POCHINTESTA NEW SUPT.
Understanding, vision, heart

“Some candidates articulate a platform without believing it. I see it differently.
“My vision is to have understanding of the community and its values. I’ll work with the stakeholders and seek to understand them. This is where I work.
“Understanding what makes the district tick and what the community values are critical elements in formulating vision,” said Marco Pochintesta prior to his appointment as WCSD superintendent at the Monday, February 4 Board of Education meeting.

Pochintesta was Asst. Supt. of Administration for two years and became Interim Supt. in April of 2012. While building principal at John Jay High, he had not thought of district leadership at that time and was not thinking of district administration. Former Supt. James Parla suggested he consider pursuing an Asst. Supt. role two years before Parla retired. What Parla saw in Marco, as he prefers to be called, was his ability to solve problems, lead, and build consensus.

“I am a worker. I have no campaign, no platform, and I stay out of politics. The issues I identify and propose solutions for have to pass the tests of merit. My actions are the same. The district’s size doesn’t intimidate me. I’ve grown up in it. I’m aided by knowing the issues and the people I work with to address them.

“My team concept is relationships. The strength of relationships with my colleagues and their talent comes to mind. The strengths I have in interpersonal skills have worked for me as Asst. Supt. It’s my ability to work with people to solve problems and meet challenges. That’s the power of relationships.

“I prefer rolling up my sleeves, being with people, seeing things visually and hands on. Tell me the idea and then show me. I’m a good learner/listener. I prefer management by shoe leather and putting in the miles. I work at a table, and then let me go see a school.”

Marco’s father was in the restaurant business where he had to understand work experiences for different groups of people. Marco learned to get to know people through their work and how to gain an understanding of their challenges, the talent they bring to the table, how they all work together. “It’s all in how we contribute and in our knowing how we can best achieve a common goal,” he added.

“As a district, we are a good district. My responsibility is to present and promote the good things we do as a district of excellence. It is important work. We all need to do this.”

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From The President

Dear WCRT Members,

Happy New Year! This year has started out differently in our family with my husband, John, getting a double knee replacement on Jan 8th. He was three days in the hospital and then eight days in Helen Hayes Rehab Hospital. It has been quite painful, but at this writing he is walking with a walker and doing the stairs with a cane. The worst is past and he is recuperating well. Our son is a PT and is very happy with his progress. Thanks to all of you for your cards, concerns, and prayers.

In mid January I received a call from a contact person from a non-profit organization formed in 2009 called Hudson Valley Home Matters. The mission of this organization is to offer help to seniors 50 and over who want to stay in their own homes. It sounded like something some of us could take advantage of, but in fact they are looking for volunteers. They would love to work with retired teachers because we are so responsible. I was assured that they do background checks and provide training for volunteers.

If you would like more information their website is www.hvhomematters.org. The contact person is Barbara Doblas at 845.558.5245. Please tell her you heard about Hudson Valley Home Matters from the WCRT.

Think spring - the seed catalogs are on the way.

Susan Roger

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**Newsletter distribution process, renewals, dues info**

Some WCRT members who want to receive the *Commentator* and *PostScript* by email have not received them. Contact www.wcteachers.org or Ronnie Dwyer at the WCT office wct@frontiernet.net if the problem continues. Retirees give the WCRT their email address. The WCT maintains the email list for publication. Prohibitive U.S. Mail costs may soon force us to cancel postal mailings, so please consider going green to save money.

The *Commentator* and *PostScript* may be viewed at www.wcteachers.org.

Several retirees have almost had their NYSUT benefits cancelled because they neglected to pay their WCT dues. Calls to the office and checks sent in a panic have mitigated the problem. Make checks payable to WCRT and mail to WCT.

Renewal notices have been sent out. Dues for 2012-2013 will be:

- $20.00 Yearly
- $200.00 Individual Lifetime
- $325.00 Couples Lifetime

Pay lifetime and alleviate the yearly task of renewing.

