

**Look Inside: for Your
Read Across America
Poster**



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Delegate Council
Celebrating 125 Years
of Service**



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Native America
Reading**

Ring in the New Year:

Time to Organize, Unionize, and Mobilize!

The waning weeks of 2011 saw a flurry of union organizing activity within NEA-NM that seemed to run counter with the strong anti-union fervor seen across this country and still being fought by our union sisters and brothers in Wisconsin, Ohio, Arizona, and other places. The latter part of the now dearly-departed year saw NEA-NM welcome back a bargaining local in the Southwest Region to our NEA family, greeted a new bargaining local in the Southeast Region, and successfully completed a wall-to-wall bargaining unit in the Northwest Region (see page 3 for more on this). The hard work of local leaders and NEA-NM staff, along with the courage of school employees, to stand proud and stand strong in times when these working Americans are vilified for wanting fairness, respect, and a voice is truly appreciated and acknowledged. These New Mexico school employees, in these different corners of our state, voted to have that voice through the NEA family. Now the hard work of attaining the fairness and respect through the collective bargaining process is before them. Joining is no longer enough as our 100,000 colleagues in Wisconsin found out.

Must Be Present To Win

It's about being seen, being heard, and being present when the attacks on our profession and our professionalism are bandied about by politicians who are intent on keeping favor with their campaign contributors and corporate tax shirkers. How else can you explain a state Governor running for President who just "retired" in the middle of his term so he can double dip and yet, wants to privatize YOUR Social Security and cut YOUR Social Security benefits while delaying YOUR access to them, because they are an excessive and unnecessary burden? How else can you explain your neighbor or uncle, or sister-in-law struggling to keep their small business afloat when their prices are undercut by out-of-state corporations which pay less

in taxes and, as an added sweetener, are showered with tax incentives to locate here and compete with those small businesses?

Keep Them Occupied

It's about being seen, being heard, and being present; and that's as true here in New Mexico as it is in the Rotunda of the Wisconsin State Capitol or in the door-to-door campaign across Ohio to successfully repeal the anti-bargaining law. It all starts on January 17, 2012 with the opening of the 30 day Legislative Session.

It's about BEING SEEN, BEING HEARD, and BEING PRESENT...

You may be quite busy in front of your classroom or your bus or your serving line to personally occupy the state capitol but you can personally occupy your legislators' office phones, emails, and twitters. You can personally occupy them with your concerns, your priorities, and your needs as a school employee and as a tax-paying New Mexican who makes this state work. You can personally occupy them by letting them know that you are not going to take "it" any more and that you certainly can't take any less than you are now. The "it" is a larger workload, shared by fewer people at your worksite; more demands and fewer resources; promises made, but somehow not kept; and a shrinking paycheck. These will be some of the issues in this short money session and there will be more. You can follow them daily by visiting our legislative updates at www.nea-nm.org and

then acting upon the suggested actions. Again, it's not enough to know what is going on but to take action in shaping the final outcome so that it's positive for public schools and public school employees.

ACCOUNTABILITY- A Two-Sided Coin

While the session ends on February 16, 2012, our work is set to begin because all the moaning and complaining heard in legislative circles about YOUR accountability suddenly turns to THEIR accountability as all 112 legislative seats are up for election. It can no longer be enough that a candidate is married to a school employee or comes from a family of educators or fondly remembers their favorite teacher. It can no longer be enough that a legislator once supported us. It has to be about where they've stood during these last years of withering attacks on our profession and our members and where they are in the upcoming 30 days. It will be about public education being a TOP priority in deed and not in rhetoric. Your elected members of our EdPAC will be asking all candidates for these 112 seats to complete our questionnaire, before any decision or recommendation is made. And, if one is made, then again, that is not enough. That's when we ask YOU to help us get them elected- by phoning, stuffing envelopes, walking precincts and urging family and friends to vote for candidates who do support your profession and your livelihood.

It's more than joining, or knowing or recommending. Our job, if we choose to be successful, will be to find common ground among our school employee colleagues, bring them into the NEA family and then use our strength in numbers to make the difference against Fat Cat contributions. **It's about being able to organize, unionize, and mobilize for our students, for our well-being, and for our future... and it starts NOW. ***

It's Time to Hold Hands and Stick Together



Do you sometimes wonder if anybody is listening anymore? Everyone is so busy talking and saying what they want to say, it seems that we have lost the art of listening. Too often politicians talk about their agenda and all the things they are going to do or not do before they've listened to their constituents or looked at the facts.

As an early childhood educator for most of my career, I have recently been thinking a lot about Robert Fulghum's book: *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*. In it he lists some of the things he learned: "Share everything; Play fair; Don't hit people; Put things back where you found them; Clean up your own mess; Don't take things that aren't yours; Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody; Live a balanced life - learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some." And to me, the most important to remember is this: "When you go out in the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands and stick together."

Kindergarteners today are more likely to be expected to write on the line, sit quietly as they learn to read and compute, and take tests to demonstrate their proficiency. There isn't much time left for learning to share, play fair or say they are sorry. Certainly the balance is quickly disappearing from our classrooms. And the question is—why? Parents don't believe it is more important for their five-year olds to sit quietly and color in the lines. Early childhood educators certainly know that is not the way young children learn. And yet that is where we are. Education is being changed by those who have never taught, who see public schools as a business, not a profession for teachers or an opportunity for kids to

become productive, involved citizens who "hold hands and watch out for each other."

