



901 E. Kennedy Boulevard • Tampa, Florida 33602

May, 2002

## Dialogue from the Executive Director

Dr. John Miliziano

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

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At the end of this year, Floridians will be electing a new governor, a new house of representatives, and a portion of the state Senate. In the past several years we have seen the legislature and the governor put into place many changes that have been anti-public education. Expansion of the voucher system and charter schools, refusal to adequately fund education, and elimination of retirement benefits for educators are but a few examples. If one reads the newspapers, it is obvious that many more radical and disruptive things are on the agenda by the present administration and those legislators who are now in power.

Everything you hear today says that education is the most important issue in America, both at the national and state levels. In light of this fact, why then are educators and those who advocate for public education not listened to and are not allowed to play a major role in what happens to our schools? The answer may be in part that we, who are most affected by what happens to education, are not organized nor speak with one united voice. Educators, by nature, are conservative and not politically assertive. The voting record of educators is not very impressive. Many educators are not registered to vote and those that are registered vote in very small numbers.

In the March newsletter, HASA's leadership asked members to give their input as to whether HASA should establish a PAC, a Political Action Committee. An explanation of what PACs are and do was clearly given in this article. It is important that our members speak out on this issue so that if support is evident a PAC can be established in time for the upcoming elections. Please share your comments with your HASA component representatives and alternates. You can also log on the HASA web page at [www.hasaonline.com](http://www.hasaonline.com) and correspond via the provided links. You can also telephone me directly by calling 265-0001 or 857-8893.

### **Hillsborough Association of School Administrators Mission Statement**

*“To promote the general welfare, encourage unity, establish communications between the components, and exercise leadership forwarding the purpose and need of the membership and of the public schools.”*

# Legislative Benefits Committee Update

Dr. John Miliziano, Executive Director

The HASA Legislative Benefits Committee will be meeting in early May to take up several issues that will be pursued in the upcoming months.

The survey on retirement benefits in Southeastern states that was conducted several months ago has been widely circulated and has received very positive feedback. The results of the survey were shared with the superintendent and his staff, school board members, members of our Hillsborough County Legislative Delegation, members of the Hillsborough Advocates for Public Education (HAPE), and representatives of the Tampa Bay Area Coalition of Associations of School Administrators. The Legislative Benefits Committee will expand the survey to include several additional information elements to make it more comprehensive and informative. One thought was that once the survey is finalized, the various educational organizations and advocates of education will want to widely publicize the information in newspapers and others print media.

At the May meeting, the Legislative Benefits Committee will also address the possibility of establishing a PAC and proposing a plan of action for HASA board approval, that would promote involvement in the upcoming state elections for governor and the legislature. A third issue for consideration will be a plan of action to promote the several bills that were filed but failed in the 2002 legislative session: (1) Increase the retirement multiplier from 1.6 to 2.1 percent and, (2) decrease the best five year average to three years.

## Latest News From the FASA Lobbyist

### **Dr. Juhan Mixon**

On Tuesday, April 16th, Dr. Juhan Mixon met with Rep. Jerry Melvin at his office to discuss differences in position on principal alternative certification. Rep. Melvin has repeatedly advocated an alternative certification plan for local school boards with NO state guidelines, as now included in the 1,800-page education rewrite bill. Mixon met with Chairman Melvin to try and persuade the legislator to accept six requirements at a minimum for alternative certification:

- 1) The certificate would be a state license, not a district certificate.
- 2) The state certificate would be issued by the Department of Education.
- 3) Pre-approval of district alternative certification plans by the Department
- 4) Bachelor's degree
- 5) Criminal background check
- 6) Professional development within two years in at least the following five areas: curriculum, labor relations, education finance, discipline/classroom management, and testing/assessment.

The next Special Session of the Florida Legislature will be held in the next 2-3 weeks. Hopefully, FASA can persuade the House and Senate to adopt our proposal in the "re-write" bill.

# The Tampa Bay Area Coalition of Associations of School Administrators

The Tampa Bay Area Coalition of Associations of School Administrators met on April 16, 2002 from 9:00 to 10:30 AM at Armwood High School. Present were Reid Wallace from Manatee County, Marilyn Highland and Jan Gibbs from Sarasota County, and John Miliziano from Hillsborough County. Neriah Roberts from Polk County came to the meeting but had to leave early to respond to an emergency in his home county.

