



Mark Your Calendars

February

15 - Unit 8 GM - 3:30 PM
21-25 Midwinter Recess
28 - STA Exec. Bd. - 4:00 PM

March

3 - Unit 7 GM - 2:30 PM
8 - Nurses - 3:00 PM
9 - Rep Assembly - 3:30 PM
10 - TA Training
25 - Good Friday (No School)

NYCOSH, NYSUT Sponsor Poster Contest

New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health (NYCOSH) and NYSUT are sponsoring the second annual Youth SAFE Program poster contest, promoting young workers' rights and safety on the job.

Kids, ages 14-19, living in New York state are encouraged to submit poster designs by April 1. The winning design will be distributed throughout the state as NYCOSH's official Youth SAFE poster.

NYCOSH is a non-profit coalition fighting for safe and healthy working conditions. For more information and a contest release form, go to www.nycosh.org/youth-contest.html.

--NYSUT Leader 1/21/05

W-2 Confusion

W-2 confusion? If you noticed that the YTD (total wages paid) on your December 29, 2004 paycheck is different from the amount in lines 3 and 5 on your W-2 here's why: Your health and dental premiums are paid with pre-tax dollars. This is done via a 125 Plan by contract and has been done for years. Individuals may have set up a 125 plan account which is also tax exempt.

To verify this, take the YTD total from you last 2004 check, subtract all health and dental premiums and your own non-reimbursed medical account (125) and you get your Q-2 figure. Here's the equation:

YTD- health and dental premium amounts paid- any 125 plan amount you set up= Line 5 on your W-2. If it does not check, call payroll at ex. 4193.

AFT Has Free CDs

AFT members (all STA members belong to AFT) now have access to unbeatable savings on music CDs. The program has more than 15,000 CD titles representing rock, pop, R&B, jazz, rap, classical and Latin music, as well as many other genres. Single CDs are only \$9.99 each and double CDs are only \$15.98. Buy two and get the third CD free! Standard shipping is always free. To learn more or to peruse CD selections, go to:

www.unionplus.org/music

Empowering Practitioners Through Evaluation



"Teachers are able to track their own growth as practitioners."



"Reflection on practice has increased."

Leaps and Bounds

The numbers of practitioners engaged in alternative models has increased exponentially in each of the three years they have been available from 24 in 2002-03 to 99 in 2003-04 to 194 in 2004-05. Elmwood and Ed Smith faculty members have found the alternative models a provide a great opportunity to engage in collegial sharing. Dr. Weeks folks have initiated a large scale move to alternative options this year. Another comment was, "Maybe a place to start is ... to share experiences of staff that have tried alternative options."

This meeting was supported by the continuing efforts of the STA and SCSD team to promote continuous refinement of our professional evaluation.

--McKenna

Understanding Evaluations

The New Model For Practitioner Evaluation Task Force is continuing their School Team Collaboration meetings this year. The first one was held on January 5th at the Teacher Center.

This is the third year that this model for evaluation has been in place. These meetings are designed to create a forum where staffs can learn more about the evaluation methods that are currently being used and provide an opportunity for questions to be answered. There are 192 practitioners, from elementary through high school, who have opted for one of the alternate methods of evaluation this year.

Many schools were represented at this meeting. Presentations were made reviewing the evaluation process and its timelines. Staffs then had an opportunity to share the strengths that they see of the process and any unanswered questions that they may still have.

There are two more collaboration meetings that are scheduled for this year. They will be held at the Teacher Center on March 22, 2005 and May 4, 2005, from 3:45-5:00 pm. All are welcomed to attend.

--Patty Tanguay

On January 5th teams of Unit 1 members and administrators came together to discuss the implementation of the changes in the *Model for Practitioner Evaluation* over the last three years. Facilitator **Stephanie Pelcher** charged the teams with three focus questions:

- What positive experiences have occurred at your school as a result of the New Model for Teacher Evaluation?
- What questions continue to be asked by staff about the model?
- How are tenured staff members in your school responding to the alternative options now available- peer coaching, action research and portfolio?

Teams set to work in earnest and here's a sampling of their overwhelmingly positive responses.

"The (Individual Professional) growth plan is personalized and reflective."

