

Region VI Reporter Winter 2010

Special Points of Interests:

- Did you know that the state ATPE campus representative of the year came from Region VI? Congratulations, Debbie Folk of Willis ATPE!
- Did you know that as a member of ATPE you are a member of the largest independent educator organization in Texas? You are part of a family of about 118,000 members.

Region VI Secretary on Leader Development Committee



The brand new standing committee members of the ATPE Leadership Development Committee. Region VI Secretary, Cory Colby (back row center), served as one of the inaugural members of this innovative committee.

opportunity to serve on this inaugural meeting of the Leadership Development Committee. “This committee is really a bold visionary leap for ATPE in staying on the cutting edge.” The committee is charged with developing and recommending plans and programs for developing the leadership of ATPE for the next 30 years. Cory also said, “As all teachers know, successful mentoring is key to growing and keeping the leadership that organizations need to be competitive and successful.”

The committee concluded with several recommendations for the state board on the initial steps the state organization can make to start successful leadership programs this year.

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Region VI is blessed to have an abundance of highly skilled and naturally talented members and leaders. Getting these members and leaders actively involved in

continuing the vision of ATPE was the purpose behind the creation of this brand new standing committee.

Cory Colby had the

ATPE Members to “Show Some Love” during Lobby Days

Who is your state legislator? That is something every teacher should know off the top of their head. Why? Because your legislator has a powerful say on all of the regulations that govern your occupation. This is your chance to say

about the legislation that gets passed in the state capitol.

On Valentine’s Day (Feb. 14) ATPE members from across the state will go to Austin to meet with their legislators about important issues facing education

today. If you are considering going and would like more information contact your region or local officers.



Exclusive Q and A with State Vice President—Cheryl Buchanan



Cheryl Buchanan
2010-2011
ATPE, State VP

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

Cheryl Buchanan is a woman who can be described with many positive words. Some have called her a uniter and a peacemaker. Many have noted her positive and humorous perspective when it comes to teaching and to serving in leadership in ATPE. Here is some of what Cheryl had to say when we caught up with her and began looking forward into her next year in ATPE.

Q: How does it feel to know that this summer you will presumably take over as the figurehead of ATPE?

A: Humble. It is a position that I take very seriously and I know that I will be looked to for leadership. I will work hard to handle this position with grace, honesty, professionalism, and integrity while remaining down-to-earth.

Q: What changes lie ahead for ATPE?

A: We are setting some really high standards right now in our board meetings in regard to the ethical standards and expectations for our regions and locals that tie into the central tenets of ATPE. Other changes that ATPE is making include the fact that we are working to become a paperless office and organization. We have begun sending board minutes and agendas via officer flash drives. We have also begun installation of a brand new state-of-the-art database system.

Finally, we have also joined with TCEA - the association for computer educators - to combine our efforts and provide more technology opportunities, like webinars and webisodes to train members and leaders.

Q: Recently you were the state officer who facilitated the meeting of the brand new standing committee on Leadership Development for ATPE. How did the committee come into being and what do you hope to see come of the committee?

A: The committee was originally a collaborative idea of the board and Doug Rogers. The facts are that the average age of our members continues to increase. We had to find a way to identify, involve, and train new leadership for the organization. This committee is the first step. If we wanted to last another 30 years we had to step into the future. We have to find a way for new leaders to “buy in” to what we are about.

Q: Speaking of leaders, what do you see as characteristics of a leader?

A: Someone who is not afraid to take chances and make changes. They have tact, tolerance, and a willingness to work. Finally, they have faith; not just in their ability, but in being an instrument used by God.

Q: Any last comments?

A: Region 6 has become an integral part of the success of ATPE and has really shown what strong leadership and forward thinking members can accomplish in a region. Keep it up!

Sam Houston State University Local Unit Reactivated

At the end of the 2009-2010 school year the Huntsville unit and Region VI helped to bring a dream back to life. The Sam Houston State University unit came back to life and began recruiting future educators into ATPE.

All members of Region VI may share in the excitement

that many of the methods students and student teachers that will be coming to their campuses will already a member or will have heard of the Association of Texas Professional Educators. This will definitely aid the region in recruiting efforts, but it also guarantees that these

these new educators will step into the workplace with a connection to other individuals and confident that they have someone to turn to in their first years as a classroom educator.



