House Representatives Meet With NYSUT Delegates

NYSUT Delegates from local area counties met with Maurice Hinchey (22nd District), Kirsten Gillibrand (20th District), John Hall (19th District), and NYSUT President Richard Iannuzzi on Thursday, April 12, 2007. This gathering gave the three representatives and the NYSUT president an opportunity to thank unions for helping get them elected.

Congressman Hinchey mentioned a number of bills that were passed, and stressed that he is working towards passing legislation that favors the working family. Congresswoman Gillibrand addressed the group next. She mentioned that this new congressional class really wants to make a difference, and she will fight for all of the NYSUT recommendations addressing NCLB. Congressman John Hall was the final speaker before dinner was served. After explaining some of the bills that have been recently passed in the House, Hall talked about educating people about the history of labor, which is why we are able to have such benefits as fair wages and health insurance.

The final speaker of the evening was NYSUT President Richard Iannuzzi. Accompanying the president to this meeting were NYSUT Vice Presidents Maria Neira and Robin Rapaport and NYSUT Secretary-Treasurer Ivan Tiger. President Iannuzzi spoke of the upcoming RA in Washington, D.C., but most of his remarks focused on the Governor’s budget. Charter schools are still a hot topic, and NYSUT was hoping none would be added. However, one hundred new charter schools are in the budget. Fifty of those schools are guaranteed to be set up in New York City. For more information about charter schools, visit this NYSUT site: http://www.nysut.org/cps/rde/xchg/nysut/hs.xsl/mediareleases_6867.htm.
Good News!

- Congratulations to Frank and Kelly Evert (KR) on the birth of their son, Wayne Vincent. Wayne was born on April 8, 2007, weighing in at 7lbs., 15oz., and 21 1/2 inches long.

Sheafe Road Celebrates a Baby Boom for the 2006-2007 School Year:

- Clare Curtis (5th grade) and husband Jay (6th at Myers) welcomed a son, Quinn Arden, on July 11th.
- Michele Keenan (1st grade) and husband Tim welcomed a son, Riley Joseph, on September 23rd.
- Carly Waxman (1st grade) and husband Jarad welcomed a son, Jake Hunter, on December 17th.
- Enid Roberts (reading) and husband Steve welcomed a daughter, Isabella Elaine, on December 29th.
- Gianna LaRose Marsh (school psych) and husband Rich welcomed a son, Finnegan Lauer, on March 10th.
- Jon Sokol (4th grade) and wife Kim (5th at Brink) welcomed a son, Tanner Matthew, on March 12th.
- Danielle Salvestrini (art) and husband Dave welcomed a son, Mason Tyler, on March 23rd.
- Nicole Donovan-Kowalczyzk (4th grade) and husband Brian welcomed twins, Ryan Patrick and Abigail Joanne, on April 18th.

Congratulations, and stay tuned for more on the way!

Dates to Know

May 7 - BOE meeting (GY, FS, & BR)
May 18 - payday
May 21 - BOE meeting (KR, FP, & WJH)
May 25 - Due to the April 16th storm, we have school
May 28 - Memorial Day observed
May 29 - R.A. meeting
June 1 - payday
June 11 - BOE meeting (VW, EV, VR, & OV)
June 15 - payday
June 19 - R.A. meeting

Highlights of the 2007 NYSUT RA Convention:

look in the next issue for more information

WCT delegates awaiting the arrival of Senator Clinton and Gov. Spitzer.

WCT delegates visit the Vietnam War Memorial and search for the names of loved ones.
Teachers Make the Best Friends  
By Kristen Marino

Teachers make the best friends. I was aware of this simple truth long before I became a teacher. I grew up as witness to friendships that begin in hallways and faculty rooms. These friendships are lasting and true. I have many memories of the lively gatherings my parents and their friends have had. Although they have retired and left their classrooms behind, those relationships remain.

