SHAKER HEIGHTS TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

SHTA NEWSLETTER No. 1. October 1970

Editor, Burton Randall

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK:

Events of the past few weeks indicate that Ohio teachers have awakened from their prolonged sleep and are now ready and willing to accept their leadership role in our state. Our endorsement of John Gilligan for governor and our moral and financial commitment to the TRIE program give evidence to the fact that teachers are aware of the power factor in today's political world. We must as a profession realize that total involvement mandates that we engage in political activity at all levels. The question for educators should no longer be one of party. It should center on a candidate's position concerning support of public education. Lack of state support becomes more of a problem concerning all of us as local taxpayers register their protest against today's economic conditions by voting against school levies. If we are to regain the ground lost in our last two-year package we must continue to do our excellent job in the classroom--for this will do more than anything else to ensure the passage of our May levy, we must join our local association and support its leadership team, and we must intensify our efforts at the state level through TRIE and other political activity. We cannot ask the people of this community and the state to make an investment in us unless we are willing to invest in our own future.

Sal Fabrizio,
President

IN MEMORIAM

For more than twenty years, Mrs. Pearl Kuhels gave dedicated service to the school children of Shaker Heights. As teacher and as principal, she strove to fulfill those purposes for which our profession exists. The many who recognized and shared in the fidelity of her goals have been enriched by her care and concern. Hers, then, were the highest ideals, and her life exemplified the tenets by which she lived. The teacher in us all could hope that this be said of us too in truth.

MAJOR INCREASE IN SHTA MEMBERSHIP

Figures from Membership Committee Chairman Maggie Jone, though still incomplete, reveal a significant increase in SHTA membership over 1969-70. It appears we may have a membership in SHTA of about 465 our of 480 people eligible to join, perhaps even a percentage of 97 or 98. Membership in Senior High jumped from 71% to 98%. Though the available figures do not include Moreland, they are sufficient to allow us to read them as a very strong affirmation of support of President Sal Fabrizio and his leadership team, and as a mandate to the Association to provide vigorous leadership in salary improvement.

Let me present to all a brief note I got out hurriedly to the senior high faculty before our general meeting October 12:

Dues are higher, but higher for very good reason: to build a vigorous, active organization. The tea party image, and low dues, and shillyshallying are, we hope, behind us. The strongest single reason for joining is that this year, with Sal Fabrizio as President and Emil Knorr as Chairman of Salary-Tenure, there is hope of making up the ground we lost two years ago in accepting the very inadequate salary plan which still afflicts us. It is worth pointing out that our receiving the extra state money this fall was the direct result of vigorous and protracted efforts by Emil and Sal. Little though that amount is, it's a lot more than the cost of dues.

If Sal and Emil, and the rest of the SHTA Executive Board and Representatives are to negotiate effectively, they need our support. They need all of us.

SHTA can be a strong and vital organization. It deserves our active support. If you have fallen away from it in the past - as I did - in dissatisfaction with its tendency to spend all year rewriting its constitution and never to get on with real problems, now is the time to come back. With the leadership it has, it can be strong. But that leadership needs a clear demonstration of support. This is a crucial year.

Well, the demonstration of support has happened, in the clear form of membership at increased cost. SHTA needs your active support also in participation in its meetings. And in providing the editor with news and ideas for future issues of this newspaper.

SHTA BRIEFS

Three major fields of action this year, in order of priority:

1. Negotiating a new contract.
   After a series of building meetings to sense the mood and the desires of the staff, the Salary-Tenure Committee will be ready to exchange written proposals with administration negotiators in December. We hope some agreement can be reached by January or February for presentation to the staff. SHTA has asked to be represented on the Board of Education committee which recommends the size of the levy to be submitted to the voters next May.

2. Joining in the fight for the future of education in Ohio.
   Recognizing that adequate state support is essential to the survival of public education, even in Shaker Heights, the Executive Board and Representative Council have voted to back the TRIE campaign

for tax reform with money from a revised budget, political action, and personal commitment. Don Scherer is working with representatives from other locals to co-ordinate campaign efforts in Cuyahoga County.

3. Working for better human relations.
This is a continuing long-term concern and is shared by the administration, PTA's and other community groups. We seek to get to know and understand each other better through better communications, working together on joint committees and advisory groups, and having fun together on social occasions. This year's big project is the voluntary, paid in-service training in human relations offered to elementary teachers on Saturday every month. However, much more time is actually spent by SHTA officers in quiet, unpublicized efforts to alleviate individual grievances or problems in human relations reported to them privately by members.

