

News Views

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Negotiators from all over northeastern Ohio gathered on NEOEA Day for our annual Negotiations Conference. Parma EA President Jeff Wensing and Westlake TA negotiator Drew Hocesvar took the opportunity for some extra discussion with OEA Education Reform Consultant Ellen Adornetto, who had just co-presented "Focus on Evaluation" with Attorney Kathy McKinley.



The largest workshop at NEOEA Day 2014 was "In Search of Wonder: Common Core and More," which brought noted authors to Perry. Among the speakers was Steven Kellogg. For more scenes from NEOEA Day, see the photo spreads on pages 6-7 and 12.



One of our biggest trainings of the year is Megaconference, with Leadership Development, Personal Development, and Professional Development workshops. Where else would you see a legal update on the same program with line dancing (pictured here)? It's still too early to register, but we have a preview of Megaconference 2015 on page 10.

President's Message:

Time to Transform the Culture

President Kim Richards relates some of the issues arising from the present focus on standardized testing, and challenges us to work with parents and community members to change the culture that produced them. ... 2

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Members Hit the Road for NEOEA Day Activities

Our once-a-year color pages (center and back) offer glimpses of members enjoying a day of self-selected professional development. Supporting dozens of NEOEA Day workshops in 27 locations calls for a small army of volunteers to fan out across Ohio and other states! We recount their travels for you. 8

Taking a Stand on Common Core — A Resolution in Progress

With all the concern about the impact of the Common Core, NEOEA's Resolutions Committee did what they generally do with important issues of interest to our members: they set out to draft a resolution on the topic for consideration by the Representative Assembly. Resolutions Committee Chairperson Kari Walchalk provides an insider's glimpse of the process. 9

What Every Educator Should Know about Fracking

On behalf of NEOEA's Environmental Concerns Committee, Professor Ray Beiersdorfer offers some background on hydraulic fracturing ("fracking"), which affects the homes and schools of many of our members. 10

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NEOEPA Day

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Cross-Country Ski Outing

Mark your calendar now to join the Environmental Concerns Committee for our annual evening of cross-country skiing at Chapin Forest. 11

President's Message

Time to Transform the Culture

By Kim Richards, NEOEA President

For the last several years, the educational climate in the state can best be described as uncertain. Most of us,



however, are alarmed and fearful of the outlook on the horizon and the direction that public education is taking. We used to inspire and open the hearts and minds

of our students, certain to raise the standard of living and promote democracy through education. Many districts are now underfunded and can no longer reach these goals. The welcoming, nurturing climate we used to have with all education employees, administrators, and parents working together for the common good of the students has been weakened. How did this happen?

I believe the shift started with “No Child Left Behind.” It then snowballed into the testing-obsessed, data-driven culture that we now have in our public schools. Testing has become an epidemic despite the objections by parents, students, and teachers. These tests are used to make major decisions about a student. In Ohio it means if you fail, you cannot graduate or you cannot be promoted to the next grade. High-stakes testing can override and diminish the overall achievement of students. Think about what that means for our students’ success. Students who fail the “standardized” test and are retained have a higher dropout rate. We end up teaching to tests one after the other, which is completely against what professional educators know is sound educational practice.

High-stakes testing can be unfair to our students. How many stories have we

heard about students crying because they **just can’t finish!** Parents are upset because their children do not want to go to school because they are bored; all they do is take tests. And whose “standard” are we testing?

I teach Amish students; nothing is standard about their lifestyle—no norm reference covers them. Test scores aren’t really objective. Who writes the test questions on these tests? Who chooses the test questions, the number of questions, the time allowed, and when the test will be given? Who chooses the cut scores that decide where proficient or passing is? Who determines the meaning of these scores? These are all subjective—not objective processes—and most of the people who make these decisions are not even educators.

Young people entering the teaching profession shouldn’t have to face the specter of a career defined and evaluated by high-stakes testing. There are only so many ways you can creatively tell a student how to fill in the bubble with a #2 pencil.

And worst of all, high-stakes testing misinforms the public. Communities have the right to know how a school is performing; however, high-stakes testing only provides a narrow piece of information. Test results do not take into account the multitude of factors that influence student learning such as poverty, student mobility, parents’ education, safety, and community resources.

