

# CHR PRESS

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SPRING 2011

NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTRAL HUDSON REGION PTA

## Letter from the Director

Welcome to our second edition of the CHR Press for the Central Hudson Region PTA. It has all the highlights of past events such as the 2010 Presidents/Principals Dinner, Council Tea, Holiday Gathering, the 2011 Legislation/Education Breakfast, Reflections Celebration, Spring Conference, Stanley Marcus Youth Humanitarian Award Dinner, and the Jenkins Scholarship Winner.

Thanks to May Neils for her tremendous input and design for this second issue and to the Region Board members who contributed to the articles.



Please feel free to contact Merle Payne, Region Director, at [centralhudsonrd@nyspta.org](mailto:centralhudsonrd@nyspta.org) if you wish to contribute to our newsletter, CHR Press!

Enjoy Reading!!!

- Merle Payne  
Central Hudson Region  
PTA Director



Merle Payne  
CHR PTA Director

## 2010 Presidents/Principals Dinner

The 2010 Central Hudson Region Presidents/Principals Dinner was held on October 21, 2010 at the Casa Mia Manor House in Blauvelt, NY. The restaurant served a scrumptious meal. There were one hundred and fifteen attendees, forty four units and four councils were represented.

This year's Keynote speaker was Assemblyman Kenneth Zebrowski. Mr. Zebrowski spoke about educational funding in Albany and the needs of the educational funding system to be changed.

Directories for the Central Hudson Region were distributed to the unit and

council presidents.

Once again, there was a vendors fair in which seven vendors were represented. The vendors were: EPIC, Barnes & Noble, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Equal Exchange, Mixed Bags Designs, Music Masters, and Veggiecation Program. Each vendor

supplied a beautiful door prize. These prizes were presented at the end of the dinner.

As always, the event was a huge success and a good time was had by all!

- Laurie Becker  
Presidents/Principals  
Dinner Chair

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## Central Hudson Region Council Tea 2010

The continuation for the need for Central Hudson Region Council PTA Presidents to become involved with their Region to bring about a smooth transition and be a strong support for their PTA Units still prevails, **COLLABORATION** being the main objective.

On Saturday, November 20th, 2010, Central Hudson Region held its second Annual Region Council Tea from 10 AM to 12 noon at the Tuxedo Park Library in Orange County. Six of the nine PTA Council Presidents attended: Dorothy Atzl - Clarkstown, Kim Foskew - East Ramapo, Donna Priest - North Rockland, Amany Dgheim - Ramapo Central, Maureen Howard - Valley Central and Katie Bisaro - Warwick Valley.

Several Central Hudson Region Board Members participated as well: Merle Payne - Region Director, Laurie Becker - Associate Director, JeanneMarie Flanagan - Treasurer, Patty

Gustafson - Bylaws Chair, Cindy Tangney - Parent Involvement Chair, Mary Ann Stevenson - Reflections Chair and Rebecca Thomas - Education/Special Education Chair.

Refreshments of donuts, homemade pumpkin pie (JeanneMarie's specialty), coffee, and tea were served throughout the morning. Central Hudson Region folder packets containing information about the NYS PTA restructuring changes were discussed as well as particular problems per council. Everyone **collaborated** with each other.

Two presenters gave a short talk centered on their advocacy. Beth Nottingham from Barnes & Noble talked about school book fairs and Carrie Steindorf from The Rockland County Department of Health talked about healthy fundraisers for schools/nutritious

snacks.

Kudos was received from the attendees! This event will be repeated next year and hopefully have all nine PTA Council Presidents present. The gathering

fulfilled the cohesiveness between the PTA Council and the Region. See more of you in November 2011!

- Merle Payne  
Central Hudson Region  
PTA Director



## Holiday Gathering 2010

Many holiday festivities/celebrations happen during the month of December. Central Hudson Region repeated its "Pasta Night Holiday Gathering" at a local Rockland restaurant.

