

Advocate

Texas State Teachers Association/National Education Association

FALL 2003

Changing the world

From Africa to the Galapagos with Disney's top teacher

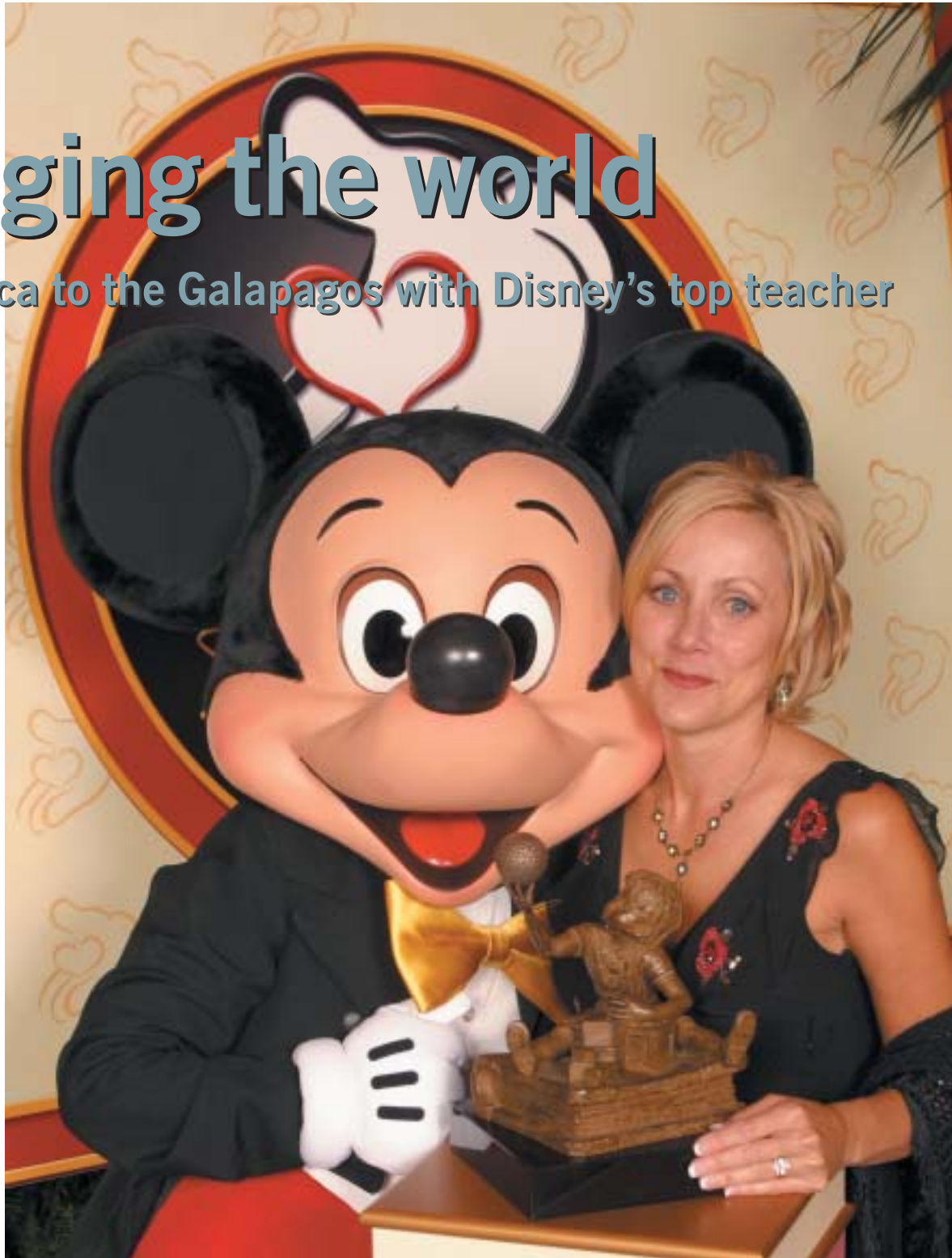
\$500 stipend
goes to all
professionals

In search
of Elvis and
Vanadium

How does
TSTA's Help
Center work?

Kudos to
three ESPs

Inside: your
membership
card!





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Bert Ogden Chrysler, Dodge,
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HOUSTON

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Larry Davis, Al Flores, Dave Donato
aflores@davischevrolet.com;
ldavis@davischevrolet.com;
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sstubbs@machaikford.com

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Ian Nylander
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Tejas Toyota
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Russell Wells
rwells@tejastoyota.com

LUBBOCK

Gene Messer Toyota
806-748-4800
Charlie Hopkins
internet@genemessertoyota.com

MCALLEN

Bert Ogden: BMW, Nissan
956-631-6666
David Flores
teetered@hotmail.com

MCKINNEY

Gillman of Denison: Honda, Mazda,
Toyota
903-463-9800
Vicki Wright
vicki.wright@lawrencemarshall.com

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Troy Tucker, Tim Tolson

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On the road again

“On the road again” could be my theme song for the last several months as I have traversed our great state attending New Teacher Orientations, member meetings, and visiting more campuses and work sites than I can count!

I have experienced the energy and dedication of our leaders and staff who spend hours and hours promoting our fine organization, its services and benefits, and providing opportunities for all school employees to become part of our TSTA/NEA family. These visits give me lots of chances to talk to members and observe firsthand the hard work you do everyday on behalf of our children.

Then, as the first six weeks of school passed, I began to notice some energy levels beginning

to wane, some frustrations beginning to set in, and more questions about retirement and Social Security were being asked! It seems that there are a lot of educators unhappy about certain circumstances regarding, for example, TAKS preparation and also having to reference the TEKS objectives for every lesson and for every test question. The overwhelming complaints

centered around how the legislature cut health insurance stipends, making some folks' paychecks reflect a cut in pay from last year, even some that received small raises from their districts.

Next, I began to notice that frustration and anger were giving way to apathy, a feeling of powerlessness, an attitude of being too busy to care. Apathy is so debilitating; it saps our energy, it brings us down. So, maybe it's time for a “Pep Talk from the Prez”!

You know, I was so proud of you all last Spring when we, TSTA members, generated over 20,000 phone calls that beat back 40 bad

bills. Many of you had never called your legislator before, and it energized you and made you feel powerful! This IS the power of collective action, and it can work on your campus and in your school district! One voice may not make a difference, but standing together with your colleagues can. Organize and mobilize at your local level to speak out against the administrivia and paperwork that bogs you down and keeps you from inspiring your students, from encouraging creative thinking and problem solving skills, and reenergizing yourself in the process!

There are about 280,000 teachers in Texas. Imagine what we could do if all were TSTA members, and if everyone had the courage to make a call, write a letter, speak to the school board, vote and encourage others to vote, and stand up for what we need in public education. Our collective voice would soar and changes could be made by the sheer force of our power.

Billy Graham said, “Courage is contagious. When a brave person takes a stand, the spines of others are stiffened.” Never underestimate your power, my friends. Let us continue to have the courage to rail against those who would diminish the quality of public education, against those who think measuring students and grading schools make them better, while cutting vital funds needed to do the job. Work within your local association, if possible, to change the circumstances that frustrate you and your colleagues and students. Have the courage to make sure we truly leave no child behind, no teacher unqualified, no mandate unfunded. Together, we can!

—TSTA President Donna New Haschke



UPFRONT

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As TSTA-backed legislation passed the House and Senate, the TRS board changed the rule on health care stipends; rules for TRSCare may change; more.

MEMBER ADVOCACY

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That's the number of inquiries the Organizing Center for Legal Services and Member Advocacy received in the first two months of school. Featured case: Helen O'Neal gets her coaching job back.

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Grapevine teacher Sherri Steward-Ganz teaches her ecology students that they can make a difference in the world and their own neighborhood. Disney has named her the top high school teacher in the nation!



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It's time to elect delegates to the TSTA and NEA conventions! Please note: Elections for the NEA convention will be handled differently this time—your ballot will be in the spring *Advocate*!



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Advocate

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Counselors, librarians, nurses: **your stipend is back!**

TSTA worked for weeks with the legislature and key legislators to fix the problem with the \$500 stipend not going to counselors, diagnosticians, librarians, nurses and other professional staff who make more than \$50,000 a year.

As a result of these conversations, Rep. Jim Pitts filed HB 31 to fix the problem. At press time, it had unanimously passed the House and the language was also included in the Senate version of HB 7, which had passed the Senate and gone to conference committee.

At the end of September, the Teacher Retirement System board, meeting after both of these actions were taken, could see where the legisla-

ture was going and adopted a rule that contained the same language that is in HB 31.

Under the new rule, all full-time (30+ hour) employees who are not administrators will receive the \$500. "Administrator" is defined as people who spend 50% or more of their time in a designated administrator position—basically assistant principal through superintendent. The new rule takes effect immediately.

Just to clarify: Librarians, counselors, nurses, diagnosticians, etc., who make over \$50,000 a year will now get the \$500 stipend.

TSTA is still working on a legislative solution because TRS rules can be changed at any time; passage of legislation would place the protection in statute where TRS could not change it at a later date. Check our web site, www.tsta.org, for updates.

Rules for qualifying for TRSCare may change

In addition to the health care stipend, HB 7 also contains language about TRSCare. If there are no other changes in HB 7 when/if the bill finally passes, the following are the current and new requirements to qualify for TRSCare, the retiree insurance program.

After the 78th regular and special sessions, there are now two “rules of 80,” one for retirement eligibility and the other for TRSCare, the retiree insurance program.

There were no changes in the requirements for retirement eligibility. A person who meets the “rule of 80,” including any purchased service credits for out-of-state time, etc., can qualify for an unreduced TRS annuity.