"The exchange conference is a great tool for dialogue between teammates and administrator."

"It has been meaningful for those who chose an alternative model."

"(End of the year alternative options) presentations were used at the last administrative meeting so that time was used more effectively."

Things to work on:

- "We are unsure of how many are aware of options or participating."
- "How are the Individual Professional Growth Plans (IPGP) being used to plan Superintendent's Conference Days (and all professional development)?"
- "How do we get involved in the alternative options? What's involved?"
- "What training and support options are available?"
- "Can we get examples of IPG plans, peer coaching, action research and portfolio?"
- "Tenured staff are tentative to committing to alternative evaluation options."



"This process is a recharge for veteran teachers."



"We like the performance indicators and rubrics"

Playing an Active Role... Successful Professional Development

Professional development is most successful when the participants have played an active role in its design. The Professional Development Plan (PDP) is required by New York State and approved annually by the Board of Education. Every school district must have a committee that is comprised of more than 50% teachers. The Syracuse PDP committee meets every year to update the plan.

Buildings that are implementing the PDP are able to plan and provide professional development opportunities that support the needs of their staffs. These buildings have identified their School Improvement Team or convened a Site Professional Development Committee to take on the task of planning professional development.

A summary of practitioners' Individual Professional Growth Plans (IPGP) is compiled by this committee to guide the types of professional development that will support areas identified on the IPGP. The IPGP summary is a very powerful tool when planning site based inservice, Superintendent's Days and determining the expenditure of any staff development funds.

Hopefully we have moved past the days of one-size-fits-all professional development. Practitioners are the best judge of the professional development that would most effectively help them to improve their skills and support student achievement.

Who is responsible for planning professional development in your building? If you are unsure, ask your Building Committee to have a discussion regarding the implementation of the PDP.

--Marylou Balcom

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From the President's Desk... Kate McKenna



Renewing Our Professional Focus- The Model for Practitioner

What is an annual evaluation? A time when an administrator observes your practice, writes up his/her impressions of your work or a time when practitioners focus on professional goals and then demonstrate their ability to work towards those goals over the course of a year?

Over the last five years a joint STA and SCSD team have engaged in productive negotiations and refinements regarding the way teachers and other Unit 1 members are evaluated annually. Criteria identified by the state were organized into three domains- *Planning and Designing Instruction*, *Instruction* and *Professional Responsibilities*. Performance indicators and rubrics were developed and refined with the assistance of unit members. Alternative evaluation options for tenured staff were included as well. This comprehensive process resulted in our current model for evaluation.

There has been a sustained mutual commitment to moving the focus of the practitioner evaluation from external evaluation to collaborative and reflective evaluation. At the heart of this process is the *Individual Professional Growth Plan* developed by each unit member. Individual plans linked to site and district initiatives are focused on the practitioner's area of inquiry and/or interest.

Many report that they prefer the "self-starter" nature of this design. **And the impact of individual plans can be magnified when building teams use the collective growth plan data to format site-specific professional development initiatives.** These can be used for planning superintendent's conference day activities or developing site-based professional development courses. It is hoped that as the data from building plans are shared with other schools, cross-school teams may find more opportunities to collaborate in similar professional development goals.

Spreading the Word

The two-way dialogue shared at the January 5th meeting among and across school teams is one way the union and the district are supporting the transition from "other" directed evaluations to self reflective evaluations. This meeting, one in a series, was also another opportunity for teams to learn more about the alternative options- peer coaching, action research and portfolio- available for tenured staff. This part of the evaluation model is catching on. In the first year 24 people chose alternative models. In the second year the number rose to 99 and this year the number is 194, almost double last year's participants. It is hoped that as members learn more about this they will consider trying an option.

What's Next?

The labor/management team is developing contract language to address our Peer Assistance and Review program. This process is meant to put the responsibility for first year teacher induction under the umbrella of a labor/management committee. Information about the Toledo Federation of Teachers PAR program can be found at http://www.tft250.org/peer_review.htm. Our district plan will be similar to this first in the nation plan.

Impact on Other Units

Unit 8 members have had a checklist evaluation for many years. In their last negotiations, members argued successfully to revamp this evaluation system into one that is more professional. We offer the Unit 1 system as a model for self-directed and reflective practice.



