



# NEESPA News

North East Educational Support Personnel Association  
Est. 1960



February 2005

Volume 3 Issue 3

San Antonio, Texas

<http://www.neisd.net/neespa/index.html>  
8961 Tesoro Drive  
San Antonio, Texas 78217

## Paraprofessional Recognition

Editor: Peggy Turner,  
Special Programs



L-R: Yvonne Schwartz, Ruby Jurecki, Virgella Miler, Lois McAlister, Carmen Peters, Millie Harvey, Betty Boyden, Ana Bess Johnson, Nora Ybarbo  
NEESA (North East Educational Secretaries Association) 1970's  
Bosse's Nite Entertainment

### In This Issue:

Paraprofessional Reception	1
Message from Editor	2
2005-2006 Nominations	2
Ashlee Rose, NESA Student	3
NEESPA Helps Employee	3
TESA Conference	4
Angel Tree	5
Yard Sale	5
Association News	6
Membership	7

*"Our Golden Anniversary as an Independent School District has caused us to reflect on our history, to celebrate our successes and to contemplate our future. We owe a great debt of gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the success of the school district. There are many district groups that have contributed in a remarkable way to our success. None more than our paraprofessional staff. They are the frontline of our award winning school district. They meet and greet the public, they churn out the work, and they conduct themselves in a way that always reflects positively on the people they work with and the school district. We will honor a special group of retired and senior members of the North East Staff who have made a significant contribution to the success of the district. We honor them not only for their individual contributions, but for the way they have always contributed to the overall success of the district. It is with a great deal of thanks that we honor and recognize those individuals that have given so much to this district."*

-Twain O. Tharp, 50th Anniversary Committee Chairman



On February 16, 2005, fifty seven deserving paraprofessionals were recognized and awarded a *Distinguished Service Medal* for their contributions to the district. This Anniversary event was open to all paraprofessionals and administrators in the district and was held at Piper Bass Student Center. NEESPA Board Members served as the official hosts of the celebration and the event was a huge success. Thanks to all who participated and gave of their time to assist.

Affiliated with Texas Educational Support Staff Association  
And  
National Association of Educational Office Professionals

## Message from the Editor

-Peggy Turner, Special Programs

*“A group of secretaries began meeting on a monthly basis under the direction of Superintendent Virgil T. Blossom during the 1950’s. With several members of the group joining the Texas Educational Secretaries Association, they expanded and organized themselves into the North East Educational Secretaries Association (NEESA) and elected their first president in February 1960. The bylaws of the association were later amended in 1990 to include all categories of support staff personnel, changing the name of the organization to North East Educational Support Personnel Association (NEESPA).”*

*-Excerpt from article in 50th Anniversary Newspaper  
“History of NEESPA”*

While it is important to recognize and honor those that have contributed so much to our profession, it is equally important to remember our humble beginnings. We owe a great debt of gratitude to those early pioneers as they have helped to pave the way for the rest of us. Their grace and professionalism has helped to set the standard for the way we conduct ourselves and the manner in which we do so each day.

The 50th Anniversary Committee chose our group to recognize, and a ceremony was held in our honor. We should all be proud and excited to participate as history is being made everyday and all around us. The events that happen today are being archived and preserved for those to discover and marvel for the next 50 year milestone. We need to play a role in that history. As NEESPA continues to grow, we always encourage new membership. Our door is always open and we have a lot to offer. History is being made and we fully intend to be part of it.

Our elections are underway for the next slate of officers, so please consider voting. We want to be the next group of pioneers for those that will eventually follow in our footsteps.

## 2005-2006 Officer Nominations

- President - Elect: Terri Villalobos, Nimitz Middle School  
Irma Acosta, Health Services
- 1st V.P.: Michelle Ruiz, NE Police Dept.  
Peggy Turner, Special Programs
- 2nd V.P.: Andrea Terrazas, Procurement & e-Commerce  
Yolanda Guidry, School Improvement
- 3rd V.P.: Sheryl Silvas, Risk Management  
Sarah Rodriguez, Food Service
- Corresponding Secretary: Esther Cisneros, Administrative Staff Development  
Yolanda Gutierrez, Special Education  
Irene Lujan, Food Service
- Recording Secretary: Carmen Flores, Maintenance  
Angie Huerta, Health Services
- Treasurer: Danielle Hernandez, Curriculum Compliance
- Parliamentarian: Maria Garcia, Nimitz Middle School  
Juneanne Holder, Risk Management



NEESPA President, Juneanne Holder poses with Distinguished Service Award Recipients at the February 16 recognition reception



Left to Right, Danielle Hernandez, Esther Cisneros, Juneanne Holder

## Ashlee Rose



Ashlee Rose poses with Juneanne Holder, NEESPA President

What a night to come together as a group to celebrate the holiday season. Our Annual Christmas Social was held at Alamo Café on Wednesday, December 8, 2004. On this special evening, our group was treated to a wonderful surprise, up and coming music star Ashlee Rose. Ashlee is an amazing fifteen year old student who attends the North East School of the Arts. She began performing at the tender age of eight and began writing her own songs at the age of twelve.

