

# FOCUS

ON JERICHO  
TEACHERS  
AND THEIR ISSUES

May 2006

## President's Message for May

By Maryann Risi

In my May President's Message I would like to take a few moments (or should I say "inches of text") to clarify some of the "points" that were brought up in the Election Edition of *Focus*.

We did not "allow" the environment in this district to change. Many of the changes described are due to increasingly intrusive State and Federal mandates. Few things sap more energy or generate more paperwork than State and Federal mandates. *Very* creative lesson planning still goes on, *despite* all the mandates. And that is because the great majority of us did go into this profession for all the right reasons. We keep our eyes on

the prize which has always been to provide our students with the best educational experience possible.

There was a recommendation to attend Board of Education meetings. I do. All of them. The building delegates who represent you each sign up to attend at least two. The present Executive Board has always encouraged the attendance of teachers at Board meetings and PTA events. But we do understand that our members have lives outside of Jericho and so we attend all meetings as representatives for you. How many Board Meetings does our colleague suggest we attend? Will this now become another mandate and a further inroad to the use of our free time?

As opposed to what was sug-

gested, ("We have not had to truly negotiate in seven years..."), the JTA had a full negotiation in 2000. We have always had a Negotiations Committee (consisting of all three levels) and relied on their counsel. With the Negotiations Committee's endorsement, Joan Rosenberg and I sat with the Superintendent and John Gross, the District's lawyer, to make some improvements to our work environment (i.e. the June half day for Elementary teachers).

With regard to the Domestic Partners Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), one would have to be quite naïve to believe that anyone, in this financial climate, would give a benefit just because it is "the right thing to do." The Delegates suffered over this

(Continued on page 2)

## Hall of Fame Article in Local Paper Short-Changes Teachers

By Denise Ryder

For those of you who attended this year's Hall of Fame (the event in which we recognize Jericho High School graduates for their accomplishments), it was as wonderful as always. After many years of emceeding the event, Barbara Murphy (retired HS English & Social Studies) handed the mic over to Nick Maraventano (HS Social Studies) who did a *fantastic* job.

Here's my comment: with more than *thirty-five* retirees at the event (none of which were counting it as "a night back"), and about that same number having at-

tended for the last *fourteen years*, there was not one word mentioned about them being there in the Syosset-Jericho Tribune article that reported on the event. "Students, faculty, administration and the members of the board of education joined family, friends and members of the community to celebrate."

*Our retirees were these honorees' teachers! Our retirees were these honorees' inspiration! The recognition of the honorees' former teachers is a HUGE part of this event!*

Jon Carin, class of 1982, who was recognized for his accomplishments in the field of music

(Continued on page 2)

## Jericho Teachers Association

Maryann Risi  
President

Ted Lucher  
Middle School VP

Kevin Brodsky  
High School VP

Lois Burn  
Elementary VP

Fran Rivera  
Secretary/Treasurer

Denise Ryder  
Focus Editor/WebMistress

[www.jerichoteachers.org](http://www.jerichoteachers.org)

## FOCUS

is the monthly newsletter of the Jericho Teachers Association. We welcome input, articles, viewpoints, and questions from all members. If there is an issue you would like to see

addressed or you would like to contribute please e-mail

Denise Ryder, at  
[ryder@jerichoteachers.org](mailto:ryder@jerichoteachers.org)

## President's Message *continued*

point. Dental was never brought from the Delegate Assembly to the Executive Board. Empire Medical was the only negotiated package. This was clearly written in the MOA.

The Executive Board was pushed into very quick negotiations over the Driver's Ed. MOA however, the Delegate Assembly was informed of the three items brought to the table for negotiation. Let me explain – there was a time constraint that was the result of us becoming aware of a case we should have been pursuing and were not. This Executive Board immediately followed through in order to preserve the rights and welfare of Association members. The Board of Education was averse to reaching any set-

tlement on this issue and would have used the lack of Driver's Ed. Program as a negative with the public during upcoming contract negotiations process.

The Executive Board, in all negotiations, has input from NYSUT (New York State United Teachers).

Stipends for in-service teachers have not been limited because they are a contractual amount (unlike outsiders who will be paid less---just ask Cecile Wren!!). The district, *by contract*, has to provide enough classes to afford the opportunity for all members to take at least one class per year. This has not changed.

The Executive Board truly believes

that our membership will stand together. We have faith in their ability to judge the necessity for action when it faces them.

On a lighter note, I have an important announcement about our End-of-Year Celebration...it's sold out! That's right, we are at capacity, which is a big improvement over last year (and past years). Between the attendance at our End-of-Year Celebration, the fact that we have some "competition" in our upcoming Executive Board elections, and some of our recent wins with the Board of Education, I'd say things are really looking up!

## Hall of Fame Article in Local Paper Short-Changes Teachers *continued*

as a longtime member of the group Pink Floyd, spoke of Henry Sweitzer who was *his music teacher* as having a significant influence on his musical career.

Celia Felsher, class of 1972, a partner in Reservoir Capital, a premier investment firm and President of the Mamaroneck School Board, specifically mentioned *her high school librarian*, Joan Jacobs.

Geraldine Kalfus-Gurman, class of 1964, a dance and drama educator who has performed with the Anna Nassif Dance

Theater as a co-choreographer, with Call for Peace Drum and Dance Company, and belongs to the Madison, Wisconsin Arts Board and Dance Council thanked George Batjaika, who was her Spanish teacher.

Joel Brosdsky (Social Studies), Fred Grasso (Art), Maureen Tracy (Social Studies), and Phyllis Mandell were all mentioned by name.

I'm not saying it was a purposeful oversight by any means - it was just a very unfortunate one.

## FOCUS

The Jericho Teachers Association does not endorse nor recommend and of the products and services offered in this section. These "advertisements appear as a courtesy to our members.

### Long Island Hypnotherapy

# LIH

Michael R. Pekor, MS, C.Ht.  
LMHC # 001624

358 Maple Ave.  
East Meadow  
New York 11554

Free Consultation  
(516) 205-2350  
[www.liphypnosis.com](http://www.liphypnosis.com)

### Caring Hands T'ai Chi... Stronger From The Inside Out



Sifu Michael R. Pekor, MS, C.Ht.  
Nationally Certified Instructor  
National T'ai Chi Gold Medalist

1552 Old Country Road  
Westbury, NY 11590  
(Rear Downstairs Entrance)

(516) 205-2350  
[www.caringhandstaichi.com](http://www.caringhandstaichi.com)



**Philip Chaney**  
Licensed Real Estate Salesperson



## Prudential

**Douglas Elliman Real Estate**  
154 Plandome Road, Manhasset, NY 11030  
Bus 516 627-2800 Direct 516 627-9260  
Fax 516 365-2795 Cell 516 993-3579  
[philip.chaney@prudential.com](mailto:philip.chaney@prudential.com)

An independently owned and operated member of Prudential Real Estate Affiliates, Inc.