

The FEDERATIONIST



Published by THE RHODE ISLAND FEDERATION OF TEACHERS & HEALTH PROFESSIONALS/AFT. AFL-CIO

June 2002

Inside:

Bits and Pieces p.2

*Egan Appointed to VNA,
RI Boards* p.3

*Bower Succeeds Allen as
PSA President.* p.4

*Johnston History Teacher
National Nominee* p.4

*Chaffee Follows Davey
as VNA of CNE
Co-Chair* p.5

*Woods Succeeds Clements
as President of St. Joseph
FNHP.* p.5

*RIFTHP to Host National
AFT Regional ER&D
Training.* p. 6

*RIFTHP/URI Graduate
Courses a Success* p. 6

*ESEA: What Do You Need
to Know?* p. 7

*Watch for Special
Legislative Report
Coming Soon. . .*

Trudeau Secures a Great Contract

In 1996, the residential workers at the Trudeau Center, an agency serving the needs of developmentally disabled people, unionized and joined the Trudeau day workers. Since that time, the local at Trudeau has been in contentious negotiations to win a first contract for their new members. On March 1, 2002, the membership overwhelmingly ratified a contract covering both groups.

The contract now provides for salary increases for the residential workers from \$10.75 per hour to \$11.40 per hour retroactive to July 2001, and then \$12 per hour, in the third contract year ending on June 3, 2003.

There were major improvements in the working conditions for residential members accomplished in this first contract. Among the highlights are the conversion of the scheduling of vacations from the discretion of management to an equitable system. The new process on floating is equitable for all residential caregivers. Also, tuition reimbursement which will assist almost all the caregivers as most are enrolled in higher education, and full insurance coverage when transporting clients.

The day program employees will be amongst the

highest paid non-profit service providers for disabled people in the state. Trudeau workers are now earning as much as \$2 per hour more than others who are similarly situated. The categories of Occupational Therapist,



**Terri Trautman
President, Local 3726**

Physical Therapist and Speech Therapist now have a salary matrix that provides compensation based on experience before hiring, as well as growth in experience while working at Trudeau.

Union President Terri Trautman and her negotiating committee were gratified by the vote of confidence in the contract that passed by a 125 to 19 vote. Trautman said that although the securing of this contract after

innumerable sessions was wonderful, that it was only “. . . the first step in rebuilding Trudeau to being the best agency in the state, a status it used to enjoy, but after years of neglect is now suffering the consequences.”

Trautman went on to say, “A lot of good people with life-long commitments to the work have left. The child development program has gone, several vocational programs and opportunities for clients have been terminated. The agency has been in a holding pattern. Trudeau is now a stable agency that will be able to retain its staff and bring quality back due to recapturing its stability.”

“It is our job to teach people with disabilities to advocate for themselves. By getting this contract, employees have set the example. The foundation is laid. Now the real work begins.”

In addition to Trautman, the members of the negotiating committee were Gerri-Gail Shepherd, Kim Bat-tell, Roger Kelly, Catherine deBoer, Marie Lindstrom, Mary McCaughey and Lorraine Paiva.

Richard Skolnik, Esq. assisted the committee.

Bits and Pieces... **A day in the life of...**

This will likely be published nine or ten weeks after it is finalized in my computer. You will already know the outcomes of the issues I will write about that were swirling around yesterday, April 2, 2002.



The immediate crisis: The Cranston Teachers Alliance is facing a threat from the Auditor General that he will nullify their contract if the City doesn't come up with a plan to generate millions of dollars to close its huge budget deficit. Although the School Department has done nothing to contribute to the deficit, immediately acknowledged by all the powers that be, Cranston teachers are being asked to come up with 3 million dollar savings for the City out of its contract, as are police, fire and all other municipal employees asked also to pony up givebacks.

Millie D'Aguianno and Frank Flynn are working furiously to try to help the City while at the same time making sure that their members are protected. No lawyers except those the Auditor General has asked believe that abrogating a contract is within his scope of authority, but the threat that the State will take over the operation of the finances of the City is not a happy thought. While

it has been the RI experience that when the state directly funds an entity, like the Central Falls Schools, they tend not to starve it. When it's a matter of intruding in a corrective mode, it tends to focus much more on savings and not on supporting programs.

