Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; They listen with the intent to reply. —Stephen R. Covey

Every time I see an adult on a bicycle, I no longer despair for the future of the human race. —H.G. Wells

What a sheltered life I lead! And what would I do without a teenager to help explain the world to me? —Anu Garg

Curious that we spend more time congratulating people who have succeeded than encouraging people who have not. —Neil deGrasse Tyson

Nothing is so impenetrable as laughter in a language you don’t understand. —William Golding

Sometimes you can’t see yourself clearly until you see yourself through the eyes of others. —Ellen DeGeneres

A library outranks any other one thing a community can do to benefit its people. It is a never failing spring in the desert. —Andrew Carnegie

From the Region Director

Susan Brown, GVPTA Region Director, director@gvpta.org

I hope your year has gotten off to a great start. As we prepare for our winter months I would like to remind you about a few things. Your first membership payment was due on October 31. If you have not made it, please do so. Remember membership is a year-long activity. Continue to grow your unit and submit regular payments to the state office. It is required to stay in good standing.

Your 990 was due on November 15th. If you have not filed it yet, please do so. This is important for maintaining your status as a nonprofit organization.

Several of our regional members attended the state’s annual Convention in Niagara Falls at the beginning of the month. This event is our NYS PTA’s business meeting, it showcases the Reflections program and student performance groups, and provides opportunities for learning. It also provides an incredibly valuable opportunity for networking with other PTA leaders and a lot of FUN too. Please ensure your unit has funds set aside for leadership development.

Remember that if you ever have a concern, our region board is here to help. Enjoy the holidays. ♥

The Honorable Verda Colvin

At NYS PTA convention this year we had the opportunity to listen to the Honorable Verda Colvin, a superior court judge in Macon, Georgia. Every month she meets with troubled young people in an attempt to give them an option for a better life. You can see a video of her with children at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QE0RE1sWM9Y

At her presentation she talked about the importance of having positive role models in our children’s lives. This is especially true of same sex role models. Many of our families are single parent ones. In the lucky ones, both parents remain active and involved in their children’s lives. Unfortunately, however, too many children do not have access to good male role models. She championed targeting males to become involved in PTA, school and children’s lives in general. Not just fathers and relatives, but members of the community at large.

A few of her suggestions to get men more involved follow:

• Make a specific point to ask men to come to a meeting and help at an activity.
• Have a raffle in which you can only put your name if you bring a man to a meeting.
• MAC-MEN who care ABOUT CHILDREN T-shirts that they can wear to promote involvement.
• Select simple, specific tasks for men to participate in. Men are more interested in the job than the socializing. Give them the job.
• Weekend food pantry collection and distribution.
• Partner with My Brother’s Keeper organization https://www.mbkalliance.org/
• Partner with Watch Dogs organization http://dadsofgreatstudents.com

I think one of her closing remarks was particularly memorable— “Each of us bears some part in the success or failure of children.” Not just those living in our homes, but those across the community. It is the message of our motto- Every child, One voice. Rededicate your organization to making sure that you are doing what needs to be done for all children. ♥
Congratulations!
At our 51st annual Partnership Dinner we recognized some outstanding people for their work both as a staff member and a PTA member. These people contribute countless hours to helping support children. Congratulations to our regional award winners.

Dr. Jeffery Henley, Odyssey Academy in Greece – GVPTA Administrator Award
Cassie Catlin, Northside School in Fairport – J. Ernst DuBois Educator Award

Remember you can nominate candidates for these and other awards at our Genesee Valley Website http://www.gvpta.org/site4/index.php

Treasurer’s Corner
Michael Valicenti, GVPTA Treasurer treasurer@gvpta.org or mvalicenti@sjfc.edu

990’s – Thank you to all those who pushed to get their 990’s completed by November 15th. For those units that filed extensions, please try to get the 990 completed as soon as possible. Any units that need assistance with completing the 990 or with anything else to do with their books, please contact myself or another GVPTA board member.

Fiscal year-end dates – Some units have found that when they tried to file the 990N electronically that the IRS system would not allow them to do so because the filing was within a year of the fiscal year end date on the previous year’s filing. The fiscal year end date on your 990 filings should match the fiscal year end date stated in your unit’s bylaws, which for most units is June 30th.

If a unit finds that for whatever reason the year-end date on the 990 filing is now different from the date in your bylaws, then that should be corrected. According to the Internal Revenue Service this correction should be done with a letter explaining the change. The IRS will make the change within 12 weeks so that next year a correct filing can be completed. I will have a standard form letter saved for any unit that needs to change this date. Just email me and I will email you the letter to complete and send to the IRS.

