**WCRT Luncheon: facts, fun, friends, food**

POUGHKEEPSIE, NY-- WCRT luncheon guests at Christos Restaurant enjoyed a business meeting with plenty of entertaining benefits on May 14. These photographic highlights show some of the event’s aspects.

LET’S EAT! Abundant variety created difficult choices with more food than food groups.

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www.wcteachers.org

Roger Higgins explains the new WCRT high school scholarships. One senior from John Jay and one Roy C. Ketcham with Education as a career will each receive $500. Orchard View Alternative School entrants will be paired with his/her home high school. Committee members are Roger, Leslie Leventhal, Flo Mondanaro, and Jack Devine. Criteria were an 80 or above GPA and submission of an essay. Winners’ profiles will be featured in the mid-August issue of the PostScript.


Sue Roger, WCRT President, announces that the executive board is considering not mailing the Commentator with the PostScript. WCRT members are also WCT members and entitled to the publication, but mailing costs are becoming prohibitive. She asked guests to offer their ideas.


Pasquale Del-Carpini, WCT President, pleaded with luncheon attendees to “Please, please, please vote next Tuesday… I talk to you because you (retirees) understand.” He highlighted the Board of Education elections, candidate endorsements, and the budget. “You are my secret Army to get out and talk to people like friends, neighbors, and relatives.”

Roger, WCRT President,PLEASE®, is considering not mailing the Commentator with the PostScript. WCRT members are also WCT members and entitled to the publication, but mailing costs are becoming prohibitive. She asked guests to offer their ideas.

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www.wcteachers.org
From The President

SUSAN ROGER
WCRT
President

Dear WCRT Members,

Well, this awful winter is behind us. We are busy planting our huge vegetable garden and dealing with ruined shrubbery due to the deer or winter kill. It is so great to be working out in the yard again.

The annual budget vote and Board of Education election are over. We didn’t get all of the candidates we were backing. However, I just hope that they are civil to each other, and find a way to work together for the good of our students and staff.

We had a wonderful luncheon at Christos on May 14 with about 55 retirees in attendance. It is always a fun time to see past colleagues. We conducted a WCRT election of officers for our executive board, and all were elected.

I would like to take this time to thank all of the officers, directors, and committee chairs for all the work they do for all of us.

Susan Roger

NEW newsletter distribution process, renewals, dues info

If you would like to receive the PostScript or Commentator by email, you MUST register your email address with the website www.wcteachers.org. If your email address is not registered there, you will not receive any publications or notices.

Retirees give the WCRT their email address. The WCT website 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 once a member registers.

WCT & WCRT publication dates for academic year 2014-2015: Commentator and PostScript mailing dates:
Oct. 15* Mar. 16
Nov. 14 Apr. 15*
Dec. 15* May 15
Jan. 16 June 15*
Feb. 13* and one sometime in August*.

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 2014-2015 are:
$ 20.00 Yearly;
$200.00 Individual Lifetime;
$325.00 Couples Lifetime.
Pay Lifetime and alleviate the yearly task of renewing.

WCT & WCRT Retiree Election
July 1, 2013-June 30, 2015
President........ Susan Roger 226-8285
1st Vice-Pres. Roger Higgins 297-8757
2nd V.P. ....... Leslie Leventhal 297-4430
Rec Secy. ...... Flo Mondanaro 454-0352
Crr Secy. ....... Barbara Stick 896-9572
Treasurer......... Tom DeRito 440-3476
Past Pres............. Alice Baker 452-5793
WCRT Rep. to WCT Representative Assembly.... Ellen Korz 297-9713

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

The WCRT PostScript is published in Oct., Dec., Feb., Apr., June, and Aug. during the school year. Editor: Bill Dourdis wdourdis@verizon.net (845) 473-1796

The WCRT PostScript is a 2014 NYSUT United Communications Competition Winner with 5 awards: 1st, Best Article About A Social Justice Issue, by Brian Connolly; *AD, Best Photo, by Brian Connolly; 1st, Best Column/Blog, by Cliff Foley; *AD, Best Creative Writing, by Jack Devine; *AD, Catchiest Headline/Title, by Saranne Ratner. (*AD = Award of Distinction; & 1st=1st Place).