The requirements for TRSCare are as follows:

For the 2003-04 school year
Until August 31, 2004, a person who is eligible to retire under TRS and has 10 years of Texas school experience is eligible to participate in TRSCare upon retirement. A person employed in the public schools during the 2003-04 school year who has already bought out-of-state time or other service credits before August 31, 2003, will be allowed to use that purchased time in order to meet the new “rule of 80” for insurance purposes if they retire before August 31, 2009.

Beginning September 1, 2004
The new requirements to be eligible for the TRSCare

retiree insurance program will be:

- (1) Ten years of Texas school experience AND
- (2) EITHER be 65 years of age OR meet the “rule of 80” with only Texas school experience. Five years of the service time can be met with military time bought in the TRS system.

After September 1, 2004, a person who is eligible to retire but does not meet the new TRSCare eligibility requirements may get the insurance but will have to pay the full cost of coverage until they reach the age of 65 or achieve the insurance “rule of 80,” as explained above.

For example, a person who is 55 with 20 years of Texas school experience and five years in another state would be eligible to retire under the retirement “rule of 80” if the person had bought credit for those out-of-state years in TRS.

But that same person would not meet the new retiree insurance “rule of 80.” They could get the insurance at the time of retirement but would have to pay the full cost for five years. At age 60 with 20 years of Texas school experience they would meet the insurance “rule of 80” and thereafter their costs would be reduced because of the state contributions.



Looking ahead to the next special session

“Money is not the root of all evil. It is the lack of money that is the root of all evil.”

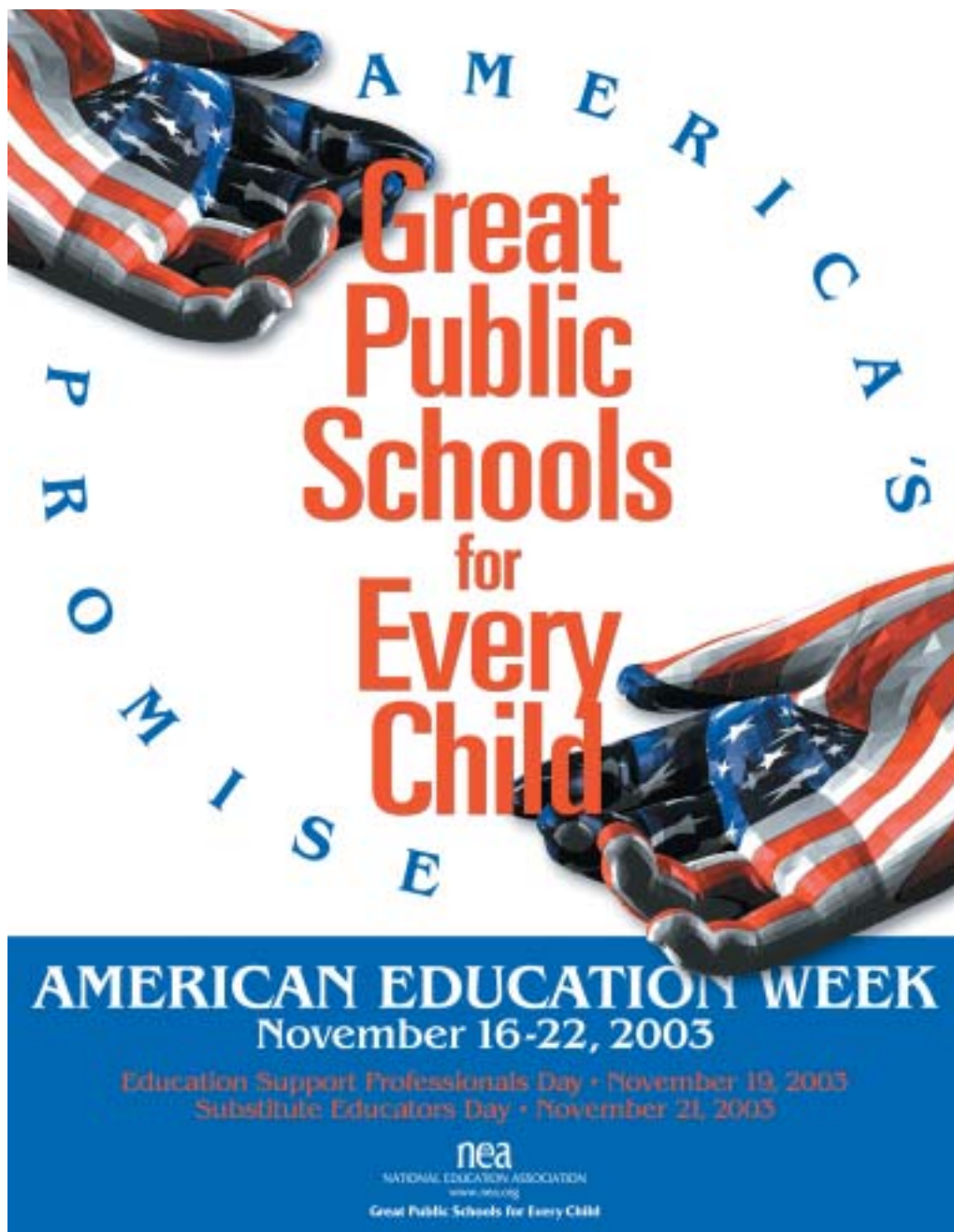
“Reform should be done with us and by us, not without us and against us. Yes, you’re a special interest group. Your special interest is children and public education.”

—NEA President Reg Weaver, speaking at the Ambassador Academy, where he presented graduates with certificates this summer.



IMPORTANT!

If you have not yet signed up for the TSTA Briefing, our weekly e-newsletter, please do so now! If you’re on the list, we can communicate with you immediately when action is needed during the next special legislative session. You can sign up at www.tsta.org.



Great Public Schools for Every Child

America will once again recognize the educators and school staff who keep her children safe, and healthy, and help them achieve during American Education Week, November 16-22.

Wednesday, November 19 is a special day to honor the education support professionals

who positively impact our school communities.

Friday, November 21 honors the work of substitute educators. This year's theme is "Great Public Schools for Every Child—America's Promise."

Tools you can use are at www.nea.org/aew.

Save receipts for tax deduction

Don't forget to save your receipts for out-of-pocket expenses for classroom supplies and resources to take advantage of up to a \$250 federal income tax.

The Educator Expense Deduction, which applies to support professionals as well as teachers, is authorized by federal legislation strongly supported by NEA. However, this well-deserved tax relief will expire after the 2003 tax year unless Congress acts to make it permanent.

H.R. 785 and S. 695 make tax relief permanent, increase the current \$250 maximum deduction to \$400 in the House bill and \$500 in the Senate bill, and expand allowable expenses to include professional development. The bills would take effect this tax year. Supporters of the bill are encouraged to urge their own elected representatives in Congress to support the legislation and to sign on as cosponsors.

For more information, call the IRS Tele-Tax system toll-free at 800-829-4477 and select Topic 458.



Musicians support public school music programs

Texas Music Project's "Don't Mess With Texas Music, Volume One" CD features a variety of country, rock, blues and soul music from nationally known and emerging Texas artists, including Erykah

Badu, Willie Nelson, The Dixie Chicks, Clint Black, Boz Scaggs, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Delbert McClinton and others.

The CD will be promoted and sold by several retailers, including Randall's and Starbucks, and on the Texas Music Project's web site, www.texasmusicproject.org.

It also will be available for use as a fundraiser by local schools. All proceeds from the sales will benefit music education in Texas schools.

"Everyone supporting the project is doing it because they love music, and because they understand music education helps kids reach their full potential, regardless of what they grow up to be," Willie Nelson, honorary chair of the Texas Music Project, said. The Texas Music Project is a non-profit initiative whose mission is to help strengthen and restore rigorous music education to Texas schools, raise awareness of the positive impact music education has on students, and promote Texas music.

Around Texas



Laredo teachers, librarians, and counselors are getting a \$1,600 across-the-board pay raise. TSTA member Rene De La Vina, a special education instructor at Cigarroa High School, had encouraged the board to strongly consider the \$1,600 for teachers, as well as step increases for paraprofessionals.

The *Laredo Times* also credited De La Vina with "persistently lobbying the board and central administration to assign an additional staffer at each campus to lighten the paperwork load on each special education teacher. De La Vina has characterized the special ed teacher's daily routine as 60% teaching and 40% paperwork, 'at best.'"



Did you know that if you are certified, any year in which you substituted for at least 90 days can be counted as a year of experience on the state pay scale?

A law to that effect passed back in 1998-99 but Garland ISD employees didn't realize it. Garland Education Association ran an article on the law in its August newsletter, and TSTA staff member Charles Axe spoke with the personnel director on behalf of employees who were owed money. The district gave up to four years of back pay (because there is a four-year statute of limitations) to qualified individuals. One member worked seven years as a substitute; he'll receive between \$25,000-26,000!

The Texas Capitol Ornament

Eighth in the series of annual collectible ornaments, the 2003 edition depicts the elegant wrought iron entrance gates that graciously welcome visitors to the Historic South Grounds of the Texas State Capitol. Layered in 24 kt gold and enhanced with black detail, the ornament, fitted into a beautifully designed insert that portrays the grounds as they looked when the gates were completed in mid-February, 1890, is presented in an attractive gift box. Cost for each ornament is \$16.00 (plus S&H). Proceeds support Capitol preservation and education projects.