It is critical that our legislators understand how dangerous high-stakes testing really is. It’s the total school community that fosters student growth. We cannot accept a single test as the culmination of student achievement. We most certainly will not tolerate the teacher bashing that almost always accompanies poor test scores when we have so many other tools and resources to measure student growth. High-stakes

testing paints a misleading picture of our public schools, their employees, and their students.

It will take a coalition of educators, parents, and community members to make the changes happen. We must seek changes in existing local, state, and national educational mandates from school boards, legislatures, and congress. This should be of the highest priority. If we want the best for our students, then we need to have the best for their teachers.

Now is the time to transform the culture!

In solidarity,

Kim

Nov./Dec. Calendar

Saturday, December 6, 2014

OEA Representative Assembly
Columbus Convention Center

Save the Date

Saturday, January 24, 2015

Environmental Concerns’

Cross-country Ski Outing
Lake Metroparks Chapin Forest

Saturday, March 14, 2015

Megaconference
Corporate College East

For the most up-to-date information on the NEOEA calendar, go to www.neoea.org/Private/PresidentsPage.htm.

Web Resources

at www.neoea.org

- Community Involvement Grant
- Cross-country Ski Outing
- ESP National Conference scholarship
- Game of Hope player application
- NEOEA Friend of Education
- Nomination Form/Letter of Intent for Elections at the Spring 2015 RA
- OADDP State Conference scholarship
- Positive Image Award
- PR Mini-Grant

North Eastern Ohio Education
Association
is affiliated with the
Ohio Education Association
and the
National Education Association

Kim Richards, President
Mary Alice Conkey, Past President
Jeff Wensing, President-elect
Lillian Tolbert, Recording Secretary
William S. Lavezzi, Executive Director
Linda Grunden, Executive Assistant and Editor

Address all correspondence to the NEOEA Office, 5422 East 96th Street, Suite 200, Garfield Heights, Ohio 44125-5330. Views are not necessarily those of NEOEA, the editor, or the officers and Board of Directors.

Address e-mail for *News & Views* to editor@neoea.org

Labor Lines

The American Labor Movement has consistently demonstrated its devotion to the public interest. It is, and has been, good for all America. — John F. Kennedy

Consumer Corner

NEA Propane Discount Program

Are you one of the 60,000,000 Americans who use propane for cooking, home heating, hot water heating and more? If so, you know how expensive propane can be. With the NEA Propane Discount Program, members receive:

- \$50 of free propane when you switch to a Propane.pro supplier.
- Up to four FREE, no-obligation quotes from pre-screened and approved propane suppliers in your neighborhood. **You'll only work with top rated and pre-screened local suppliers.** The suppliers compete, and you save on your

propane bills.

- \$100 toward the purchase of a new propane tank from your Propane.pro supplier.

And if you live in an area where Propane.pro offers **Premium Membership**, you'll enjoy pre-negotiated offers that will save you an average 25-40 cents per gallon on your propane. **Plus, Premium members don't pay any fees**—not for your tank, deliveries or anything else.

To sign up or learn more, go to www.propane.pro/nea or call 855-966-1444 (toll-free).

District News

Cuyahoga Nonprofit Helps with Classroom Materials

In late August, Mary Alice Conkey paid a visit as President to the Cleveland Kids in Need Resource Center. In a meeting with Community Ambassador Judith Kovach and Program Manager Tammi Kline, she discovered a local asset that many of our members have found valuable in stocking their classrooms.

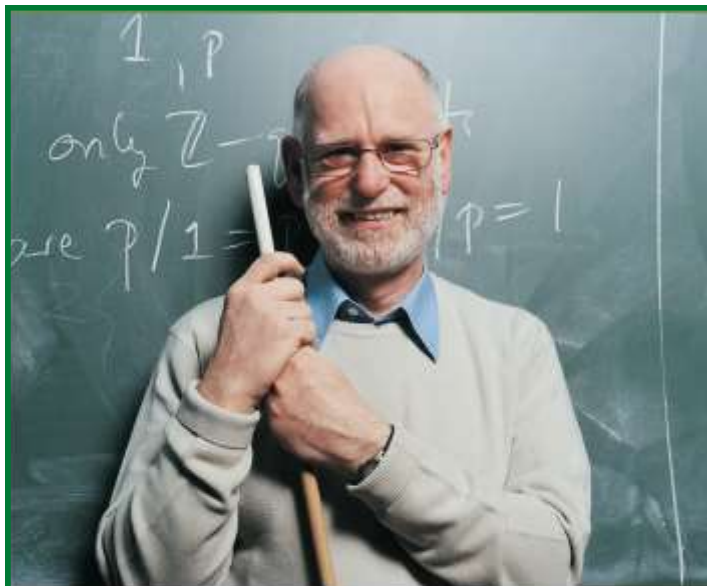
The Resource Center is a local nonprofit that gives more than \$2 million worth of free school supplies, books, uniforms, craft items, furniture, art supplies, and more to licensed classroom teachers in more than 240 eligible schools in Cuyahoga County. To be eligible, a school must have 65% or more of its students enrolled in the federal free or reduced lunch programs. Many of those schools are in districts with NEOEA locals.