Meanwhile, there has been only an 85 cents tax increase in the last five years, an organized anti-tax group called CUT is trying to dominate the agenda and keep a tax increase out of the equation. Let the City employees pay for the problem. The Mayor has put his political future on the line, and has responsibly told the public that a significant tax increase is necessary, while a member of the City Council is adamant that there will be no increase in this election year.

Jim Parisi from our office has been working closely with the CTA leadership in formulation of strategy and membership communication. I have contributed a few ideas and Dick Skolnik, the Union's attorney, is doing the legal legwork.

The worst that can happen is that the Auditor General does end up with the authority to abrogate contracts. The second worse is that the City's finances are taken over by the state. The best that can come out of this is that the budget deficit is closed through tax increases and labor-management cooperation with union members protected from any

permanent loss, and perhaps even gain for future years.

Then there's Local 958, the Providence Teachers Union. Negotiations have gone on for what seems like forever. The membership has been adamant in their continuing no confidence in the current School Department leadership. The issue has never been reform. The Superintendent did not want to be tied down to specific contractual language in the Collective Bargaining Agreement on education programs. This was the core of her stated need for flexibility. Educational flexibility was never at the heart of the problem for union members. Abuse of discretion always was. Not all, but several principals were creating an oppressive, almost punitive environment in their buildings. There has been every appearance that the principals were meeting the Superintendent's expectations of them.

Some teachers had been personally affected by what appeared to be a lack of humanity. The Roseanne Warren story is well known. Her house burned down on Palm Sunday. She and her family managed to get out with some clothes. She asked for and was denied three day's leave to find a place to live. She was docked \$900 for three days' absence and only got the paid days for the emergency leave as a result of a grievance. A story like that goes through the school system like wildfire. So what worries the teachers is the management rights' clause.

Then there's North Providence that is among the cities on the Auditor General's list for intervention. In a precautionary mode, the Town administration has invited the North Providence Federation of Teachers to engage in rebargaining in order to make it difficult for the Auditor General to insert himself into North Providence. And so, John Maguire is in the same mode as Millie and Frank. Although the pressure is not immediate, the apprehension is no different.

In a very bizarre series of events, a member of one of the RIFTHP locals has filed unfair labor practice charges against both management and the local union on his theory that he has been unfairly treated by both entities in different ways under labor law. Meanwhile, he has several grievances in process. The nature of his unfair labor practice charges would have the result of dissolving the union. That result would make his grievances not being processed by a union which he has proposed should cease to exist.

This is being written on a plane. I am starting my vacation and expect that I will spend most of my time on the phone talking to people in Rhode Island.

I will be worrying about the bargaining for our state employed teachers and Kent VNA, complicated issues in Johnston and at Bryant College, the RI General Assembly, and Max and Ms. Kitty.

Marcia Reback

Egan -Appointed to VNA, RI Boards

Alma Egan, President of FVN Local 5090, the Union of registered nurses at the Visiting Nurse Association of Rhode Island (VNA of RI), was recently appointed to the Board of Trustees of the VNA of Rhode Island and the Board of the VNA Foundation, the Agency's charitable endowment. Egan will serve a one-year term, and will be subject to reappointment at the end of her term.

Egan's appointment is an emphatic tribute to her history of service to the VNA. Mary Linn Hamilton, CEO of the VNA of RI, described the process by which Egan was identified as a candidate for the Boards. "As the Nominations Committee considered possible candidates, Colby Cameron (Chairman of the Agency's former Board) and I both thought Alma would be great if she could balance the role with the demands of her field staff and Union position. We just wanted her to feel comfortable jumping between the fiduciary responsibilities of Board member and Union President." Hamilton asked Egan if she would be willing to have her name forwarded as a VNA Board candidate for consideration by the Lifespan Board, who, as parent to the VNA in the Lifespan system, had authority over approval of VNA Board candidates.

Egan had her own initial reservations at the prospect of sitting on the Agency Board. While surprised at the request, she felt a sense of accomplishment. Egan

felt the request showed that the Union's role at the Agency had changed significantly, that the Union could be much more a part of the administration of the Agency. And while she wondered what it would involve to be a Board member, and what sort of decisions she'd be called upon to make, Egan told Hamilton she would be willing to serve and agreed to have her name forwarded as a candidate.

