



East Central Ohio Education

The Link Between Your Local
and the Ohio Education Association

Serving members in Stark, Wayne,
Holmes, Carroll, Tuscarawas,
and Columbiana Counties

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A New Year-Are You Ready?

By ECOEA President Angela Stewart

Welcome to 2015! January 1 brings renewed hope and new resolutions. I have never liked resolutions, maybe because like so many others, I rarely have been successful. To me they are promises made in January and then later broken and lamented about in late December. "I'm going to lose 20 pounds this coming year," becomes "Hey, I only gained 5 pounds this past year!" I've never understood why people wait until January 1 to identify and fix whatever problem they perceive to have. If you see a problem-no matter the date-fix it! If it isn't working, try a different approach. Isn't that what good educators do? And why don't resolutions work?! Maybe it's because we set ourselves up for failure. If we truly want our resolutions to work and as much as it sounds like writing learning objectives, they need to be clear, reasonable, and measurable. We need to have a plan and we need to have resources. Most importantly, we need to enlist the help of others to be successful. Besides making your personal resolutions this year, take a few minutes to make a few professional ones. I've been thinking about some changes I need to make since the OEA RA in December. President Higgins delivered a passionate, thought-provoking speech comparing our union to a tree. You can find the complete transcript at www.ohea.org. The analogy of a tree representing union membership was a visual one, eliciting some powerful reflections about our own Ohio Education Association, and ultimately our ten districts. Are our roots strong enough to withstand a "Right-to-Work" storm? Our union tree needs some tending and some TLC in order to grow tall with strong roots. We need to begin this new year with a resolution to engage our members more than ever. Relationships need to be built and strengthened if we want to have strong roots and substantial growth. It will take some time, but we need to start now. We cannot wait until the end of the year to determine if our resolution was successful or not. I can guarantee that our new body of legislators and appointees will not allow it! So let's work on some resolutions together! First, we need to be clear: OEA/ECOEA/Locals are not just officers and a few leaders. These organizations are EVERY member...YOU are OEA! No longer are unions just there to bargain a contract. Your union is fighting toxic testing, privatization, and many other issues that affect you and the learners you serve. Second, we need to be reasonable: We need to start engaging those members who haven't been participating. Relationships take time, but we need to start making some asks. We need more members to attend meetings and become more informed, to make contacts with legislators and other key figures, and to advocate for their association at all levels. Lastly, we need to measure our success: We need to be constantly communicating and checking in with those newly engaged members. We also need to expand our conversations with everyone we meet about why unions are important to them and especially the middle class. We need to stand up for ourselves and stop the flood of toxic rhetoric from the media. "Union membership is like a gym membership. Dues are paid to be part of a larger group with similar interests and goals. But, just like a gym membership-if you don't show up or participate, you do not become stronger. Unions are only as strong as their membership. Just like any neighborhood church, non-profit, or community organization-the respective strength rests with how many members of the group who actually stand and deliver." -unions4workers. If we are not going to exercise our rights, how will we become any stronger? How will our tree withstand the storm? We must be willing to stand up for ourselves and we must encourage others to stand up with us. Most importantly, we must start building relationships with all our members and with all those public education supporters. We need to be inclusive, not exclusive. Maya Angelou said, "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." So resolve to start having conversations now. Share your passion and your stories. Make someone feel valued and appreciated. Tend to your tree. For the storm is brewing...and we must be ready!

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Check us out on the web



www.ecocea.ohea.us

ECOEA Fall Roundtable Held on October 20th

Over 50 members attended this event where a Legal Update presentation was given by Attorney, Kathleen McKinley. Attorney McKinley focused on teacher evaluations. "Door pies" winners were treated to a delicious Hartville kitchen pie as their prize. Pies were won by Janel Travis, Newcomerstown TA, Mary Ann Mastnick, SCEPTA, Stephanie Linder, Minerva EA, Sonya Ash, North Canton EA, and Anne Bowles, Wooster EA. It was a delicious and informative way to spend a Monday night for all!

UPCOMING ECOEA EVENTS - REGISTER NOW!

Retirement Workshop-Saturday, February 7, 2015 Courtyard Marriott at Belden Village

Register now on the ECOEA website for the Retirement Workshop. Please note the staggered start to the three different sessions being offered!

Session I: STRS Late Career session. Registration begins at 8:15 AM, breakfast buffet, program at 9:30 AM. Designed for members who are within 5 years of retirement.

Session II: Mid-Career STRS Registration begins at 8:45 AM, breakfast buffet, with the program beginning at 9:30 AM. Designed for members with 15 or more years but open to members at any stage of their career who want to know more about their STRS benefits.

Session III: SERS Registration opens at 8:45 AM, breakfast buffet, program at 9:30 AM.

