POUGHKEEPSIE, NY--WCRT Luncheon attendees at Christos Restaurant, Friday, September 23 repeatedly heard about the importance of their vote in the presidential election in November 2016 and the Constitutional Convention vote in November 2017.

Pasquale Delli Carpini, WCT President, listed a series of informational items: He reported on the Memorandum of Agreement as a five-year deal to 2021.

The WCT Local Action Project (LAP) received over 21,000 books for distribution.

Pensions: with $107 billion, Teacher Retirement System takes care of all of us. $550 million a month is paid out.

Constitutional Convention (CC): November, 2017. Vote NO. a) In a CC, “It’s all up for grabs.” b) Amendments for a particular thing every 20 years. c) It has three vital roles:
1) we’re protecting our defined benefit in Article 5, Section 7.
2) It would open a Pandora’s Box. 3) The major thing is they could go after our pensions. “The mentality is, “If I don’t have it, you shouldn’t either. Ours is healthy and wealthy. They don’t get a Christmas bonus or stock options. If enough vote YES, we’ll be in trouble money-wise. We don’t want elected officials messing with our pensions.”

Sue Roger, WCRT President, commented that we should convince family, friends, and neighbors to vote this November and vote NO to a CC next November. “It will affect our state parks, land, Adirondack building,” and other talking points.

She distributed Retiree Membership Handbooks for all attendees before going through her business meeting agenda.

Newly-retired attendee Karen MacLeod, Vassar Rd. Music teacher, offered a great factoid: “I’m the second Music teacher ever at VR. The first was Barbara Dinehart in the 53-year history of Vassar Road Elementary School.”

First-time attendee Barbara Pignataro, taught Science at Wappinger Junior High. “I’m just glad to be here.”

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www.wcteachers.org

Table Talk...

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Joyce Betros, Marie Dow, and Cheryl Zmudzinski.

POLITICAL ACTION COLUMN
WCT LAP receives 21,000 books
RC 13 Conf celebrates 25 yrs of service
From The President

Dear WCRT Members,

It is with great pleasure that I announce that our Executive Board has appointed Mary Ann Moran to the place of Alice Heusinger as a director. Mary Ann will serve until the Spring Luncheon where she can be duly elected if she wishes to continue, and I hope she will. Her main duty will be to assist Peg Nikola with the mailing of the Post-Script.

Peg has let me know that after years of being on the Executive Board, she will be retiring in June 2017. If anyone is interested in the position, please let me know. An election committee will be formed to select a slate of officers to be voted on at the luncheon.

It seems as if this election year has gone on forever. However, it is so important that each one of us cast our ballot. Therefore, I urge that you all register and encourage your families to do the same, and come election day be sure to vote.

Susan Roger

PostScript

WCRT Officers and Board of Directors

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
Corr Secy........ Barbara Stuck 896-9572
Treasurer........... Tom DeRito 440-3476
Past Pres............ Alice Baker 452-5793
WCRT Rep. to WCT Representative Assembly…. Ellen Korz 297-9713

Directors
Ruth Ehlers           831-6390
Jane Stockslager   297-3766
Jack Devine           297-5032
Margaret Nikola   221-3824

Committee Chairpersons
Political Action: .....................Cliff Foley
Constitution/Bylaws: ..Jane Stockslager
Gifts and Contributions...Mary Coiteux
Retiree Council 13 Liaison....Cliff Foley

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

The WCRT PostScript is a 2016 NYSUT United Communications Competition Winner with two awards: 1st Place, Best Column/Blog, We’re at War in New York by Cliff Foley; Award of Distinction, Creative Writing, Devine Intervention: A lofty look at retirement by Jack Devine.

Protect your WCRT, NYSUT membership

Members with email addresses registered on the website wcteachers.org will receive publications and notices by email. Please keep email information up to date on that site.

Our files are not linked to that site, so please notify the WCT office if any changes in address, phone, or email, etc.

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.