SAVE THESE DATES (future details coming soon)

July 25 Deadline for mid-August PostScript
Sept. 16 Fall Luncheon, Christos, 11:30a.m., $23,
Deadline for mid-October PostScript
ACTIVISM AND MANY HOT ISSUES

CLIFF FOLEY
Political Action Chairperson

Summer is arriving and the heat is on. No, we are not talking about the outside weather but the educational climate in New York State. As retirees we have had the luxury of not having to deal with many of the issues that our colleagues in the classroom are facing. Unfortunately we can’t just assume some magic power will keep adversity from impacting us. We may be glad that we are not in the schools, but we can’t ignore the ill winds that are blowing throughout our state. NYSUT President Karen Magee in the June issue of NYSUT United states, “As we enter June, this year has sparked unparalleled activism by our members in every constituency group, in every corner of the state.”

One of the things causing this activism is the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR), which is the proposed evaluation system for educators. Championed by Governor Cuomo the APPR uses student test scores in the evaluation process. His request was for 50% of a teacher’s evaluation to be based on these results. In the June 11, 2015 issue of the Poughkeepsie Journal we read that the majority of Dutchess County school superintendents have signed a petition calling for the suspension of the implementation of the APPR. Since all districts were forced to create a plan, Wappingers did submit one in 2014. The State Education Department even approved it! If you would like to read the 92-page document, it can be found by searching APPR on the Internet.

Of course no article on hot education issues in New York would be complete without a mention of Common Core. This connects directly with the APPR since student test scores based on this defective curriculum would be used to make decisions about the future of individual teachers. Common Core ignores the fact that not all children are the same and can learn at the same rate. In my December 2013 Post-Script column, “Attacking the Core of the Problem,” I stated, “There is no doubt a rebellion against the poorly conceived and implemented Common Core standards is under way.” We have now seen this become an organized campaign by parents who are pulling their children out of testing based on Common Core.

We need to be part of the activism. Yes, retirees could be affected by APPR when it’s coupled with the 2% tax cap and low teacher morale going into upcoming contract negotiations. There could be an impact on health insurance and the Welfare Trust Fund. And don’t forget to throw into the mix the influence of whoever is sitting on the board of education. Because of the way the tax cap is determined, it has been estimated that the 2016-2017 tax increase allowed could be 0% because of very low inflation. Districts statewide may be forced to make cuts or try to get a supermajority of 60% of voters to pass a budget over the cap.

Not all of the hot issues are in the school classrooms. Of great concern to retirees is any threat to the New York State Teachers’ Retirement System pensions that we enjoy. The New York Constitution currently guarantees that your income cannot be reduced. We don’t know what our governor, who has been an advocate for private schools and an increase in the number of charter schools allowed in the state, may do in the next few years. One concern is that he may look to get a constitutional amendment or hold a constitutional convention that would remove our pension protection. We have already seen him push through a change that puts new active teachers into a sixth retirement tier with reduced benefits. With no constitutional protection, all educators could be tossed into this Tier 6.

There is a tremendous amount of money being funneled into elections through Super PACs. These could have a big influence on the outcome of elections and on legislation that is passed as a result of who gets voted in. If every WCRT member would make a contribution to NYSUT’s VOTE-COPE political action fund, we might not have to look for that magic power to protect us from these many threats. We can’t wait until it’s too late before we become part of the activism.

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 “Berkshire Hathaway Real Estate.”
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.

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.
Protect your WCRT, NYSUT membership

WCRT by the numbers:

- WCRT membership as of June 9, 2015:
  - 609 WCRT members
  - 186 yearly members
  - 367 Lifetime members
  - 44 Complimentary Lifetime members
  - 12 Complimentary members
  - 79 retirees don’t belong to WCRT & not entitled to NYSUT benefits
  - 370 members email subscribers
  - 232 members postal subscribers

Please consider email subscription. It saves us considerable spending on postage.

Membership checks MUST be made out to WCT, not WCRT. Otherwise, they will be returned to you and you will need to issue a new check.

Membership dues are:
- $25.00 for a year
- $44.00 for a lifetime
- $12.00 for a complimentary membership

Lifetime is the best deal. Pay once and get about it!

