WCT 2008 - 2009 General Membership Meeting

On Tuesday, April 21, 2009 there will be an informational general membership meeting in the auditorium of Roy C. Ketcham H.S. at 5:15 p.m. The check-in will start promptly at 4:15 p.m.

Your attendance is of utmost importance.

The following will be discussed:

- Wappingers Central School District Budget and how it will impact WCT members
- Update on federal and state stimulus programs

Thank you in advance for your support.
Hoops for Hope
By: Anne Pedicone & Dawn Turpin-Orgetas

Members of the Oak Grove faculty and staff attended the Miles for Hope, Breast Cancer Foundation’s, HOOPS FOR HOPE fund-raiser on Sunday, March 15, to support the foundation in their fight against breast cancer and celebrate with our dear school secretary, MaryAnn Leddy. Mrs. Leddy was chosen this year as the honoree at the annual event, for her 25th year as a breast cancer survivor.

WCT members, Dawn Turpin-Orgetas, Jennifer Segal, Rose Greene, Cathy Augello and Karen Zmudosky, as “LEDDY’S LADIES”, competed in the Women’s Basketball Tournament fund-raiser. The Oak Grove faculty and staff raised $1,206 in honor of Mrs. Leddy. It was a wonderful day in supporting a great cause!

Tier III & IV Workshop
Sheila J. Salenger, teacher Board Member of the New York State Teachers’ Retirement System (NYSTRS), will be conducting a workshop for members of the WCT in Tiers III & IV on Thursday, April 16th at 4 p.m. in the library at Roy C. Ketcham HS. The maximum number of participants for this workshop is 50. The workshop is NOT in lecture format. Your questions will set the discussion, in tandem with materials you will receive. Everything about tier III/IV, the retirement system, current benefits available to you, your future benefits, as well as any concerns or understandings you have about the TRS are great topics to bring up. Light refreshments will be served at the workshop. We hope to see you there.
Kinry Road Family Book Club a Success

By: Meredith Inkeles

The Kinry Road Literacy Committee (Elizabeth Daley, AIS; John Farrell, Principal; Meredith Inkeles, Librarian; Nancy Longenberger, AIS; and Erin O’Neill, 4th Grade Teacher) wanted a way to encourage families to share the joy of reading and decided to start a Family Book Club. The Puzzling World of Winston Breen by Eric Berlin (interest level: grades 3 - 6) was selected as the first book. This children’s book is an intriguing mystery, full of puzzles*, and it keeps the reader guessing until the end.

After all participants read the book, the Kinry Road Family Book Club met on Friday, March 13, 2009 at the Kinry Road Library. An enthusiastic and varied group of faculty, staff, students, parents, and siblings attended; the children participating in the evening’s events attend Hyde Park schools, Kinry Road, Myers, Oak Grove, Vassar Road, and Wappingers Junior High. Since puzzling was the cornerstone of the book, the evening began with everyone attempting to solve diverse puzzles and conversing about different aspects of the mystery.

The surprise of the evening was that the author, Eric Berlin, had contacted the Literacy Committee and set up to call in and speak with the group. At 6:45 PM, the phone rang and Eric Berlin was on speaker phone chatting with the group and answering questions. Mr. Berlin spoke with the group for 20 minutes and when the call was over the students could be heard whispering, “That was so cool!”

The remainder of the evening was characterized with activities that would have excited the book’s puzzle-loving main character, Winston. Families worked on puzzles located on Winston’s Puzzle Blog (winstonbreen.com/blog), put together jigsaw puzzles, tried to take apart tavern puzzles, and solved an array of dilemmas, problems, and riddles on the Mensa for Kids web site (mensaforkids.com). At the end of the evening, one lucky student won the raffle of the newest Puzzling World of Winston Breen installment called The Potato Chip Puzzles (to be published in mid-April); all the children left with a puzzle-filled goody bag.

The Literacy Committee’s goal of encouraging family reading proved successful and the group is planning a similar event for May 8, 2009. The next book selection is Mr. Chickee’s Funny Money by Christopher Paul Curtis.