To order on line:
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 To order toll free call: 888-678-5556
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Here are some examples of cases that the TSTA Help Center staff and TSTA lawyers are working on, or have resolved since the beginning of this school year:

► The TSTA Help Center assisted a Dallas member in collecting a retirement bonus for unused sick leave. The member submitted an application for the bonus in a timely fashion prior to the Dallas ISD deadline, yet was told by DISD that his application was not timely. After several hours worth of phone calls with various administrators in DISD, the Help Center staff eventually convinced the administrators and proved that the tardiness problem was with the campus administration, not our member. The bonus was approved.

► A teacher resigned from his teaching contract with one district based upon the promise of a new job in another district in Upshur County. After working in the new district for 15 days without a contract, he was told he no longer had a job. He contacted the TSTA Help Center for assistance. The Help Center staff wrote a letter to the superintendent of the second district in an attempt to resolve the issue. Soon, the case was sent to the TSTA lawyers who filed for a hearing before the Commissioner and filed a grievance. Two hours later, the district sent a letter agreeing to put the member back to work. The member went to work the next day and received back pay for the time he was off. This is a classic case demonstrating the one-two punch of the TSTA Help Center and TSTA lawyers.



TSTA: just a phone or email away

Since the beginning of the 2003-04 school year, the TSTA Help Center has received and responded to over 1,500 phone calls and 3,500 emails regarding TSTA members' employment concerns. The TSTA Help Center is part of the TSTA Organizing Center for Legal Services and Member Advocacy and works together with the other TSTA lawyers to assist locals and members with employment concerns. The vast majority of all legal cases pursued by TSTA originate in the TSTA Help Center.

The TSTA Help Center is open M-F, 7-7 (Central time), during the school year. Call us at 877.ASK.TSTA, or e-mail us through the TSTA website at www.tsta.org.

When a viable case cannot be resolved in writing, over the phone, or in the field by the TSTA Help Center, other TSTA lawyers are frequently called upon to continue the fight. Since the beginning of the 2003-04 school year, TSTA lawyers are handling over 60 cases around the state in various forms of litigation and grievances with school districts.

Practice tip: When transferring jobs from one school district to another, never resign from a contract with the first school district until you have a binding contract with the second school district in hand. If you do, you may be stuck without a job if the promise in the second district evaporates. It is O.K. to accept the second contract "on condition that

my resignation is accepted by current school district employer."

► Bus drivers in Deer Park ISD were assisted by the TSTA Help Center when they were docked three hours for every day of absence, even if they regularly drove midday shifts resulting in an eight-hour day. After a TSTA Help Center staff member discussed the issue with the ad-



TSTA'S LEGAL Lungwitz, Julie Schaudies; (fr Moore, Yolanda Ramirez.

ne call

lieved of some of his duties. After a grievance hearing before the board, the board reinstated the member to full contract status. The other member was a probationary teacher whom the Board voted not to renew at the end of the 2002-2003 school year.



TEAM: (back row) Kevin Guzman, Michael Shirk, Erick King, (front row) Karen Denton, Joey King, Susan Salinas, Russell

ministration, the District reversed their "plus hours" policy and will calculate midday and shuttle shifts into the employee's computed time.

►A TSTA lawyer represented two teachers of the Edgewood ISD in separate hearings before the Board of Trustees. The first member had been accused of being rough with a student and, as a result of the charge, was re-

The TSTA lawyer convinced EISD to reemploy the teacher for the following school year.

►The TSTA Help Center assisted a member in the Houston area as she was forced out of her special education aide position due to her status as someone with cerebral palsy who is also pregnant. The TSTA Help Center wrote to the administration regarding the member's rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Pregnancy Discrimination Act. The administration reversed its position, reinstated the member and provided her with accommodations to ensure her safety on the job.

►In progress: A class action grievance is being pursued

for members in the Skidmore-Tynan ISD around a paperwork issue. TSTA is claiming that the district is in violation of a new law reducing teacher paperwork, when the district is requiring teachers to include detailed TAKS information in every lesson plan, excessive paperwork, and many unnecessary forms. If you are a teacher in Skidmore-Tynan, we need you to get more members to join TSTA and join this grievance now! Call the TSTA Help Center for details.

►In progress: A member in north Texas was assaulted on the job. Upon her return from assault leave, the district informed her that she no longer has a position and would not be paid. The TSTA Help Center is in communication with the administration in an attempt to get this issue resolved without loss of salary to the member. If this fails, TSTA will construe the school district's action as a breach of contract, and will file a termination hearing request with the Commissioner of Education.

►A member in Dickinson ISD was injured by a student in an assault. During her absence, she was unaware that she could request assault leave. She called the TSTA Help Center a few weeks after she returned to work because the district refused to pay her for the two weeks she worked upon her return. The TSTA Help Center negotiated a return of her salary not only for the two weeks she worked, but for the entire time she was out on leave.

►A member of the Ysleta Teachers Association inquired about a principal who was requiring teachers to attend a block meeting once a week, thereby depriving the teachers of planning and prep time. The TSTA Help Center empowered the member with the law which the member presented to the principal. The principal acquiesced, but then added 40 minutes to the teachers' week in apparent retaliation. The TSTA Help Center directly contacted the principal to discuss her decision. After that conversation, the principal informed the teachers that the original work schedule would return.

►A principal in Clint ISD was mandating that teachers have lunch duty one day a week during their duty free time. The Help Center empowered the campus Association Representative (AR) with the law and advised the AR to share this with the principal. The AR did this, and the principal eventually retracted his requirement that teachers work during lunch one day a week.

►Two teachers (one in El Paso and another in central Texas) had unrelated cases that were referred to the State Board for Educator Certification by their respective school districts for alleged misconduct and possible certification sanction. TSTA lawyers were successful in convincing SBEC that the nature and quality of the evidence which was offered in support of the alleged misconduct was so weak as to justify SBEC's closing of the cases without sanction.

►A TSTA lawyer has been assisting a Plano ISD bus driver in an ongoing employment dispute with the school district involving a reassignment and demotion. After months of claiming that her grievances were un-

timely, the Plano school board finally agreed that its administrators should hear her grievances.

►A TSTA lawyer settled a case in Port Arthur on behalf of teachers who claimed they were not getting the appro-

priate amount of planning and prep time.

►A TSTA support personnel member in Conroe ISD reported an incident of sexual harassment to the district's personnel director. Within weeks, the member was reas-

signed to another department and his pay was lowered two dollars per hour. A TSTA lawyer pursued a grievance. The district reinstated him to his former position and salary and paid him retroactively for the time his pay was docked.

Chalk one up for the good guys!

Helen O'Neal held a contract for teaching, and a separate contract for coaching. As we know, the teaching contract carries with it significant due process protection from being arbitrarily terminated. Supplemental coaching contracts ordinarily do not. Supplemental coaching contracts usually state that employment is at-will, and that either party may terminate the contract at any time, and without reason. (Note: Some coaches are employed under a dual or unified "teaching/coaching" contract, where significant due process protections apply to both aspects of the job.)

In this case, the separate coaching contract was entitled "Addendum to Contract." Also, the separate coaching contract stated that O'Neal could not resign from coaching without permission of the superintendent, but that the school district could terminate her coaching duties at any time. (How fair is that?) Furthermore, the coaching contract stated that if O'Neal resigned without permission, it would also be construed as a resignation from her teaching job!

In seeking to dismiss her from her coaching contract, several administrators tried to get her to resign but she refused. A couple of months later, the school board terminated her coaching contract without notice or an opportunity to defend herself. O'Neal filed a grievance nine days after the school board vote. Board policy requires that a grievance be filed within 15 days of the grievable event.

The school board ruled that her grievance was untimely, and refused to hear it. The school board believed that she should have filed a grievance within 15 days of when the administrators asked her to resign.

TSTA appealed the case to the Commissioner of Education in Austin. TSTA argued that O'Neal's grievance, filed nine days after the school board vote, was timely because she had not been harmed until the board actually terminated the coaching contract. TSTA lawyers also argued that her coaching contract was "unified" with her teaching contract for two reasons: 1) The coaching con-

tract was called an "addendum to contract" and 2) Because a resignation from her coaching contract without permission would be construed as a resignation from her teaching contract. If it could be shown that her teaching and coaching contracts

were "unified," then her coaching job would have the same due process protections as the teaching job, and the board could not have dismissed her coaching job without giving her due process.


In one of the worst decisions in a long time, the Commissioner agreed with the ECISD school board, saying she should have filed the grievance when she was told that she needed to resign. Needless to say, this was a setback for O'Neal and for all other school employees. Extending that logic, grievance timelines might begin to run when rumors start, instead of when harm occurs.

The Commissioner never addressed the contract issue.

TSTA appealed the case to Travis County District Court. In late September 2003, Judge Jeanne Meurer issued a judgment reversing the Commissioner of Education, ruling that O'Neal's grievance was timely filed, and that her teaching and coaching contracts were unified. What this means for O'Neal is that ECISD wrongfully terminated her coaching contract without providing her with due process—a significant error that must be remedied. What this means for O'Neal and all other school employees is that grievance timelines do not start running until harm actually occurs. The ultimate fate of this case will not be known until all litigation and potential appeals have ended, but for now, chalk one up for Helen O'Neal and the good guys!



—TSTA General Counsel Kevin Lungwitz



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inspiring the courage to dream



"Sherri's professional life inspires in us all the courage to dream and the will to make great things happen for students and thus, our nation, our world, and our collective future."

—Dr. Janet Hood-Hanchey, Grapevine assistant superintendent



Sherri Steward-Ganz first visited Africa ten years ago.

"This one little school I visited in Lusaka, Zambia...they were just trying so hard to have a real school," she remembered. "They had 2,000 kids and 13 teachers who hadn't been paid in four months. When they were paid, their average salary was \$12 a month. Little kids were walking 10 miles to school and once they got there, there'd be no water to drink all day long. That little school really stuck in my mind. I thought, 'What can I do to help them?'"

