Echo Newsletter

Information from National and New York State PTA and the Genesee Valley Region.

From the Region Director

Susan Brown, GVPTA Region Director
director@gvpta.org

Welcome to the new school year. I am Susan Brown, your region director. My job is to help you do your job by providing resources, information and support. At the region level we have Associates assigned to cover units as well as chairpeople in specific areas such as Reflections, bylaws and membership. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

I hope the new year has started out well. There are lots of new and exciting things going on with PTA this year. First off, the state has kicked off its new portal for information. Units will be using the new membership pages. Bylaws will be migrating there soon as well. Because we are going to a new system, it is especially important that you keep your contact information up to date.

Second, our state’s annual PTA convention is open for registration now. This event will be held in Saratoga Springs from November 11-13. There are a number of workshops to help you fulfill your PTA obligations as well as ones related to specific educational issues, child health and safety and advocacy. At this event we also conduct the business of the organization from adopting the budget report, to modifying bylaws to looking at our resolutions which guide our advocacy efforts. Information is available at the PTA website or here: http://www.nyspta.org/pdf/Events/Convention-Registration-Booklet.pdf.

Third, our region is hosting the state’s Reflections Roadshow from October 15-28 at BOCES 1’s 15 Linden Park location. People are invited to come and see the state award winners in this competitive arts activity.

Fourth, our Reflections activity will be off and running with a slightly earlier deadline so that we can host our regional celebration before the artwork is sent off in January.

Fifth, our state’s new PTA executive director, Kyle Belokopitsky, will be helping to spread information through biweekly newsletters to our members. This will be a great way to learn about important issues surrounding education and children. Using our new membership platform will facilitate this activity.

Lastly, our regional Partnership dinner is in early November. At this event we present awards for a teacher and administrator who have been assets to PTAs. We also celebrate the partnerships we have with our school staff. Look for more information in the weeks ahead.

I hope things are off to a great start.

Treasurer’s Corner

Lisa Christoffel, GVPTA Treasurer
treasurer@gvpta.org

Welcome to the new school year!

Some key things to double check and make sure have been completed as you start this school year:

- Your unit filed their IRS Form 990 for the 2015 year (July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016); please forward me an email copy of your confirmation if you did the epostcard.

- Your unit’s budget has been passed for the 16/17 school year, and you have the ‘official’ copy

- As you prepare for your first meetings, be prepared to share a copy of the successful audit that was done on last year’s books, a copy of this year’s budget, and a report on any spending or income from over the summer
Hopefully you were able to attend GVPTA's summer Leadership Academy and get more information on how to perform your fiscal duties, but if you couldn't attend, or if you still have questions, feel free to call or email me anytime.

Have a great school year!

And if you're not yet a member, join Genesee Valley Region PTA's Facebook group and page. I will be posting treasurer reminders and updates throughout the school year. You can also use that to ask questions, share successes, and share tips and tricks with other treasurers and officers in other units.

Membership

Julia Anello, Membership Chair

We are so lucky to have!! I personally look up to her awe-inspiring. She is a fantastic and wise lady, that I know having a new system roll out, after just one last year, may feel daunting. I think you are so lucky to have!!

There is a new award system this year as well: some you apply for, some you do not. One award to keep track of at this busy time, is the brand new Fast Track Membership Award which is automatic, you do not need to apply. To qualify, reach 60% of your membership goal paid by 10/31 and you will automatically be entered for a chance to win $250. Six winners will be chosen, and will be announced at Convention!

At our Summer Leadership Training this year, I focused on marketing. Hopefully, those of you who attended got some ideas, and have your creative juices bubbling. I can't wait to hear about all your plans!

I had so much fun with all of you, thank you so much for attending, for giving me your feedback, and for letting me talk so quickly to you all!!

We were lucky enough to have NYPTA President, Bonnie Russle with us for our Summer Leadership Training. I hope you had a chance to talk with her. Her dedication and generosity to our cause is truly awe-inspiring. She is a fantastic and wise lady, that we are so lucky to have!! I personally look up to her so much!!

I know having a new system roll out, after just having one last year, may feel daunting, I think you will find the new system to be much improved, and continuing to get better and better. Phase two of the roll out is loosely scheduled for March and I am excited to see what new enhancements NYPTA has in store for us.

If you are having difficulty with the new system, I am always here to help, please don't hesitate to reach out.

I can't wait to see what all of our wonderful units that make up Genesee Valley Region do this coming year! You keep me smiling and are all an inspiration to me as well! Keep up the fantastic work you all do - and thank you for doing it! You're amazing!!

2016-17 Awards

Jill Ehrlinger, Awards Chair

Now is the time to start thinking about recognizing those in your schools and your PTAs for their outstanding service to kids. There are awards that are given by GVPTA and also by NYS PTA:

Genesee Valley Region PTA Awards:

- Does your PTA unit have a special teacher and/or administrator who have gone above and beyond working for your PTA unit? Consider recognizing them by nominating them for these Genesee Valley Region awards that are presented at our PTA Partnership Dinner in November:
  - J. Ernest DuBois Educator Award: Genesee Valley Region PTA honors an educator (classroom teacher, librarian, or counselor) who demonstrates excellence in education through his/her work with children and youth and is an active PTA unit member.
  - The Genesee Valley Region PTA Administrator Award recognizes an exceptional administrator who demonstrates a commitment to education and to the children and families in his/her school, in his/her district, in his/her community and is an active PTA unit member.

- The forms and award information can be found on the Region’s website: www.gvpta.org/site4/index.php/your-pta/awards.
- This year's submission deadline is Fri., October 7th.

New York State PTA Awards:

- Are you looking to recognize someone incredible in your PTA? Or do you know of a student who is planning to go into the wonderful profession of teaching? There are several scholarships and awards from NYS PTA to help!
  - Jenkins Memorial Scholarship for Teacher Education – Deadline December 15
  - Youth Humanitarian Award in Memory of Stanley Marcus – Deadline January 31
  - Parents As Reading Partners Award – Deadline June 15
  - Leadership Award in Honor of Jane Skrzypek – Deadline June 15
  - Teacher Fellowship for Graduate Study in Memory of Richard Gazzola – Deadline June 15
  - Advocate in Action Award – No Deadline
  - NYS PTA Honorary Life Membership – No Deadline
  - NYS PTA Distinguished Service Award – No Deadline
  - Gold Oak Award – No Deadline
  - Diamond Award – No Deadline

For more information on NYS PTA awards, go to nyspta.org/YourPTA/AwardsRecog_AwardsDeadlines.cfm
most important activity in a child's education. Studies have shown that children who read at home are better prepared to succeed in formal education. The primary objective of PARP is to engage and involve parents in the essential task of helping their children become life-long readers. PARP encourages parents to participate in some type of reading experience with their children for at least fifteen minutes a day, thereby instilling strong reading habits. You are probably doing a reading program - how can you take it to the PARP level? 

Are you interested in becoming a School of Excellence? Join us Wed., Sept. 21 for an info webinar to learn how to start on the path to excellence.

The PTA is...

- A powerful voice for all children,
- A relevant resource for families and communities, and
- A strong advocate for the education and well-being of every child.