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President's Message

by Denise King



I hope everyone was able to enjoy a restful Thanksgiving with your friends and family. The Monmouth County Education Association has a lot to be thankful for.

At the October MCEA Representative Council meeting, Gail Maher, Wall President, was appointed as our treasurer to fill the term vacated by Vicki McKeon due to her retirement.

Vicki McKeon has been a great asset to the MCEA leadership and its members. Her dedication to the educators and educational support professionals is truly inspirational. For many years, she has represented our members at NJEA meetings and at the NEA Representative Assembly. She has served as our MCEA treasurer for five years. Under her tenure as treasurer of our Association, she insured the fiscal responsibility of the Association on behalf of its members. She made a very detailed, transparent, treasurer's report so members can see what money the Association has and how that money is spent or invested. She will be remaining as County Executive for this year and will help transition Gail into her position. We wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

The MCEA Leadership has been attending meetings regarding Chapter 78 reform. The first meeting was held in New Brunswick with the NJEA leadership to organize the signing of a petition of support for reform by every member in the NJEA. 74% of the Monmouth County Education Association members signed the petitions which will be presented to legislators. The leadership of MCEA and some members have been meeting with Legislators in LD 11, 12, 13, & 30 to get their support on proposed Chapter 78 relief legislation. Members of the MCEA also discussed, with our legislators, two different bills which will protect ESP members' jobs through Just Cause and Outsourcing notification. You can help

by participating in conversations with legislators or attending County meetings.

The MCEA Scholarship Fund is going to hold the First Annual Gift Auction March 9, 2019 with the goal of increasing the number of scholarships and the award amounts we can give to our members' children. One hundred percent of the Gift Auction proceeds will go to the scholarship fund. If you can make a donation, get a local business to donate, or attend this event, it would be greatly appreciated. The event will be held at the Jumping Brook Country Club from 6:30 – 10:30 PM. Tickets are \$45 which includes dinner and a sheet of raffle tickets. Tickets can be purchased from the MCEA Office, so grab a few friends and make a table and have some fun while supporting the scholarship fund.

There are so many ways to become involved in the MCEA. We truly enjoy connecting with our members who attend the professional and personal development offerings the MCEA provides. Most of our members who attend are happy they came. Please add attending one MCEA event to your New Year's resolution list if you have never attended anything in the past. I look forward to seeing you at trainings, socials, and other county sponsored events. I wish you all a wonderful holiday season!

Upcoming MCEA Events

- 1/7/19 LAT Meeting, MCEA Office 4 pm
- 1/16/19 XYZ's of Retirement, Jumping Brook, Neptune, NJ 4:15 pm
- 1/23/19 Rep. Council, Jumping Brook, Neptune, NJ 4:15 pm
- 2/23–2/24 MCEA Overnight, Ocean Place, Long Branch, NJ
- 3/9/19 Scholarship Fund Gift Auction, Jumping Brook-Neptune, NJ 6:30 pm

Organization Continues to Grow

by John Napolitani



It's hard to believe that the holidays are here and we are about to start a new year. The MCEA Executive Committee has continued to increase participation with our members in many ways. We have increased workshops that are offered, Optical Academy dates and general meetings for the benefit of

our membership.

As we start to plan for the next year, we know that we have created a template for success. We have been pleased with the results that this Executive Committee has had over the past five years and will continue to do more as we continue to lead this organization. We always welcome your input and suggestions for new and more innovative ideas that can help our membership.

Of course, our Association has had its challenges as well on a global perspective. We are still battling for permanent Chapter 78 relief, as well as more rights for our ESP. These battles are not easy and not won without hard work. We have to continue to be steadfast in our pursuit of the rights that we deserve and work hard to maintain what we presently have as members of our Associations.

In closing, I am always thankful to the membership for entrusting me in this position. The members that know me will attest that I, along with the entire MCEA Executive Committee, is here to represent each and every person in a fair and equitable manner. I want to wish each and every member, as well as their families, a very Happy Holiday Season. Please be safe, get some rest, and enjoy your break.