NEW PROCEDURE:

Even if we already have email addresses in our WCRT database, members MUST register their email address through the www.wcteachers.org website NOW or they will not receive email publications and notices.

EAST FISHKILL RECREATION
SUMMER OUTDOOR CONCERTS-- 2015

Sun. Aug. 2 2-4pm  RED WING PARK, MATT JORDAN OLDIES BAND
Sing & dance to the oldies at the lake.
Fri., Aug. 7 6:30-8:30pm  EF REC PARK  RENDITION 7-piece high energy band –
music for all occasions Pop, country, rock, top 40
Fri., Aug. 14 6:30-8:30pm  EAST FISHKILL REC PARK
FRIDAY NIGHT SUMMER CONCERT – RAIN DATE
RED WING PARK  TBA
SUNDAY AFTERNOON CONCERT – RAIN DATE
Fri., Sept. 4 6-8pm  JOHNNY DELL AND NITE LIFE
“End of the Summer-Labor Day Concert “ with the talented
Johnny Dell returning with a wide variety of music.

RAIN MAKE-UP DATES: SUNDAY NIGHTS 8/2, 8/16  6PM

From left: Margaret Geary (Fishkill), Carol Wall (Myers), Cathy Celtruda (Gayhead), Fred Wall (Brinkerhoff, Myers), Sue Blodgett (John Jay), Chris Romano (Myers), and Marilyn Walsh (Brinkerhoff).

Friends of the East Fishkill Community Library, also retired Wappingers Central School teachers!

The Friends spend our time fund raising for the EF Library. This year we have actively run activities to raise funds for the new Children’s Area of the Library. It is turning out beautifully!

Some fund raising activities WCSD teachers might be interested in are: The Antique Appraisal Day, (in Spring), which has an expert antique appraiser here (retired from Sotheby’s) to tell you the value of your piece; English High Tea (May 23, off site at the Bushey residence), where you can enjoy, tea and scones in an elegant setting; Library Ground Beautification Day , (May 30), come by and lend a hand; After Hours at the Library, (Oct. 9) which is a wine and appetizer social with live music; and Artisan Craft Fair, (Nov. 14) local artists donate their works for sale. Check the Library or Friends websites for more details.

The NHYC Annual Day of Golf is scheduled for August 28, and proceeds again go the Wappingers Falls Meals on Wheels Program. Over $75,000 has been raised to help keep those Meals on Wheels spinning.

Retired teachers Charlie Powers and Jack Devine, retired administrators Skip Rottkamp (Chairman), Joe Corrigan and Rosemarie Gardner, have served on the Golf Committee for the past ten years and find it to be a very satisfying way to serve the local community.

Any golfers reading this are encouraged to play in the tournament. It has a great reputation for the way it is run and the price has been kept attractively low. Detailed information may be found by going to: www.nhyc1869.com.

To those who do not play golf, there is an easy way to help Meals on Wheels. A check for $25.00 will “Feed a Resident” for one week (10 meals!). Checks can be made out to “NHYC” and sent to;

Skip Rottkamp
57 DeGarmo Hills Road
Wappingers Falls, NY 12590

If you know of any golfers who may not read this, please pass the word. A Day of Golf is great fun. The cause is worthy and then some.

NEW HAMBURG ANNUAL DAY OF GOLF FOR MEALS ON WHEELS

Held annually on August 28th, the New Hamburg Annual Day of Golf is a popular event that raises funds for Meals on Wheels. This year, the event is scheduled for August 28th, with proceeds going towards the Wappingers Falls Meals on Wheels Program.

The venue is the Red Wing Park, and the tournament begins at 2 pm. Participants enjoy a round of golf followed by a delicious meal at the Matt Jordan Oldies Band concert. The event is open to all who are passionate about supporting this essential service for the elderly.

For those who wish to support Meals on Wheels but are unable to participate in the tournament, there are other ways to contribute. A check for $25.00 can be made out to “NHYC” and sent to Skip Rottkamp at 57 DeGarmo Hills Road, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590. This gift will enable Meals on Wheels to continue providing its vital services to those in need.
The end of the year and budget time always generate lengthy discussions. Add in the governor’s recent actions and you have the makings of anger, frustration, and depressed morale.

