Echo Newsletter

Region Director: Susan Brown, director@gvpta.org

This newsletter provides 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

Hello everyone! I am your new Region Director, Susan Brown. I thought I would tell you a little about myself. I have two kids, Wiley, my 19 year old son, and Cat, my 16 year old daughter. They inspire me to do more each day for the kids across the region. During the day, I am a special education teacher with Monroe BOCES 1. I come from the small town of Ontario where I served as both unit treasurer and president. On the region board I have served as an assistant director, associate director, secretary and treasurer. This wealth of opportunities has led me to my new position and I am so excited to begin my tenure supporting you in all your hard work.

I hope the end of the year is wrapping up well. I know this is a busy time for you all and I appreciate the fact that you donate your time and expertise to our children throughout the year. As the year wraps up, please make sure you complete the annual officer update, form A, so that we can stay in touch.

This summer the state is holding its Summer Leadership Conference in Utica. This is a great opportunity to learn new things about your PTA position, information about parenting and school, how to complete membership and bylaws so you can stay active, how to inspire volunteers and so much more. It runs from July 22-24. More information may be found at www.nyspta.org/pdf/Events/SLC-Registration-Packet-2016.pdf. Attending is so worthwhile. I hope to see many of you there.

If you cannot make the state event, we are hosting one closer to home. On Wednesday, August 24th we will be hosting an evening training opportunity. Since this is close to home and a single evening, we hope many of your unit members can come. Look for more information in the weeks to come. ■

2016 Stanley Marcus Youth Humanitarian Award – Anna Crowell
Jill Ehrlinger, Awards Chair
awards@gvpta.org

The Stanley Marcus Humanitarian Award is presented to a junior or senior who best exemplifies the humanitarian principles of Stanley Marcus, who died in 1977 while serving as third vice present of the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers. He will always be remembered for his humanitarianism and dedication to youth through zealous volunteer community service - the very heart of PTA's mission. We are very proud to say that Stanley Marcus was from Genesee Valley Region and had been our District Director, so this award is very dear to our region.

This year's Stanley Marcus Humanitarian Award winner for Genesee Valley Region is Anna Crowell from Fairport High School, Fairport High School PTSA.

This year what especially impressed the award committee was Anna's continued dedication over several years to the Special Olympics. She became involved through her Uncle who is a Special Olympics athlete. Anna has been affected so much that she has decided to pursue a goal of becoming a physical therapist one day. As Anna has said, “[This] is the feeling...
that I want to feel every day at work for the rest of my life. This feeling, the joy and pride and amazement, is why I love volunteering with Special Olympics. These people will never know how much of an impact they have made on my life, which is why I want to continue to give back and make an impact on theirs.”

Very well said, Anna! All PTA members understand exactly what you mean.

Congratulations, Anna! ■

Treasurer’s Corner
Lisa Christoffel, GVPTA Treasurer
treasurer@gvpta.org

Hello to all PTA leaders, especially unit treasurers. If you did not get a chance to meet me over the past few years while I was the Region Director, I want to share a few things about myself with you, and then pass on some advice as you close out your school year.

I am a mother of three boys, one of whom graduated from college in May, one who is currently at Penn State, and one of whom is finishing his sophomore year at Odyssey Academy in Greece. I’ve held almost every position available throughout my PTA experience, since my oldest was in elementary school. I worked for Kodak for 26 years, but am now a freelance copywriter, owning and running my own small business.

I am a true believer in the mission and vision of PTA, and I want to be sure you’re all able to support it too, by having sound fiscal processes and enabling your unit to do the things necessary to be the voice of your students and families in your district.

Over the course of the next year, I’ll be sharing tips and reminders with you via the ECHO. In addition, I will be emailing regularly with the Unit Treasurers, checking in to make sure I answer any questions you may have about how to perform your role. I will also be putting those out on Genesee Valley’s Facebook page (Genesee Valley Region PTA). Please LIKE that page, and make it a favorite, so that you can get those updates. And feel free to reach out to me with any questions: treasurer@gvpta.org.

Advice for the end of the school year
(taken from the Resource Guide, which you should be VERY familiar with)

Before leaving office, the unit treasurer should:

- Bring a copy of the minutes showing the election of new officers to the bank when updating signature cards. Be sure the minutes reflect the names of out-going officers so those people may be removed. Check with your bank ahead of time to see what forms of ID are required.
- Arrange for the transfer of all records, reports and files to the new treasurer. Obtain and file new signature cards with the bank, so that the new treasurer will be authorized to sign checks without delay.
- Make sure that all state and national portions of dues have been collected and forwarded to the state PTA office. Even if dues have come in after May 31st, they still need to be remitted to NYS PTA. Memberships can be sold year round.
- Balance the books to prepare for the audit. Set up the audit before turning the books over to the new treasurer. Your new treasurer deserves to receive a clean set of audited books.
- Prepare the annual report covering the term of office.
- Submit IRS Form 990, 990-EZ, 990-N, 990-T (ALL have to do one of those), and any other IRS forms that might be required.
- Be sure that the insurance payment for the next school year has been sent in. ■

End of year Activities

The school and PTA year is rapidly approaching. The bylaws require the new officers to take over on July 1 and before year end every unit and council should complete an audit and make sure their bylaws are current. If you have questions about either of these activities please contact our bylaws chairperson, Stephanie Fuchs, at stephfuchs1@gmail.com or our newly elected treasurer, Lisa Christoffel, at lchristoffel80@gmail.com.