The Resource Center gets the word out to teachers in eligible schools primarily through a network of local "advocates," generally signed up by building principals. Advocates get some special privileges, so if you are in an **eligible building and your building doesn't have an advocate**, it would be worth checking with your principal to see if you could become an advocate. To register and find out more about how to use the Resource Center, go to clevelandkidsinneed.org/teachers. That's where you can find a link to the current list of eligible schools.

Cleveland Kids in Need is part of a network of 32 resource centers affiliated with the national Kids in Need Foundation (kinf.org); Ohio's other Kids in Need Resource Center is located in Dayton. Activities are heavily supported by local and national donors and by in-kind donations from businesses involved in manufacturing, distributing, and selling office supplies.

As important as Cleveland Kids in Need is, it affects students

in only one area of NEOEA. Members who know of similar programs operating in their area should tell us about them with an email to desk@neoea.org.



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NEOEA Nomination Form/Letter of Intent for Elections at the Spring 2015 Representative Assembly

The following Board of Directors' positions will be filled in elections at the NEOEA Representative Assembly on Saturday, April 25, 2015:

NEOEa Unit 2 Representative
NEOEa Unit 3 Representative
NEOEa Unit 6 Representative
NEOEa Unit 10 Representative

NEOEa Minority Representative-at-large
OEA/NEOEa Unit 1 Representative
OEA/NEOEa Unit 4 Representative
OEA/NEOEa Unit 7 Representative

The term for the officers listed here run from September 1, 2015, through August 31, 2018. Members interested in serving in any of these capacities should

submit a letter of intent to the NEOEA office by Monday, February 9, 2015; the following letter may be used. Either mail or fax is acceptable. Candidates for the OEA/NEOEa positions must also submit the OEA form available from the office of Carol Price, PriceC@ohea.org.



Ms. Mary Alice Conkey, Chairperson, NEOEA Nominating Committee, 5422 East 96th Street, Suite 200, Garfield Heights, OH 44125-5330

Dear Ms. Conkey:

I, _____, am interested in running for the position of _____.

I am a member in good standing of the (list your local association—no abbreviations, please)

_____, NEOEA, OEA, and NEA.

Home address: _____

Home/cell phone: (_____) _____ Work phone: (_____) _____

Email address: _____

School building: _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Please mail by **Monday, February 9, 2015**, to **NEOEa, Candidate**, 5422 East 96th Street, Suite 200, Garfield Heights, OH 44125-5330, or fax to NEOEA at 216/518-0202. For more information, please call NEOEA at 216/518-0200.

NEOEa Prepares to Field Celebrity Player for Game of Hope

February 8, 2015, will mark the ninth anniversary of NEOEA's participation in "The Game of Hope Charity Classic," a celebrity basketball game sponsored by The Hope Foundation of Mahoning Valley. The Hope Foundation is dedicated to the education, research, and charitable centers across the Mahoning Valley providing grants and other services to terminally ill children, and aim to support local charities who share in their common goal. In the last eight years, they have donated money to organizations that support their mission and goals, such as Silver Lining

Cancer Fund, Potential Development Program, Inc., Project Linus, Easter Seals, and Youngstown Hearing and Speech, just to name a few.

Since 2005, the game and the foundation have raised more than \$75,000.

Last year Niles EA President Brian McConnell stepped in as NEOEA's Game of Hope Player. Thank you, Brian!

Previous celebrity players for NEOEA include Past President and NEA Director André Taylor (Twinsburg EA), Past President Jeff Pegg (Warren EA), Scott

Chronister (Lakeview TA), and Amy Nilsson (Howland Classroom TA).

