In Memoriam...
Kate Lanni Moore (1978 - 2011)

FISHKILL - Kate Lanni Moore, 32, a lifelong resident of Fishkill, died unexpectedly on Saturday, April 23, 2011 at Vassar Brothers Medical Center.

Born in Poughkeepsie on September 11, 1978, she was the daughter of Richard and BJ Lanni of Fishkill. Kate was employed as a Special Education Teacher at the Vassar Road Elementary School for the last three years where she also administered the Garden Club. She was a member of the First Reformed Church of Fishkill. She loved her work and she enjoyed music, long walks with her Mom, camping with family and friends and she loved her flip flops.

On September 30, 2006 at the First Reformed Church, Kate married Craig Moore who survives at home. In addition to her husband and parents, she is survived by her two beautiful daughters, Charley and Maddie; her mother and father-in-law, Donald and Eileen Moore of Hopewell Junction; her grandmother, Adelaide Lanni of Peekskill; her brothers and sisters-in-law, Brian and Bianca Moore of Florida, Lindsay and B. Quirk of Millbrook, Kevin Moore and Kelly Riebeshi of Hopewell Junction; her nieces and nephews, Isabella, Victoria, Caelan, Molly and Baby Jack; and many aunts, uncles, cousins and other loving family members and friends.

The WCT is collecting donations for the education fund which has been set up for Kate’s children and for a paving stone for the garden at Vassar Road (Kate was an advisor of the Garden Club). Donation checks should be made out to Craig Moore and can be sent to Diane DiChiara at John Jay High School via interoffice mail.
STAY INFORMED… IT’S UP TO YOU !!!!

{A New Monthly Feature in The Commentator}

Below are some important articles to keep you up to date with current educational issues. These issues will directly affect your job on a daily basis.

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The Wappingers Congress of Teachers will be holding our 3rd Annual Food Drive in all Wappingers Central School District buildings from May 17th until May 24th. We collected nearly 4,000 pounds of food last year, roughly the weight of a minivan. I challenge all of you to beat that total during this year’s food drive!

The food we collect from May 17th-24th will go to the Zion Food Pantry, which is located in a converted garage at the Zion Episcopal Church. They are 100% non-denominational in regard to the people that they serve. Jack Devine, member of the Wappingers Congress of Retired Teachers, is an active volunteer at the Zion Food Pantry. Jack told me that the pantry serves 65-70 families, on average per week, and that they would be in serious trouble if they did not receive help from the community and organizations such as the WCT. During a typical week they are able to give each of their 70 clients:

- 1 box of cereal
- 2 cans of tuna fish
- 2 cans of fruit
- 2 cans of vegetables
- 2 cans of soup
- 2 boxes of macaroni and cheese
- 1 jar of peanut butter
- 1 jar of jelly
- 1 jar/can of spaghetti sauce
- 1 box of pasta
- 1 can of stew

The WCT is calling upon every member to bring in non-perishable food items and place them in the box in your building during the food drive. Parents, students, and other community members are also welcome to bring in food and donate it.

Please remember that every donated can, box, and bag can make a big difference. To quote Helen Keller, “Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” As a union, we can do great things when we work together!
On Friday, April 1st, the Wappingers Congress of Teachers gathered at the Arbor Ridge Restaurant in East Fishkill to honor some of its own. This celebration of milestones recognized the 2011 Retirees, members with 25 Years of Service, the Newly Tenured, and the new National Board Certified Teachers.

Colleagues gathered to reminisce and reacquaint over the cocktail hour. Former WCT president Ralph Capasso and his wife were in attendance. Ralph was president from 1973 to 1990. Bill Dourdis, retired RCK English teacher, was in attendance and was seen snapping photographs of the newly retired. Also, in attendance was Barbara Stuck, a representative from the Wappingers Retired Teachers who warmly welcomed the new retirees into the fold. Retirees, Jill Platt (JJ), Mary Jane Klokiw (JJ), John Ditton (JJ), Jeanne Dittion (RCK), John Lumia (RCK) and Camille Raccioppo (Myers Corners) were seen milling through the crowd.

