

JUNE 2018

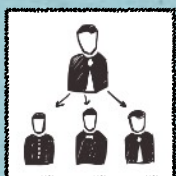
LOCAL DO'S



“Unions safeguard our rights. They function to provide fair wages, benefits and safe work environments ... They give us strength in our collective voice.”



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“UNIONS SAFEGUARD OUR RIGHTS”

BY MARK STEINBERG,
BMUST PRESIDENT

Two topics have been the focus of my Local Do's articles and our “union” conversations this school year... the Constitutional Convention and the Janus Case. Your Board of Trustees and building representatives spent a great deal of time trying to raise awareness about both of these issues so critical to our profession and livelihood. We have tried to educate our members and reinforce a strong bond with BMUST through one-to-one conversations, group meetings, a power-point presentation, handouts, posters, shirts, and magnets. An outstanding collaborative effort and a wonderful sense of solidarity resulted in a resounding defeat of the Constitutional Convention (83% - 17%) and I'm confident it will lead to an even stronger sense of unionism following the Janus decision.

I strongly believe that we will be fine once the anticipated Janus decision comes down either in May or June. The feedback I have received from building representatives and staff members has been that people do understand and appreciate their unions. They understand that organizations who encourage members to drop their union affiliations only have their own financial interest at heart. One only has to look at the posters I sent to each building to clearly understand their true motivation...

“We know the unions won't go away without a fight. They won't go away even with a fight. They won't go away until we drive the proverbial stake through their hearts and finish them off for good.” (Direct quote from a Freedom Foundation fund raising mailer).

Unions safeguard our rights. They function to provide fair wages, benefits and safe work environments. They ensure a comfortable retirement with a decent pension. They give us strength in our collective voice. For all of those reasons, these organizations want to silence and destroy us. They will not succeed!

So really what's at stake for us? Could we possibly experience the devastation union members have experienced in Wisconsin? Could our 67 page contract become a pamphlet if our union loses enough members and becomes decertified? Just consider what our contract provides us:

- **A salary schedule with opportunities for column advancement**
- **Stipends for sports, clubs, and cafeteria duty**
- **Limits on class size and periods taught**
- **A defined work day and year**
- **Paid sick leave and personal days**

• **Due process rights and an established grievance procedure**

• **Sick bank rights when staff have exhausted their sick days**

• **Health insurance buyout and coverage in retirement**

• **Retirement sick day buyout**

• **Flex Plan, 403b, 457, and Roth savings opportunities.**



**Mark Steinberg,
President, BMUST**

The Janus Case is not about worker freedom, it's about weakening the unions workers depend on to advocate for their interests. We are a thorn in their side because collective bargaining gives us the power to negotiate fair contracts. Nobody has ever been forced to join their union, but since the Abood case, everybody has been required to contribute financially so that the union can function effectively for all of its members. Who can argue against everyone paying their fair share? This case however will likely change that requirement, but it must not change a single member's affiliation with BMUST. Again I believe we will be fine because I'm unable to comprehend how anyone would consider becoming a “free rider” and accept all the benefits BMUST and our contract has to offer without contributing to our organization.

Since the early 1960's BMUST has remained focused on protecting the rights of its members and the benefits we all enjoy. Presidents Lou DeFilippo, Rick Hamilton, and Mike Dolber have paved the way for all of us to make BMUST the highly-regarded union it is today. Our contract has been the model used by many associations around the state. How we respond to the Janus decision will be the legacy we pass on to future generations of staff members. Today, we need your continued membership and support. Our collective response will determine if we become the strongest generation of unionists or the last generation of unionists. How will you respond to this challenge?

As always, thank you for your participation and continued support. I'm confident we will always maintain the “US” in BMUST and keep our union strong.

In solidarity,

Mark





“MEPHAM DRAMA CLUB SOARS TO NEW HEIGHTS”

BY BILL MORRIS (MEPHAM H.S.),
LOCAL DO'S STAFF WRITER

On March 23rd and 24th, *The Mephram Skull & Bones Drama Club*, led by Edward Grosskreuz, Jr. put on a hip, exciting production of Lin-Manuel Miranda's *In the Heights*. The performance was ground-breaking in that it highlighted the incredible talents of the cast and crew through a very challenging production. The live music from the student and faculty band, including Mike Mitchell, Eric Vivello, Brian Neiderman, & Band Leader, Brian Lotze, was fantastic. The set, sound, and lighting were phenomenal. The singing, rapping, dancing, and performances, orchestrated by Mr. G. with the assistance of Whitney Stone & Kyle Banks, wowed the audience. People are still talking about this show at Mephram and in the neighborhood!

With the amazing production of *The Laramie Project*, this past Fall, and now this, where will the *Skull & Bones* take audiences next?