On December 8th Central Hudson Region PTA board members: Laurie Becker, Elia Soba-Cuevas, Vic Czajkowski, JeannMarie Flanagan, Mary Frascione, Daniel Freedman, Michael Freedman, Patty Gustafson, Merle Payne, Mary Ann Stevenson, Rebecca Thomas, and Christine Webb enjoyed soup, salad,

bread, assorted pastas and sauces, soda, coffee/tea, special holiday cake, token gifts, and each other's company collaboratively at this celebratory event.

Using our tax exemption with each attendee paying their own set fee and the RD treating for the gratuity, a very enjoyable social evening was had by all! BRAVO TO NEXT YEAR 2011!!

- Merle Payne  
Central Hudson Region  
PTA Director



## Together We Can.... Reflections 2010-11

Our Central Hudson Region PTA's started their local Reflections programs early this fall. Local chairs needed to complete their events in time for the region's judging at Monroe-Woodbury High School on December 3rd and 4th. Students in the three counties that make up our Central Hudson District submitted over 2,700 entries this year. Of those, 575 original works of art in dance choreography, film production, literature, music, photography and visual arts were submitted by local units to be judged that weekend. After the scores had been tallied, there were 70 entries that had been

selected to move on to New York State judging. When the results of the NY State Reflections judging were announced in March, Central Hudson Region had a great showing with eight of our students receiving recognition for their works (listed below). Two students, were selected to receive the Award of Excellence, and their pieces will go on to National PTA judging. Awards of Merit were given to six Central Hudson students and their entries will be displayed at the NY State PTA Convention in Niagara Falls this November. Congratulations to all!! The Central Hudson Region

winners and their families were invited to the CHR Reflections Award Celebration. This well attended event was held on May 13th at Suffern High School. A multimedia presentation of all the student's works was the highlight of the evening, and everyone received Central Hudson Reflections medals and certificates in recognition of their achievements. At the end of the program, next year's Reflections theme, "Diversity Means ...." was announced. Sadly, this year is our last as Reflections Chairs. It has been a very rewarding 'job' and we thank our Region Director, Merle Payne, and

all the dedicated people that have worked along with us over the years serving as Reflections unit chairs, assistants and judges at our CHR judging weekend, volunteers at the Reflections Celebration, and especially all the students who shared their creative visions of "Together We Can..." Best of luck to Liisa Warren, Central Hudson's new Reflections Chair. We know she'll do a great job, but of course we're always here to help Liisa.

- Mary Frascone & Mary Ann Stevenson  
CHR Reflections Chairs



DYLAN HUTT  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
LAUREL PLAINS ELEMENTARY  
**AWARD OF EXCELLENCE**



JESSIE BROWDE  
VISUAL ARTS  
STRAWTOWN ELEMENTARY  
**AWARD OF EXCELLENCE**

**AWARD OF EXCELLENCE (will be judged at the National level)**

DYLAN HUTT - PHOTOGRAPHY - LAUREL PLAINS ELEMENTARY  
JESSIE BROWDE - VISUAL ARTS - STRAWTOWN ELEMENTARY

**AWARD OF MERIT (will be displayed at the New York State Convention)**

JORDAN ADER - DANCE CHOREOGRAPHY - SMITH CLOVE ELEMENTARY  
LAUREN-ASHLEY DALEY - PHOTOGRAPHY - RAMAPO HIGH SCHOOL  
PAUL MATTAWAY - FILM PRODUCTION - BARDONIA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
SABRINA ROTHSCHILD - VISUAL ARTS - SOUTH ORANGETOWN MIDDLE SCHOOL  
LIAN CHISHOLM - VISUAL ARTS - SOUTH ORANGETOWN MIDDLE SCHOOL  
SARAH OMER - VISUAL ARTS - SPRING VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

## CHR PTA Annual Meeting / Spring Conference

The CHR PTA Spring Conference was held on May 25, 2011 at the Casa Mia Manor House. Thirty-one Members attended. Four Councils were represented by their Presidents. Laurie Becker led us in the Pledge of Allegiance. Region Director, Merle Payne, welcomed everybody. JeanneMarie read an Inspirational piece. Greetings from NYS PTA were given by Al Benson, VP NYS PTA. A Buffet Dinner was served.

