WCT MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN THE WAPPINGERS ST. PATRICK’S DAY PARADE

Dawn Sala (MC) and Mike Lyons (SR)

Lynne Garcia, Mary Temple, & Coco Scalzo from Gayhead

Mandy (FE) & Coco (GH) Scalzo

Children of Members riding on the WCT Float

Group from Fishkill Elementary
STAY INFORMED – IT’S UP TO YOU !!!!
Respectfully submitted by: Flip Gertler – VP Political Action

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

NYSUT UNITED – March 2013
Making a Case for students: (p. 6)

Brief Summary: NYSUT has filed a lawsuit against New York State over the tax cap law which went into effect in 2012. It challenges that the law places unconstitutional limits on local school districts and undermines basic democracy. NYSUT is fighting for the principle of “one person, one vote”.

NYSUT UNITED – March 2013
Real Solutions (p. 22)

Brief Summary: Short excerpts from educators across the state on issues ranging from testing to materials to community support. These were taken from the “Tell It Like It Is” initiative.

AMERICAN TEACHER – Spring 2013
Disappearing Act (p. 12)

Brief Summary: High stakes testing is not only putting undue stress on educators but parents, students, and school districts are feeling it also.

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS

- Tuesday, April 23 at WJHS at 7:30PM
- Tuesday, May 7 at District Offices at 7:30PM
- Monday, May 20 at District Offices at 7:30PM
- Monday, June 3 at District Offices at 7:30PM
- Monday, June 17 at RCK at 7:30PM

NYSUT TO LAUNCH NEW AND IMPROVED WEB SITE

At the 2013 NYSUT RA delegates were informed of NYSUT’s endeavor to revamp nysut.org. After talking to members, conducting surveys and taking polls, NYSUT realized that the site was rich with information, but complicated to navigate.

Many changes have been made including more sensible navigation, a reliable search engine and the option of a mobile version for your smartphone or tablet. The new site will be launched on May 1st.
Wappingers Congress of Teachers
Recognition Dinner
Honoring 2013 Retirees,
Members with 25 Years of Service,
Members Granted Tenure,
& National Board Certified Teachers.

Friday, June 7th, 2013
6:00 P.M.-11:00 P.M.

Cocktail Hour with Carving Station
Top Shelf Open Bar
Dinner Choice: Chicken Marsala, Prime Rib, Salmon
Cake & Coffee

Price: $40.00 per person- Free for 2013 retirees
RSVP to the WCT Office by Friday, May 17, 2013

Please return this lower portion of the invitation with your payment. Checks are to be made out to “WCT”. Reservation accepted until Friday, May 17, 2013.

Name: ________________________________________________________________

Number attending: __________

Building: ____________________________________________________________

Dinner Entrée Choice:

Chicken Marsala: _________

Prime Rib: _________

Salmon: _________
ACCOUNTABILITY FOR MR. GATES: THE BILLIONAIRE PHILANTHROPIST EVALUATION

By Anthony Cody

Bill Gates, who is more responsible than anyone for the absurd evaluations by which teachers are now being held accountable, had the gall to write this week in a tone of exasperation about the results of his own advocacy for these very practices.

Yesterday I asked when Mr. Gates, the great enthusiast for accountability for others, might hold himself accountable for his own handiwork.

As wealth has concentrated in the accounts of individuals such as the Gates, Walton and Broad families, they have used this to wield unprecedented power over the lives of those of us without access to such resources. They pay for their own media outlets, and heavily subsidize others. Their money redirects existing grassroots groups, and underwrites new ones. They work with ALEC to write legislation, and funnel money through PACs to buy off politicians to move it forward across the country. They are utterly insulated from any sort of accountability. They do not face voters in any election. Nobody "evaluates" them. They cannot be fired. They may on occasion choose to engage in a dialogue, but they are not obliged to respond to the substance of the criticisms raised. As my question indicated, this accountability they demand from teachers is a street that goes one way only.

But let's imagine we could turn the tables on Mr. Gates and evaluate his performance as a philanthropist. Might we establish some goals to which we could hold our billionaires accountable? We do not have any measurable indicators such as test scores to use, but since I do not find these to be of great value in any case, I will offer a more qualitative metric, based on my knowledge of the subject's work. Since he has spoken glowingly of the salutary effect of feedback on teachers, surely he will welcome this feedback, even though it is unsolicited.

In the tradition of the Danielson and Marzano teacher evaluation frameworks, I offer the Cody Billionaire Philanthropist Evaluation Model, as applied to Bill Gates.

