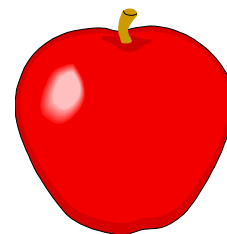


# CHALKDUST

www.northcentraloea.org



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 www.northcentraloea.org

## President's Column:

### Crossroads: Getting Older, While Staying Younger

- Bradley J. Strong



There are times in our lives when we know things are about to change, and we do not know what the future holds, but we cannot go back and change them. Like:

- when we graduate from High School,
- maybe when we graduate from college,
- definitely when we get married,
- when we have children,
- potty training,
- when you have a second child 15 years after your first, and potty training again
- entertaining your children, when our kids graduate from high school
- when you have a milestone birthday, like 40
- when our kids begin college
- let me stop now before I put myself in the grave!

Well, this year is a year of crossroads for me. First I turned 40, my oldest daughter graduated from high school and began college, and my youngest is finishing up potty training & moved into a big girl bed.

Let's start with me turning 40. Being 40 doesn't feel much different than 30, except the aches and pains, high blood pressure, weight issues, rotator cuff, Achilles heel, & I can't deal with stupid people as nicely as I used to be able to. I find myself saying things I used to only think, that has caused me some problems. Like the moron who parks across two spots in the parking lot at the grocery store, or the idiot who has 40+ items in the 20 items or less express lane. I have found myself leaving notes on car windows and asking people if they know how to count, neither make my wife proud. **Life lesson: wisdom & truth come with age.**

My 3 year old continues to work this 40 year old man. I said she will either keep me young or kill me, one or the other. Potty training is nearly complete, thank GOD! We are now at the stage where she has to pee at every restaurant, store, and person's house we are at. It is not enough that we have to

use every restroom in Northern Ohio; she has to loudly announce the success of her endeavor. I am the proud parent of a 3 yr old who went poo-poo @ Meijers, and everyone knows it. **Life lesson: Be proud of your children & everything you do, no matter what others think.**

We have moved from a crib to a big girl bed this summer. My 3 year old was ready to get a "big girl bed" but her mother was not (sorry Meg). Now her big girl bed is a big step; one that needs some help from a good dad. You guessed it. I had to sleep in the "big girl bed" the first couple of nights. Now, imagine me, my 3 year old, 3,000 stuffed animals around the bed, her talking in her sleep, me snoring, all in a twin bed. I woke up tired, my back hurt and, my neck was stiff and my daughter saying "Good morning daddy, I love you." **Life Lesson: Spend time with your children, even when it is a pain in the neck.**

My oldest daughter has graduated from high school and is beginning college. She is attending OSU-Mansfield, where I went to college. As I attended orientation with her, I realized the crossroad I was facing. She wants to be a teacher just like her mom & dad. I tried to talk her out of it. But she just gave me that "dad you are a moron" look, and listed that as her major. I told her to enjoy her college years, but not too much, to be involved, learn new things, challenge ideas, and to discover who she really is. She smiled and said; "OK". **Life lesson: we teach & give the great advice for the future; remember it will take years to see if that teaching & advice was heard. Tell them to: live well, laugh often, and love much!**

As my busy schedule keeps me traveling, I try to spend every minute with my 3 year old. I was packing for another of my many union trips and my 3 year old daughter was having a wonderful time playing on my bed. At one point she said "Daddy, look at this," and stuck out two of her fingers. Trying to stay focused on packing while keeping her entertained, I reached out and stuck her tiny

Continued on Page 2

## NCOEA 2009-2010 Calendar

November 5	*NCOEA Executive Com.
November 14	NCOEA Fall RA, Mansfield Sr. H.S., 8:00 am
November 16-20	American Education Week
November 17	NC Emerging Leaders, UniServ, Lexington 4:45pm
December 5	OEA Fall RA, Veterans Memorial, Col., 9:00 am
December 15	Chalkdust Deadline January Issue
January 7, 2010	*NCOEA Executive Com.
January 19	NC Emerging Leaders, Mansfield Sr. H.S., 4:45pm
February 4	*NCOEA Executive Com.
February 4-6	OEA Collective Bargaining Hyatt Regency, Columbus
February 16	NC Emerging Leaders, Mansfield Sr. H.S., 4:45pm
March 2	Read Across America
March 4	*NCOEA Executive Com.
March 18	NCOEA Spring Workshop, NC Emerging Leaders Mansfield Sr. H.S., 4:45 pm
March 31	Chalkdust Deadline Mid-April Issue
April 8	*NCOEA Executive Com.
April 20	NC Emerging Leaders Mansfield Sr. H.S., 4:45pm
April 26	NCOEA Spring RA, Mansfield Sr. H.S., 5:00 pm
May 3-7	Teacher Appreciation Week
May 7-8	OEA Spring RA, Veterans Memorial, Col., 9:00 am
May 13	*NCOEA Executive Com.
June 5	NEA Delegate Briefing
June 18-20	NCOEA Retreat, Mohican
July 1-6	NEA Representative Assembly, New Orleans

\*All NCOEA Executive Committee Meetings begin at 6:00 pm, at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church, at Route 42 North and Route 30 East in Mansfield. All NCOEA members are welcome to attend. Pizza, salad and snacks are served at 5:15 pm.