Upon registration, all members are invited to enjoy a complimentary breakfast buffet prior to their program.

Both of the STRS sessions will be lead by STRS representative John Buch. Members attending the SERS session will hear from SERS representative Cameron Vaughn. All members will hear NEA Member Benefits Rep Guy Kendall-Freas presenting "What I Want My Loved Ones to Know" with good information for members at any point in their career to deal with the financial and legal encounters of life. Kathleen Purdy, ECOEA Rep to OEA-R will present the benefits of membership in retirement along with the opportunity to join OEA-R at the session. You can even join OEA-R at the workshop so bring along your checkbook!

Members need to send in their \$10 deposit that will be refunded when they sign in at the workshop.

Member guests may attend for a \$15 charge. Breakfast, sessions, door prizes, networking! Attendance is limited to the first 100 registrants so don't delay!

Sign up today on the website at: www.ecoea.ohea.us

The Retirement Workshop is being offered this year with the support of OEA-R! Registration closes Friday, Jan. 30, 2015. No registrations will be taken after that date.

Legislative Dinner-Friday, March 6, 2015 Courtyard Marriott at Belden Village

Our annual Legislative Dinner with our area legislators will again be held at the Courtyard Marriott at Belden Village. All area legislators and State Board of Education members from our six county district will be invited to join us in an open forum where members can ask questions about issues that affect public education. A complimentary dinner is provided for members; guests may attend for a \$15 charge. Attendance is limited to the first 100 registrants. After the dinner and forum, guests and legislators are invited to stay for networking and socializing. There will be door prizes and snacks during the networking, with a cash bar available. Legislators have been asked to save the date to meet with us. You can register on the ECOEA website now!





Certificates for the Five Star Award for Local involvement at the District level were presented at the ECOEA Rep Assembly. Winning the unrestricted \$500 award from a lottery drawing of qualifiers was Canton Professional Educators' Association. President Paul Palomba accepted the check from ECOEA President Angela Stewart. This is the third year for this award that encourages participation in ECOEA activities and leadership. There were nine locals of the 62 locals in the ECOEA district that met the criteria this year. Congratulations to all our Five Star Locals for their leadership and participation!

Accepting the Five Star Awards were Ed Sims, Rittman EA, Dan Campanaro, North Canton EA, Janel Travis, Newcomerstown TA, Tracy Lemus Santos, Fairless EA, Paul Palomba, Canton Professional Educators, and Kelli Green, Perry CTA. Also receiving the Five Star Award were the Wooster Education, Southern Local, and Massillon Education Associations. Congratulations to these locals.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE VACANCIES:
 The following vacancies exist on the ECOEA Executive Committee: Columbiana #1 Rep, Columbiana #2 Rep, ESP #1 Rep. Please contact President Angela Stewart at the ECOEA office (330 499-8587) or by email at ecoea@sbcglobal.net if you are interested in one of these leadership positions.

THE FOLLOWING LOCALS WERE REPRESENTED AT THE ECOEA FALL REP ASSEMBLY. DELEGATES WERE PRESENT FROM:

Unit I

- Fairless Education Association
- Jackson Classified Personnel Association
- Jackson Memorial Education Association
- Lake Local Education Association
- Perry Classroom Teachers' Association

Unit II

- Rittman Education Association
- Wooster Education Association

Unit III

- Canton Professional Educators' Association
- Dover Education Association
- Newcomerstown Teachers' Association
- North Canton Education Association
- Stark County Educators and Professional Trainers

OEA-R

Does your local send delegates to represent your interests? If not, you are allowing other people to make decisions for you. Be an active participant in the democratic process of OEA. Get involved!



Congratulations to Allison Grimm, President of Lake Local EA, whose name was drawn for one of the ECOEA Unit Scholarships at the Fall RA. ECOEA awards 3 Unit Scholarships of \$500 by lottery drawing. All members are eligible to apply for this annual scholarship using the online application on the ECOEA website.



ECOEA was proud to provide the musical entertainment at the opening of the OEA Fall Rep Assembly this year. The North Canton Middle Notes honors choir, under the direction of Mindy Whitesmith, set the holiday tone with their beautiful voices. The choir then traveled next door in the Convention Center to help kick off the Jingle Bell Run. Middle Note students come in before the normal school day for practices. Thank you Mindy and students for all your hard work and early mornings to prepare for this performance. *Photo by Mandy Bankert*

OEA Collective Bargaining Conference 2015

February 5-7

Know Your Value, Know Your Power

Register at this link:

<https://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?EventID=1643768>

ECOEA provides 10 scholarships of \$50 for our Local Associations who send one or more members to this Collective Bargaining Conference. Information and an online application can be found on the ECOEA website www.ecoea.ohea.us



ECOEA Fall Representative Assembly Recap:

Delegates to the Fall Rep Assembly gathered at the Canton Professional Educators' Association office on Saturday, November 24 to conduct the business of the District and prepare for the OEA Fall Representative Assembly which will be held in Columbus on Saturday, December 6, 2014. President Angela Stewart welcomed guests which included OEA President Becky Higgins, OEA Vice President Scott DiMauro, and OEA Secretary Treasurer Tim Myers.

