## OUR HONORED RETIREES

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<th>Louis Bonifati</th>
<th>Barbara Haan</th>
<th>Marsha Moy</th>
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<td>Lynn Garcia-Lutri</td>
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## 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

- Barbara Barysh
- Sherry Clarke
- Pasquale Delli Carpini
- Jennifer Slater

## National Board Certification

- Katrina Duffy
- Gina Kreso
- Colette Plassmann
- Louise Rose
- Jennifer Soltish
- S.D. Turpin-Orgetas

## Members Granted Tenure

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<td>Carly Fletcher</td>
<td>Jeani Lyons</td>
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<td>Kelly French</td>
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<td>Phillip Toretta</td>
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Deborah Plambeck  I began my teaching career at Dutchess County BOCES. In 1997, I was hired by the Wappingers School District as a kindergarten teacher. I have spent all my years in the district at Fishkill Plains School in room 21. During that time, I was afforded the opportunity to provide a solid foundation for so many students to achieve academic success. Touching so many lives has been such a rewarding and memorable experience. I am left with many memories that I will treasure forever.

I will miss the constant challenge of teaching and watching students succeed. I will no longer have my precious students or be able to listen to all the priceless stories they have to tell.

I plan to enjoy life to the fullest with my wonderful family, five beautiful grandchildren, and dear friends. While I look forward to enjoying my retirement and moving into the next phase of my life, I leave with a heavy heart. I will truly miss my students and colleagues, and wish everyone the very best. To Fishkill Plains School, I leave behind the echo of my laugh!

Marsha Moy  Looking back over my career in Wappingers, the word fortunate keeps coming to mind. I am fortunate to have started subbing in this district (I learned so much from all the different experiences), and fortunate to have gotten my first full time assignment in second grade, and later at fifth and sixth grade, at Fishkill School. I worked and enjoyed life with so many talented, inspirational, compassionate, and fun-loving mentors, community members, and friends to guide me for eight years. I was fortunate that my husband John, and a generation later, my daughters Meagan and Julie, all graduated from that school and we share a bond being Fishkill Frogs!

After being at home for seven years with my children, I was fortunate to get back into the Wappingers district when Kinry Road reopened and I was hired as a second grade teacher at the new K-3 building...Vassar Road. I have been so fortunate to share these past 20 years surrounded again with dedicated, talented, supportive, and creative friends. I am fortunate when I say goodbye to them in June, I can go back to visit them in our building in September thanks to such a strong community of parents working to keep the building open.

I am fortunate, and give a special thanks, to all those dedicated to protecting and improving our rights over these many years. Our salaries and retirement benefits mean that I will be able to enjoy this next chapter of life with my family and friends with great anticipation.
Dear Colleagues,

After two years of arduous negotiations, the WCT and the WCSD—with the help of mediator Martin Sheinman—reached a memorandum of agreement May 1, 2014 that is both educationally sound and fiscally responsible. I would like to thank and recognize the negotiating team: Martha Bilsback, Flip Gertler, Raymond Koretsky, Michael Lyons, Michelle Ross, and Steve Berman (NYSUT's LRS) for their patient, diligent work and relentless pursuit towards a successful resolution of a four year agreement that will expire June 30, 2016.

Aside from making significant financial gains, we were able to preserve, protect and improve benefits that are dear to both the active members and retirees as well. Health insurance is of paramount importance at every negotiation. I’m proud to say that through research, hard work and perseverance, we were able to keep and improve the health insurance plans by going to the Empire Blue Cross/Blue Shield Healthy Advantage PPO and replacing the MVP/HMO and the CDPHP with the Empire Blue Cross/Blue Shield EPO 20 that affords our members the same extensive network as the PPO. The negotiating team was able to retain such an important benefit and at the same time save a significant amount of money for the district in order to make the settlement possible without further burdening the taxpayers.

