

# FOCUS



*Volume XXIV, Issue 3, November 2010*

## **Nichols' News**

Thanksgiving time already!? Time is flying by. I see that every time I look at my daughters. Becky is a senior and was measured for her cap and gown the other day. Sarah is learning to drive. Let me just say that I have new respect for our Driver Education Teachers!

It is also budget time. As you know, our system here at ESM requires us to tie our budgetary needs to what we are doing in the classroom. That is actually a good thing because it means your budget is very defensible, and it also means the administration can speak about how accountable our budget is to the taxpayers. So keep that in mind when you are typing three hundred things into a spreadsheet and grinding your teeth...

There has been a lot of discussion this fall about the PLC time in the elementary schools. That isn't to say that it isn't important in the middle and high schools, but we did put specific language into the current contract about it. We are working closely with the administration to balance the

need for PLC time and the practical problems of scheduling, and coverage. Thank you for your patience.

Speaking of the elementary schools and having patience, we are also working the bugs out of the Progress Reports and Elementary Report Cards. Everyone I have talked to has acknowledged that there are issues that need to be fixed. These are being addressed. Stay tuned!

This December we will be having our annual elections for Building Chairs and for Building Representatives. All of your reps have, or have access to, our Constitution and Bylaws. They will use this in figuring out; based on building census, how many reps your building is entitled to. In addition, we are asking you to ratify a resolution passed by the Board of Directors for a small raise in Local Dues of \$0.25 a paycheck. We want to use this to offset rising costs for the office, for negotiations, and to give our officers a small increase in their stipend.

The Building Chairs will conduct the election and

ratification vote in each building by secret ballot. Anyone wishing to have their name placed on the ballot for Building Chairperson, or to be a Building Representative, should let their chair know as soon as possible. In the event of a contest, keep in mind that second place in a race for Building Chair does not automatically make you a Building Rep. Also in case of a race, we ask that a representative for both candidates be present when ballots are counted. Ballots will be kept and stored at the union office until the next election.

In case you were wondering, this year we will also be having an election in late May for Officers, Delegates to the Representative Assembly, Delegates to AFT, and Delegates to NYSTRS. But that is some months away so you have time to ponder.

We are still waiting to hear the outcome of some of the races held on Election Day. Some NYSUT endorsed candidates won, and some lost. Thank you to all of you who took the time to exercise your right to vote on Election Day.

Recently Chrystal Corbett and I had the opportunity to present information about our Teaching Learning Communities curriculum at the Social Emotional Learning Summit at the Double Tree. Howard Glasser was the keynote speaker and also a presenter in one of the break out sessions. He is the Executive Director of the Children's Success Foundation in Tucson, Arizona. He is designer of The Nurtured Heart Approach and the author of Transforming the Difficult Child currently the top selling book on the subject of ADHD. He has been a featured guest on CNN and a consultant for 48 Hours.

The conference was really good! Our Foundations teachers were there, as well as our school psychologists and other colleagues. ESM was well represented, and our own Barb Englehart is one of the organizers. But, I will tell you what made me most proud. Some ESM students were invited to be part of a panel discussion to talk about their experiences in our classes at ESM. Well, I want you to know that it feels wonderful to have one of your students get up in public, all poised and confident, and tell an entire room how awesome their teachers are and how much they have learned from us! I hope each and every one of you gets to experience that feeling.

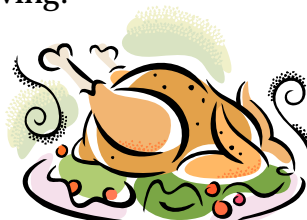
One of the take-aways I wrote down from the conference

was Howard Glasser's point about giving praise to students. He says that too often we spend a lot of time on the negative and with students that have issues, and when we do give praise to the students that deserve it, we tend to short-change them and just say, "Nice work. Good Job." What he would like to have us do instead of that is give evidence of why we are praising when we want to acknowledge when a student does well. Be specific, like: "Jami, I liked that you volunteered to give your presentation to the class first because I know not everyone is comfortable speaking to a group. You made eye contact and spoke confidently, and held everyone's attention." Now that is praise!

The Holiday Season is coming right up. For many families this is a stressful time, and the same is true for people who work in schools. Please remember to sharpen the saw and pace yourself. I know that the job you are doing is not easy, and there are a lot of demands on your time. You are meeting your responsibilities to your class every day and making a difference. You are doing a good job balancing your work and family and I appreciate it and I hope they do too!

Happy Thanksgiving!

*John*



Please forward any items you would like to be included in the next issue of FOCUS to Jami Mock @jmock@esmschools.org.

**WHAT'S YOUR EX'CUSE? T-SHIRT SALE**

**\$10**

Contact the DECA Office at 434-6711

Proceeds go to the **JIM and JULI BOEHEIM FOUNDATION**

Helping to Better Our Community

*"It isn't what you have in your pocket that makes you thankful, but what you have in your heart."*



## 10 Bad Signs for Good Teachers.....

(reprinted from <http://www.jokes4teachers.com/J0031.php>)

**Teachers are trained to watch for signs:** signs that the students are learning something, that the students aren't learning anything, that the students are onto something, that the students are up to something. There are some signs that teachers have not been taught to watch for: signs that could spell disaster. Here is a list of 10 such bad signs - if you happen to see one of them, beware!