As educators, we do know how to listen. We also know how to think critically—that's what we teach our students to do every day. We need to listen to what is being said and then ask questions, challenge the lies and half-truths. We know what is best for kids—not policymakers who have never taught in a classroom, not politicians who have not even been in a classroom since they were students. We know our kids are more than a test score. We know the work we do is so much more than anything that can be measured by a single test. So we need to listen, we need to evaluate what we hear, and then we need to use our voices to advocate for what is right. We must continue to speak up over and over again to challenge those who speak without any regard for the truth. Educators I meet across the state have so much passion for the work they do—we have to take a few minutes to share that passion, to talk about our students and their needs, their successes, and what we know about what works in helping kids learn.

As union members, we also know how important it is that we "hold hands and stick together." Isn't that what unions are about – having a collective voice, standing up for those who may not be able to speak up for themselves? Along with speaking up for public education, we have another obligation: We must stand strong and challenge the attacks on unions and the rights we have worked so hard to achieve over the years. NEA-New Mexico recently celebrated its 125th anniversary. We can be proud of the positive difference we've made for kids, for public education, for education employees and for our state. Labor history clearly demonstrates the positive impact unions have had on our country. Minimum wage, safer working conditions, elimination of child labor, a 40

hour work week, health care and retirement benefits are all the result of union advocacy.

Yet many states are dealing with proposals to take away union rights. The most recent example occurred in North Carolina where Republican legislators could not overturn the Governor's veto of anti-union legislation, so instead waited until Democrats were out of town and called a special session at 1:00 AM to overturn the veto. Where is the respect for the process, for educators, for their colleagues? Where was the open debate on the issues, listening to different perspectives? Fortunately, the North Carolina Association of Educators sought and won a temporary restraining order against the State of North Carolina for the legislation that prohibits NCAE from collecting voluntary dues through payroll deduction. Ohio voters strongly supported unions in their fight for collective bargaining. In several other states, unions have won at least temporary court victories to protect their rights. "Holding hands and sticking together" makes a difference! We must demand that elected officials play fair, clean up their own mess and don't take things that aren't theirs.

As educators and as Association members, we must continue to stand strong for public education, our kids and our future! We must hold hands as we go out into the world and combat these attacks on our profession and our students and watch out for each other! What we do matters and is worth fighting for every day.

In unity,

Sharon Morgan, NEA-NM President

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There's no "Do-Overs" on the Web

What you post and tweet can come back to haunt you

Ah, the joys of social media. We now live in an age where any thought, feeling, experience, sight or sound can immediately be transmitted and shared with the entire virtual planet - instantly. Having deep thoughts about Justin Bieber's hairstyle? Twitter away. Wondering what your friends think of your new hairstyle? Facebook poll! In milliseconds your quote, video, picture or query can be seen by countless virtual world dwellers.

But what if your post isn't about Justin Bieber, but is instead about what you think of your "incompetent" principal? What if the video isn't of your baby drinking milk, but of you guzzling something a lot stronger while partying in your bikini at the lake? What if the poll isn't about your hairstyle, but is about sexual preferences and mistakenly makes it to the inbox of students or parents?

Rather than harmless virtual fodder, you've now created something very dangerous that can cost you your reputation, your job and even your freedom. And the above examples

aren't just hypothetical; teachers have faced discipline and even termination across the country for those very things because they posted without thinking - or posted because they misunderstood the dangers.

There is a great deal of misinformation spread among education employees regarding how the law deals with social media postings. Many believe that if privacy settings limit viewers of what they post, then the information can't be used against them by their employer. Not true. If you post it on the web (via blog, Twitter, Facebook, etc), regardless of what security settings you use, it is no longer private and can and will be used against you in a court of law as well as the court of public opinion.

Others think that they are free to post criticisms of their boss or coworkers online and that the First Amendment will protect their speech. Again, not true. The First Amendment protects a very limited type of speech and will rarely help a disgruntled employee keep his or her job after venting about a boss online. (A recent ruling by the National Labor Relations Board regarding concerted activity applies only to private sector employees, not public employees, so don't read too much into the media hype).

There's no "Do-Overs" on the Web continues on page 11



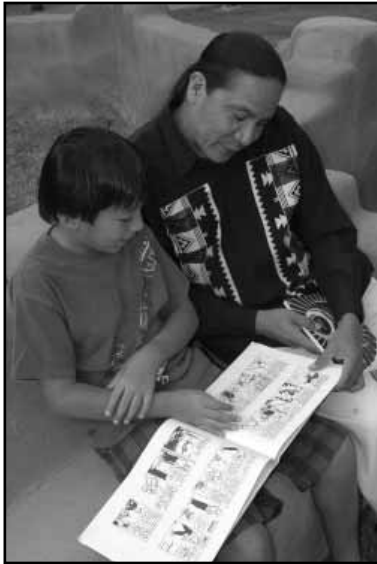
Native America Reading

NEA-New Mexico proudly introduces its 2012 NEA-NM Read Across America Chairperson, Harlan McKosato. Harlan is the host of his five-day-a-week national call-in show or "electronic talking circle", called Native America Talking. The show airs on fifty-two public and tribal stations across the United States and Canada covering popular topics such as health care, education, natural resources, and the "Book of the Month" with over 500,000 listeners each week.