When it was time the next school year for her ecology class at Grapevine High School to study global water, she added a personal touch to the lesson.

"Kids here in America don't understand that half the world doesn't even have clean water to drink. I decided to show my slides of Africa to the kids to show them what it's like," she said.

The plight of the children of Lusaka touched the hearts of the teenagers living halfway around the world in a comfortable suburb northwest of Dallas. Between 1995 and 1998, they collected \$10,000 worth of school supplies, then \$22,000 for a water well and new classrooms for Lusaka.

"I think our students got more out of it than theirs did," Steward-Ganz said.

The first group of students bought Lion King study kits, filled them with school supplies, and added a personal letter and color photo to each one.

"Zambia has a big problem with the poaching of elephants and lions. We tried through our letters to teach the children that conservation of wildlife will help them in the long run. We wanted them to know that the animals were worth more to them in ecotourism," Steward-Ganz said.

Thanks to British

Airways, she flew first class with one student and one administrator to the school to deliver the supplies.

"There were two pencil sharpeners, decorated with pictures of Simba and Nala, in each study kit. We came back the next day and all the little girls were wearing the pencil sharpeners in their (elongated holes in their) ears," Steward-Ganz said.

For the next three years, Grapevine students held car



Disney Teacher Award

Steward-Ganz's students nominated her for a DisneyHand Teacher Award. Out of 185,000 nominations nationwide, she was among the 32 chosen. She received \$10,000 plus \$5,000 for her school, as well as national recognition. "It was very uplifting to be around the other Disney honorees; they were all so passionate about what they're doing. I thought I was not in their league."

Then Disney announced they would narrow the list to three top teachers, each of whom would receive \$25,000 and \$5,000 more for their school. "They selected the top three based on a three-minute talk and eight slides. I've never been so nervous in my life," Steward-Ganz said. "I showed slides of the Galapagos, Jane Goodall dedicating our center, the water well in

Africa. I thought I was terrible. They told us to think of what we would say if we won. I didn't even give it a thought. I had already figured out who I thought was going to get it."

She was named Outstanding High School Teacher at the awards gala at Disneyland. "I was truly shocked when they called my name. I think I said something like, 'I love Mickey!'"

HOW TO APPLY FOR A DISNEY AWARD

It's easy to nominate someone for a DisneyHand Teacher Award. Just go to <http://disney.go.com/disney-learning/ata/> and fill in the person's name and school. Nominations for 2004 closed at the beginning of October but a new cycle begins in August.

washes and sold t-shirts and hundreds of endangered species chocolate bars. Steward-Ganz gave talks and slide shows to local clubs, asking for a \$50 donation, although they always gave more. They collected \$11,000 and Rotary International matched it.

"Maybe being naïve is a good thing sometimes," Steward-Ganz reflected. "Everyone said, 'You can't do that in Africa, you'll have to spend half the money in bribes.' When we got there, I rented a flatbed truck and picked up some men who were out of work, men whose average salary was less than \$1 a day, and we got to work. We had so much money left over after building the water well that we were able to build a new cinderblock science wing and give the students all new desks and chalkboards."

Lusaka was not her first effort to help Africa. In 1992, before she had ever visited the country, Steward-Ganz and her students held a black tie dinner at the DFW Airport Hilton featuring Dr. Jane Goodall as the speaker. Many celebrities, including the mayors of both Dallas and

Fort Worth, were there. Tickets were \$75; they sold out in four days.

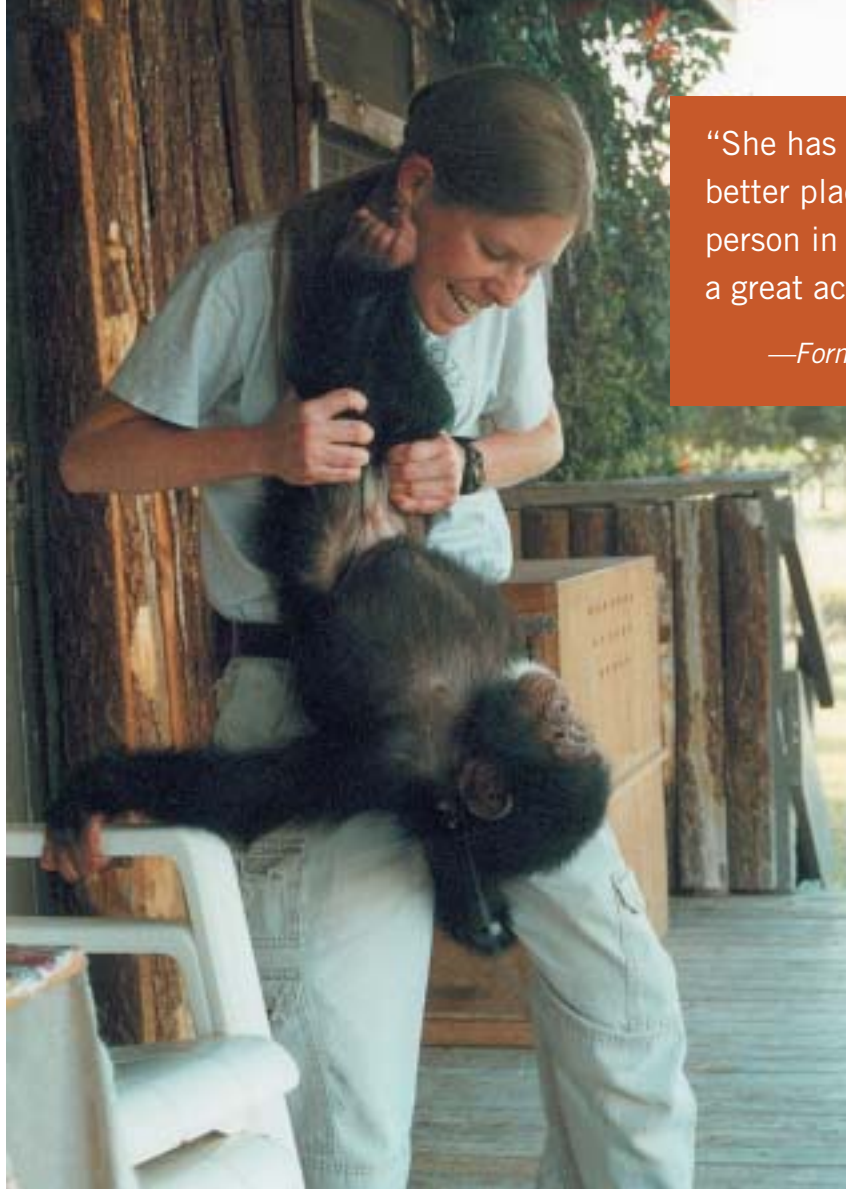
After the speech, they surprised Goodall with a check for \$45,000 for her chimp sanctuary in Burundi. (Due to political unrest and poaching, the sanctuary was later airlifted to Sweetwaters, a private reserve in Kenya.)

Steward-Ganz' last trip to Africa was in 2000. "Things had changed so much from the time I first started helping. There's so much political unrest, women are treated so badly, and the AIDS crisis is just overwhelming," she said. "The misery and suffering are staggering."

She described "roving bands of AIDS orphans." She'd see them in the dump, looking for food. The teenagers use toddlers as bait; when people stop to try to help, a pack of armed teenagers will surround and rob them, she said. "Walking down Kenyatta Boulevard in Nairobi one day, we saw a

two-year-old lying in the street," Steward-Ganz remembered. "In his hand was a glob of industrial glue; they sniff it, it's an appetite sup-

pressant. When we bent down to pick him up, we saw a gang of teenagers coming toward us. We had to put him back down and quickly leave."



"She has better play person in a great ac

—Form

Galapagos Islands

"I had written a lesson plan for the animal intelligence segment of PBS Scientific American Frontiers television show," Steward-Ganz said. "They called one day in 1998 and asked how I'd like to go to the Galapagos for free as a teacher ambassador. I'm thinking 'Which of my friends is playing a joke on me?'"

She spent most of December 1998 in the Galapagos and Ecuador. You can read her journal and see her photos online; from www.pbs.org/safarchive, click on the robot (cool science), then the cyber field trip entitled "Destination: Galapagos Islands."

"Alan Alda was so nice. What a humanitarian," she said of the former "MASH" star who is the show's host. "He would sit on deck and play Scrabble with us. His knowledge of science blew me away—he's not just reading a script!"

devoted her entire life to making the world a better place, especially for children. If I can affect just one person the way she has affected my life, I will have made my life a great accomplishment."

Former student Boanna Owens, who now works with Jane Goodall

Ecology Center

It took 18 industrial dumpsters to clean up the trash on the four acres behind the high school. The students did it all themselves, except for the asbestos roofing tiles in the creek bed that had to be removed by the EPA.

"This was a place where the kids came and got in trouble," Steward-Ganz said. "I wanted to motivate them. I'd struck up a friendship with Jane Goodall and I told her my idea of wanting to build a nature center where the dump was. She said, 'If you build it, I will come.' By April 1990, we had finished the pond, the waterfall, and the nature trails. Dr. Jane made 13 stops in North America on her lecture tour that year. One of those stops was Grapevine High School, to dedicate our ecology center."

Over several years, the kids built and paid for all of it themselves—a giant aviary, a pond for the duck and the fish, a winding brick walkway, a two-room cage for the disabled raccoon, nature trails, and a veterans' memorial with a stage.

