



THE

SPIRIT

OF

'76

The Newspaper of Local 1776
The Association of Catholic Teachers

50 Years Strong
1966-2016

1700 SANSOM STREET - SUITE 903 - PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103 - 215-568-4175 - VOLUME XXXVII-NO.5
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From the President's Desk

NEGOTIATIONS 2017

Happy New Year!

As first semester comes to an end, you are all up to your noses in yet to be marked projects, still to be graded semester assessments and soon to be completed GradeConnect columns. The ACT Staff is knee-deep in preparations for contract negotiations both for teachers in the 17 Archdiocesan high schools and for our colleagues at Holy Cross in Delran, New Jersey. The paperwork for you and the ACT Negotiating Teams is similar in volume, but there will be no grade recorded for us until both contracts have been mutually agreed to and ratified by their respective memberships.

At Holy Cross, the Team is selected and the Surveys have been completed. In the next few weeks, Irene and I will begin working on the Holy Cross proposals with our Team Members there.

(Continued on page 2)

When I last wrote about Negotiations on this side of the river, I told you of my December 12 letter to the Secretary for Catholic Education once again asking for an Early Bird Contract because “a negotiating issue crucial to a successful multi-year Agreement is Medical Health Insurance. Given the uncertain political situation in regard to the Affordable Care Act, the Association feels that this would impede any negotiation beyond one year.”

On December 21, the Deputy Secretary for Catholic Education responded. He wrote of the “breadth of issues” the System felt needed to be addressed. “We agree that Medical Health Insurance is a crucial and yet difficult issue to gauge, given the political climate as it relates to the Affordable Care Act.” He spoke of the need to update and clarify “multiple aspects of the contract, in addition to Medical,” “particularly in the area of academic delivery and working conditions.” Since the System feels it would “not be able to address these multiple issues in an ‘Early Bird Format’,” “We are requesting that Traditional Negotiation approach be utilized . . .”

As I responded to the Deputy Secretary on January 3, 2017, “For the Association, it will be extremely difficult to complete the negotiating of a traditional multi-year agreement without a workable medical insurance proposal. As the System is aware, the Association looks at the contract proposals as a total package; nothing falls into place until everything falls into place.” “Since the parties have not been able to agree upon an alternative bargaining process, the Association will now begin preparation for traditional collective bargaining.”

As ACT members are keenly aware, the last time the Association and the System engaged in traditional collective bargaining for a multi-year contract was 2011. A ratification vote followed a two-week strike, a strike that was not primarily about salary or benefits. It was much more about teacher rights and teacher dignity.

The Association is asking for teachers to nominate themselves for the Negotiating Team. Deadline for names is January 27. Contract Surveys will be sent out to all schools early next week. Senior Delegates will give them to all members. They are due back to the Delegates by Wednesday, February 8.

A General Membership Meeting to approve the ACT Contract Proposal will be held at the Marriott Courtyard (the former Crowne Plaza) on City Avenue on Wednesday, March 15 at 4:00 PM.

As always, we will keep you, the members, updated as we work toward what we hope will be a successful conclusion of negotiations. We ask for your support and your prayers.

Rita

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

National Association of Catholic School Teachers John J. Reilly Memorial Scholarship

The National Association of Catholic School Teachers established the John J. Reilly Memorial Scholarship to help defray the cost of a college education for outstanding children of NACST members. During their senior year of high school, \$4,000 awards are made to two students, \$1,000 in each of their four years of college study.

All sons, daughters and stepchildren of all active NACST members are eligible to participate in this scholarship provided they are in good standing in their senior year of high school. [Application forms are available from the Senior Delegate of each high school.](#) **Deadline for submission of all applications is March 10th.**

THE CHARLOTTE DRUMMOND FOUNDATION Memorial Scholarship

A Memorial Scholarship has been created in the memory of Charlotte Drummond in honor of her forty-five years of service to students in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Charlotte taught for forty years at the former Cardinal Dougherty High School in the city of Philadelphia and she taught for another five years at Cardinal O'Hara High School in Springfield, Delaware County. Charlotte had a lasting impact on hundreds of students and alumni from both schools. Charlotte passed away on March 23, 2016 after fighting a courageous battle against Parkinson's Disease.

The Charlotte Drummond Memorial Scholarship is a legacy scholarship that keeps the spirit of Charlotte Drummond and her dedication to Catholic education alive by offering one \$2,000 scholarship annually, beginning in the 2017-2018 academic year.

Eligible candidates must be rising juniors or seniors attending a Philadelphia Archdiocesan high school, and must have a recommendation from a teacher or guidance counselor that speaks not only to their ideal candidacy for the award through involvement in school, but also speaks to their financial need.

An application for The Charlotte Drummond Foundation Memorial Scholarship is posted on the homepage of the ACT Website at www.act1776.com. **The deadline for submission is March 1, 2017.**

2017 TAX REPORTING

Under the Affordable Care Act, most U.S. citizens and legal residents must have health care coverage. This is known as the “Individual Mandate”.

To prove that you and any dependents had the required health care coverage in 2016, you will need to include IRS Form 1095 with your tax returns.