I’m not sure if it is the nature of the teacher to be a good friend; we are, after all, caregivers. It might be because we are so grateful for adult companionship during the precious 40 minute prep time. Whatever the reason, I know this; my teacher friends are in a league of their own. They know about every sniffle and doctor’s visit my children have had. I know when they last had an argument with their spouse. They gently remind me when I’m looking like a candidate for a “Stacy and Clinton” intervention, and I remind them of the best way to approach a difficult parent. We celebrate all of the good things in life: weddings, births, and new homes. We are there for each other when things are not so sunny, when life throws curves our way.

My best friend recently taught me that life is precious, fragile, and fleeting. After fighting brain cancer courageously for sixteen months, my friend Kasey Monopoli, a second grade teacher at Oak Grove, passed away. We were the goofiest of pals! No one else could make me giggle like a twelve year old at a sleepover party without even trying. I cannot yet comprehend a world that exists without her smile, without her laugh, without her eye rolling and smart cracks to bring me back down to earth when my ego grows too large. I can’t yet believe that there will never be another passionate discussion of what we each believe works best in the classroom. I can’t fully understand that she won’t be on the other end of the phone if I call her. To say that I will miss her is an understatement.

Teachers make the best friends. I am so fortunate to be surrounded by them. I know that I will treasure each moment with them, even more than I did before. Take a moment today to poke your head out of your classroom, look for those friends, and let them know what a precious part of your life they are. Give them a hug and squeeze them in memory of my friend Kasey.

Workers Memorial Day

Even though it has been more than 30 years since Congress passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OHSA) — the nation’s first comprehensive workplace health and safety law, thousands of workers are killed on the job each year, and millions more are injured or made ill.

Workers Memorial Day, which was held on April 28, 2007, is a day designed to honor those killed and injured, and also to focus attention on the need to do much more to ensure worker safety. As weak as OSHA protections can be, they are better than nothing—which is the situation for almost 9 million public employees who are not covered in their states. (The AFT is pushing for passage of a bill in Congress, recently introduced by Rep. Robert Andrews (D-N.J.) that would extend OSHA coverage to these workers.)

School employees in particular suffer high rates of work-related assaults and work-related asthma. In addition, healthcare workers and transportation workers suffer strains and sprains at rates that rival those of construction workers.

The AFL-CIO’s theme for this year’s day was “Good Job, Safe Jobs, It’s Time.” The AFT has adopted its own unofficial motto: “A moment of silence is not enough.” Stickers with that slogan were distributed at the AFT’s PSRP conference in Las Vegas, and the union’s health and safety program also hosted a Workers Memorial Day luncheon during the conference.

To learn more about Workers Memorial Day, visit the AFL-CIO web site for facts and materials. This information has been reprinted from the AFL-CIO web site.
I began my teaching career at John Jay High School in September of 1974, thanks to Tillie Hayden, English Department secretary. I had student taught at RCK the previous spring, and she kept putting my resume on Dennie Hannan’s desk!

In addition to three years of teaching ninth- and tenth-grade English at Jay, I also taught ninth grade at WFJHS, and was involved in the Project Adventure Program. (Nothing beats camping for three days with about fifty ninth graders!) During both my maternity leaves, I taught night school; creative writing for adults; and even facilitated a gifted program. After my second maternity leave, I taught a year of seventh- and eighth-grade English at Van Wyck. I have taught seventh grade there ever since.

There are many aspects of this career that I will miss, but I have to say that my colleagues top the list. I work with the most caring professionals and finest human beings on the planet. I’ll also miss sharing in both the talents and struggles of my students, many of whom have brought me great joy. On the other hand, I won’t miss the heavy emphasis on test prep and test scores, which pigeonhole our pupils and sap the joy out of reading and writing. I will also be rejoicing when I grade my last essay!!!

As my new life begins, I plan to spend more time with family and friends; take lots of classes; read; write; keep fit; expand my role in the parish music ministry, and perhaps even direct a children’s chorus again.

I will miss you all.

Retiree: Marjorie Dannen Markowitz

Rep. John Hall Visits Brinckerhoff

John Hall stopped by Brinckerhoff Elementary on April 12, 2007. Below are pictures from his visit.