McKosato traces his tribal roots to the Sac and Fox/loway nations in Oklahoma. He has hosted the show since 1997, writes a column for the Santa Fe New Mexican, and has been an adjunct professor of journalism at the Institute of American Indian Arts. In 2002, he was appointed Chair of the Albuquerque Mayor's Commission on Indian Affairs. In 2003, he won the Crosswinds Weekly readers' choice award for "Best Radio Personality in New Mexico. He was honored as the Distinguished Alumnus by the University of Oklahoma's Gaylord College of Journalism in 2005 and, in 2003 anchored the McKosato family on three episodes of TV's The Family Feud.

In his October 2, 2011 column for the New Mexican, he writes about his being asked to

spearhead this year's NEA-NM Read Across America. He writes, "... when I thought about my own upbringing, reading and literacy have been the foundation to all the academic and professional successes that I've been fortunate enough to enjoy over the years. The joy of reading has been passed on from me to my fourth-grade son. It is quite a thrill to hear him laughing out loud reading Calvin and Hobbes..."



He concludes that column by saying, "...So, let's get our children away from those video games for a while. Let's get them off the Internet long enough to stick a book in their hands, have them open it up and read. I really do believe that a reader today is a leader tomorrow."

Harlan and his son, Nekon, are featured in this year's poster (INSIDE this ISSUE) with the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center as the background. You can listen to Harlan airing live every weekday at 11 am on KUNM 89.9 in Albuquerque and you can see him on our NEA-NM Read Across America video at www.nea-nm.org.

You can also visit our website and the NEA link for ideas on how you can celebrate March 2nd and EVERY DAY as NEA-NM Read Across America Day. *

MEMBER MENTIONS

Stand Up and Be Counted

Congratulations to the newly-elected ESP members to the NEA-NM Board of Directors. Elected at Delegate Council for one year terms are: Henry Armendariz, maintenance personnel from NEA-Loving; Bruce Bennett, maintenance personnel from NEA-Los Lunas; Randy Mondragon, bus driver from NEA-Santa Fe; and Teresa Ybarra, instructional assistant from CSEC-Las Cruces.

New Locals and Additions

Welcome to the newly affiliated Teachers Association of Lordsburg-NEA and their new President, Christina Salinas, an educational assistant in Lordsburg. A hearty hello to the newly NEA affiliated CCSD Operations Department in Central Consolidated Schools which is now part of CCEA and NEA-NM. And last, but certainly not least, congratulations to our newest bargaining local, NEA-Lake Arthur and their president, Becky Hammond.

In Memoriam

We acknowledge and mourn the passing of John Gemoets, long-time, active, and loyal member of NEA-Las Cruces who died in November; Madge Hernandez, active member and AR in Espanola-NEA who also passed away in November; and Art Haggerton of NEA-Las Cruces, White Sands Middle School for 30 years and a loyal, career long member who passed in early October.

We also note the late December passing of John Chase, NEA-NM Executive Director, from 1983 to 1985. He was elected President of NEA's Student Program while a student at University of Northern Colorado. John served most of his recently-ended NEA career as a political affairs specialist. Our condolences go to his wife, Barbara, and to his long-time friends and colleagues, Lynne and Jude Mason, formerly of Santa Fe.

nea Member Benefits



From: Eleanor "Snookie" Krumbiegel

NEA Member Benefits
Affiliate Relations Specialist

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- Free lifetime hearing aid cleaning and check-up service
- 3 years' worth of free hearing aid batteries

NEA DENTAL AND VISION INSURANCE

Good oral care is critical to maintaining your overall health. Recent studies have linked oral health with a variety of overall health conditions ranging from diabetes to heart disease. The NEA Dental and Vision program now provides members with

substantial coverage for a majority of your dental care expenses.

Members can also add the optional vision insurance to cover your eyewear needs that provides substantial coverage for exams, lenses, frames and contact lenses. For additional information visit neamb.com or call 1.866.984.7730.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

NEA ACADEMY

The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership at Walden University

NEA Members are eligible for a 10% tuition reduction, waived application and \$100,000 per year in NEA member scholarships.

Master's degrees designed to help you become more effective educators in helping your students succeed. Members can benefit from challenging courses, expert faculty members, a convenient online format and 24/7 student support at an accredited university.

Visit Walden's Master's Degree catalog to see what the leading provider of online

education programs (U.S. News & World Report-May, 2010) can do for you. Questions? Call the NEA Academy at 1.800.893.0396 or go online at neamb.com for details.

DID YOU KNOW?

NEA Member Benefits provides a "Travel Savers Newsletter" that is available online - click on the Travel & Leisure tab at neamb.com - click Features. Members receive exclusive special offers when they sign up for the monthly Travel Savers Newsletter!

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Great Savings have never been easier when you take advantage of the hundreds of exclusive offers available every day through NEA Click & Save

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School Employee Retirement Benefits Are Promises Made. They Must Also Be Promises Kept!