You will receive a 1095 if you purchased insurance for yourself and your family or if you are enrolled in a group health plan provided by your employer or union.

The forms will be mailed by the end of January 2017. For more information about how new IRS reporting requirements under the ACA affect you, please consult with your tax advisor.

ARCHDIOCESAN HIGH SCHOOLS

TAX INFORMATION

2016 DUES

\$551.24

(13 Pays X \$26.20 + 8 Pays x \$26.33)

NOTICE

It's time to start thinking sabbatical!

Applications for sabbatical leave must be submitted

no later than March 1st.

**It's time to start thinking about whether or not you want to apply.
Applications for sabbatical will be posted in each school in February.**

A BIG SHOUT OUT TO THE GIRLS AT LITTLE FLOWER CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL AND TO THEIR TEACHERS

Little Flower Catholic High School for Girls is the first Archdiocesan high school to participate in the Junior Flower Show of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) as part of the Philadelphia Flower Show. Through funding from the Connelly Foundation, the PHS was able to provide materials for the students to participate in the show. As a result, Little Flower held its own flower show the week of January 17, 2017, and four volunteer judges from PHS judged every project, from horticulture to botanical illustrations. Partners, Corinne Roonan and Madelyn Elliott's succulent terrarium won "Best of Show" for the Horticulture Class, and Makayla Heyward, who painted Calla lilies, won "Best of Show" for the Artistic Class.

The LF Flower Show was made possible due to the efforts of the following teachers and students: Mrs. Vanda C. Menna, moderator of the Green Thumb Club, Mrs. Noreen Diehl, moderator of the Art Club and her art students as well as Mr. Sean Montgomery's art students, and Mrs. Sharon Cornwall, Science Department Chair and her biology students. There was an overall participation of over 100 students who submitted projects.

Below is the succulent terrarium submitted by students, Corinne Roonan and Madelyn Elliott that won "Best of Show" for the Horticulture Class, and will be on display at the Philadelphia Flower Show in March.



Lancer's Local

Issues or contractual items of interest to
Holy Cross Academy (Delran, NJ)

The 2017 Holy Cross Negotiating Team is

Daniel Dockery, Joseph Dvorak, Jennifer Kelly, James Nolan,
Walter Walsh, and Randy Wilkinson.
Rita Schwartz and Irene Tori will be there from ACT.

**HOLY CROSS ACADEMY
TAX INFORMATION
2016 UNION DUES
\$534.00**

ACT WEBSITE

All teachers are asked to logon to the ACT Website (www.act1776.com) and verify your personal information. It is critical that we have your current information and that it is accurate, since this is a contract year. **It is important that we have a PERSONAL email address for you**, since contract information and updates, Executive Board Minutes, and other pertinent information will be sent via email. **We cannot and will not send email to a school email address.**

Every teacher was provided with a username and password for the ACT Website. (New teachers will receive their log-on information in their welcome packet.) If you do not have this information, please contact Ginny at the ACT Office at 215-568-4175 or email her at ginny@act1776.com and she can provide this information to you.

To update your personal information, logon to the ACT Website and, in the upper right hand corner of the homepage, click on member login. Type in your username and password and then verify the information on file. Any changes made will be sent to the ACT Office automatically.

RETIREEES' ROUNDTABLE

In December, we wrote to our retirees (electronically) wishing them a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We mentioned that beginning in January 2017, we were going to add a page to our newsletter dedicated to our retirees, ***“who will always be an essential part of who we are.”*** We received several notes thanking us for all we do and have done.

So going forward, this page is for you; a place where you can submit articles or postscripts, sharing with us and your former colleagues the things you may be doing now that you have the time to pursue other interests. We invite you also to share some of the challenges you may be facing as a result of retirement, and we invite you to reminisce about the early days of your career, and those of the Union. You may also brag a little, too, sharing an important milestone birthday or anniversary, the marriage of a child, or the birth of a grandchild. We look forward to hearing from you and highlighting you in future newsletters. You can email us at act@act1776.com or nacst.nacst@verizon.net.

MONTHLY GROUP MEDICAL RATES FOR RETIREES AGE 65+ (Effective January 1, 2017)

PERSONAL CHOICE 65

Single Coverage: \$833.50

KEYSTONE 65 HMO

Single Coverage: \$712.40



MOVIE TICKETS

ACT Office keeps a limited supply of movie tickets on hand for teachers to purchase at a discounted rate. We have REGAL/UNITED ARTISTS and AMC Tickets Available. **AMC Tickets are now \$10.50 per ticket. Regal Tickets are now \$8.75 per.** If you are interested in purchasing tickets, please send a check payable to the Association of Catholic Teachers with your request. If you will be ordering large quantities, please call Ginny in advance to make sure your request can be filled in a timely manner. Please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope with your request.

Little Flower student, Makayla Heyward, won “Best of Show” for the Artistic Class for her painting of Calla Lilies, which will be on display at the Philadelphia Flower Show in March.



GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

**WEDNESDAY
MARCH 15, 2017**

4:00 P. M.

**Courtyard by Marriott (formerly Crowne Plaza)
City Avenue**

AGENDA

Contract Proposals
New Business