

FOCUS



Volume XXV, Issue 1, September 2011



Nichols' News

Now that school has started, I just don't have time to do all those things that I did last summer! I read a lot and don't seem to have the time to do it as much. However, if you read and want to share with others, I did create a Facebook Group called "The Great Central New York Book Club." If you want to say something about a book you read, drop me a line and I will put you in the group. I got some great ideas about books I want to read--when I have time again.

Thanks to all the people that helped out at the New York State Fair for ESM's turn at running the NYSUT Booth in the Center of Progress Building. We gave away so many pencils and rulers that if any kid in Central New York complains about not having something to write with...

Not to be a namedropper, but both Senator Dave Valesky and Senator Joe Griffo stopped by the NYSUT booth to say hello. We talked about the change in the ELA test dates in April. Senator Valesky followed up by sending our office a copy of the letter he sent to Commissioner

John King. In this letter, he scolds him for neglecting to seek schools' input and for placing a burden on both schools and families. Senator Griffo took the opportunity to say that he was glad that NYSUT won our lawsuit regarding 20% instead of 40% of our APPR being tied to student test scores. It is nice to know that our elected officials do listen to us and do care. I would like to point out that both senators are married to teachers. So they also have good taste...

I hope everyone enjoyed the ESM United Teachers Pizza Party. Thanks go out to Cindy Todd for organizing and setup. Also thanks to everyone who pitched in to sell tickets and work the tables. Let us not forget the incredible music from both bands. We can all be proud of the money we raised for such good causes.

We are approaching the deadline for people to let us know about problems with their schedules and issues of that ilk. You can complain to me in November about it, but I won't be able to help you much then.

Also, don't forget to write your SMART Goals for October 15. Because it falls on a Saturday, it might make sense to turn them in Friday the 14th of October--unless you and your principal work something out for a Saturday hand-off...

I already mentioned the Calendar Change. It was out of all of our hands so we are doing the best we can. This was not a shining moment for the brand new Commissioner of Education. Perhaps we should work on a "Commissioner-In-Need-Of-Improvement Plan."

"Politics" is often a dirty word in the lead up to elections. But "Voting" can never be a bad word! We need to exercise our right to vote. Sometimes it is inconvenient, sometimes we forget. Please don't let that happen again. Approximately 9% of our ESM members are not currently registered to vote, according to materials sent to our office from NYSUT. There may be explanations for this. Some of that information may be incorrect or out of date. If you moved, you may have forgotten to register. You may have thought that you were

automatically registered when you did something with your driver's license. Perhaps you got married and changed your name. We handed out Voter Registration forms at the Pizza Party and I can get more. Let me know if you need one for yourself or for a friend or relative. This is a big deal.

According to our New York State Comptroller, Tom Dinapoli, your pension is in great shape! The fund has been making money and has been doing well despite the roller coaster ride that is the Dow Jones Industrial Average. Why? Good management. Sound investment choices. Not letting the state government borrow against it. That last one is what has destroyed the integrity of many public pension funds around the country. But when you hear in the press that our pension is a bad thing, please know it isn't. Let's keep it that way. If there ever is a Constitutional Convention, number one on the list of things to do will be to get at your Retirement System. Be vigilant!



ESM is working to update our APPR in a manner that will make it reasonable, realistic, and relevant. Some schools are rushing to do things that they will only regret later. Frankly, ESM doesn't need to be the first lawsuit. We can let that honor go to others. Right now, we are doing the same thing we have been doing and when we have a new agreement, you will hear about it. It is a steep learning curve, and nobody really knows what it will look like in the end.

Speaking of APPR, recently I attended the On-Line and Blended Learning Summit Albany. While you are wrapping your head around how we can have so few administrators observe every teacher 2 times a year, with both pre and post conferences, think about this: If you were an administrator, and you had teachers teaching on-line courses, how do you assess those teachers? It seems very likely that we will be offering some form of online courses in the near future, perhaps before the end of our next contract. Online teaching is a different skill set, and you would also be measured differently. Classroom management becomes more about organization than discipline. I just wanted you to know that people are thinking about this stuff even if you aren't.