The meeting began with information about our new home office. The closing was March 31, but we won’t actually be in until June. Workers are doing electrical and structural repairs. The building was vacant for a long time and needs some renovating. At the next meeting we will see the exact expenditures. We have a 15-year fixed mortgage at 4.5%. Within the next ten years, the building will be ours.

It’s VOTE-COPE time as well. It was stressed that now more than ever we need as much support as possible to have representation at the table. The actions of Governor Cuomo, Didi Barrett, and Sue Serino make it imperative that we have the funds to fight back.

The BOE Elections are May 19. Our three candidates are Karen Karath, Babu Munusamy, and Rob Rubin. This is the beginning of our contract negotiations, so the elections are very important. We did not support Ved Shravah. Everyone was asked to send postcards to those who don’t get information from local unions or NYSUT. These postcards give us the best return.

Pasquale commended us on the showing at the rally and how well it was organized by the Executive Board. It made a huge impression on not only our community, but others as far as Albany. Ten other districts followed with rallies. Didi Barrett and Sue Serino’s offices have been inundated with letters of protest from our members. Sue Serino has invited us to join an educational advisory committee. Her perception of what happened with the budget vote was quite different from ours. She is reaching out to us.

We are also being asked to write letters to the Board of Regents, particularly Judith Johnson who represents Dutchess County, even though there was a slight increase in funding and we are not losing positions. Although she has stated that the evaluation system is unattainable, according to the timeline, letters from our members, in agreement, should be sent. Enclosed in the packet for the meeting was a letter from NYSUT that will be distributed to all WCT members to sign about APPR. Also letters from NYSUT about protections for test refusal will also be distributed and signed.

Although it wasn’t the first discussion at the meeting, the BOE elections and Budget vote was addressed. The turnout was less than 5000, very disappointing even though the budget passed. The proposition that didn’t pass was the one for the BOE to purchase a building for their offices. Most people did not understand the wording of the proposition and just did not want the District to spend that money. The District will rent again, and instead of owning a building in five years, they will continue to spend $390,000 a year of taxpayer’s money. The Superintendent should have explained this better in his budget talks.

The new home of the WCT is still being renovated. It will be ready the end of July and an Open House will be planned.

There will be an Eligibility Audit for our health insurance in the fall. The purpose is to find if any members are deceased, divorced or their children have aged out. It is recommended to have this type of audit every five to six years. Everyone will be asked to complete the paperwork involved.

We discussed at length the issue of the 6th grade being moved back to the elementary buildings and the teachers having to relocate. Many teachers are upset, frustrated, and have a difficult time with the change. Pasquale reiterated this is not a union issue. It does not violate any union or contract rules. The board can change the configuration of the buildings and teachers must go where their students are.

Finally, you might find this amusing: there are again problems with prior approvals not being addressed in a timely manner. This has been a problem since the 1970s. While cleaning out the WCT office, problems about prior approvals were found, to which Pasquale responded that it was an automatic approval, especially if people were approved the year before for the same course. I guess it’s same old, same old.

The decision was previously made to have an outdoor event at Bowdoin Park, June 19, 3-7pm, to end the year and celebrate everyone. Hope everyone can attend. More information should follow.
Letters [to Poughkeepsie Journal editor]

Sun., May 3, 2015

Here’s how to dismantle public education

Suppose I want to destroy public education and replace it with private profit-making schools. How would I go about it?

First, we need a scapegoat because our schools are, for the most part, functioning pretty well. Let’s put them on a budget cap of say 2 percent, so they will have to start eliminating programs and teachers and teacher’s aides. Let’s mandate some additional tests that are unfunded. Let’s also make those tests impossible for reasonable teachers and students to succeed. Let’s design the test for the elite, college-bound students. We could then make it really difficult for the teachers to succeed by making the passing percentage for a class to be 85 percent of the students.

In order to get rid of these now failing teachers we will have to expedite the dismissal procedures. Since there are no long lines of certified, experienced teachers to replace them, parents will be rushing to enroll their kids in our charter schools.

If we only accept the brightest and best, then we can be assured of success. We can cut back on pay by using uncertified teachers, by cutting out insurance and pensions, and profits should be good.