One of the most important year end actions is completing a new Form A (annual contact information form – go to http://nypta.cloudapp.net/FormA to access the on line form). Even if the same officers are continuing, the current or new president has to complete the form or you will not receive information from NYS PTA or National PTA and you will not receive membership information in August. This year National PTA is distributing their back to school kits only to units and councils who have submitted an updated Form A. If there are any questions please contact director@gvpta.org. ■

Membership

Julia Anello, Membership Chair
membership@gvpta.org

As we approach, the end of another school year, I hope your thoughts are already turning to what we can do better, stronger, more effectively for the next school year to make our units the very best they can be. As you reflect upon this past year, take some time and make a list of the things that really worked for your unit, and maybe some things you wouldn’t repeat.

I would love it if you would share these thoughts to compile this information and share with all our units in August! You may help another unit out, and in turn find the next new ingredient to your own membership success. Collaboration makes us all more successful, and is one of the many wonderful

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Keeping this information visible as you start to plan for next year is key. This is especially true if your current membership chair is passing the torch, and a new person fills that role in August. Help to lay a strong membership foundation for the coming year. We always think we will keep things fresh in our minds, but the haze of summer BBQs can fog the memory. Trying to start fresh with a membership campaign, in August, can prove more difficult then you may imagine now, in June, as we are all in a rush to wrap things up and take a break.

Hopefully, NYS PTA has received those last membership payments, and you are able to breathe a small sigh of relief. You did it!! Whether this is your first year, or you tenth (or more!) congratulations on a job well done, and thank you for your service to your unit.

The 2015-2016 school year has been another great one for Genesee Valley Region. Thanks to all of your efforts, we are continuing to grow. This is not the case across the state, and certainly not across the nation.

I would like to issue a loud and proud shout out to the twenty one units that saw a growth in membership this year; Bloomfield PTSA, Brockport Central PTSA, Buckman Heights Elementary School PTSA, Cohbles PTSA, Craig Hill PTSA, Durand Eastman School PTSA, East Irondequoit Middle School PTSA, Eastridge PTSA, Fairport Hs PTSA, Greece Arcadia High School PTSA, Greece Arcadia Middle School PTSA, Helendale Road PTA, Ivan Green School PTA, Jefferson Avenue Elem School PTA, Johanna Perrin Middle School PTSA, Kelley School PTA, Mt. Morris PTA, Northside School PTA, Penfield High School PTSA, Urban Choice PTA, Victor Central PTSA. You all managed to set a shining example even through being faced with the challenge of the new online membership portal. Let us not slow this momentum, or become complacent!! Let's work together to make 2016-2017 even better!

I look forward to seeing many of you in August, as I outline what new changes NYS PTA has in store for us. I hope you all have a wonderful summer. You deserve it!!

2016-17 Awards

Jill Ehrlinger, Awards Chair
awards@gvpta.org

It seems early to be thinking about next year, but now is the time to start thinking about recognizing those in your schools and your PTA’s 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

Best wishes for a relaxing summer!
GVPTA Spring Conference & Annual Meeting

Gary R. Elling, Secretary, secretary@gvpta.org

The Spring Conference and 94th annual meeting of the Genesee Valley Region PTA was held May 5, 2016. The Cinco de Mayo themed meeting, organized by Kim Breidenstein, Colleen Taylor, and others, was held at the Five Sons Winery, 1360 West Sweden Road, Brockport, NY.

There were 37 voting delegates, five non-voting delegates and two guests in attendance for a total of 44 people representing 20 units. This established a quorum.

The Audit Committee report of April 23rd found the books of the Genesee Valley Region PTA to be in good order.

The nominating committee presented the slate of officers. The candidates were elected by unanimous voice vote. They are:

Associate Directors:
Antonia Beaty, Jori Cincotta,
Kathy Giles, Sonya Verrillo

Secretary: Gary Elling
Treasurer: Lisa Christoffel

David Steggles, from NYS PTA, conducted the installation of officers.

A nominating committee for 2016-17 was elected. They are Keisha Seymour and Dorothy Petri with Loretta Cross as an alternate.

Numerous baskets for the basket bazar were donated by units and local businesses. As expected Colleen Taylor won nothing.
Why Partner?
Dorothy L. Petrie
Webster Central PTSA co-president
Centralptsa@websterptsa.org

Why partner with Webster Central PTSA? This is
the question that we have attempted to answer over
the past year, and we continue to reflect upon as we
build relationships within the Webster community.
We established three goals for our unit in the Fall of
2015.