Monthly reconciliations – monthly reconciliations are not only important but required for PTA units. According to our NYS PTA Insurance Risk Management Guide (nyspta.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/RG-05-B-Insurance-AIM.pdf), an annual audit of the books, and a monthly bank reconciliation are required for Bond coverage to apply to your Association. Bank statements should be received by someone other than the treasurer, like the president, and then forwarded to the treasurer. That way someone other than the treasurer has seen the bank statement. In addition, each monthly reconciliation must be reviewed and signed off on by someone who is not a check signer on the unit’s bank account. These steps act to limit fraud and theft while insuring full disclosure of a unit’s financial condition. Any units that wish to see an example of a monthly reconciliation please contact me and I will send you one that we use each month at Region.

As always, please contact me with any questions.

We Have Great Schools
Susan Brown, GVPTA Region Director, director@gvpta.org

USA Today ranked schools using a quality index that took into account attendance, suspensions, class size, teacher experience and diversity. According to their rating formula, School #23 in Rochester received the highest ranking in Monroe County. They have an active PTA that undoubtedly is part of the formula for success at their program. Way to go!

For more information about their ranking system see www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/2017/11/02/school-quality-index-exclusive-rankings-new-york-districts/602171001/

You can read about School #23 at http://on.rocne.ws/2AH1NRe

Why PTAs might not want Co-Presidents
Susan Brown, GVPTA Region Director, director@gvpta.org

A legitimate concern among PTA officers is sharing the workload. Nevertheless, each local unit must recognize that there are acceptable parliamentary options available to help alleviate this concern. Co-presidents (and any co-officer) are one of those options, but it entails some challenges.

There are legal as well as parliamentary problems that exist when a unit has co-presidents. For example:
OASAS Announces New 24/7 Open Access Center in Rochester
Center Gives People in Need Round-the-Clock Access to Help for Substance Use Disorders

NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) today announced the opening of a new 24/7 Open Access Center to help direct people to addiction treatment services. The center, located in Rochester, will be open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and will deliver immediate engagement, assessment and referral services for people suffering from a substance use disorder. OASAS provided $500,000 for renovations and operational costs for the center.

Center staff will be available around the clock to assess people in need of treatment, and refer them to the appropriate level of care. This Open Access Center is a collaborative project of Recovery Net, a coalition of nine community-based, OASAS-certified providers led by Delphi Drug and Alcohol Council. This is a unique and innovative model of care and the first of its kind in New York State.

We are delighted to share this news and grateful to Governor Cuomo and NYS OASAS for your continued commitment to expanding critical prevention, treatment and recovery services in communities throughout New York State.

See the complete press release here.

When there are co-presidents, who casts the deciding vote when there is a tie vote? Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised points out that it is the presiding officer’s responsibility to cast the deciding vote when there is a tie. With co-presidents, how can they split one vote? They only have one vote together.

In terms of legal contracts and papers, which co-president is responsible for signing such paperwork? Accountability for the actions of the PTA is important, both for the members and for the others with whom we work. If co-presidents are in place, there needs to be procedures about who has signing authority for what.

Sharing duties and responsibilities, communicating with each other and others, representing the PTA, delegating and supporting the PTA board can be very difficult for people who know each other well and are friends. The potential for problems and misunderstandings is very great. Rather than having "co’s", local PTAs can delegate work to Vice-Presidents and other officers.

If one of the "co’s" does something wrong (for instance, if a co-treasurer misappropriates PTA funds), the other person can be held responsible.

Dividing the tasks for any position can be complex, and there will often be matters that have not been resolved from the outset which will cause conflict both between the two people and within the PTA.

While some PTAs consider co-presidents as a means to "share the work load", we should remember that as stated above there are other parliamentary alternatives available that do not produce the legal and parliamentary complexities.

Vice-Presidents: These individuals are elected officials of the unit who have the same fiduciary responsibilities as the other officers. Bylaws provide the "how" and "when" these officers should be utilized to assume the duties of the president.
Your unit could assign additional duties to the Vice-Presidents that will help "share the work load" of the President. Traditionally, Vice-Presidents are seen as "Presidents in training" and assigning additional duties will only further prepare them to succeed in the President’s office.