If we could purchase some of the now available public schools for discount prices, profits could climb still higher. We will need to save a few of those old schools for those students that are unable to meet our standards. We will have ample profit to continue supporting our political allies.

Gerald Webb
Wappingers Falls
[Gerry taught 18 yrs. in Wappingers, then 14 yrs. in Peekskill. He retired in 1999.]

Mon., June 1, 2015

Tolerance should go in both directions

Why must everyone be expected to tolerate so-called same-sex marriage which overturns society’s norms and the sacredness of “He made them male and female matrimony”? The “media is the message,” progressive, secular culture is foisting it upon us.

How many have thought about its long term effects? One major change is that gender will become indistinguishable. Perhaps that is its goal: no more fathers, mothers, aunts, uncles, sister, brothers. Children in school will be taught homosexual/lesbian sex, multiple marriage partners will seek approval, man/boy marriage? Why not in- sex, multiple marriage partners will seek approval, man/boy marriage? Why not?

Will churches and businesses be vili- fied and forced to go against their deeply felt beliefs in order to accommodate this anomaly? Toleration works both ways. Let’s hope the Supreme Court understands the threat to society this will be if they vote to approve it nationwide.

Ralph Capasso
Fishkill
[Ralph served 17 years as WCT President and started the WCT.]

Bits ‘n’ pieces

To receive any WCT/WCRT publications by email, you must now register your email address at www.wcteachers.org even if we already have your email address.

You will not receive anything electronically if you are not registered on the website.

Enjoy some of what NYC has to offer.
Sign up to receive the monthly Plum Benefits Guide.
Send an e-mail to jtkorz@optonline.net to be added to our list.
Ellen Korz

Roy C. Ketcham High School’s “Masque and Mime’s 50th Anniversary Celebration”

Saturday, July 18, 2015
at Ramada Inn, Fishkill, NY

Roy C. Ketcham’s esteemed drama club, Masque & Mime, will celebrate its 50th Anniversary. Current and former members, as well as the “drama mammas and papas,” are invited to attend.

$50.00 if pre-registered before July 3, 2015. $60.00 at the door after 7/3/15.
Price includes buffet, soft drinks, desert and coffee, as well as memory lane performances.
Checks or money orders should be payable to Masque & Mime’s Advisor:
Rosemary Evaul and sent to her attention c/o Roy C. Ketcham High School 99 Myers Corners/Wappingers Falls, NY/12590.
Those wishing to pay cash should pay Rosemary directly. Please include name(s) of attendees with payment. For payment questions, call Rosemary at 845-505-5390.
For more information about the event or if you are interested in performing from a list of pre-selected musicals, please contact Michelle mmartinetti23@gmail.com OR 914-489-6069.

Save the date
Sat., Sept. 19, 2015
Wappingers Central
75th Celebration
Plan to attend
Watch for more details

Tom Derito
Financial Report available
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.

Jane Stockslager
WCRT Constitution, By-Laws

Constitution and Board of Directors Voted on!

At the Spring Luncheon on May 14, the WCRT voted on the WCRT Amended Constitution was voted on. All amendments from the past 10 years were added and the new Constitution was accepted.

Treasurer

At the Spring Luncheon on May 14, the WCRT voted on the WCRT Amended Constitution was voted on. All amendments from the past 10 years were added and the new Constitution was accepted.

www.WCTeachers.org or sundancewf@aol.com
New website forces new email policy

Mandatory registration on website now required

Dear WCRT retirees,

Ya gotta be in it to win it.

Get your butts in gear.

Get with the program.

No more procrastinating.

These are the new Wappingers Website Warnings.

This entire issue focuses on new ways to conduct our union business. Our new WCT/WCRT website at www.wcteachers.org was designed to unify its groups, both active and retired teachers. It offers far more inclusive benefits and capabilities than the previously limited a la carte website.

With this new website comes a new policy: Even if we already have email addresses in our WCRT database, retirees MUST register their email address through www.wcteachers.org or they will not receive email publications and notices. Members must initiate their email registration as part of the website’s security features. (Follow the steps at the top of this page.)

