

Tech Talk at the AFT Convention

By Greg Beyer, SVFT Vice President

Detroit in July. It was not a vacation, but a trip to the AFT's annual convention. Sharing a meeting hall with 4,000 other teachers, higher education, public employee, and health care professionals was an invigorating and eye-opening experience. The sessions were lively, and committee debate on resolutions was passionate. For a complete convention wrap-up, be sure to visit the AFT website at <http://www.aft.org/convention/> .

I was most interested in the technical and media training offered by the national. As you may have heard, we have a newly designed website. AFT offers its affiliates free web hosting and beginning this month, we will be taking advantage of it. The new site will allow the officers to update information instantly to keep members as current as possible on issues of interest and importance. The convention offered the opportunity to see the current platform as well as a preview of the updated new design that will be in place this fall.

Social media is another new initiative of the SVFT and was addressed at the convention. Our Facebook page (Save Vo-Tech Schools) and our Twitter feed (@SVFTunion) are additional ways that members and officers can interact. Updates on union events, the renovation of our future office, and Election 2012 have been hot topics lately. I encourage everyone to subscribe and stay on top of union information.

The technology highlight of the convention was the official launch of AFT's Share My Lesson website. All teachers know that they get their best ideas and suggestions from other teachers. But usually, these are confined to colleagues in our building or our system. Share My Lesson (www.sharemylesson.com) opens the entire world of lessons and unit planning to AFT and SVFT members. The site has been active a very short time and already has more than a quarter million resources available for teacher use. The future of the site is limited only by the imagination and creativity of its users.

Detroit may have been hot in July, and sadly and strangely empty due to the economic downturn. But I will remember Detroit 2012 as an inspiring trip that armed our delegation with ideas that will make this next school year an even better one for the SVFT.