Enriquez Entertainment (“Hudson Valley’s Most Dynamic DJ’s”), once again, provided the music, which began to resonate throughout the room shortly before dinner was served. During the evening, a variety of music was played appealing to diversity of tastes. Dancers passed through the decades with music from Elvis Presley to the Rolling Stones to the Black Eyed Peas.

The WCT seems to now have an official Master of Ceremonies in the person of Tim Kermani, John Jay math teacher. For days before the event, Tim could be seen wandering the halls of JJ holding a piece of tattered paper and every so often stopping a colleague to rehearse a line from his speech.

This year the number of retirees is well over thirty and the number of teachers receiving tenure is over fifty! Eleven teachers were honored for completing twenty-five years of service and six teachers achieved National Board Certification.

The WCT Recognition Committee members are Rena Finsmith (JJ), Alyson McCarroll (JJ), Tim Kermani (JJ), and Diane DiChiara (JJ). For the past two years Terry Feeley (JJ) has created the celebratory certificates. The committee welcomes new members and ideas from the membership. Please send suggestions to any of the above-mentioned members.

The party has nearly doubled in size during the past two years. We look forward to an increased number of attendees as word gets out about the good time, good food, and good music all for a bargain price!
Celebrating 25 Years of Service
Judith Baumann
Sandra Brown
Barbara Deppe
Wayne Federico
Ann Hack
Ellen Korz
Mary Langert
Michael Lyons
Mary Ann Moran
Patricia Nardone
Maria Santisteban-Tracy

Celebrating Tenure 2010-2011
Nicole Bombo
Rachel Calogero
Kelly Carter
Lizzette Cintron
Catherine Ciocchi
Joshua Conklin
Michael Corsano
Michael Crocco
Heather Dahl
Anthony DelGreco
Brianne DelGreco
Tiffany Devincenzi
Alyson Dodge
AnneMarie Dunn
Karen Ferrara
Bianca Ferris
Kristin Gargano
Betty Giambalvo
Erin Giammichele
Linda Gilmartin
Nicole Heady
Barbara Heffler
Kathryn Jackson
Jessica Johnson
Amanda Judge
Siobhan Kaminski
David Kedzielawa
Claudia King
Maria Kocaj
Susanne Lake
Eugene Lalli
Jeanette LaSalvia
David Lumia
Carolyn Maiello
Nicole Marinaccio
Kaitlyn Markowitz
Karen May
James Mealty
Phyllis Menzi
Kate Moore
Nicholas Negro
Andrew Nikola
Nicole North
Melissa Page
Michelle Pettigrew
James Phelan
Jennifer Ratajczak
Lisa Reyes
Jerry Richard
Katy Rodriguez
Jennifer Rogers
Nicole Scalzo
Elizabeth Scheffel
Jennifer Segal
Bonnie Shurpin-Muller
Grace Ann Smith
Jennifer Soltish
Christine Spadaro
Cara Speirs
Amy Sturomski
Kelley Sullivan
Eleni Tarpey
Adam Thyberg
Katie Watson

National Board Certified Teachers 2011
Therese Coyne
Patricia D’Antono
Mary Valez
Cassie Horton
Catherine Kim
Daniel Roberto

Tim Kermani, Mike Ambron, Ray Koretsky

Therese Coyne & Spouse

Already retired Jeanne Ditton (RCK) and John Ditton (JJ)
New Retiree, Barbara Rowan (RCK) and Spouse

New Retiree Jim Molloy (JJ) and Spouse

New Retiree Leslie Siegle (JJ) and Best Friend Wendy Heuman

New Retiree Denise Herberger (JJ) and Spouse

New Retiree Phil Cameron (JJ) & Spouse

2011 Retirees

Pasquale DelliCarpini & Kim Mahusky
2011 Retirees … CONGRATULATIONS!

