POUGHKEEPSIE—Christos Restaurant hosted the WCRT Spring Luncheon with a huge hot and cold buffet on Tuesday, May 7, attended by 65.

After countless meetings and presentations about the upcoming budget vote, WCSD Superintendent Marco Ponchintesta offered luncheon attendees an overview of the capital projects proposition:

“Contrary to the adage 'what goes up must come down,' expenses for the district must endure. The State Education Department’s new mandates are upward cost drivers. Costs rise, but revenues still go down. Wappingers is the largest district in the county but it ranks 12th in pupil spending.

The major role of the budget is to remain a school district. We must preserve and advance the good we do through fiscal responsibility. Consider the increase in social and emotional needs of students. Academic Services program needs to grow its resources because no additional K-6 level teachers and social workers as well as ELA teachers will be hired.

In this Post-Newtown era or other previous school tragedies, school safety is more than a buzzword. It’s a necessity because it’s reality! We now have a full-time resource officer at Roy C. Ketcham High School.

Other items retained or preserved include Advanced Placement and Honors courses, electives, sports, and extra-curricular activities. Full-day Kindergarten is a positive story. We strengthened our Early Intervention Program, now ranked the highest priority in a recent school budget survey.

Reduced staffing is difficult. We try to preserve as much as possible, trying for smoother sailing ahead as we reduce spending and conserve programs.

Pasquale Delli Carpini, WCT president, noted “we’re all well behaved today,” and promised not to tell any jokes about old people going to a doctor.

“We have three candidates for three spots on the Board of Education. That’s a good thing so we can put all our efforts into passing the budget. That is extremely important! The magnitude of madness of a contingency budget with cuts to be made is serious. The BOE recommended staying under the 2% tax cap in keeping the integrity of the district. Encourage people to vote ‘yes.’ If the budget fails, 59 WCT members will have to go.”

Delli Carpini reminded attendees about the NYSUT Rally in Albany on June 8. A bus will pick up people at RCKHS and at the Thruway park-and-ride in Kingston.

Regarding pensions, he quipped “ours is the best funded fund in the world!” It has tremendous checks and balances. “We have guaranteed benefits because of the Constitution’s Article 5 Section 7 and VOTE-COPE.”

For email subscribers, see LUNCHEON page 9
From The President

SUSAN ROGER
WCRT President

Dear WCRT Members,

As summer has finally arrived, my thoughts go back to the last day of each school year when the elementary and junior high teachers would stand on the sidewalk and wave goodbye to the students. They were so happy it was vacation time! The feeling for me was always bittersweet. I was so happy it was vacation time! The thought of having my children home for the summer was wonderful, but the memories of standing student by student and waving goodbye to the students was always bittersweet. I was stuck in the 6th grade for another year. However, there was always the hope that my daughter, Robin Sue, is getting married in July. She was an outstanding student and remembers all of her teachers fondly. She attended Gayhead, Van Wyck, and John Jay. Many of you will remember her. We feel that she received an excellent education and had superior teachers. We are busy and excited about the wedding. Fun times.

I would like to thank my Board of Directors for all the work they do on our behalf. I would especially like to thank Judie Rubin for her years of service on the board.

I wish you all a healthy and fun-filled summer.

Susan Roger

Newsletter distribution process, renewals, dues info

Some WCRT members who want to receive the Commentator and PostScript by email have not received them. Contact wct@frontiernet.net 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 WCT and mail to WCRT.

Renewal notices have been sent out. Dues for 2012-2013 will be:
- $200.00 Individual Lifetime
- $325.00 Couples Lifetime

Pay Lifetime and alleviate the yearly task of renewing.

WCT & WCRT publication dates for academic year 2012-2013: Commentator and PostScript* mailing dates:
- Oct. 15*
- Nov. 15
- Dec. 14*
- Jan. 15
- Feb. 15*
- Mar. 15
- Apr. 15*
- May 15
- June 14*

and one sometime in August*.

