On February 3, 2007, a brisk Saturday morning, 45 student participants arrived at Annapolis High School hoping to show their superior knowledge about historical persons and events, of various diverse racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. The coveted awards in each category, elementary and middle school, were $1,000, $500 and $300 U.S. Savings Bonds, for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place finishes, respectively. Although all the participants were winners for their dedication to studying and learning about diverse cultural history, six participants prevailed in the competition. We are pleased to announce the following winners of this year’s Bee:

### Elementary

1st Place: Nicholas Hubscher, South Shore ES  
2nd Place: Josiah Evangelista, Glendale ES  
3rd Place: Shannon Thomas, Quarterfield ES

### Middle

1st Place: Alexis Cash, Brooklyn Park MS  
2nd Place: Tatiyana Canady, Brooklyn Park MS  
3rd Place: Kevin Fleming, Brooklyn Park MS

Congratulations to all and we hope to see more participants at next year’s event!

“Knowledge is power and enthusiasm pulls the switch.”

-Steve Droke
Annapolis High School - What's Happening???

The year took a strange twist on January 24th when the Superintendent announced that he was "zero basing" Annapolis High School.

The first question most people ask is, "Why? Wasn't there another way to proceed?"

The facts in this case are quite simple. During each of the past four years at least one student has "failed" in one of the following four sub groups: African Americans, Free and Reduced Lunch, ESOL, Special Education. Notice that I said "two or fewer students failed in one sub group."

Under No Child left Behind that is enough to push a school into corrective action.

What happens then? The Superintendent has various options - up to and including "Zero Basing." Some states set their sub groups at between 50 and 200 students. Maryland has chosen to set is groups at FIVE.

What then is "Zero Basing?" Well it means that everyone in the school, and I do mean everyone, must reapply for their job.

Well is this a good way to go? I have no idea. TAAAC was not consulted.

As part of our effort to help those who want to stay as well as those who want to interview for other positions, TAAAC designed and paid for the Community College to provide training sessions on How to Create a Resume and Interviewing Skills. (6613)

We will continue to work with the AHS staff until all of our members are fairly dealt with.

For those of you following the Letters to the Editors and columns by various columnists, you know that public opinion is running about 99% in favor of the staff at AHS.

What's next? We are encouraging all staff to examine their feelings and make a decision as to whether they will in fact "be happy" at the "new" 12-month AHS. For those who don't want that life style, we have proposed several courses of action and will work with members to help them with the transition.

RUMORS - We are addressing rumors directly with members throughout the county. As you all know - in the absence of information rumors rule. Unfortunately we are in an information drought.

The TAAAC leadership team will work with our members until this matter is settled.
A school’s Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) can be a valuable and influential forum to resolve school specific issues and to develop procedures for the effective operation of the school. The Negotiated Agreement states that the purpose is to “give teachers an opportunity to advise the principal in the development of procedures for the operation of that school.” The FAC is your chance to give direct input into issues at your school, whether it is a health and safety issue, a scheduling inequity or disciplinary issues the FAC gives you the ability to provide input and help develop solutions to such problematic situations. It gives you the opportunity to raise pertinent issues and to have open and honest discussions regarding how to overcome such obstacles. Whether you are on the FAC or not you should take advantage of this medium to work collectively with your colleagues to address the issues of mutual concern at your school. (2547)

The size of the FAC is determined by the principal. The TAAAC Association Representative shall be a voting member of the Council by virtue of their position as TAAAC Rep. A majority of the members shall be elected by all teachers in a secret ballot election conducted by the Association Representative(s) in June. The remainder of the Council shall be appointed by the principal. All members shall serve from July 1 to June 30 of the following year. The principal can attend the meetings of the FAC but he/she does not have authority to vote. TAAAC can also attend the FAC meetings if they are invited. Meetings may be called by either the principal or the chairperson. Rules for the conduct of the meetings shall be established by the FAC members. It is your right to have a FAC as per your Negotiated Agreement so if your school does not have a FAC call TAAAC to help you get started. If you do have a FAC, you should use it to raise concerns as it is a valuable forum to help resolve the needs in your school. (7824)

Mills-King Award Ceremony

The Mills-King Award Ceremony took place on Thursday, February 22, 2007 at Mills-Parole Elementary School. This annual event highlighted the accomplishments of nominees for their contribution to excellence in human relations in education.