**SAVE THESE DATES**

(future details coming soon)

- Mar. 21    Deadline for April, 2013 *PostScript*
- Apr. 23    WCRT Executive Board meeting, 10:00a.m.
  Deadline for February, 2013 *PostScript*
- May 7     WCRT Spring Luncheon, Christos, noon,
  help food pantry on this National Teacher’s Day
- May 30    RC 13 Spring Luncheon, Christos Restaurant, 11:00a.m.
The NYSUT Legislative Luncheon was held at the end of January. Three members of the Wappingers Congress of Teachers executive board and I traveled to Kingston to meet with area elected officials and make our concerns known. Each attendee is assigned to a table where either a state assemblyman, state senator or Congressman joined the group. The majority of the participants were active teachers with a handful of retirees sprinkled in. It gave those of us who are enjoying the “easy life” a real feel for how things in the classroom have changed and how the issues of 2013 have impacted the profession that WCRT members enjoyed for many years.

NYSUT provides talking points to help us get the discussion off and running. Most of you can probably list a number of the top concerns facing education in New York State.

Leading the list is the 2% tax cap. In order for a school district to go over this cap, they need a super majority of 60% of the public voting to approve the action. NYSUT recommends amending the law to exempt certain school district expenses beyond the control of the district and replacing the super majority with a simple majority.

A second list topper is State Aid. According to the notes from NYSUT, they have, “...lost close to 35,000 education jobs in the last three years.” They go on to say that, “If we are going to have our students compete globally, we must do more to engage those of us who are enjoying the “easy life” and get them ready. We can’t directly affect them. They should be staying involved and offering possible solutions to avoid the long-term negative impacts on negotiations, attitudes toward pensions and health care that could be harmful to all of us in the future.

A major issue for 2013’s teachers is the APPR (Annual Professional Performance Review). This is the new evaluation procedure that each district has had to develop and get approved by the State Education Department and is an outgrowth of the federal program called Race to the Top. New York, by agreeing to create the new evaluation system, has netted $700 million from Washington. The bottom line seems to be that IF AND WHEN you get an approved evaluation plan, the districts will get some money sent to them. Fail to have this in place and the government will withhold a 4% increase in aid. This could be called educational funding by blackmail.

One of the biggest problems with this new way to “improve” the education of our children is that it bases a good part of a teacher’s evaluation on student test scores. With two years of unsatisfactory evaluations a teacher, even with tenure, can be fired. There are many unanswered questions and unfortunate side effects already associated with this system: What happens when 3rd graders are made to sit and take tests for long periods and they end up in tears or they just fill in the blanks to get done? Where do we place student teachers when we can’t find cooperating teachers who will risk students doing poorly on standardized tests? What happens to the teacher who goes on maternity leave for a couple of months? What happens to morale when certain people are exempted because no one has figured out how to evaluate positions such as librarians, social workers, art, music and PE teachers? Will we see a major teacher shortage within the next ten years as anti-public-education forces and politicians try to reshape our schools and the profession becomes very unappealing to young people?

Other concerns raised by NYSUT included the failure of the state to fund teacher centers and the need to raise the minimum wage. The luncheon gave educators a good chance to communicate directly with our elected officials.

Retirees should not sit back and be relieved that many of these 2013 issues are not directly affecting them. They should be staying involved and offering possible solutions to avoid the long-term negative impacts on negotiations, attitudes toward pensions and health care that could be harmful to all of us in the future.
Connolly handles Yellowstone, cancer

By Brian Connolly and Heather Connolly Jerome

Editor’s note: No matter how many times Brian “Rocky Balboa” Connolly gets knocked down, he always gets up. Bloody, bruised, and battered but never broken. He constantly arises.

Brian, WCRT Class of 2001, spends his retirement writing about the wolves of Yellowstone. He’s a retired teacher’s everyman, enjoying what he always loved to do, catching up on all that he didn’t have time to do, and dealing with situations none of us wants to have.