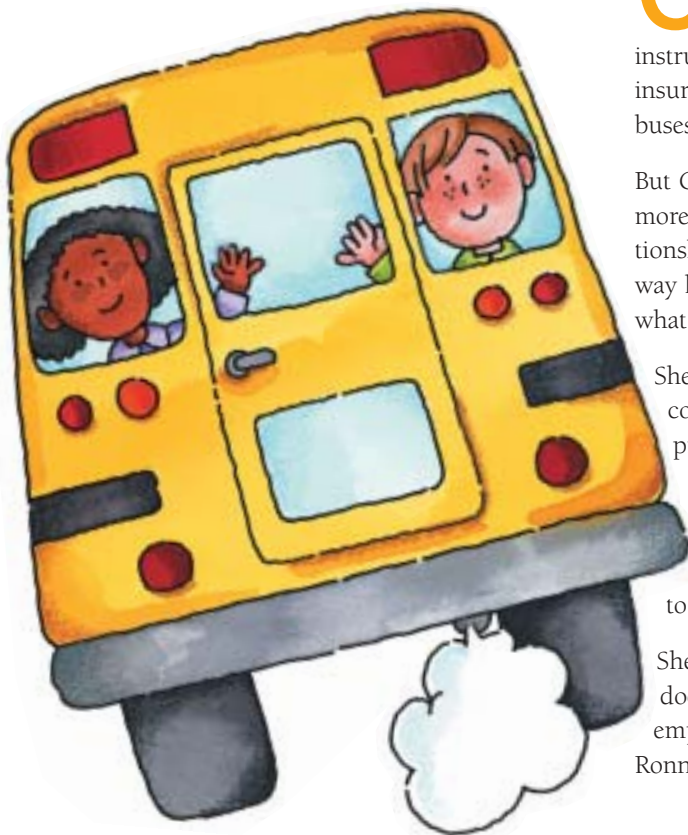
"We get football and baseball players. Cheerleaders. It's a cool thing to be involved in, and the kids respect it," Steward-Ganz said. "And the ecology kids are very well respected in our community. Six Flags called to ask them to run their haunted house for March of Dimes, and they're called to judge elementary science fairs all the time."

Biology and chemistry are required to get into the class but most students have also had physics. "We do advanced placement environmental labs, lots of water chemistry and botany," she said.

During the summer, Steward-Ganz comes up every other day to feed the animals: a raccoon, fish, and birds outside; lizards, tropical birds, fish, and turtles inside.



TSTA honors the Ronnie Ray ESP A



Claudette Thomas is the lead bus driver for Pasadena ISD. She provides training to new bus drivers on the policy and procedures of Pasadena ISD and, as an instructor in CPR and first aid, she also provides training to insure the safety of students being transported on school buses.

But Claudette Thomas believes that driving a bus is about more than transporting students. She works to establish relationships with all the students on her bus. Every day on the way home, she reviews the day with the students to find out what they have learned.

She has taken the lead as well in fighting off attempts to contract out the services provided by education support professionals in her district.

“ESPs are behind the scenes people,” Thomas says, “but now we are coming to the front because we’re fighting for our jobs. The administration we have in D.C. seems to think we can do more with less—meaning ESps.”

She is a hard-working, hard-charging TSTA leader who does what it takes to make things better for education employees and kids. We are proud that she’s our TSTA Ronnie Ray ESP Advocate of the Year!

at the representative assembly

Two new NEA directors

Texans Yolanda Molina and Shirley Howard were elected as at-large education support professional representatives on the NEA Board of Directors. The election took place during the NEA Representative Assembly in New Orleans in July.

Molina is an NGS entry data specialist/migrant recruiter for Mercedes ISD; Howard is a bus driver with Midland ISD and two-time



winner of TSTA’s Ronnie Ray ESP of the Year Award.

Texas delegates worked hard in New Orleans to push

their candidates, as shown in the photos above. On the right end, pictured in the top photo is Yolanda Molina; pic-

tured in the bottom photo is Shirley Howard.

Other Texans serving on the NEA Board of Directors

Advocate of the Year

Why I joined TSTA/NEA

"I joined TSTA when I first started working for the school district and I've loved every minute of it. Membership reminds me of the American Express Card slogan, but with TSTA, it's "Don't be caught on—or off—the job without it." You never know when you might need your membership, for job-related information,



for an update on the legislature, for discounts, or for legal assistance."

—Claudette Thomas

NEA Resources

CHARLOTTE IN 2004
The 2004 NEA ESP Conference will be March 12-14, 2004 at the Westin Charlotte Hotel in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Look for registration forms and information on www.nea.org/esphome beginning in late fall.

FOR TITLE I PARAS
Written in a Q&A format, the U.S. Department of Education's 14-page document, "Title I Paraprofessional Non-regulatory Guidance," is on NEA's ESP website. It answers many of the questions paraprofessionals have about the Elementary and Sec-

ondary Education Act, including general information, requirements for paraprofessionals, paraprofessional assessment, and funding issues. Available as a PDF or text document at www.nea.org/esphome.

ESP TALK

This is the place to discuss issues related to education support professionals and the workplace, including school safety, privatization, benefits, paraprofessional training, organizing, and more. It's part of OWL, NEA's web site for members only. Visit the discussion forums at www.owl.org.



are Fran Valenzuela, Houston, retired director; Mike Buckner, League City, administrator at-large director; and

our Texas NEA directors Eva Gonzalez of El Paso, Jennifer Jones of Fabens, and Wanda Nealy-Ward of Corsicana.

The NEA Representative Assembly photos in this issue were taken by Nicki Roberson of San Antonio.





Space Pioneers

Blazing galactic trails in 2003

Journey with your students to uncharted galaxies with this year's Space Day Design Challenges—"Blazing Galactic Trails." Using any planet, moon, comet or asteroid as the launching point for exploration, students will create an electronic journal of the expedition, develop a multi-purpose tool for exploring and/or surviving, or design a

working vehicle to help explore a region.

Design Challenges are unique, online learning initiatives that encourage students in grades 4-8 to employ mathematical and scientific concepts, initiate independent research, promote inquiry and "real-life" problem-solving, and connect directly with national standards in science, mathematics, tech-

nology and language arts.

Two teams of Fredericksburg elementary teacher Teri Becker's students won national recognition in 2002. "The Challenges promote team research, collaboration and creativity better than any program I have ever used in the classroom," she says. Her students met with Sen. John Glenn, Sally Ride and many other NASA engineers and

(Maybe the characters are walking down the sidewalk toward the playground, swinging back and forth on the swings—you may have to fold their legs—then returning to class.)

►When you play this video back, it will create the illusion of a moving picture. Children will be amazed to see the magic and feel incredible pride!

J. Eli Lubman, Zavala Elementary, Austin

SHARE YOUR IDEAS WITH US!

Do you have a great bulletin board or classroom door? A creative way to teach fractions or organize homework? A new strategy for Spanish class or back-to-school night? Your colleagues would love to hear!

Drop us an email at debbiem@tsta.org or write to TSTA Advocate, 316 W. 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701.

Idea exchange

NURTURING THE NEXT SPIELBERG

If you have access to a camcorder, your class can create a fun animated movie.

►Have the kids write their own story; for example, We Go to the Playground.

►Some children draw the characters in the story and cut them out.

►Others draw or paste down construction paper figures for the background—in this example, maybe trees, sidewalk, grass, swings.

►Have the children set the cut-out characters on the background page, film for 2 seconds and press "pause."

►Then move the characters slightly, record for two seconds and press "pause." Repeat until the story is finished.



A sandwich and a little encouragement

A word of encouragement may be all it takes to build up a child's confidence and boost his or her self-esteem. NEA Lunch Mail is three little boxes of 30 individual cards, each with a different message on the inside and a spot on

the back for your own personal message.

As an educator, you can use them as a special reward for a job well done. If you're also a parent, tuck the card in your child's lunchbox, under his pillow or

in her backpack.

You can buy one box for \$4.95 or all three for \$12.95 plus postage and handling.

Call the NEA Professional Library at 800-229-4200, email neapl@pmds.com, or visit www.nea.org/books.

Authors line up for Texas Book Festival

Looking for a great way to inspire a love of reading in children? Consider the Texas Book Festival November 8-9 at the State Capitol. It's a free outdoor book fair combining book signings, author panel discussions, children's activities, music, readings, and more.

More than 100 writers will attend, including popular children's authors Ashley Bryan (*Beautiful Blackbird*), Esmé Raji Codell (*How to Get Your Child to Love Reading*), Lila and Rick Guzmán (*Lorenzo's Revolutionary Quest*), Susan Jeffers (*Brother Eagle, Sister Sky*), Sue Macy (*Bull's Eye: A Photobiography of Annie*

Oakley), Louis Sacher (*Holes*), Brian Selznick (*The Meanest Doll in the World*), Cynthia Leitich Smith (*In My Grandmother's House*), Diane Stanley (*Being Thankful at Plymouth Plantation*), and Adrienne Yorinks (*Quack!*). For adults, there's Dave Barry, Roy Blount, Jr., Peter Carey, Oscar Casares, Rod McKuen, Dan Rather, Gov. Ann Richards, Bob Schieffer, Amy Tan, Calvin Trillin, Scott Turow, and Herman Wouk. Now in its eighth year, the festi-

val has raised \$1.43 million for Texas public libraries. www.texasbookfestival.org.