Save the Date

FIRST ANNUAL GIFT AUCTION

March 9, 2019

6:30 – 10:30 PM

Jumping Brook Country Club

210 Jumping Brook Road

Neptune, NJ 07753

Tickets \$45

Includes Dinner and One Sheet of Raffle Tickets

For more information, contact MCEA office
at 732-455-5055 or mcea@mceanj.com

MCEA Offers Professional Development

by Tracie Yostpille



The 2018-2019 school year has begun and so has the Monmouth County Education Association's professional development offerings. Whether you are looking to develop your teaching craft, your ability to advocate for your local association, or develop your personal finances and prepare for retirement, the MCEA has something to offer you. Please make

sure we have your personal email address, so we can send you notice of all our professional development offerings directly. You can sign up using Eventbrite or email us directly to register for any event. If you are not receiving our PD offerings, please send your personal email to mcea@mceanj.com.

Our first MCEA bus trip to NYC to see the Broadway play *Wicked* was a huge success. We are looking to book another trip in the spring so be on the lookout for an announcement. Sign up quickly if you are interested in attending with us because the bus trip sells out quickly.

Save the date for the MCEA overnight professional development conference at the Ocean Place in West Long Branch. Friday, February 22nd and Saturday February 23rd are the dates to save. The Monmouth County Education Association will be hosting once again with our friends from the Middlesex Education Association. Please plan on attending and bring a friend! Friday night there will be a keynote speaker and then entertainment. On Saturday there will be two professional development sessions. Session choices will include professional development, public school and member advocacy. If you have never attended the overnight before, this is your year and if you have attended in the past, we can't wait to see you again. Have a wonderful holiday season Monmouth County members and a healthy prosperous New Year.



MCEA members attended an Autism PD Workshop at the MCEA Office on October 15.

Wear your RED for ED

by Vicki McKeon



So much has happened since our last newsletter. The weather has certainly gone from summer straight into winter this year. Last summer, I was happy to be a part of the Monmouth County delegation to the NEA RA. We were among the more than 400 delegates from New Jersey who joined more than 6,000 NEA colleagues from across the nation at the

2018 National Education Association Representative Assembly in Minneapolis. The RA convened only a few days after the Janus Case was decided in the Supreme Court and became one of the most pressing issues of the assembly. The challenges that public education and educators face are daunting, but we are up to the task. This Supreme Court decision occurred on the heels of a movement that supported public education that started with the strike in West Virginia in February and quickly spread to Kentucky, through Oklahoma, to Arizona, Colorado, and North Carolina.

NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia said, "...we are fierce fighters who will stand up for ourselves and for our students and we will be heard!". The RED for ED campaign gained momentum at the RA. All delegates wore red on the final day of the RA to celebrate the RED for ED movement. This momentum has continued since then with wearing red in support of Public Education every Wednesday.

The Representative Assembly is a business meeting on the National level, much like the MCEA Representative Council is a business meeting on the County level. The majority of our time is spent adopting new policy statements, resolutions, amendments to existing policies and debating more than 100 new business items. These decisions form a blueprint that defines in detail the NEA education policies for the coming year. Next year, the NEA RA will be held in Houston. It would be great if we can take a full delegation. Think about attending either through your local or plan to run as a State Delegate. Contact the MCEA office if you have questions about attending the RA. Nominations for the delegate positions open in February.

Closer to home, on the state level, the NJEA Convention was held November 8 and 9. Hopefully, you had the opportunity to attend the convention this year and the MCEA meet and greet luncheon held on November 8th. As we have done in the past, MCEA provided a bus from the County office in Neptune to the Convention in Atlantic City and back at the end of the day at no charge for our members. The convention offered professional development, High Tech Hall, Keynote

speakers, the State Board of Education meeting and a multitude of vendors all surrounding the NJEA Main Street. The convention affords you the opportunity to network, learn best practices, get new and exciting ideas, and discover all that your union has to offer. Put it on your calendar now for next year, November 7 and 8, 2019. I look forward to seeing you there. Until then, continue to stand up for our students and Public Education. That is why we wear RED for ED. We are NJEA Union Strong!



