

Region VI Reporter

Region 6 ATPE Tidbits:

- **Did you know that Region 6 ATPE has already given over \$12,000 to ATPE PAC this year?!**
- **ATPE remains the largest independent educator organization in the nation!**
- **Region 6 ATPE has won the award for PAC donations for the last 2 years!**

Inside this issue:

5 Questions with Sam Spurlock	2
Member Services Update	3
Student Motivation—Debbie Silver	4
Region 6 Wrap Up	5
Financial Aid for the Summit	5
What is PAC and Why Support It?	6
"Dessert"-ing the School	6

Looking Forward With Region President-Elect Charles Lindsey

As the newly elected president of Region VI, I am excited about the year ahead of us and look forward to the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead! I also am humbled and grateful for the support of those who elected me to this position. I want to thank those that have served in this capacity before me for setting the standard of service to Region VI and I hope this year, through our efforts, we can even raise higher that excellent standard of service.

As I think about the 2011-2012 year and my goals, several things stand out. First, and foremost, we will need to work on membership. I know that in my own district, most of the teachers and paras that were laid off were ATPE members. My fear is that this is probably the scenario in most districts that had to cut staff. We must tirelessly work on keeping and securing members to fill in the gaps where members were lost, to keep Region VI the strong region it has become. By partnering with the ATPE's brand

new transitional membership program we will work to retain those members who have lost jobs and keep them active while they are in transition. I want to also reach out to all locals in Region VI by keeping good communication where it is already in place and improving in areas where communication has further opportunity for growth.

At the region level, we will be looking for ways that we can help you at the local level and want to hear from you about new ideas or ways things can be done better. We have a strong core of leaders in Region VI who have a broad variety of experiences and abilities. Our common tenet is that we are all here to serve and support all of you as fellow members of A T P E .

As educators, we may have a difficult road ahead of us in the wake of unfriendly legislation emanating from Austin during this past regular session and looming special session. It is my belief that this year if we work even harder and show



Charles Lindsey
Region 6
President-Elect
2011-2012

greater support than we have been called upon in the past we will continue to rise to the occasion as the premier educator organization in the state of Texas.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns; if I don't know the answer, I'll find out. I can be contacted the following ways:

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Five Questions with State Past President—Sam Spurlock



Sam Spurlock
2010-2011
State ATPE
Past President

“As we look ahead to the next century, leaders will be those who empower others.”
- Bill Gates

Sam Spurlock is a mild mannered science teacher from the small Texas city of Olney. While he may be from a small town he is known as a dedicated leader and strong voice for education to educators across the Lone Star State. We were able to get some time with him on what he calls his “farewell tour.”

Q1: As a past president, what advice can you offer to those who look to be involved in ATPE’s future leadership.
A: I think there are three things that need to be given special consideration. The first is to be sure you are willing to make the commitment of time required to serve. The second is to make sure your administration is supportive of your desire to serve ATPE and the public schools of Texas. The third, and most important, is to make sure your family is supportive of your

desire. If elected, your choice will affect the lives of many and you must confidently face your decision to run knowing all interested parties are supportive.

Q2: Speaking from your experience, how can ATPE remain a growing and vibrant organization that represents a constantly changing teaching profession?

“ATPE is made of the most passionate supporters of public schools and public school students.”

A: There is no doubt that ATPE represents educators serving in an ever changing environment. While not turning away from our tenets, ATPE must constantly seek to meet the changing needs of our newest members as well as our veterans. We must constantly seek to communicate with and service our members in the most effective manner possible. I know this means to make better use of social media since that is where the current generation lives. To keep growing we must make sure we properly prepare younger members to assume leadership.

Q3: What is the best thing about being “Past President”?

A: This may be a loaded question. I think it serves as a

decompression period from the past 5 years. The “Past President’s” office provides opportunity to evaluate the past few years and plan for the future. I am finding that I do have something to offer as a mentor to the other officers.
Q4: What do you consider the greatest accomplishment that occurred while an elected officer of ATPE?