His story depicts a retiree’s resilience to overcome adversity while still contributing to education and society. This role model retiree embodies values taught in the classroom, whether with desks and chairs or hills and plains. This union he still represents periodically reads his work and appreciates Brian’s energy and courage. These email excerpts of his knock-down-drag-out 15-round battle with cancer as his opponent provide inspiration to us all as the saga of his legacy continues…

Delisting of Wolf 253M, YouTube photo essay read by author (2005) (link below)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eYGxfIJiBgA

06-26-12 WARM-UP
Hey Bobby, Bill & Rory,

I miss you all so much. Bobby, I hope you found my bookmark in your side door in January. Unfortunately I was on a fast track back to Yellowstone to meet up with an artist friend. A lot happened on that trip east. I had a family reunion in Oberlin, OH with brothers Mike & Chris, their families and Judy. It was sweet and designed to let them know that I had recovered from the cancer. Bummer. But the harder news was they found a second tumor, very small spot, on my left lung. Attempts to cure will involve 18 weeks of chemo followed by surgery followed by radiation.

It’s been a rough trip, but I’m trying not to sweat the small stuff. I’ve enrolled in a special trial in Portland for chemo three days in a row, then return for more three weeks later. My first series of treatments were Wed/Thurs/Fri. On Sat & Sun I hiked 4 miles and yesterday I did 22 miles on my bike. They said to keep active. I may outrun this thing. Heather will send updates for the next nine months. If you’d like to keep up, send her a note and she’ll add you to the list. Last summer I got overwhelmed keeping up with correspondence, so Heather took over that role.

Unfortunately, sarcoma is not a popular cancer and therefore not cost effective in terms of research. The trial I’m in is the first in 30 years. It’s a double-blind study. I’m either getting the new drug in connection with the old, or just a placebo & the old drug. The placebo word reminds me of a girl. I met once who fit that definition. Funny how the mind works.

Hey Bill,

Sorry I haven’t kept up reporting from Yellowstone. This email makes up for it.

BRIAN

CONNOLLY

Yellowstone Correspondent

WCRT Class of 2001

Good news is I wrote a nice essay (which I hope you’ll forward to others) about my trip to the Park last summer with my five-year-old grandson Arlie. It was amazing! I donated the essay to the Yellowstone Park Foundation hoping it could present a way to raise money for them and help me give back the many gifts I received from the Park. *Arlie and Papa in Yellowstone* was so much fun writing and is as much Arlie’s essay as mine. I hope you enjoy it and share it.

*Arlie and Papa in Yellowstone* by Brian A. Connolly
(Aug. 2011)

ROUND 1

Hey, Bobby,

My first day hooked up to the chemo machine, I listed on index cards about 25 ideas for The Yellowstone Poems I hope to write this summer. The second day of hook up, I wrote the first poem: Nature: Three Lessons. I’ll send it on once it has a little polish. The third day I slept.

Hope you all are well. Maybe by spring I can head back your way.

Love, Brian

YELLOWSTONE PARK FOUNDATION E-NEWSLETTER

To ensure delivery, please add info@ypf.org to your address book.

Welcome, Brian, to Yellowstone eNews!

In This Issue: Yellowstone trail crews accomplish enormous amount of work during the park’s short summer season. Find out if they’ll improve your favorite trail helped by YPF’s Trails Fund. We’ll also update you on a big project at Old Faithful, and how you can join us for a special Old Faithful September weekend. Finally, be sure to read the profile of Brian Connolly and his inspiring essay *Arlie and Papa in Yellowstone*. 

YPF Donor Profile: Brian Connolly

He knew he was hooked on the world of the wolf when in February 2002, he found himself on a windy hill in Yellowstone, twenty below zero, with his spotting scope on two wolves bedded on the snow across the valley near Crystal Creek. He thought to himself, “It just doesn’t get better than this.” Avid wolf watcher, author, and longtime Yellowstone Park Foundation (YPF) supporter Brian Connolly talks about why he has made Yellowstone a priority in his life.