The Lifespan Board approved Egan's candidacy, and she attended her first meeting in January. She now feels her seat on the Board enables the Union to be more informed of and involved in the Agency's workings at the highest level of management. "It shows how the relationship between the Union and the Agency has changed," Egan said. "This administration realizes the value of its employees' experience and expertise, and has included their input to guide the Agency's operation."

Egan finds she is able to add meaning to facts and figures presented at Board meetings. As a twenty-year employee of the Agency, she is able to answer myriad questions about previous Agency practices. Hamilton has been extremely pleased with Egan's service on the Board, and says Egan informs the Board of the day-

to-day operation of the Agency from the perspective of the visiting nurse. "Alma is able to advise the Board of the effects of Agency policies on staff members and on quality of patient care. Other Board members actively seek her advice as they weigh multiple factors in deciding the expenditure of foundation dollars on behalf of the Agency," Hamilton said.

Hamilton said she doesn't believe there is precedent in the Agency's 100-year history, the last twenty-five of

which include the nurses' collective bargaining status for Egan's seat on the Board. Indeed, such involvement on the part of the

Union is a welcomed but marked contrast to the history of labor-management relations at the Agency. Under the leadership of prior CEOs, the relationship was more adversarial, and management excluded the Union leadership and staff from input into organizational decisions. The result, the Union found, was a series of questionable business decisions which, when compounded by drastic cuts in Medicare funding, imperiled the Agency's survival. Egan's efforts to help the VNA through that crisis demonstrated to current CEO Hamilton her suitability for Board membership. "Alma's work with and on

behalf of the Agency, the way she championed us through our Medicare difficulties, showed the leadership and commitment we were looking for," Hamilton said.

Alfred J. Verrechia, Lifespan Board Chairman and President and Chief Operating Officer of Hasbro, Inc., said Board service such as Egan's is "probably not common in Corporate America. However, hospital boards have physician involvement, and I would think the VNA would want to have nurses involved in the same way Lifespan and its affiliate institutions have doctors on their Boards." Julie Duffy, an attorney for Textron, Inc., is herself a corporate pioneer as the Agency's first female chairman. Duffy said, "The nurses had been very helpful in turning the Agency's performance around, and it, therefore, made sense to include a nurse on the Board to create a stronger organization." She said Egan has proven to be a huge attribute as a Board member.

Egan believes the Agency has engendered a stronger commitment from nurses to the Agency. "The decent wage increases won in our last negotiations, coupled with the Agency's inclusion of the Union on its Board, shows our members they are valued. We feel more connected to the Agency, and that has better paved the way for the Union and management to deal with our incoming conditions."



**Alma Egan, President
Local 5090**

Bower Succeeds Allen as PSA President

Rob Bower has been elected to the presidency of the PSA@RIC, Local 3302, AFT. Bower replaces Brian Allen who decided not to seek reelection as his third two-year term expired. The PSA is the union of Professional Staff at Rhode Island College.

Bower previously served as Vice President of the PSA for three two-year terms, and has served on the last three Negotiating Committees, having chaired the last two. He sees technology advances as significantly changing the landscape for the Professional Staff at the College.

"As technology changes and becomes more integral to the College's mission, the roles of our members change as well," Bower said.

Local 3302 has a diverse membership. "We provide professional support to students at RIC from the time they seek acceptance to the College through the Admissions Office to their needs in housing, counseling, computer support in labs and classrooms, financial aid, right through to commencement," he said. "With such a diverse membership, and with technology changing professional roles at the College, the Union needs to be vigilant in its efforts to maintain the integrity of the bargaining unit as the College creates new positions." Bower now has several unit clarification appeals before the Labor Board on new positions the College filled outside the bargaining unit.

And, like other state employees, his members have been frustrated with recent changes in health care coverage. Bower includes health care benefits as a continuing concern for him as President.

For his part, Brian Allen feels very comfortable that he's left the leadership in good hands. He purposely worked very closely with Bower over the last few years of his presidency to familiarize him with the demands of the office. Allen encouraged Bower to chair the Negotiations Committee. Allen, husband of the Kent VNA's union co-chair, Sally (see p. 5), looks forward to continuing to serve the PSA as an informal sounding board for Bower.