*A guide to talking with policymakers
about potential changes to your retirement.*

By Charles Bowyer

During my last year as a teacher on the public payroll my compensation package consisted of my salary, my employer paid health benefits (including sick leave), and the portion of my future retirement benefit that I earned that year. If I had been unable to fulfill my obligation for any day of my 184 day contract, an appropriate amount of each component of my compensation package would have been deducted. The retirement benefit I earned that year (since I was already vested in the system with more than five years experience) was one year of credit for a retirement qualification that allowed me to retire after 1) 25 years, 2) at age 60, or 3) when my age and service equaled 75; with a multiplier of 2.35 % of my five-year average annual salary times my years of service; and with an annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) starting at age 65 equal to one half of the consumer price index, capped at a maximum of 4%.

I don't believe anyone would suggest that the legislature or anyone else could come to me and say we've changed our mind about how much salary you earned in the 1993-1994 school year for the days you worked; we want \$5,000 dollars back. Irrational, stupid, unrealistic scenario, right? However, there are some, unfortunately including our Educational Retirement Board (ERB) and at least one committee of the legislature (although by the narrowest of votes, 4 to 3 in each instance), who suggest I be forced to give up part of my already earned compensation for that school year; namely, my eligibility for the COLA as described above (they want me to accept 12.5% less than I earned). For those of you still working who are vested, but more than ten years away from retirement, the suggestion is that you give up part of the credit you earned toward retirement eligibility by imposing a new minimum retirement age of 55! That's right; you earned it, but give it back!

You earned the retirement eligibility, but you also earned some actual cash toward retirement. Some would have you and the public believe that your retirement benefits are a gift from taxpayers. They are not. Out of every dollar that funds your pension (and health insurance, for that matter) 100 cents comes from you! We use words like "contribute" to indicate how much our public employers set aside to pay for our retirement plans. Those words make it sound like a gift. They really only indicate how our retirement system is funded, either a direct

contribution taken from you or deferred compensation from your employer.

Your pension plan is the direct result of your contributions and deferred compensation- money that you would have been paid as cash salary but, instead, was placed in a state operated pension fund where the money can be professionally invested (at a lower cost of management) for the future.

Since it is true that pension and benefit money already belongs to public school employees, some might ask why employees would not just take the cash as direct compensation and do their own investing for their retirement through their own individual retirement plans.

Pulitzer Prize winning tax reporter, David Cay Johnston, writes, "Expecting individuals to be experts at investing their retirement money in defined contribution plans — instead of pooling the money so professional investors can manage the money as is done in defined benefit plans — is not sound economics. The concept, at its most basic, is buying wholesale instead of retail. Wholesale is cheaper for the buyers. That is, it saves taxpayers money."

On Thursday, September 15, 2011 the ERB developed funding goals of 80% by 2030 and 95% by 2040. NEA believes that these goals are unrealistic and require changes to school employee retirement plans that are too severe. NEA urged the board not to adopt these extreme funding goals. However, the only member of the Board to vote against the goals was Mary Lou Cameron, NEA-NM's member of the Board (and the only active public school employee on the ERB).

These funding goals forced the plan changes recommended by the ERB. Their proposals make changes to the retirement qualifications of vested members by creating a mandatory minimum retirement age of age 55 for all members not within 10 years of meeting a current retirement qualification. Further, the plan reduces all future COLAs by 12.5%, including those of current retirees. We have made our views clear. No changes that reduce promised benefits for vested active members are acceptable. No changes that reduce the COLA- or other benefits of current retirees are acceptable. No changes that adversely alter the retirement eligibility rules for currently vested active employees are acceptable.

The unrealistic funding goals were adopted at least partly because the Governmental Accounting Standards Board

(GASB) has proposed new reporting and accounting standards for public pension plans. GASB is a non-governmental organization that sets accounting standards for states, cities, counties, school districts, and the trust funds that they establish. GASB does not have the legal authority to compel compliance, but the accounting profession and investors view the standards as part of the baseline for proper accounting. GASB's statements become part of generally accepted accounting principles. Part of the rationale used by the ERB was that the new standards will affect the bond ratings of the state, school districts, or both. NEA has queried the bond and credit rating agencies on the validity of this argument and has found that there is no reason a pension plan has to make changes in anticipation of the new accounting standards' treatment of unfunded liabilities. In essence, the ratings agencies are saying that it's always been part of their job to look at and factor into their analyses pension plans' unfunded liabilities. As a result, the future inclusion of unfunded liabilities on an employer's balance sheet should not spur changes to pension plans in order to protect credit ratings.

We believe that our earned retirement benefits are a protected contract and a vested property right under the New Mexico Constitution. We firmly believe that Article 2, Section 19 and Article 20, Section 22 of the New Mexico Constitution make any diminution of benefits to currently vested members of ERA under current economic conditions unconstitutional.

To summarize your arguments against retirement plan changes for currently vested or retired members of the Educational Retirement Association,

1. If you are vested, you already earned your benefit under the conditions in existence when you vested.

2. No one contributed a gift on your behalf. You paid for your retirement plan as deferred compensation that already belongs to you.