LEARN MORE > http://www.ypf.org/site/ R?i=GKmdXN8MoA267cYzcpIPFw

Rory,

Thanks for recent emails. I always love to hear from home. So I’ve saved the very good news for you. I finished another book! *Alphie, the Yellowstone Wolf Pup*, written for 8 to 12 year olds, their grandparents and everyone in between, will be out next spring. The book, set in Yellowstone, traces a wolf pup’s first year of life. A friend here in town came up with a donation to cover half the publication costs. My friend George Bumann, a sculptor in the Park, opened all his sketchbooks for me to choose from for illustrations. (Google him to see some of his work) Maybe I’ll sell enough books to buy one of his bronzes! I’m very excited about this book. I’ll donate part of the profits to the Yellowstone Association who controls bookstores in the Park. That may boost sales. Mostly the book helps young kids connect with Nature and especially predators like wolves. I am pumped on the project and it is excellent to have such a project going on right now.

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Connolly... in Yellowstone

from page 4

07-13-12  ROUND 2

[Heather takes over] Dad finished his second round of chemo today. He is a bit more tired than after his last treatment, but that might be partially from when he took Arlie and his other 6-year-old friend camping last weekend, something most healthy 65 year olds won't even consider! They had a great time camping 2 nights, and playing in the river, and doing boy things all weekend. It was a little overshadowed that on Saturday morning dad's hair started to fall out. Luckily the boys were sleeping so he pulled himself together before they woke up, sat them down and explained what was going on and why he was a bit fragile that day. He reported by the end of the day the boys were disappointed he wasn't completely bald! That cheered him up and on Monday he went and buzzed the hair super short (see photo). Nate and Arlie just had theirs done, so now they are a crew. This week dad's hair started to fall out in patchy manner. He'll shave it bald this weekend. So far his beard is holding up well.

He put some energy into figuring how to manage the chemo side effects, but he is on a good regimen of meds that do a pretty good job. When I checked on him tonight, he was out on his daily 4-mile walk. He hasn't biked as much, but made sure to walk every day.

ROUND 3:

We head to Portland OR and his next round of chemo. His new set of scans (MRI and CT) are August 1 and results will tell us if the chemo is working and help doctors determine to continue the same regimen or make changes. The tumor in the top of the leg is palpable, and dad does not think it grew since chemo started, because it grew noticeably in the month between diagnosis and start of treatment. We feel very positive about this. Scans and results are on dad's birthday, which we take as a good omen.

Scan results on August 3, mean he's officially half done with his entire course of chemo.

08-26-12  ROUND 4

Dad had his 4th chemo treatment last week and is doing pretty well. After #3rd he had a few days when he didn't feel great, but so far this round he is doing better. He had an allergy attack last week and had difficulty with his eyes and skin. His doctor said his allergies will be much worse now that his immune system is depleted and he lost his eyelashes, so his defense system is compromised. He increased his allergy medicine and started using eye drops which have both helped a lot. He stopped his daily 4-mile walking routine due to pain in his right hip from his tumor. Now he can't walk more than a mile without severe difficulty with his hip. You know dad and his need to be active, so he tried his bike again and found it does not aggravate his hip like the walking. He started with 8 miles last week then rode 22 miles yesterday and again today! He never ceases to amaze me!

09-12-12  ROUND 5

Dad is in Portland for chemo round 5. The doctor is pleased with the CT scan results. The lung spot size decreased from an initial 1.5cm to .5cm today which is excellent news. That is the spot they were most concerned about and needs to respond to chemo. The tumor in his leg grew from 5cm to 6.5cm; however it has not spread and still appears well encapsulated. The doctor still feels this is a reasonable growth rate given how quickly it grew prior to chemo and will continue the original plan and finish these last 2 rounds of chemo. We then meet with doctors to discuss surgical removal of the leg tumor and possible surgery on the lung, though we hope by the next CT scan maybe the lung spot will be gone. Dad also had a MUGA heart scan last week as a routine follow up and it showed his heart is very healthy and not negatively affected by chemo.

He decreased his exercise regimen these past few weeks due to inflammation around the leg tumor. He's still very active with Arlie, though he's sad that school started so his little buddy goes to first grade five days a week! But he makes sure they spend quality outdoor time together on weekends. He just stacked 2 cords of wood delivered last week so he is all set for winter.