1. The principal smiles at you. This is a very bad sign. It means the principal is up to something, and that something somehow involves you. It could mean the principal is about to ask you to volunteer to be the new coach for the girls' soccer team, or to write his two-hour speech for the Mothers' Club, or to accept three new students from the local home for delinquent children. If the principal not only smiles but asks, "How are you doing?" that's even worse. And if he or she then adds, "Could I please see you in my office for a minute at your convenience?" - run for your life!
2. Things are going well for you in the classroom. Many inexperienced teachers take this for a good sign, but more seasoned educators know it means things are going to go bad for you-very bad and very soon. Maybe you are about to change to another class, or smitten by a rare tropical disease, or your classroom is about to be invaded by a herd of wild plastic-eating termites. I know several teachers who believe in this bad omen so firmly that they have peace only when things are going horribly in the classroom.
3. Your classroom is completely equipped with audio-visual aids. If you walk into your room and see a record player, an overhead projector, a tape recorder, and a movie projector-that's bad. It's a sure sign that none work-because if they did, they would have been "borrowed" long before this. Just in case you test the equipment and discover that everything does work (you realize, of course, that the chances of this happening are one in a million), that's still a bad sign. It means that you have just been put in charge of maintaining all the audio-visual equipment for the entire school.
4. Your students tell you that you're their favorite teacher. If this happens, brace yourself. It means the kids want something. That something could be something relatively small: "Let's not talk about colons and semicolons today. Let's talk about football." Or your students could be bargaining for something bigger: "Let's not have any homework this year, okay?"
5. You are prepared for all your classes for the coming week. Any teacher who does this is only asking for trouble. You cannot tempt Fate so blatantly without expecting dire consequences. And what could some of those consequences be? Maybe you will be struck with the five-day flu on Sunday evening, or there will be a battery of psychological tests this entire week.
6. You have all your report cards finished a day ahead of schedule. This sign, closely related to #5, simply means that the administration has just introduced a new kind of report card, and the old kind (127 of which you have just finished filling out) is now obsolete.
7. Your students do poorly on your test. This is a bad sign- or at least the administration interprets it as a bad sign-which makes it so for you. It means you are an incompetent teacher who ought to be booted out of the classroom as soon as possible. If your students do poorly on a test sh-h-h!-don't tell anyone, not even your students. Destroy the tests, give a retest, and hope and pray that the kids do better-but not too much better. (See the next sign.)
8. Your students do very well on your test. This too is a bad sign. In fact, it's a worse sign than #7. It can only mean one of three things: 1) the test was too easy, 2) you are a stupid teacher, 3) the kids cheated.
9. You have a few free minutes to yourself after school. If this happens, one of the following events is bound to occur: 1) another teacher will report you to the principal for not having enough to do, 2) some kid will come in and ask if he or she could talk to you for a minute and stay 2 hours, 3) the principal will ask if you could give the janitor a hand with cleaning the bathrooms after school.
10. You receive positive feedback from a parent. Although this sign rarely occurs, it portends trouble. You can be sure that if one parent is praising you, another one is already initiating legal proceedings to have you removed from the classroom. When all is said and done, it's a better sign to receive no parental feedback than any kind at all.

## ESM Retirees Luncheon Dates

Always the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of odd school-year months.

2011- Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, and May 5<sup>th</sup>.  
Rico's Ristorante (Rt 290)

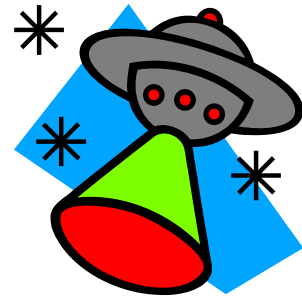
Questions-call Larry Loudis 656-3934



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- walk on the moon,
- be an engineer and build rockets,
- design and build a lunar colony,
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Apply for the Honeywell Space Academy for Educators Scholarship

All expenses are generously paid for by Honeywell

Applications are due December 30th

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Love wholeheartedly, be surprised, give thanks and praise --  
then you will discover the fullness of your life.

– Brother David Steindl-Rast



 beliefnet

# AWALK The WALK

**Where:** Rosamond Gifford Zoo

**When:** December 4, 2010 – 10:00am to 12:00pm

**Who:** For ALL Ages

**What:** A walk to help benefit the Ronald McDonald House of CNY

**Cost:** \$5 Donation



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HOUSE CHARITIES  
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***\*This event is being hosted by DECA students at ESM High School\****

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**Discounts** include TripMark.travel (hotels, flights, cruises and more), Wyndham Hotels & Endless Vacation Rentals, Motivano Online Marketplace, EPIC Hearing Service Plan, Powell's Books, OfficeMax, Bose, Barnes & Noble.com, Working Advantage (discount tickets and more), Philips Lifeline, car and truck rentals, Six Flags, Buyer's Edge Inc. (buying service), HEAT USA and Defensive Driving (online or classroom). Be sure to check the Member Benefits website, [www.memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://www.memberbenefits.nysut.org), for particulars on these discounts, because some you can only receive by linking off the Member Benefits site. Many have unique ID numbers.

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**Workshops** include Identity Theft, 403(b) Basics, 403(b) Employer Contributions, Inside the 403(b), Unraveling the Mysteries of Credit and Credit Reports and The Financial Planning Puzzle. Workshops are scheduled by

your local president, chapter leader, retiree council leader or retiree chapter leader.

To request information, call Member Benefits at 800-626-8101 or visit [www.memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://www.memberbenefits.nysut.org).

Some benefits may not be available in all local associations.



For information about these programs or about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits or refer to your NYSUT Member Benefits Trust Summary Plan Description.

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For more information about retirement programs available to employees of East Syracuse – Minoa CSD contact:

**Robert F. Abbott – 315.622.3333**

**Joseph Addison – [jaddison@ibrokernet.com](mailto:jaddison@ibrokernet.com)**

Services are offered through **Security Distributors, Inc.** a subsidiary of Security Benefit Corporation ("Security Benefit").

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