3. The ERB's funding goals are unrealistic and unnecessary, even in the face of new GASB rules.

4. Changes to the benefits of currently vested or retired members are an impairment of constitutional contract and property rights.

If the facts don't work with policymakers, try these three quotes that politicians

Mark Your Calendar

Register at: www.nea-nm.org

JANUARY 2012

28 • NEA-NM Election Postcards Mailed Out

FEBRUARY 2012

15 • Notification of Delegate Allocation for RA
17 • NEA-NM Election Deadline
18 • NM Legislature ends
24 • NEA-NM Election Hand Delivery Deadline

MARCH 2012

1-2 • Read Across America Activities
2 • Dr. Seuss' Birthday NEA's Read Across America
11 • Daylight Savings Begins
16 • Registration Deadline for Spring Conference
30 • NEA-NM Board Meeting
30 • Registration Deadline for ESP Conference
31 • NEA-NM Spring Conference

APRIL 2012

6-9 • Spring Break (NEA-NM Offices Closed)
9 • RA Local Delegates Form Due to NEA-NM
13-14 • NEA-NM ESP Conference, Albuquerque

MAY 2012

6-11 • Teacher Appreciation Week
8 • Teacher Appreciation Day
28 • Memorial Day (NEA-NM Offices Closed)
29 • Registration Deadline for Summer Presidents' Academy & Summer Leadership Academy

should understand, especially in an election year:

1. A politician is known by the promises he keeps.

2. There is no greater fraud than a promise not kept. ~ Gaelic Proverb

3. Losers make promises they often break. Winners make commitments they always keep. ~Denis Waitley *



Online learning for your life

Have You Visited NEA Academy's New Interactive Website?



Your input helped guide the design of the NEA Academy's new website, and we think you'll be pleased with the results. Come explore the site and fill out your personal profile. Based on the preferences you select, this new interactive learning environment will provide content recommendations, course alerts, and additional material of specific interest to you. We invite you to see the all-new NEA Academy at neaacademy.org.

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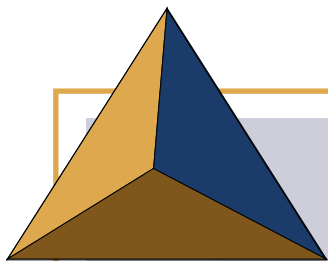
NEA Academy's University Partners

NEA Academy's university partners were selected after a nationwide review of higher education institutions and advanced degree programs for educators. Visit the Academy's website, neaacademy.org, for more information about each of these outstanding institutions and their special benefits for NEA members.

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AC340112



A Tip of the Hat...

Congratulations go to the seven inductees into this year's NEA-NM Hall of Fame and the five special award recipients who were recognized for their efforts on behalf of our students and/or members. For a listing of this year's winners to go along with these pictures visit our Fall issue at www.nea-nm.org. *



Save the Date

Visit www.nea-nm.org for details & registration



MARCH 31: 9 am-4 pm

NEA-NM Spring Conference,
NEA-NM Headquarters
2007 Botolph Road, Santa Fe

Lodging: Group rate of \$82 at the
Residence Inn

Hotel cut-off date: March 8, 2012

Registration fee: \$20

Details at: www.nea-nm.org



APRIL 14: 9 am-4 pm

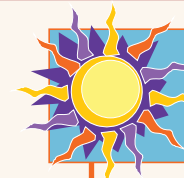
NEA-NM ESP Conference
Embassy Suites Albuquerque
1000 Woodward PL., NE, Albq.

Lodging: Rooms reserved double
occupancy April 13th for ESP members
traveling more than 2 hours.

Hotel cut-off date: March 20, 2012

Registration fee: \$20

Details at: www.nea-nm.org



JUNE 12-14

**NEA-NM Summer
Leadership Academy,**
Ruidoso, NM

Lodging: The Lodge at Sierra Blanca
Hotel cut-off date: May 12, 2012

Registration fee: \$100

Details at: www.nea-nm.org

2011 Delegate Council

*Celebrating Our Past—
Working Now In Planning Our Future*

A packed roomful of over 170 delegates met in Albuquerque on November 5, 2011 for the annual Delegate Council and the commemoration of NEA-NM's 125th anniversary. Delegates welcomed NEA President Dennis Van Roekel and a distinguished delegation of past presidents, staff and leaders who participated in the day's business and celebration. Go to www.nea-nm.org for more Council pictures and join our NEA-NM Face Book page for even more great snippets of the day's happenings. *



Ten minutes with...



Donna J. Every

Position: **Special Education
Paraprofessional**

Local Association: **NEA-Santa Fe**

Years worked in Education: **14**

What is a typical school/work day like for you?

I start with daily morning duty supervising the kids eating breakfast and the Kindergarten students waiting for teacher pick-up. (I do daily duty in an agreement that allows me to leave at student dismissal every afternoon because I have to go to my second job!) I work with a first grade Special Needs student-when he is in therapy, I work on various tasks not part of my job description but valued by my colleagues: tech help with computer issues, trouble shooting A/V equipment, working on the school sound system and wrangling the school Lost and Found.

What do you like about your job?

I like helping prepare my SPED students for a productive future. I like collaborating with my competent, hardworking, smart colleagues and socializing together when we can. I like being a cog in a wheel that brings curiosity and intelligence to our students along with joy to them and their parents.

