

*From the desk of GEA President,
Penney Tyree*

As many of you know, each July the National Education Association (NEA) holds its annual Representative Assembly (RA). This year, the Utah delegation joined more than 9,000 elected educators from around the nation, who met together to take care of the extended business of the NEA.

One of our Granite members, Holly Slade, a sixth grade teacher at Hillsdale Elementary, addressed the delegation because of a new business item was submitted to the NEA RA delegates by an educator from California. Holly felt that the new business item should include additional language. The new business item now states that “NEA will publish in existing communication channels a piece on awareness of education employees’ rights **including options for administrative actions** [editor responsible for bolding] in regard to students who exhibit violent behaviors.” Holly felt that administrators have the obligation to support educators who deal with violent students in the school setting. Holly spoke with the maker of the business item, and he agreed to include Holly’s amendment.

Holly received support from all members of the Utah delegation and also from the national delegation. Her action is an indication of how one person can have a voice for 3.2 million educators.

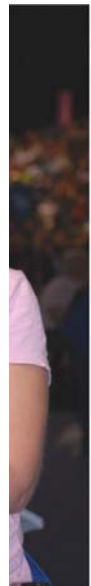
Often, Association members feel that the NEA (by the way, “WE ARE THE NEA”) independently makes decisions for its members. The democratic process and the chance to be heard truly does occur at the NEA Assembly.

Every delegate from GEA took the opportunity to be heard by the entire NEA delegation. Some were involved in “manning the mike” in order to allow others to speak; and other GEA delegates

(like Holly) had opportunities to speak directly to the entire delegation.

We must be very proud of how our delegation represented you. The NEA RA experience showed that any member can, as with Holly’s experience, be heard and can make a difference.

So, when GEA members feel that they don’t have a voice, think of the opportunities that our own GEA delegates had. They represented you well. In the spring, when elections are held, you may want to consider running for an elected position. You can also have the experience that the GEA delegates had. You can be heard; even at the national level.



First-time RA attendee, Holly Slade, addresses NEA national delegates.*



***GEA thanks UEA Board Member, Sue Dickey, for permission to print this photograph.**

GEA AND DISTRICT REACH AGREEMENT AIMED AT HELPING THOSE WHO CHOOSE TO RETIRE MIDYEAR

Upcoming changes to the way in which educators purchase years toward retirement have prompted GEA and Granite School District to come to an agreement what will positively affect those who choose to buy years in order to retire at mid-year.

The following is a memo from Mike Fraser, Director of Human Resources, dated September 8, and sent to all employees. GEA is publishing the memo to ensure that all members are aware of its contents.

“Please be advised that due to recent legislation passed during the 2010 Utah Legislative Session, the cost to purchase years of service with Utah Retirement System has increased dramatically. This legislation will become effective January 1, 2011.

For example: A teacher who desired to purchase 2 [sic] years of service would pay approximately \$30,415.00. Due to the new legislation, after December 31, 2010 those same 2 [sic] years would cost approximately \$44,113.00.

Due to this dramatic increase, Granite School District is providing a one time only [sic] “window of opportunity” for those employees who plan on retiring at this school year’s semester as outlined in Administrative Memorandum 56 (teacher), 71 (secretary), 78 (classified), and 74 (administrative/Middle Management). **Those employees who have the desire to retire at that time will need to complete their last day worked no later than December 15, 2010 to be eligible to purchase years of service under the old Utah Retirement System’s guidelines.** [Editor responsible for bolding.] Please refer to the Utah Retirement Systems website [at] www.urs.org for detailed information.

The notification deadlines for teachers and administrators/middle managers are still in effect for a 2010 school year semester termination [**October 1, 2010 is the deadline**], however, the “window of opportunity” will allow the employee to complete their last day worked no later than

December 15, 2010. **This opportunity is for this year only.**

This agreement is just one of a myriad of things that GEA does to serve members all year long. MEMBERSHIP IN THE ASSOCIATION DOES PAY!

COME CELEBRATE A NEW YEAR WITH FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES

The Granite Education Association, in collaboration with the Canyons and Jordan Education Associations and our classified colleagues, invites all members and their families to an evening of fun and food during our annual Member Appreciation BBQ.

The event will be held on Monday, September 20 at Wheeler Farm, 6351 South 900 East, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. All members and their families are welcome to come enjoy a cookout, time to visit with old friends, and an opportunity to meet candidates who will be running for office in the various precincts represented in the three districts.

Look for an invitation posted on the GEA website at www.gea-ut.org or on your school’s bulletin board.

GEA looks forward to thanking its members for their loyalty to the Association.

IMPORTANT INSURANCE REMINDER

GEA reminds its members that ALL employees who wish to participate in Granite School District insurance that they must re-enroll for that insurance during open enrollment in October. **This includes newly-hired educators who may have just signed up during July and August—you MUST enroll again during this time period.**

Open enrollment runs from October 1 through October 22. Insurance fairs will be held at Cottonwood High on October 7; Taylorsville High on October 13; and Hunter High on October 19.

DON’T MISS YOUR DEADLINE!