

FOCUS



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Nichols' News

What does Occupy Wall Street mean to us? What does it mean to teachers, to education, to our union, or to society? I have been trying to get a handle on this for a while. You can read widely and get a lot of different opinions. Some are not in favor of these people who are demonstrating and camping out in cities around the U.S. and other countries. Accusations fly around. Glenn Beck and other conservative celebrities such as Ben Stein, Elizabeth Hasselbeck, Kelsey Grammar and Frank Miller have said that this is not a credible movement. Beck has called the protesters "Marxist radicals" and insists they will "kill you."

On their own web site, the OWS people say:

"Occupy Wall Street is leaderless resistance movement with people of many colors, genders and political persuasions. The one thing we all have in common is that We Are The 99% that will no longer tolerate the greed and corruption of the 1%. We are using the revolutionary Arab Spring tactic to achieve our ends and encourage the use of nonviolence to maximize the safety of all participants. This #ows (sic- a twitter term I think...) movement empowers real people to create real change from the bottom up. We want to see a general assembly in every backyard, on every street corner because we don't need Wall Street and we don't need politicians to build a better society."

So I am giving you all homework. Please let me know what you think about OWS. Or go to their website at occupywallst.org and take their survey and tell them directly. Let me know if I am missing some vital piece that would give me the "Ah Hah!" moment I am looking for.

If you haven't noticed the lime green shirts and the buttons and stickers around the district, then let me tell you what it is about. Our sister union, the School Related Professionals (SRP's) are at impasse with their negotiations. They have been attending Board of Education meetings, and generally trying to draw attention to their cause: Binding Arbitration.



Still don't have a clear picture? The truth is, many of us are frustrated with the same things the OWS people are frustrated with. I know I certainly identify with being one of the 99%. But we are also somewhat frustrated with the Occupy Wall Street people too. It just seems like the organization ought to be more organized.

Binding Arbitration is really the last step in a Grievance Procedure. Before both parties get to that point, there are many other stages that provide the opportunity for an agreement.

In the ESM Board of Education Contract with the ESM United Teachers, arbitration happens only after a hearing before the Board of Education. In the

event the grievance is not settled to both parties satisfaction, an arbitrator is selected. The arbitrator has to be mutually acceptable to both the Board of Education and the Teacher's Union. At the time that the arbitrator renders his decision, it becomes binding on both parties. Please note, the arbitrator cannot issue a decision that contradicts any laws, and cannot usurp the functions of the Board of Education under the contract. Both the Board and the Union bear the expense of arbitration equally.

Historically, the ESM United Teachers cannot remember a time when we ever had a case that made it all the way to Binding Arbitration. In previous cases both parties were able to reach some sort of settlement before the Arbitration Stage. In fact, in almost every instance an agreement was reached before even Stage 3, a Board of Education Hearing.

Because we are public employees, we are prohibited from going on strike as a last resort to force an agreement. Binding Arbitration is a much more civilized method of insuring that both parties bargain in good faith to reach a compromise. Good faith bargaining is always the best and most desirable solution. Only in the event that no such agreement is reached would an arbitrator render a decision. The real point behind Binding Arbitration is to encourage both sides to bargain.

So what happens at Binding Arbitration? Both parties make their last, best argument and an impartial party renders a decision. That really doesn't sound too bad does it?

We have had our first APPR Committee meeting. If you see Cheryl Lavigne, Wendy Barney, Eileen Christopher, Matt Cincotta, Gina Gabriel, Denise McGinley, Becky Grossman, Pam Herrington, Taylor Hunt, Theresa Hunter, or Cindy Todd please thank them for their service on this very important committee. Then, give them a piece of your mind! That's right, give them feedback on S.M.A.R.T Goals, observations, assessments, student teachers, balanced classes, rubrics, and anything that you are worried about when it comes to our new Annual Professional Performance Review. We need input from all of you. You can email me too!

The faculty and staff at Pine Grove Middle School have been having meetings with King and King Architects to explain what they need to have in a 21st Century Middle School. I would urge everyone to make sure their voices are heard, put your thoughts in writing, and encourage Facilities Committee members to share them with the architects. We want them to design something that will be what the late Steve Jobs called, "Insanely Great!"

It is budget season and while you are planning what to order for next school year we are hearing from our beloved

governor that he is contemplating mid-year cuts and delays in our state aid. And he wonders why protestors are sleeping on park benches...

I hope this upcoming Holiday Season is good for you and your family.