Ashlee has been nominated for the “Female of the Year & Rising Star Award” of 2003 through the “My Texas Music” and named one of “American Top Ten Rock Bands” by *Seventeen* magazine in September 2003. Ashlee’s most recent accomplishment is winning the “2004 Horizon Artist of the Year” at the Just for Plain Folks Music Awards in Santa Ana, California. Over 1,000 albums and 140,000 songs from 85 countries around the world competed for this award.

Ashlee has the voice and style similar to Sheryl Crow and she not only graced our group with style, poise, and professionalism, but her beautiful music was heard throughout the restaurant for customers and staff to enjoy as well.

Along with good friends, great food, and the spirit of giving, everyone in attendance had a joyous time. What a fantastic way to start the holiday season!

*Source: Irene Lujan, 2nd Vice President*

## NEESPA Helps Employee



Pictured are Carmen Flores, NEESPA Member, Pete and Vilma Gonzalez

On the morning of October 27, 2004, the home of Pete Gonzalez burned down in a devastating fire. Pete is the Head Custodian at Oak Meadow. He shared his home with his wife and mother who is battling cancer and undergoing treatment. Carmen Flores, a member of NEESPA, came to the Executive Board asking if there was anything NEESPA could do to help the Gonzalez family. Every year, NEESPA donates allotted funds toward a service project, so we decided this year we would help one of our own NEISD families in their time of need. A check in the amount of \$50.00 was presented to Pete and Vilma Gonzalez. They were so grateful for our gift and said they would put it to good use as they rebuild their lives.

*Source: Carmen Flores, NEESPA Member*

## 55th Annual TESA Fall Work Conference

This year, the theme for TESA's Annual Fall Work Conference was *Awakening TESA Stars*. The annual event was held November 19-21, 2004 at the Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center in Grapevine, Texas. Eleven members of NEESPA attended and they include Irene Lujan, Maria Garcia, Danielle Hernandez, Irma Acosta, Andrea Terrazas, Terri Villalobos, Juneanne Holder, Linda Kallies, Olga Rubio, Sheryl Silvas, and Annette Knaus. With funds available this year, NEESPA rented a fifteen passenger van so more members were able to attend the conference without worrying about transportation. Irma Acosta was the driver and Sheryl Silvas her copilot, and together they got the group up and back safely.

As always, the conference had excellent STEM and breakout sessions ranging from elementary round tables, "Be A Star-Unleash Your Full Potential", to making inexpensive snowmen families out of socks and stuffing. Even after all of the professional development sessions that were offered, exhibitors were on sight to delight us for our shopping pleasure.



On Friday evening during the "Shining Stars" reception, the CEOP graduation was held and Irene Lujan proudly walked the stage to receive her diploma for completing her STEM courses. She now has her certificate as a Certified Educational Office Professional (CEOP) and plans to pursue her Professional Standards Program (PSP) certificate. Good job Irene!

Also, during the conference, there were inspirational keynote speakers and wonderful meals at the "Leading Stars" (President's) breakfast, "Shooting Stars" banquet, and "Star Bright" brunch. After the "Shooting Stars" banquet Saturday night, everyone was able to enjoy an evening of Casino Night and see another side of some of their friends performing karaoke.

It seems as each conference comes and goes, they get better. Where else can you go to learn new things, network, fellowship, and make new friends along the way that will last a lifetime? Mark your calendar, TESA's Summer Work Conference will be held June 22-24, 2005 in Austin. Additional information will be forthcoming.

*Source: Juneanne Holder, President*



**Together We Can Make a Difference**



## Angel Tree

T'was the week before Christmas as Santa and his helpers packed up their sleighs for an amazing adventure that was sure to bring joy and goodwill.

On a chilly Saturday morning, December 18, 2004, Santa Claus and his helpers—Stacie Kinsey, Esther Cisneros, Kirt and Juneanne Holder met in the parking lot of the NEEC building excited about delivering all of the gifts that were so graciously donated by staff members of NEISD.



Santa poses with one of the adopted families

This year, NEESPA adopted three families from Walzem Elementary. All combined, there were fourteen children. As Santa and his helpers arrived at each home, we came upon such warmth, gratitude, happiness, and tears of joy. There are not enough words to describe the emotions each family shared. NEESPA's Angel Tree Project provided three families with more than they could ever imagine and they were all so grateful. This will be a Christmas they will never forget.

On behalf of NEESPA, we want to thank everyone in the district who helped make this wonderful journey a success. We could not have put the smiles on each child's face without your care and support.

Source: Esther Cisneros, 3rd Vice President

## NEESPA Yard Sale



At the January Board Meeting, it was decided that NEESPA will hold a Spring Yard Sale on Saturday, April 9, 2005 at Nimitz Academy. All proceeds from this fundraiser will go toward the general fund.

