

# The Union Rag

*Newsletter of the Northern Essex Community College Professional Association-NECCPA  
distributed four times a year at unexpected intervals*

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*NECCPA Meeting in Bentley during 1998 "Work to Rule" action*

## **2004-05 NECCPA Officers** *elected at the April 26 meeting*

President- Peter Flynn,  
Vice President -Mark Palermo,  
Treasurer Pam Donahue,  
Secretary -Bill Heineman,  
Day Grievance Officer- Mike Nutter,  
Statewide Board - Gail Stuart,  
At Large Lawrence --Ellen Madigan,  
At Large Haverhill -Steve Proietti.

## **N.E.C.C.P.A. votes to join statewide "Work to Rule" job action**

At the April 26 general monthly meeting of NECCPA, 54 attendees unanimously supported a motion to move to a "Work to Rule" status in the fall 2004 semester should the contractually promised "points" remain unfunded at that time.

The statewide MCCC Board of Directors voted to ask local chapters to adopt a "Work to Rule" policy next September if the points due in April 2003 have not been paid by that time. This means that Association members should not complete work above and beyond what the contract requires. It may involve adjourning meetings, for instance, when they begin next fall. The goal is to attract attention, get management involved in this issue, and to exert leverage on our legislators.

The "points" translate to as little as \$700 per annum for most faculty. Some faculty would benefit from points adjustments based on changes in degrees, licenses, or reclassification based on appeals decisions. The amounts are so modest that local payouts are often suggested to ameliorate the losses. On many campuses this would mean about \$30,000 added to the budget.

The non-unit administration was recently awarded a 3% raise by college trustees, an percentage amount higher than most state employees have received in recent years.



*Professor Dee Risley and daughters Kate age 8 and Tanya, age 6*

nearing exhaustion, they are notified by personnel that they will not be paid after a date certain.

Ms. Risley had questioned whether, as an adoptive parent, she could draw sick pay during the time she would need to be absent from the workplace to pick up her new daughter.

The Massachusetts Maternity Act of 2000 states that leave for giving birth and adoption should be treated equally under the law. It ensures eight weeks of unpaid leave for each. That law suggests that *all* benefits that biological birth mothers receive should be extended to adoptive parents. It is less clear that the intent is that an adoptive parent would be entitled to use sick pay only should she, or perhaps a family member, develop a medical condition simultaneous to the adoption process.

According to the written legal opinion provided in this matter by Massachusetts Teachers' Association attorney Brian A. Riley "Unlike adoption, pregnancy is viewed as a disability under the law."

Fortunately the bureaucratic entanglements Dee encountered during adoption procedures were minimal and her absence totaled only about three weeks. Due to the way missed "duty days" are calculated against wages, Risley was docked for five weeks, something she's not thrilled about.

Despite a month of lost wages, Dee and her family are elated with Tanya, and the closing phases of the process went quite smoothly. We hope they all live happily-ever-after!

### **Rights of unit members who adopt**

Dee Risley, a tenured professor and coordinator of the Deafness Studies program adopted a 6 year old girl named Tanya from Kazakhstan in February, 2004. The arrangements for the trip vis-à-vis a unit member's contractual entitlements regarding benefits and sick pay prompted some study. The findings are notable, particularly for anyone who might plan to adopt in the future.

The adoption meant planning a trip of indeterminate length to that eastern European country because of the vicissitudes of the adoption process in a foreign country.

As a consummate professional, Ms. Risley arranged coverage for her classes and obligations for a period where she would be required to

absent herself from the job to travel and negotiate bureaucratic procedures surrounding the adoption.

The existing contract allowed Ms Risley to negotiate a leave up to twelve weeks during the semester, and to retain insurance and other benefits for that period.

Generally women taking maternity leave draw on accrued sick pay for the extent of the leave for about three months. Seldom are they required to submit a doctor's note before leave begins, or within that timeframe. The contractually stipulated practice is for them to announce (within three months before leaving) to their immediate supervisor that they intend to take Maternity Leave. Locally the practice apparently has been that the petitioner also stipulate in the letter that she be allowed to draw accumulated sick days. Then, when their sick days are

## NECCPA Scholarship 2004

Sarah Anderson is the recipient of the 2004 Northern Essex Community College Professional Association (NECCPA) Scholarship. Anderson, a 27 year old mother of two from Haverhill, was selected from a group of impressively credentialed candidates for the annual prize which is accompanied by a monetary award of \$500.