More than a "Blue Light Special" – The Teacher Center

At various times all of us have either been beneficiaries or victims of staff development. Staff development is not a "One Size Fits All" garment; it must be carefully tailored to meet the individual style and needs of the recipient. When we are lucky, we choose, or receive, "Ready-To-Wear" staff development; something we can make our own through alterations and accessories. If we are truly blessed, we are rewarded with "Couture" staff development; a program uniquely crafted to fit our personal desires.

By necessity, the Syracuse Teacher Center must offer "One Size Fits All" staff development – a rollout of a concept to reach as many of our constituents as possible in a short time frame. But we prefer to be more fashion forward. Our "Ready-To-Wear" offerings include *Just For You* courses, developed by your peers and usually presented at the Teacher Center on West Fayette Street. The "Couture" line of staff development is delivered through individual *Educational Horizon Grants* to attend workshops and conferences, or through site-based *Professional Development Grants*. Site-based *Professional Development Grants* are offered to school communities, partnering schools or select groups within schools to further a specific professional goal identified by a group through their Professional Development Plan. The Teacher Center is currently soliciting new proposals for *Professional Development Grants* for the spring and summer of 2005.

Professional development is very much like a new outfit. Welcomed, because it is about renewal and change. Uncomfortable, because you are striving to become at ease with your new personal and professional statements. Challenging, because you are creating a new persona that needs adjustment before it becomes an integral part of the professional you.

Ultimately, professional development is about the impact it makes upon our students. In order to reach that end, professional development is about the changes it makes in you the person and you the teacher. Professional development rewards and energizes both teachers and students.

As we celebrate the twentieth year of the creation of the Teacher Center concept in New York State, the Syracuse Teacher Center Staff and the Policy Board of Directors are taking time to review our past and make plans to renew our future.

The Teacher Center must set staff development trends while satisfying the wants and needs of our clients, the teachers of the Syracuse City School District. We need and welcome your input. Our charter is to be your "one stop shopping place" for professional fulfillment. Whether you are shopping for the "blue light special" or the "haute couture" of professional development, the Syracuse Teacher Center exists to enable you.

--Fred O'Hara
Teacher Center Policy Board Chair

KEVIN'S NOTES...



The Salary Saga Continues

On Wednesday, January 12th, three of our members, **Mary Taylor**, **Marlene Bilbo**, and **Joan Riley** spoke to the Superintendent and the Commissioners of Education at the monthly meeting. These dedicated and experienced teachers described similar personal experiences involving the disturbing salary implementation methods currently employed by the SCSD. Their salaries are wrong and, despite their own best efforts and ongoing attempts by the STA on their behalf, the district has yet to demonstrate any serious interest in correcting them.

As we move toward a Stage 3 hearing on some of the salary issues, I'll share with you the remarks I made to the Board on that same evening:

Commissioners, Mr. Superintendent, thank you for this time and your attention.

I'd like to offer a little background information with regard to the comments of the teachers that have come to speak to you tonight. Although I'm specifically addressing Unit 1 concerns tonight, please be aware that many of these salary issues continue to be problems for Units 8 and 10, as well.

The current Unit 1 contract was settled in December 2003 after over a year and a half of negotiations. During those negotiations, our members received no raises at all. Throughout that frustrating and seemingly endless process they consistently demonstrated patience and professionalism. Unfortunately, as of today, the district is still not paying hundreds of Unit 1 members the salaries they were promised in that agreement.

Among the long list of salary problems are:

- Simple calculation errors yet to be corrected.
- Conducting research that has changed some members' years of service dating back to the 1970's, negatively affecting their pay and retirement.
- Incorrect deductions of hard earned longevity stipends.
- Incorrect step and column placement.
- An application of anniversary dates that defies logic and punishes many of our most experienced and dedicated members.

The district's interpretation and implementation of the salary schedule has consistently been at odds with the intent of the people, myself included, who sat at the bargaining table. Although we believe progress has been made on some of these issues, we are asking this board to urge the district to make all of these salary corrections immediately and meet the salary obligations they agreed to in the contract.