We need your help once again in collecting gently used items such as clothing, books, jewelry, kitchen items, pictures, and toys. As you clean your closets this Spring, please consider donating items for the yard sale.

Please contact one of the NEESPA members listed if you need additional information. If you cannot deliver items, NEESPA members will make arrangements to pick up your generous donations. Donations will also be accepted at Nimitz.

Deadline for donations is **April 6, 2005**.

Source: Juneanne Holder, NEESPA President

## Yard Sale Contacts

- Sara Rodriguez, Food Service  
657-8820
- Peggy Turner, Special Programs—804-7130
- Yolanda Gutierrez, Special Ed.—804-7201 x 384
- Cloma Harvey, Finance & Acct.—804-7111 x 399
- Olga Rubio, Nimitz Academy  
442-0462 x 232
- Esther Cisneros, Staff Development—804-7192
- Juneanne Holder, Risk Management—804-7238 x 243



## Association News



### Legislative Report

#### Take Away – Add Back

A program had started that put the state health stipends for school employees into medical accounts that would include an annual management fee. The fee would deduct as much as \$42 from the \$500 stipend educators could use for medical expenses. Previously, the stipend had gone directly to employees. Governor Perry asked the Legislature to pay \$18 million to cover the cost of the administrative health care fees, but when the Legislative Budget Board met, it did not discuss the proposed transfer. Educators have been angered and upset since lawmakers cut their stipends from \$1,000 to \$500 last year. The governor's office has stated that lawmakers did not anticipate the fee would be so high. Later, the \$42 administrative fee was eliminated and the \$500 payment to be made directly to educators. Lt. Governor David Dewhurst and House Speaker Tom Craddick directed the Teacher Retirement System to eliminate the account through Aetna which was created by the Legislature last year.

#### Para-Educators

Texas has a certified educational aide exemption program for college tuition. If you are a certified educational aide, you can apply to have all your tuition and mandatory fees exempted at Texas public colleges or universities when earning teacher certification. According to the State Board of Educator Certification rules, anyone employed by a Texas public school district as a para-educator and works directly with students in a classroom can apply for any educational aide certificate through their school district. Contact human resources for additional information.

*Source: Nelda Van Dyke, TESA Legislative Consultant*

### Professional Development Opportunities

All professional development classes are offered through Administrative Staff Development and can be accessed via A-Train. It is a great idea to stay abreast of the latest skills and techniques so you can perform at your optimum level. Some of the classes being offered are:

- MS Word Intermediate, Level 2                      March 3, 2005
- MS Word Advanced, Level 3                      March 10, 2005
- Business Writing I                                      March 31, 2005
- MS Word Advanced, Level 4                      April 7, 2005
- PowerPoint    April 14 and 28, 2005
- Business Writing II                                      April 28, 2005

All classes can be accessed through A-Train. For questions regarding classes being offered, please contact Administrative Staff Development at 804-7192.



## Honorary Membership

As part of the district’s 50th Anniversary, NEESPA is inviting paraprofessionals in the district to become an **Honorary Member** for the remainder of the Anniversary Year. NEESPA is a wonderful organization dedicated to the promotion of professional development for all support personnel in the North East Independent School District. We are affiliated with the Texas Educational Support Staff Association (TESA) and the National Association of Educational Office Professionals (NAEOP). Besides all of that, joining NEESPA is a wonderful opportunity to be part of a professional association. If you are interested in becoming an Honorary Member, please contact Esther Cisneros, 3rd Vice President, or any of the Board Members. They will assist you with the application process.

As a result of the 50th Anniversary Paraprofessional Recognition Reception, several paraprofessionals elected to become Honorary Members. Those new members are:

- |                                 |                               |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Jeanette Bynum, Pupil Personnel | Julie Bennett, Internal Audit |
| Judy Koop, Stahl Elementary     | Suellen Ratliff, SECSS        |
| Susan Hough, Fine Arts          | Maria Olivera, ACE Academy    |
| Ann Mzyk, Community Ed          | Mary Medrano, Pupil Personnel |

Thank you ladies, for joining the team! We look forward to a long lasting relationship with you.

## Birthdays



The following members are celebrating January, February, or March birthdays.....

- Vera Hernandez Jan. 24
- Linda Kallies Feb. 13
- Cloma Harvey Feb. 21
- Connie Granado Mar. 1
- Maurine Patillo Mar. 6
- Amabel Lopez Mar. 6
- Peggy Turner Mar. 8
- Irene Lujan Mar. 12
- Frances Ballejos Mar. 19
- Yolanda Gutierrez Mar. 20
- Olga Rubio Mar. 23
- Maria Garcia Mar. 30

Happy Birthday ladies!

## New Member Update

Kudos to our brand new members! They are:

- Edith Todd, Nimitz Academy
- Joan Schott, Nimitz Academy
- Carol Zelenak, Ed White M.S.

Welcome aboard!

*Source: Esther Cisneros, 3rd Vice President*

*“The attitude of the individual determines the altitude of the group.”*

*-John C. Maxwell*