

Speak Out ^{SCTA}



Volume XXXVII No. 1 • A Publication by the Sachem Central Teachers' Association • October 2014



Become a Walker in the Fight Against Breast Cancer

by Cathy Rienth

The American Cancer Society has been saving lives for more than a century. Today, they're helping to save more than 400 lives a day. By putting our dollars to work, and by doing the most we can to raise awareness as a community, we can continue to help those with breast cancer. We can never stop working tirelessly to find the cures to put an end to this deadly disease.



Each person who walks in an American Cancer Society Making Strides Against Breast Cancer event has a reason for walking, and each person touched by cancer has a story to tell. Our stories are a reminder that each Making Strides Against Breast Cancer event is more than just a walk. They remind us of the progress we're making together to save lives and to create a world with more birthdays. The more people who walk to raise money in the fight against breast cancer, the more survivors there will be.

The American Cancer Society invests more in research to find, prevent, treat, and cure cancer than any other non-governmental organization. Unlike some organizations that

support only breast cancer research, they also fund research to find cures for all types of cancer, because discoveries in one area can often help find answers in another.

We fight for every person threatened by every cancer in every community. We know that finding breast cancer early, when it is easiest to treat, can mean the difference between life and death. The American Cancer Society provides screening guidelines, educates the public and health care professionals, and helps to ensure access to mammograms for ALL who need them.

Feel free to reach out to me if you are interested in participating in our next event.



The Push for Student Leadership Paying Dividends at North

by Andrew Brezak

School spirit at North is at an all-time high! Jon Chiaramonte and Chris Olsen, North's Student Government Advisors worked hard to revamp Homecoming, bringing back an 'old school feel' throughout the building. Their first tasks were to get their Student Government students to buy into the idea and to tackle much of the workload. What they never realized was their students' excitement would trickle up to the faculty.

"We can't put our finger on why or how it happened

Spirit Week featured "Hamptons Day," "New York Day," and "Pajama Day," leading up to a Homecoming Dance and pep rally. "We haven't had a Homecoming Dance in over 10 years and to see the turn out that we had- we sold out in three weeks. Our Student Government leaders had a good read on their classmates- they wanted this! What's old is new again. Not only did we sell out in three weeks but we had a wait list of students in case we had more tickets returned. 530 students attended and 25 student volunteers worked the event. I'm proud to say it was an enjoyable night. The kids dressed to impress and did not disappoint."

Students also brought their positive energy and excitement to the pep rally where class advisors had the opportunity to showcase their hard work. "The kids were very excited to participate in a skit as a junior class. It was a bonding experience for them," said Jen Ogozalek, Junior Class Advisor.

It was a very successful week at North and faculty members have taken note. Continuous references to an "Old School Feel" resonated. If the Homecoming dance and pep rally are any indication, school spirit is back at North, for good. Students will continue to be in the lead.

but this year's Homecoming and Spirit Week had the most teacher participation. The students were very excited to see their teachers take part in the festivities. It truly created a sense of community," said Chiaramonte.





The SCTA Fall Festival was a Success!

By Marjorie Ayasse



For several years, NYSUT has worked with many locals around the state in an effort to support projects and plans that strengthened communication, built coalitions, improved political action, and increased member participation. With the SCTA beginning its third year as a NYSUT LAP (local action project) local, the Executive Team felt strongly about organizing an event for our members and members' families. This past Saturday turned out to be a perfect day for our first annual SCTA Fall Festival, as there was plenty of sunshine and friendly faces! It was great to see our Sachem family at large.

The Fall Festival was held at Sachem High School North from 1-4pm on the soccer fields behind the school. Several craft stations were organized for

younger children and supervised by volunteers from North's National Honor Society. Elementary students spent their time creating sand art, necklaces and bracelets, marble paintings, cards for veterans, and sticker art. The children also perused through hundreds of books donated by the SCTA before taking the gifts home. Talented students from East's Art Honor Society provided face painting to festivalgoers, adults and children alike. In support of Breast Cancer Awareness month, Cathy Rienth set up a Strides table selling t-shirts to raise money for the American Cancer Society. Lastly, we can't forget the food! Jon Weston served up hot dogs and ice cream; we could have had a hot dog eating contest! (Maybe next year...)

We hope to make this an annual event for our Sachem family.