NEOEa's PR Committee has published information (www.neoea.org/Game_of_Hope.pdf) for the role of celebrity player, and completed applications are due on Friday, January 2. The game will be played on Saturday, February 8, at 3:00 p.m. in Beeghly Center at Youngstown State University.

For more information, visit The Hope Foundation of the Mahoning Valley at www.hopemv.org.

Bargaining Report

Following is a list of local contract settlements since the bargaining report we provided in the September-October issue. Each entry in the following report begins with a listing of the county, employer, local affiliate, service council, and OEA office. These are very brief summaries of rather complicated agreements; consult your OEA Labor Relations Consultant for more detailed information.

- **Cuyahoga, Euclid City, Euclid Classified Assn. (North Coast "C", Mentor).** In February the classified employees ratified a 1-1/2 year contract effective July 1, 2013, with a .5% increase.
- **Lake, Lakeland Community College, Lakeland Faculty Assn. (Unit 38, Hudson).** At the end of August, the faculty ratified a three-

year agreement with increases of 0%, 1%, and 3%.

- **Lorain, Keystone Local, Keystone Local EA (Kudos, Vermillion).** At the end of August the teachers ratified a two-year contract effective July 1, 2014, with no increase.
- **Portage, Southeast Local, Southeast Local SSPA (Unified Portage, Hudson).** The classified staff ratified a three-year contract with increases of 2% each year plus two additional steps and restoration of all three steps frozen in the previous contract.
- **Portage, Southeast Local, Southeast Local District TA (Unified Portage, Hudson).** The teachers ratified a three-year contract with increases of 2% each year and shifted the entire index up a step (i.e., new step 1

was old step 2) and restored all three steps frozen in the previous contract.

- **Summit: Copley Fairlawn City, Copley TA (Summit/Portage "C", Hudson).** In August, the teachers ratified a three-year contract with increases of 2% each year plus a \$400 lump sum each of three years to non-steppers.
- **Summit: Nordonla Hills City, Nordonla Hills EA (Summit/Portage "B", Hudson).** In August, the members ratified a three-year contract with increases of 2% each year on the base plus a \$1,000 lump sum for anyone who was part of the freeze in 2001; \$500 for everyone else.

Monthly Quiz

Congratulations to Kristen Russ from Strongsville EA, winner of the last issue's "Monthly Quiz" contest.

In each issue we'll be asking a question. (Often, this one for instance, the answer can be found in the pages of the newsletter itself.) All the entries will

be made online, and one winner will be drawn each month to receive a restaurant gift card.

The second question this year is: what is the date of the next Megaconference?

We'll welcome all entries, but to be considered for the restaurant gift card,

the winner needs to answer by Friday, December 12. To answer, go online to www.tinyurl.com/NEOEA201411.

Thank you to all who have participated!

Scholarship Applications

NEOEA will make available scholarships for several different groups. Recipients will be asked to share a report on their conference experiences.

Education Support Professionals: The annual NEA ESP National Conference will take place this year at the Louisville Hilton New Orleans Riverside in New Orleans, Louisiana, on March 6-8, 2015. NEOEA will make available three \$900 scholarships for NEOEA Education Support Professional members to attend the conference.

To be eligible for this scholarship, applicants must apply to NEOEA by Friday, December 5, 2014, using the form on our website at neoea.org/ESP_Scholarship.pdf. After attending the conference, recipients must attend an

ESP Organizing Committee meeting in northeastern Ohio to share their experiences at the national conference.

Winners will be responsible for making their own registration, room, and travel arrangements using conference registration materials available from Labor Relations Consultants and on the NEA website. Registrations are due to NEA by late January 2015.

For more information, go to the NEA ESP web page at nea.org/grants/31430.htm.

OADDP Scholarship: This year's State Conference of the Ohio Association of Developmental Disabilities Professionals will take place at the Mohican State Park Lodge on Friday and Saturday,

March 6-7, 2015. NEOEA will make available five scholarships for NEOEA members to attend the conference.

To be eligible for this scholarship, applicants must apply to NEOEA by Friday, January 23, 2015, using the form on our website at neoea.org/OADDP_Scholarship.pdf.

Winners are responsible for making their own registration and travel arrangements. More information about the OADDP State Conference is available online.

Check back at neoea.org for information on the Higher Education scholarship and the Minority Leadership Training scholarship.