Standard 1: Awareness of the Social Conditions Targeted by Philanthropy
Rating: Below Standard
Mr. Gates does not demonstrate an understanding of the social conditions that are the focus of his philanthropy. Actions and statements by him and his representatives indicate ignorance of the pervasive effects of poverty, and the overwhelming research that indicates the need to address these effects directly. Mr. Gates has not attended public schools, nor worked in an educational context, and thus he has no personal expertise. He primarily cites research he has paid for himself, which tends to conform to his views. His representatives claim their Foundation lacks the resources to address poverty, and insists that educators bear the burden for overcoming its effects with minimal support.

Recommendation for Professional Growth:
We recommend Mr. Gates take a year off from his work as a philanthropist, and work as a high school instructor in an urban setting. His students should include English learners, students who are homeless, and those designated as Special Education. He should work alongside a fully credentialed professional educator, who will provide him with feedback, and reflect with him as he gains an understanding of how we create effective learning conditions for students.

Standard 2: Understanding of how Learning is Measured
Rating: Below Standard
Mr. Gates has concluded that measurement is the primary means by which social progress can be made. He has determined that test scores are an adequate means of measuring learning, and promoted a wide variety of ways by which these scores are used to reward teachers and students accordingly. This is based on a fundamental error. In fact, test scores measure only a small part of what we value.

(Continued on page 5)
Recommendations for Professional Growth:

Mr. Gates should, with the help of an experienced educator, design a series of rich PBL projects that allows each of his students to demonstrate their learning through authentic products in real-world contexts. He should compare the work they are capable of producing to their standardized test scores, and reflect on the things that each mode of measurement captures.

**Standard 3: Understanding of How Teaching is Evaluated**

**Rating: Below Standard**
Compounding the fundamental error regarding the measurement of learning described under Standard 2 above, Mr. Gates has promoted the use of teacher evaluations based in significant part on test scores and VAM systems. Research does not support this use of test scores, and raising the stakes on test scores has promoted widespread teaching to the test. Mr. Gates has made statements that indicate he is unaware of effective evaluation practices, such as the Peer Assistance and Review program and others.

Recommendations for Professional Growth:
Mr. Gates should spend a week shadowing PAR consulting teachers as they work with teachers in Toledo, Ohio. He should review the research on forms of effective evaluation practices.

As recommended above, he should serve as a classroom teacher for a full year, and have his performance rated based on VAM scores derived from standardized tests taken by his students. He should reflect with his colleagues on the validity of these ratings. He should also meet with a peer evaluator to set professional goals at the start of the year, and several times during the year meet with this person to reflect. At year's end he should compare the models of evaluation he experienced, and reflect on which were of greater validity and value.

**Standard 4: Understanding of Effective Instruction**

**Rating: Below Standard**
Mr. Gates has repeatedly stated that he believes we ought to stop spending money on keeping class sizes small, and instead use that money to provide performance bonuses for teachers. He has also indicated that we should "personalize" learning through the use of computers and videos that allow students to work at their own pace. This does not comport with what we know about child development, or the importance of personal relationships with students.

Recommendations for Professional Growth:
Mr. Gates should spend a week shadowing children in elite schools such as the one attended by his own children, and study the way personalization is accomplished. He should then spend a week shadowing children at a Detroit school where class sizes have been significantly increased due to budget cuts, and the pressure of high stakes have focused instruction on test preparation.

In the year he teaches, he should be assigned at least one class no larger than 15, and another no smaller than 38, and reflect on the learning conditions in these two environments.

Summary of Evaluation Results and Recommendations:
Mr. Gates falls below standards in all four of the areas that were observed. His philanthropic activities should be suspended immediately pending his completion of the recommended professional growth activities.

A panel of expert reviewers composed of students, parents and educators from communities that are the targets of his philanthropy should be convened to review his reflections at the end of his year of investigation and reflection. This panel should subsequently review and approve the re-initiation of philanthropic projects following this process.

This is the beginning of what might be a far more complex process of reflection for Mr. Gates. It might be seen as absurd, but my intention is sincere. His thinking is magnified in its effect by the billions he has to spend as he chooses. With such power comes a huge responsibility to learn from one's mistakes. I do not know how Mr. Gates reflects on the successes and failures of his work - there is no evidence of

(Continued on page 10)
MEET THE NEWEST NATIONAL BOARD TEACHERS
Submitted by Diane DiChiara , NBCT Exceptional Needs 2003/Renewed 2013

This year the WCT celebrated 12 newly achieved National Board certified teachers. From John Jay: Linda Gilmartin, Kerri Roger and Jennifer Coltellino; from RCK: Norma Chlus; from Fishkill Elementary: Mandy Scalzo and Cheryl Urquhart; from Brinckerhoff: Amy Manfredi and Brenda Maiolo; from Van Wyck: Christine Sullivan, Aileen Basuljevic and Barbara Procario and from Wappingers JHS: Jennifer Nevel.