The nominees for this year’s Mills-King Award were: Lisa Blandford, Ruthie Bushnell, Patricia Clark, Melissa Davis, Tami Galloway, Arleathea Hackett, Victoria Hourican, Ramon Jarvis, Melissa Jessie, Beth Martin, Charlotte Newton, Carley Offer, Charlene Smith, and Mintie Turner. The evening culminated with the announcement of the winner, Arleathea Hackett, a fifth-grade teacher at Fort Smallwood Elementary School.

The keynote speaker for the event was Janice Hayes-Williams, Capital newspaper columnist and historian, and musical selections were provided by Nicholas Barnett and the Mills-Parole Student Chorus, directed by Melissa Oliver.
A Two-Headed Bureaucracy?

It is a difficult thing to understand when an organization, run by educated professionals, addresses two nearly identical situations in directly contradictory ways. It would be especially difficult to understand if it turns out that the same decision-maker acted in both matters.

Let’s look first at the sad situation being foisted upon educators at Annapolis High School. Characterized as a staff by their employer to be either incompetent or uncaring, many will be leaving the school, some voluntarily, some not, created vacancies that will by some magic be filled by educators that someone for some reason deems to be more competent or more caring. To encourage applications to the school, the administration would like to provide some incentives. (3080)

One common incentive is money, and one of the ways to put money into educators’ pockets, and accrue some benefit from doing so, is to put them on a 12-month work year. The logic is intact. In this matter, however, to its credit, the administration immediately recognized that the 20% increase in the work year can only lawfully occur through negotiations. The collective bargaining agreement, with only narrow and explicitly-defined exceptions, prescribes a 191-day work year for all classroom teachers. TAAAC, at the time of this writing, is considering a request to re-open the contract it received on February 23.

Let’s look now at the Infants and Toddlers Program. During the same month in which the Annapolis High School reconstitution was being considered and the mandate under law to negotiate modifications to agreed upon terms and conditions of employment was being acknowledged, the same administration unilaterally extended the work year from 10 to 12 months for ITP teachers, and asked those who did not want the 12-month work year to leave the school. TAAAC has initiated the appropriate corrective action.

Please understand this fully: Both of these actions happened in the same month, in same year, concerning the same 20% extension of the work year, under the same collective bargaining agreement, and to teachers in the same bargaining unit. TAAAC will respond appropriately in both of these situations and do what it believes to be in the best interest of its members. But while it does so, we who do this work daily have to wonder how and why such similar facts and circumstances led to diametrically opposing decisions. Or is it simply that heads came up once and tails the other?

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Upcoming Events

March 12 – Government Relations Committee, 5:30 PM, MSTA*
March 14 – TAAAC Board of Directors, 4:30 PM, TAAAC
March 19 – Government Relations Committee, 5:30 PM, MSTA*
March 20 – Finance Committee, 4:30 PM, TAAAC
March 20 – Nominating Committee, 4:30 PM, TAAAC
Deadline for TAAAC Ballots, 5:30 PM
March 26 – Government Relations Committee, 5:30 PM, MSTA*
March 27 – Finance Committee, 4:30 PM, TAAAC
March 28 – High School Concerns, 3:30 PM, TAAAC

(*Legislative briefing at MSTA then visits with available legislators)
Teachers Speak Out Regarding Aflac Insurance Claims

For the past couple of years, representatives have been coming into Anne Arundel County schools and offering teachers and support staff supplemental health and disability insurance through Aflac. Have you ever wondered if any teachers got paid on any of their claims?

Here’s what a few teachers have said:

*Kim Rushing, who had problems as soon as the first trimester of her pregnancy, had this to say in thanks to her Aflac Representative, Julia Rivas... “You and Aflac were both very instrumental in keeping my anxiety at bay. It was a difficult time and the turnaround with calls and the check were both efficient and timely. I am very grateful that you came in 2005 and informed our school about Aflac. It was as if God were answering my prayers. I am now given the opportunity to take time off, get paid and spend time with my baby.”* (7228)

Aflac’s Disability Income Protection pays not only for sickness and accidents, but also for childbirth and complications. It could be due to stress, or the fact that teachers are on their feet most of the day, or any number of factors; but teachers have a higher rate of pregnancy complications than the general population.