NEOEAD



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The Cleveland Museum of Natural History



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Experience
Amish
Country



"Telling Stories" at the
Cleveland Museum of Art

ay 2014



The Akron Zoo: Where Kids Love to Learn



50 Ways to Use Google Forms—It's Not about Working Harder, It's about Working Smarter!



Shakespeare Teacher Intensive



How to Teach International Students and ELL



Strategies for Working with English Language Learners



Digital Library Resources for Teachers



Parents and Teachers as Allies



Cuyahoga Valley National Park



Wandering Attention:
ADHD Across the Lifespan and the Sexes



Principles to Action—
A Mathematics
Mini-Conference

These photos are courtesy of Ellen Becks, Barb Catalano, Mary Alice Conkey, Doug Crawford, Verlene DeWitt, Marti Franks, Margo Fraser, Gary Hollow, Deb Lipnos, Tom Moscovic, Bill Noice, Dianne Noice, Lisa Steigerwald-Kana, Linda Grunden, and Bill Lavezzi. We'd like to extend our thanks to them for sharing their talents with us.

Members Hit the Road for NEOEA Day Activities

By William S. Lavezzi, NEOEA Executive Director

As they do every October, members improved their skills on October 17 at dozens of NEOEA Day programs. Even as we continue to compile reports on this **year's programs, it's clear that hundreds of members took advantage of NEOEA Day's opportunities for professional, personal, and leadership development.**

Sponsoring dozens of programs in some 27 locations is a logistical and organizational challenge, and the day's success was augmented by the work of NEOEA officers, volunteers, and staff members.

Each year, our first program starts before NEOEA Day: the annual tour to New York City, organized by Dave Baker and 20th Century Tours, picked up its first passengers, including Board escort Tom Moscovic (Willoughby-Eastlake TA), in the NEOEA Conference Center parking lot in Garfield Heights. Also that afternoon, NEOEA Day Program Coordinator Nanci DiBianca (Cuyahoga Heights TA-retired) stopped by the NEOEA Conference Center to pick up registration materials needed for the Negotiations Conference in Independence the next morning.

The action heated up on Friday morning. Nanci dropped off the registration materials at the Negotiations Conference and then headed up to **"In Search of Wonder"** in Perry.

NEOEa Day Committee chair Sherri Koncilja (Painesville City TA) and Executive Assistant Linda Grunden greeted a cluster of workshops at Thomas W. Harvey High School (named for the first president of NEOEA) in Painesville. Sherri continued on to Independence for the Negotiations Conference, while Linda stayed for a program beginning at 10:00 before following her to Independence for the Negotiations Conference.

President Kim Richards (Cardinal EA) opened the Negotiations Conference by greeting the participants and introducing the presenters.

Meanwhile, Past President Mary Alice Conkey (East Cleveland EA) was driving to a morning program at Cuyahoga

Valley National Park, followed by a trip to Richfield for **"Yoga 4 Classrooms"** in the afternoon.

Labor Liaison Marti Franks (Twinsburg EA-retired) was taking care of the western areas of NEOEA. First she went to Vermilion Middle School to help with the **"Retirement Countdown"** session offered by STRS. Then she spent the afternoon in Westlake and Bay Village for programs on Shakespeare and mathematics.

Bill Noice (Hudson EA-retired) and Dianne Noice (Independence EA-retired) spent their day in Portage and Summit Counties visiting workshops on **technology, "Bullying in PE," and the opportunities of the Akron Zoo.**

Gary Hollow (Bristol ASE-retired) may have logged the most miles. He started in Salem, south of NEOEA, at the Underground Railroad Trolley and **Museum and ending up at "How Much Is Enough?" in Eastlake.**

Communications consultant Margo Fraser and her husband Doug Crawford, both retired OEA employees, visited five sessions in the center of NEOEA's area, ranging from the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo on the west to University Circle on the east and then back downtown.

Barb Catalano (Mayfield EA-retired) photographed morning sessions at the NEOEA Conference Center in Garfield Heights, then headed to Independence for some personal finance workshops, then went to Notre Dame College in South Euclid for a workshop on ADHD, and finally returned to Garfield Heights for an afternoon session.

New York City wasn't our only tour destination. Ellen Becks (Revere EA) and Pam Knox (Brunswick EA) covered separate Friday and Saturday tours to Amish country led by WVIZ-TV. Lisa Steigerwald-Kana (Campbell EA) went to Dresden for a Longaberger tour.