Other items of interest:

In response to an SHTA request, Dr. Lawson has asked all building principals to keep the second Monday of every month free of meetings lasting beyond 4:00 p.m. so that SHTA committees can meet.

Currently under consideration are proposals to obtain legal counsel for the Association on a retainer fee, in case of need; to incorporate the Association and bond its treasurer.

Jean Brattin
Recording Sect'y.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

The absence of publicity of Mrs. Kuhels' death, until the tribute of a colleague printed above, and of the death of our valued associate Mrs. Mae Peterka last year, are symptoms of size. We are now a big system, and we are busy people, and time rushes us all. But it need not be a heartless factory. We are a very human institution, and all of us, in the classroom and in offices, counselors and secretarial people and custodians and teachers and administrators, do "work together, whether we work together or apart."

So one function of this little newspaper is to memorialize loss, and also achievement and service. I can only do that if you let me know. It is your newspaper; I can only edit, and, in this issue, try to raise some questions and look at a few problems. For present, at least, we have decided to mimeograph to keep costs down, thinking that content is more important than format.

There follows a note, to all of you, that I sent recently to SHTA Representatives.

May I have your help in securing information for the SHTA Newsletter? As a Representative, in contact with those you represent in your building, you are in a good position to know the interesting things that are going on there, whereas I, in senior high, might not hear. I'd like the Newsletter to be informative. Special activities or accomplishments of individual teachers, exciting innovations, unusual experiences of travel or education - all will be welcome.

I'm easy to reach at Extension 235. On a regular day I'm near the phone (and not in class) 10:10 to 11:00 and 12:00 to 1:00. Or of course by inter-school mail. I expect to attend the Representative and other meetings and so will see you there. I do hope to hear from you. Good communication among colleagues can strengthen our work.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE REPORT

The Social Committee Survey of Desirable Social Activities for the SHTA resulted as follows:

1. First day of school at nature center — 72% Yes
2. Clambake in October — 53% Yes
3. Fall-Winter dinner dance — 35% Yes
4. Others mentioned: Spring or Fall picnic social
   Car pools to Hanna Theatre
   Car pools to Cavalier basketball games with dinner before game
   Hotcakes and sausage served once a month at a different school each month from 6:45 to 7:30 a.m.

The Social Committee will offer the following activities this year:

1. Fall-Winter dinner dance in December
2. Turtle soup in January
3. Lamb roast picnic in April
4. Canoe trip on Mohican River in May
5. May tea social

We are offering a variety of activities this year to give more people the opportunity to participate in something which will result in fellowship and in getting to meet our colleagues and friends in an informal setting.

Our Clambake of October 2 was very successful and enjoyable as any of the over 110 guests will testify. Despite the short notice, the religious holiday, and the wine festival, the pavilion at Horseshoe Lake Park was full of happy faces. Joe Zimovan would like to convey personal thanks to everyone who participated in making this first Social a success. Special thanks go to all members of the Social Committee for handling the tickets, and individual thanks are in order for Don Vogel, Larry Maniglia, and Max Vermilion from Woodbury; Dorothy Lungmus, Margaret Behrens, and Sandra Markt from Senior High; Roger Colucci of Malvern; Carolyn Booker from Moreland; Ella Welch, Glenna Parsons, and Evelyn Storms from Fernway; Thomas Harshman and Jim DeMersseman from Byron; Blanche Brack and Jeanne Bauter of Mercer; Barbara Pinsak and Mildred Talbot of Sussex; Marjorie Clarke and Mary Cornell of Ludlow; Nan Leibold of Administration; and Dick Bramlish of Onaway.

We thank all our contributors of the $150 worth of Door Prizes both commercial and personal. Max Vermilion had four teams of volleyball aspirants playing after dark!

Special thanks go to Senior High, Fernway, Mercer, and Boulevard who served the fine cider at the SHTA meeting at Byron October 12. Everyone loved it.

Thank to Jack Lawson, Credit Union's Sandy Schoenegge, Paul Dimmick, Ed McMillan, Charles Sindledecker, and Recreation Department for all their personal donations of Door Prizes. The commercial donors are too numerous to mention, but they are permanently observable on a plaque which is being used for this purpose.

In closing, the Social Committee has this to say: If it's fun you want - something different - come to the SHTA's Socials because we are "putting it all together" for a change. Something for everyone is being planned.

Joe Zimovan, Chm.

Better than Fifth

It's better than being fifth though not so good as being first. Our 36 National Merit Scholarship semi-finalists place Shaker fourth in the country this year. I have asked Dr. Lawson to try to discover what schools rank ahead of us. Are they specialized schools or general high schools? Are they bigger than Shaker or smaller? Are they regularly out in front?