Annual Business Meeting was called to order at 7:18pm by Merle Payne. Candidates for 2011 Officers were announced by Laurie Becker: Associate Directors - Laurie Becker and Vic Czajkowski; Corresponding Secretary - May Neils; Recording Secretary - Elia Soba-Cuevas; Treasurer - JeanneMarie Flannagan. As there were no nominations from the floor, the above slate put forth by the Nominating Committee was elected. The Audit and

Treasurer's Reports in the Conference packet were approved. Nominations for the 2011 Nominating Committee were requested from the Floor. Tammy Gamble and Travis Jackson were nominated and elected. Chris Webb and Merle Payne presented the Stanley Marcus Youth Humanitarian award to Kylie Morris and the Jenkins Memorial Scholarship to Cameron McCarthy.

Al Benson installed the Region Director and new 2011 Officers. Travis W. Jackson from Suffern Middle School presented an outstanding Workshop called "CYBER BULLYING."

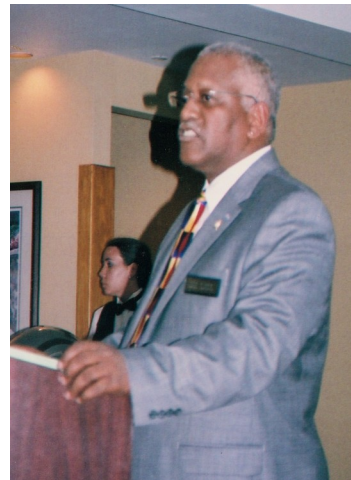
The Conference concluded with the drawing of Door Prizes by Laurie, JeanneMarie, and Vic.

My THANKS to all the Conference Committee Members who made it all possible.

- Vic Czajkowski,  
Spring Conference Chair



Merle Payne,  
Region Director  
and  
Vic Czajkowski,  
Spring Conference  
Chair



Al Benson,  
VP NYS PTA

## ROCKLAND COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD HONORS ITS PTA UNITS/ COUNCILS PRESIDENTS – A HISTORICAL EVENT!

On June 15, 2011 the Rockland County School Board honored Central Hudson Region PTA and eight Rockland County Units/Councils Presidents at their annual dinner event. The theme for the evening was "Leading Children to Excellence."

Each PTA received a beautifully framed Definition of Five Words – Surrender, Victory, Trust, Love, and Faith printed with each PTA name. These words will be long remembered as a

leadership inspiration to PTA's everychild.onevoice for years to come. A great gift to Rockland PTAs!

As the evening continued with remarks from the NYS President of NYSSBA, Florence Johnson, one could see how much PTA and school boards influence educational excellence within schools and communities. Both enable the passion for students, parents, and community public schools to succeed.

As Regional Director of Central Hudson Region PTA, I thanked the Rockland County School Board with a short blurb entitled "This is PTA" taken from a National PTA advertisement several years ago. All of the Rockland PTA Unit/Council Presidents were publicly acknowledged. A packet from our Region's Spring Conference was left with the Executive Director and President of the Rockland County School Board so the association could view the

Region Annual Report to see what has been accomplished by/for the one hundred twenty-five PTA Units in Central Hudson Region PTA, parents, teachers, children and communities within the school year 2010-2011.

A M E M O R A B L E  
B E G I N N I N G T O  
H O N O R I N G P T A ! !

- Merle Payne  
Central Hudson Region  
PTA Director

### Legislation/Education Breakfast

The Central Hudson Region PTA held their Annual Legislation/Education Breakfast on March 12, 2011, at the Casa Mia Manor House in Blauvelt, NY.