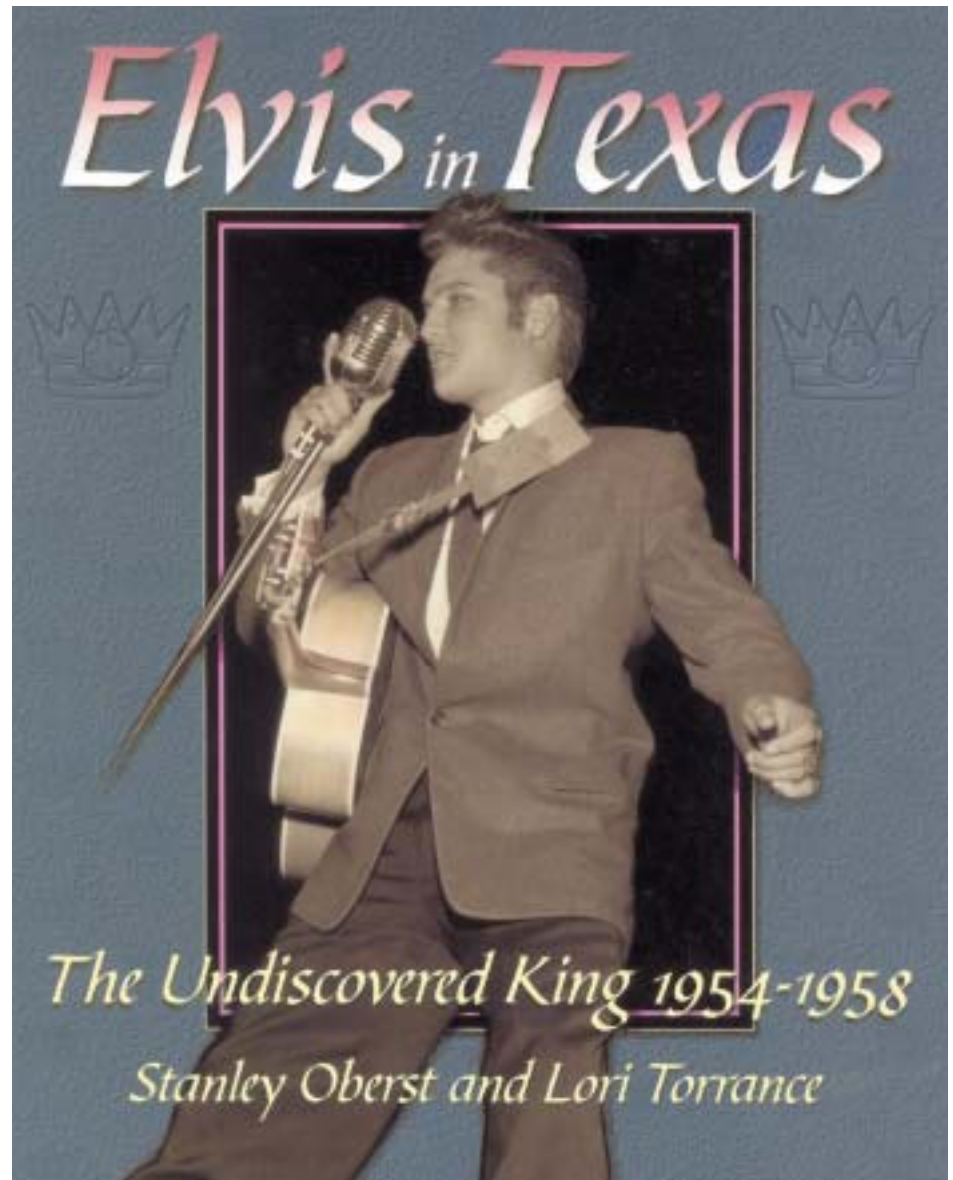
Need a grant?

The grants below are available from the NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education on an ongoing, year-round basis.

INNOVATION GRANTS
NFIE awards up to 200 grants per year of \$2,000 each to teams of two or more educators to promote collaborative education innovations that lead to high levels of student achievement. Preference will be given to NEA members and educators who serve economically disadvantaged and/or underserved students.

LEARNING AND LEADERSHIP GRANTS
NFIE awards up to 75 grants per year of \$1,000 for individuals or \$3,000 for a study group to promote high-quality professional development experiences that lead to improvements in practice, curriculum, and student achievement in the public school or higher education institutions. Preference is given to NEA members.

GENERAL INFORMATION
All practicing U.S. public school teachers in grades preK-12, education support professionals, and higher education faculty/staff may apply. Applications may be submitted at any time and are peer reviewed. For grant guidelines and an application form, go to www.nfie.org.



Teacher tracks Elvis through Texas

Long before pink Cadillacs and paparazzi, a musical yet-to-be named Elvis Presley and his two faithful sidekicks tore up Texas highways, perpetually late for their next high school hop, car dealership opening, or Lion's Club fund raiser. As they dodged tumbleweeds at 110 mph to play at every wide spot in the road, scores of abused cars and unwary rattlesnakes sacrificed their lives so

that one day Elvis Presley could tell a Dallas newspaper reporter, 'I owe a lot to Texas. They're the ones who put me over the top.'

"Though to most good ol' boys (and gals) Elvis was a mystery wrapped in a riddle inside a pink and black suit, anyone who met him knew he possessed that certain something. No matter what the folks in Texas thought of his creative wardrobe, dub-

ious bodily exertions, or guitar homicide, all agreed Elvis served as an excellent musical ambassador. They just weren't sure from what planet. These are their stories."

So begins *Elvis in Texas*, a book by history teacher and TSTA member Stan Oberst and Lori Torrance. The authors spent three years interviewing people who saw, heard, and knew Elvis in the early years. Now in its third

printing, the book documents each of Presley's appearances in Texas, complete with old photos, concert posters, and reviews from local newspapers. These documents, and the memories of the people who were there, are now a lasting monument to a special time in Texas' rich musical history. Oberst is a teacher at Shepton High School in Plano. You can buy his book on amazon.com or buy.com.

In search of the elements

We asked people who would agree to be featured in our "Amazing Members" column to please write us. Here's one of the letters we received! (If you would like to be featured, please email us at debbiem@tsta.org or send a note to Advocate, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701.)

In the Winter *Advocate* 2002, I found a question: "Are you amazing?" I think the project my husband Jim and I are doing is terrifically amazing.

Together we are writing a book, *Rediscovery of the Elements*. We go all over the world collecting pictures and data about where the elements were first discovered, the mines, the laboratories and the scenery and towns around the area.

Our research has taken us to Romania, where Tellurium was discovered; to Sweden where many elements were discovered; and about 20 other countries.

We are really excited about the discovery of the mine in Romania since it is over 200 years old and still existed or at least the entrance timbers were there. We had to go to The University of Texas to get a map of the area from their geology school.

We use a Global Positioning System to mark the places and draw maps on how to get there. We believe it is historically significant since in the next 25 years or so, there won't be anyone who can find these places.

We spend our summers researching and locating the information. We have published 12 articles so far, and my photographs have been on two scientific magazine covers. Our book should be published in about 2006 since we still have some research to do and we have to sort through over 5,000 photographs.

Visit us at www.jennymarshall.com/rediscovery1.htm.

In May, I retired from teaching technology classes at Denton ISD at Calhoun Middle School after 23 years of teaching and 23 years in NEA/TSTA. Now I am a lifetime member. My husband Jim teaches chemistry at the University of North Texas.

—Virginia (Jenny) Marshall, jmarshall@jennymarshall.com



Looking for a Thorium mine in Levoya, Norway



Outside the Lomo del Toro, Mexico, Vanadium mine



In front of a 500-year-old house in London

Honors and awards

Know someone who's outstanding

Many of our outstanding TSTA/NEA members, region and local associations, communities, businesses, organizations, and individuals who are friends of education deserve honors and awards. TSTA

is accepting nominations for awards contained in this article. For details and/or a nomination form for an award, contact the Center for Executive and Governance (877-ASK-TSTA, ext. 1510). Nominations are to be submitted to the Center for Executive and Governance, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701.

► Friend of Education

Award: recognizes either (1) an individual or a major single accomplishment or career effort which has greatly impacted Texas education and which achieves some aspect of educational progress with which TSTA agrees; or (2) an organization/company outside the field of education which has made an outstanding contribution in the field of education. Any TSTA member, local association, region, or other recognized

group (e.g., statewide or special committee or caucus) may make nominations. A letter or memorandum of nomination should be submitted, accompanied by a biographical statement providing details about the major single accomplishment or career effort supporting the worthiness of the individual or organization/company to receive this award. Nominations must be postmarked no later than Sunday, November 30, 2003.

► Ronnie Ray ESP Advocate of the Year Award:

recognizes a TSTA educational support professional whose activities reflect the contributions of ESP to public education and show outstanding accomplishments in one or more of the following areas: innovations to support the day-to-day educational process; professional achievements in his/her classification; involvement in the promotion of public education in the community; involvement in local, state, or national association; and enhancement of ESPs' image in his/her association, work site, or community. The nominee must have been a TSTA/NEA member for three years as of January 15, 2004. Nominations must be submitted by a region and/or local affiliate. Only one nomination may be submitted by a region and/or local affiliate. Nominations must be received no later than 4:45 p.m. on Sunday, November 30, 2003. The recipient of the award will be submitted as TSTA's nominee for NEA's ESP award.

► **Frank J. Tejeda Award for Public Service:** recognizes an individual for service at the state or national political/legislative level on behalf of public school children or educational employees of Texas. Nominees must be elected or appointed officials that are not currently employed full-time by a school district. Nominations must be postmarked no later than Sunday, November 30, 2003.

► Professional, Human, and Civil Rights Awards:

recognize Texas educators, local associations, regional associations and individuals who are friends of education for distinguished service and contributions in promoting and/or



standing?

encouraging professional and human rights activities. Categories of awards are: Individual, Special, Mickey Leland Memorial, and the Willie Velasquez Memorial. Nominations must be postmarked no later than Sunday, February 1, 2004.