Andrea Bialek
David Bloom
Eileen Bosch
Philip Cameron
Kathleen Cornett
Terry Cunningham
Susan Dexter
Wayne Federico
John Hafner
Sandra Hayes
Denise Herberger
Jill Jurina
Ellen Korz
Carol Mastianni
Kara McKenna
Karen Minervini-Whelan
James Molloy
Lynn Paraskeva
Alissa Perreault
Olga Perlman
Judith Roenick
Barbara Rowan
Sheila Salenger
Barbara Searle
Catherine Seehase
Leslie Seigle
Laura Siko
Catherine Smelter
Susan Stoller
Jeanette Sutherland
Johanna Valente
Johanna Wermuth
Virginia Woych
Virginia Young
Cheryl Zmudzinski

RCK Retiree Ginny Woych & Spouse

Former WCT President Ralph Capasso & Mrs. Capasso

New Retiree Johanna Valente (Van Wyck)

New Retiree David Bloom (Kinry) & Spouse
Fishkill Plains Students Break Their Own Record.
By Steve Schwartz

During March 2011, the third, fourth, and fifth grade students at Fishkill Plains Elementary School voluntarily participated in the Saint Jude Children’s Research Hospital Math-A-Thon program. It is a known fact that St. Jude’s Hospital treats children with serious diseases like cancer and genetic immune defects.

The Math-A-Thon program allows students to build and practice essential math skills while they raise funds for kids battling Cancer at St. Jude. Each child who participated was required to get a sponsor to pledge a certain amount of money for each math problem they could answer correctly.

This year the students raised $10,753. This is the highest the school ever raised. Since the school started participating in this fundraiser, our school has raised $62,965 for the hospital. We are so proud of the students. Mrs. Fitzsimmons class raised the most money this year which was $2,003. Fourth grader Victoria Pacacha in Mrs. Chernay’s class raised the most money, which was $600.

This was indeed another shining example of how the students at Fishkill Plains dedicate themselves to showing “acts of kindness”, specifically for the benefit of other children. The project proved to be an achievement that students, teachers, and administration are proud to announce. Character Education lessons teach us to seize every opportunity to perform gracious “acts of kindness” towards others!

Congratulations to all!
Brinckerhoff Staff Adopt-A-Highway Crew—
Cleaned up a One-Mile Stretch of Route 82

Brian LaSusa, Terri Langer, John Neveol, Renae Vena, Sandy Smith, Bob Furlong,
Amy McNamara, Barbara Haan, Jen Kirschenheiter, Megan Calimano,
Kathleen Howard, Greg Renino
Each year that I have attended the NYSUT Convention, I always try to focus on one aspect to report about and I always come back rejuvenated and inspired. Not that this year was any different, but throughout the convention I kept thinking how this would be my last one to attend. This year’s theme was, “United We Lead”. It reveals the commitment NYSUT has made to collaborate with other unions to preserve the working middle class and not allow what the unionists before us fought and even died for, to have been for nothing.

Thinking back to my earlier days in teaching, 1969, I worked in a non-union private institution for severely mentally handicapped youngsters who were not permitted to attend public school. I loved it there and we were like a big family, but the working relationship with the board of directors did not allow for discussion about benefits, hours or salary. By my fourth year there, my colleagues and I discussed negotiating a new contract. Each of us met with the director to discuss our own issues separately. It was then that I suggested finding out about unionizing. Some teachers were worried because they had been there for years and weren’t certified. It took lots of work, but we did get a union and those teachers without credentials were grandfathered in because experience counts and they too needed to be protected. From then on I learned first hand the importance of collective bargaining and maintaining a safe and secure workplace that respected me as a teacher.

