His freedom to speak protects my freedom to call him a bigot. —Aristotle

Seven blunders of the world that lead to violence: wealth without work, pleasure without conscience, knowledge without character, commerce without morality, science without humanity, worship without sacrifice, politics without principle. —Mahatma Gandhi

I have always imagined that paradise will be a kind of library. —Jorge Luis Borges

Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. —Elie Wiesel

The actions of men are the best interpreters of their thoughts. —John Locke

No, no, you're not thinking, you're just being logical. —Niels Bohr

From the Region Director

Susan Brown, GVPTA Region Director
director@gvpta.org

I hope the fall has treated people well and they are off to a great start. I know that I have answered a few questions from people who needed to know how to do something. That is what we are here for. Please ask if you need help.

We just returned from the state convention Nov. 11-13 in Saratoga Springs. What a fantastic event! One of the most notable speakers was Dr. Stephen L. Dewey. He is a neuroscientist from the Feinstein Institute who spoke about addiction. One of his personal goals is to speak to children about addiction using his brain imaging to showcase the effects of drugs on the brain—both short and long term.

A short quiz about his topics:

1. What is eyeballing?
   a. Looking closely at something in order to indicate a desire to buy
   b. Estimating the volume of alcohol in a product
   c. Holding a bottle of clear alcohol over your eye until the pain becomes too extreme
   d. A way of getting drunk that bypasses breathalyzer screening

2. What is tamping?
   a. Crushing marijuana until it is a fine powder to be inhaled
   b. Binging on alcohol during the weekend
   c. Soaking a tampon in alcohol and then inserting it into an available orifice
   d. A way of getting drunk that bypasses breathalyzer screening

3. What is vaping?
   a. Using e-cigarettes
   b. Promoting cross dressing in people under the influence
   c. Inhaling alcohol fumes for a fast high
   d. A way of getting drunk that bypasses breathalyzer screening

4. How long does it take for the brain to return to normal metabolic functioning after intoxication (normal ability to think, reason, recall and learn)?
   a. 1 hour per drink
   b. 1 day
   c. 5 days

Answers: 1. c & d, 2. c & d, 3. c & d, 4. c

The first three activities can have debilitating impact on the human body: blindness, colon or vaginal rupture, infertility, and permanent lung damage. Kids do not understand the ramifications of these behaviors and we need to be there to provide high quality information to them. Perhaps the most disturbing thing is that he has a support group for fourth grade alcoholics. It is not too soon to talk to your child about your family’s values in relation to alcohol and other drugs.

The state PTA brings in high quality speakers like Dr. Dewey to help us be well informed when we talk to both our kids and our community. Next year’s convention will be in Niagara Falls. It would be a great thing to set aside funds for your unit to attend.
Treasurer’s Corner
Lisa Christoffel, GVPTA Treasurer
treasurer@gvpta.org

Hello, all! I first want to thank everyone for getting their taxes filed on time this year. I think I was only unable to badger and hound one or two units into getting their filing done! But that brings me to a concern that I want to address.

Some of the treasurers I reached out to had no idea they were supposed to file taxes. That means that your units may not have had a solid transition plan in place to bring in new officers and ensure they understood their role.

Or they did not attend our free Summer Academy to get the training from us directly.

I realize that new presidents and other officers have a lot thrown at them. But that’s why attending training events and reading the communications that come from NYS PTA and us (the GVPTA region) is so critical. We don’t expect you to know everything automatically, but we do expect that you’ll use the resources we provide to ensure your unit is running effectively.

In the end, if you don’t do what needs to be done to run the unit, it will get shut down, and the kids and families won’t have your awesome support throughout the school year.

If ANYONE feels that they need support to understand their role as treasurer, please don’t hesitate to reach out to me. I’m more than happy to sit down with you one on one and make sure you’ve got the tools you need to succeed. My email is treasurer@gvpta.org. Let me help: I want you to succeed and I want your units to be able to support their school kids and families.

Convention report
Lisa Christoffel, GVPTA Treasurer
treasurer@gvpta.org

GMOs and DEET: What do these 2 things have in common?

PTA now has new positions on both, added to the dozens of other positions we have. What does a PTA position mean to you? Well, it means that you can use those positions to help you advocate for changes in your own school or district or town.