Marilyn and Jan reported that their district had been successful in having the voters approve a referendum on a multimillion-dollar package to help improve the operational funding of the school district. The taxpayers of Sarasota County obviously recognize that they have to do what the Florida Legislature has failed to do in adequately providing for public education. Sarasota County School Based Administrators (SCSBA) took out a newspaper ad listing all Association members' names in support of the referendum. SCSBA should be commended for taking a proactive attitude on this very important issue. Other districts should follow this excellent example.

Reid Wallace reported that his Association is taking steps to reorganize. Reid shared with the Coalition members a letter that he sent to all Manatee County administrators about the importance of joining the Association. One of the main concerns of Manatee administrators is to protect themselves from legislation that is unfavorable to their future as administrators.

Coalition representatives reiterated the importance of building local coalitions of advocates for public schools, much like Hillsborough's HAPE (Hillsborough Advocates of Public Education).

Coalition members were encouraged to log on HASA's web page at [www.hasaonline.com](http://www.hasaonline.com). The web page offers a great deal of information including information about the Coalition.

The Coalition's Board moved on the following issues:

- Recommended that the Retirement Benefits Survey that included information from ten southeastern states be expanded to include: Payment of Health Insurance Coverage to Retirees; Employees Contributions to the retirement plan; and payment of life insurance premium of retirees. HASA's Legislative Benefits Committee conducted the survey. When the survey is updated, the Coalition will consider taking out newspaper ads in all members' counties.
- Recommended that the Coalition provide financial support to the five legislators who sponsored the two retirement benefits bills that failed passage during the 2002 Legislative Session: Representatives Mark Flanagan from Bradenton, Nancy Detert from Venice, and Senator Locke Burt from Ormond Beach who sponsored the Bills on reducing the average compensation to three years and Representative Heather Fiorentino from New Port Richey and Senator Ken Pruitt from Port St. Lucy who filed the bills that would have increased the annual retirement multiplier from 1.6 to 2.1 percent. The proposal is to see if the Coalition can use the Sarasota County PAC to collect money for the above legislators. Marilyn and Jan will look into the legal aspect of this proposal and report back to the Coalition Board of Directors at the next meeting.

The next meeting of the Coalition's Board of Directors will be scheduled sometime in June or July. The time, date, and location will be announced.

## A Long and Honorable Road of Service

Most of you have heard of or have seen the movie “Blackhawk Down”. A dedicated Hillsborough County administrator really didn’t want to see the movie because the memories would be too vivid and painful for him. He knew first hand the danger and destruction of war. At the urging of his wife and greatest supporter, he agreed to be the featured guest at the movie premiere and the subject of a descriptive newspaper article in January. You see, one of our very own, Ron Cugno, was the Commander of the helicopters called “Little Birds” in the 1993 Mogadishu combat mission featured in the movie. Ron said the movie gave a realistic accounting of what happened as well as an accurate insight into the terrors of war. In the dark shadow of September 11, this movie hammered home the military ethos: Don’t leave anyone behind.

Ron is currently the Assistant Principal for Administration at Jefferson High School. He grew up in the Boston area and graduated from Bridgewater College with a BA in Psychology and History. He taught Social Studies and coached football, wrestling, and baseball at Bristol-Plymouth Regional Vocation High School in downtown Taunton, MA. While he coached, Ron also played semi-pro football for the Middleborough Cobras in the Eastern Football League.