Mary, Marlene and Joan, like far too many of our members, have shown remarkable patience in the face of a non-negotiated and punitive salary interpretation. The salary problems they've encountered and the district's unwillingness to correct them, serve as unfortunate examples of a central office administration that squanders one of its most important assets — the goodwill of its workforce.

--Kevin Ahern, STA 1st VP

School Counseling Week Was February 7-11

If you work in a building with a school counselor, you know the wide-ranging roles these colleagues play in making schools work and helping children learn in the classroom.

Hopefully you gave them a pat on the back which they so deserve during National School Counseling Week Feb. 7-11.

Take the opportunity all year to highlight the tremendous impact counselors can have in helping students achieve school success. This year's theme was "School Counselors Point You in the Right Direction."

For more information on how to celebrate school counselors, see the Jan. 20 *Please Join Us...* or visit the NYSUT Web site, www.nysut.org. You also can go to www.school-counselor.org or www.nyssca.org for the New York State School Counselor Association's tips on celebrating the Profession.

sta Open Line

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Editor In Chief: Kate McKenna: mckenna@syrteach.org
Editor: Kelly Abt: kelleenabt@yahoo.com
Managing Editor: Cathleen A. Danboise: cdan@syrteach.org

Contributing Writers:

Nancy Peluso - Unit 8 (STA)
Kevin Ahern - 1st Vice President (STA)
Marylou Balcom - Unit 1 - Ed Smith
Kelly Abt - Editor - Lincoln
Ann O'Hara - Unit 10 President - VanDuyn
LouAnn Coleman - Unit 7 President - Henninger
Fred O'Hara - Unit 1 - Fowler
Patricia Tanguay - Unit 1 - Elmwood

Health Beat from Unit 10



Ann O'Hara (RN BSN), President
HCPC member

Some members have expressed a concern about scabies. Therefore, we offer the following information in hopes that it will answer any questions you might have.
--Ann O'Hara

Everything You Needed to Know About Scabies, But Were Afraid to Ask

Signs and Symptoms:

Scabies is an infection that affects the skin. The most common symptom of scabies is itching, which may be worse at night or after a hot bath.

A scabies infection begins as small, itchy blisters that break when your child scratches them. The itchy skin may become thick, scaly, and crisscrossed with scratch marks. Because scabies is caused by a mite that burrows into the top layer of skin, you may actually see the mite's burrows as short, dark, wavy lines on the skin's surface.

Scabies most commonly affects the arms and hands, especially the webs of skin between the fingers, the inner part of the wrists, and the folds under the arms. If the scabies infection is severe, other areas of the body may also be affected, particularly the elbows and the areas around the breasts (in older girls), genitals, navel, and buttocks. In older children and adults, the face, head, palms, and soles aren't usually affected, but in infants, almost any area of the skin can be affected.

When your child scratches the skin affected by scabies, he increases the chance that his injured skin will also be infected by bacteria. Impetigo, a skin infection caused by streptococcus bacteria, may develop in skin that is already infected with scabies.

Description:

Scabies is caused by the burrowing mite *Sarcoptes scabiei*. Female mites, which have four pairs of legs, are turtle-shaped and about 1/50 inch (0.4 millimeters) long. They burrow into the top layer of human skin to lay their eggs, which hatch within 2 weeks. The mite's burrows can often be seen as short, dark, wavy lines on the skin's surface, especially around the wrists and between the fingers.

Scabies mites are usually transmitted from person to person by close bodily contact, especially among family members, persons who share the same bed or clothing, or sexual partners. Mites can live for 2 to 3 days in clothing, bedding, or dust.

In specific cases, casual contact may spread the infection. Children under age 15 are more likely to catch scabies. Your child may increase his risk of getting scabies by borrowing other children's clothing.

Incubation:

Once a scabies mite lays eggs under the skin, it takes about 2 weeks for young mites to hatch, but longer for symptoms to appear.

Duration:

Once a person starts receiving treatment for scabies, it usually takes about 2 to 4 hours for him to become noninfectious (no longer able to spread infection to others). Itching generally stops soon after treatment begins, but it can also remain as part of an allergic reaction that may last for weeks. The skin marks of scabies usually clear in 1 to 2 weeks, but in some children they take a few months to disappear.