*Andrette Duncan had to take leave on Aflac’s Short Term Disability... she spent more time trying to get the right person at AACPS to sign off on her employer verification part of the claim form than she did with the claim. She faxed all the information in on Tuesday, February 13, Aflac approved the claim on Valentine’s Day and her check was mailed on Thursday, February 15. She is really very happy with the fast service as some major hospital bills needed to be dealt with.*

The reason Aflac has grown into one of the largest insurance carriers in the world is not because of the Duck! It is due to word of mouth among people who have Aflac policies. They have one of the shortest turn-around times in the industry when it comes to processing claims.

*Karen Patterson has made claims under the Aflac Accident Policy for her two daughters’ sports related injuries... “I was pleased with the Personal Accident Indemnity Plan. They covered everything they said they would cover in the brochure. Diane Williams, my Aflac Associate, made it easier to file my claims. Aflac definitely pays in a timely fashion. I would recommend the Accident Plan, along with the others to anyone, especially those with family members who are involved in sports. This policy took the edge off as far as financial worries for deductibles and unexpected bills that I had no idea wouldn’t be covered by my health plan!”*

Like many teachers, you may have off-handedly dismissed the idea of supplemental health coverage because you feel you don’t need it. The truth is *everyone* needs extra coverage to guard against financial disaster in the event of a catastrophic illness or accident. Your present health plan most likely won’t pay for everything if you or a family member is ill, or recovering from an accident over an extended period of time. How will you continue to pay your bills after your sick bank runs out? Most people are only a few paychecks away from bankruptcy. Are you really prepared?

*To find out more about what is offered, contact Suzanne Herrmann, Employee Plans Services, 301-585-4990. A representative can come to your school at your convenience to meet with you. We cover pregnancy, illness, injuries or surgery, and hospital stays – even during the summer months, and provide for family coverage through most policies.*
NOMINATIONS OPEN

The Nominating Committee is accepting nominations for the Sick Leave Bank Approval Committee and the AACPS Calendar Committee (Secondary). Nominations will be accepted until the May 2, 2007 Association Representative Council Meeting.

Name__________________________________________
Home Address____________________________________
School___________________________________________
Phone (H)_____________________ (S)__________________

I would like to place my name in nomination for the following position(s):

☐ Sick Leave Bank Approval Committee

☐ AACPS Calendar Committee (Secondary)

Have you spotted the last 4 digits of your phone number?
Call the TAAAC office to claim your prize!

NOMINATIONS OPEN

The Nominating Committee is accepting nominations for the Credentials and Nominating Committees. Nominations will be accepted until the April 4, 2007 Association Representative Council Meeting.

Name__________________________________________
Home Address____________________________________
School___________________________________________
Phone (H)_____________________ (S)__________________

I would like to place my name in nomination for the following position(s):

☐ Credentials

☐ Nominating

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Andrea J. Barker
Robert P. Carter
Carolee Courter
Jill P. Delviscio
Lorien B. Evans
Matthew W. Kostecka
Kristin Krycia
Robert L. Mauro
Mary M. McCormick
Louise O’Neil
Jennifer A. Welsh

TAX PREPARATION

R. J. Pellicoro & Associates is now accepting appointments for tax preparation at the TAAAC office on the following dates:

Thursday, March 8
3 PM – 7 PM

Monday, March 12
3 PM – 7 PM

Please call the TAAAC office to schedule an appointment.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Anchor Aquatics Inc. is now training and hiring LIFEGUARDS for 2007. For more information, please call 410-956-0744 or visit www.anchoraquatics.com

Spend Summer in the Sun
DRD Pool Service Inc. is accepting applications for summer job openings as swimming pool field supervisors and swimming pool managers. No Experience Necessary – Free Training. For more information, call Noelle Navarro at 410-923-7665, 1-888-785-7665 or email to: n_navarro@drdpools.com