Well, here I am all these years later and unions are facing those same issues. Nearly every speaker at the RA focused on solidarity, civil rights, and labor rights. We as workers are what America is and was built on. Nearly every speaker reiterated that Wall Street started the problem, we bailed them out, but we need economic security to stay in our communities, pay our taxes and create economic activity.

Then there were the social justice issues. We learned more about the union’s efforts to fight bullying. A young man and woman from New York high schools spoke eloquently on opening our classrooms to dialogue and to take a stand against bullying. I thought to myself that these are two future activists who will continue to make our nation great. Fair Trade and helping those children and women who are enslaved in the world was depicted in another video. Last but not least was the issue of violence against women, an problem that continues to increase in our country. All of these issues are important to us because as well as our commitment to children, we have a commitment to protect human rights.

I always report to all of you of the wonderful entertainment provided by New York students. It reminds us all of the importance of the arts in education. The first group was an award winning choir from Walt Whitman High School. Then there was the Celtic Dreams, a step dancing troupe of 7-12 year olds of African American and Hispanic backgrounds. The instructor was a music teacher from Ireland and you could see the dedication she had to her students and the students to her. She spoke of how the last four years they have learned so much about each others cultures. Isn’t that what Americans are supposed to do? It was a beautiful event.

So what did I come away with? The theme made me somewhat nostalgic and I recalled the 60s and the marches and sit-ins I attended. The speakers reminded me that we are fighting to preserve the American Dream and that education is the pathway. Sitting there with over 2000 delegates made me feel proud to be a delegate. Spending time with my colleagues from Wappingers made me feel that it was an honor and I will truly miss them.
Wappingers Congress of Teachers
Presents

**NYSUT’s Defensive Driving Program**
(Recognized by the National Safety Council)

THIS COURSE IS OFFERED TO WCT MEMBERS AND IMMEDIATE FAMILY ONLY

**TUESDAY, MAY 31, 2011 & TUESDAY, JUNE 7 2011—6 p.m. to 9 p.m.**

Sessions will be held at Roy C. Ketcham High School, Room Large Group Instruction.

Family members are welcome to participate. A fee of **$30.00** per person is necessary to cover cost of materials. (Participants MUST attend both sessions).

**If you subscribe to auto insurance through NYSUT Member Benefits (METPAY), there is a $25.00 refund.**

Benefit to Participants:
Upon completion of the course, members and their family members, who are principal operators of a vehicle, are entitled to a ten percent reduction in the base rate of their liability (bodily injury and property damage), no-fault (personal injury) and collision insurance premiums each year for three years.

WCT members and their family members who complete the course may receive a subtraction of up to four points on their driving records. This applies only to points for violations occurring within the 18 months immediately before course completion. It does not affect points for earlier violations and can never be used as a “credit” for future points. Points may be reduced only once in any 18-month period.

To register, send the clip-off below and your check to the WCT office ASAP. Reservations will be accepted on a “first come, first serve” basis. No cancellations after Thursday, May 26, 2011.

Member’s Name __________________________________________

Are you attending? Yes______ No______

Family Members (Attending) 1)____________________________ 2)____________________________ 3)____________________________

School (School Mail Location) __________________________

Home Phone _________________________________________

A check for **$30.00 per person** must accompany this form. Please make check payable to “WCT.” You must be a WCT member or WCT family member to enroll in this course.
New Babies...

Congratulations to Carmelita Suefert (JJ English) and her husband Evo Rondini (VW Math) on the birth of their daughter Gisela Beatrice on March 28th.

