spoke out about the HS dress code and said that it had handled poorly by the administration. Faculty and students were not informed about the dress requirements until after the fact.

Kevin McFadden (*Retiree*) thanked teachers who carried the petitions to support tier reinstatement for retirees.

Carol DeMicco (*Berea*) asked whether the district can require an injured employee to schedule doctor's appointments outside of the work day.

Toni Sperry (*Mont.*) asked for VOTE/Cope money be turned in.

Treasurer John Bonagura indicated that all teachers should have received conference day assignments.

Pat Darney (*Berea*) reported that DRA's (*reading inventory assessments*) are



### Meet the Executive Council

#### **Bob Jurgens, High School**

Bob teaches English, advises Youth in America Campus Club and Multicultural Club. He has been a member of Executive Council for four years.

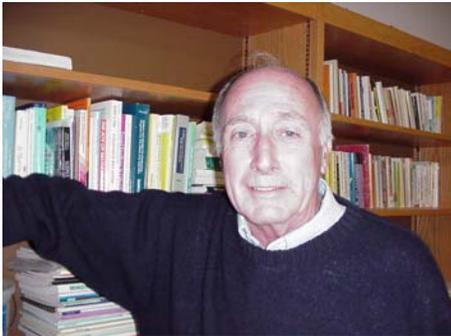
being administered at the elementary level with substitute coverage for two days. Those students who have not been tested in that time will not receive the same testing environment. This also removes the teacher from the classroom. President Tim Brown said he would discuss the matter with Assistant Superintendent John Hunter.

Dana DeMasi (*MS*) outlined special education concerns regarding triennial reports and the effects on time outside of the classroom. CSE meetings were also discussed, and President Tim Brown stressed that if a CSE meeting runs into your lunch time, you must be given a minimum of 30 minutes for lunch. He instructed that the building administrator should be immediately informed that your lunch period must be rescheduled— you should not wait until after the fact. Peter Meisel (*HS*) stated that teachers need to know their rights in CSE meetings— he stressed that decisions should be made by the entire committee, not just one or two of the committee members.

Arline Friedman (*HS*) volunteered to coordinate a local retiree VOTE/Cope Drive next year.

*The next VCTA Executive Council will be held September 11, 2001 at Professional Library, VCHS. VCTA meetings are open for members to attend.*

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



"President Tom Hobart said he understood concerns, but that retroactive benefits would be too open-ended and jeopardize the health of retirement systems."

Bull! Those retired now who might be eligible for tier reinstatement are known, the number of said retirees is known. How is that open-ended? Mr. Hobart is wrong and is selling out a group of retirees who are being discriminated against. (*See April 30 column of Mac's Musings.*) I will be writing to Mr. Hobart to share with him my strong sentiments. Perhaps some other retirees and/or active members would care to join me.

The VC Retirees join the active VC family in expressing the deepest sympathy to the family of Maryellen Meddaugh. Maryellen a central office staffer passed away recently. Condolences to husband Richard, son Richard and daughter Elizabeth.

### Last blast of the year...

I am so ticked about this that I will use quotes and phrases from the May 23 issue of the New York Teacher to purge my soul.

"Representative Assembly delegates (NYSUT convention) tabled or defeated a number of resolutions seeking retroactive improvements for retired members."

### Nobody asked me, but ....

The VC teachers and staff have alone another wonderful job this year, giving of their talents and of themselves to make learning meaningful for VC students. The retirees salute their active brothers and sisters. Good job!

VC will be diminished by the loss of this year's retirees. May they have happy and healthy retirement years. (*More about this crew in the summer edition/retiree lunch-*

*eon announcement of "Musings."*)

### Retiree's Alert

Mark your calendar for Wednesday, September 5th for the annual retiree luncheon. Last year we had 85 in attendance. Let's make it 90 to 100 this year!

### Amen!

Thanks to Patti Lunden for her kindnesses to this humble scribe. She is a first-class editor. Gratitude also to the VCTA officers for their concern for the retired members. And thanks to all of you who have turned each month to the back pages—active and retired— and who have shared your thoughts with me. It has been a privilege for me to represent the retirees and to write the columns. Special thanks to Orin Segall, who continues to be a great advocate for retirees on the executive council.

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

**Peace.**

~ Kevin McFadden

## Retiree Class of 2001

May the Road rise to Meet You.  
May the Wind be Always at your Back.  
May the Sun shine Warm upon your Face.  
The Rains Fall Soft upon your Fields.



*Arline Friedman, Jim Tate, Marc Newman, Karin Lyons, Derek Taylor, Barbara Winchell, Ernie Pettine, Carol Hochreiter, Brenda Oretsky, Genevieve Fox*

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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.

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should leave much to be desired.  
~ Alan Gregg**

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

Valley Central Teachers' Association
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Montgomery, NY 12549
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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 August 20, 2001. Any articles submitted to the VC Echoes will also be posted on the VCTA Web page.

At the June 12, 2001 meeting of the Executive Council,

Vice President Jay Sussdorff and Building Representative Mary Goldberg

were appointed as negotiators for the VCTA.

It is the hope of President Tim Brown and the Executive Council,

that informal negotiations can begin as soon as possible.

The present Collective Bargaining Agreement expires on June 30, 2002.

The three best things about teaching...

Whenever I see that bumper sticker that says "The three best things about teaching...June, July, August", it still makes me smile even after sixteen years! This past week I was talking to a teacher who said, "My students are happy it's summer, but they're not half as happy as I am."

Now such a conversation could be easily turned by someone not in education, but educators know the importance of summer. I get excited in June as I reflect on the past year and begin to plan for the next one. One of the best things in teaching is the chance to do something over, to

perfect our craft.

Summer is a wonderful time to do professional development which is not necessarily just taking some workshop, but taking the time to read, to create, to just have time to think about teaching (instead of thinking about the paperwork of teaching!) This is the professional development which makes a difference and teachers have been engaging in this type of professional development long before the Commissioner thought to make professional development a requirement. Summer gives teachers the opportunity to refresh themselves, to get back in touch with the reasons they answered the call to



teach in the first place.

I hope each of you will make the most of the ten week journey into the soothing calmness of summer. See you in September.

~ Patti Lunden