SHSU local members and Dr. Frank Hoffman, join Region Pres., Judi Thomas and Huntsville Pres., Kathy Partin at a reception in Huntsville.

Continuing the Cause through Letters to the Editor

The mid-term elections have come and gone. The Republican Party rode a wave of economic turmoil and voter dissatisfaction to historic victories in the U.S. House and the Texas House.

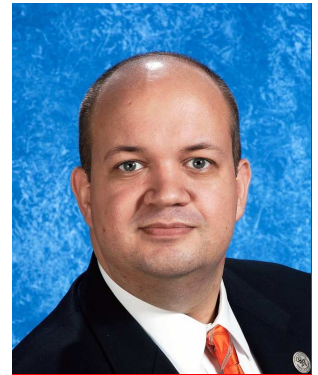
Whether your guy won or lost at the election box the cause of high quality education and the need for high-quality, educator-friendly legislation has not ended. These causes continue on

throughout every year and season.

With deficits looming and education being such a large portion of the state budget there will be many feeling pressure to cut education spending and raise ratios.

Legislators work in a world of public perception. A legislator is persistently running for re-election. This is a concerned citizens greatest tool; other than their vote.

As these legislators ready to head back into session and look at where to cut spending I encourage the members of Region VI to use one particular tool without relent; the Letters to the Editor. During this session I will be encouraging educators and others to join a letter writing campaign in the papers to make light of any proposed cuts in the education of the children within Region VI.



Cory Colby
2010-2011
Region Secretary

What's Ahead - A Look at the 82nd Texas Legislature

Guest Columnist

Brock Gregg, ATPE Governmental Relations Director

At the state level, Gov. Rick Perry defeated challenger Bill White to win a third full term. Perry will be working with a friendly state Legislature; Republicans hold a majority in the senate and greatly extended their majority in the House.

Heading into the election, there were 77 Republicans and 73 Democrats in the Texas House. Twenty-one incumbent House Democrats lost their bids for re-election and one did not seek re-election, meaning that in January, 99 Republicans and 51 Democrats will be in the Capitol for the 82nd legislative session.

This represents an enormous partisan change in the Texas House and means that one party is only one vote short of a 2/3rds supermajority needed to access the state's rainy day fund, or even to change the Texas constitution without input from the minority party. Considering the looming \$25 billion short-

fall in the state budget as well as an already broken school finance system, these elections could bring drastic changes to the public education system. The Select Committee on school finance has already outlined a four point proposal to

“Just because we have a budget shortfall does not mean we have to dismantle public education...”

change the school finance system and deal with education cuts by, **1.** Eliminating the current target revenue system created in 2006 and providing additional funds to the districts most harmed by that system **2.** Eliminating all state grant programs that are not part of the foundation school program formula funding, **3.** Reviewing all

mandates in the education code, (like class size limits, teacher certification, salary schedules) and providing local flexibility, **4.** Increasing the formula weights for poverty stricken students and LEP students. These impending cuts and a sea change in the philosophy of the legislature based on the elections mean that now more than ever before, ATPE members and leaders must forge lasting and meaningful relationships with their state legislators. Our voice must not be drowned out by the cry for balancing the budget with cuts and no new taxes. Just because we have a budget shortfall does not mean we have to dismantle public education and lose all of the gains we have made for students over the years. In addition, lack of money does not mean we have a lack of student and educators needs and it is our obligation as professionals to outline those needs and make education the priority in the 82nd legislature.

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



Brock Gregg
ATPE Governmental
Relations Director



Charles Lindsey
2010-2011
Region Vice
President

“Education is a better safeguard to liberty than a standing army.”
- Edward Everett



Region Vice President Updates on State Membership Committee

Vice-President Charles Lindsey attended the ATPE State Membership Committee meeting in Austin on October 16, 2010. The charge of the committee is to “promote growth by reviewing and providing input and recommendations on the development and implementation of recruitment programs and materials.” The meeting consisted of times in which the whole committee were involved in discussion, and times in which items were discussed in small groups. The committee reviewed competitor materials and re-

ported on any noteworthy items contained in their materials; we also reviewed the various materials that ATPE offers and the need for any new materials. Most agreed that the most useful items are the application packets, the comparison “holey” flier, \$100 Daily Draw, and the peer recruitment folder with the application. There is a need to get persons more involved with the ATPE website, or visit the website more frequently.