I am proud to say that this group of teachers now brings the WCSD (40) into the top five school districts statewide with NYC (180), Schenectady City (56), Arlington Central (52) and Rochester City (46) ahead of us. NYS now has 1,466 NBCTs out of a total 102,237 NBCTs throughout the country.

I am privileged to know each of these teachers and to have worked with many of them through the NB process. And to steal a line from Oprah “What I know for sure” is that each of these women demonstrates excellence, perseverance and the belief that all students can achieve. Their work does not end in the classroom, but extends to extracurricular activities, community events, building and district committees and to the development of independent living skills for the most needy of our students.

For many of these teachers the road to NB was not a one-shot deal. NB stresses that the process can take from 1 – 3 years; furthermore, NB allows candidates to retake entries that received a low score. Some teachers began their journey through the Take One process while others began it through the entire NB process. Take One allows teachers to complete just one entry in a year, bank their score and then to return the following year to complete the rest of the process. To read more about the National Board process access http://www.nbpts.org/.

Despite the upheaval in education through the over abundance of testing and the new APPR system, these teachers along with New York State’s other 145 newly achieving NBCTs as Arne Duncan (U.S. Secretary of Education) states stand for “excellence and professionalism and as leaders in the classroom they are uniquely positioned to transform their field.” Congratulations, Teachers!

Text the word VOICE to 518-631-3202 to receive updates from NYSUT!
The Friends of the East Fishkill Library Cordially Invite you to an English High Tea

Date: May 4, 2013
Hosts: Jan and Dave Bushey
Venue: 35 Carpenter Road, Hopewell Junction, NY
Seatings: Noon, 2:00 or 4:00 PM
Suggested Donation: $20.00 per person
Reservations: Contact Dave or Jan at 221-6123

Come join us for what will be a lovely afternoon of scones, a variety of traditional English sandwiches, dessert, tea or coffee and social conversations with friends.

Your contribution should be made to: The Friends of East Fishkill Library. All proceeds are for the benefit of the library.

NYSUT Race for Solidarity
Saturday, May 18, 2013
FDR Park—2957 Crompond Rd Yorktown Heights, New York, 10598

Register now at www.active.com search NYSUT Race for Solidarity

Registration Closing Date: Thursday, May 16, 2013 @ 11:59 PM US/Eastern

Join us on May 18th for the First NYSUT 5K Race for Solidarity. Come on out to FDR Park in Yorktown for this collective demonstration of our solidarity. All proceeds from this race will benefit the NYSUT Disaster Relief Fund which is supporting our union brothers and sister who are still coping with the aftermath of Super Storm Sandy.

Participants may run or walk the park course. Stick around after the race for a classic-style barbecue in the picnic areas of FDR Park.

Start time of the race will be 10:30am. Awards will be presented to the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place finishers in each age bracket.

Event schedule and times:
Packet Pick up - 9:30am
5K Start - 10:30
Awards - 11:30
IANNUZZI: RALLY IN ALBANY FOR PUBLIC ED!

RA 2013 - April 12, 2013—by Matt Smith

NYSUT President Dick Iannuzzi called upon delegates Thursday to make their collective voice heard loud and clear at a massive rally on June 8 in Albany to fight for the future of New York's public education system.

Addressing a packed convention hall of unionists - who rose to their feet and hailed his impassioned call to arms - Iannuzzi urged members to descend upon the Capitol to "cry out with one voice" on behalf of students, educators and public service professionals who have been under the relentless attacks of those aiming to destroy public education.

The rally, he said, is "a fight about the truth - not the lies we suffer through every day. It's a fight about the future of public education and getting it right!"

With his voice growing hoarse as he shouted above the delegates' applause, Iannuzzi said the fight was "about celebrating, not demonizing, educators ... it's a fight about funding for pupils and teachers, not Pearson and testing!"

Pointing to the statewide union's many successes of the past year, Iannuzzi said NYSUT members - at the polls and through protests, petitions and pens - have been heard on a range of issues, from the need for equitable education funding and disaster relief to demanding an end to the state's testing obsession.