10-02-12  ROUND 6

Dad is at OHSU for his final round of chemo!!! Yay!!! His oncologist said his red blood cell count is a little down (though still within healthy range) accounting for extreme fatigue the past few weeks. They still think his blood looks good, and proceeded with chemo as planned. His PICC line is removed on Thursday and he is elated. He meets with the oncologist and leg surgeon on Nov.7, then the Thoracic surgeon on the 8th. Those 3 doctors then meet to review all his scans and progress and make a plan for surgery and radiation.

Yellowstone Park Foundation articles (2012) (link below)

http://www.ypf.org/site/R?i=GKMdXN8loA267cYzcpIPFw

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Connolly handles Yellowstone, cancer

from page 5

10-16-12
Dad developed a 103 degree fever on Saturday. Nate took him to the ER in Bend and after fluids and lots of tests they admitted him. Strep test, flu test and urinalysis were all negative. They also ran blood cultures. Results tomorrow. Fever’s cause is severely low white blood cell counts -- common to patients post chemotherapy. Fever well controlled today. If blood cultures come back negative tomorrow, they send him home Thursday, where it’s safer to recover than in a germ hospital. He has a sore throat and cough (a side effect of chemo), but otherwise in decent spirits and keeping nurses on their toes! He is not allowed to receive flowers or plants due to his low immunity, and allowed visits by immediate family only. He is also sad because he is not allowed to be near children (germ factories), so he can’t see Arlie for a little while.

10-17-12
Blood cultures came back negative (yay!), so he’s off antibiotics and oxygen as of this morning. Throat pain has decreased by about 50% since yesterday. White blood cell count is also rising meaning recovery from chemo. Red blood cell count was still quite low today so they gave him blood today to make him feel better. His temperature was under control all day. This is all great news and they plan to release him tomorrow.

10-21-12
Dad went home to Nate’s house on Thursday and slept most of Friday (snuggled up with Nate’s new puppy). He is still very tired/low energy, but feels MUCH better than before the hospital admission. He’s grateful to hospital staff for everything they did; however, he is much happier at home without people taking vitals every half an hour. He’ll stay with Nate until Monday or Tuesday and then go home. His spirits sound much better now and we expect this was the lowest point of all this treatment and he’s going to improve from here. I’m having shoulder surgery on the Nov. 5 and my typing skills will be limited in my sling!

10-21-12
Surgery lasted 3 hours and they removed the entire tumor. It appeared well encapsulated, had no tendrils or fingers penetrating neighboring tissue, and it did not involve any adjacent lymph nodes. Dad is awake, but very groggy. They kept him overnight "for precaution only" but expect him to go home tomorrow.

11-08-12
Dad met with the oncologist and leg surgeon yesterday and thoracic surgeon today. CT scan yesterday showed the leg tumor grew significantly in the last few weeks; however, it’s well encapsulated, more cyst-like than tumor-like, and does not interfere with local nerves or tendons. They plan to surgically remove that tumor next Friday (the 16th). The challenge with this surgery is the tumor’s proximity to an artery in the leg. If the artery is damaged during surgery, they use a left leg vein to fix the damage (rather routine). They do not think this tumor spread at all and are confident surgery removes all cancer from the right leg. After an overnight hospital stay (much better than 5 days he spent last year), he stays with Nate another week until he is up and about on his own. He is VERY excited to get this thing out of his leg and move forward!

The lung tumor continues to shrink and the spot now visible may just be the tumor’s scar tissue. The thoracic surgeon suggested they watch this spot via CT scan every 2-3 months to ensure it does not grow. If size increases, they do surgery to remove 10-25% of the left lung. Of course, Dad’s first question was, “how would that affect my trips to Yellowstone??!” The surgeon said it would make hiking in high elevation more difficult, but he could still go and enjoy. Dad is happy with that.