What is hard about your job?

Special Ed Teachers and Paraprofessionals have demanding jobs-I sleep well at night (happy exhaustion!) Dealing with colleagues who are disrespectful or combative or who don't see the value of our local make it hard. In the past, so have administrators who did or do not have a sense of fairness or respect toward their staff.

What are the most fun or unusual things that have happened on the job?

Some of the more fulfilling are seeing fruition from courses of study or preparation that lead to special presentations to the school community; musical performances, our annual Fiesta Verde, African-American Knowledge Bowl, Rock the Arts, Field Day and Spelling Bee to name a few.

How has being an Association member been helpful to you?

I have the pleasure of working with super-hardworking NEA colleagues. I learn from them and am inspired by them daily as they remind me of the importance of a large and active membership. Being a member helps me to see the BIG picture; the total school community and how each individual impacts it, rather than just my own job or role. I feel empowered to educate, inform, and, in turn, inspire my fellow members. *

Daily Updates On Legislative Happenings

**Learn the Legislation-Lobby the Legislators ONLINE
at www.nea-nm.org. Limited Time Only! 1/18-2/18/12**

President Profile: NEA-Belén

Belén's Dynamic Duo-When the office of local president seemed bigger than one person, these two colleagues decided to tackle it together.



Tarla Hill

In her ninth year of teaching and second year as Co-President, Tarla Hill decided her science background could best be used in the science classrooms at Belén High School, where she teaches Special Education science. Starting with her AA from Eastern NM in 1999, she completed her Bachelors from ENMU the next year, and received her Masters in 2009 from the College of Santa Fe.

When the local was seeking a new president upon Donna Stromei's retirement Tarla was ready to bring her background in school/Special Ed law and ease at public speaking to the presidential partnership she shares with Bernice. A consummate volunteer, she also gives of her time to the American Cancer Society, as a class sponsor, as a parent liaison at her daughter's school, and fundraising chair at her son's pre-school.

She wants to see NEA-Belén grow stronger in membership, build morale and professionalism throughout the district and recruit more members into leadership positions in the local. So, how does she get away from it all? Well, she's not sure what "relax" means, but now and then she'll "make her hubby" take her out of town (to Los Lunas?). When asked why she became an NEA member she replies,

"I am a Special Education teacher; protection was my first reason. Second, I come from a predominantly Union family, so Employee Rights have become extremely important in my life."

Just ask her mom, a union leader in her own local.



Bernice Montoya y Chavez

Bernice is the oldest granddaughter on both sides in a family of 40 first cousins. It was only natural then for every family gathering to be the teacher training ground for her to organize, educate, reprimand, guide, and be in charge of the younger brood. She cites her love of children and her desire to encourage students with similar backgrounds to hers to excel and seek higher education. She herself started with an AA in 2000 from the UNM Valencia Campus, followed by her Bachelors

in Elementary Education from College of Santa Fe in 2001, and her Masters from the University of Phoenix in 2006. She is in her tenth year of teaching and currently teaches fourth grade at Gil Sanchez Elementary.

Seeing the same vacancy in her local's presidency that Tarla saw, Bernice also decided to step up and share the load of leadership with her colleague. She feels (and the last two years have shown it) that her dedication, drive, and penchant for being a hard worker will help her local get stronger and more active. Increasing membership in NEA-Belén, improving member collaboration and bettering administrative training are goals she wants to accomplish. Her reason for joining NEA is short and sweet:

"Public education employees should be respected and treated like professionals so they are happier and more energized for their students."

When asked how she relaxes and gets away from it all- well, we go back to where we started; it's all about family and the fact she feels blessed to have their support and love as she works on behalf of her students and her members. *

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• Putting Kids First • Promoting Professional Excellence • Improving the Well-Being of School Employees

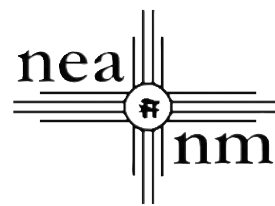
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NEA-NM Election 2012: Candidate Statements

For the Office of NEA Director



Gerri Franco

Greetings Colleagues, my name is Gerri Franco and I am pleased to announce my candidacy for NEA Director.

As with many of you, little did I know all those years ago, that volunteering to become my building's Association Representative would result in such a positive change in my professional and personal life. I believe that I have always had the desire to help others and stand up for those who I feel are being treated unjustly. However, the support and training that I have received from my NEA "family", has just served to help me become a more informed and effective leader.

I have also had the privilege and opportunity to serve in various local, regional and state positions. I am currently a member of the Essential Leadership Cadre where I am receiving even more valuable insight into becoming a better leader.

Current times are really tough for educators. We are combating tough economic times, which have placed us in a position of having to defend our profession. These challenges are impacting our ability to provide for both students and families. I welcome the opportunity to serve as your spokesperson and "give back" to my profession and the NEA: the organization that has given me so much. *



Ann George

Like you, I have patiently waited for my administrator, my superintendent, and my legislators, to ask my professional opinion on how we can improve our schools, develop a fair evaluation for educational staff, and be in partnership for what is best for student learning. THEY WILL NEVER ASK. Our voice has been diminished. It is time to RAISE our voice! Every day we demonstrate BEST PRACTICES they have yet to recognize! I will pursue, at national and state level, acknowledgement that New Mexico-NEA members are committed to the BEST public education possible. WE ARE PUBLIC EDUCATION!