Oak Grove collaborates with Dutchess County March of Dimes
by Dawn Turpin

Oak Grove Elementary School collaborated up with the Dutchess County Chapter of the March of Dimes. With the help of the peer mediation group the children they raised $430 to keep all babies healthy from March 29, 2011-April 5, 2011. The March of Dimes is a wonderful charity and they will be hosting at walk/family fun day on Sunday May 1st at 10:00 am. The event will be held at the Walkway over the Hudson on Route 9, in Poughkeepsie. You are all welcome to attend the event to see just where the money is going, and meet our mission family. You may also create walk teams on your own if you want to do so. Just go to Marchforbabies.org and sign up under your family or team name, it’s a great way to honor any premature babies you may know. Mr. Lander’s 5th grade class raised the most money ($111.67) and will receive a pizza party for lunch. Mr. Marrinan’s 5th grade class came in 2nd place with $51.20 and Mrs. Tarpey’s 4th grade class came in 3rd place raising $50.65.

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Important Information about the WCT Welfare Trust Fund...

Trustees:
Christine Romano, Chairperson
Kim Mahusky, Treasurer
Erin Mulligan, Secretary
Flip Gertler, Trustee
Pasquale Delli Carpini, Trustee
Ronnie Dwyer, Administrator

WCT Telephone Number:
845-227-5065
Daniel H. Cook Telephone Number:
1-800-342-6651

- You must let the WTF know of any changes in your personal information ASAP
- Student verification forms must be sent to Daniel H. Cook every semester
- Dental & prescription reimbursement forms are on-line at the WTF website
- Please direct all questions & concerns to the WCT office or directly to Daniel H. Cook

from the... WCT Welfare Trust Fund

A financial consultant from Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. will be in the WCT office on the following dates:

- May 17, 2011
- June 14, 2011

Appointments are (1) hour blocks available between 2pm & 6pm on a first come first served basis.
When you call the office to schedule an appointment, we will forward a questionnaire to you. Please complete it and bring it with you to the meeting.

Since these slots fill up very quickly CALL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

The WCT office number is 227-5065.

If the above dates are not convenient for you, call Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. directly at 1-888-949-1925 and other arrangements may be possible.
Get Your WCT Gear

Short sleeve tees, long sleeve tees, and lanyards are available for purchase at the WCT Office. Shirts range in size from small through 3X. Please stop by the office to make your purchases. Payment for these items must be a check made out to WCT - cash will not be accepted.

WCT Gear is available at the WCT Office:

- $9 for short sleeve tee
- $12 for long sleeve tee
- $2 for lanyards

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FOR SALE: Sage green microfiber motion sofa (recliners on both ends). 85” long. Excellent condition. Asking $300.00. Call (845) 635-3463

FOR SALE: Kreepy Krauly automatic in ground pool cleaner. Used one season. Asking $150.00. Call (845) 635-3463

Caretaker Needed: East Fishkill Historical Society in Hopewell is in need of a caretaker for the main house, barn, and schoolhouse. Must live on premises—1BR, upgraded Bath, LR, EIK, heat included. Rent is $400/month beginning April 1st. References required with 1/month security. Call 227-4136.

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WCT COMMENTATOR Policy

The content of the WCT COMMENTATOR shall reflect the official positions and policies of the WCT, with the following three exceptions:

1. The President of the WCT should present his/her views in a message to the members from time to time, but not less than bimonthly.

2. Signed Letters to the Editor (of responsible length) containing personal views from members and subscribers shall be published subject to laws of libel.

3. Members of the WCT may place articles adhering to the Canons of Journalism concerned with WCT positions, policies, and issues of interest to teachers in the Commentary Section. (For both Letters to the Editor and the Commentary Section, the writer’s name and WCT affiliation shall be attached, and an editor’s note shall accompany these sections indicating that “The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the official views and policies of the WCT.”)

Reprints of articles from the WCT COMMENTATOR are allowable only with the permission of the WCT President.

WCT COMMENTATOR Advertising Policy

The WCT COMMENTATOR advertising policy as adopted by the Executive Board is as follows:

Noncommercial (Personal) ads for WCT MEMBERS only will be run for two issues at no charge.

Commercial (Business) ads for WCT MEMBERS only: guaranteed placement for half of the school year, $35.00 per half year payable Sept. 15th and Feb. 1st or $5.00 per issue.