And what if PTA does not have a position on something? That’s OK: you can still advocate as long as it’s consistent with the mission and vision of PTA and aligns with our overall Where We Stand positions. And if the issue is one that seems to affect a large number of students and families, you can write your own resolution and present it before the PTA membership at Convention.

That’s exactly what the makers of the newly passed GMO resolution did. They were very worried about the lack of unbiased testing of GMOs, the lack of labeling, and the potential for an element of a GMO to be allergy-causing, but the person eating the GE or GMO food would never know it, because added elements to GMOs tend to be unrelated to the food they’re being put into. And if they’re not labeled (most aren’t and there are no rules around it right now), they can cause an allergy situation.

I encourage you to become familiar with PTA’s Where We Stand document. If your membership has the interest, why not form a standing Advocacy committee? They can do local things like training your membership about what advocacy means and how they can effectively advocate for their child or their school. Or they can pick an advocacy issue, and they can research it and propose changes to law as a result.

The foundation of PTA, the reason it was formed over 100 years ago, was to advocate for ALL children with ONE voice. But it starts with you: virtually every resolution we have and every law we’ve gotten passed has begun with a parent or set of parents who wanted to see something changed.

Convention is a great place to see that advocacy in action, as the delegation votes to retain, update, or adopt new resolutions on things as diverse as GMOs, bicycle helmets, and student and parent participation on school-based committees.

However, the best way to see it in action is by participating in our Lobby Day where we get trained how to lobby on a Sunday afternoon, and we head in to Albany and lobby with our lawmakers on issues critical to our kids. Or participate in virtual lobby week, where you can send in position statements to our lawmakers along with thousands of others across the state. Stay tuned for more details in January.

What a Reflections Roadshow It Was!
Susan Brown, GVPTA Region Director
director@gvpta.org

On Saturday, October 15 Genesee Valley Region PTA hosted the third NYS PTA Reflections Roadshow, to great success! We had a number of student artists, dancers, filmmakers and musicians attend with their families. Thank you to Monroe 1 BOCES for hosting our event.

Check out photos of the event here.

Watch this great video of the artwork on display.

The NYS PTA Reflections page can be found here. It has helpful information about how to start and run a successful Reflections program in your school, plus this Reflections program video.

I would like to recognize the people from our region who worked to make this year’s roadshow event a success: Julia Anello, Lisa Christoffel, Gene Kinney, Antonia Beaty, and Valerie Beaman. Without the work of these people, the Roadshow would not have been possible. Thank you all!! ~ Susan
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

GVPTA Awards
Jill Ehrlinger, Awards Chair, awards@gvpta.org
At the 50th Annual PTA Partnership Dinner the Genesee Valley Region Administrator Award was presented to Dr. Jeffrey Green of Odyssey Academy PTSA. Dr. Green truly exemplifies what it means to be a committed administrator who is active in his school's PTSA. He exemplifies the NYSPTA values of collaboration, commitment, accountability, Respect, inclusivity and integrity. On a daily basis, he strives to meet the goals of our mission statement.

The J. Ernest Dubois Educator Award was presented to Mr. Henry Pardon of James P.B. Duffy School #12 PTA. Mr. Pardon has participated in PTA-led activities strongly advocating for adequate funding for schools, more appropriate testing for students, and proper funding for arts and music education. His participation with the PTA has shown his solidarity as a teacher with the parents in working together to educate all our children.

It was my distinct pleasure to present these awards to Dr. Green and Mr. Pardon. We all appreciate all of their work for our children.
30 POINT UNIT CHECK-UP
Julia Anello, Membership Chair
membership@gvpta.org

As PTA officers we often say, “There are no PTA police,” when in fact we may secretly wish that there were. New York State PTA Convention 2016 provided a workshop that offered registrants a chance to experience a taste of what that would be like.

Hailing from Niagara Region, Field Support Coordinator Cindy Ames and from Western, Region Director, Patty Frazier teamed up to present their outstanding workshop; A 30 Day Check-Up for Your Unit. The following list helps you to “police” your unit or to train other units on how to police themselves to be in tip top shape.

The genius of this list is that it is simple, yet succinct, and provides all the tools you need, and fits on one sheet of paper. Using this checklist as a guideline for running PTA, at any level, is a solid foundation to success.

PTA BASICS
1. We have read our bylaws.
   Our current bylaws expiration date is__________.
2. We have paid our insurance invoice.
3. We have submitted our Annual Officers’ Contact Information (Form A).