SAVE THESE DATES (future details coming soon)

Aug. 1 Deadline for August, 2013 PostScript
Sept 18 Madava Farms tour and tasting, Dover Plains NY, 11a.m.
$31p/p, reserve by Sept. 4 (see flyer)
Sept 25 WCRT Fall Luncheon, Christos Restaurant, 11:30a.m.
$22p/p, reserve by Sept. 18 (see flyer)

WCRT Officers and Board of Directors

July 1, 2011-June 30, 2013
President........ Susan Roger 226-8285
1st. V.P........ Ron Person 297-8757
2nd. V.P........ Leslie Leventhal 297-4430
Pres............. Cliff Foley 473-1796
Pres............. John Dourdis 427-5065
Pres............. Aimee Bower 267-5986
Pres............. Shirley Lee 926-5173
Pres............. Barbara Stuck 896-9572
Pres............. John Dourdis 427-5065
WCRT Rep. to NYSUT Representative Assembly.... Ellen Korz 297-9713

Committee Chairpersons

Political Action: .................. Cliff Foley
Constitution and Bylaws: .. Judie Rubin
Historian: ........................ Kathie Munsie
Gifts and Contributions... Mary Cofteux
Retiree Council 13 Liaison.... Cliff Foley

PostScript

WCRT Mission Statement:
To bring WCSD retirees together for mutual assistance and socialization, and to promote the best interests of retired educators.

Wappingers Congress of Retired Teachers Newsletter
Heritage Square, 2537 Route 52, Suite 15
Hopewell Junction, NY 12533
(845) 227-5065
www.wcteachers.org

Editor: Bill Dourdis
wdourdis@verizon.net (845) 473-1796

The WCRT PostScript is a 2012 NYSUT United Journalism Competition Winner with 3 First Place awards.
Best Union News Story, by Bill Dourdis;
Best Profile, by Sheila Sullenger; & Best Publication, Bill Dourdis, Editor.

WCRT 1989
**Political Action**

Editorial views expressed are those of the writer and not necessarily those of the WCRT PostScript staff and management.

**Education in the Future**

Mike Lyons, WCT Vice President for Elementary, wrote an article in the May 15, 2013, Wappingers Congress of Teachers’ Commentator that made this writer step back and think about where education in the United States is headed. He attended the recent NYSUT convention in Washington, DC and came away with a theme, “...which was the corporatization of the American educational system.” His article expresses his concern about “…test mania” -- the corporate way to evaluate students” and his concern that, “we have to test these young children for six days at 90 minutes a day.”

At the Convention, New York State United Teachers Vice-President Maria Neirra is quoted with a similar concern, “It’s about testing becoming big business! It’s about silencing our professional voice and about testing becoming big business! It’s about testing becoming big business!”

Another concern is that teacher evaluations will now be tied to these test scores. Will they exempt this first poorly handled year or will this be used as an all-out attack on teachers and their unions so that a corporate model can be substituted?

This look at the business model of education in the future is not complete without a mention of charter schools. These allow the opening of for-profit schools and the use of public school money to support these private businesses. The voucher system is closely tied to charter schools allowing parents to also take money out of the local public school and give it to these private enterprises. In an April 28, 2013 article in the USA Today, Tina Trujillo of the University of California-Berkley Graduate School of Education points out that, as a group, the charters don’t have a much better track record than other schools. They have been around for about 20 years but they are still only a small experiment.

As retirees, we need to stay involved and support those currently in the classroom. We need to make our views known and our voices heard.

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**NYSUT Retiree Council 13 website:**

http://ny.aft.org/rc13/

**Directions to WCT office**

The WCT office is in the Heritage Square complex at 2537 Route 52 in Hopewell Junction.

- Heritage Square is a short distance east of the intersection of Routes 376 and 52 and west of the Taconic State Parkway.
- Enter the parking lot and make the second right turn into parking.
- Enter main entrance of building.
- The sign over the main entrance is “Prudential”.
- Take stairs or elevator to 2nd floor.
- Go right, all the way to the end.
- “Wappingers Congress of Teachers” sign posted on Suite 15 door.

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**WCSD Board of Ed. e-mail address:**

WCSD.Board@Wappingerschools.org

**NOTE:**

If you are aware of a member’s illness, or the need to send a condolence card, please contact Ruth Ehlers at 831-6390.
Barbara B. Scoba

BEACON- Barbara B.Scoba, a longtime Beacon resident, entered into rest Friday morning, April 19, 2013 at her home. She was 85.

Born in Fort Ann, New York, she was the daughter of Cleon J. Baker and Florence E. Williams. She graduated from Fort Ann High School in June, 1945 and attended the Army Nurse Cadet Program at Syracuse University receiving her diploma in 1948. While attending Syracuse, she met her husband Michael who had returned from the war in Europe and was working in the dining room supporting the nursing students while he was attending the university. On June 4, 1950, they were married at her mother’s home in Smith Basin, NY with Jean B Graham, her sister, and Bennie Bertolini, Mike’s brother-in-law, as maid of honor and best man. Initially they resided in Cold Spring, New York and later moved to Beacon.