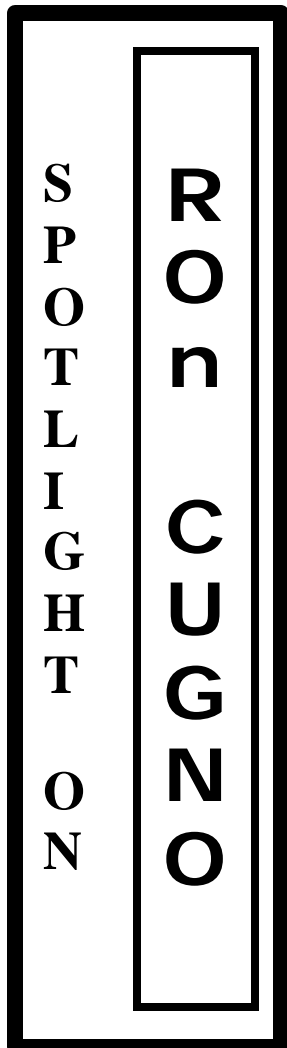
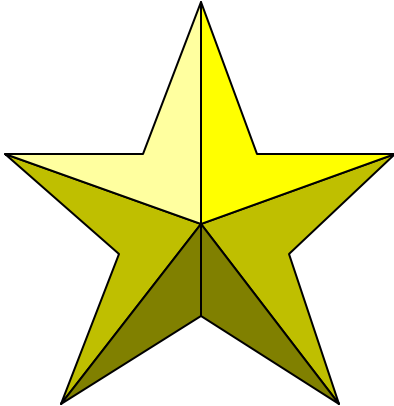
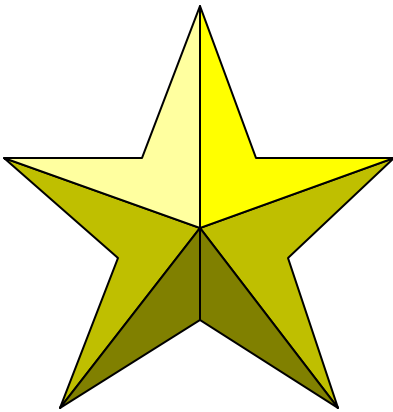
Ron went to school at night to earn his Master’s Degree in School Administration from Bridgewater and was also a part time policeman in the town of Raynham. He soon became the head football and wrestling coach and taught Social Studies at Bridgewater-Raynham High School.

After making the decision to join the United States Army in 1978, Ron was commissioned as an officer in 1979 and thus completed flight school. He served in the Army for 20 years. His service took him all over the world. He commanded two Air Cavalry units on the East/ West German border and commanded two other Special Operation Aviation units. Ron served in numerous combat operations including the Middle East, Desert Storm, Haiti, and Somalia. He was awarded the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Defense Meritorious Medal, Army Meritorious Medal, Presidential Citation, Valorous Combat Unit Award, several National Defense Medals and many Air Medals for Valor. Ron flew over 1000 combat hours during combat operations and commanded all the Little Birds, A/MH-6 helicopters in Somalia.

Ron and his wife, Ellen (a teacher at Symmes), moved to Riverview in 1996 from Tennessee, and he retired from MacDill Air Force Base in 1998 as Lieutenant Colonel. After retiring from the military, Ron rejoined the teaching ranks, teaching a self-contained classroom in Youth Services at Detention East for Hillsborough County. The following year he transferred to Tampa Bay Tech High School teaching Social Studies and coaching football. Later that year Ron was appointed Assistant Principal for Student Affairs at Jefferson High School. And as mentioned before, he is currently the Assistant Principal for Administration at Jefferson High School.

Ron doesn’t fly anymore but spends most of his spare time studying to complete his Doctorate Degree from NOVA University. In fact, Ron will be Dr. Cugno in a few short months. His honorable road of service to his country and now to the children of Hillsborough County has been long and well traveled. Congratulations, Ron Cugno, for a life well done!

*Submitted by:  
Judith D. Kennedy  
Principal-Valrico Elementary*



# A Member Speaks Out

In early April, all middle and high school 12 month APIs were called together to Armwood High School to meet with Mr. Poindexter, Mr. Valdez, and Mr. Martinez to discuss the issues surrounding the possible reduction of their work year. The fact that our system faces a huge budget deficit was basis of this proposed cut. Mr. Poindexter pointed out other cuts in the county that have already been enacted.

A primary factor in the reduction of the work year for the APIs was the elimination of traditional summer school in middle and high schools. Because a primary responsibility for 12 month APIs was the running of this summer program, Dr. Lennard and his staff looked to reducing the work year of this group of administrators as an area of budget savings. The savings would be in excess of \$300,000. 12 month APIs were assured that they would still keep their accrued vacation time, and would have several options for cashing in, saving or using those days.

The reaction of this group of administrators ranged from discouragement to disbelief. Several administrators expressed great concern that they had not been given adequate notice of this loss of salary (ranging from \$4000 to \$5000+) in order to make budgetary plans for financial security over this summer. Other administrators asked what other options Dr. Lennard had considered besides this cut in one component administrative group.