Anderson plans to continue at NECC in fall, 2004 in the registered nursing program. Her stated ambition is to work as a pediatric nurse with H.I.V./AIDS children. She previously served as an AIDS educator in 1994-95 in a program sponsored by the North Prospect Church, Cambridge MA.

Besides presenting an outstanding academic transcript, Anderson is a member of the NECC student leadership program. Last spring she received the John Spurr award.

She participated in an American Civil Liberties youth program called Project Hip-Hop in 1995 where she toured landmarks of the civil rights movement for two months on a bus with students from an array of backgrounds. Currently she is active with the Boy Scouts.

Other candidates for the award were David Willis, Erin Warner, Regina Weeks, Allan Malloy, Andrea Rossetto, Rebecca Cherney, and Tamara Perez. All of the candidates submitted very impressive packages. The contest required a short essay on "How NECC benefited me", a recommendation from a faculty person, a sample of graded writing from a course, and an academic transcript demonstrating the student would graduate in the 2003-2004 academic year.

The competition was judged by professors Mike Finegold, Barbara Stachnevicz, and Gerry Morin.



*Sarah Anderson, 2004 NECCPA Scholarship winner*

### NECCPA Scholarship bake sale

The enticing aroma of hot buttered popcorn enticed gastronomes young and older to the NECC Professional Association bake sale in the lobby of Spurr Hall on Friday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Association held the event to benefit the NECCPA Scholarship Fund and raised a record-breaking bake sale proceeds of \$269.52 for the account.

The financial success was attributable to the innovative "guilt

driven price structuring" and the generosity of the college community. No items were sold at a fixed price. When customers approached the tables and asked the price, they were instructed to negotiate with their personal conscience as to the amount that seemed best for their ability-to-pay, and the importance of the scholarship fund in their perception. While a couple of students took a cookie and walked away, most dug deep into their pockets and emptied them of change.

Few unit members did not respond favorably to a request to bake or provide for the affair. Renowned baker Sandy Devellis provided her famous butter scotch windowpane cookies. Frank Leary provided his brownies and signature Irish soda bread. Linda Desjardin baked a plate of chocolate-nut chip cookies in an Easy Bake oven. Gail Stuart, Louise Bevilaqua, Carol Barron, Rick Lizzotte, Pat Taglianetti, , Cathy Pirri, among others, contributed baked goods.

Peggy Fallon baked and staffed the tables, as did Gail Stuart, Frank Leary, and Joe LeBlanc. Thanks to all who participated for a memorable event, and generous building of the



Bake sellers Peggy Fallon, Peter Flynn and Marilyn McCarthy scholarship fund.



## NECCPA Spring Gala

The annual NECCPA Spring Gala will be held at the Dalton Club on State Street in Newburyport once again this year. The party will follow the NECC graduations ceremonies on May 22, from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Fall 2003 retirees will be honored.

Music by the semi-acoustic Eclipse trio, composed of Joe Rizzo, Al Foucault and Chriline "CZ." will set the mood for the cocktail hour. Sample the sounds of the band at <http://www.eclipserock.com>.

After dinner Frank Leary will emcee the awards ceremony. A plaque and award check will be presented to this year's NECCPA scholarship winner.

The event is a potluck dinner. Contributions will be accepted from those indisposed to cooking. A roast beef will be available this year for the Atkin's and South Beach crowd, along with ample greenery for the vegetarian and ovo-lactarian folk.

This event grows in popularity every year.

Don't miss it this year!

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### ***Quote of the Month:***

"We see things not as they are,  
but as we are.."

Anais Nin

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**Union Rag Editor:** Peter Flynn,  
[flynnpeter@comcast.net](mailto:flynnpeter@comcast.net), 978-  
462-0601, [pflynn@necc.mass.edu](mailto:pflynn@necc.mass.edu),

*Retired NECC Faculty person Frank Leary held a political meeting in Georgetown at the Pentucket Workshop. He's pictured here with freshman Representative Barbara A. L'Italien (D, Eighteenth Essex.). L'Italien is in a hotly contested race to hold onto her seat.*