To keep the portability, the depth and the level of benefits for our members and their families, there is a more out of pocket cost sharing in the form of increased copays and coinsurance as explained in the many informational presentations made since May 8, 2014. I’m aware that change is not something that most of us are comfortable with, but the fees associated with the plans have remained the same for the past fifteen years. In order to keep the same level of benefits, these changes were necessary and also dictated by the Affordable Care Act’s looming “40% Cadillac Tax” that would affect health insurance premiums as of 2018. We are very close to that threshold with the present plan. Both the members and the District would have to pay their share of the 40% tax set by the government, and that’s simply not affordable by either side.

During negotiations, we were very cognizant of the hardship that the cost increase would represent for our members, especially the retirees. To address these concerns, a copay/coinsurance reimbursement plan of up to $300 has been established through the WCT Welfare Trust Fund, following the same procedure as with the drug reimbursement plan. This will give the members a veritable choice of health insurance without incurring an increased financial burden.

Continued page 6: Change
Barbara Haan Being a teacher has been an amazing experience. I have had the opportunity to teach primary grades (Grades 1 and 2) and secondary grades (Grade 4). While teaching grades 1 and 2 I was able to see the daily gains of students learning to become readers and writers.

While teaching fourth graders I saw the thrill of students’ faces light up when using the right words to explain an idea. The discussions and connections made helped pave the path to learning.

The work has been hard but the rewards plentiful. The daily grind of testing, dealing with behavior issues, and ever changing curriculum are nothing compared to the joy received when a child experiences success in your classroom. It is a career that I wouldn’t have traded for any other – one that has been full of irreplaceable memories.

Christine Romano This September will be the first time since 1957 that I will not prepare to go back to school...as a student, as a parent or as a teacher.

As I reflect on my 31 year career I realize how much things have changed and how much things have stayed the same.

I was lucky to teach in several school districts with Wappingers being the bulk of my career. I have had the pleasure of working with so many wonderful colleagues, staff, and administrators. I could not have asked for a more enjoyable job. It is what I wanted to do from the first day I walked into my class at St. Brigids School in Brooklyn. I saw my first grade teacher and knew that was what I wanted to do with my life.

I am ready to move on to the next chapter. I have places to go, people to see, and lots to do. What I am looking forward to the most is traveling in the OFF season. Visiting my children, enjoying my granddaughter, having lunch with friends during the week, and just plain handing around are at the top of my list. I hear from fellow retirees that Sunday night will take on a new meaning in retirement and I can’t wait.

I say to all who still have many years left to keep on plugging away. Fight for what you know is right in education and always remember that the kids come first. I smile when I think of the hundreds of students who have crossed my path and their unique personalities. Their memory is what makes me realize how lucky I have been. I leave with fond thoughts and great satisfaction at the career choice I made. I will miss everyone and wish all the best of luck for all the years to come.
Students at Orchard View read excerpts from Beverly Donofrio. In the memoir, Ms. Donofrio shares how she became a teen mother and a high school dropout at fifteen. After several years of struggling at motherhood, she eventually went to college and pursued her childhood dream of becoming a writer. She spoke with the students about the importance of admitting, embracing, and moving beyond your mistakes. She also spoke to them about the necessity of having either a college degree or a marketable job skill. She encouraged them all to pursue their passions and leave their doubts behind. The students were attentive and engaged, asking a variety of questions. They enjoyed a casual and friendly dialogue with Ms. Donofrio, who ended by advising them: “Be real and be honest about who you are, and grow from your experiences, that’s really your most important job in this world.”
On behalf of the negotiating team, I would like to thank all of you for your patience, support and confidence during the onerous process of negotiations. Your trust in our ability to represent you in such important and vital matters gave us the strength and courage to forge forward and remain focused to accomplish the task at hand. It was truly an honor and a privilege and at times a humbling experience.

Simultaneously, the WCT was engaged in the 2014 budget vote campaign and BOE candidates' election. Once again, through the hard work of our members, the budget passed by over 62% and the Union-endorsed candidates gained the five available seats on the board. I would be remiss if I did not recognize and thank our Administrative Assistant, Ronnie Dwyer, for her steadfast, consummate professionalism, and encomiable planning throughout this process. Cliff Foley always plays an integral role in this procedure: from interviewing BOE candidates to revising and reframing their informational pamphlet. His guidance and experience in the political arena is invaluable and much appreciated. Recognition and thanks also go to Welfare Trust Fund chair Christine Romano. She is retiring this year, after a long and distinguished career. Her many years of service to the Fund have ensured unprecedented benefits to our members. Theresa Stowell is accepting the responsibilities as the new WTF Trustee.