Please check out recorded scenes from *In the Heights* done by *Bellmore-Merrick Broadcasting* at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/BMBCBroadcasting>






For More info. on the cast & Crew, check out their professional Playbill at: http://www.playbillder.com/show/vip/Wellington_C_Mephram_High_School/2018/In_The_Heights_43225

For More info. on *The Skull & Bones*, check out their website here: <http://skullandbonesdramaclub.weebly.com/in-the-heights.html>



BY LISA SHAPIRO (MERRICK AVE M.S.), LOCAL DO'S WRITER

**Merrick Avenue has had an eventful spring!
Here are some of the highlights.**

- For the first time ever, both the 7th and 8th grade boys' basketball teams had undefeated seasons this year. Great job coaching, Jason Dove and Matt Chicco.
- Our acappella group, *Word of Mouth*, directed by Dana Brandwein, won a talent competition at a fundraising event that took place at the Plainview JCC. Their prize was \$250!
- Our third annual ***Spring Fling*** was a success. The kids had a great time dancing and learned a little something about how to DJ from our very own, DJ Zinke.
- Congrats to one of Roland Clark's 8th grade classes which won the **Achieve 3000** Contest, **"Read to Succeed"**.
- Our self-contained students in the 8:1 MORE program have been out and about in town during their weekly community integration trips. Stew Leonard's was a huge, recent hit. Additionally, under the management of one of our speech teachers, Lynda Nislow, the same students have been running a cafe a couple of mornings a week. Students served as greeters and cashiers. According to Deanne Junior, a frequent cafe patron, "I highly recommend the MORE Cafe. The coffee is delicious, and the staff is amazing. I also appreciate the addition of yogurt to the menu. This gem gets 5 cups     .

- **Challenge Day**, a field day event designed for our self-contained population and incoming students who will be part of this program, was a huge success once again. Organized by Lauren Beinert with the assistance of our physical Education Department and students in the Natural Helpers club, cheering and smiles were aplenty in the gym on May 15th. The theme this year was "See the Able, Not the Label."
- At the April RA, Sarah Norton presented her research regarding the need for more consistent access to better spaces dedicated to nursing moms in our district. As a result of her informative presentation, BMUST will be purchasing new mini-fridges with Vote Cope funds for each of our buildings. Hopefully more improvements will be underway!
- Congrats to our newly tenured teachers; Tim Conway, Lucrezia Colangelo, Jackie Hennessey, and Bobby Zinke. You're in it for the long haul now!

“CALHOUN HONOREES”

BY WENDY SIMSON (CALHOUN H.S.), LOCAL DO'S STAFF WRITER

In March Calhoun honored Carol Cupo (Guidance Counselor), Katie Lessig (Special Education Teacher), Marirose Merola (Special Education Teacher), Rosemary Garofolo, (PTSA President), and Dominique Tirino (PTSA President) at the annual Founders Day Dinner. We were also entertained by Calhoun's Crescendo who sounded incredible, singing songs from their Spring Tour Program.

Relay For Life is an overnight event made for communities and schools who want to make an effort in raising money for cancer patients. This year was the third year at Calhoun High School. This night was filled with endless activities. The Bellmore-Merrick community raised over \$33,000 towards the American Cancer Society.

Congratulations to Sandy Sardo, Ed Tumminelli and Eric Vivello on their tireless efforts in training their students for the Spring Tour. Concert Choir received a superior rating, Crescendo- superior rating, Max Kirby-best solo, Wind Ensemble-superior rating, and String Ensemble-excellent rating.

The Senior Experience Fashion Show team raised over \$11,000 towards their cause through this year's fashion show. Generosity.org is a 501c3 humanitarian organization with the goal to end the clean water crisis in developing countries. Generosity.org uses the donations to build a well in a developing country in order to provide clean water for people who have a difficult time reaching it. Water affects so many aspects of living and without it people in developing countries are presented with fewer opportunities. Lack of water has proven to negatively impact sanitation, education, health, and so many other necessities. If people in developing countries are provided with access to clean water, many other opportunities will be opened up to them and the cycle of poverty can begin to break. The team created a website and under "How to Donate" there is a link to our team page for direct donations. <https://seniorexfashionsho.wixsite.com/mysite>

“ADVANCED LEARNING AT M.A.P.”

BY LAURA SHERIDAN (M.A.P. H.S.), LOCAL DO'S STAFF WRITER

In the Spring of 2014, Mr. DeTommaso challenged us to begin offering AP courses at MAP. He wanted our students to have the same opportunities to prepare for college that their fellow students had in the other three high schools. Gradually, our list of AP classes and AP students has been growing.