Devoting the early years of her married life to her children; Michael, Ann and Peter, she employed her nursing skills on a part time basis until 1968. In that year, she joined the Wappingers School District as school nurse at Roy C. Ketcham High School. During that period, she earned her school nurse teaching certificate. She remained in that position until her retirement in 1991.

While the nest was slowly being emptied and in retirement, she pursued her love of quilting, crafts, cats and her family. In these years, she devoted many hours creating numerous hand stitched quilts for sons, daughters, grandchildren, and family friends. These colorful creations are a loving legacy to her faith, and devotion to those she loved. Her cats were her devoted companions providing her joy, comfort and company in her garden. With her husband Mike, they created many unique and handcrafted creations for their grandchildren at Christmas.

Barbara is survived by her brother Donald Baker and his wife, Ruth of Glens Falls NY; her two sons, Michael J. Scoba, Jr and his wife, Denise Ann Ackerman of Hyde Park; Peter Scoba and his wife, Jeanne of Franklin, MA and her daughter, Ann L. Evans, Hyde Park; fourteen grandchildren; Celestine Marie Milanese and her husband, Alessandro; Steven Scoba; Julie Kulaga and her husband, Joseph; Chase, Brett, and Ben Evans and Jessica Fitzgerald; Chelsea Flesher and her husband Daniel; Kate, Eliza and Samuel Scoba; her two great-grandchildren; Joseph Kulaga and Samuel Flesher, and many nieces and nephews and their spouses.

She was predeceased by her husband Michael, father Cleon J. Baker, mother Florence E. Williams, sister Jean B Graham and brother-in-law Daniel Graham.

The family will receive their friends on Tuesday, April 23, 2013 from 3 to 5 and 7 to 9 p.m. at Halvey Funeral Home, Inc. 24 Willow Street, Beacon.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be offered at noon, Wednesday, April 24, at St. Joachim Church, 51 Leonard Street, Beacon. Interment will follow in St. Joachim Cemetery, 303 Washington Avenue, Beacon.

Donations in Barbara’s memory may be made to St. Joachim- St John the Evangelist Church, 2 Oak Street, Beacon, NY 12508 or to the Animal Rescue Foundation, 54 Simmons Lane, Beacon, NY 12508.

To send the family a personal condolence please visit www.halveyfh.com.

Funeral arrangements are under the supervision of Peter T. and Patrick J. Halvey.

In Memoriam

Report for April 30 Meeting

I was unable to attend, but thanks to those who did, I can report on a very short meeting:

The meeting focused on the budget which needs everyone’s help to pass on May 21, 2013. $4.8 million has been cut from the budget because of poor decisions by the BOE last year. The regular budget takes care of cuts through attrition. The contingency budget means 59 member cuts. Money is being put toward passing the budget with three candidates for three spots on the board.

On negotiations, no decision made--not even for a counter offer--showing the BOE how to pay and make money in the 3rd year of the contract.

Testing and scoring on State Exams is an ongoing problem. The WCT is asking for local scoring instead of regional.

Don’t forget the major rally for the future of public education on June 8 in Albany. Busses will be provided. It is important to participate. They need a strong presence.

Report for April 30 Meeting

ELLEN KORZ
WCRT Rep. to WCT RA

The 2013-2014 calendar has been adopted. The first Wednesday in September, a Jewish religious day, is questionable.

Grievances were presented and not decided as yet. They concern prior approval, mentoring money, salary increase, unfunded clubs, and communication in a timely manner.

Congratulations to John Lumia on his election to the BOCES Cooperative board.

The Recognition Dinner is June 7. Please come and enjoy.

Don’t forget VOTE COPE. Send money and/or forms to Ronnie.

Protect your WCRT, NYSUT membership

WCRT by the numbers:

WCT membership as of May 3:
655 retirees
575 WCRT members
175 yearly members
39 yearly members not renewed
342 Lifetime members
41 Complimentary Lifetime members
17 Complimentary members
100 retirees don’t belong to WCRT & not entitled to NYSUT benefits
24 not paid this year & soon deleted
334 members email subscribers
241 members postal subscribers

Email subscription is something to consider. It saves us considerable spending on postage.