= Let's remember that this is an achievement, first, of the students themselves, and second, of the whole system, from kindergarten on, even though the high school wins the kudos.

Are there ways we could get across to Shaker parents who spend extra money on private schools what a very good job we do with their tax money?

(Editor's Note: I'm hoping that this first issue will bring response from you, will stir an interest in expressing the creative ideas you have to your colleagues in all the schools of the system. Here, I'm raising questions, even hoping for thoughtful debate. Let's share our ideas and opinions. Our greatest advances and most worthwhile consensus may come from serious and thoughtful argument.)

Better than Fourth!

Word from Dr. Lawson since writing the above: The three schools ahead of Shaker are Phillips Exeter Academy, which draws top students from all over the world, Regina High School which draws citywide, and Franklin School in New Orleans on which we are seeking information. Shaker stands ahead of Scarsdale and Newton and other schools with which we compare ourselves; but exact comparison is difficult because different states have a different cut-off point for semi-finalists. More anon.

One quest on that interests its editor as to the content of this newspaper or newsletter is that there is inevitably a good deal of overlapping with "All Hands", with the School Review, and with PTA Newsletter. Should the SHTA newspaper, in addition to professional and social news, try to present more editorial and philosophical thought?

Should it grapple with the serious questions that beset education? Including salary? Should it present statements of individual members who wish to reach a forum of their colleagues with an opinion or argument or plea? The editor thinks it should and hopes to hear what you think. If you want to make a statement in the newspaper, please get in touch with Burton Randall in Senior High. If a particular difficulty or dissatisfaction impedes your work, perhaps your colleagues should know of it. Conversely, if you know of a particular strength of Shaker schools, or your building, or a colleague, or yourself, let's proclaim it. For we are a good school system, and steadily getting better.

SUPERINTENDENT's SECONDARY ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Council meets this year from 2:30 to 4:00 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month. Elected faculty members are Miss Georgann Seekins and Nicholas Koelkebeck, Woodbury; Mrs. Anne Palomacki and John Halounek, Byron; and Richard Klyver and Burton Randall, Senior High. As your representatives on the committee, they would welcome hearing what problems and issues you want the Council to consider. The opportunity to bring your voice and views to bear upon the directions the schools take is real.

Meetings last year (in the opinion of your editor who was on the committee then too) were very helpful in bringing frankly before the Superintendent problems of serious concern to the faculty. Issues now under discussion are the improvement of teacher-student relations, inclusion of students in decision-making, and the new K through 12 health program.

SALARY

No solid information yet. But Emil Knorr has reported that attendance at the building meetings on salary ran between 80 and 90%. With people as busy as we all are with our students, and pther meetings, that's a strong indication of our concern.

We need to get our message across to taxpayers. We work long hours, many of them at home. We are available outside of class for conference and tutorial help. We keep up with advances in our profession and try to apply them. We innovate; and we try to preserve a vital tradition too. Shaker is not a system where the teacher goes through a routine performance; but there are many such schools; and although money is not the primary factor, there is a clear and strong relation. Disgruntled or defeated or impoverished teachers are not likely to be glad and vigorous teachers.

To quote a Plain Dealer headline: "If Taxpayer Wants 'Premium' Schools, He Must Pay".

In Shaker, we are doing a premium job. We are constantly compared in achievement with the other great schools across the nation. We are, perhaps, fourth in the nation.

But in salary, we're just near the top in Cuyahoga County - if that -, and that is a very long way below the top schools in the nation. In salary, the Shaker schools have not yet shown leadership.

Eventually, you get what you pay for. And at the present salary base, a beginning Shaker teacher, with a B.A. degree and a certificate, and all the commitment in education these represent, is paid less than a full-time City of Cleveland laborer. We wish the laborer prosperity; but that situation certainly does not show in practice, where it really counts, in money, that the teacher is regarded in Shaker Heights, Ohio, as essential in the educational process.

TRIE

TRIE means Tax Reform for Improved Education:

For Ohio's Future

For Education's Future

For Your Future

Trie is a comprehensive public awareness program through newspapers, radio, and television, an in-depth evaluation of the needs of each school district in the state through an OEA-developed survey form, and an intensive political action program at the local level.

According to Salary-Tenure Chairman Emil Knorr, the Shaker schools earn more from fees and interest than they receive from the state.

People must be convinced that there is a need before they will support any requests for a change in taxation. It is our job to explain this need. Note that TRIE is not so much asking for more money as it is asking for a change in the way we get money for schools. If we are to ask a lot of the Shaker taxpayer, then we want to show him that we are oing all we can to alleviate his situation.