According to Lindsey, “the interesting challenge for the committee was address-

ing the differences that are found from one region to another or one local to another, while providing for effective membership recruitment throughout the state.” The diversity of the committee, made up of a member from each of the 20 regions, made the work that we did more enjoyable. The committee adjourned with recommendations that would help us to continue the fight against competing organizations, and tweaking the materials that are currently offered.

Focus On: Student Teachers; Developing the Next Generation of Classroom Leadership

Student teachers have become a standard presence in the modern education arenas. Many teachers refuse these young, wide-eyed, and optimistic new soon-to-be colleagues because of the perception of extra hours or work that is needed to raise up the next generation of teachers.

It can be agreed that there is extra time needed for the next generation of educators to be raised up in a way that allows them to be effective facilitators in the classroom. The problem of veteran teachers refusing to invest in the next

generation is that both sides lose. New teachers are blessed with the knowledge, experience, and expertise of our sage educators. Veteran teachers lose the opportunity to learn about the newest trends in education that will help them bridge the gap between them and their students.

One of the most valuable tools that any profession has is the process of the older generation taking and molding those that will take up the mantle of their profession.

Statistics show that modern

educators entering the field are staying for an average of three years. The overwhelming requirements of differentiating, documenting, and development is enough to drive out the best of people from the profession. We must embrace the new faces on our campuses or risk losing them and the children they would impact with their presence in the classrooms. It should be the purpose of each educator to not just be in the classroom for the children that enter there, but for all students who come on their campus - including student teachers.

High Morale - Goodbye, Blues. Dr. Monte Selby

Dear ATPE members,

In July, I offered a keynote presentation and several breakout sessions for your state conference. One of those sessions featured ideas and activities to impact morale at school. In most schools, this is the right time of year to revisit the topic, but I promise to keep it brief, practical, and lighthearted.

To affect morale, most people think of events. A staff party. Discovering a chocolate mint with a "you're worth a mint" note attached. Cash. As in, "you're as bright as this new penny!." Events are okay, and they can elevate morale - at least until the chocolate mint dissolves.

When I was a principal, sometimes on a dismal day (like when they predicted a major school-closing snow storm that missed town), we'd run to the store, grab some ice cream or sherbet, locate soda and cups, steal a library cart (dangerous), and run around after school making floats for the staff. That

would get us out of classrooms, into the hallway telling stories, and leave us a bit more energized and connected. FYI - when students ask for a float, tell them it's a perk they'll get when they become an educator.

More lasting than the morale "event", is the morale "process". Here's a powerful example that won't cost a dime. Start *every* meeting (IEPs included) for two weeks with five minutes of sharing successes (as in, no whining). If each staff member arrives with three examples of student, staff, parent, or community successes, it'll change morale at school. Keep it simple. A student who opens a door for a classmate is a success. Pay attention. The more people look for successes, the more they see. Suddenly, school looks a little brighter. Plus, it's nice coming to school knowing others are looking for opportunities to report on *your* successes.

For a real challenge, consider this. I'm from a family of

songwriters. You've heard our songs through radio, TV, commercials, websites, conferences, movies, etc. Sometimes we try to write as if we're watching the "action" take place. Pick a powerful song that describes your school at it's best - the most inspiring song you know. Now take video of students, staff, and parents at their best (classroom, hallway, lunchroom, ball games, concerts, dances, etc). A music video of great people illustrating the words to a great song is inspiring. It can change morale at school. Need a song? Email me!