You MUST belong to the WCT to be eligible for NYSUT benefits. One retiree, just last week, had her NYSUT insurance cancelled due to lack of dues payment. She subsequently paid and was re-instated. Lifetime is the best deal. Pay once and forget about it!
TROY, NY—New York State United Teachers hosted its annual Journalism Awards luncheon on Saturday, April 27 at Hilton Garden Inn in Troy, NY.

Bill Dourdis, WCRT PostScript editor, attended the event and received two Awards of Distinction and first-place plaque out of four categories entered.


All entries were judged in the state for a Class III retiree publication with 501-1000 members. The competition covered entries produced between September 1, 2011 and August 31, 2012.

During his eight-year tenure as Editor of the WCT Commentator, Dourdis won six NYSUT awards and five AFT awards for General Excellence, Best News Story, Best Editorial or Column, and Best Feature.

As PostScript Editor, Dourdis has won 23 awards in eight years. (18 firsts and 5 seconds.)

An outside panel of professional journalists judged the competition according to their professional standards.

Mary Fran Gleason, NYSUT United Editor-in-Chief, thanked her crew and staff and especially the local editors for all the passion they put into their communications efforts because their work is important to NYSUT’s effort to keep members informed and to celebrate their successes.

NYSUT Vice President Maria Neira presents Bill Dourdis, WCRT PostScript editor, with three awards at the 2013 NYSUT United Journalism Conference awards ceremony April 27. (Timothy Raab photo.)
OBSERVANCES FROM THE MORNING LINE

HAVE YOU NOTICED THAT YOU ARE NOW:

1. USELESS without a pair of “reading glasses” and continually asking “WHAT DID YOU SAY?”
2. ALWAYS parking in the SAME area at Malls and Discount stores.
3. WRITING THINGS DOWN on cards more than ever (& often forgetting where you put that list)
4. Always parking your car facing OUT…(& no longer worried about backing into shopping carts & SHOPPERS).

Golf tourney helps Meals on Wheels

by Charlie Powers WCRT Class of 2001

This is The New Hamburg Yacht Club’s 10th Annual Day of Golf to benefit Meals on Wheels of Wappingers. All proceeds go to MOWOW. Last year we raised $8,500.00. Our goal this year is $10,000.00.

The tournament is Friday September 13th, 2013 at Beekman Golf. [new name] Registration is at 10:00a.m. with a shotgun start at 11:00 a.m. Cost per golfer is $125.00. Checks are payable to NYHC. A buffet will follow the tournament.

Former WCSD teachers on the committee, and strong supporters of our efforts, are Skip Rottkamp, Chair; Bob Blose, Jack Devine, Joe Corrigan, Rosemarie Gardner, Roger Higgins and Charlie Powers.

As in the past, we are looking for golfers, tee/green sponsors, program advertisers, gifts and prizes for our raffle. Please consider being a booster for $25.00 or a donor (any amount). Checks are payable to NYHC with Meals on Wheels in the memo section. Whatever anyone can do to aid our efforts will be most appreciated.

For a registration form or for any answers call Skip Rottkamp at 845-297-3546 or e-mail him at skipro44@aol.com. To be a booster or donor, mail your contribution to Skip Rottkamp, 57 DeGarno Hills Rd., Wappingers Falls, NY 12590.

By the way, if you think you are getting close to needing the services of Meals on Wheels, perhaps you should seriously consider helping us out in some way!
News since last issue

As a service to any interested WCRT member, our union’s financial report is always available upon request. Address your questions or concerns to tderito@optonline.net and we’ll make arrangements to satisfy your numerical curiosity.
Save on vacations with Member Benefits

Have you been planning to finally book that incredible vacation to the Caribbean, Europe or Australia that you've always dreamed about? Or perhaps you need to plan an upcoming business trip or rent a vehicle as part of your next excursion?

Wouldn’t it be great to be able to save some money while doing so? NYSUT Member Benefits has a variety of endorsed discount travel programs designed to help you keep extra cash in your wallet while enjoying some well-deserved rest and relaxation.

If you’re on the hunt for big savings, look no further than the Member Benefits-endorsed travel program offered by Wyndham Hotels & Endless Vacation Rentals. NYSUT members can enjoy savings of up to 20% at nearly 7,000 participating hotels among 17 hotel brands with Wyndham Worldwide; meanwhile, save 25% at more than 200,000 vacation rentals in 100 countries with Endless Vacation Rentals.