Paraphrasing President Barack Obama - who said at his inauguration in January that it was time "to complete the journey" Iannuzzi told delegates: "We know and they need to know in Washington and in Albany - the journey cannot be completed without our voice."

"It cannot be completed without the voice of unions, it cannot be completed without the voice of public workers, and it cannot be completed without public education."

Iannuzzi reminded members that, despite their success, "our enemies are powerful." He noted the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in the landmark Citizens United case "gave billionaire bullies unfettered access to the media to spread their lies with a greater degree of extortion than has ever existed."

Yet, while that may provide them a pulpit, Iannuzzi - quoting Ghandi - added that "the human voice can never reach the distance that is covered by the voice of conscience."

He said "our collective voice is that collective conscience - and it speaks loud and clear."

As he did a year ago, Iannuzzi again stressed our "voice" not be "wasted or depleted frivolously through unbridled passion," but instead be "used efficiently and effectively by balancing reason with passion."

Iannuzzi said public educators' voice "speaks for students in rural, suburban and urban districts suffering from poverty ... for dreamers seeking access to affordable higher education ... for minimum-wage earners and the middle class" and for public service professionals in education and health care.

The NYSUT president told delegates that, in re-electing President Obama, they had reason to be proud.

"Through your tremendous hard work, we beat back a conservative, hard-line, anti-public-service, anti-union and anti-middle-class national ticket," he said.

Unlike our enemies, who seek to amass power through dishonorable means, he said the union's collective voice "speaks for finding solutions, not placing blame."

"We've used our voices well, and we've raised our voices. But to complete the journey, we must continue to use our voice," Iannuzzi said. "There is still much more to do."

That work will accelerate at the rally in Albany June 8. Further details about the rally will be posted on www.nysut.org as they become available.

6.8.13
MEMBERS’ CLASSIFIED ADS


FOR SALE: 4 Concert tickets for "One Direction" at Hershey Park Arena on July 5, 2013. Good seats. Selling for exactly what I paid for them - $380.66. If interested, please call Rosie at 845-

FOR SALE: 4 window air conditioners, 5000 - 9000 BTU's (3 use remotes, included). $75 each or all four for $250. Call 845/494

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SUNDAY & MONDAY—$2.50 pints of Bud Lite drafts and $5.25 wings at the bar.

TUESDAY—Prime Rib Night

WEDNESDAY—Italian Night

THURSDAY—Turkey Thursday with the Fixin’s

FRIDAY—Free Happy Hour Hot Buffet and Drink Specials at the bar from 3:30pm—6:00 pm

SATURDAY—One of a kind stuffed burgers

TUESDAY & THURSDAY—10% off lunch orders (eat in or take out)

MONDAY—WEDNESDAY—Early Bird Special from 4-6 pm.
Full course meal only $11.95!

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must use coupon code WCT2013

As one of the Hudson Valley’s top DJ and area entertainment companies, Enriquez Entertainment has performed at numerous WCT Weddings, retirements, Sweet 16’s, Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, Dances/Proms, Holiday Parties & more! Contact us today for your next event!

**MEMBERS’ CLASSIFIED ADS continued**


**FOR SALE:** Violin — Full size. Excellent condition. (Otto Ernst Fischer Stradivari). Includes bow (Becker) and case (Heritage) with humidity gauge. Originally $1159.50. Asking $800.00 OBO. Call 845-223-6423 (Jill).

**HOUSE FOR SALE:** Fishkill - 2 Bedrooms, 2 Full Baths. 1,000 sqft. COMPLETELY RENOVATED inside and out - including new electric, plumbing, Andersen windows, siding, insulation, furnace and central air. Large work kitchen with granite counters and floor; including cherry cabinets and stainless steel appliances. Oak hardwood floors throughout, tiled bathroom floors and custom tiled shower in master bath. Many extras include laundry room on main level, fenced in back yard, two Trex decks, barn shed, full basement and attic for storage. Brand new driveway and stone paver sidewalk just completed. $249,999 Make an offer 845-897-2815. See full listing and pictures for 364 Cedar Hill Rd. Fishkill, NY at Zillow.com.

**FREE:** 7ft. artificial Pine Christmas tree with stand, if you pick it up. Call Eloise @ 226-8655.

**FOR SALE:** 2003 Nissan Xterra SE 4WD. 76K miles, red, gray interior, 6 disc Rockford Fosgate sound system, electric windows, cruise control, tow package, great in snow. $7850. Call 845-226-8766.

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**ACCOUNTABILITY FOR MR. GATES**

(continued from page 5)

thoughtful reflection in his public writing.