For the future, it is crucial to increase member involvement within our Local and the community. It is important to remain vibrant and strong. We cannot wane in executing our responsibilities! We should not rest on our laurels and become stagnant. A strong Union is always proactive, visible and unified during good and bad times. At this time, I would like to wish you and your families a peaceful, rejuvenating, and well-deserved summer vacation. See you in September!

In solidarity,

Pasquale Delli Carpini

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**A MEMBER’S QUOTE PRIOR TO SETTLING THE CONTRACT**

“As a child of the 60’s I am use to getting things done with numbers of people. The more people you had the better to make a point. The numbers we are getting at the flagpole are really sending the wrong message that is weakness. We need the whole faculty out there to send the message of solidarity and strength.” *Jim Melanson*
As a long time teacher of WCSD (30 years) and current retiree, I would like to congratulate the WCT membership on the recent district elections and the long overdue but ultimately successful contract negotiations. Hopefully the public and the Board of Education can now put what I understand was a difficult and acrimonious election season behind them and concentrate on the needs of the students of the WCSD.

One of the issues at hand is the proposed closure of Orchard View School. As a member of the committee that originally worked on creating this alternative program for the district, I would like to provide some history and the rationale behind its creation. For years and years and years, secondary teachers and administrators bemoaned the lack of an alternative program for students who were not succeeding in the large, conventional high school setting. Attendance issues, personal and social distractions and behavioral concerns were just some of the factors leading to student failure and teacher frustration. Over and over again the idea of an alternative program for this group of students was broached, meetings held, committees developed, and recommendations made, only to have them “filed” and never heard from again.

Approximately six years ago (time has a different meaning for retirees!) one of these committees on which I served, actually brought the idea of an alternative program to fruition and Orchard View was created. It is important to remember that it was TEACHERS who pushed for this program, TEACHERS who largely felt the impact when students were not succeeding in their classrooms, and TEACHERS working at the new school who ultimately saw student turn their lives around.

Orchard View was designed as a voluntary program to which the students had to apply. Students who "lost their way" and had trouble regaining their academic footing in the large, conventional high school setting were the target audience. For the most part, this plan filled OV with students who wanted to be here. There was a strict attendance policy and any student who went over the attendance limit was dropped from particular classes or from the program altogether. Student/school contracts were signed and adhered to and families were expected to play an active role in making sure their students followed school policies. Structure was an important component because we knew that part of the target students’ problems was the inability to focus enough to make wise academic decisions in an environment that lacked clear limits on behavior and work expectations. Smaller classes, increased counseling, and the inability to “get lost,” figuratively or physically (!) in the larger school environment all helped these students begin to meet with success.

Students, teachers and administrators lives have not become easier since the time that Orchard View opened. We all know the opposite is true. Why then do any of us think closing OV is a viable option for WCSD? The students are still there, the need is still there; the will needs to be there as well. Drop-out rates, failure rates, time spent on discipline, filling out forms, keeping records, etc (all of which I understand are now under increased scrutiny) will only increase and guess what – you’ll be back to square one with TEACHERS bemoaning the lack of an alternative for this group of students. Why not speak out now, before all are negatively affected, rather than try to right the wrong years down the road?
It is the distinct honor to present the WCT 2014 Janet and Ralph Capasso scholarship to Devon Stuart.

Devon Stuart is the daughter of Brian and Caryn Stuart and a senior at Minisink High School. Caryn is a special education teacher at John Jay High School. Devon is an honor student and a member of the National Honor Society, Key Club, Student Council, Youth in Government and the National Technical Honor Society. Devon has assumed a leadership role in her class as president for her junior and senior year. Devon will be attending Ithaca College in the fall pursuing a degree in Physical Therapy.

Devon balances her studies with many volunteer activities. Devon has devoted a significant amount of time volunteering at the Fed by Grace food pantry where she was motivated to bake over 75 loaves of homemade bread for the food baskets.