Contagiousness:

Scabies is a contagious disease caused by a mite. It is spread from person to person by close physical contact (including sexual activity) and by sharing the same infected bed, linens, clothing, or towels.

Prevention:

Scabies may be prevented by practicing good hygiene. Some good habits to encourage include daily showers or baths, frequent hand washing, and wearing clean clothing. Encourage your child not to share clothing with friends.

Once someone in your family is being treated for scabies, all other household members should be treated, too. Clothing and bed linens used before treatment started should be washed in hot water.

When to Call Your Child's Doctor:

Call your child's doctor whenever your child has a skin itch that will not go away, especially if the itch is worse at night and seems to center around the wrists or the webbed part of the fingers.

Also, call your child's doctor for any of the following skin symptoms: blisters, rash, red streaks or lines, pain, pus, or swelling.

Professional Treatment:

If your child's doctor suspects that your child has scabies, he or she may scrape a small part of the affected skin and examine it under a microscope for signs of scabies mites.

In older children and adults, scabies is treated by using 5% permethrin cream or lotion (such as Elimite) and must be used on the child's head and neck as well as the body. The medication is left on for 8 to 12 hours and then washed off. The medication should not touch the eyes or mouth. Alternative medicines include lindane and 10% crotamiton.

Because scabies can be sexually transmitted, sexually active older children with scabies may need to be examined for other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Children who have developed a bacterial skin infection such as impetigo in addition to scabies may need an antibiotic prescription. Your child's doctor may also prescribe an antihistamine to treat itching.

Home Treatment:

If your child has scabies, you may need to help him apply the medicine prescribed by the doctor. This usually involves applying the medicine to your child's skin, covering his entire body from the neck down, and leaving the medicine on for several hours. All other household members will need treatment as well. If scabies affects an older child who is sexually active, the sexual partner will also need treatment for scabies. All clothing, towels, and bed linens will need to be washed in hot water. Your child's toys should also be washed, but there is no special cleaning needed for floors or furniture.

Updated and reviewed by: Kim Rutherford, MD
www.kidshealth.org

Report From Unit 8 President & STA 4th Vice President, Thank You For Bailing Me Out!

Thank you to those who helped me get out of jail. The \$300+ that I collected for the MDA will certainly be put to good use.

--Nancy Peluso



TA workshops at the Teacher Center

If you want to attend a workshop, you must discuss it with your administrator, complete an "Excused Absence" form and call Ellie Contos at SETRC, ext. 4685 to register. We need to be able to plan and provide adequate materials and space for the participants. You should register with Ellie as soon as you complete the excusal request. Don't wait to register until the paperwork approving your workshop attendance comes-sometimes that actually arrives after the workshop. The only way we know that you intend to participate is your call to Ellie to register.

Representation

As an STA member you have the right to representation in any meeting with an administrator if you feel such meeting could result in disciplinary action. There are STA Representatives in your building-talk to one of them-exercise your right to representation. Go to your STA Rep for advice if you have any questions or concerns. In the event that an incident occurs and you receive a letter from the administrator indicating that the matter is being referred to the Personnel office, call me! STA is here to guide and support you as well as to protect your rights. We cannot effectively react or respond if we are unaware of your situation.

TA Certification

The New York State regulations governing teaching assistant certification changed significantly effective February 2, 2004. In addition to requirements of fingerprinting and proof of completion of two workshops-"Identification and Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse or Maltreatment" and "School Violence Prevention and Intervention" anyone applying for TA certification must achieve a qualifying score on the New York State Assessment of Teaching Assistant Skills test (ATAS). Go to: www.nysatas.nesinc.com for more information. The next test date is May 21, 2005. Through NYSUT and the Teacher Center we will be able to offer a test prep course. Information regarding the course will be announced when plans have been finalized. It is important to note that the regulations pertain to date of application for TA certification-not the date of hire. Go to: www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert for additional information regarding TA certification. If you are working now as a teaching assistant and have not yet applied for certification the February 4, 2005 regulations apply to you. Please call me at ext.4526 if you need further clarification.