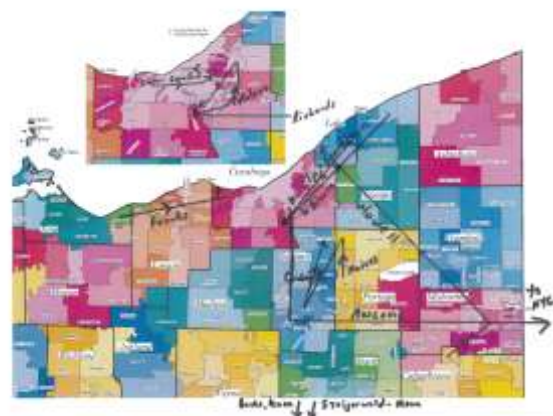
While these folks were crisscrossing Ohio (and Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York), other members of NEOEA's

Board of Directors and its NEOEA Day Committee were also attending sessions, including Meisha Baker (Lorain EA), Ellen Becks (Revere EA), Andrea Beeman (Maple Org. Support Team), Sarah Carver (Mentor Classified Emp.), Diana Charters (Ashtabula ACSE), Verlone DeWitt (Westlake TA), Pam Knox (Brunswick EA), Debra Lipnos (Twinsburg EA), Teri Mackey (Wadsworth EA), Kecia Sanders-Stewart (East Cleveland EA), Irene Spraggins (East Cleveland EA), Lisa Steigerwald-Kana (Campbell EA), Lillian Tolbert (East Cleveland EA), and Jeff Wensing (Parma EA).

And the Negotiations Conference **couldn't have gone off without the** participation of Leadership Development members Karen Carney (Campbell EA), Martha Dunford (Perry EA-retired), Megan McCaskey (Parma EA), Susan Selby (Olmsted Falls EA), Pat Wagar (Mayfield EA-retired), and Chairperson Sherri Koncilja (Painesville City TA).

Having so many of our leaders in the field on NEOEA Day does more than get pictures for NEOEA Day. It communicates to the chairpersons who run these sessions, the presenters who deliver the content, and our members attending the sessions just how important the day is to our organization.

When NEOEA's founders met 145 years ago to establish this organization, one of the first things they did was to designate an annual meeting. That annual meeting became NEOTA Day and, eventually, NEOEA Day, and it's just as important now as it was then.



Taking a Stand on Common Core – A Resolution in Progress

By Kari Walchalk, Field Local TA and NEOEA Resolutions Chairperson

Common Core, merit pay, charter schools, school violence—all educational buzzwords that evoke strong feelings by both members of the educational community and the general public. So we ask ourselves, what should we do with Common Core? Chuck it? Ignore it? Implement it? Try to make it work? Is this the direction we want American public schools to be headed?

Some members may question why **NEOEA hasn't already developed a position on Common Core. It's not a quick process.** Resolutions Committee



members work throughout the school year to formulate statements on issues that best reflect the majority of **members' opinions.**

As a committee, Resolutions is charged with the responsibility of developing such a position. These statements should reflect the basic beliefs of the organization and its members. Issues are looked at from all the viewpoints of all the different categories of members, from classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, school psychologists, guidance counselors, vocational instructors and pre-school staff through university faculties.

Who ultimately decides on position statements? You do as a member of

NEOEA! Each year the delegates to **NEOEA's Fall Representative Assembly** take action on all the Resolutions, both existing positions as well as newly developed ones.

Before we can do anything about Common Core, we need to define it. Who should be in charge of implementing these standards? Are the standards age- or grade-appropriate? How should the success of a child in attaining a level of competency be measured and how often? Who should devise the measurement devices? These are all questions discussed over several meetings by the members of the Resolutions Committee. Input from members, collecting available data, taking a look at the short-term and long-term implications of taking a position on a highly divisive topic all need to be taken into consideration.

Once a workable statement is developed, the resolution is submitted to the Representative Assembly for approval, modification, or rejection. You, as a delegate, decide. Such action then serves to guide the Legislative Committee on developing positions to lobby for or against with our elected leaders who may have the authority to enact changes. As the Resolutions Committee continues its work on Common Core and other issues, you may be wondering how you can have input to the process. One way is to consider volunteering to become a member of the committee. Or if you simply wish to express your thoughts on a subject, feel free to give your input to

the committee by attending one of our meetings or writing up your thoughts on an issue and submitting them. So tell us: what do you think is the good, the bad, and the workable of Common Core?