The committee was most impressed by Devon’s significant poise, grace and humility during her interview. Devon spoke about her passion and excitement for her future studies in physical therapy. Devon is currently completing her rotations in physical therapy with her classes at the New Visions Medical program at BOCES. Devon’s teacher put it best when she described Devon as “the quintessence of resolve and intellect, a student about whom all educators dream.”

Committee Member: Eileen Clancy
Tonight I have the honor to speak to you about Laura Dixon, a senior at John Jay High School. Laura impressed us by being a very bright young lady, ranking 12th in her graduating class of 550 students. Not only is Laura an exceptional student academically and an AP Scholar, she has also been involved as an active member of the National Honor Society, the Math Honor Society, and the Spanish Honor Society. She is highly respected and well-liked by both her peers and the faculty for her endearing personality and academic success.

Her involvement in honor societies and cheerleading demand a large investment of afterschool time and she has successfully been able to balance her extracurricular schedule while achieving a high level of academic success throughout the years. In her essay, she described how being involved in the Special Olympics affected her in a positive way.

Being involved with the Breast and Ovarian Cancer Society and the Special Olympics has enabled her to grow more cognizant of others and develop endearing qualities such as compassion and understanding. We seldom find these fine qualities in today’s world.

Laura looks forward to attending Northeastern University in the fall where she plans to study to become an orthodontist. Her empathetic nature and ability to deal well with people will surely be essential assets as she pursues her professional goals. We sincerely applaud your noteworthy accomplishments and wish you the very best for the future and success in all your endeavors.

Committee Member: Maria Delli Carpini
The young lady I am introducing to you tonight will be graduating in just a few weeks from Millbrook High School, and will be attending the University of Delaware in the fall, where she plans to pursue a course of study leading to veterinary school. She is passionate about wildlife, and hopes to someday work with tigers.

Brittany Keenan is the daughter of Van Wyck 6th Grade Math and ELA Teacher Sean Keenan. She immediately impressed us with her cheerful personality, compassionate outlook, and passion to make a difference in the lives of others. Highly influenced by the Hugh O’Brian Youth Leadership program, she describes herself growing from a “social butterfly” to “a thinker whose thoughts turn into realities.” As evidenced through her transcript, Brittany has never been afraid to take on a challenge. Whether academic, personal, or social, Brittany faces each endeavor with enthusiasm and determination. Outside of school, she is actively involved with athletics and community service, and also spends time working with various organizations involved with veterinary care.

Brittany’s guidance counselor states, “Brittany has become an excellent ambassador for the underdog. She does not hesitate to speak up when she sees an injustice or unkind act. She is tolerant of the views and beliefs of others, while remaining true to her own convictions.”

Brittany has proven herself to be a leader for her school and community, and we are confident that she will continue to involve herself in activities through which she can make a difference in the world around her. We wish her luck, and hope that she will always maintain her faith in herself, compassion towards others, and courage to pursue her dreams and make them become realities.

Committee Member: Anchala Sobrin

WJHS 75th Anniversary!

WJHS will soon be 75 years young! Many of you have many happy memories of this great building. The cornerstone will be commemorated with a small ceremony this September. The graduating class of 1957 will be on hand for this occasion since it occurs during their class reunion. On September 19, 2015 there will be more festivities to celebrate the 75th birthday, so please save the date!
A PUBLICATION OF THE WAPPINGERS CONGRESS OF TEACHERS

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Trustees:

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

FROM THE WCT WELFARE TRUST FUND

An attorney and a financial planner will be in the WCT office on the following dates:

Wednesday, July 9, 2014
Wednesday, August 20, 2014

Call WCT office for appointment: 845-227-5065

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS:

WCT OFFICE: 845-227-5065
DANIEL H. COOK 800-342-6651
MIRKIN & GORDON (LAWYERS) 914-997-1576
DAVIS VISION 800-999-5431
STACY BRAUN ASSOC (FINANCIAL) 888-949-1925
HEALTH ADVOCATE 866-695-8622

DIRECTIONS TO WCT OFFICE
2537 ROUTE 52, SUITE 15
HOPEWELL JUNCTION, NY 12533

- Heritage Square complex east of Rt 376 and 52 and west of the Taconic
- Enter parking lot and make second right
- Use front entrance
- Go to 2nd floor, door at the end Suite 15
Since the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year, the National Honors Society has been volunteering and lending helping hands to all parts of our community.