TSTA also encourages regional and local affiliates or individuals to nominate an individual, organization and/or a region or local affiliate for an NEA Human and Civil Rights Award. For further information on the individual award categories and forms, you may view NEA's website at www.nea.org/annualmeeting/hcrawards or write NEA Human and Civil Rights, 1201 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036-3290 (202-822-7705). Nominations must be postmarked no later than December 15, 2003.

►Ermalee Boice

Instructional Advocacy/ NEA Teaching Excellence

Award: recognizes, rewards and promotes teaching excellence. Through this award, teaching excellence, public education, and the NEA's dedicated members are honored. Nominations must be postmarked no later than Monday, March 1, 2004. The recipient of this award will be submitted as TSTA's nominee for the NEA Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence.

Upcoming TSTA/NEA Events

NOVEMBER

- 8 Constitution, Bylaws & Elections Committee Meeting, TSTA Headquarters
- 14-16 TSTA/TFT Joint Educational Issues Conference, Adam's Mark Hotel, Dallas
- 16 Community & Instructional Advocacy Committee Meeting, Adam's Mark Hotel, Dallas
- 16-22 American Education Week
- 19 National ESP Day

DECEMBER

- 5-7 TSTA Board of Directors Meeting, TSTA Headquarters
- 12-13 NEA Board of Directors Meeting, Washington, DC

JANUARY

- 15-16 NEA Western Regional Minority Leadership Training Seminar, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
- 16-18 NEA Western Regional Leadership Conference, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
- 23-24 Legislative Cadre Training
- 24 TSTA Constitution, Bylaws & Elections Committee Meeting, TSTA Headquarters
- 25 Legislative & Political Advocacy Committee Meeting, Austin
- 30-31 TSTA Board of Directors Meeting, TSTA Headquarters
- 31 School Bell Award entries due

FEBRUARY

- 1 TSTA Board of Directors Meeting, TSTA Headquarters
- 13-14 NEA Board of Directors Meeting, Washington, D.C.

Oklahoma to host NEA Western Conference

NEA's Western Regional Leadership Conference is January 16-18 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. NEA funds selected state affiliate participants based on membership. Last year, NEA funded 16 participants from Texas, including the president, vice president, one Board of Directors member, and the Texas NEA Directors. TSTA's president selects the remaining funded participants.

Each year this conference proves to be one of the best leadership training conferences. It provides personal leadership skills as well as background knowledge of NEA, its programs and activities. The conference registration fee for non-funded members last year was \$85. TSTA encourages as many leaders as possible to attend.

As in the past, the Western Regional Minority Leadership

Training Seminar will be held prior to the conference in Oklahoma City, January 15-16. NEA funds five members from Texas to attend the conference. TSTA's president selects these members.

Leaders/members wishing to attend either of the conferences as a non-funded participant must submit their request in writing to TSTA President Haschke no later than 4:45 p.m. Friday, November 21.

National delegate elections

Let's go to Washington, D.C., for the 2004 NEA Representative Assembly (RA) July 4-7. Pre-RA meetings and workshops begin on June 26. The first Texas caucus will be on July 2 with the Texas event being held that evening.

The exact number of delegates from Texas will be determined by our TSTA/NEA membership as of January 15, 2004. TSTA will be allocated one state delegate for every 1,000 active (teacher or ESP) and life-active NEA members and locals will be allocated one local delegate for every 150 members, or major fraction thereof.

NEA has established a policy of encouraging ethnic-minority representation reflective of the ethnic make-up of the state's population. The goal for TSTA is to elect at least 48 percent of our total delegation from among our ethnic-minority members. We cannot accomplish this goal unless all of our leaders and caucuses help recruit ethnic-minority candidates to run for delegate positions at both the state and local levels.

Below you will find some of the specific requirements and timelines for election of state and local association delegates. Anybody with questions about the elections, or needing other information about the process, should contact Sandra Solimine at TSTA, 877-ASK-TSTA, ext. 1514 or email sandras@tsta.org.

Please note that the timeline and process for the election of state delegates to the NEA RA is substantially different from previous years.

STATE DELEGATES

The *Advocate* containing ballots for the election of State Delegates should be received by members by March 31, 2004. Ballots must be received at TSTA no later than 5 p.m. on April 16, 2004. Ballots will be canvassed on April 17 and all delegates and alternates ("successor delegates") will be notified by letter.

NEA requires that all elections for state and local delegates must be conducted with open nominations and secret ballots. At the end of this article you will find a Nomination Form to seek election as a State Delegate to the 2004 NEA RA. If you would like to run for a delegate position, please complete the form (or a copy of it) and return it to TSTA.

The form must be received by the Center for Executive and Governance at TSTA no later than January 15, 2004, in order for your name to appear on the printed ballot.

Each candidate for State Delegate is entitled to have his or her name published in the *Advocate*, along with a statement of 25 words or less detailing his/her professional association involvement.

NEA also requires proportional representation for supervisory and non-supervisory members. In order to insure this is not violated, supervisory members are not eligible to run for state delegate as outlined above. Instead, they are eligible to run in a separate election for Category 2 State At-Large Delegate (which also includes NEA Life Retired members) and/or in the Statewide Supervisory Cluster election. Supervisory

members desiring to seek election as a delegate should complete and return the Nomination Form (marking the appropriate box) along with the 25-word statement. Only those Supervisory members who are also local members may run in the Supervisory Cluster election, though the local association has the option not to participate in the Cluster. Those Supervisory members who do not belong to a local, or who belong to a local that opts out of the cluster may still run in the Category 2 election. Again, if you have questions please call Sandra Solimine at 877-ASK-TSTA, ext. 1514 or email sandras@tsta.org.

LOCAL DELEGATES

Since local associations are allocated one delegate for each 150 NEA members or major fraction thereof, a local must have at least 76 members (teacher, ESP and life) to qualify for a delegate. Locals with fewer than 76 members may cluster together for the purpose of electing local delegates. Regional Presidents will work with locals in their regions to form those clusters.

NEA will notify locals in mid-February of the number of delegates allocated for each local. Locals will be provided official NEA forms for reporting data about local delegates and alternates ("successor delegates"). **Those completed forms must be received by TSTA no later than April 10, 2004, in order to insure proper credentials at the NEA RA.** Locals must conduct an election that provides for open nominations and

New NEA State Delegate Voting Process

Ballots for voting for state delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly will be placed in the spring issue of the *Advocate*. Members will need to mark the appropriate ballot in the *Advocate* (no ballots may be copied), cut the ballot out, place the ballot in a sealed envelope, and place the label on the envelope as the return address. You must use the return label that is provided in your *Advocate* for your ballot to be counted. The return label will have your name and address, along with other information to ensure that your ballot is properly sorted. The ballot will be separated from the envelope before counting to ensure secrecy.

secret ballots. That can be done either by delivering a nomination form to each member (using a local newsletter is permissible), then insuring each member gets a ballot with the names of those returning the form, or by holding an all-member meeting, with proper notice to each member, and accepting nominations at the meeting, then voting by secret ballot.

Locals that include both supervisory and non-supervisory members must elect delegates in proportion to the appropriate number of such members. Instructions on how to calculate the proper allocation will be provided with information about the number of delegates to be elected.

RETIRED DELEGATES

TSTA-R/NEA-R delegates are elected in two elections with different eligibility requirements. Those members meeting both sets of eligibility requirements may run in both elections. Someone who was an NEA life member while teaching and is currently retired, may seek election as a Category 2 State At-Large delegate by completing and returning the Nomination Form and marking the appropriate box.

A separate Nomination Form is provided for TSTA-R/NEA-R members to seek election as a TSTA-R/NEA-R delegate. **The deadline for submitting this form (and election statement of 25 words or less) is January 15, 2004.** For this election, delegates are allocated one delegate for the first 50 TSTA-R/NEA-R members and an additional delegate for each additional 1,000 TSTA-R/NEA-R members.

STUDENT DELEGATES

The TSTA-Student Program is allocated one delegate for the first 50 TSTA-SP members and an additional delegate for each 500 members.

These delegates are based on TSTA-SP membership as of March 15, 2004.

TSTA-SP members seeking election as a delegate should use the same form

as for the TSTA-R delegates and mark the appropriate box.

The deadline for returning this form for student members is March 15, 2004.

NOMINATION FORM

NEA Representative Assembly At-Large Delegate Positions—July 4-7, 2004

(This form is also available online at www.tsta.org)

NOMINEE FOR: (Check one)

- ☐ TSTA-Student Program Delegate Position (Deadline for receipt at TSTA Headquarters is March 15, 2004)
☐ TSTA-Retired Delegate Position (Deadline for receipt at TSTA Headquarters is January 15, 2004)

(Circle One: Mr. Ms.) Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Day Phone _____

Email _____

University (TSTA-SP Only) _____ Social Security No. _____

ETHNIC GROUP: (Check all that apply)

- ☐ American Indian/Alaska Native ☐ Asian ☐ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
☐ Black ☐ Hispanic ☐ Caucasian (not of Spanish Origin)

☐ YES ☐ NO TSTA-R: I authorize printing of my ethnicity.

☐ YES ☐ NO TSTA-R: Enclosed is my election statement of 25 words or less which will be sent with the ballot.
 (Note: Statements exceeding 25 words will not be considered.)

Send by U.S. Mail or FAX (512-486-7053) To: Sandra Solimine, TSTA,
 Organizing Center for Executive and Governance, 316 W. 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701

Signature of Nominee _____

NOMINATION FORM

2004 NEA Representative Assembly State Delegates

January 15, 2004, 5:00 p.m.—Deadline for receipt at TSTA Headquarters.