When Dr. John Miliziano, Executive Director of HASA, was notified of these concerns, he solicited input from APIs. Dr. Miliziano stressed that, although HASA is not a union with a posture of negotiating issues surrounding the employment of its membership, HASA is vitally involved with establishing open communication and a flow of ideas and options with all levels of the administrative organization of our school system. Dr. Miliziano spoke with Mr. Poindexter and met with Dr. Lennard several times to specifically discuss the issues surrounding this 12-month API work year/pay cut.

Both Mr. Poindexter and Dr. Lennard were apprised that the APIs were being financially impacted by salary reductions twice in one year; the recent four-day cut that all 12-month employees took and now the loss of one month's salary and benefits. Dr. Miliziano also suggested a number of alternatives on how the APIs could be utilized over the summer in doing things such as helping to opening 11 new schools, assisting with conducting a massive property inventory of the entire school districts, etc. In making the argument not to reduce the 12 months APIs to 11 months, Dr. Lennard was also provided with several cost saving measures that would have realized some badly needed savings. A list of 23 examples of the work performed during the summer, in addition to summer school supervision by the 12 month APIs, was also shared with the superintendent.

The final proposal on this issue, which was approved on 4/23 at the School Board meeting, reflected a partial modification to the original proposal. The APIs were granted five additional workdays this summer. The remainder of the proposal stayed the same. This issue is indeed a part of a complex set of circumstances which resulted from the budgetary shortfall passed on by the state legislature. There ARE no easy solutions. There ARE no solutions that do not affect people's lives. The APIs need to know that HASA did not stand by passively without making its collective voice heard when dealing with this difficult issue.

	<h2>Did You Know...</h2>	
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- ✓ That the Florida Retirement System's (FRS) \$96 billion fund is the nation's second largest next to California's State Teachers Retirement System with nearly \$100 billion. (Tampa Tribune 3/13/02)
- ✓ That Florida's pension fund lost \$321 million, or 1/3 of one percent, in the Enron Corporation collapse. (Tampa Tribune 3/13/02)
- ✓ That the Florida Legislature is considering approving a "Principal Alternative Certification" law with no state guidelines. (Juhan Mixon, FASA's Legislative committee 4/18/02)
- ✓ That the expected increase cost for Florida's school employees health insurance benefits will be an additional \$175 million for the next fiscal year. This represents an average increase of 19.4% that school boards will have to absorb. (Wayne Blanton, Florida School board Association 3/5/02)

# Retirement Workshop Opportunities

A series of retirement planning workshops entitled *Financial Strategies for Successful Retirement* will be offered exclusively for HASA members through the Community Education Department of the Hillsborough County School District. This exciting and informative four-session course will take place at Chamberlain High School, on June 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and the 25<sup>th</sup> between the hours of 6:30 PM to 9:00 PM. The course curriculum covers important money management concepts including but not limited to:

- FRS and DROP
- Social Security and Medicare
- Tax Strategies
- Estate Planning
- Investments\*
- Risk Management\*\*
- Retirement and Lifestyle Issues



The workshop will give you the tools needed for a successful retirement. The course is designed to educate you on proven money management techniques used for protecting your money from inflation, income taxes, and erosion due to health care needs. The instructor will guide you through the nine steps you can take to prepare for retirement success, as well as aide you in the development of your own personalized financial plan. The curriculum is current complete and entirely educational. This course is taught at colleges, universities, and to special groups, such as HASA. If you are serious about gaining money management knowledge, this is the course for you.

Your instructor will be David Karp, a Registered Investment Advisor, and President of Karp & Associates. Mr. Karp has been selected by HASA to offer financial planning services to its members. With over 15 years of experience working with school board employees and their families, Mr. Karp is well versed on programs and benefits that are unique to school board employees. A featured guest instructor will be Estate and Elder Care Planning Attorney Emma Hemness.

A \$20 tuition fee will cover the cost of all four sessions for a couple or an individual. As a HASA member, the regular \$30 materials fee has been waived. To register for this informative course please call 813-977-9940. Please register early, as seating is limited.

\* Securities offered through Securities Service Network, Inc., member NASD/SIPC.

\*\* Investment advice is offered through Karp & Associates, a Registered Investment Advisory Firm.