My successful history of leadership experience:

- Vice President of my local
- Vice President of my region
- Elected 2 terms NEA EdPAC member
- Elected 2 terms State Board of Directors
- Delegate to the National RA for 4 years, 2 as your elected state representative.

I bring the expertise needed to be heard in Washington DC. I BRING YOUR VOICE that will not be silent, your concerns, rights, and thoughts. We need strong committed leadership to stand up for public education.

Your VOTE for ANN GEORGE - NEA DIRECTOR provides you a PROVEN LEADER WITH A STRONG VOICE. I AM THE NEA! *

For the Office of NEA Alternate Director



Rosemary Carrasco

LET ME INTRODUCE MYSELF. My name is Rosemary Carrasco and I am asking for your support and vote for the NEA Alternate Director position. I AM A PROUD NEA-NM UNION MEMBER!

I am currently the President of Carlsbad-NEA and a member of the NEA-NM Board of Directors.

I also serve the members of NEA-NM as an ELL state trainer and chairperson of the Minority Caucus. I am a 12-year veteran certified Bilingual teacher.

During my 12 years of NEA membership, I have had the opportunity to successfully serve in various positions in my local and NEA-NM. These opportunities taught me the importance of a leader who can articulate the Vision and message of both NEA and NEA-NM.

Your vote for Rosemary Carrasco counts and you can count on me for:

- Tested and Proven Leadership
- Vocal Advocate for NEA-NM Values and Policies
- Visionary
- Proactive
- Sound Judgment

I have the proven experience in union leadership during these tough times to always seek advice, research, listen, and then implement a unified political agenda that will enable NEA-NM to remain relevant to our members in the next 125 years to come.

I would appreciate the opportunity to continue to give the organization my energy and ideas in making NEA-NM a stronger advocate for all its members.

Thank you...for your consideration and support. I would love to hear from you at: carrasco123@yahoo.com *



Irma Valdespino

I am proud to declare my candidacy for the NEA-NM Alternate Director. I have been a NEA-NM member for 16 years I have served on the NEA and NEA-NM Board of Directors as ESP At-Large Director. While on the NEA-NM Board of Directors, I along with my fellow ESP Directors initiated the ESP Task Force which later became the ESP Committee. In 2000, I was selected the NEA-NM ESP of the Year and the 2001 NEA ESP of the Year.

As President of the Classified School Employees Council of Las Cruces, my collective bargaining team and I have worked diligently to bargain a strong collective bargaining agreement. During my tenure as president, my local has grown to 500 members.

Understanding the importance of being politically visible, I have gone to the NM Legislature to advocate for public schools and public education employees.

I am an experienced leader and a passionate advocate. I will work alongside the other members of the NEA-NM Leadership team and the Board of Directors to continue the proud tradition of NEA-NM of standing strong, advocating for students, public education and all educational employees.

Thank you for your support.

Irma Valdespino *

NEA-NM Election 2012: Calendar

Become Active: Go To www.nea-nm.org for NEA-NM's Call for Nominations Information

- 01/27/12 Postcards with instructions for electronic voting (and instructions for a request for optional paper ballots) will be distributed via direct mail to eligible member voters, including retired delegate and retired member of the board of directors mailed to all eligible retired members.
- 02/17/12 Electronic voting closes at 5:00 PM MST. Postmark deadline for eligible voters to return optional paper ballots to NEA-NM.
- 02/24/12 Deadline for receipt of optional paper ballots at NEA-NM headquarters by 5:00 p.m.
- 02/25/12 Elections Committee Tally Subcommittee will meet at 10:00 am in a place to be determined to tally election results and set procedures for a runoff election, if necessary.
- 02/27/12 Elections Committee reports election results to NEA-NM Board of Directors.

- 03/05/12 If a run-off election is required, postcards with instructions for electronic voting (and instructions for a request for optional paper ballots) will be distributed via direct mail to eligible member voters.
- 03/26/12 Electronic voting in run-off elections closes at 5:00 PM MST. Postmark deadline for eligible member voters to return optional paper run-off ballots, if any, to NEA-NM.
- 03/29/12 Deadline for actual receipt of optional paper run-off ballots at NEA-NM headquarters by 5:00 p.m.
- 03/30/12 Elections Committee Tally Subcommittee will meet to tally run-off election results.
- 03/30/12 Elections Committee will report run-off election results, if any, to NEA-NM Board of Directors for certification. Determination of at-large elections, if any, are required at 2012 Delegate Council.

NEA Representative Assembly Delegate Deadlines

- 02/15/12 Local Associations of 76 or more members, as of January 15, receive allocations, instructions, and delegate forms from NEA.
- 03/15/12 State receives Student Delegate Allocation and conducts Student Election with same return deadlines as indicated for the run-off election in the elections calendar if any student nominations were received.
- 02/18/12 - 04/01/12 Local Associations conduct local RA Delegate elections, ensuring open nominations and one-person one-vote secret ballots.
- 04/09/12 Deadline for receipt of local delegate forms by NEA-New Mexico.
- 05/15/12 Deadline for receipt of all local, state, and cluster delegate forms by NEA.