PRESIDENT’S GUIDE
4. We have a calendar of meetings and events.
5. Meetings are planned and an agenda is prepared and shared.
   We hold our annual meeting as per our bylaws in the month of ________.
6. Our secretary establishes a quorum of _____ before voting takes place.
7. Motions are recorded and seconded before discussion takes place.
   We use Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised.

PTA BOARD
8. Our secretary files the minutes in a timely fashion for approval at the next meeting.
9. Our committees submit a plan of work.

FINANCE AND INSURANCE
10. We have adopted a balanced budget by vote of our membership.
    Amendments to the budget are approved by vote of our membership.
11. Our fundraisers are planned to support our programs, activities and leadership training.
12. Our checks are signed by 2 authorized PTA signers.
13. Our treasurer presents an activity report and a budget report at each meeting.
14. We have an annual audit with a signed statement given at the first meeting of the succeeding school year.
15. We have filed our IRS Form 990 for the fiscal year ending June 30.
16. We refer to the green-yellow-red light for insurance recommendations when planning our activities.

MEMBERSHIP
17. We have a membership goal of__________.
18. Our dues to become a member are__________.
19. We maintain a roster of our members.

BYLAWS, PROCEDURES, NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS
20. We have approved procedures for officers and committees.
21. We follow our bylaws for the make-up of our nominating committee.
22. Our vote for new officers takes place in the month of ________. We accept nominations from the floor as per our bylaws.

ADVOCACY
23. We include advocacy efforts in our annual plans.
24. We inform our members of the positions of NYS PTA found in the “Where We Stand” document.

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY
25. We support student success by promoting the National Standards for Family School Partnerships.
26. We seek to partner with our teachers, principal, school board and community.

PROGRAMS, AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS
27. We follow the 3-to-1 rule of three planned programs for every one fundraising activity.
28. We have a NYS PTA Pick a Reading Partner Program (PARP).
29. We participate in the National PTA Reflections Arts Program.
30. We recognize our members and partners with NYS PTA and National PTA awards.
Attention Moms!

If you are a full-time or part-time stay-at-home Mom, we are looking for you!

The MOMS Club of Webster & Ontario offers support to other moms with:

- Meals for mothers of newborns delivered
- Playgroups for pre-schoolers
- Member exclusive field trips (October field trip is a tour of Schutt's Apple Mill; November is to the Little Dude Ranch for pony rides)
- Monthly meetings with kid-friendly activities
- Mom's Night Out events, and more!

If you would like to join or want more information, please contact look for us on facebook: MOMS Club of Webster and Ontario; or email us at momsclubofwebsterandontario@yahoo.com

Excerpts from a recent Brockport PTSA News Letter

Lynn Moulton, Brockport PTSA, brockportptsa@gmail.com

Brockport PTSA offers many opportunities to make connections between families, students, and district staff. It has been a busy fall!

- Our first Speaker Series of meetings had Jim Liebow, Robin Boody and Mike Falkenstein provide a dinner of pizza, fresh veggies, apples, and milk so parents could have a taste of school lunches and see the apple slicer in action. Mr. Liebow shared a short presentation and there was time for questions and answers as well. The kids had crafts and games to keep them busy and “Thanks!” also to our student volunteers.
- Smile! School picture days at the elementary schools were a great success. Did you know that every elementary student gets a free class photo in the spring?
- In October, PTSA provided water stations for Walk to School Day. It was a beautiful day and there were so many thirsty walkers!
- PTSA is proud to support the Safe School Ambassador program at BCS1. PTSA funds the refreshments and lunches for the participants of this awesome program.
- Thanks to our Veterans! PTSA provides a reception after the Barclay School’s Veteran’s Day celebration. It gives the veterans time for coffee and conversation after the schoolwide ceremony. It is a great time for them to connect amongst themselves.
- PTSA knows how important literacy is to the success of students. To support that, book fairs are held throughout the school year so that students can purchase books and it allows us to provide books to classrooms and libraries, as well as fun activities and prizes. We generally combine each book fair with a free family night to allow parents time to shop but also to allow families to have some together time. Student and adult volunteers are always needed so consider helping to contribute to their success. Thanks to our OMS and Hill School student crew volunteers! We hope you enjoyed the Bubble Circus and Cookies, Crafts & Cocoa.
- PTSA helped sponsor a visit by author Jim Averbeck at Hill School in November. What a wonderful opportunity to jumpstart student interest in reading, writing, and creative thinking.
- To encourage school spirit, PTSA offered sportswear for sale. We had a wide variety of options from t-shirts to sweatpants to hats and blankets.
- PTSA participated in the National PTA’s Reflections arts program. Two workshops were held for elementary students to work on their entries and a reception was held in mid-November. Entries were judged and several will advance to the regional level.