The Central Hudson Region PTA was pleased to see such a great turnout for this event. The CHR PTA would like to thank Senator David Carlucci (38th District), Congresswoman Nan Hayworth (19th District), Assemblyman Kenneth Zebrowski (94th District), Assemblywoman Ellen Jaffee (95th District), and Carmen Dubaldi, Jr., who represented the office of Assemblywoman Annie Rabbitt (97th District), for being a part of the legislative panel and taking questions from the audience in attendance that day.

The audience was a great mixture of CHR PTA members, PTA Council members, PTA Unit Presidents and members, school superintendents, school principals, school board members, teachers, high school students and community members.

This year the audience had many questions regarding the pros and cons of the Governor's proposed 2% tax cap. They also wanted to know the legislative panelists position on tenure, pensions, healthcare costs, unfunded mandates, and school district consolidation. There were also questions about the high cost of NYS Regents Exams to school districts and these exams holding back students from receiving a high school diploma, even though the student passed the course and final exam for the year. One high school student

asked what he could do as a high school student to help reduce the budget cuts taking place.

The attendees received a packet of legislative, educational, and advocacy information from the NYS PTA as well as a directory containing contact information for their local legislators.

The CHR PTA Legislation Committee looks forward to another year of branching out and working with PTA Councils and their administrators and school board members, PTA Presidents and their unit members, our NYS Legislators, NYSED, NYS Board of Regents and community members as strong advocates for the education and well-being of our children.

- Susan O'Brien  
CHR PTA Legislation  
Chair



NYS Senator David Carlucci  
Assemblywoman Ellen Jaffee  
Assemblyman Kenneth Zebrowski



Susan O'Brien  
Legislation Chairperson



Audience members listen as legislators answer questions regarding education, healthcare, and funding.

## CHR Chairman Tidbits!

On October 6th, 2010, Central Hudson Region PTA was invited by the Clarkstown School District Council President, Dorothy Atzl, to run a Reflections workshop for her district. I asked if it would be possible to extend that invitation to the Region. She was kind enough to oblige. We had an amazing show of over 20 attendees. Many were first time Reflections Chairs, scared and unsure of what lay ahead. The seasoned chairs helped answer questions and gave advice

to many. I distributed the current Reflections Packet that is available on the NYS PTA website. The night was extremely informative and successful. Thank you Clarkstown for your hospitality in welcoming other districts to your school.

- Mary Frascone  
CHR Reflections  
Coordinator

October 20th, 2010,  
Central Hudson Region

PTA brought a "School of Instruction" to Pearl River PTAs at the Franklin Avenue Elementary School. Region Officers-Region Director-Merle Payne, Associate Directors-Laurie Becker and Vic Czajkowski and Chairmen-Bylaws Patty Gustafson and Jewelry Boutique Loraine Butler discussed the following topics: PTA Mission, communication, being an effective leader, bylaws, membership, treasury, nominations and elections. Time for questions and answers was

allotted. To a very informative evening!!

On February 2nd, 2011, I was asked by South Orangetown PTA Council President Michelle Jones to do a bylaws presentation. I showed the attending units how to go online to [www.nyspta.org](http://www.nyspta.org) and use Bylaws EZ. Walking them through it I was able to answer all of their questions.

- Patty Gustafson  
CHR Bylaws Chair

## JENKINS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

The Jenkins Memorial Scholarship was inaugurated in October, 1946 as a special Golden Anniversary Project. In 1947 the fund was established as a permanent project as a living memorial to the Young people who lost their lives in military service during WWII and was named for one of them, Clifford N. Jenkins, Jr., son of Margaret Jenkins, NYS PTA President 1944-1947 and

National PTA President 1961-1964. The purpose of the project is to assist outstanding students in preparing for the teaching profession. Each recipient receives \$3000 paid in installments.

Criteria for the award includes Character, personality, academic achievement, and potential teaching ability.

To be eligible, applicants must be public high school

seniors who plan to prepare for a teaching career and will be attending a college of the State University of New York and have not accepted scholarships exceeding the value of \$16000.

Applications are reviewed by a committee of educators and members of the NY PTA Board of Directors. Candidates who pass the initial screening are invited to appear for

personal interviews in March.