Bereavement Days

I know, I know---I've said it before and I'm saying it again: in our most recent contract negotiations we did successfully achieve parity with the bereavement language in the Unit 1 contract. Once printed, Article XIII of the new Unit 8 contract will read: "Each member shall be granted up to six (6) days of leave with full pay for each death in the immediate family or the nearest relative. Such leave shall not be curtailed because of use of family illness days and shall be on a non-cumulative basis." We have requested that the District make the necessary adjustments for anyone who was denied 6 days. In some instances members were forced to use a personal day. Please let me know if you were affected by the District's misinterpretation of the contract language.

Unit 7...

What's Cookin'?

LouAnn Coleman, President

Folks, for those of you who know Unit 7 president LouAnn Coleman and all of you who don't (but wish you did!):

LouAnn has recently been diagnosed with a terminal form of cancer. You are invited to show your friendship and support by joining us for an event to remember all of our good times (and the many meals served!).

LouAnn's friends and family are holding a CELEBRATION OF LIFE on Saturday, February 19th at Pastimes Club. It is hoped that we can raise money to assist LouAnn with travel for treatment over these next few months.

The suggested donation is \$10.00 per person or \$15 per couple
Contact Kris Bruns @435-4358 or 696-8928 for ticket information/purchase.
Checks can be made out to Lucia Coleman.

LouAnn is currently a cook at Henninger High School who does an exceptional job of representing the Unit 7 members and supporting all of us. She is also the Unit 7 director on STA's Executive Board.

Thanks for your interest and caring, Kate

Labor Relations Summary

by STA Labor Relations Specialist
Heather Sponenburg



ALL MEMBERS

PERSONNEL FILES

Members should periodically review their Personnel File. Personnel should send you a copy of anything that is being put into your file; however, it is your responsibility to review your file and make sure that its contents are correct and appropriate. If you have never seen the contents of your file or have not done so in some time, you should consider calling Personnel (x4526) and making an appointment to review your file. Employees may challenge or rebut items as well as request the removal of items in their files.

MEDCO

In response to a failure to ensure that all members received their MEDCO information and cards, STA filed a grievance with the District. That grievance demanded that the District send a written explanation to our members immediately and provide a clear procedure for members to follow in seeking reimbursement for out of pocket costs incurred due to the lack of information on January 3, 2005. The District did send out an informational letter on January 5, 2005. The District provided STA with a written reimbursement procedure on February 1, 2005. That form is being distributed to building reps at the February 9th Rep Assembly. Thereafter, each building should have a copy of this form.

UNITS 7, 8, AND 10

In response to a grievance filed by STA the District finally provided STA with a final draft copy of your new contracts. We are currently reviewing the drafts to ensure accuracy. Once we have finished we will return the drafts to the District for finalization and printing. The new contracts should be ready soon.

UNIT 1

PROPERTY DAMAGE CLAIMS

Article VI §G addresses the issue of property damage. In recent years we had several issues regarding property damage arise and through negotiations with the District, we have instituted the following procedures with respect to vehicle vandalism:

Unit 1 Members' vehicles parked on District property or in parking lots rented by the District whose vehicles are subject to vandalism occurring during regular working hours, extension of service or during required attendance events are able to file claims for reimbursement with the District.

The employee must:

- file a Notice of Claim with the Board of Education;
- submit the claim to the member's insurance company,
- take action against the known vandal and file a police report.

After the vehicle is repaired, the following documentation must be submitted to the District's attorney or designated administrator:

- itemized proof of the cost of repairs;
- proof of insurance coverage;
- copy of police report and a written statement detailing circumstances of the vandalism/damage.

The District shall then reimburse the member's cost to repair the damage not covered by insurance, up to the limit of the Article VI §G allowance for claims if the following conditions are met:

- the vandalism was witnessed, and the witness signs a statement detailing the circumstances; or
- the vandalism/ damage was viewed on or taped by a security camera; or
- the vandalism/damage was such that it could not have occurred prior to parking on the District's property or in the parking lot rented by the District (e.g. slashed tires).

If you are the victim of vehicle vandalism, follow the above steps with the District. If you follow these steps but still encounter difficulties, please call STA for assistance or if you have any questions.

How Many Have You Asked...

What Have Unions Done for Me?