Monte

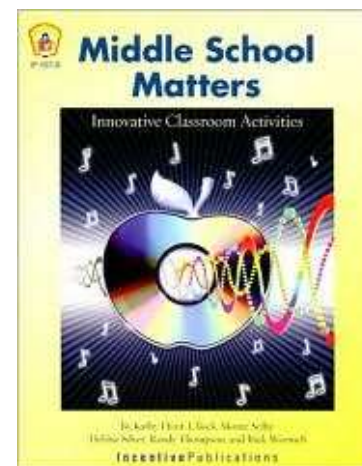
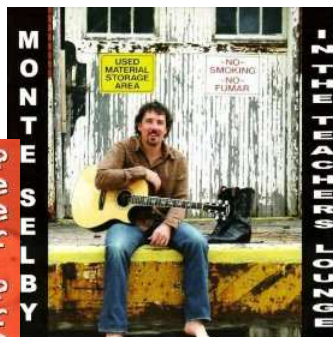
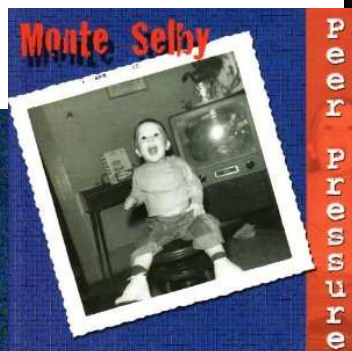
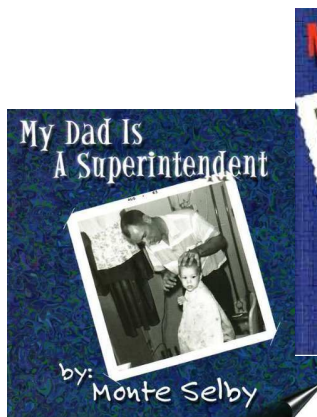
Dr. Monte Selby is an educator, author, and songwriter who works with students and staff in schools throughout North America. Web: www.monteselby.com
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Dr. Monte Selby

"The man who does not read good books has no advantage over the man who cannot read them."

- Mark Twain



Magnolia Member Wins Extreme Classroom Makeover

A huge congratulations goes out to Magnolia ATPE member, Leigh Darilek, who won one of the Extreme Classroom Makeover prizes from ATPE during the 2010-2011 membership enrollment. Leigh was a teacher trainee who joined during the

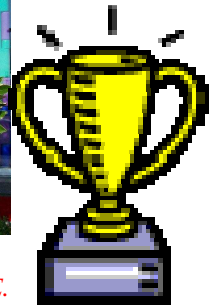
2009-2010 school year and joined this year as a first-time professional member.

ATPE offered numerous incentives during the enrollment period for the 2010 – 2011 school year, including the daily draw and the classroom makeover.

Congratulations Leigh!



An excited Darilek proudly displays her ECM check from ATPE.



“Too often we give children answers to memorize rather than problems to solve.”
- Roger Lewin

State Officers Attend Region VI Fall Meeting

On November 20th, Region 6 ATPE held their fall meeting at McKenzie’s Barbecue in Huntsville. The region officers and members were happy to welcome past state president Sam Spurlock and his wife along with State ATPE treasurer, Ginger Franks to the meeting.

Sam, from Olney ATPE, joked that his visit to the region served as part of his “farewell tour” as he leaves



Sam Spurlock

the leadership of the state organization. Sam noted he has been heavily involved in the state organization for the last decade.

Ginger Franks, of Nacogdoches ATPE, took the opportunity to greet the members of Region 6 and praise them for turning out to meet on a Saturday morning.

The presence of these state officers is a note about the growing influence and reputation of Region 6 within the statewide ATPE or-

regions with a membership between 500 and 1000 members. As a continued symbol of the region’s dedication to supporting the PAC the region collected 14 PAC contributions from the approximately 20 members of the region who were in attendance at the meeting.

Brenda Lynch updated the members on the current issues being discussed by the state board. Judi Thomas gave an update on the region and announced the **Spring region meeting will be April 9th around Conroe.**



Ginger Franks

Membership Maintenance Idea - Remembering Their Anniversary

While membership maintenance may not have all of the excitement that recruiting new members has it is as important, if not more important, than recruiting those new members in your local unit.

One way to keep members is to make sure that the member realizes that he or she is valued by the organization and that they are not just an insurance policy holder. He or she is an individual and a valuable part of our organization.

Providing a personal touch goes a long way in today’s impersonal technology-driven society.

Try this. Use your campus or local unit member list and look for members who have been members 1, 5, 10, 20, 25 or even 30 years. Take a moment to write them a “Happy Anniversary” card and leave it in their box. Let them know that ATPE appreciates every year of their membership and look forward to continuing our relationship.



Questions? Comments? Ideas?

Please send all correspondence to Cory Colby at cgcolby@yahoo.com or ccolby@willisisd.org.

Your stories and pictures are welcomed.