



Science Teachers Association of New York State

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2008-2009

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ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

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PHYSICS

Penny Mann

Oriskany High School

Mohawk Valley Section

mvsta.org

THE VOICE

Winter 2009

Going west to Rochester for the conference was a great experience, and I encourage more of you to join us for next year. If you need help promoting it to your administrators, we can help. Both hotels were very accommodating and nice, a big difference from the Nevele. Everything was within a city block or you could travel by the walkways which connect all the sites. The conference center had two big rooms, one for all the exhibitors and one with two large screens and impressive sound system for the speakers whom were both excellent. Dr. David Gallo treated us to some exceptional video clips from ALVIN during some of Woods Holes expeditions including the Dumbo octopus.

There were so many workshops and guest speakers that it was hard to choose. The special programs were especially enjoyable. Joan Taber and I had a wonderful time at *The Night at the Museum* and experienced their planetarium as well as gigantic robotic insects and a simulation of an earthquake. I am glad I only had one glass of wine. We did miss all the shared meals, but used the hospitality room for many. We hosted a hospitality room with Saranac Beer which included a separate living room and kitchen. The evening was a success.

I welcome to our board two new Subject Area Representatives. Joan Taber and I both decided it was time to hold one job on the board and have found very qualified persons to take over the positions for Physics and Earth Science. Jud Spanneut of New Hartford with the encouragement of Bob Allers has agreed to be the Earth Science SAR. I look forward to interesting field trips from him. He will bring an expertise to this position that I could not. Penny Mann will replace Joan Taber as Physics SAR. She has been teaching physics at Oriskany for many years and has been a long time participant in the Physics Network Meetings. Barb Cavaretta would also like to occupy one position on the board, so we are looking for a replacement for Intermediate SAR. If you know someone or interested yourself, please contact me and I will explain what is involved in the position.

We are planning a dinner and speaker for the spring. We are looking towards the end of April or beginning of May at Casa Too Mucha. Since the owner, Patty, is so accommodating for our dinners, we are now regularly meeting there as a board.

Lee Kowalsky

ELEMENTARY

Pat Zuck

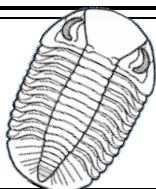
pzuck@oneida-boces.org

Laura Carey, an Environmental Educator with the **Rogers Environmental Education Center**, at 2721 on Highway 80, in Sherburne is offering a “**Winter Mini Teacher Institute**” during February break. For February 16th the workshop is from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. and with an optional field trip for teachers from 5-6 p.m. On February 17th the workshop continues from 9 a.m.-12 noon. Teachers will learn about the Canids (dog family) in New York, and visit the Wolf Mountain Nature Center. Also, participants will receive interdisciplinary activities and other resources for their classroom plus receive ten and a half contact hours. Light refreshments are provided but please bring a lunch. There is a \$15 fee and limited housing is available at \$10/night. To register email Laura at lcarey@gw.dec.state.ny.us or by phone the number is 607-674-4017.

Again this year our area Cornell Cooperative Extension Education Centers are participating in **Ag Literacy Week** during the week of **March 16th-20th**. Ag Literacy Week unites our communities and schools. This year the volunteers will share a special story highlighting the New York State Apple Industry with additional educational activities for students. The book read by the volunteer is then donated to your school library. This year’s book is called ***The Applesauce Bandit*** written by Juleah Tolosky. The Oneida County coordinator for this event is Heather Sweeney and her number at Cornell Cooperative Extension is 736-3394. If your school is in one of our adjoining counties she will help you in contacting your local coordinator. Additional information about this event can be found at the Cornell web site www.nyaged.org/aic

FLY TYING SYMPOSIUM FROM BOB FIELDS- OUR TROUT IN THE CLASSROOM COORDINATOR

A **Fly Tying Symposium** is scheduled for **March 14th from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.** at the **Radisson Convention Center** on Genesee Street, Utica. In the *main Conference Room* there will be videos on fishing in Central New York, Saltwater fly fishing on Long Island, fishing in the Adirondacks, and fishing in the Western New York tributaries plus Tom Deane teaching fly tying. In the *Seneca Room* there will be Hourly Fly Tying Classes for children and adults. At 3 p.m. in the *Adirondack Room* there will be a GRAB BAG fly tying competition. Admission is \$12 for adults that will include a 1 year membership to Fly Fishers Angler Association and children are free. There is no limit as to the number of children. Additional information can be found at www.cnyffaa.org and to participate please contact by email jpross@jprossflyrod.com or etkaczor@hotmail.com



EARTH SCIENCE

Jud Spanneut

jspanneu@nhart.org

Happy New Year! I wanted a moment and introduce myself as the new Earth Science SAR for the Mohawk Valley Science Teachers Association. I teach Earth Science and Earth Science AIS at New Hartford Central Schools. This is my fifth year at New Hartford, after making the jump from the world of geological consulting. I live in Utica with wife Mary and our three sons.