Delegates unanimously voted to endorse candidate Jeff Rhodes for NEA Director #5 who was running unopposed. Elected to the ECOEA Executive Committee was Lynn Simpson, Minerva as Carroll County Rep.

ECOEA Awards were presented to the Top Ten FCPE Locals. The Canton Professional Educators' Association won the \$500 in the drawing from the 9 locals that qualified for the Five Star Award. Public Relations Grants were awarded to five locals for projects submitted and approved by the Executive Board. The drawings for Unit Scholarships were held with Allison Grimm, Lake Local EA winning for Unit I, Stacey Zines, United Local EA for Unit II and Gina Mogus from North Canton EA for Unit III. Congratulations to all the members and locals who received awards and scholarships this year.

OEA AND ECOEA SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS DEADLINES APPROACHING

OEA offers several scholarships and awards to members and locals. See the OEA website for further details. Applications are also available at ecoea.ohea.us. The deadline for these awards is January 15, 2015.

Learn more about NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia at: <http://lilysblackboard.org/>

All ECOEA members are eligible to apply for the Quinn Scholarship for Members awarded each year at the ECOEA Spring Rep Assembly. This \$500 scholarship is awarded to a member in memory of Bill and Dolores Quinn. Bill was the first Executive Director of ECOEA and his wife Dolores served as office secretary. The first ECOEA office was in the basement of the Quinn's home. A second Quinn Scholarship of \$1,500 is awarded to a child of a member that is seeking a degree in education. Both applications are available online at the ECOEA website under the Scholarships and Awards tab and have a deadline of March 1, 2015.



The **DLAMC Banquet** was held on Friday evening, December 5, at the OEA Headquarters hotel, the Doubletree Worthington. Featured speaker was NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia who spoke passionately for social justice. Pictured are Anne Bowles, Wooster EA, Board of Directors, Tracy Lemus Santos, Fairless EA, Board of Directors, NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia, and Mandy Bankert, North Canton EA delegate. Following the banquet delegates were welcomed to Hospitality Night hosted by the District Leaders' Council. Jim York, delegate from North Canton EA, served as DJ for the event.



President Becky Higgins' Listening Tour Fall October 22, 2014

OEA President Becky Higgins and ECOEA President Angela Stewart spent a beautiful fall day touring the eastern part of the ECOEA District by visiting locals in Columbiana County. Pattie Howe, (lower left) President of Beaver Local EA, arranged for the visit to Beaver Local, President Gretchen Winland (left) made the arrangements for East Palestine, and President Stacey Zines arranged the visit to United Local. The Listening Tour concluded with a reception at Shale Tavern in Lisbon where over 40 members welcomed President Higgins. Attendees also got the opportunity to speak with the OEA-endorsed candidates Nick Barborak (HD5), Bobby Hagan (State Board of Ed District 8), Senator Joe Schiavoni (SD33), and Congressional District 6 candidate Jennifer Garrison. President Higgins spent the day listening to members concerns and visiting classrooms. Thanks for listening, Becky!

ECOEA Positions with Expiring Terms 2015:

Officers (2 year term):

President

Vice President

Recording Secretary

Executive Committee (3 year term):

Columbiana Rep #1

Stark County Rep #3

Wayne #1

Minority Member

ESP #1

ESP #2

OEA Committees (3 year term):

Legislative Committee

Resolutions Committee

Local Development & Training Core Function Committee

Member Rights & Protections Core Function Committee

OEA Board of Directors (3 year term):

ECOEA Unit II

This position requires an OEA Declaration of Candidacy available from OEA. Email Carol Price at PriceC@ohea.org. Please follow all instructions and dates carefully.

The Spring ECOEA Representative Assembly date **has been changed to Saturday, April 11, 2015** at the Canton Professional Educators' Association, gavel down 8:30 AM. In order to appear on the ballot for any of the above ECOEA positions, your completed Letter of Intent must be received in the ECOEA Business Office by March 1, 2015. Your Letter of Intent must state:

Your name

Your Local Association

Address, Phone, Email address

The ECOEA position you are seeking.

A sample Letter of Intent can be downloaded from the ECOEA website under the Forms and Applications tab. Please send to the ECOEA office by March 1, 2015