I will now put in a blatant plug for the CORE Federal Credit Union. In the interest of full disclosure I should tell you that I am a member of the Board of Directors of the CORE Credit Union. This credit union was established by teachers in our



district many years ago and was originally housed at the High School. Now we have grown to three branch buildings: East Syracuse, North Syracuse, Morrisville, and, of course, the Spartan Branch in the High School.

I am proud to say that I go with High School students to the elementary schools to participate in Bank at School Day. I see my students from class working the Spartan Branch. I'm proud of the national awards CORE has won for what we do. So let me ask you: Are you taking advantage of what your credit union has to offer? If not, stop in there and find out why everybody speaks so highly of Bill Sweeney and his staff. You won't be disappointed.

Finally, many of the people who were laid off last June have been hired back in some capacity. Not everyone though, and we are always working on that. How the next budget will impact staffing remains to be seen. We will keep you posted.

Have a great year!

Thanks,
John



ESM United Teacher's 2011 Pizza Party was a HUGE success!

Thank you to everyone for coming out and supporting our fundraising efforts.

Special thanks to Staff Infection. It's always a special treat to hear you. (Don't forget to give to Rockin' the Red Cross)

A standing ovation to Alter Ego! What a party! Thank you for staying through and helping us dance the night away!

Congratulations to all of the winners:

Paula from Woodland, Jan Ahlsen-Fremont, Thom Bailer-HS (Two time winner!), Mary Cook-ESE, Diana McGarrity-Minoa, Sandy Hough- Minoa, Ann Falkner (spelled correctly& two time winner!) Minoa, Denise Aaserud-PG, Robert Clakely-DO, Melanie Elbers-Woodland, Anne Byrne- PG, Joe Marko, Paul Kaczanowicz-Minoa (Two time winner!), Beth Richman-Woodland, Kelly Modelewski-CHS, Darlene Baker-CHS, Cheryl Longo-ESE (Two time winner!) Lisa McDougal-PG (Two time winner!), Carolyne Martin-Fremont (Two time winner!), Penny Tedesco-PG (Two time winner!)
Kris Diedrickson PG, Kathy Southwell-DO, Sue Corbett-Fremont, Sharon Rhoades-Bus Garage, Sandy Susco-HS, Kim Isbell-Park Hill

Thank you to all our family, friends, and local community members that donated this year.

Apollo Tanning, Dunkin' Donuts (Donna Stensland), Buffalo Wild Wings, Cookie Lee jewelry (Kelly Modelewski), Thirty One (Hayley Schober), Torchwood Liquors (Denise McGinley), Trapper's Pizza Pub I, II, and Stingers, Nestle (Ann Falkner), Wal-Mart, John's Service Center (Nancy Georgevich), The Caboose (Beth Richman), Wa-Noa, Tony's Restaurant (Mary Albanese), NGMP/Next Generation Maple Products (Steven Caccamo), Clute's Cakes (Lorrie Clute), Tastefully Simple (Colleen Knittel), Black and Decker (John Young), Texas Roadhouse, and Regal Cinemas.

Thank you. Have a wonderful year! ESMUT



ESM Retirees Luncheon Dates

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

Questions-call Larry Loudis 656-3934

**Blessed are the flexible:
For they shall not get
bent out of shape!**
~ Anonymous



Random Teacher Trivia

1. Teachers in China are highly respected. They hardly ever leave the profession and are reasonably paid. Teachers in Germany enjoy the same situation. Teachers in England are poorly regarded.
2. In ancient Greece teachers were paid higher wages than skilled craftsman. They received gifts from citizens also. The highest paid teachers in Greece were music teachers.
4. The great African civilizations from the time of the Pharaohs in ancient Egypt to the Kingdoms of Kush and Nubia produced teachers that were respected all over the ancient world.
5. In the U.S. the percentage of teachers over age 48 is rising every year. The percentage of teachers under age 35 is decreasing.
6. According to the National Association of Head Teachers, almost 25% of head teachers in England and Wales reported by survey they drank too much or were alcoholics.