## Welcome to HASA!

**Larry Martin, retired**  
**Deborah Davis, Coleman**  
**Patricia Bishop, Secondary Education**  
**Shana Menia, Lincoln Magnet**

**Anthony Jones, Gaither**  
**Ernest Fernandez, Chamberlain**  
**Irene Alonso, Internal Auditing**



## Spring Membership Social--A Success

*Janelle Buck, Historian*

*“United in Freedom, Spirit, And Education”*

If you did not attend the annual spring social held on Thursday, April 25<sup>th</sup> at the Center Club in Brandon, you missed a great opportunity to mingle with co-workers, colleagues, School Board members, Dr. Lennard, and his staff. The food, refreshments and hospitality were enjoyable, thanks to the hard work of the planning committee. Those who dedicated their personal time and efforts were Dan Bonilla, Mary Cunningham, Linda Denison, Manuel Duran, Gina Flynn-Carmack, Connie Hayden-McPeak, Connie Hicks (worked diligently on getting the door prizes), Jean Leone, Tee Solomon, Charlotte Valenti and Novenda Wilson.

The afternoon included awards presented to the following deserving recipients:

**Leadership**- Robert Lawson, Principal, Dowdell Middle Magnet

**Raymond O. Shelton Award**- Dr. Jack Lamb, School Board Member

**HASA Professional Involvement**- Ashley Smith, Retired Administrator

**HASA Public Relations**- Dan Valdez, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

**Lyle Flagg Award**- Charlotte Valenti, APEI, Egypt Lake Elementary



Pat Smith, Director of Guidance, announced the ***HASA Scholarship*** winners that she and her committee selected. Appreciation goes out to Tammy Crawford-Morse, Community School Administrator, East Region Adult Education; Sue Marohnic, Principal, Symmes Elementary; John Cobb, AP, Randall Middle; Holly Clemons, AP, Blake; Susan Turner, Principal, Mintz Elementary; Susan King, Supervisor, Citizen's Call Center; Nancy Bartels, Supervisor, Guidance Services, and Susan Houx, Supervisor, Human Resources, for their work. Special thanks to Dr. Debbie Coyle for obtaining the NOVA tuition waivers for:

**Ken Gaughan**- Supervisor, School Social Work since 1989 who is working on his Doctorate in Organizational Leadership at Nova Southeastern University.

**Yolando Andrews** - Teacher, Armwood High School for 10 years. She is working on her Masters Degree in Educational Leadership at USF. She is the first and only one of seven children in her family to obtain a college degree and to attend graduate school.

**Shirley Harvey** - AP for Student Affairs at Eisenhower Middle School who has worked for the district for 28 years as a Speech Pathologist and an Assistant Principal for ESE. She is working on her Doctorate in Educational Leadership at Argosy University (formerly University of Sarasota).

**Christina Stone** - received a New Scholarship of \$2,000. (HASA/Hillsborough Education Foundation and USF) She is a junior at USF and graduate of Durant H.S. She plans to teach high school English and sponsor a school activity. In addition, she is the first in her family to have a college education. Christina's mother is Cynthia Stone, Secretary at Tampa Bay Tech Magnet.

**Joyce Patterson** - a teacher at Stewart Middle Magnet who is an aspiring administrator and is studying for her Ed.S degree in Educational Leadership. Joyce is a Subject Area Leader, LA and Curriculum Integration Resource Teacher.

Congratulations to those scholarship winners!

Board members who attended the social were Dr. Jack Lamb and Glenn Barrington along with Assistant Superintendents Randy Poindexter, Dr. Michael Bookman, Dan Valdez, and Jack Davis. Dr. Lennard's message was both enlightening and encouraging. He discussed the difficulties with the fiscal situation but was pleased that administrators had worked arduously this year to overcome obstacles and had set priorities for the benefit of their schools and the district. He also spoke about the need for additional administrators as many retire and new schools are built. He encouraged the current leaders to pursue their interest in positions that will need to be filled.

The Social was a tremendous success and plans are in the works for the Fall Social to be held August 22<sup>nd</sup>. President Mark West and Executive Director Dr. John Miliziano asked that all members encourage their colleagues to join HASA and become involved in serving the organization. Dr. Miliziano stressed the importance of being proactive with legislative concerns and becoming involved in working with our local coalition on issues that affect Hillsborough County. The web page is up and running ([www.hasaonline.com](http://www.hasaonline.com)) and recognition was given to Hal Nelson for all of his hard work on that project. Membership is crucial to the continued success of HASA and the benefits are most worthwhile. Thanks to those who work industriously toward that endeavor.