PostScript newsletters in October and December of 2014 featured, highlighted, emphasized the benefits and advantages of this new communications tool and cajoled readers to register and “get on board” with the newer, better technology. Helping the WCRT lower postal costs is no longer what members are asked to do. Members are now put on notice that they follow the eight steps outlined by the webmaster or their communication with the WCT/WCRT will stop.

Liken it to, “Don’t expect an IRS refund if you don’t file a Form 1040.” However, you can guarantee a return of ongoing communication with the WCRT and NYSUT, get copies of insurance claim forms, view videos, and much, much more.

Other noteworthy changes in this issue include a new WCT office, how to battle New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo’s hostility toward active and retired teachers, and constitution and by-laws updates.

On a personal note, I want retirees to have access to news about their colleagues and friends through the PostScript. Too many of us contribute to our local communities by sitting on executive boards of non-profit organizations, raise and give money to worthy causes, work in food pantries, shelters, and outreach programs. They offer their time and talent and we want to recognize them. Register your email address on the website so we can keep in touch.

Bill Dourdis, PostScript editor

A couple of issues ago, I wrote an article in Postscript describing the WCT’s brand new webpage, and the need to register for access to the site. Since then, many of you have in fact registered, but many of you have not.

The new website offers members the most direct avenue to get questions answered, access forms, and find answers to your questions about the WCT/WCRT. It is, in fact, your first point of reference.

So, in hopes of enticing more WCT members to register on the new website, and with apologies to Late Night with David Letterman, here are the TOP TEN REASONS TO REGISTER ON THE WCT WEBSITE . . .

1. Only registered members enrolled in one of the WTF plans can file for reimbursement of up to $150 per covered family member for medical co-pays.

2. Registered members will receive the POSTSCRIPT via e-mail, and in FULL COLOR.

3. Registered members can get access to the website.

4. Registered members will have access to the WCT WEBSITE.

5. Only registered members will have access to the WCT website.

6. Registered members enrolled in one of the WTF plans can file for reimbursement of up to $150 per covered family member for medical co-pays.

7. Only registered members can get forms to file for the above.

8. Contract information, constitution information, an event calendar, blogs, election & political information, insurance, even “on-line” shopping information is available.

9. Access to the Welfare Trust is done through the website.

10 – A random drawing of all newly registered WCRT members will be held, and the winner will receive a private tour (hosted by Pasquale) of the new WCT office.

- Welcome to the Welfare Trust is done through the website.

- Registered WCRT members will receive the POSTSCRIPT via e-mail, and in FULL COLOR.

- The WCRT will save money because e-mail delivery of the POSTSCRIPT saves your organization money.

- Confidential information is only available to registered members.

- Registered members enrolled in one of the WTF plans can file for reimbursement of up to $150 per covered family member for medical co-pays.

- Only registered members can get forms to file for the above.

- Contract information, constitution information, an event calendar, blogs, election & political information, insurance, even “on-line” shopping information is available.

- Registered members will be better informed, better able to communicate with friends, former colleagues, WCT members, the WTF and with WCT Officers and staff.

- Only registered members will have access to the WCT WEBSITE.

Here’s how to register your email with the website:

1. Go to www.wcteachers.org

2. On the right-hand side, go to the “Member Login” module

3. Click on the “Click Here to sign-up” link (It is yellow)

4. Enter all of your information on the form. This is the information that we will use to maintain our records and to send email and/or text notifications. Make sure that you choose a username and password that you will remember.

5. Click submit

6. Review all of your information

7. Click Submit again

8. Wait 24-48 hours for us to verify your membership. You will receive an email advising you that you are good to go. At this point, you can come back to the website and login.

Hope this helps.

Thanks, Nancy
POUGHKEEPSIE, NY-- NYSUT president Karen Magee spoke at the Retiree Council 13 luncheon at Christos Restaurant May 28. RC13 serves Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Sullivan, and Ulster Counties for consolidated unity among retiree chapters. Magee introduced herself as “the first woman president of NYSUT—but not the last! I’ve been in the position over a year and find it interesting and baffling.

“These are unprecedented times... The teacher voice is under attack. If silenced, there’s no need for Collective Bargaining or no 3020a process... There’s a calculated attempt to silence the voice of the unions. NYS Governor Cuomo is a bully! His sole objective is to dismantle and destroy education and replace it with a private system directly affecting those who fund him.