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

East Syracuse-Minoa Cosmetology Class presents The Annual Craft Show



Crafters Wanted!!

Date: Saturday November 12
Time: 10-4 pm

Cost: \$25.00 for one space and table or \$45.00 for two

First Come, First Served!

For more information or to register call 434-3305 and ask for Bernie or Carol. You may also request more information by email: breppi@esmschools.org

FOR SALE



8'x12' Shed

(cost of materials)

ESM Carpentry 750-9451

One per Semester (First come first serve)

6'4" Walls, 8' Peak, 4' or 6' Door, 25 Year Shingles,
T1-11 Siding

4x4 Treated Skis, Treated 2x6 Floor, 3/4" Deck,
Cedar Trim

ADOPT A TROOP



HELP SUPPORT OUR SOLDIERS!!

In partnership with the East Syracuse Lion's Club, we have adopted a 38 man engineering platoon from Fort Drum which is being deployed in late October, as well as 6 ESM grads, 3 parents and 1 educator.

Collections will go through October 28th. Items requested are:

SNACKS:

beef jerky/slim Jim's
granola/nuts/seeds/protein bars/fiber bars/peanut butter/crackers/mini boxes of cereal/dried fruit/gold fish
hot fries/pringles/any individually wrapped snack
gum/hard candy/cough drops/chewy candies
hot chocolate/single drink packets for water bottles/energy drinks/instant coffee
ramen noodles/easy mac/minimeals in plastic(ravioli/soup/etc)

TOILETRIES:

toothbrushes/mouthwash(mint)/toothpaste/dental floss
fragrance free body and hand lotion
hand sanitizers/soap/BABY WIPES
WHITE socks/foot powder/gel inserts
fly strips chapstick/sunscreen
razors
sewing kits
air fresheners/febreeze
DEODORANT-NOT ANTIPERSPIRANT!!
shampoo
Baby powder, foam shaving cream, AAA batteries,
playing cards, Post Cards from places in the USA,
original stories written by the students.

Since we must respect customs in Iraq/Afg. we can not send any pork products. So, no pork rind snacks or any magazine showing skin. It's best not to collect any magazines.



FLU CLINIC

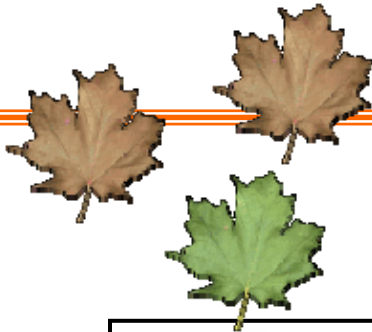


- **OCTOBER 19TH 2:30P.M.-4:30P.M.**
- **HIGH SCHOOL HEALTH OFFICE**
- **COST: \$30: PAYMENT AT TIME OF SERVICE (CASH OR CHECK)**
- **SIGN UP WITH CONNIE BANIEWICZ AT THE HIGH SCHOOL HEALTH OFFICE BY OCTOBER 12TH (Contact by EMAIL ONLY)**

THIS SERVICE IS OFFERED TO ALL DISTRICT FACULTY AND STAFF. IF YOU SIGN UP, PLEASE BE SURE TO SHOW UP, A VACCINE IS BEING RESERVED FOR YOU.

INSURANCE CLAIMS ARE NOT SUBMITTED. YOU MAY RECEIVE A RECEIPT TO SUBMIT TO INSURANCE ON YOUR OWN.

PLEASE CHECK WITH YOUR INSURANCE PROVIDER REGARDING FLU SHOT COVERAGE.