John Hall with Brian LaSusa’s 5th grade class
Thanks to WCT

Dear WCT Members:

“It is in the shelter of each other that the people live.”

Irish Proverb

Words cannot truly convey the gratitude and appreciation for all who have generously contributed to my family after the tragic fire at our home on February 9. In spite of this event, we feel so blessed to be safe and surrounded by so many supportive people. It is a humbling experience to be on the receiving end of so many generous hearts.

My two daughters, Jaclyn, 12, and Taryn, 10, are so aware that we can rebuild our home and replace things. It is a huge inconvenience and quite stressful. However, we will find the blessing in the end.

Home is where your family is and we are so thankful for the outpouring of assistance from the entire WCT family. I feel privileged to have the opportunity to work with such a compassionate group of professionals. On behalf of the Murphy family, thank you for all of your generous contributions.

Sincerely,
Lynda Murphy
Business Teacher
John Jay High School

MEMBERS’ CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE: Lovely custom built brick ranch on the south side of Poughkeepsie. Three bedrooms, one and a half baths, hardwood floors, fireplace, many new updates, all new thermal windows, new appliances, finished basement & laundry room, two car garage, beautiful level backyard with privacy fence, professionally landscaped. Listing Price $345,000. Call Mike Harrington 845-221-1318. Express Realty Services.

FOR SALE: 2 BR, 1 bath on large lot in town of Saugerties, NY. Move-in conditions, detached garage. Walk to river and park, close to Catskills. Asking $148,900. MLS 20063533. Call Henry Sobeck, Licensed Real Estate Broker (845) 256-6577 or e-mail tatydelph@aol.com.

FOR SALE: One (1) Mount Saint Mary Graduate level course voucher valued at $1800.00, will sell for $1200.00 OBO; Sony 27” color WEAG Trinitron TV, like new, $150.00; Brooksonic 13” TV, color, DVD VHS combo, like new, $50.00; Bennington Pine Rocker, $100.00. Call 896-7664.

FOR SALE: Man’s dresser, ladies’ dresser in good condition. Best offer. Call Herb @297-5657.

FOR SALE: 3 credits for Mt. St. Mary’s College course for $800.00. Contact Madonna Ray @ 845-227-4540.

Why have a boring retirement party? You could have a DJ that will raise the roof and bring back the 3 decades of music that kept you going!! Leave with a BLAST!!

Contact: Memory Lane D.J. Services - Mr. Ramirez, Wappingers Jr. High Phone #: 845-255-6732

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FOR RENT: Two bedroom cape on Martha’s Vineyard. Large loft upstairs. No pets. Available Sunday, June 24th to Sunday, July 1st. $850.00. If interested, please call Lorraine Blaszak at 221-3357 or 797-2019.

Continued on page 6
MEMBERS’ CLASSIFIED ADS (continued from page 5)

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Chris Capasso
Interior & Exterior Painting
Gutter Cleaning, Roofing, Siding, Windows
Power Washing & Staining
Phone 845-242-8228

FIREWORKS: Friday, August 24th @ 7:05 PM. Hudson Valley Renegades Baseball game. Reserved grandstand tickets $10.00 each to benefit Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. Call Kerry @ 223-9817 for more information.

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FOR RENT: Falmouth, Cape Cod. Fully equipped 3BR, 2 bath duplex on quiet cul-de-sac. 5 min. walk to Vineyard Sound beach, walk to town. Sleeps 6, no smoking, no pets. Available 7/7-14 and some weeks in August. $1800 per week.
Call Bill McCabe at 223-5734 or e-mail wmc1226@frontiernet.net.

FOR SALE: Vero Beach Fl. Ocean condo, rental available, 2 bedrooms 2 baths $850 plus tax per week. Available for sale $225,000. Email me for pictures waltfranca@yahoo.com.

FOR SALE: 2003 Mercedes C230 Kompressor, 4 cyl. 4 door, automatic, sunroof, black on black. 40,000 miles. Call 831-6057 for details.

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