A: I strongly believe the greatest accomplishment has been the opening of the discussion of how to prepare ATPE for the next generation. I have seen the most forward thinking boards over the last few years be willing to ask and answer the tough questions. I hope from this beginning ATPE will continue to move to a brighter future.

Q5: Finally, you have traveled the state on your “farewell tour” and as an officer. What insight have you gained about the organization and its members?

A: ATPE is made of the most passionate supporters of our public schools and public school students. No matter where I have been – locals large, small, urban, or rural – I find members that are willing to give of themselves to offer up a brighter future for the young folks of Texas. I have so many memories to carry with me but the greatest revolve around the wonderful friends I have made that share a willingness to do what it takes to make a difference.

What’s Happening in Education Law? LAN Members Know!

One of the most critical aspects for successful education systems is informed and involved educators. While many feel that they don’t know enough to become involved there is an easy solution. Go to www.atpe.org and sign up for the Legislative Alert Network (LAN) and get notifications about the latest legislative issues affecting education. You can also call the state office and have one of the friendly ATPE office staff set up a LAN registry for you by simply calling the toll free number 800-777-ATPE.



A Message from the ATPE State Office Member Services Director—Amy White

Greetings from the ATPE State Office!

As you all wind down another school year, please allow me to say “thank you” for dedicating yourselves to the schoolchildren of Texas. I also want to thank you for serving and supporting fellow educators during what has been a most challenging year in Texas public school education! Thank you for making ATPE, your organization, more than 116,000 members strong.

I truly believe that being an educator is a “calling,” not just a profession. As ATPE members, you’ve had the courage to continue being in the classroom, working with students just like you always do, even though the outside world has called public education into question.

It is interesting to note that approximately half of

the 660,000 or so full-time public school employees are not members of any professional educator organization. As leaders in our field, we have an opportunity to reach out to those individuals sharing the ATPE message. I hope that you will join me in doing so!

This spring, thousands of Texas educators were notified by districts that they would not have positions next school year. If you have been affected by a school district reduction in force (RIF), ATPE wants you to understand your important place in the ATPE family. We invite you to continue your ATPE membership during your time of professional transition. In order to reach out to educators affected by RIFs, the ATPE Board of Directors (BOD) has reduced

ATPE’s public membership dues from \$35 to \$10 for the 2011-12 school year.

Public members receive ATPE’s publications, stay up-to-date on the association’s advocacy efforts, and save money using the many services and discounts available to ATPE members. You may join as a public member by completing the online application at www.atpe.org in early June.

Please note: Public members are not eligible for legal services or professional liability insurance. If you will be substituting or working in another capacity in a school district, you need to renew your ATPE membership in the appropriate insured category to be eligible for those benefits. Please visit www.atpe.org/protection for further information about the terms and conditions that apply to insured category membership.



Amy White
ATPE Member
Services Director

“The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows.”
- Edward Everett

Will We See You At The Summit? Educators Come Together for the Event of the Year.

The ATPE Summit is the realization of a vision for the next step in creating a dynamic cutting edge teacher organization that is dedicated to supporting the freedom of all educators to teach. The Summit combines the governance activities that were the focus of the annual convention with the development activities that Leader U offered each summer to its members.

The Summit brings opportunities to better serve members by the cost savings of combining these events and the impact on members by being held at a time when more members are able to attend the functions. The Summit will offer opportunities to have a voice in the future of ATPE as well as hone the skills that help good teacher grow into great teachers by learning from those on the cutting

edge of education and spending time with motivating speakers. The greatest benefit is the opportunity to share and learn from other professional educators in and out of the training sessions.

Contact Judi Thomas at jthomas@willisisd.org if you are interested in attending or for more information about The Summit you may visit online www.ATPE.org/summit or inquire with your local unit president.

Failure, “There’s an App for That” - Dr. Debbie Silver



Dr. Debbie Silver
Educator/Speaker/
Author

“I’ve missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I’ve lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I’ve been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.”

- Michael Jordan

Debbie Silver is author of *Drumming to the Beat of Different Marchers* and has a new book on student motivation and becoming lifelong learners out soon from Corwin Press.