(This form is also available online at www.tsta.org)

NOMINEE FOR: (Check one)

- ☐ State At-Large Delegate: Category 1—Teacher, ESP or other Non-supervisor
☐ State At-Large Delegate: Category 2—Administrator or NEA Life Retired
☐ Statewide Supervisory Cluster—Supervisors who are members of a local association*

*Supervisory members whose local chooses not to participate in the cluster are not eligible to run in this election.

(Circle One: Mr. Ms.) Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Email _____ Social Security No. _____

Local Association _____ TSTA Region _____ Work site _____

Position (Teacher, Principal, ESP, etc.) _____ ☐ Supervisory ☐ Non-Supervisory

ETHNIC GROUP: (Check all that apply)

- ☐ American Indian/Alaska Native ☐ Asian ☐ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
☐ Black ☐ Hispanic ☐ Caucasian (not of Spanish Origin)

☐ YES ☐ NO I authorize printing of my ethnicity.

☐ YES ☐ NO Enclosed is my election statement of 25 words or less which will be published in the spring *Advocate*.

Send by U.S. Mail or FAX (512-486-7053) To: Sandra Solimine, TSTA,
 Organizing Center for Executive and Governance, 316 W. 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701

Signature of Nominee _____

TSTA state convention delegate elections

State delegate allocations for local associations (including TFA) to the April 23-24, 2004 TSTA House of Delegates will be mailed to local presidents on January 5.

Delegates are allocated to locals in a ratio of one (1) delegate for each fifty (50) members or major fraction based on the local's Active, Life and ESP membership on May 31, 2003. The policy regarding election of delegates, forms, and timelines will accompany the allocation. Retired and student members are not eligible to be nominated or elected as local association delegates.

Delegates from retired and student membership categories will be elected at-large by their respective memberships and have different timelines as outlined below. Contact Sandra Solimine in the Organizing Center for Executive and Governance at 877-ASK-TSTA, extension 1514, or email sandras@tsta.org if you have questions regarding the elections.

ATTENTION, RETIRED MEMBERS:

According to the TSTA By-laws, delegates for the state House of Delegates are allocated to TSTA-Retired/NEA-Retired members.

The number of at-large TSTA-R delegates will be based on TSTA retired membership as of May 31, 2003.

In order to run for a TSTA-R at-large delegate position, a candidate must be a member of TSTA-R and NEA-R.

These at-large retired delegates are allocated in the ratio of one (1) delegate to each seventy-five (75) members or major fraction thereof.

Nomination forms must be received by January 15, 2004.

Ballots for the election will be sent to members the week of February 9, 2004. The

deadline for returning ballots to TSTA Headquarters is March 10, 2004.

Any retired member who is a TSTA-R/NEA-R member may nominate himself/herself or another qualified member for a retired delegate position.

ATTENTION, STUDENT MEMBERS:

According to the TSTA By-laws, delegates are allocated to the TSTA Student Program

in the ratio of one (1) delegate for each seventy-five (75) members or major fraction thereof based on unified TSTA membership as of May 31, 2003. These delegates will be elected in a statewide election.

Nomination forms must reach TSTA Headquarters by January 15, 2004. Ballots will be mailed to TSTA-SP chapter presidents the week of January 26, 2004. Chapter presidents will conduct the election and ballots must be returned to TSTA Headquarters by March 5, 2004. Any member may nominate himself/herself or another member.

NOMINATION FORM

Retired and Student At-Large Delegate Positions TSTA House of Delegates—April 23-24, 2004

The deadline for receipt of this nomination form at TSTA's Headquarters is January 15, 2004
(This form is also available online at www.tsta.org)

NOMINEE FOR: (Check one)

- ☐ TSTA-Student Program Delegate Position
☐ TSTA-Retired Delegate Position

(Circle One: Mr. Ms.) Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Email _____

Social Security No. _____

University (TSTA-SP Only) _____

ETHNIC GROUP: (Check all that apply)

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaska Native | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black | <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic | <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not of Spanish Origin) |

☐ YES ☐ NO TSTA-R: I authorize printing of my ethnicity.

☐ YES ☐ NO TSTA-R: Enclosed is my election statement of 25 words or less which will be sent with the ballot.
(Note: Statements exceeding 25 words will not be considered.)

Send by U.S. Mail or FAX (512-486-7053) To: Sandra Solimine, TSTA,
Organizing Center for Executive and Governance, 316 W. 12th Street, Austin, TX 78701

Signature of Nominee _____

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WS481202



Texas State Teachers Association/National Education Association

2003-04 Enrollment Form

Please return this completed form to your Association Representative or mail to TSTA Membership Department, 316 West 12th Street, Austin, Texas 78701-9516. If you have questions, call **877-ASK-TSTA**.

<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>		
NAME			SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER			DATE OF BIRTH		
<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>		
ADDRESS			LOCAL ASSOCIATION			HIRE DATE		
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>					
CITY	STATE	ZIP	NAME OF ISD					
<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>					
EMAIL AT HOME			CAMPUS/WORKSITE					
<input type="text"/>			<input type="text"/>					
EMAIL AT WORK			POSITION (I.E. CLASSROOM TEACHER, LIBRARIAN, BUS DRIVER, ETC.)					
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	ETHNICITY					
AREA CODE	HOME PHONE	AREA CODE	WORK PHONE	<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Alaska Native				<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic
				<input type="checkbox"/> Asian				<input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian (not of Spanish Origin)
				<input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander				<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
				<input type="checkbox"/> Black				

Ethnicity information is optional and failure to provide it will in no way affect your membership status, rights or benefits in NEA, TSTA or any of their affiliates. This information will be kept confidential.

METHOD OF PAYMENT

____ 1 Cash/Check ____ 2 Payroll Deduction Authorization (below)

I hereby authorize the _____ School District to deduct the total amount of the annual obligation as set by the appropriate Association governance bodies in _____ equal payments in order to pay my dues to the professional associations and organizations listed and for political action contributions indicated. The authorization will continue in effect for this school year and future years, including any increase that may occur, until I give written notice to the local by September 15 to revoke. I further authorize any unpaid annual balance to be deducted from my final check. The Local Association will notify School District officials of the annual dues amounts for all levels of the Association each year.

____ Please check if you would like to receive TSTA's electronic newsletter, the *TSTA Briefing*, which is distributed by email at least once a week.

Send to: ☐ home email address ☐ work email address

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ANNUAL DUES AND CONTRIBUTIONS	AMOUNT
1.	Professional Dues—TSTA/NEA (Active)	\$369.00
	Professional Dues—New to the profession	\$251.50
2.	Substitute Dues—Full-time	\$272.25
	Substitute Dues—Part-time	\$132.50
3.	Educational Support Dues—Full-time	\$191.00
	Educational Support Dues—Part-time	\$ 98.00
4.	NEA Fund for Children and Public Education (suggested amount \$15.00)	
5.	TSTA-PAC (see disclaimer below)	\$ 9.00
6.	Region Dues	
7.	Local Association Dues	
TOTAL		

DISCLAIMER: The TSTA Political Action Committee (TSTA-PAC) and National Education Association Fund for Children and Public Education collect voluntary contributions from Association members and use these contributions for political purposes, including, but not limited to, making contributions to and expenditures on behalf of friends of public education who are candidates for federal office. Contributions to TSTA-PAC and The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education are voluntary; making a contribution is neither a condition of employment nor membership in the Association, and members have the right to refuse to contribute without suffering any reprisal. Although the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education requests an annual contribution of \$15, this is only a suggestion. A member may contribute more or less than the suggested amount, or may contribute nothing at all, without it affecting his or her membership status, rights, or benefits in NEA or any of its affiliates.

Contributions or gifts to The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education, TSTA-PAC and local PACs are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

Federal law requires political committees to report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer for each individual whose contributions aggregate in excess of \$200 in a calendar year.

Federal law prohibits The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education from receiving donations from persons other than members of NEA and its affiliates, and their immediate families. All donations from persons other than members of NEA and its affiliates, and their immediate families, will be returned forthwith.

"I decline to contribute to TSTA-PAC and I understand this will not in any way affect my membership status or rights." _____ INITIAL

Annual membership dues to NEA include \$4.50 for NEA Today, \$2.45 for NEA-Retired and/or \$16.00 for the Higher Education publications. The NEA publication(s) received by members are based on membership category. Annual membership dues to TSTA include subscription to the TSTA Advocate. Membership is open only to those who agree to subscribe to the goals and objectives of the Association and to abide by its constitution and bylaws.

Former student member?
____ YES ____ NO

MEMBER SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

LOCAL ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE _____

It's not too late!

Joint TSTA and TFT Texas Educational Issues Conference

November 14-16, 2003,
Adam's Mark Hotel, Dallas



Texas State Teachers Association and the Texas Federation of Teachers will host a joint educational issues conference in Dallas on the weekend of November 14-16, 2003. The conference will feature informative speakers and a huge selection of workshops on educational issues for Texas educators and educational support professionals. Go to www.tsta.org/classroom for details.

If you are a new teacher, you can earn eight hours of Continuing Professional Education credit toward your state certification requirement. Experienced teachers may be able to earn local professional inservice credit.

Registration fee is \$140 after October 22, which includes lunch and dinner on Saturday. The registration form can be downloaded at www.tsta.org/classroom.

The Adam's Mark Hotel, located at 400 Olive Street in Dallas, is the conference site. Contact the Adam's Mark Hotel at 800-444-2326 and tell them that you are attending the TSTA/TFT Texas Educational Issues Conference.

Please share this copy of the *Advocate* with others

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