11-16-12
Surgery lasted 3 hours and they removed the entire tumor. It appeared well encapsulated, had no tendrils or fingers penetrating neighboring tissue, and it did not involve any adjacent lymph nodes. Dad is awake, but very groggy. They kept him overnight "for precaution only" but expect him to go home tomorrow.

12-05-12
Dad eagerly awaits his first shower tomorrow. Doctors reported margins around the tumor were clear after surgical excision and the removed lymph node was not affected by the cancer. The tumor was consistent with metastatic fibro sarcoma -- what we expected. Chemo was 80% effective killing the tumor (in other words 80% of the tumor was completely dead). This is great news. It does beg the question, however, about how effective chemo was against the lung tumor. At his January 10 appointment they do a new lung CT scan for changes in the area after chemo ceased. They then decide if they want to proceed with surgery to remove the lung tumor and its surrounding tissue. We prepare ourselves for their decision to not want to remove the tumor and Dad feels content with that, hoping to beat this once and for all so we don't have to keep fighting it year after year.

He said "I was feeling a little stiff and sore when I woke up so I went for a 3-mile hike and now I'm feeling better." He's doing remarkably well and getting back into his old routine. Arlie’s coming to sleep over tomorrow night and looks forward to start physical therapy on the leg and get back into a routine of feeling good.

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Connolly...

from page 6

1-10-13
The lung surgeon did not have such great news. The spot in his lung, which shrunk considerably during chemotherapy, grew again back to near its original size. That would be OK, but there is now another very small spot in his left lung and a new spot in his right lung. With these new spots, he is no longer a candidate for lung surgery. He received this news today so he waits for an appointment with the oncologist in charge of his last course of chemo before we know the next steps. He couldn’t see that doctor today, so he and Nate headed back to Bend and return to Portland next week to see Dr. Ryan (oncologist). The next step is another course of chemo or radiation or possibly both, but again we won’t know anything until next week at the earliest.

On a positive note, dad felt so good over the holidays he made an impromptu trip to Yellowstone! He spent almost a week there with many friends, both human and wolf, and celebrated New Year’s there. That trip renewed his spirit and reinvigorated him to fight this thing.

1-12-13
Dad figures the best thing to do is keep active, so he got up, did his hour and a half of physical therapy exercises, then went for a 2-mile hike in 4-degree weather. He’s as amazing as ever and keeps up with all his regular activities.

1/30/2013
AND THE WINNER IS...?
The last CT scan results showed new spots the radiologist mentioned were “extremely small” and “difficult to see” and, though not ruled out, he is “not convinced” these new spots are sarcoma. Another scan in 6 weeks will show if they are still there and have grown.

He gave choices for treatment after the next CT scan. If the spots go away or not grow at all, then we return to the thoracic surgeon to consider surgery for the original spot in the lung (dad joked that 3 weeks ago that seemed like worst case scenario and now he’s ready to have them do it today!). If the spots have grown, he has a chemotherapy option for us. One is another clinical trial in Portland combining 2 drugs currently used independently, amplifying the effects. These drugs have more mild side effects than the last course of chemo (he may even keep his hair!), and he can stay on them indefinitely if they work (he maxxed out the last chemo amount so it is no longer an option).

We are not out of the woods by any means, but the news was more positive than expected. We still have reasonable choices and time to make them. Another CT scan March 13 gives a better idea what these new spots are and our next course of treatment. Dad says, “it appears my expiration date was just pushed back a bunch!” (you have to keep a sense of humor through all this).

He developed cellulitis in his right leg from lymphedema caused by his last surgery. He is on antibiotics and I am here forcing him to stay off it which, it turns out, is a full time job! We expect a full recovery from this mere inconvenience.

Thank you all for your support. As always, feel free to contact me with any thoughts and questions.

Heather
New Year, Not Many Changes: January 29 RA Meeting

The meeting began with a small recognition reception for the newest National Board Certified Teachers. It felt good to honor their hard work and dedication to our profession. Pasquale mentioned that we should take notice: They were all women.