In the fall of 2014, we offered AP Literature and Composition to a class of four students. The following year we added AP Language and Composition. In 2016 AP Psychology was added, and this year AP Euro joined our list of classes. They are taught by Laura Sheridan (English), Mary Sweeney (Science), and Tiffany Rzempoluch (Social Studies), respectively.

Eleven of our students took AP Exams this year, half of them taking two exams apiece. That's roughly 23% of our student body. Teaching AP courses at MAP is challenging due to our schedule and our often fluid roster of students, but we are excited to see our students stepping up and envisioning themselves as AP students!

“EXPRESSING GRATITUDE FOR EXEMPLARY SERVICE”

BY BRUCE REED (KENNEDY H.S.) LOCAL DO'S EDITOR

The Kennedy community has been fortunate to have had exemplary building supervision under the auspices of Lorraine Poppe, who's illustrious career in education spans over 44 years. Many teachers attended Kennedy High School's Retirement Dinner to recognize and honor Ms. Poppe for her 23-years of service as principal at Kennedy High School. Kennedy administrators and educators took turns highlighting the impact of Ms. Poppe's service to our community. Speeches were given by Eileen Connelly (former AP of Guidance), Gerald Owenberg (newly appointed Kennedy Principal), Karen McGuinness & (Social Studies Department Chair). The following excerpts capture the spirit of this occasion:

“Under Lorraine's leadership, Kennedy High School has received national recognition for academic excellence ... Lorraine also spearheaded a multitude of service learning projects and fundraisers that helped residents of the Bellmore –Merrick community through challenging and often heart-breaking times—from the aftermath of 9/11 to Hurricane Sandy.” - Karen McGuinness, Social Studies Chairperson.

Additionally, Kennedy H.S. also thanked the following for their years of exceptional service: **Dr. Ben Weiss**, School Psychiatrist, **Karen McGuinness**, Social Studies Chairperson, **Mark Melillo**, School Librarian, and **Patricia DonAngelo**, Secretary. We wish you many years of enjoyment in your retirement.

In other news....

Dawn Sullivan (Science Department), has been offering Yoga classes for fellow faculty members on alternating Tuesdays. Dawn has offered this service in an attempt to help fellow teachers find a balance of mind, body in spirit during a busy and hectic academic year.

Walter Avellaneda (Music Department) spearheaded a fundraising campaign to benefit the Smile Train. The Smile Train is an international non-profit charity organization that assists children with untreated cleft lips and palate. Walter sponsored a “Dirty Jeans” Friday, encouraging teachers to donate to this worthwhile cause. As a result of Walter's efforts, enough funds were raised to cover the cost of three surgeries, so that children from different regions around the world will receive their “forever smiles” for free. Thanks to all for your generosity and support. To learn more about the Smile Train, visit their website [here](#).

“SPRING FEVER AT G.A.M.S.”

BY STACI PEKUSIC (GRAND AVE M.S) LOCAL DO'S WRITER

Now that the weather has improved, Grand Avenue teachers have been as busy as ever. Here are some of the highlights of this season.

Student Field Trips

As teachers, we know one of the best ways to learn is to travel. Something many people don't realize, however, is how much hard work goes into putting a trip together. This Spring, Grand teachers planned several exciting field trips for students.

First, Mr. Blanco's music classes attended a trip to the Metropolitan's **Cloisters Museum** in Manhattan.

There they were given tours and taught to appreciate the medieval origins of art and music. Next, the

Robotics Club, led by Ms. Biancardo, made its way to the **Cradle of Aviation** for a day of hands-on

learning. Mr. Bargiel and Mr. Rummenie brought the **Yorker Club** to the **Cold Spring Harbor Fish**

Hatchery for a hike and informative presentation. Finally, in May, teachers on **Teams' Discovery and**

Legacy brought 150 students to test their physical skills at the **Adventure Park** of Long Island.

These trips were more than just a break; students were given opportunities to learn about and to participate in the world around them, thanks to the vision and dedication of their teachers.

Sad Goodbyes

Spring is an exciting time of year because we look forward to soon saying goodbye to our students and colleagues until September. This spring, however, we must say goodbye to several staff members who will not be returning in the fall.

This year's retirees are:

- **Barbara Hirten (Art)**
- **Theresa Simeone (Social Worker)**
- **Rosanne Walker (Librarian)**
- **Melissa Williams (Art)**

We wish them all well as they continue on to their next phase, with the hope that they will always look back fondly upon their time at Grand.

We also bid a bittersweet goodbye to our Assistant Principal, **Andrew Del Rosario**, who will be moving up to Mepham High School next year. He will be sorely missed; Mepham's gain is truly Grand's loss. Our best wishes go out to Mr. "Del"!

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