SAVE THESE DATES (future details coming soon)

Nov. 8 VOTE on this election day
Nov. 15 WCRT exec board mtg. 10:00-12:00
Jan. 10 WCRT exec board mtg. 10:00-12:00

You MUST belong to the WCT to be eligible for NYSUT benefits. Make checks payable to WCT and mail to WCT.
Renewal notices have been sent out. Dues for 2015-2016 are:
$ 20.00 Yearly;
$200.00 Individual Lifetime;
$325.00 Couples Lifetime. Pay Lifetime and alleviate the yearly task of renewing.

You can register and belong at www.wcteachers.org --WCRT PostScript

WCT officers and board of directors

WCRT publication dates for academic year 2016-2017:
PostScript mailing dates:
Oct. 14 Apr. 18
Dec. 9 June 20
Feb. 10 Aug. 11

The WCT PostScript is published in Oct., Dec., Feb., Apr., June, andAug. during the school year.
Editor: Bill Dourdis williamdourdis@gmail.com
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All of the pundits seem to be saying this could be the most important election in our lifetime or maybe the century. That could be true. There are certainly many issues that will have an impact on retirees and all the rest of the United States and maybe the world. If that seems like an overstatement, think about it.

At the top we have to look at the candidates and what their placement in the White House may mean. NEA Retired President Tom Curran stated recently, “Hillary Clinton stands with educators and it is time for us to stand with her.” It is no surprise NY- IUT, AFT, and NEA have endorsed Clinton. Among her positions on education are the launching of a national campaign to elevate the profession of teaching, making sure all students learn computer science, and rebuilding our schools. On this last item we see many urban and rural schools that are falling apart with students learning among the mold and rodents.

And then there is Donald Trump and education. He did give a speech on schools and his basic message was to strip public education funding from the federal government and hand it to a voucher system and private schools. AFT President Randi Weingarten stated, “As far as we can tell, Trump never bothered talking to educators to find out what support they need in order to give every kid a great education.” Weingarten continued, “In the years I spent working in New York City, I never once saw him at a civic event, never saw him engaged in an effort to lift up public education. Now he wants to hand our public schools over to private businesses so they can make a profit—it's no surprise, from a man whose idea of education can best be summed up in Trump University, a fraudulent enterprise built to rip off hardworking students.”

AFT goes further to do the math for the $20 billion that Trump wants to take out of the federal budget. This would end Title I, cut about 300,000 teachers, and take funding from 56,000 public schools affecting 21 million students.

As if education was not enough, we see the appointment of the next Supreme Court Justice and what the makeup of the court in the next four years will do to our way of life. The survival of unions is a future we had better be concerned about! We came very close to the Right to Work idea being approved on the federal level. This would allow workers to decide to not support the union financially but be entitled to all of the monetary and other benefits. This would not work for too long before salaries and benefits would decline and so possibly would retirement benefits.

It is not only education that we have to be concerned with but also the environment. The September/October 2016 issue of the Sierra Magazine has this quote by the editor, “Donald Trump’s Presidential campaign has been like an oil-train derailment in slow motion—the spectacle is awful to witness, impossible to turn away from, and mesmerizing in its sheer horror.” A Sierra website on September 15, 2016 stated, “Donald Trump detailed economic and energy plans today which double down on his total denial of the scientific consensus on climate change and the global movement toward clean, renewable energy. Trump said he would end the life-saving Clean Power Plan, open up our coasts to drilling, promote the dirtiest fuels, and gut safeguards and protections for clean air and clean water.”

The support for Clinton is not the only endorsement in this area. Senator Chuck Schumer is running for re-election. We have two congressional seats for Sean Patrick Maloney (D-18) and Zephyr Teachout (D-19). On the New York State level there is Terry Gipson running for the 41st senate district. NY- IUT has endorsed Assembly candidates Didi Barrett (106th), Joe Torres (105th), Frank Skartados (104th), Kevin Cahill (103rd), and Peter Lopez (102nd). If you live out of the area, check for endorsements by your local education groups.