Photography: Giovanna Harris, George Foehner, Cole Foehner, Brady Putnam, Rocco Rodrigues

Literature: Maddux Williams, Brady Putnam

Visual Arts: Charlie Milacic, Madilyn Walberger, Haley Petrillo, Adriana Passalaqua

The entries will be displayed at Seymour Library from mid-November through December and regional level judging will be announced in mid-December.

Newsletter

This year we are utilizing MailChimp to manage our on-line newsletter distribution. The emails will be coming from newsletter@brockportcentralpta.org, so if you already receive them be sure to add the address to your contacts so they come right to your inbox! You can sign up on our web site BrockportCentralPTSA.org under Links/Forms. Previous newsletters are archived there as well.

Membership

There is still time to support PTSA with your membership. We are committed to making every child’s potential a reality. You can help us reach our goal in Brockport. Your dues go toward funding our local programs and advocacy efforts, as well as the advocacy work that NYS PTA and National PTSA carry out on behalf of all children. Membership forms can be found in school buildings as well as our web site, where on-line memberships can be submitted as well. Membership is open to anyone, even if you do not have a school-age child.

Get Togethers

Meetings (with coffee and conversation!) are generally monthly throughout the year. Check our web site BrockportCentralPTSA.org and click About and Calendar for details, or the bcs1.org calendar as well. We have both daytime and evening meetings to fit your schedule. If there’s a meeting topic that you would like to see, please let us know at BrockportPTSA@gmail.com.

Keep connected! PTSA utilizes Facebook (Brockport PTSA), Twitter (@BrockportPTSA), our web site BrockportCentralPTSA.org and email (BrockportPTSA@gmail.com)—or better yet, come to a meeting and share your ideas in person. Your questions and input are valuable!
GVPTA Executive Committee 2016-17

Susan Brown, Region Director  
director@gvpta.org
Gary Elling, Secretary  
secretary@gvpta.org
Lisa Christoffel, Treasurer  
treasurer@gvpta.org
Antonia Beaty, Associate Director  
AntoniaBeaty@gvpta.org
Jori Cincotta, Associate Director  
JoriCincotta@gvpta.org
Kathy Giles, Associate Director  
KathyGiles@gvpta.org
Sonya Verrillo, Associate Director  
SonyaVerrillo@gvpta.org
Gene Kinney, Past Region Director  
GeneKinney@gvpta.org
Mary Twardokus, Past Region Director  
MaryTwardokus@gvpta.org

Additional GVPTA Contacts are listed on the web site

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 [pdf] - 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

Our Children Magazine (National PTA)  
http://ptaourchildren.org/

Upcoming Events, Deadlines, and Reminders

Reflections Reception
Monday, December 12, 6:00 pm @ Brighton Admin Offices, 2035 Monroe Ave, Rochester, NY

PARP workshop
January 12, 2017 @ 6:30 pm  Brighton Admin Offices

Founders Day, February 17, 2017

Leg/Ed Conference Virtual Lobby Day
March TBD

GVPTA Spring Conference Day
May TBD

Pay membership dues monthly.

Summer Leadership Conference Changes
This year the state has proposed making the Summer Leadership Conference a twenty-four hour event as a trial. I know how valuable this conference has been in the past to me as well as many others. In 2018 the conference will move from Utica, where it has been held for the last decade or so, to Union College in the Schenectady area. Since many of our members may find this a challenge to attend, the western regions are looking at putting together a conference that will be closer to home. We will be looking for input from you over the next year to plan this event.

Welcome to our newest unit:
Monroe 1 BOCES SEPTA.

As our PTA family grows I would like to reach out and thank everyone who helped make this happen. One of the great powers of PTA is the community we make together. No one is doing it alone from scratch. Working together we make each other better. ~Susan