Many thanks go to our planning committee: Frank Scricco, Maria Feuerwerger, Jon Weston, Kevin Tougher, and Matt Rivera. Special thanks go to: Alison Sinacore for volunteering and providing student volunteers from HS North National Honor Society, Lauren Lewonka and her Art Honor Society volunteers from HS East, and the Sachem district and Board of Education for their support!

Why I Vote

by Jon Weston

On September 9th, before I headed to my teaching job at Sachem North, before I headed to my Union job at the SCTA office, and before I went back home to partake in my third (yet most important) role of husband and father, I went to the Huntington Town Hall to participate in a job that impacts all the other areas of my life.

I was the first person to vote at my polling place that morning, and I voted for Zephyr Teachout for governor in the Democratic primary, someone who I believed would appreciate my job as an educator and union worker more than the current occupant of the Executive Mansion.

You see, I engage in this civic liberty so that my job, my family, and my way of life remain safe. I vote in state elections, for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Assemblyman and Senator, Comptroller and Attorney General. These people impact the funding that goes to our schools. That affects my job as an educator and the education of my son. These people also represent me when laws limiting collective bargaining, eliminating tenure, and amending APPR, among other concerns, come across the statehouse floor. That directly affects my job.

I vote in national elections, for President, Vice President, US Senator and US Congressman. This year is a midterm election, and we only have Congressmen up for election and reelection, but what an important year it is to send or keep advocates for public education in Washington. Race to the Top and No Child Left Behind are still being amended, as are their successor, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, all of which directly impact what we do each day in our schools for our students.

One of NYSUT's endorsed candidates, Congressman Tim Bishop, spoke to a room of educators, including

your elected NYSUT delegates, on October 9th. He informed us that there is a bill in Congress right now that reduces the amount of standardized testing to a level of required testing not seen since before NCLB. Charter schools, which Congressman Bishop characterized as "detrimental to public education," are still being discussed in Congress. Bishop has remained constant in his staunch advocacy for public education in his 12 years representing Eastern Suffolk in Washington, and now he is running against State Senator Lee Zeldin in CD 1. Zeldin, who has helped Sachem over the years acquire more state funding, according to Bishop, is better prepared to represent us on state issues, like fixing Common Core, which will not be dealt with through a federal mandate.

There are more candidates, like Jason Zove who is opposing Assemblyman Mike Fitzpatrick in AD8. Zove has received the endorsements of NYSUT, AFL-CIO, and the police officers' and firefighters' unions primarily because of Fitzpatrick's ostracism and damaging votes that he has accumulated over the years, like the only vote against a moratorium on K-2 standardized testing. This is a midterm year election, but it is far from unimportant, and there are plenty of candidates out there who are running to preserve the public education system that we know and love.

We all have a job to do in the coming weeks. It is voluntary, but necessary, in order to retain the jobs we enjoy doing each and every day in Sachem. We must educate ourselves on the issues and the politicians, and get out to vote on November 4th, for supporters of our livelihood; it's the only way we can secure our future and the future of public education for our students and our families.

I vote because it's the only way I can control my say on issues that are otherwise out of my hands. I vote because it's a constitutional right to get involved in the democratic process.

I vote. Why don't you?



List of NYSUT Endorsed Candidates:

Statewide

State Comptroller - Tom DiNapoli

Attorney General - Eric Schneiderman

Congress

CD 1 - Tim Bishop

CD 2 - Steve Israel

State Senate

SD 1 - Ken LaValle

SD 3 - Adrienne Esposito

SD 5 - Carl Marcellino

State Assembly

AD 1 - Fred Thiele

AD 2 - Anthony Palumbo

AD 3 - Ed Hennessey

AD 5 - Al Graf

AD 6 - Phil Ramos

AD 7 - Andy Garbarino

AD 8 - Jason Zove

AD 9 - Joe Saladino

AD 10 - Chad Lupinacci

AD 11 - Kimberly Jean-Pierre

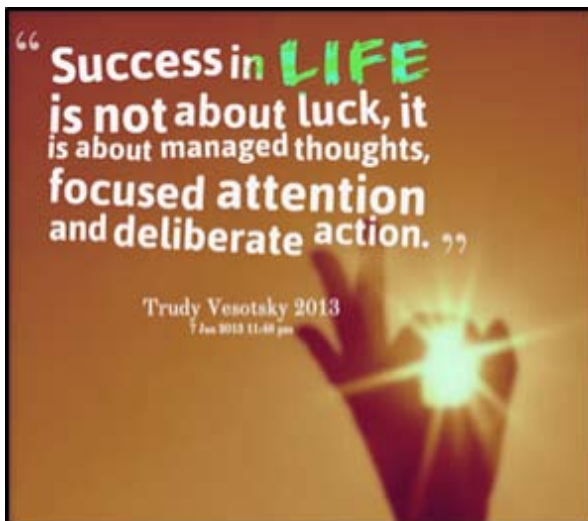
AD 12 - Andy Raia

Using NoodleTools to Create Better Researchers & Writers

by Madelyn Haussner, School Librarian, Sachem North High School

***“Inspiring students to be authentic independent and collaborative scholars.
Supporting educators to teach a systemic research and literacy process.”***

Looking to increase student achievement? Do you want your students to become better researchers and writers? Do your students seem bored or restless? Look no further than NoodleTools, an integrated academic research platform providing differentiated literacy instruction for students. Available through the Virtual Reference Collection (VRC) 24/7, NoodleTools is changing the way students research and write.



What can NoodleTools do for YOUR students? Depending on the purpose of their writing, students learn how to scaffold the necessary skills for writing using technology. Tools for reflection and metacognition are built into the program - students compile, review, evaluate, analyze and incorporate information from their sources, not just fill in the boxes. Students share a project with their teacher and/or librarian, who monitor their progress and provide essential feedback, all within NoodleTools. Students create their own customized 'to do' list, based on the project requirements and their individual pacing. All tools are organized in one place, accessible 24/7 from any computer with Internet access. Students can create a source list, note cards, outline and write their research paper us-

ing NoodleTools. School media specialists/school librarians throughout Suffolk County and the tri-state area have been teaching NoodleTools to students in collaboration with teachers with much success. According to their website, NoodleTools is geared for students from 5th grade through university, but most educators have started instruction in 7th grade or later.

Evaluating multiple sources can be confusing and requires logical and analytical skills - your school librarian can provide instruction on these digital literacy skills, guiding students to credible, reliable resources. Students learn which components are necessary to create a source list, and evaluate these sources, creating annotations if required. NoodleTools provides citation tools aligned with MLA, APA or Chicago formatting. Students create note cards which are connected to their source list and learn the scaffolding skills. They initiate their note cards using evidence in the form of a quote or textual reference which supports the claim, then paraphrase or summarize this evidence in their own words. Finally, students interpret, evaluate and reflect on their paraphrase or summary, ask questions and provide their own ideas which correlates to this evidence. This is one concept most students forget to incorporate in their writing. Note cards can be aligned into categories or tags which are utilized to create the outline, providing the framework for writing the paper. As educators, we understand the importance of teaching students this structure, which in turn, helps students to create thoughtful, meaningful and comprehensive writing pieces. (College & Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing: Production and Distribution of Writing, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.6 and Research to Build and Present Knowledge, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.8).



Introduced at Sachem HS East in February, English 12 AP students used NoodleTools to create and complete their literary criticism research paper. Teachers Lorri Kropp and John Troise were impressed with those students who applied themselves within NoodleTools. Students were elated since everything was online and in one place – no note cards, highlighters or papers to organize constantly. Although some were resistant at first, once they became familiar with the program, they adapted and found it much easier to keep track of deadlines and materials. Additionally, their writing was enhanced due to the opportunity for reflection. Students were motivated, energized and proud of their success. One senior came to me after writing her paper to tell me how easier this monumental task had become. Once her note cards were written, she stated her paper was essentially created – she only had to weave cohesive thoughts between her notecards to write the actual paper. She never thought it could be this easy!

Q&A's with Lorri Kropp:

MH: *Did you see improvement with students writing using NoodleTools?*

LK: *Definite improvement using it - those that took it seriously reaped the benefits.*