Wyndham Hotels has the right hotel for you at the right price – whether it’s an upscale hotel, all-inclusive resort or something more cost-effective. With Endless Vacation Rentals, NYSUT members can save on resort condos, villas, homes, and cottages that provide space and flexibility ideal for families and groups of friends traveling together.

These aren’t your everyday run-of-the-mill hotel rooms as accommodations range in size from resort studios to multi-bedroom units. And, many units feature large living rooms, dining rooms, fully-equipped kitchens, and laundry facilities.

Whether you’re looking for a multi-bedroom condo in Orlando or Las Vegas, or a luxurious resort in Mexico, the Caribbean, Europe, or Canada, Endless Vacation Rentals offers the space and comforts-of-home to make each stay a memorable time!

Don’t forget the car rental discounts!

Next time you need to rent a vehicle, make sure to contact Alamo, Avis, Budget, Enterprise, Hertz, or National. These companies provide NYSUT members and their families with discounted rates on passenger car rentals.

You can even receive 20% off local or one-way truck rentals from Budget Truck Rental.

Learn more about these endorsed programs – including how to access discounts, unique website codes and website links – 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.

May/Jun. '13
More from the luncheon

Barbara Dobilas, representing Hudson Valley Home Matters, promoted her four-year-old Not-for-Profit business that relies on lots of volunteers. With chapters in the City and Town of Poughkeepsie, Wappingers Falls, Hyde Park, Lagrange, and Pleasant Valley, she hopes to expand into Beacon soon.

HVVM’s main goal is to keep seniors in their homes. Dobilas called luncheon retirees “the sandwich generation—helping between their parents and kids. They offer a social calendar of events and a list of service providers, contractors, and businesses that are senior friendly.

Volunteer tasks include shopping or transporting a senior to buy groceries, changing a light bulb, taking one for a haircut, replacing batteries, chatting, and calling for mowing services. No medical services are provided.

Franca Petrillo will take a collection for Donna Starr, a Van Wyck Junior High Math teacher, who didn’t work this year. She has cancer and is in Phelps Memorial Hospital in Westchester where her husband works. Donations are accepted for the three sons, ages 18, 20, and 21.

Retirees Sandra Hayes, Cheryl Zmudzinski with her husband Stan as they talk baseball. The backdrop is McCann Golf Course. They wait their turn as others help themselves to a delicious buffet lunch.

Retirees enjoy the hot and cold buffet offering as they pile their plates high with the wide variety of food.

Kara McKenna prepping for others like she used to in her classroom.

Dear readers,

This bonus page is for e-mail subscribers because they can handle whatever I send them.

I’d like some feedback on your thoughts about this concept. Printed hardcopies limit me to eight black-and-white pages. I can be more flexible electronically. You get the benefit. Let me know what that benefit is for you.

Let other retirees know about the color(s) and the convenience. Drop me an email note also. Tell me what you told them.

Enjoy the leftovers.

Bill Dourdis, PostScript editor
wdourdis@verizon.net

See page 5 for awards story
Visit 800 acres of scenic nature and culinary wonder at Madava Farms. You will trace the journey Crown Maple Syrup makes in a single day from tree to bottle inside the world’s largest sugarhouse. State-of-the-art technology and artisanal practices produce quite possibly the purest maple syrup on earth.

We will have a tour and tasting and a farm style lunch provided by a Culinary Institute of America chef. Produce that is raised on the farm is incorporated in every luncheon. After lunch, you are free to stay and wander through the gardens and the beautiful trails.

- This is a very special outing planned for September 18, 2013.
- Reservations due no later than September 4.
- We will meet at Madava Farms at 11:00a.m.
- Walking tour lasts about 90 minutes and then lunch will be served.

(name(s) ________________________________
Number attending @ $31.00 per person ________________________________
Amount enclosed ____________________  phone # ____________________

Make checks payable to WCRT and send to:
 Leslie Leventhal, 56 Pye Lane, Wappingers Falls 12590
Wednesday, September 25, 2013
11:30a.m. **note the new time!

Christos Restaurant,
155 Wilbur Blvd. Poughkeepsie, NY
Huge Hot and Cold Buffet Lunch served at 12:00noon
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.

NO GUEST SPEAKER--JUST FOOD AND FUN!!
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 Sept. 18, 2013.
Spouses, guests, and significant others welcome.