This election is seeing the impact of the Citizens United decision that allows business and the wealthy few to dump tremendous amounts of money into election campaigns without being identified. Your support of NY- IUT’s VOTE-COPE helps to support candidates in local, state, and federal elections.

Yes, you need to make decisions. They need to be made on issues, not personalities. At the top of the ticket, some folks have talked about third-party voting. Look at history and you will see that this is a protest that leads to nothing but your concerns often not getting protected.

**WHATEVER YOUR DECISIONS, GET OUT AND VOTE IN THIS “ELECTION OF THE CENTURY”!**

**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 or ruthellenwct@optonline.net

**Notify these groups of an address change or death of a member:**
- WCRT office, 280 New Hackensack Rd. Wappingers Falls, N.Y. 12590 (845) 227-5065 wct@frontiernet.net
- WCT, same as above
- NYSUT, 800-342-9810 800 Troy-Schenectady Rd. Latham, N.Y. 12110-2455 www.nysut.org
- NYSTRS, www.nystrs.org 800-348-7298 x 6250
- 10 Corporate Woods Drive Albany, NY 12211-2395
- WCSD, Human Resources 25 Corporate Park Dr. P.O. Box 396 Hopewell Jct., NY 12533 845-298-5000 x 115

**Directions to new WCT office**
280 New Hackensack Rd. across from the Dutchess County Airport

From Vassar Rd: Jackson Rd. (County Rt. 110), left onto New Hack Rd. toward Rt. 376.

From Rt. 9 Wapp. Falls: take County Rt. 104 at Dunkin Donuts and Perkins on New Hack Rd.

From All Angels Hill Rd: (CR 94) north to NHRd, west to 280 NHRd.

From Red Oaks Mill: Rt. 376 south past DC Airport, right onto NHRd. 280 on left.

**WCSD Board of Ed. e-mail address:**
WCSD.Board@Wappingerschools.org

**NYSUT Retiree Council 13 website:**
http://ny.aft.org/rc13/
In Memoriam
James Gordon Mead

MOUNT DORA, FL - James Gordon Mead died in Mount Dora, FL on Sept. 10, following a brief period of declining health. Jim was born in Beacon, NY in 1927 -- in the front bedroom of the family home that still stands on North Ave. He was the son of James Van Deusen Mead and Florence Rogers Mead, both sides of the family having deep roots in the mid-Hudson valley. Earlier generations of the Mead family operated a brickyard near Chelsea and a farm that became part of the property now used by Castle Point VA hospital.

Jim graduated from Beacon High School, where he played on the basketball team. He turned 18 in June of 1945 and enlisted in the Navy. Empty chairs were left for him and another young man who missed his high school graduation for basic training. He served on a destroyer during the occupation of Japan immediately following the end of the war. After his discharge in 1946, like many men of his generation, he took advantage of the GI bill to further his education.

Jim attended NY State Teacher’s College at Oneonta where he met the love of his life, Barbara Seidel from Troy, NY. After receiving his degree, he began working for Wappingers Central School District in 1951, and married Barbara in 1953. They purchased land on Michael Drive in the town of Wappingers Falls -- located on a hill with sweeping views up the Hudson Valley. After saving up a down payment to build a house, the bank turned down their loan request because they were both teachers. So they took their money, loaded the car, and spent two months driving across the country during the summer of 1955 -- beginning a lifetime love of travel in the U.S. In 1957, with the help of family, friends, and his pregnant wife, Jim built his own house where they would live until 1985.

Jim started teaching 6th grade Social Studies, English, and Math, but taught grades 7 and 8 Social Studies for most of his career. When he began in 1951, the entire Wappingers K-12 school system was housed in a single building. When he retired in 1984, that same building was one of two schools in the system for grades 7 and 8 -- just one of many changes that took place during his tenure. For much of his career, he taught at Van Wyck Junior High School.

