

**"It Is Powerful" --- Opinion of 1<sup>st</sup> time delegate, Rob Fetters, Mt. Vernon**

## 2006 NEA Representative Assembly in Orlando

This year's NEA RA was held in Orlando, Florida, July 2<sup>nd</sup> – July 5<sup>th</sup>. 13 NCOEA members represented NCOEA well on the floor of the assembly. In addition to delegate duties, members participated in a blood donation drive and bone marrow screening for the benefit of the city of Orlando. They also attended a fun filled Ohio Night and the NEA friendship Night Party.

Led by NCOEA President Cathy Aleshire's bid of \$1,430 for the privilege of being "President" of the OEA delegation for one hour on the floor of the assembly, the NCOEA had 100% participation in the Fund for Children Contributions with a total of \$3,531 in donations. In return, OEA President Gary Allen became the NCOEA President for that same hour. Lots of fun for a good cause!!!

Ohio stayed in the Portofino Bay and Royal Pacific Hotels which are a part of the Universal Studios Theme Parks. Needless to say many members splurged this year and brought their families along to take advantage of these beautiful facilities and the perks for the Universal Theme Parks.

Here is what first time NEA delegate Rob Fetters from Mt. Vernon had to say about his experience:

"What is it like participating in your first National Education Association Representative Assembly? What is it like to enter a huge hall with 9,000 other professionals who care about children and their learning? What is it like to vote dozens of times each day in the world's largest deliberative democratic body? What is it like to sit amid a sea of colorful tropical shirts and be noticed by everyone? What is it like to hear moving presentations which bring you to tears about the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and freedom from many perspectives but about one nation? What is it like to learn how your organization played a meaningful role in fighting segregation and discrimination? What is it like to know that what you do makes a real difference in peoples lives? ***It is powerful.***"

Here is the opinion of another first timer Brenda Bright-Lane of Ashland City:

"Wow what an experience! I was privileged to attend the NEA Representative assembly this summer.

What a gathering! Over 14,000

educators, support staff, and supporters of public education brought together in one huge venue for six days of grueling hard work. A typical day started at 7:00 a.m. and went until approximately 7:00 p.m. Topics of discussion were many and varied. It was inspiring to be surrounded by people who wanted what is best for our Nation's children.

Friday, June 30<sup>th</sup> was dedicated to Ohio's state delegates. Believe me the state of Ohio was well represented. The evening was capped off with dinner, dancing and networking.

As mentioned previously, we worked about 12 hours every day including the weekend and even on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. There was however some relaxation such as the NEA Friendship Night with dinner and dancing for delegates.

I for one hadn't a clue as to the myriad of issues that was addressed by this assembly. Although the days were long and the sessions often grueling I would strongly urge that everyone who has the opportunity to attend the NEA Representative Assembly should do so. It is an experience you would long remember."



Front: Mary Jane Schlairet, Fredericktown; Middle: Donna Christman, Cardington-Lincoln; Becky Mayer, Ashland; Judy Novak, Mansfield; Patti Dice, Mt. Vernon; Perry Brokaw, Mansfield; Joyce Skocic, Mt. Vernon; Cathy Aleshire, Bucyrus; Chris Swank, Exec. Sec.-Treas; Back: Brenda Bright-Lane Ashland; Rob Fetters, Mt. Vernon; Mike Tagg and Dan Bishop, Mansfield; and Paul Kauffman, Mid-Ohio Educ. Serv. Cen.



Rob Fetters, Mt. Vernon  
Brenda Bright-Lane, Ashland



### ***Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk***

We are looking to put together an OEA Women's Caucus team of walkers for the Columbus *Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk* on Sunday, October 22, 2006. This walk is sponsored by the American Cancer Society to raise money for breast cancer research, education and advocacy. Please consider joining our team. You can participate by raising pledges and walking the 5K (3.1 miles) walk, sponsoring our team or making a monetary donation. If you cannot participate in the walk, Here's the easiest way to make a donation: 1. Either type in or cut and paste this address:

[http://makingstrides.acsevents.org/site/TR?pg=entry&fr\\_id=2240](http://makingstrides.acsevents.org/site/TR?pg=entry&fr_id=2240); 2. You will be on the American Cancer Society's Making Strides web page. Click on "Find a Walker"; 3. Click on "Search for a Team" and then type in: OEA Women's Caucus; 4. At that point, you can either click on "Join OEA Women's Caucus" (meaning to make a donation for the team) or on "Make a Gift". Either way, you'll come up on the screen that allows you to make a donation using a credit card; You can also join the team as a walker using this website. For questions or more information contact Donna Christman at christman\_d@earthlink.net