Every year the committee reviews our entire document to keep it up-to-date and relevant, looking for what may be



missing or what needs to be modified or deleted as changes to education take place. There are currently 160 resolutions in our document. The committee tries to be proactive as well as reactive to new issues: in other words, what we believe is best for public education. Position statements on the impact of immigrant children on schools, funding level cuts perpetuated by financial support being diverted to charter schools, combating terrorism and violence in schools and anti-bullying efforts as well as Common Core are some of what the committee is currently working on. Look for these at upcoming Representative Assemblies.



News from DLAMC

By Verlène DeWitt, Westlake TA and NEOEA Minority Representative-at-Large

NEA President **Lily Eskelsen Garcia** will be the keynote speaker at the annual banquet sponsored by the Doris L. Allen Minority Caucus (DLAMC). The **topic will be: "What's Testing Got to Do with It?"** Tickets for this event are \$45 and can be purchased online on the OEA website (ohea.org). Additionally,

this event is on Friday night, December 5, 2015, at the Worthington Doubletree Hotel. Delegates attending the Fall OEA RA should find President **Garcia's topic most timely and of great interest.**

The DLAMC caucus is actively seeking to increase the participation of minority

members. There will be a regional summit in northeast Ohio in the spring of 2015. Members of the caucus and other interested educators from NEOEA are encouraged to attend. As soon as plans are finalized, details will be announced.

District News

What Every Educator Should Know about Fracking

By Dr. Ray Beiersdorfer, YSU-OEA, for the NEOEA Environmental Concerns Committee

Unless someone has been living under a rock (pun intended), they have probably heard something about fracking. Fracking is the recovery of oil and gas from low-permeability rocks by propping open existing fractures in the rock with grains of silica sand.

While this process has existed for decades, the combination of high-pressure injection, slick-water (low-viscosity), high-volume fracking with horizontal drilling began in the Dallas-Ft. Worth region of Texas in 2004 and has rapidly expanded around the country, coming to Pennsylvania in 2009 and Ohio in 2011. This process has been called super fracking and has totally changed the oil and gas reserve distribution around the world. In terms of environmental health and safety, super fracking for shale gas has been scientifically linked with birth

defects in Colorado, high levels of air and water pollution in several states, as well as earthquakes right here in Ohio and elsewhere.

In northeast Ohio's Mahoning Valley, which includes Youngstown, there have been three separate swarms of fracking-related earthquakes, in an area that had been seismically quiet for over 200 years. In 2011, a well injecting frack waste in Youngstown triggered over 100 earthquakes, including a magnitude 4.0 which caused damage. After the well was shut down, the company illegally dumped the waste into a creek, eventually contaminating the Mahoning and Beaver Rivers, a source of drinking water for communities in western PA. Small earthquakes are continuing to this day.

Read more at neoea.org/Fracking.pdf.

Brag Box

Art Work

Shout out to the Cardinal art teachers! Elementary art teacher Mary Eigner and Middle School art teacher Amy Alvord submitted some of their students' art work to be displayed at the NEOEA office. Awesome work, ladies!

NEOEA is looking for art teachers K-12 to submit student art work for display at the office. The work does not need to be matted or have



any special mounting to it. Any two dimensional piece, from water colors to photography, is welcome. Now is the time to spotlight your local student's art work. Your local will also be recognized in our News and Views. Please contact Kim Richards at Kim.Richards@CardinalSchools.org for further information on how to spotlight your student's art work.

Workshops and Conferences

Coming Next Issue: Megaconference

Megaconference [ME guh con fer ens], n: 1) a day of learning for members and guests, including topics in Leadership Development, Personal Development, and Professional Development; 2) hundreds of members attending thirty-six workshops planned by your peers on NEOEA's committees; 3) Saturday, March 14; 4) Corporate College in Warrensville Heights. See *value*.

Here's what participants said about Megaconference 2014:

"After the sessions with Cris and Jeremy, we are more aware of who our friends are in the community and who to be wary of." (Barb Armour, Brunswick ESP Assn.)

"The Line Dance King of Cleveland is truly worthy of his name. He is an excellent teacher of all types of line dances—modern, country-western, etc." (Verlene DeWitt, Westlake TA)

"A great opportunity to reconnect and network with professionals from other locals." (Jeanni Zeal, ACCESS)

Each local President gets three coupons, each good for one free admission; and for those who don't have a coupon, the bill is still pretty small: just \$15 for members and \$25 for guests.