She noted court cases and now the theory is ‘impovery areas have’t succeeded because teachers had tenure.’’

Magee cited examples from Staten Island and inner city Syracuse where there were no resources, no books, or grandparents to dote over their grandkids, and kids were not succeeding at the same rate. Compare that to a school two miles outside Syracuse with better success. Both schools had teachers with tenure.

Then there’s the gag-order lawsuit vs. Common Core: teachers aren’t allowed to discuss questions with colleagues or anyone; questions that are developmentally inappropriate, grammatically incorrect, poorly worded, and with wrong answers on the key. Teachers could design tools to do all this. Why have the money go to corporations? Let teachers create questions based on appropriate information, that are diagnostic and make sense.

Magee stated “In our day, we bought the Barron’s test book. Why not now?”

The NYS Education Department issues a test that counts for a significant portion of a teacher’s career. This is one poorly designed test. The governor wants it to be a snapshot for 50% of a teacher’s grade... What works in Harrison might not work in Yonkers or upstate... There have to be individual goals for each school district... Free sneakers for all won’t make any of you an Olympic athlete... when there’s poverty, class size, parent resources, and lack of funding.”

She explained to the governor that “expeditious doesn’t make it practical.”

“The governor says he respects teachers but not the union, but teachers are the teachers’ union! Legislatively, there’s a bill to hit the pause button on APPR to protect jobs so teachers aren’t terminated without cause. Magee is hoping for a mirror bill from the Senate but is guardedly optimistic about it.

Her closing remarks were, “In order to save Article 5, Section 7 of the State Constitution: ‘a pension, once issued, cannot be diminished or impaired,’ we need to stay active and informed to avoid a NYS Constitutional Convention in 2017.”

Luncheon: facts ‘n’ fun from page 1

Mary Coiteux, Nominating Committee Chairperson, handles election of officers for the next two-year term. Unanimous vote.

Bob Ruopp and Christine Zwinscher register at table. Leslie Leventhal and Roger Higgins are seated.

more pictures on next page
In Memoriam
James R. Kidder
1942 to 2015

Jim was an avid sports fan. He followed the Yankees, Giants, NASCAR and was a Marist Women’s Basketball season ticket holder. He was thrilled to be in Yankee stadium to see Mickey Mantle hit his 500th home run!

Jim loved animals and over the years many cats shared his life and love. In his final days, Ava and Nala (grandson Aldrin’s cats), rarely left Jim’s side. Nala slept on Jim’s bed during his final days and kept her paw outstretched over Jim’s leg to provide him comfort.

Jim is predeceased by his parents, Fred and Elizabeth Kidder. He is survived at home by his loving wife Margaret; son, James F. Kidder; daughter, Merlyn L. Akhtar; and grandson, Aldrin M. Akhtar. On Jim’s side, he is also survived by his sister, Susan (Kenneth) Powell (Miami) and niece, Kelly LaGarde (NC). On Margaret’s side, Jim is survived by parents-inlaw, Gary & Merlyn Fino of Hudson; sister-inlaw, Polly (Fino) Desantis of Yorktown Heights; nieces, Katherine (Desantis) Martin, Margaret (Desantis) Spencer, Phillis (Desantis) Clermont; and nephew, Guy DeSantis. He is also survived by 11 grand nieces and nephews.

Jim was at home in hospice care from February 3, 2015 until his demise on April 12, 2015. During that time, Jim and his family chose to have a celebration of life marked by visits with family and friends, a photo tree depicting his life, and a memory book filled with notes from visitors and e-mails from those who could not visit to share their stories in person. On March 5, 2015, Hospice Chaplain Chris Boyd officiated at a marriage renewal ceremony for Jim and Margaret.

In lieu of remembrances, we ask that you pass on Jim’s legacy of helping others by doing an act of kindness for yourself or a loved one. A memorial service is planned for later date. McHoul Funeral Home, Inc. is assisting the family. For online condolences, please visit www.mchoulfuneralhome.com.
News since last issue

Source: Poughkeepsie Journal

I got this card for passing my 3rd-grade reading test and this one for passing the MCT2. And this one for "no child left behind." This one is for Common Core. This one is for my district being woefully underfunded. I got this one for selling fundraiser chocolate and wrapping paper and one for every year MAEP has been underfunded...