Thanks,
John



"The Pilgrims made seven times more graves than huts. No Americans have been more impoverished than these who, nevertheless, set aside a day of thanksgiving."

~H.U. Westermayer



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sports. media. crafts. party. candy. room. style. now.

Our Event Will Begin On:

Date: December 3- December 18, 2011

Time: Monday thru Saturday 10AM-9PM; Sunday 11-6 (Holiday season hours are extended)

Where: Widewaters Plaza, 7954 Brewerton Rd, Cicero NY 13039 – 315-699-7815

**And 10% of the total dollars spent by our
Organization will be donated BACK
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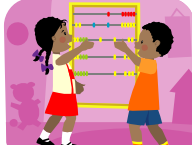
To be completed by a Five Below Associate

PRE TAX Purchase Amount \$ _____

Register #: 1 2 3 4 5 6 Associate Initials: _____

DAYCARE Openings

State licensed Home Day Care Provider in the North Syracuse School District currently has openings for children 2 years and up. Jacquelyn's Home Day Care has been providing quality child care for over 20 years. Call Jacquelyn Kotary at 458-8571.



Stephen Pacelli
Sure-Look Home Inspections and Radon Testing.
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with 27 years experience
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ESM Retirees Luncheon Dates



Always the 1st Thursday of odd school-year months.
Upcoming dates: Jan. 5, March 1, May 3
Rico's Ristorante (Rt 290)

Questions-call Larry Loudis 656-3934



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

Show your Spartan Spirit!!!
Spartan Flip Flops!
Sold by the **ESM Teaching Assistant Union**
\$15



Flip Flops are embroidered with ESM and Spartans. They run big as they are unisex sizes. (women's size 7=small)

To purchase, contact

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We raised over \$1,500 for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Western/Central NY in Celebration of Charlene Connolly.
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Staff Infection



Trappers on November 18, 2011

Education Beyond the Classroom



Honeywell Educators @ Space Academy

Each summer, hundreds of middle school science and mathematics teachers attend the Honeywell Educators @ Space Academy program at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama. Since 2004, over 1,600 educators from 44 countries, 50 U.S. states and two territories have graduated from the program. Scholarships for these educators are underwritten by Honeywell Hometown Solutions and through contributions from more than 1,700 Honeywell employees.

During the program, teachers participate in 45 hours of intensive classroom, laboratory, and astronaut-style training and simulations focusing on space science and space exploration. Methods for presenting scientific concepts and hands-on learning sessions are used extensively to make science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) lessons more relevant and effective. All lessons and activities are correlated to National Science and Mathematics Standards and are designed to be replicated in classrooms around the world.

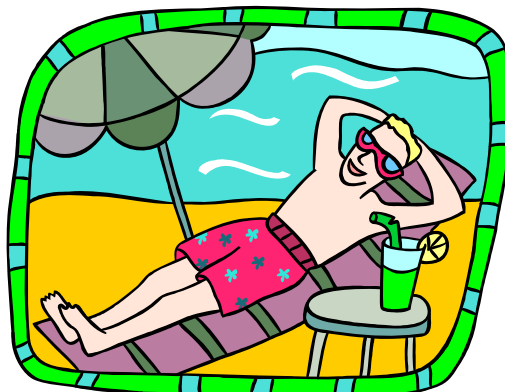
Applications available at <http://educators.honeywell.com>



Honeywell

Retirement Seminar

All are welcome!



PRESENTED BY:

Paul Farfaglia,
Teacher Representative
NYSTRS

WITH:

Stephan Lasher, ING

WHEN:

Monday,
December 5, 2011
4:30 PM – 6:30 PM

WHERE:

ESM United Teachers
Park Hill Office
303 Roby Avenue
East Syracuse, NY 13421



RSVP to ESM United Teachers esmut1@dreamscape.com
or call Judy Massena at 437.0109 or Ext. 2343 by Friday, December 2, 2011



A Message from Liberty Mutual

You could save up to \$327.96 on your car and home insurance.¹



As an employee of **East Syracuse School District**, you could save up to **\$327.96** on your car and home insurance with Liberty Mutual,¹ while receiving advice and excellent service from licensed insurance counselors. You will also have access to safety resources to help keep you and your family safe.

How many ways can you save?²

Multi-policy discount on home insurance

Additional discounts based on driving experience and car and home safety features

Features such as Accident Forgiveness, New Car Replacement and Loss Forgiveness

Contact Teresa for a chance to win a \$250 VISA Gift Card!