Next on the agenda was explaining why our state aid will decrease this year by about $2million: we have no capital projects. Last year we received money for starting full-day kindergarten. We got approval for our APPR plan and will receive state aid. This led to a contract negotiations update.

The WCT is waiting for confirmation of the new Superintendent, which should be Marco Pochintesta. This was postponed due to bad weather and should take place Monday, February 4. 19 candidates were interviewed. Marco and Neil Miller (out of District) were the final candidates. Once finalized, the three-year negotiated contract can be put into place.

If anyone is not aware of Pasquale’s passion for maintaining the best possible health care plan, be assured it is his major concentration as the labor representative in DEHIC. A possibility the consortium by-laws could change opens the door to other changes. A meeting on January 30 will discuss this again and Pasquale is gathering information and votes to avert the change. He will keep us informed of any changes. If you noticed any changes in your insurance payment, thank the premium holiday in December.

Dutchess County Executive’s Arts Awards Winners Announced by Gayla Cawley

The Dutchess County Arts Council announced the winners of the 2012 Executive’s Arts Awards. The awards were presented on October 9 at the 26th Annual Arts Awards Gala by County Executive Marc Molinaro at a dinner ceremony at Villa Borghese in Wappingers Falls.

According to the press release, eight categories were awarded. Millbrook resident Felicitas S. Thorne was honored in the patron category. The Wassaic Project won in the Arts Organization category. Other winners are BMW of the Hudson Valley’s Beacons of Music, Billy Name, the Professional Arts Workshop, the Masque and Mime Society of Roy C. Ketcham High School, the Rhinebeck Chamber Music Society and Delswan Madden.

Business Manager of the Dutchess County Arts Council, Lisa Fiorese, said that the recipients receive recognition for their award and an engraved plaque. There is no cash, just honor and publicity.

Source: The Millbrook Independent, Volume 4 Issue 33

Protect your WCRT, NYSUT membership

Pasquale, Flip Gertler, Mike Lyons and Cliff Foley attended the NYSUT Legislative Luncheon. Our newly elected officials were there and sat with the members to discuss educational issues. Some newer elected officials were unaware of such things as APPR and certainly learned a lot to bring back to Albany. Flip mentioned that Andy Pallotta showed him an app to put on your phone to send messages and faxes to your legislators. Go to NYSUT MAC to find it.

Outcome of grievances pending: since they were not dealt with in a timely manner, they now may become a Stage 3 grievance. More to come.

Be ready to march in the Wappingers St. Patrick’s Day Parade March 2. The WCT will have a float, using shamrocks to name each of our schools, and could Pasquale be our Leprechaun leader? Come out and walk with your fellow retirees. Bring your families for a fun morning.

Lastly, a Kinry Rd. teacher, Kelly Everett, suffered a tragedy. Her house burned down. The WCT will set up a contribution center through the WCT office.

Hope to see you at the parade.

Past Prez says thanks

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you all so much for your cards and condolences sent to me at the time of my loving Mother’s passing.

She passed away peacefully just two days before her 103rd birthday.

Due to terrible weather between here and Michigan we were unable to get to her funeral but will go visit her grave on Mother's Day.

Again, thanks for supporting me.

Alice Baker, WCRT Past President

WCRT increases scholarship money

Dear Pasquale, WCT Executive Board, and WCT Members,

At this time I would like to advise you that, with pleasure, the WCRT Executive Board has voted to increase our donations to the Capasso and Leventhal Scholarships. The donation to the Capasso Scholarship will increase from $200 to $600. The donation to the Leventhal Scholarship will increase from $200 to $600. Thus, all five recipients will receive $300 each from the WCRT.

We retirees have always been proud of our WCSD graduates. I know from my time on the selection committee that competition is stiff for these awards, and the recipients are always outstanding.

We want you to know how proud we are of you and the job you do to prepare our young people. Please feel free to ask for our assistance when needed.

Our best regards for a successful 2013.