The trend in the 1970’s to rather that one believes s/he over again. We ought to build children’s self-esteem by has power over his/her own model for them how to learn making sure everyone “was a life. Self-efficacy beliefs pro- from missteps and how to winner” was based on the be- vide the basis for human moti- stay true to their goals. We belief that if we made kids *feel* vation because unless people have to help students under- stand that their efforts and *good* about themselves their believe they can effect changes stand that their efforts and their positive perceptions would in their circumstances and their choices make a tremen- dous difference in outcomes. translate into better school lives, they have little incentive

work. We did everything we to act or to persevere through difficult situations. We could to keep them from fail- ing at anything. We curved Self-efficacy is bolstered when grades, “dumbed down” the a student achieves something s/he had previously thought unattainable. Overcoming ini- tial failure is a powerful incen- tive for further pursuits. Adults

left out. We made a mistake. Current research abounds with research on mo- tivation theory, which clearly states that self-esteem buoyed by contrived circumstances is at best, transient and at worst, counterproductive. True self- worth is built by genuine achievement, usually after a considerable struggle. In order to build self-sufficient, re- sourceful, life-long learners we must provide them with ex- periences that constantly stretch them to new levels. We have to teach them that failure is part of growth and that most success comes from deliberate practice and effort rather than from inherent gifts or luck.

We should provide students with numerous exam- ples of ordinary people who have become extraordinary by overcoming failure over and over again. We ought to model for them how to learn from missteps and how to stay true to their goals. We have to help students understand that their efforts and their choices make a tremendous difference in outcomes. We need to be sup- portive but honest with our charges; we should give them effective feedback that avoids labels (both positive and negative). We should judge less and guide more. We can encourage without effusive praise and construc- tively give feedback without disapproval.

In 1977, Albert Bandura introduced a psycholog- ical construct he called *self- efficacy*. Through his research as a psychologist and re- searcher he concluded that the foundation for human motiva- tion is not just about believing one has certain qualities, but

We should provide students with numerous exam- ples of ordinary people who have become extraordinary by overcoming failure over and over again.

We need to teach them about purposeful prac- tice and help them internal- ize the necessary mecha- nisms to reach just beyond their current grasps. We have to show them every day that effort and choices are things they can control, and in fact, are the keys to a successful life. And failure, well, “there’s an App for that!”

Self-efficacy Affects:

- The CHOICES we make
- Our EFFORT (how hard we try)
- Our PERSEVERANCE (how long we persist against obstacles)
- Our RESILIENCE (how quickly we recover from failure or setbacks)

Region 6 Wrap Up - Judi Thomas, Region 6 President

Region 6 ATPE Family, Take a deep breath and relax! We are in the home stretch of this school year. With less than 10 days with kiddos, we are certainly in "crunch time". Finishing final paperwork, checking in textbooks, inputting final grades, etc., etc., etc. **I am thinking SUMMER and SUMMIT!!!**

I hope you are registered to attend. If not, contact your local unit president and get registered. This event will be a FIRST for ALL of us. Many of us have attended both ATPE Convention and Leader U training, but never a combined event. I can't wait to see what is in store for us! ATPE does EVERY-

THING with class!! The folks in the state office literally "roll out the red carpet" for our members year after year. I am so proud to be a member of ATPE - the premier educator's association in the state of Texas.

Thanks goes out to all of you who have responded to the ATPE LAN alerts by calling your legislators in Austin. Many of you have also called other educators and family members to get them involved. Elected officials and staff have heard from many of us more than once. All efforts to derail HB 400 have been successful, to this point. However, there is a special session. Don't stop calling to express

your thoughts about their efforts. I was able to send emails to many legislators, not just those representing my district. If you experience any difficulty using the email system on the Texas Legislature website, don't hesitate to jot the phone numbers down and give the office a call. If you have friends or family living in a member's district let the member know you will be talking with them as well. Tell your representative that you will be watching to see how you can "help". Representatives will have to earn our help by voting "right".

Enjoy your final days of the 2010-2011 School year and I look forward to seeing you in July at the Summit!!