Looking back on his own terms as President of the PSA, Allen cites among his proudest accomplishments the PSA's enhanced level of organization, its heightened visibility to the membership and on campus, its name change to PSA@RIC (from the more nebulous "RICSA"), and its greater alliance with college faculty through its "Equal Partners in Education" initiative.

Allen is commencing a six-month sabbatical. The leave time will be spent developing a proposal to create an "In-Service Learning Program" that would align faculty curriculum for student learning within the needs of the community. "For example," he said, "anthropology students will

learn not only that homeless shelters exist in the Greater Providence area, but also why the shelter's inhabitants are in need of such support." He said he'll be working closely with other colleges in and around Providence in developing his proposal, so he won't need to travel.

Bower, who came to RIC from Kansas State University in 1985, is currently the Director of Publishing at the College, a position he has held for seven years. Allen is Director of the Campus Center at the College and has been at RIC since 1981.

Johnston History Teacher National Nominee

Virginia Improta, a social studies teacher at Ferri Middle School, has been named the RI History Day Teacher of Merit. She is RI's nominee for the National Award. Over her 30-year tenure in the Johnston Schools, over 50 students have reached the National History Day Competition. Her students have won both national and state special awards.

The National History Day contest for students is scheduled for June 9 - 13, at the University of Maryland, College Park.



*Rob Bower; President
Local 3302*

Chaffee Follows Davey as Kent VNA Co-Chair

Joanne Chaffee has returned to her former position as co-chair of the bargaining units of FVNHP, Local 5022 at the VNA of Care New England (aka Kent VNA). She joins Sally Allen who has served as co-chair for almost two years.

Chaffee replaces Blanche Davey who, with a heavy heart, resigned from the agency to accommodate the changing demands of her young family. Davey had served for 1 1/2 years and had been looking forward to the Union's negotiations with the agency for the two contracts expiring May 3 1, 2002.

The co-chairs, assisted by Marcia Reback and Mike

Mullane, just completed negotiations of the integration of employees from Kent Hospital's home care unit into the VNA. One of Chaffee's on-going objectives is to ensure that administration of the integration agreement is proper.

The Union is in contract negotiations with the agency, following extensive preparations. Their goal is to achieve another good contract, with wage, benefit, and working conditions improvements, particularly in light of a health care economy where the services of their members are in high demand.

Chaffee brings a wealth

of professional and union leadership experience to her position, as she is in her 24th year at the Agency. She has served the union in the past as a co-chair, as secretary of Local 5022, and on the grievance and negotiations committees.

Chaffee earned her RN degree from Roger Williams Hospital and her BSN from Rhode Island College. She has worked as a Quality Improvement/Education nurse for the past eight years, and prior to that, as a therapeutic nurse at the Agency. She brings strong advocacy and keen organizational skills to the co-chair position.



Joanne Chaffee

Woods Succeeds Clements as President of St. Joseph FNHP

On April 29, 2002, members of the St. Joseph Hospital FNHP elected Linda Woods as their new President to succeed Janet Clements, who retired from St. Joe's on April 1. Janet retired from St. Joseph's Hospital after working at the hospital for 42 years. She had been president of the Union for the past three years.

Linda has worked at the St. Joseph Hospital Rehab Unit for seven years after transferring from Fatima

Hospital where she had worked in the neurosurgery unit. Linda also worked as a per diem for the Roger Williams home care program.

Linda received her RN from the St. Joseph Hospital School of Nursing and currently works the 3:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m. shift at St. Joe's. Linda's primary objective as President of Local 5018 will be for "more participation from our members." Best of luck to Linda in her new role as President and best wishes to Janet on her retirement.



Linda Woods, President Local 5018

****Bargaining News****

- Providence Teachers ratify

- Pawtucket Teachers Alliance — new three year

- Cranston Teachers Alliance — new three year

****In Negotiations****

- Kent VNA
- Howard Union of Teachers

- Johnston Federation of Teachers

RIFTHP to Host National AFT Regional ER&D Training

For the first time, AFT national level Educational Research & Dissemination (ER&D) training will be offered regionally, and the RIFTHP has been selected to host the training in Providence.