Our members made appearances at events such as freshman orientation and parent night in order to introduce the underclassmen and their parents to Roy C. Ketcham. Volunteers acted as mentors for their younger classmates. We also attended events such as Interact’s Taste of Ketcham and the PTSA’s Annual Car Show, and we will soon be volunteering at the annual senior senior prom as well.

Many of our members also aided guidance during their hectic scheduling season over the summer. One of our largest events was the school-wide blood drive, which was hosted by the American Red Cross. Our officers ensured that the event flowed smoothly and that the doctors and nurses did not feel overwhelmed by the large number of student and faculty donors.

Throughout the year, we have also collected a large amount of donations. Our members donated cat goods to be sent to Mid-Hudson Animal Aid’s burnt down cat shelter. We also collected jeans for Aeropostale’s Teens for Jeans to help homeless teens across America, and we brought in books to be used as study aids for those who can’t afford to buy their own.

Students also donated food for our holiday baskets. We made some visits to our local elementary schools as well with the Sheafe Road Fall Festival and the Evans Halloween Fun Night. The members also volunteered at the Knights of Columbus for a pancreatic cancer fundraiser and appeared at our annual Orange Out basketball game in honor of a leukemia survivor, Nick Scianna.

Our most current project is Mr. Ketcham, which occurred March 21. This is one of the National Honors Society’s largest fundraisers and never fails to bring the entire Ketcham community together.

Many new arrivals to our Fishkill Plains community this year!

Eric Kedzielawa and Kelly Kimler each welcomed baby boys to their families! Michelle Moroney, Amanda Greco, Rachel Leone, Adam McCaffrey, Amy Buckingham, Lindsey Wessels, and Jill Mierisch all welcomed baby girls! Cristine Blake welcomed twins- a boy and a girl! Joanne Gleason, Denise Lombardi, Teri Brothers and Jeannine Beaumont all welcomed Grandbabies this year too!

If you lost count... that was 16 new babies in all!
Congratulations to everyone!

Bill and Jeannie Newman, from JJ and Vassar Rd respectively, welcome their son Ryan William born Tuesday May 28th.

The JJ Librarian Kim Hooper and her husband are enjoying daughter Grace Daryl.

JJ teacher Jason Jutt and his wife are happy to have their son Brody Joseph on May 5th.
Kathleen A. Conroy
Roy C. Ketcham High School
Business Education Teacher
FBLA Advisor
Work Based Learning Coordinator

Annual Car Show
Roy C. Ketcham hosted the 4th Annual Car Show as a fundraiser for several of its clubs. Students from FBLA, the Future Business Leaders of America, took advantage of this opportunity to raise money for upcoming competitions. Their booth included baked goods, a raffle, and delicious smoothies. Fundraising is essential to the group, allowing them to participate in multiple competitions across the state that are otherwise difficult to compete in. They worked extremely hard to meet their goals, and plan to put extreme effort into upcoming competitions.

The 10 FBLA students who competed in Rochester and received ribbons in the following categories:

1. **Snap Shot Award** (for Social Media) Submitted 5 pictures or videos of different events on Facebook or Twitter for FBLA Chapter.
2. **Perfect Press Award** (Press Releases) Reporter for the chapter submitted at least 5 articles to the NYS FBLA Express and local newspapers.
3. **Baby Bucks Award** Raised money for the FBLA'S state charity March of Dimes.
4. **March of Dimes Madness Award** Community Service Award
5. **Early Bird Award** Had all members (44 students) registered with the state by October 15th 2013.
6. And **Camille Secor** won for Roy C. Ketcham High School in the category of **Business Math** as a **State Champion** and she will be representing our school at Nashville, Tenn. **National Competitions** June 29-July 2nd, 2014.
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May/June '14