Local Negotiators Elevate Skills at Fall Conference

One of the most basic functions of a union local is to negotiate on behalf of its members. And that's why NEOEA has offered Negotiations Conferences to our members for many years.

This fall, NEOEA presented a Negotiations Conference on NEOEA Day (October 17).

The first hour was a program on "Legal Update—Focus on Evaluation." OEA Attorney Kathleen McKinley and OEA Education Reform Consultant Ellen Adornetto teamed up to provide a review of current legal issues, with a review of what we've learned after a year with OTES and a look ahead to what we can expect under Senate Bill 229.

The second hour was devoted to two sessions. OEA LRC Lynn Davis' topic was special education, which has become a major focus of instruction, affecting both teachers and classified personnel. Members learned tips for writing special education language and for enforcing special education provisions in contracts.

Also in the second hour, attendees received a briefing on communications during bargaining, conducted by OEA Media Relations Consultant Michele Prater, UniServ Organizer Matt Ides, OEA LRC Don Holub. This session

focused on face-to-face, print, and electronic communications, including social media.

The third hour also included two sessions. OEA Education Research Development Consultant Matt Whitman presented "Using the General Fund Analysis and Five-year Forecasts." School districts' five-year forecasts have assumed greater importance in recent years as treasurers have been required to sign off on potential contracts. Attendees learned how to read the Five-year Forecast and make use of OEA's General Fund Analysis.

The other session in the third hour was "Beyond the Contract." An experienced panel of OEA LRCs Tad Colbeck and Ernest Blanden and Past Lakewood TA President Colleen Corrigan presented their experiences with Labor-Management Teams. Members learned language that promoted successful LMTs and how to avoid common pitfalls.

Members were most appreciative. Avon Lake EA's Jeff Arra stated, "This was my first NEOEA Conference, and I was very happy I went. It was informative and useful as we go to the negotiations table soon."

Sherri Koncilja from Painesville City TA said, "Every NEOEA workshop provides insights on state and regional trends to consider for contract language. Learning to advocate for our members is essential for association leadership. I learn something new at every workshop." First-timer Dorian Evans from Sandusky Non-Teaching Emp. Assn. affirmed, "This conference was put together well. All the sessions were very helpful, and the information presented gave me a better understanding on how I can better serve our union members."

NEOEA's next large-scale training, the Megaconference, is scheduled for Saturday, March 14. NEOEA's Leadership Development Committee plans to repeat some of the Negotiations Conference sessions again at Megaconference. The January-February *News and Views* will have more information.



Cross-Country Ski Outing

Saturday, January 24, 2015

Lake Metroparks' Chapin Forest Reservation

A Winter Outing of the Environmental Concerns Hiking Series

Join us on a crisp winter night cross country skiing aka Nordic skiing. Enjoy the solitude of the woods, the scent of pine trees, and the sound of barred owl's "whoo-cooks-for-you" call in the distance as you glide along the groomed trails of Lake Metroparks' Chapin Forest. There is no better way to beat the midwinter's doldrums than on a pair of skis!

If you have never cross-country skied before, now is the time to try. Your adventure begins with a ski lesson from an experienced guide. After you get your ski legs, we'll embark on a ski tour through the woods on lighted trails

along the flatlands and a gently sloped hillside. Many of your colleagues have experienced the quiet beauty of the woods including your Executive Director and many Environmental Concerns Committee members.

So, dress for the weather (layer by layer), call up some friends, and prepare for some unforgettable fun. There's no excuse not to join us—not even the price. Your \$4.00 investment for skis, lesson and an hour on the hillside with friends is certainly worth the price. If you have your own skis, it's free!

Join us on Saturday, January 24, from

6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Chapin Forest Pine Lodge. The registration form is available at neoea.org/SkiOuting.pdf.





Creativity in the iPad Classroom



Bullying in PE—Solve It with Adventure



A Day of Orff with Betsy Kipperman: Playing With Pieces of the Schulwerk



Leave No Teacher Behind: Nontraditional Planning for a New Generation



The Top Ten Uses of Chromebooks in Your Classroom

Underground Railroad Trolley and Museum tour



New York City tour



In Search of Wonder: Common Core and More

(authors, from left: Katherine Paterson, Nikki Grimes, Steven Kellogg, Chris Crutcher, and Tanya Lee Stone)