How can we build a climate for tax reform? Through newspaper advertisements, radio spots, TV spots, bumper stickers, folders, film. Tell your neighbors too.

Just one thing more. Teach. Gladly, vitally, and when necessary sternly. Teach. As the phrase goes, that's what it's all about.

PETTY TYRANNY, OR MERELY FOOLISH?

The October 21 Plain Dealer reports that the principal of an East-Side Cleveland school banned from school property teachers' cars without bumper stickers supporting the three Cleveland ballot issues, and that custodians put stickers on cars without the owners' permission. Perhaps it is too trivial a matter to denounce, but if it represents that principal's regular dealing with the teachers of the school, it is worse than foolish; it is destructive to professional and personal dignity. In that regard, it matters. It couldn't happen in Shaker Heights, we hope.

WASTE NOT

Kenneth Caldwell, Senior High assistant principal, reports that the school's Expendable Supplies Account, which covers film rentals, departmental supplies, repair and maintenance of equipment ditto masters and paper, etc., is already spent.

Luckily we do have an administration which has a clear understanding that materials are expendable whereas students' education and teachers' energies are relatively far more important. We use a great deal of paper because we think of new and better exercises, problems, explanations to present our students; we think of better ways; and therefore we discard. We move on, in a continuing process of creative change, while maintaining the strengths of a tradition. It must be very deadening to the serious and creative teacher to teach in a school - and there are, elsewhere, many - where he is rationed stingily in supplies.

But a budget is a budget, and a practical necessity. We should do all we can individually not to waste; and if our administration, in seeing where supplies do go, finds waste, it should act. For example: Film is a very valuable enrichment to our teaching, but it can also be overused to satiety. Some very silly things can happen under the guise of innovation.

ARTICLE IN NATIONAL MAGAZINE

John Barner, Senior High teacher of dramatics, has an article, "Producing the Different Play", in the October Dramatics magazine. The magazine's cover is an illustration of The Chinese Wall, the production of which Mr. Barner's article describes.

BUDGET

A preliminary report suggests a strongly favorable vote of SHTA membership on the submitted budget including the planned expenditure of $900 to support TRIE in local ads and spots.

MEETINGS

Dr. Lawson has approved making available the second Monday of each month for SHTA meetings. That is, administrators are not to schedule affairs which would conflict with teachers' attending SHTA functions to begin at 4:00 p.m. on those days.

LEGAL AID

Dick Tappenden of Byron brought up at the October 12 meeting the subject of retaining a lawyer skilled in school law so that help could be available when needed by SHTA or its members. Invited to research this matter and present it to Representative Council, he did so very thoroughly October 22, with the result that the recommended lawyer, John Papandreas, will soon meet with SHTA leaders.

DEPARTURES FROM PARADISE

Why do teachers leave Shaker Heights? Is the turnover high? What are your thoughts on this? What needs to be done to encourage strong and serious teachers to stay? For whenever a teacher who has grown in the system leaves, a part of its vital tradition leaves with him.

WHICH CAME FIRST?

Law or people? Are we too chicken to try to change it? Or should we egg each other on? A painful but very real topic which schools are going to have to face was expressed in a recent headline: "There Are Too Many Unwilling Students". In democratic theory, education is for all. Probably we all accept that. But is the practice of the theory working? Some thoughtful observers in education think it is not working nearly well enough. What then should we do?

The question is open, the forum available for debate. If you care, enter it. I hope to hear your views. (BR)

EDITOR's PLEA

For future issues, I need more news of your building: What people are doing, special programs and accomplishments, opinions and ideas and questions, problems too.

MAN DOES NOT LIVE BY BREADTH ALONE

SHTA has donated a pair of Size 16 football shoes, formerly the property of Joe Zimovan's brother, to Collinwood for a young man with a special need.

WHEN THE PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS BEGIN

Remember that OEA got the schools the extra $100 (minimum) to $200 (maximum) for this year, and that without strong SHTA efforts we should not have received it directly. OEA also saved our tenure law from almost certain defeat, and saved our right to negotiate as an association. OEA also now provides the teacher $250,000 in professional liability insurance.

HOBBYISTS

Are there other inveterate punsters besides the hard corps in Senior High? Can the prose or cons of this issue arouse response? When water flows over the dam, must the falls chip where they may? Railroad buffs in Senior High, tired of railing at each other's layouts, hope to track down other chaps and form ties.

Sal Fabrizio

Woodbury