* (The puzzles located throughout the book are available at www.winstonbreen.com.)

WCT Gear Available at the Office

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.

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VW Foreign Language Festival a Big Hit!: ¡OLÉ! BRAVO! JUHEE!

By: The Van Wyck Foreign Language Department

On the evening of March 13, the Van Wyck Foreign Language Department hosted its third annual Foreign Language Festival for our seventh grade students and their families. Seventh grade students who study Spanish, Italian, French, and German with Johanna Valente, Allyson Rubin, Tina Schmitz, Nancy Torres-Diaz, Alexis Cascio, Lauren Guerrero, Lisa Herring, and Lucienne Zollner participated in the event. The students’ Foreign Language Week projects were on display, many students prepared delicious ethnic treats to share with everyone, and the winners of the Foreign Language poster contest were announced!

The following students were a tremendous help to the Foreign Language teachers in setting up the cafeteria, serving the food and beverages to our guests, and cleaning up. These students helped their teachers from approximately 3 p.m. through 7:30 p.m. We are extremely grateful to: Taylor McAuliffe, Brittany Margosian, Sarah Kubikowski, Kayla Tutolo, Griffin Guccione, Tara Guinee, Sydney Parsons, Cassie Pyle, Emily Sepulveda, Mary Westerman, Joshua Marte, José Guvenilir, Timothy Arnold, Elizabeth Portch, Rose Brown, Dominique Cooke, and Jennifer Min.

Special thanks also go to the many students who helped the Foreign Language teachers for various periods of time over the course of the event. VERY special thanks also go to the Van Wyck custodial staff, Mrs. Basuljevic, the Van Wyck administrators, the Van Wyck PTO, the Van Wyck Student Government Association, and Stewart’s for their support and donations. An extra special thank you goes to the parents and family members who provided many of the ethnic delights and also shared the evening with us. Everyone helped make the evening a huge success!

Retiree: Jo-Ann Fury

Jo-Ann has been teaching in Wappingers since 1988. Prior to that, she taught in the Ballston Lake School District and in the Kingston City School District. She remained at home for 15 years with her children and taught preschool in Raleigh, NC for 5 of those years. During her time in Wappingers, Jo-Ann has taught 3rd grade at Fishkill Plains for 14 years before working for Dr. Hill as a Technology Integration Teacher.

When asked what she will miss the most, Jo-Ann said, “I will miss the professional and social interaction with my colleagues, and of course, the children. I will miss the people in my office, especially Betsy Zingaro, Mandy Dwight, Paul Rubeo, Charlie Hill, Maryann Politi and our wonderful support staff. I will miss the teachers and talented computer TAs I have had the pleasure of working with at Fishkill, Oak Grove, Fishkill Plains, Vassar, Kinry and Evans, too.” Additionally, Jo-Ann said, “I will not miss waking up to an alarm clock, and carrying computers and cameras!”

For the future, Jo-Ann is planning for lots of traveling, enjoying her husband, children and grandchildren, writing, painting, photography and becoming a perfect, organized homemaker!
The Welfare Trust Fund was established to provide a variety of benefits for eligible bargaining unit members and their dependents. It was created as a result of Collective Bargaining between the Wappingers Congress of Teachers and the Wappingers Central School District. Employer contributions are based on the amount stipulated in the current Collective Bargaining Agreement and are provided at annual rates. Members, other than those on COBRA continuation coverage, part-time employees (more than .5), and retirees, do not make contributions to the WTF. The benefits presently offered by the Fund are as follows:

- Dental
- Optical
- Financial Planning
- Legal Services
- Life Insurance
- Health Advocate
- Prescription Co-Payment Reimbursement
- Hearing Aid

Who administers the WTF?
The Board of Trustees administers the WTF. It is made up of five persons, one of whom is the President of the WCT by virtue of holding that office, and the other four of whom are designated by the Executive Board of the WCT. The current Trustees are:

- Christine Romano, Chairperson
- Betty Seifert, Treasurer
- Erin Mulligan, Secretary
- Philip “Flip” Gertler, Trustee
- Pasquale Delli Carpini, Trustee

The Board of Trustees employs a Fund Administrator who is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the WTF. The WTF also employs consultants who assist the Trustees and the Fund Administrator.