AFT's ER&D program is a "colleague-to-colleague" professional development process with local practitioners trained to disseminate research and effective instructional strategies nationally. ER&D courses include Foundations of Effective Teaching, Thinking Mathematics, three reading courses and Managing Anti-Social Behavior. The week-long "training of trainers" has been held every summer in Baltimore with potential ER&D trainers coming from across the country.

The RIFTHP provides statewide programs and supports an ever-growing cadre of ER&D coordinators who provide professional development at the local level. The RIFTHP uses ER&D to support mentoring programs, a partnership with URI and the development of local professional development institutes, centers and academies that are coordinated by strong ER&D local leaders.

Recognized nationally for its strong ER&D network, in 2000 and 2001, the RIFTHP, in partnership with the AFT, held national-level training in Rhode Island. This year the AFT decided to pilot a regional approach and

looked to the RIFTHP to coordinate the program.

Through a partnership with the Community College of Rhode Island, the training will be held from August 12th through the 17th at CCRI's Providence Campus. Representatives from the Northeast Region who have been selected by their local union presidents as potential ER&D trainers will participate in intensive training experiences in either: **Foundations of Effective Teaching, Managing Anti-Social Behavior, Reading Comprehension or Beginning Reading**, and develop plans to disseminate the information in their own locals.

RIFTHP/RI Graduate Courses a Success

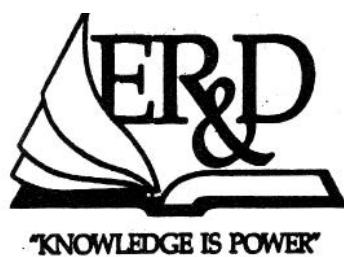
This spring semester, the RIFTHP and URI collaborated in offering two graduate level ER&D courses, Beginning Reading and Reading Comprehension. The courses, taught by ER&D Reading Coordinators Millie D'Aguanno (Beginning Reading) and Jackie Bourassa (Reading Comprehension), were a great success. Based on the AFT's ER&D reading modules, the courses combined solid research on the teaching of reading with practical strategies designed to assist teachers in strengthening their

daily instruction. The hands-on courses also made specific connections to the RI Reading Policy and the New Standards Performance Standards.

Evaluations from the courses indicate that they were well received by the participants with comments like: "I wish I had had this kind of information in my teacher preparation courses" and, "Thank you for giving me practical information that I can use to help me teach reading."

Unfortunately, the RIFTHP/URI courses were not able to accept all applicants, leaving 15 people on a waiting list.

Plans call for the Federation to offer both reading courses again in the fall. Work is being done to expand offerings to include Thinking Math and Foundations of Effective Teaching in the future. We look forward to continuing our partnership with URI and eventually to offer an RIFTHP/URI Masters in Instruction sometime in the near future.



Milestones

- ◆ *Mortgage burning for the Coventry Teachers Alliance building*
- ◆ *Constructing a building - the Pawtucket Teachers Alliance*
- ◆ *Trudeau Union celebrates its 25th anniversary*

ESEA: What Do You Need to Know?

Congress recently re-authorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act targeted to assist poor children. This legislation has serious implications for our schools, some opportunities and some areas of concern. Over the next few months the full details of ESEA will become better known.

The following is adopted from a Q & A developed by the United Federation of Teachers (New York) and is a quick overview:

. ESEA is the law that authorizes and regulates the majority of federal K- 12 education programs. The first part of the law, Title I, is the most well known.

- Title I deals with “ensuring that all children have a fair, equal and significant opportunity to obtain a high quality education and reach proficiency on challenging state academic assessment.”
- Title I authorizes the allocation of about 13 billion dollars to school districts around the country.
- Schools and districts may use Title I funds to provide additional help to students in poverty who perform below standards with additional after-school or summer programs, exemplary reading and math programs, by reducing class size, hiring paraprofessionals and/or providing professional development.
- Title I status is based on either the % of free lunch

eligible students or the % of students receiving public assistance.