Organically Grown Apples

*Adams
Acres*



Come visit our organic orchard in beautiful hills of Southern Onondaga county

Pick your own operations Saturday and Sunday from 10 to 5

Starting September 10th

7047 Sevier Rd Jamesville, NY

Call 498-6654 for more information or visit us on the web at

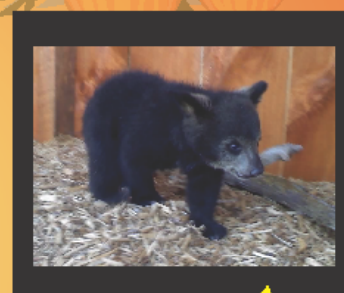
www.adamsacres.net



Every Weekend & Columbus Day
Sept. 17th - Oct. 30th
10:30 a.m.-6 p.m.

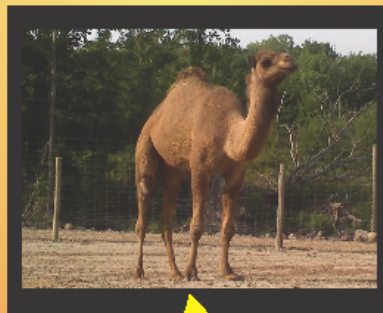
Fall Pumpkin Festival

www.thewildpark.com



Food & Refreshments

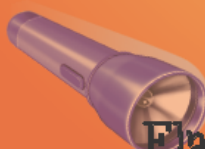
Crafts & Games



Pony Rides

Feed the Animals

Hoppers Bounceland
w/ 5 Bounce Houses



Friday October 28th



Flashlight Safari & Trick or Treating

Featuring
Many Exotic Animals from Around the World
Live Bear Show • Petting Zoo

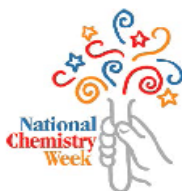
7621 Lakeport Rd. • Chittenango

for more information contact Jeff Taylor (315) 727-5587

**National Chemistry Week 2011:
“Chemistry – Our Health, Our Future!”
Illustrated Poem Contest**

As part of their National Chemistry Week (NCW) and the International Year of Chemistry (IYC) celebration, the American Chemical Society (ACS) is sponsoring an illustrated poem contest for students in Kindergarten – 12th grade.

Write and illustrate a poem using the National Chemistry Week theme, “**Chemistry – Our Health, Our Future!**” Your poem can be in any style as long as it is no more than **40 words**. Some examples are:



Haiku
Limerick
Ode
ABC poem
Free Verse
End Rhyme
Blank Verse



Example of End Rhyme Style:

Roses are red,
Violets are blue,
Sugar is sweet,
And so are you!

Possible topics related to health and chemistry include:

Hygiene Minerals
Nutrition Medicine
Vitamins

Winners will be selected in each of the following categories:

- K – 2nd grade
- 3rd – 5th grade
- 6th – 8th grade
- 9th – 12th grade

National Prizes:

1st Place in each grade category – \$300
2nd Place in each grade category – \$150

For more information about contests in your area, contact the American Chemical Society Department of Volunteer Support at 800-227-5558, x6326 or outreach@acs.org.

National Chemistry Week Illustrated Poem Contest

ACS Local Sections are encouraged to participate in the National Chemistry Week (NCW) illustrated poem contest by inviting area Kindergarten – 12th grade students to compete.