MH: *Did you have a favorite component of NoodleTools? More than one favorite?*

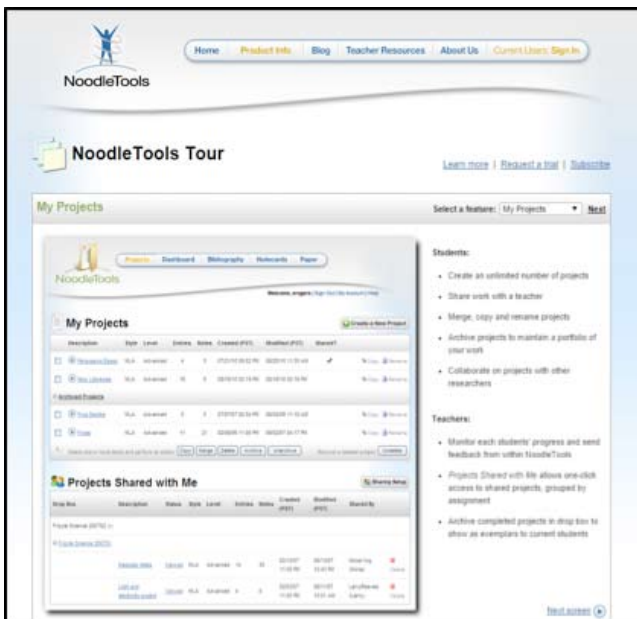
LK: *Favorite component - the ease of use when it came to formulating the works cited page and note cards for the students. For me I loved that I could keep track of their progress online and make comments to provide rapid feedback.*

MH: *Would you suggest other teachers consider using NoodleTools? Why?*

LK: *I would most assuredly suggest using it as it is a great tool for organizing all of a student's work in one place and a great way for the teacher to make sure the student is keeping up with the assignment.*

MH: *Student feedback?*

LK: *Again, the students who took it seriously really liked it and seemed like they would utilize it in college as well.*



Teachers Kropp and Troise were enthused with their students' performance and achievement and have agreed teaching it to 12th grade students in the beginning of the year with a small research project would be beneficial. Additionally, they planned to introduce NoodleTools to their 9th and 10th grade classes for creating a source list and note cards. It was also interesting to note how many 12th graders stated they would use NoodleTools in college – they found it so valuable. However, access to this subscription database expires when students graduate from Sachem CSD, but the creators of NoodleTools provide students with access to NoodleTools throughout their university career - a one year subscription costs \$15. Their college/university may also provide free access to NoodleTools. For more info, go to www.noodletools.com/tour/ or speak with your school librarian.

NEW SCHOOL YEAR... NEW CHALLENGES.

Hiawatha Accepts the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge!



On September 19, the Hiawatha staff accepted the ALS ice bucket challenge. Students and staff gathered outside to watch 26 staff members get drenched in ice cold water on a chilly day for this worthy cause. Through these efforts, Hiawatha raised over \$500 dollars. All proceeds were donated to the ALS Foundation so they can continue their global research and nationwide advocacy while also empowering people with Lou Gehrig's disease and their families to live fuller lives by providing them with compassionate care and support.

According to the their website, "during a 30-day period this summer, The ALS Association received more than \$100 million in donations." The Board of Trustees of The ALS Association has approved an initial

expenditure of \$21.7 million in funding to support six programs and initiatives to expedite the search for treatments and a cure. "The bulk of The ALS Association's initial \$21.7 million commitment—\$18.5 million—will advance four new cooperative alliances for the next one to three years involving research that has been identified as critical to finding new treatments for ALS: ALS Accelerated Therapeutics (ALS ACT), The New York Genome Center, the Neuro Collaborative, and Project MinE."

These projects would not have been possible without Ice Bucket Challenge donations. We hope to see more Sachem Schools accept the challenge and continue to support this cause.

"Not Just Ladies Night Out"

Photos by: Amanda Foran

North: Norma Egic, Sheri Rose



Grundy: JoAnn Dale, Jenny Sciortino, Janet Tamasi



Event Sponsors: Kelly Palacios, Maria Aiello, Jeri Thomson



Darleen Haas (Wenonah), Laura Clifford (Nokomis), Jackie Foley (Chippewa)



North: Alison Sinacore, Erica Sementilli, Regina Skarka, Angie Spencer



Michelle Tierney (North), Lisa Conklin (Hiawatha), Margaret Falco (Retired-OSS), Yvette Duffner (OSS)

“Not Just Ladies Night Out” Acknowledgements



A Special Thank You to:

- **Sachem North American Sign Language Club**
- **Sachem North Special Education Department**
- **Sachem North Mathematics Department**
- **Sachem North LOTE Department**
- **Sachem North Social Studies Department**
- **Sachem North Business Department**
- **Sachem North Science Department**
- **Sachem North Health Department**
- **Sachem North Nurses**
- **Sachem North National Honor Society**
- **Sachem North Italian Club**
- **Sachem Cosmetology Department**
- **Ms. Frosina's Class**
- **Leticia Rozul**
- **Boogie's Barber Shop**