Jim retired from teaching in 1984, and he and Barbara moved to central Florida in 1985. Jim had a life-long passion for golf, which he continued to play well into his 80’s. He also continued woodworking, making many items for their homes and also taking up wood carving. Jim and Barbara continued to travel, including several cruises to Alaska.

Jim is survived by his wife of 63 years, Barbara Seidel Mead. Other survivors are his son, James Steven Mead (Ruth) of Apex, NC; his sister Jane Cooper of Fishkill, NY; brother- and sister-in-law Ray and Dee Seidel of Ballston Spa, NY; and seven nephews and one niece. He was predeceased by his sister Denise Arnold, and brothers-in-law Claude Arnold and Dale Cooper.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Stevenson, Hamlin & Hilbish Funerals and Cremations, 226 E. Burleigh Blvd., Tavares, FL 32778, (352)343-4444. Online condolences may be left on the Tribute Wall at www.steversonhamlinhilbish.com/

Published in the Poughkeepsie Journal Sept. 18, 2016.

Henry Bloecker
Oct. 17, 1939-Aug. 21, 2016

Henry Bloecker, 76, of Port St. Lucie, passed away August 21, 2016 at his residence.

He was born in Mount Vernon, NY. He spent his early years in Yonkers, NY. He moved to Dutchess County, NY and worked as an Industrial Arts teacher at Roy C. Ketcham High School. Henry moved to Port St. Lucie in 1993 and worked for Martin County as a teacher until his retirement.

He was preceded in death by his loving wife of 34 years, Barbara; his parents Henry and Lena.

Survivors include his sons, John Bloecker of Chester, VA; Paul Bloecker of Port St. Lucie, FL, and three beautiful grandchildren of which he was a proud grandfather.

Elaine Hogan Crosby

POUGHKEEPSIE - Elaine Hogan Crosby of Poughkeepsie, NY, died suddenly at her residence on Thursday, August 25, 2016.

She was born in Augusta, Georgia and graduated from the Academy of Richmond County and the University of Georgia with a B.S. in Education. Elaine was a member of Kappa Alpha Theta Sorority.

After moving to New York State, she became a member of the Poughkeepsie Branch of American Association of University Women, the Mid-Hudson Alumnae Panhel, and New Hackensack Reformed Church.

She retired as Library Media Specialist at Fishkill Elementary School in 1997.

Surviving family members include her daughter, Celeste E. Crosby(Gary) of Katonah, NY; her brother, Spurgeon G. Hogan(Barbara) of Hillsborough,NJ and her 4 grandchildren, Bobby Johnson, Lauren Johnson, Campbell McDowd and Hunter Kendray.

Memorial donations may be made in Elaine’s memory to a charity of choice. Please visit www.HudsonValleyFuneral-Homes.com for condolences.

Published in the Poughkeepsie Journal Aug. 28, 2016
WCRT’s watchdog about “insider information” affecting WCSD retirees

First RA Meeting for 2016-17

We were going through a heat wave when I got the e-mail about the first RA meeting. It didn’t seem possible that it was all starting again. Great to see everyone-again and feel the positive energy of the beginning of a new school year. Good news for all was the announcement that there was a Memorandum of Agreement for a five-year contract. No details were discussed. All will be revealed at the General Membership meeting, September 1.

Our new NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist, Cathy Schwartz, was introduced. The meeting was turned over to her. The theme was shifting the paradigm. The role of the building representative is changing. Members must be engaged and reps must find a way to engage them. Status quo is no longer working. Lots of handouts were distributed on ways to get members more active. She encouraged face-to-face contact and to build on interests of members. For example, if a member had an interest in a certain group or charity, maybe the WCT could participate in an event for that and the member would lead the cause. The theme was “know your people and what motivates them.” Also mentioned was to have more family-friendly events.

Ms. Schwartz was as someone mentioned, “a breath of fresh air.” She seems she will be involved with our members and always there for us with great ideas as well as legal advice.

The importance of all getting out to vote in November was mentioned again. The WCT encourages all members to vote.