- ▶ Eight-Hour Day
- ▶ Five-Day Workweek
- ▶ Health Insurance
- ▶ Good Pensions
- ▶ Paid Sick Leave

- ▶ Fair Treatment for Women, People of Color and Workers with Disabilities

- ▶ Higher Wages
- ▶ Overtime Pay
- ▶ Job Safety
- ▶ Paid Holidays
- ▶ Job Security
- ▶ Severance Pay
- ▶ Paid Vacations
- ▶ Family and Medical Leave

These benefits were brought to you by the working women and men of America's unions, who won them at the bargaining table and set the standard for all working families.

--Central New York Labor Federation Voice @ Work booklet

Domestic Partner Coverage

STA is now able to offer **Domestic Partner Coverage** under the **Vision Plan**. An "Affidavit of Domestic Partnership" form may be downloaded from our website. (Copies are also available by calling **Ed O'Rourke** at the STA office x4526.) This form must be filled out and returned to STA with copies of all supporting documentation. Once the documentation is received and approved, a "Change of Coverage" form will be sent, which must be filled out and returned to STA. Coverage will begin as soon as this form is received and processed.

Out-of-Network Claims

The following may be helpful in filing an Out-of-Network claim for the STA negotiated Vision Plan. Note that the most value under the plan is achieved by using an In-network Provider.

Procedure for Making Out-of Network Vision Coverage Claims

1. Go to the Davis Vision website <www.davisvision.com>.
2. Click on the MEMBER LOGIN button
3. Follow the prompts to enter Member Number (your Social Security number) and Password (first 5 letters of your last name)
4. Click on the section for Forms and Information
5. Click on the Out-of Network Claim form
6. Fill out the form completely, and submit to NYSUT Member Benefits, 800 Troy Schenectady Road, Latham, NY 12110 along with a copy of your bill.
7. Wait for the check to arrive in the mail.
8. Any problems, contact Ed O'Rourke at STA x4526

--Ed O'Rourke

Westcott Community Center Presents the 2005 Spring edition of The University Neighbors 2004-2005 LECTURE SERIES

March 6, 2005 March 6 - Sunday, 3 p.m. Shirley Novak

Accompaniment or Charity: What Works in Underdeveloped Communities?

Through Shirley's slides and narrative, we will "visit" rural communities in Uganda, Chiapas (Mexico), Guatemala and El Salvador. We will "meet" empowered local leaders who are struggling to make a difference in their own and others' lives, with the help of international Doctors for Global Health volunteers.

Through Doctors for Global Health, since 1993, Shirley has made at least annual trips to El Salvador, developing strong person-to-person bonds. Along with her physician husband, she spent two months in Uganda, part of a six-month sabbatical in 2001. She is also skilled as a special education teacher to educationally challenged preschoolers and as an "English as a second language" teacher.

This talk will have special relevance to all of us who have examined the pictures from the tsunami in Asia and have wondered how best we can respond to needs in other parts of the world.

Please Join Us...

Thank God the Irish Did Apply!

Once again this year the STA banner will be in the St Patrick's Day parade as part of the Central New York Labor Council float. We need STA members to join us as we walk the parade route.

The theme from the parade committee is "Our Heroes in Uniform — Thank God the Irish Did Apply." According to the letter from the parade committee, "They were strangers in America, a land full of promise! Overcoming great hardships they sought out that promise and in doing so they performed tremendous service to their fellow mankind. They took on the roles of Police Officer, Firefighter and every form of Military Service. Their service was exemplary and their heroics are legendary, even to this day! They are known for the law and order that was protected, the lives they saved, and the foreign shores they defended in the name of our homeland. From Ireland's County Kilkenny to Syracuse's Tipperary Hill, the Parade honors them all, past and present."

What they left out is the fact that most of them were UNION MEMBERS. Come on out for one of the most fun events we have all year.

This year the parade is on March 12th. We meet at the Teamsters Hall in the morning - about 9am. Our goal should be to have 10 people/families from each building representing the STA. We hand out pencils, etc. It's good public relations and fun too!

For further information you may contact Kelly Abt via e-mail (kelleenabt@yahoo.com), at Lincoln (4450) or at home 463-6119.

STA Embroidered Denim Shirts Still Available...



Men's & Women's sizes M-XXL
\$26 payable by STA Bucks, cash or check
payable to STA

Submit order & payment to Kelly Abt @ Lincoln