Fairness demands that accountability cannot be a one way street. If Mr. Gates demands that teachers be held accountable for their work, surely he must accept some accountability for his. What is good for the poor geese ought to be good for the billionaire gander, even if he does lay golden eggs.

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**APRIL IS AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH**

- 1 in 88 children in the US
- 1 in 54 boys in the US
- affects over 2 million people in the US

If you are looking for more information check out http://www.autismspeaks.org or http://www.autism-society.org/.

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**GOOD NEWS!**

- Congratulations to Dawn Snowdon (Kinry Road), her husband Jonathon and their daughter on the addition of a new baby girl. Avery Elizabeth was born on March 11, 2013.
- Kirstin (Chapman) May (Oak Grove) and her husband John welcomed a little girl into the world. Maggie Ann May was born on March 18, 2013, weighing 7 lbs., 5 oz. and measuring 21 inches. Congratulations to Kirstin and John!
- Congratulations to Leah (JJ Science) and John Miller on the birth of their daughter Danielle on April 5th. She weighed 7 lbs 10 oz. and was 20.5 inches. Both baby and mom are doing well.
DIRECTIONS TO THE 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 lot and make the second right into the parking area.
⇒ Enter the main entrance of the building. The sign over the entrance reads “PRUDENTIAL.”
⇒ Take the stairs of elevator to the 2nd floor.
⇒ Go right all the way to the end.
⇒ Look for the “Wappingers Congress of Teachers” sign posted on the Suite 15 door.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE WCT WELFARE TRUST FUND

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

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

FROM THE WCT WELFARE TRUST FUND

A financial planner from Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. will be at the WCT office on the following dates:
• April 24, 2013
• May 29, 2013

Appointments are one-hour blocks available between 2:00-6:00 pm on a first-come first-served basis. Appointments are available at no cost to you; this is a benefit through the Welfare Trust Fund.

When you call the office to schedule an appointment, we will forward a questionnaire to you. Please complete it and bring it with you to the meeting.

The planner can advise you on any financial topic in an objective fashion since sales are prohibited under this program.

Since these slots fill up very quickly, call as soon as possible! If the above dates are not convenient for you, call Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. directly and other arrangements may be possible.

Stacey Braun has no affiliations with any 403(b) providers.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Daniel H. Cook
(1-800) 342-6651

Davis Vision
(1-800) 999-5431

Health Advocate
(1-866) 695-8622

Mirkin & Gordon (attorneys)
(914) 997-1576

Stacey Braun Associates (fin. consultant)
(1-888) 949-1925

WCT Office
(845) 227-5065
Crisis Information Checklist

In the event of a crisis, you should have the following documents/information available and their location should be known by a family member or other trusted third party:

**DOCUMENTS:**

- Will
- Living Will
- Healthcare Proxy
- Power of Attorney
- Disposition of Decedent's Remains
- HIPAA Authorization
- Organ/Tissue Donation Authorization
- Cemetery Deed

**INSURANCE POLICIES**

- Health Insurance
- Life Insurance Policy
- Disability Insurance Policy
- Long Term Care Insurance Policy
- Car Insurance Policy
- Homeowner's Insurance Policy
- Existing Trust Documents
- Where you are the donor/beneficiary
- Business (partnership/shareholder) Agreements
- Deeds to Real Property
- Recent Tax Bill associated with Deeds
INSURANCE POLICIES (continued)
Real Property Appraisals, if any
Prior Gift Tax Returns
Last Federal Income Tax Return
Prenuptial Agreements
Waiver of Right of Election
Guardianship papers
Citizenship papers
Military service records
Visa/passport
Birth certificate
Divorce/separation agreement
Adoption papers

ASSETS:
Retirement Plan Benefits
IRAs/Keoghs
• 401(k)s
Copy of Current Beneficiary Elections
List of Bank Accounts
List of Brokerage Accounts/Mutual Funds
Safe Deposit Box Number and Location

OTHER:
Computer Passwords
On-Line Banking Website
Passwords

* The information on page 12 and 13 is provided by Mirkin and Gordon and approved by the Trustees of the WTF. Please use this form to have all of your important information readily available in case of an emergency.
WCT COMMENTATOR Policy

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

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

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

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

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

WCT COMMENTATOR Advertising Policy

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

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

Commercial (Business) ads for WCT MEMBERS only: $5.00 per issue.

For prompt placement of advertisements and articles in upcoming issues of the WCT COMMENTATOR, e-mail the information to commentator@wcteachers.org. Information can also be sent to the editor at the WCT Office. Do not send articles or ads through the GroupWise email system.