The 2011 Jenkins Memorial Scholarship NYS PTA winner from Central Hudson Region PTA is Cameron McCarthy. She will be attending SUNY Brockport and majoring in U.S. History for Secondary Education and Dance.

CONGRATULATIONS and best wishes to her as she fulfills her dreams of becoming a teacher!

## YOUTH HUMANITARIAN AWARD IN HONOR OF STANLEY MARCUS

The purpose of this award is to recognize a junior or senior who best exemplifies the humanitarian principles of Stanley Marcus, who is remembered for his humanitarianism and dedication to youth through zealous volunteer community service.

Recipients must display humanitarianism by word

and deed. Quality of humanitarianism activities is valued over for quantity of extra-curricular activities. Academic achievement is not a factor in the selection process.

PTA/PTSA Unit must be in good standing - membership dues paid, insurance paid and current bylaws.

Each Region may submit one nominee for this state award. The chosen recipient from each Region will receive a recognition plaque from NYS PTA.

From the nominees submitted, one recipient is chosen by the NYS PTA Committee. Presentation of the engraved plaque and a monetary award of \$250 is

made by the Region PTA at Spring Conference.

The 2011 Youth Humanitarian Award in Honor of Stanley Marcus winner from Central Hudson Region PTA is Kylie Morris. CONGRATULATIONS to her excelled zealous volunteer community service!

## Central Hudson Region PTA Mission and Purpose

CENTRAL HUDSON REGION, a branch of the NYS PTA, comprises 115 units and 10 councils in Orange, Rockland and Sullivan Counties. In each of our school districts we have PTAs, PTSAs, SEPTAs, and SEPTSAs.

\*It promotes the work of the New York State PTA and the National PTA.

\*It channels information between the New York State PTA units and councils.

\*It provides leadership development conferences and informational updates at state conventions.

AWARDS from Central Hudson:

The JOAN BALL LEADERSHIP AWARD created in honor of a past Central Hudson Director and former NYS PTA President, this award is presented to a PTA member who demonstrates leadership potential. It is intended to encourage the growth of leadership at the unit level.

WINNERS OF THE FOLLOWING AWARDS AT CENTRAL HUDSON REGION LEVEL ARE RECOGNIZED AT THE REGION LEVEL AND ADVANCE TO NYS PTA:

JANE SKRZYPEK VOLUNTEER AWARD established in 1991 to recognize outstanding PTA volunteerism.

NEWSLETTER AWARD presented to the PA newsletter that provides the reader with national, state, region and local information about educational concerns and the PTA.

PARENTS AS READING PARTNERS AWARD given to recognize an outstanding PARP program at the region and state levels.

CENTRAL HUDSON REGION ALSO PARTICIPATES WITH NYS PTA IN THESE PROGRAMS AND RECOGNIZES REGION RECIPIENTS OF:

ACT AWARD

STANLEY MARCUS HUMANITARIAN AWARD

NYS PTA HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

TWIN PROJECTS - THE RICHARD GAZZOLA TEACHER FELLOWSHIP  
THE JENKINS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

CENTRAL HUDSON REGION ALSO PARTICIPATES WITH THE NATIONAL PTA IN THESE PROGRAMS AND RECOGNIZES REGION RECIPIENTS OF:

NATIONAL PTA HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

REFLECTIONS PROGRAM facilitated through National PTA's Reflections Program which recognizes outstanding contributions to the Arts by PreK - 12th grade students



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**We're on the web:  
centralhudsonpta.org**

**CENTRAL HUDSON REGION PTA OFFICERS 2010-2011**

- Director .....Merle Payne  
Associate Director ..... Laurie Becker  
Associate Director ..... Vic Czajkowski  
Assistant Director and Corresponding Secretary ..... May Neils  
Assistant Director and Recording Secretary ..... Elia Soba-Cuevas  
Treasurer ..... JeanneMarie Flanagan
- 
- Newsletter Editor ..... May Neils  
Webmaster ..... Christopher Neils