- The new ESEA law holds states, districts, and schools accountable for meeting high standards of achievement and mandates annual student testing in grades 3 - 8.
- . ESEA requires that ALL students, not just those in Title I schools, make **adequate yearly progress (AYP)**.
- States must set measurable goals for student achievement on state tests to ensure that students are proficient in reading and math in 12 years.
- Failing to meet AYP over a number of years can result in a series of consequences for schools that could eventually result in restructuring, closure or takeover.
- All students must participate in statewide assessment in reading and math, including students with disabilities and English language learners. Appropriate modifications and accommodations are permitted where needed.
- ESEA requires that teachers hired and teaching in programs supported by Title I funds be “highly qualified”. Public elementary and secondary teachers must obtain state certification, hold a license to teach in the state and not have a certificate or license requirement waived.
- Teachers seeking elementary certification must demonstrate

subject knowledge and teaching skill in reading, writing, math and other elements of the elementary curriculum by passing a rigorous test. Teachers seeking secondary certification must demonstrate a high degree of competency in each of the academic subjects they teach by passing a subject-matter test or completing a major in the subject.

- By January, 2006, paraprofessionals must complete two years of college, hold an associates’ degree or higher or pass a state or local assessment.
- There are many other programs that this law authorizes. In addition, there are many details that are still being studied and whose implications will unfold in the coming months and years. Few regulations concerning the new parts of Title I have been developed.

Because of the serious nature of this law and its implications, the RIFTHP and its local leaders will be actively involved in state and local discussions pertaining to ESEA’s implementation. President Marcia Reback and Professional Issues Director Colleen Callahan will serve on RI’s Committee of Practitioners.

If you would like more detailed information on ESEA, go to the AFT’s ESEA Extranet site at <http://resource.aft.org/proiss/ESEA> Your user name is “proiss” and the password is “extra”.



ESEA: The No Child Left Behind Act

RI Federation of Teachers & Health Professionals

Marcia B. Reback, *President*

Robert E. Casey
Field Representative

Michael Mullane
Field Representative

James Parisi
Field Representative

Diana Casey
Staff Representative

Colleen Callahan
Director of Professional Issues

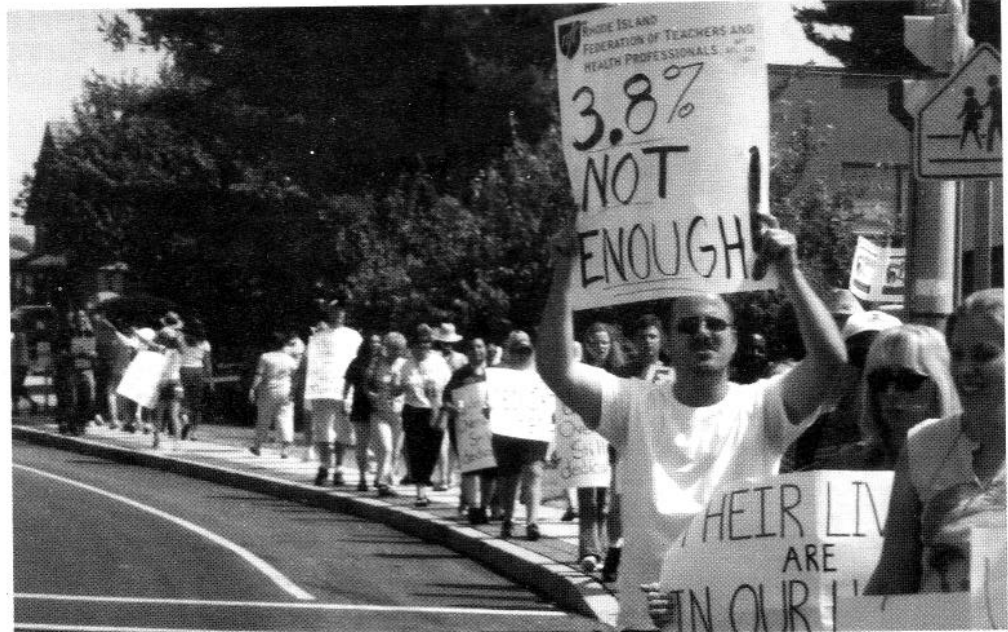
Patricia Houlihan
Director of COPE Activities

Diane Thurber
Executive Assistant

Carol Santangini
Staff Assistant

Charlene Lee
Administrative Assistant

BEFORE



AFTER: Trudeau Secures a Great Contract *(see p.1)*