In Solidarity,

Susan Roger,

WCRT President
News since last issue

NYSUT Defensive Driving classes offered

Unlike rising gas and food prices, the fee for the NYSUT Defensive Driving classes has remained at $30.00 per person. (Recognized by the National Safety Council.

The following classes have been scheduled for WCT and WCRT members and immediate family only in the Large Group Instruction room at RCK High School from 6:00 - 9:00 p.m:

Mon. Mar. 11 and Mar. 18, 2013
Thurs. May 30 and June 6, 2013

Participants MUST attend both sessions. We will collect tuition for the Oct. class only. Make $30** checks payable to: WCT, and mail to WCT Defensive Driving, Heritage Square, 2537 Route 52, Suite 15, Hopewell Junction, NY 12533.

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

Further announcements will come in the Commentator and Post-Script and by email sometime early next year.
Legal & financial plans available to NYSUT members!

NYSUT members can get quality legal and financial assistance for themselves and their families by purchasing the Member Benefits Trust-endorsed Legal Service Plan or Member Benefits Corporation-endorsed Financial Counseling Program.

Legal assistance when you need it!
For an annual fee, the Legal Service Plan -- provided by Feldman, Kramer & Monaco, P.C. -- offers legal expertise on a variety of personal legal matters such as dealing with a speeding ticket or handling estate planning.

With the base plan, you’ll get access to unlimited, toll-free legal advice from plan attorneys. In addition, when you enroll in the plan, you’ll receive two, free, hour-long consultations with a plan attorney.

The plan also provides for one Simple Will or update at no charge each year, along with a Durable Power of Attorney, Living Will and Health Care Proxy -- important documents to have in place before the need for them arises.

NYSUT members can purchase the Legal Service Plan at the special cost of $85 per year or $55 per year for retirees; an Elder Law Rider and/or Business Protection Rider are available for an additional fee.

Participating locals can also take advantage of further savings through payroll or pension deduction.

Financial expertise customized for your situation
The Financial Counseling Program -- provided by Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. -- offers unbiased, objective advice customized to your specific financial situation.

Through the program, you’ll learn how to properly invest your assets to build a college savings or retirement fund; what to look for when purchasing or financing a home; and tips for getting your credit under control.

This full-service program provides you with up to six hours of objective toll-free telephone consultations with a certified financial planner or registered investment advisor.

In-person consultations are available at least once per calendar year at each NYSUT Regional Office as well as at Stacey Braun’s New York City office. The program also includes access to Stacey Braun’s password-protected website and a 24-hour email helpdesk for basic financial questions.

NYSUT members can purchase the Financial Counseling Program for an annual fee of $260. A 403(b) Limited Plan is also available for an annual fee of $185.

Participating locals can also take advantage of further savings through payroll or pension deduction.

**Please note that if you belong to a local association that provides a group legal service plan through the local or its Benefit Fund, remember to take advantage of the plan’s benefits.

Learn more about either of these endorsed programs by contacting Member Benefits at 800-626-8101 or visiting memberbenefits.nysut.org.

For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.

Jan./Feb. '13
Tuesday, May 7, 2013   12:00 noon

Christos Restaurant,
155 Wilbur Blvd. Poughkeepsie, NY

Huge Hot and Cold Buffet Lunch served at 12:30 p.m.
Cost per person is $22.00.
Soft drinks included. Cash Bar.
Free parking on the premises.
All facilities ground floor accessible. No steps or stairs.

A short business meeting and a 50-50 raffle will be held.
Bring non-perishable food items (cans, boxes, bags) and/or shampoo, soap,
and other personal care items to be donated to local food pantries.

Please send check payable to WCRT to
attn: Leslie Leventhal, WCRT, Heritage Square,
2537 Route 52, Suite 15 Hopewell Jct, NY 12533
(and must be received no later than May 1, 2013.
Spouses and significant others welcome.

WCRT SPRING LUNCHEON
$22.00 Per Person
Tuesday, May 7, 2013
Guests are welcome

Name(s):________________________________________________ Phone Number:_________________

Address:_________________________________________________________________________________

Number of Reservations: _____ Amount Enclosed: $ __________________