1. Foster and improve family engagement.
2. Leverage our central organization to more
efficiently support the work of our association
developing resources, promoting collaboration,
and formalizing best practices.
3. Increase and communicate our relevance and
value to the community through programming
that is closely aligned with current community
needs as well as PTSA mission and purpose.

It is this third goal that guided our activities this
year. In January we became a member of the
Webster Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber holds
a monthly breakfast which has proved to be an
excellent networking opportunity. This year we also
collaborated the WCSD on the analysis and
presentation of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey
(YRBS) data. The feedback we have received from
the 120 + parents, teachers, and community
members will guide our programming for the
coming year. As a result of this program, we have
also joined the Webster Health & Education
Network.

The issues that came out of the YRBS forum,
Prescription Drug and Alcohol awareness and
prevention, Preventing Teen Dating Violence,
Depression and Anxiety awareness and resources,
and Social Media awareness and safety, are the
issues that our parents and community members
care deeply about. And this is what we talk about
when we approach businesses that we are seeking
to partner with or sponsorship from.

We offer many different ways to become a sponsor.
A full-color, redesigned calendar offers 3 different
levels of sponsorship. Businesses also have the
option to offer a local member benefit for the 2016
- 2017 Membership Drive, or a prize that will be used
as an incentive during Membership events. The
local YMCA has been an enthusiastic and active new
partner this year! Some business are offering 10% off
when a customer shows their membership card.
We are also offering the opportunity to sponsor a
speaker on a specific topic. Whatever a business
chooses, our goal is for it to make good business
sense for them AND also view our partnership as an
ongoing relationship. Sponsors will be
acknowledged in email communication, on our
website, and on social media. We plan on regularly
communicating with our sponsors, through our
monthly eNewsletter, letting them know about
PTSA and district events, and how their support
makes a difference.

This spring has been an incredible learning
experience. And each time I meet with a local
business owner, I have the opportunity to explain
the value and relevance of PTSA in our community,
and usually find that we share common concerns for
our kids. Building upon these new relationships,
with good follow-up, will be key to successful
partnerships! I would be happy to speak with any
GVPTA member in greater detail about our
experience and plans for the coming year!

Checkout the PTA General Recruitment Video
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zKjCxAirU_8

Our Newest Unit
Antonia Beaty, Associate Director
proud2b.mrs.beaty@gmail.com

Our newest unit, Young Women’s College Prep
PTSA, chartered 12/10/15 successfully ended their
year with 26 members. The PTSA hosted a Parent
Appreciation Dinner in February and planned a
Food Truck Rodeo fundraiser in conjunction with
the Montessori School #53 in April.

Are You a New PTA Officer?
The Genesee Valley Region PTA is eager to help
you with tips and best practices to make your
job easier and more successful.

Don’t miss the GVPTA Leadership Academy
Wednesday, August 24th time and location TBD.
Don’t hesitate to contact a GVPTA board
member or Susan Brown our region director.
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

"The Voice of NYS PTA" page/blog provides thoughts and commentary from the President of the NYS PTA, Bonnie Russell, on topics of interest to our membership. Please click to read the latest message.

NYS PTA Resources

NYS PTA Publications (Fast Facts, Our Children)

nyspta.org/YourPTA/YourPTA_Publications.cfm

Advocacy

nyspta.org/Advocacy/advocacy_home.cfm
www.nyspta.org/pdf/Advocacy/Advocacy-Guide.pdf

Advocacy Newsbriefs
nyspta.org/Advocacy/advocacy_newsbriefs.cfm

Legislative Program
nyspta.org/Advocacy/advocacy_legislativeprog.cfm

Where We Stand - includes current Resolutions and Position Papers

For NYS PTA issues sign up for Capwiz and then Take Action with CAPWIZ

The New York State PTA Resource Guide is available for your use as a PTA member.

nyspta.org/YourPTA/YourPTA_ResourceGuide.cfm

OurChildren Magazine (National PTA)
http://ptaourchildren.org/

Upcoming Events, Deadlines, and Reminders

Annual President/Officer Contact Info Form A—June 15

http://nypta.cloudapp.net/FormA/
Completion and return of this form is required annually as verification of contact information. In order to receive future mailings from New York State and National PTA, please complete this form electronically by June 15. Re-enter current officers if you haven't elected new ones yet.

PARP entries are due June 15th to Paige Pye parp@gvpra.org

Summer Leadership Conf
July 22-24 at Utica College.
nyspta.org/pdf/Events/SLC-Registration-Packet-2016.pdf

GVPTA Leadership Academy
Wednesday, August 24th time and location TBD.

GVPTA Educator and Administrator Award deadline
October 7, 2016.
www.gvpta.org/site4/index.php/your-pta/awards

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