THE BOYS OF SUMMER

Baltimore OUTRAGE

Wheaties

Summer School

THE THRILL IS GONE

Then

Now

College Debt
3 awarded Capasso Scholarships

The WCT and WCRT awarded three $2,000 scholarships to children of active teachers at a reception in the Roy C. Ketcham High School library on May 28.

Dignitaries included John Lumia, WCSD Board of Education Trustee; Zachary, Eric, Pasquale Delli Carpini, WCT President; Ralph Capasso, former WCT President; Gabriella and Leslie Leventhal, WCRT Vice President.

Pasquale noted, “This is the most prestigious awards ceremony in the Wappingers School District. The Ralph and Janet Capasso scholarship awards are named after Ralph, “a benefactor and union activist.” Ralph served 17 years as WCT President and started the WCT.

“Ralph’s a gentleman and a scholar who made a difference in the lives of thousands of teachers, kids, and parents. We thank him and remember him for the current benefits and working conditions. He was Teacher of the Year and Outstanding Educator. Providing students with a quality education has always been his top priority.”

During Mr. Capasso’s remarks to the recipients, he emphasized, “Congratulations for all your accomplishments. Always remember your fine and effective teachers.” He also thanked the parents for such wonderful students. “Stay focused, have faith, and keep your eye on the future and not on the past.”

Gabriella Guerriero is the daughter of Elisa Guerriero, a Kindergarten teacher at Oak Grove Elementary. Gabriella ranks 18th out of 499 at RCKHS with a GPA of 99.

Her in-school activities include National and Italian Honor Societies, Future Business Leaders of America, Environmental Club, and Vice President of Student Govt.

Her out-of-school activity is helping at their family business, Emiliano’s Pizza in Poughkeepsie.

Gabriella will attend Fashion Institute of Technology in NYC to study advertising and business.

She feels the committee chose her as a recipient because of, “my academic achievements and my involvement in various school clubs.”

Her most influential teacher is Signora DeSorrento, who teaches Italian, “because she is great with advice and I love our relationship.”

Eric Schwartz, ranked 68 out of 499 students at RCKHS, will attend University of Delaware to focus on finance. His father, Steve Schwartz, teaches 3rd Grade at Fishkill Plains Elementary.

After school activities include National and Business Honor Societies, wrestling team, and Future Business Leaders of America.

Out-of-school organizations include Eagle Scout and as a lifeguard.

Eric senses the committee chose him, “because in my own heart I feel being an Eagle Scout helped me receive this scholarship. Eagle Scout is a very rewarding achievement that not many people can receive.”

John Spear, Business teacher, was his most influential teacher because, “on his own free time he would help me with my college decision.”

Zachary DiGregorio is the son of Jennifer DiGregorio, who teaches at Brinckerhoff Elementary. Zach is Senior Class President and ranked 5th of 233 Beacon High School students and boasts a 100.287 GPA.

He will attend Dutchess Community College to study Liberal Arts.

Zach balances studies with many volunteer activities and clubs. In school, it’s National Honor Society, Varsity Track, Varsity Basketball, Beacon High School Chorus, and Senior Class President.

When not in school, Zach is busy with Boy Scouts Troop 95, Inner Strength Karate Leadership Program, St. John’s Lutheran Church Youth Group, and the Dutchess County Basketball Coaches Association All-Academic Team. He has been employed as a page at the Howland Library since 2011.

“I was probably chosen for my academic achievement while staying involved in the community and school activities.”

“Mr. Robert Atwell taught me three separate classes over two years of high school. Math was my favorite subject through high school because Mr. Atwell made it fun and interesting.”

Selection committee, Diane Dixon, Caryn Stuart, and Sean Keenan, (not in photo) whose children won last year.

Dignitaries included John Lumia, WCSD Board of Education Trustee; Zachary, Eric, Pasquale Delli Carpini, WCT President; Ralph Capasso, former WCT President; Gabriella and Leslie Leventhal, WCRT Vice President.
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