President-Elect: Some units have found this addition to their elected officers to be a successful alternative. Modeling after the National PTA, they have amended their bylaws to reflect how the nominating committee addresses this office, which duties will be assigned to the office, and how a vacancy in office will be handled. If you are interested in initiating the office of President-Elect, please contact a member of the State Bylaws committee for assistance.
PTA Partnership Dinner

The Genesee Valley Region PTA Partnership Dinner was held at Glendoveers Banquet Hall on November 15. The Partnership Dinner is an event for local PTA units to invite their members, administrators and school board members to attend together and get to know one another and the wider Genesee Valley PTA network.

The evening started with appetizers and networking, followed by a delicious buffet dinner and program featuring guest speaker Christopher Albrecht, the NYS Teacher of the Year from Brockport Central School District. Christopher is a fourth grade teacher at Fred W. Hill School. He shared his teaching philosophy and his passion for building confidence in all students. His anecdotes and stories about working with students were highly entertaining and very motivating, and we appreciate the time he took to prepare for the evening.

After dinner, GVPTA Region Director Susan Brown took a few minutes to recognize the folks in our region who have received the National PTA Lifetime Achievement Award, the NYS Distinguished Service Award and the NYS PTA Honorary Life Membership Award. Our region is fortunate to have so many people with a distinguished history of service in PTA.

Associate Director Kathy Giles then presented the two annual Genesee Valley Region Awards. Dr. Jeffrey Henley, the Assistant Principal at Odyssey Academy in Greece, received the Genesee Valley Region PTA's Administrator Award. Dr. Henley has a high commitment to education, and to the children and families in his school and district. He is a hands-on administrator who actively builds relationships with students, frequently even by visiting their homes. He is supportive of his PTA and works closely with them, particularly on events such as Open House where parents can learn information to support their children and help them to succeed.

The other Region Award is the J. Ernest DuBois Award, established in 1986 in honor of Ernest DuBois, who was a social studies teacher and active PTA volunteer at the local, regional and State levels for many years. This year’s Award was presented to Cassie Catlin, a 5th grade teacher at Northside School in Fairport. Cassie is both a professional educator and an active PTA volunteer, serving as her school's 5th grade teacher liaison and the chairman of their PTA’s major spring fundraising event. She regularly encourages her classroom parents to become involved in PTA, and designs projects such as persuasive writing campaigns for her students to allow them to act to benefit their PTA.

GVPTA would like to thank all of the local PTA units who nominated an administrator or a teacher for these awards. The applications were inspiring; please continue to recognize those who work hard to serve your districts and your units.

Thanks to Colleen Taylor and others that made this event possible.

PTA Board Leadership

At a recent Genesee Valley Region PTA board meeting, we reviewed material contained in a National PTA Standards of Affiliation (SOA) document on PTA Board Leadership. We felt that it contained a great summary of the duties, responsibilities, and issues dealt with by PTA boards. The PDF document is linked on our web site.

Please take the time to review and share it with your Unit Board and other members.

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

nyspta.org/AboutPTA/AboutPTA_Purposes.cfm
If you have any questions or need help with anything PTA, please contact an Assistant or Associate Director, Officer, or the Region Director.

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

nysptapresident.blogspot.com/

NYS PTA Executive Committee 2017-18

Susan Brown, Region Director
director@gvpta.org
Sonya Verrillo, Secretary
secretary@gvpta.org
Michael Valicenti, Treasurer
treasurer@gvpta.org
Julia Anello, Associate Director
hope4julia@gmail.com
Antonia Beaty, Associate Director
AntoniaBeaty@gvpta.org
Jori Cincotta, Associate Director
JoriCincotta@gvpta.org
Kathy Giles, Associate Director
KathyGiles@gvpta.org
Lisa Christoffel, Past Region Director
lchristoffel80@gmail.com
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

Complete Form A
Annual Officers’ Contact Information Update for 2017 membership year
nyspta.force.com/FormARegistration

Dec 11, 2017 Reflections Reception
6 pm at Brighton Administration Offices, 2035 Monroe Ave, Rochester, NY
Regular Board meeting will follow.

Jan 22 and Feb 19 Exec & Regular Board meetings will be via teleconference.

Feb 11-12 Legislative Summit & Lobby Day
Hampton Inn and Suites, Downtown Albany
more...

Feb 17 Founders Day
brochure

TBD Spring Conference
Late April or early May

PTA Members and Leaders:
Did you know that your PTA unit is an advocacy association—not a booster organization? That means your PTA should focus most of its time implementing PTA’s mission.
#WhyPTA #PTAProud #DoGoodThingsForKids