- Fund Administrator – Linda Leito
- Third Party Administrator – Daniel H. Cook Associates
- Fund Accountant – Gould, Kobrick & Schlapp
- Fund Legal Counsel – Mirkin & Gordon

The Board of Trustees meets on a regular basis to discuss benefit improvements, concerns from members, legal issues, financial reports, third party administrator reports, and also addresses any other business/concerns that may arise.

How does it work?
The Wappingers Central School District (WCSD) makes a yearly payment for each full time bargaining unit member as per the negotiated contract. Based on the yearly increased contribution by the District, the Trustees, with the expert counsel of our advisors, recommend benefit improvements.

The WTF Board of Trustees meets on a regular basis to discuss benefit improvements, concerns from members, legal issues, financial reports, third party administrator reports, and also addresses any other business/concerns that may arise.

What do you do if there are problems with a claim?
The most effective way to deal with any problems or questions about a claim is to call, write, or email Linda Leito, WTF Administrator, at the WCT office:

- Telephone number: 227-5065
- E-mail: wct@frontiernet.net
- Address: 2537 Route 52, Suite 15 Hopewell Junction, NY 12533 (or interschool mail for employees)
Health Advocate @ Your Service

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Who takes care of the caregiver? We do!

52 million family caregivers provide care for someone aged 20 and over who is ill or disabled. Caregivers who don’t get any relief can develop anxiety and depression and are prone to getting sick, experts say.

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(National Family Caregiver Association, 2005)

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Board of Education Meetings Schedule

- April 6, 2009 - Evans, Fishkill, Wappingers
- April 26, 2009 (TUESDAY) - Fishkill Plains, Myers, Van Wyck
- May 4, 2009 - Brinckerhoff, John Jay, Vassar
- May 18, 2009 - Gayhead, Orchard View, Sheafe
- June 8, 2009 - Ketcham, Wappingers

*Remember to RSVP for the WCT Dinner*

Remember to download the RSVP form for the April 24th WCT Recognition Dinner. RSVPs must be received by April 17th.

Go to http://wcteachers.org/forms/invite.doc for more information.

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(continued on page 8)
Members’ Classified Ads cont. from page 7

THINK SUMMER! FOR RENT: 2 BR, 2 BA Condo in OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND. Bayside, beautiful sunsets, fishing. Right next to the pool. Centrally located, close to all the amenities. Just cross the street to the ocean. Call Sandy at 896-1678 for more information or to reserve a week.

FREE CAT: Beautiful orange and white cat, friendly lap cat, playful, about 1-2 years old, neutered, all shots up to date, litter box trained, happy to be inside. He is wonderful in every way, except that since he came into our home in December, he can’t get along with our current cats. Contact Tad or Sue 266-4676 or nine.8@att.net.

FOR SALE: GE Washing Machine, 3-4 years old in excellent condition, $175 or best offer, call 845-849-2357.

FOR RENT: 4 bedroom beach house in Charlestown, RI, only 2 1/2 hrs from Dutchess Co. 1 1/2 baths, large screened-in porch, newly remodelled fully equipped kitchen, large rec room in finished basement with pool table, and outdoor shower. Sleeps 8 comfortably. Just bring your bathing suit! It is less than 1 mile to lovely beach with private beachside parking. It also is within 1/2 mile of stores and casual restaurant. Newport, Mystic, Foxwoods, and Block Island ferry are a short drive away. If interested, call Roberta at 221-9872.


FOR RENT: Beautiful, spacious, recently renovated 2 bdrm, 1.5 bath, bottom floor, end unit condo in POK. New floors throughout, updated kitchen and baths, brand new wall-to-wall carpet in bdrms. Community pool, close to IBM, Marist and Culinary. Excellent for young professionals or a young family. $1,395/month incl. heat/hot water. For more info or for an appointment, call Brad 845-430-3811.