One reason I have attended workshops, including the Annual STANYYS Conference, is to see what other teachers are doing in their classrooms. I have found some very useful materials, websites, and tips at these meetings. These trips have been worthwhile, and for that reason, I decided to be more involved in this organization.

This spring I hope to have another field trip for Earth science teachers. I have some ideas, but am always open to suggestions. If you have a field trip idea or any other ideas for a gathering of Earth Science teachers, please let me know. I have posted my contact information below. I hope to see you all this spring and at the network meetings.

Jud Spanneut

732.3831 (H) 601.7890 (C)

Earth Science Network Meeting will be on **Thurs. Feb. 12** at Oneida BOCES Middle Settlement Rd from 4-6 and Lee Kowalsky will do a presentation on the age of the Earth followed by time to discuss teaching strategies for Part D. Mark your calendar for a second meeting on **Thurs. March 26th** which Lee Kowalsky is calling a Thumb Drive Share-A-Thon.

CHEMISTRY

Bernadette Van Valkenburg, SAR

Vernon-Verona-Sherill High School

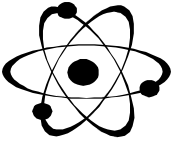
bernvan@twcny.rr.com

The second Chemistry Teachers Network Workshop was held at the Brodock Building in Utica in the technology lab. George Brown from Oppenheim-Ephratah High School demonstrated how to incorporate streaming video into PowerPoint presentations by showing us a completed lesson on Kinetics. He took the teachers through the steps to access the videos and then how to add them as hyperlinks to presentations. Then, he demonstrated the program called Castle Learning that allows teachers and students to use Regents exam questions for assignments and review for tests. Bernadette VanValkenburg shared teaching and learning strategies shared by other teachers in the Central New York area to improve passing and mastery rates on the Chemistry Regents exam.

Another workshop for March is in the planning stages and will target both Biology and Chemistry teachers. Look for the announcement in the near future.

Last of all, a new website was recently launched called "Understanding Science" that attempts to dispel myths about science and scientists, explaining that everything from the automobile to the family cat can be better understood through science. It was built by two UC Berkeley biology professors and a team of advisers. Much of the site is devoted to correcting misconceptions, such as that science is not creative and that all scientists are atheists.

Check out "Understanding Science" at undsci.berkeley.edu



PHYSICS
Penny Mann
Oriskany High School
pmann@oriskanycsd.org

Joan Taber has done a wonderful job as the Mohawk Valley Physics SAR. She has encouraged a very dedicated, generous and talented group of physics teachers to meet several times each year. She has facilitated the sharing of materials and activities for every unit of study in the Physics curriculum. I believe that I have become a much better physics teacher by learning from my colleagues at these meetings. I greatly appreciate her service, and I also appreciate all of my gifted colleagues.

Joan's shoes will be difficult to fill, but I am confident that the teachers who have regularly participated in our Physics Network Meetings will help me to continue the work that Joan did so well. My name is Penny Mann. I have been teaching for 16 years at Oriskany Central School. I volunteered to take this position because I think that the meetings are some of the best professional development available for physics teachers. I feel fortunate to have the colleagues that we have at these meetings. I want to continue learning and sharing with them, and hopefully, with new teachers in our area.

Please be on the lookout for our next Physics Network Meeting Flier. We will meet on January 27. I plan to focus on "Modern Physics" because it is a topic that most of us cover in the spring. Also participants at the first meeting this year expressed an interest in finding new materials for that unit. I'd also like to discuss amusement park physics. I know that some local school district participate in "Physics Day" at Darien Lake or Great Escape. Some districts may like to participate, but have not yet. Many teachers have modified materials to use at these events and some materials could be used even without attending. We will have access to a computer with internet access and a projector at this meeting. I would encourage participants to bring electronic versions of material to share and to bring thumb drives to save material from other teachers.

I can be reached by e-mail pmann@oriskanycsd.org. I always appreciate questions, suggestions concerns and ideas from my colleagues!

JUST A REMINDER:

SAVE THE DATE

This year's **Oneida County's Regional Science Fair** will be held at Utica College, located at 1600 Burrstone Road, Utica, on **Saturday March 28, 2009**. This fair is for students in grades 7-12.

For additional information call 315-792-3057 or go to www.utica.edu and then search Science Fair.