Members of the Monmouth County Education Association supported the Red for Ed Campaign at the NEARA Assembly in Minneapolis last July.

Assemblyman Agrees to Sponsor Bills



Mary O'Keefe, Jacqueline Paton-Kruzik, and Tracie Yostpille, MCEA members, had a wonderful meeting with Assemblyman Rob Clifton. He has agreed to sponsor all three bills we presented to him today – two bills for our Educational Support Professionals and one bill on Chapter 78 relief for all our members.

Pride Sponsors Events

by Diane Vistein

Hi Friends,

The Monmouth County Education Association and its members are halfway through another exciting year of PRIDE and community projects.

Thank you to those members who participated in the Dyslexia Workshop. The evening was both enjoyable and educational for those in attendance. This workshop is in high demand, and will be presented again in April 2019. Please sign up early as November's workshop was sold out in just 24 hours.

Also, a special thanks to those members who attended Trunk a Treats. The MCEA was able to provide treats and safety reflectors to over 2,500 children. A fun, spooky time was had by all.

Please refer to the MCEA calendar, the MCEA website, or click on the event emails you receive for information on upcoming activities.

PRIDE is a valuable resource sponsoring events which are enjoyed tremendously by those who attend.

We hope to see you in the future.

Happy Winter.



MCEA members attended a Dyslexia Workshop at I Play America on October 16.

Stay Active with MCREA

by Kathy Hodecker

The end of one year and the fast approach of another gives us pause to stop and reflect on what is important. We are grateful to all the members of the MCREA for all they do throughout the year to support community activities and organizations in our county; we work with schools, food banks, soup kitchens, and educational groups, to name a few. We are also grateful for the wonderful relationship the MCREA has with the MCEA, working together in a number of ways to promote and support public education and educators.

Being part of such an active group of retirees demonstrates the importance of continued membership in the MCREA. It is comforting to know that regardless

of what challenges face us, we have the support of all the resources and personnel at NJEA. Help is available for questions regarding our pensions and benefits, as well as personal concerns. It saddens me that so many retirees do not become members because they were so accustomed to having membership dues automatically withdrawn from their paychecks while they were working, but they do not realize that they have to make the annual payments themselves once they retire. The major changes in our healthcare coverage reinforced the strength of our organization because our members received updated news via emails and text alerts, articles appeared in our publications and on our websites, and we had speakers attend our meetings to keep everyone apprised and current. Sadly, non-members who called NJEA were directed to State of NJ websites and offices, and many people were - and still are - receiving misinformation and getting upset, all because they have chosen not to join our organization.

There is strength in numbers. Consider joining us when you retire and/or giving yourself the gift of a Lifetime membership in our unified organization (NEA-R/ NJEA-R/ NJEA/ NJREA/ MCREA) while you are still working so you will always have the support of these powerful groups. It is comforting entering a new year knowing that we have the resources of NJEA working for us. Spread the word that membership matters! Come grow with us! Happy, healthy holidays to everyone!

LAT Takes Action

by Will Potter

NJEA PAC endorsed candidates had a successful election night! Approximately 75% of all candidates endorsed won their races. Members worked hard to ensure we had representatives who made public education a priority. And most importantly, members showed up and VOTED!

We need to take action on a bill that attacks collective bargaining (A-2001). Governor Murphy should veto this bill, so please take the time to call his office and urge a veto. This bill would diminish benefits of county college employees and retirees by forcing them to switch health benefit plans.

Please call your State Senator and Assemblymen/women to urge them to support S-206/A-4352. This bill would tie public employees' premium share to their salary instead of a percentage of the premium. These bills would provide financial relief to all our members.

Our next LAT meeting is scheduled for 1/7/19 at 4pm at the MCEA HQ.