Notes: Elections Committee will make an effort to contact all candidates by phone, or candidates may call Elections Committee Chair for results. Board will do a follow-up letter to each candidate.

January 2012

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

February 2012

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			

March 2012

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

April 2012

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

May 2012

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

There's no "Do-Overs" on the Web continued

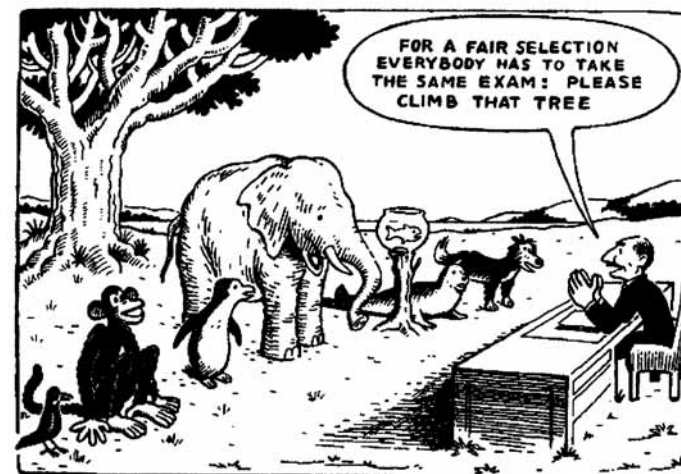
Perhaps the most dangerous presumption of all is that emails and social media messaging are safe and secure ways to communicate with parents, students and fellow staff members. Once again, not true. Those teachers who mistakenly sent a compromising personal picture or email to a parent/student, who sent a complaint about one student to the wrong parent via Facebook, or worse yet, who sent a complaint about a child's parent to that parent inadvertently, have all learned the hard way that nothing about electronic communication is secure.

Sending the wrong message to the wrong person isn't just embarrassing; it can violate privacy laws and expose you to liability. Additionally, once it is sent or posted, it will be forwarded, posted, re-forwarded and re-posted to the point that "damage control" is an impossibility.

Using Facebook to share positive family stories, recount G-rated events and post inoffensive jokes and queries is a great way for education employees to participate in our ever-growing virtual culture. Please, however, be mindful that everything you post on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, or any other medium can and will be seen by your boss, students and parents.

Remember, it isn't private if you post it on the Internet (no matter what you think your security settings are set to) and you can't take it back once you've hit the send button. *

Article reprinted with permission from the Oklahoma Education Association's Education Focus. It was written by Heath Merchen, OEA Associate General Counsel. Minor editing was done because of space limitations.





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...The Fight Goes On: A Look Back at 125 Years of Service

Jan. 1973 • NEA-NM Advocate, pg. 1:

Roswell Sets Pay - A form of "merit pay" under the guise of something else appears to be the new policy of the school district in Roswell... The new board policy states that for good and just reasons the board may increase or decrease a teacher's salary from the amount on the salary schedule...

Feb. 1974 • NEA-NM Advocate, pg. 1:

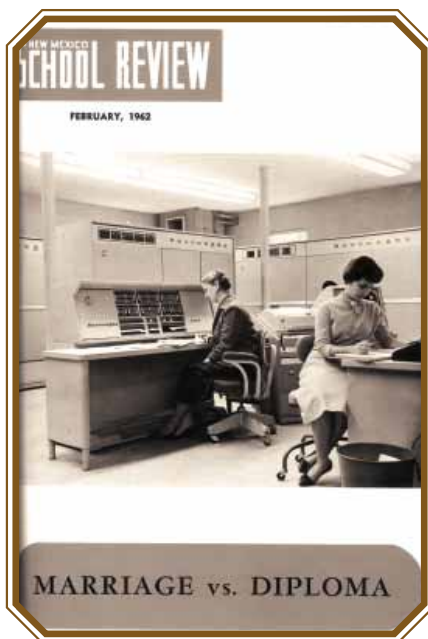
Bulletin: The House Wednesday by a 55-14 vote approved the new state education funding formula.

Feb. 1975 • NEA-NM Advocate, pg. 2:

Rep. Raymond Sanchez (D-Albuquerque) proposed public employee collective bargaining that would include teachers. The House Labor Committee held two hearings in early February on the highly controversial legislation and has given a do pass recommendation to the bill.



January 1967 • New Mexico School Review, pg. 22: "Folksinging is a special treat for youngsters enrolled in the Head Start program at Hermosa Heights Elementary School in Las Cruces. The teacher corps trainee plays their favorites."



February 1962
New Mexico School Review, Cover



December 1961 • New Mexico School Review: Our Building Dedication, pg. 16-17

Caption: Nearly 1000 teachers registered during the open house. Later, they assembled in front of the building on Capitol Street to hear Dr. Carr's dedication address from the lobby steps which face the capitol.



December 1975 • NEA-NM Advocate, pg. 10: Human relations Commission members Alice Proctor, Catherine Smith congratulate Lydia Wright on her gubernatorial appointment to the N.M. State Board of Education.