Participate in the launch of this new voluntary employee benefit! If you complete a car and/or home insurance quote³, or refer a friend or family member for a quote⁴, you will be entered in for a chance to win a **\$250 VISA Gift Card**, compliments of Liberty Mutual!



Meet your Sales Representative!

Teresa Rose

5015 Campuswood Drive
East Syracuse, NY 13057
Tel: 315-433-1243 Ext. 51825

Email:

Teresa.Rose@LibertyMutual.com

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www.libertymutual.com/teresarose

For more information on Liberty Mutual's Voluntary Auto & Home Insurance Program, or for more information on how you could be the lucky winner, please contact Teresa today!

¹Figure based on a February 2008 national sample of auto policyholder savings when comparing their former premium to those of Liberty Mutual's group auto and home program. Individual premiums and savings will vary.

²The descriptions of features, benefits and coverages are necessarily brief and are subject to the provisions, limitations, and exclusions that can only be expressed in the policy and related endorsements. Discounts, credits and benefits are available where state laws and regulations allow and may vary by state.

³Purchase not required. One entry per household. To be eligible you must not have been quoted in the past 12 months or be a current policy holder.

⁴Purchase not required. One entry per household. Current policy holders or those quoted in the past 12 months are eligible by providing a referral for a quote.

Coverage provided and underwritten by Liberty Mutual Insurance Company and its affiliates, 175 Berkeley St., Boston, MA. ©2008 Liberty Mutual Insurance Company. All rights reserved.

Are you keeping your family's best interests in mind?

The importance of having a will cannot be overstated – this crucial legal document protects your family during their time of grief and ensures that your wishes are honored.

Drafting a will can help provide peace of mind for you today and prevent unnecessary stress for your family in the future. It also allows you to name a legal guardian if you have children under the age of 18. In addition, a will ensures that your estate will be distributed according to your desires.

A power-packed legal punch

The NYSUT Member Benefits Trust-endorsed Legal Service Plan – provided by Feldman, Kramer & Monaco, P.C. – provides access to legal advice and assistance that is crucial when looking to create or update a will.

Each year, the plan provides for one simple will or update at no charge. A simple will provides for the proceeds of one's estate to be distributed to a specifically named beneficiary(ies), with an alternate distribution plan in the event that the primary beneficiary predeceases the writer of the will. With a simple will, proceeds are distributed outright with no conditions attached.

In addition to the simple will, you will receive a durable power of attorney, living will and health care proxy – all important documents to have in place before the need for them arises.

Discounted rates

NYSUT members can purchase the Legal Service Plan at the special cost of \$85 per year or \$55 per year for retirees; an Elder Law Rider and/or Business Protection Rider are available for an additional fee. Members eligible for payroll or pension deduction can take advantage of further savings.

Do you have other legal issues that you need assistance with, such as dealing with a speeding ticket or selling your home? The plan offers NYSUT members legal assistance for a variety of personal legal matters.

You will have access to unlimited, toll-free legal advice from plan attorneys; these attorneys will make phone calls and write third-party correspondence at no charge to resolve personal legal situations on your behalf before they become major problems. In

addition, when you enroll in this plan, you will receive two coupons for free, hour-long consultations with a plan attorney.

How to get started

You can enroll in the voluntary plan online by visiting memberbenefits.nysut.org or printing a descriptive brochure and enrollment form. Feel free to also contact NYSUT Member Benefits at 800-626-8101 with any questions about the plan.



Please note: if you belong to a local association that provides a group legal service plan through the local or its benefit fund, remember to take advantage of the plan's benefits.

The Legal Service Plan provided through Feldman, Kramer & Monaco, P.C. is a NYSUT Member Benefits Trust (Member Benefits)-endorsed program. Member Benefits has an endorsement arrangement of 33.33% of annual participation fees received for this program. All such payments to Member Benefits are used solely to defray the costs of administering its various programs and, where appropriate, to enhance them. Member Benefits acts as your advocate; please contact Member Benefits at 800-626-8101 if you experience a problem with any endorsed program. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.



Nov./Dec. '11

Breakfast with Santa

 Saturday

December 3rd

Free Crafts for Kids

E High School
S Large Cafeteria

S 9 am-11 am

\$5 Adults

M \$3 Kids 12 & Under

Supports our STARS that support us,
proceeds go to help host Christmas dinner for our Troops.

Featuring

 **Santa's Workshop**

Hosted by ESM Students
showcasing their talents
with a variety of unique
gift items for your
stocking stuffer or
special presents.