Contest Rules

- Poems must conform to a particular style. **No poem may be longer than 40 words.**
- The topic of the poem and the illustration must be related to the NCW theme, “**Chemistry – Our Health, Our Future!**”
- All entries must be original works without aid from others.
- Each poem must be submitted and illustrated on an unlined sheet of paper (of any type) not larger than 11” x 14”. The illustration must be created by hand using crayons, watercolors, other types of paint, colored pencils or markers. The text of the poem should be easy to read and may be printed with a computer, before the hand-drawn illustration is added, or the poem may be written on lined paper which is cut out and pasted onto the unlined paper with the illustration.
- Only one entry per student will be accepted.
- **All entries must include an entry form.** In addition, please write the student’s full name on the back of the poster.
- All illustrated poems and/or digital representations of the poems become the property of the American Chemical Society.
- Acceptance of prizes constitutes consent to use winners’ names, likenesses and entries for editorial, advertising and publicity purposes.

Coordinator Information

- ACS NCW Coordinators must develop the guidelines and deadlines for their local contest.
- NCW Coordinators must determine how many entries per school will be accepted into the local contest.
- ACS NCW coordinators will identify and submit a maximum of one winning entry in each of the four (4) grade categories to the national contest (entries from areas not covered by any ACS Local Section territory will be handled on a case-by-case basis).
- When coordinators submit entries to the national contest, the following information must also be included with each entry: local section, coordinator name and email address.
- **National contest entries must be received by the ACS in Washington, DC by Friday, October 28, 2011.** National winners will be announced on or before November 7, 2011.
- ACS is not responsible for lost, damaged, or delayed postal shipments and electronic submission is encouraged.

Entries will be judged based upon:

- Relevance to and incorporation of the theme
- Word choice and imagery
- Colorful artwork
- Adherence to poem style
- Originality and creativity
- Overall presentation

Let TripMark.travel be your one-stop travel shop!

- 1) Do you have plans to take a vacation with your loved ones this fall?
- 2) Looking to book a fantastic getaway to a beautiful international destination?
- 3) Would you like an easy to use travel site that can help you effortlessly book flights, hotels, vacation packages, car rentals and cruises for personal and business travel needs?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, the NYSUT Member Benefits Corporation-endorsed discount travel program offered by TripMark.travel could help make planning your next trip a breeze. Take advantage of one-stop shopping for all your travel needs: reserve hotels, flights, cruises, car rentals and vacation packages; browse destinations; plan road trips; or book group travel.

Online security

TripMark offers a simple online interface and advanced encryption technology that ensures that your personal information is kept safe and secure as you plan your next trip.

Helpful suggestions

To assist with your planning, TripMark also offers a variety of destination guides – offering recommendations for top-rated attractions, restaurants and hotels along with general information about thousands of destinations. Thinking about planning a road trip, but not sure where to go? TripMark’s website offers you many options, anywhere from one hour to six hours

TripMark.travel is a NYSUT Member Benefits Corporation (Member Benefits)-endorsed program. Member Benefits has an endorsement arrangement of 25% of net revenue 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.

away from a specified zip code, in any direction you choose. You can then search for hotels in the area that you select.

Strength in numbers

TripMark can even help you with group travel. Whether you’re planning a family reunion or vacationing with friends, get assistance and best available deals from the helpful folks at TripMark. For group travel only, get the process started online by visiting the TripMark page on the Member Benefits website and following the directions listed. There is a different toll-free number dedicated solely to group travel as well as a discount code to use for booking group travel.

Speak with a real person


Would you feel more comfortable speaking to a travel agent on the phone rather than booking online? TripMark’s knowledgeable agents

are available toll-free, Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. to assist with your travel planning. Please note that travel agents cannot currently book airline flights if you arrange your trip through one of TripMark’s agents; you can either book flights online or contact the airline directly.

What to do first

To get started with TripMark, visit memberbenefits.nysut.org and click on “TripMark.travel” in the Featured Discounts section of the homepage. There, you’ll find toll-free numbers for reservations, cruises and group travel, as well as a link to a NYSUT member-specific TripMark website. You can also contact Member Benefits at 800-626-8101 with any questions.





**Special Thanks (and major FISTBUMPS)
to the following for contributing to this
month's FOCUS:**

**Bernie Reppi
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Maureen Robinson
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Sally Mitchell**