Judi Thomas
Region 6 President
2010-2011

"A human being is not attaining his full height until he is educated."

- Horace Mann

Financial Aid Available for Summit - Brenda Lynch

There is great news from the state office this year! As we anticipate the new Summit there is a new program to aid units who may not have enough funds to send delegates on their own. Here are some examples of how it works.

Example 1: Waller ATPE – Small local unit in a medium region. Under the interstate assistance plan, this local unit is eligible to receive \$971 to come to the event. Last year this local

unit brought two people to the Convention. If the local unit brings two people to the summit and applies for state assistance funds, Waller ATPE and Region 6 would need to come up with the following: \$971 (cost of 2 people) - \$971 (state assistance) = \$0. **WHAT A GREAT DEAL!**

Example 2: Montgomery ATPE – Medium local unit in a medium region. Under the interstate assistance plan this local unit is eligible to receive \$597 to come to the event. Last year

this local unit brought four people to the Convention. If the local unit brings four people to the summit and applies for the state assistance funds, Montgomery ATPE and Region 6 would need to come up with the following: \$1,221 (cost of 4 people) - \$597 (state assistance) = \$624. This is a great deal too!

There are many more examples of how this works to help our local units. For more information contact your local president about the Summit.



Brenda Lynch
Region 6 Director
2010-2012

Why Support the ATPE PAC? It's About Your Kids. Willis ATPE Secretary, Cory Colby



Cory Colby
2011—2012
Region 6 ATPE
Vice President-Elect

“The task of the modern educator is not to cut down jungles, but to irrigate deserts.”

-C.S. Lewis

One of my favorite things about having conversations with other teachers is watching their faces light up when they talk about “my kids”. That is something unique to educators. Because of the amount of time spent with children in their classrooms educators begin to identify them as “my kids”.

Some have asked me why they should give money beyond their local dues to support the ATPE PAC. Here is my answer...“It’s about your kids.” We have seen in recent weeks how the education system and educators have come under attack by those in Austin who would like to take the easy way out of solving a continuing budget crisis. There is only one way to fight against those who claim that this is what the voters wanted. Prove to them that the voters want to fully fund education and the future of children.

In Austin, ATPE members have their own voice in the form of a highly skilled group of individuals who make daily trips to the offices and meeting rooms of the legislature to push the educator-created legislative agenda of

“When it comes to...PAC you have a chance to be a part of something great...”

ATPE. However, it takes financial resources to disseminate information and create the necessary materials to show legislators that the Texas education system is in need of their support and that educators have some of the best and brightest ideas regarding fixing the problems within the system.

I also often refer to PAC donations as an investment in legacy. Donations to PAC

make the voice of those in the classroom heard; students and teachers. Your contributions are an integral part of building a positive legacy in Texas education. They are part of the fight against those who want to cannibalize the education system. Your money goes to make sure that students have the chance to achieve their fullest potential in the most student-centered environments possible. Your investment makes sure that students get more one-on-one time with teachers, that they have access to the most qualified educators available, and that they remain the center of attention in the education system.

When it comes to donating to PAC you have a chance to be a part of something great; something enduring; something that is world changing—a legacy of success for kids.

Membership Minute: “Dessert”-ing the School

Remember that our members are educators. On a daily endless paperwork and memos cross their desks and through the faculty mailboxes in the work room.

There are some days where a small card or note from a caring campus rep is just “one more thing”. When this happens it is likely that the efforts of the rep will not be noticed. This tends to happen at the busiest times of the

year; Christmas, spring break, and the end of school.

As our school year draws to a close one of the last things that educators want is one more thing on their desk or in their mailbox. However, it is during these high -stress and fast-paced times that those same members would like a little treat for their stomachs. This can be referred to as “dessert”-ing the school or the sundae social and is eas-

ily done after school.

With minimal cash the teacher’s lounge can be made into a soda shop where cookies or self-serve sundaes are available for staff who would like to participate. Some red balloons and plastic ware add to the ATPE theme and reminds members that they are important. Just like kids, members should be reminded they are valuable to the school and ATPE.