Retirees were praised for their help putting labels in and sorting the thousands of books our students received from the endeavor the LAP committee put forth last year. After the meeting, some stayed to put labels in books our new kindergarteners will receive.

Great beginning, starting with a MOA. Also there is a new app you can install for easier navigation to the WCT website. Go to the app store and search for Wappingers Congress of Teachers. Some positive changes. You could feel the energy in the room. Let’s hope for a wonderful year.

RA Meeting for Sept. 27, 2016

Everyone is back into routine, but the RA had many new faces. The new Labor Relations liaison talked about getting to know members better, their interests, concerns, and what they would volunteer for. Pasquale reminded everyone to take good notes when going into meetings with members. You’ll never know when you might be called upon to remember that information, even years later. It seems one of the goals is to get the RAs to be more diligent and to get members to be more active.

Except for one building, the year began well and old grievances have been settled. The WCT and the District seem to be on good terms since signing the contract. The building having some difficulties has a new principal. Pasquale intends to talk to him about the issues.

A question came up about social media. Parents must give permission for their children to be photographed, but what about teachers? If a school has a webpage with photos of classrooms, should teachers be asked if they want to be in the photos? This new problem will be investigated.

The new App for the WCT was discussed. It’s easy to download with Apple or Google Play. It keeps you signed in unless you delete it. It has all the forms and you can print from your phone. Everyone was encouraged to use it.

If anyone is interested in the BOE meeting minutes, I receive them as an e-mail and can forward them to those who want them.

The Buddy Walk, to benefit Downs Syndrome, was October 2.

Looking forward to another interesting year. The revisions to Common Core are still an issue. Evaluations will still be an issue. We’ll see how it all unfolds.

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

CONSTITUTION ON WCT WEB SITE:

The WCRT Constitution/By-Laws is now available on the WCT web site under the Retirees section.

This is the Constitution that was voted on at the May 2015 Spring Luncheon.

If you have any questions, please contact me at the address below.

www.WCTeachers.org or sundancewf@aol.com
WCT LAP receives 21,000 books

The WCT received 21,000 free books from the First Books organization on Aug. 15. First Book gets publishers to donate quality books to participating school districts. To participate, a school district must have at least one Title 1 school. This book drive was spearheaded by the WCT’s Local Action Project (LAP).

13 huge pallets were delivered to RCK’s Annex warehouse and over 75 volunteers sorted through 6 ½ pallets and stickers (compliments of WCT) and box (by grade level) roughly 200 boxes of books.

Facilities volunteered to deliver over 120 boxes to our elementary schools and the rest of the boxes to our five secondary schools’ ELA departments.

We have 6 ½ remaining pallets and need to repeat the process. Family, neighbors, friends, students are all welcome to come and help. Remaining books will be used for community outreach as well as classrooms.

The magnitude and significance of this effort: Literacy is everything. The community responded overwhelmingly positively to the books. Little kids (who don’t have phones) were seen in their strollers and toddling around “reading” books at two community days and again at the Down Syndrome Buddy Walk at Dutchess Stadium where WCT gave out more free books.

TRIUMVERATE of leaders pitch in and help. From left, Kristen Crandall, WCSD Executive Director for Finance and Business Development, Jose Carrion, WCSD Superintendent, and Pasquale Delli Carpini, WCT president.
LAP spearheaded this worthy cause “literacy” by completing the grant and getting the 2000 needed signatures with the help of the retirees, last year.

WCRT members Paul Stich and Phil and Fran Shepherd register to volunteer at the RCKHS Annex.

Dear Sue,

I wanted to personally thank you and the other retirees for your help yesterday with our sorting and stickering of books from “First Books.”

Retirees came out in force and were a key asset to our success.

I will forward photos to Bill Dourdis, PostScript editor, for your excellent newsletter.

Thank you again!

Sincerely,

Diane DiChiara
LAP & WCT Exec Board

Retirees:
Mary Bronzi, Marsha Moy, Peg Niko-
la, Ruth Ehlers, Jackie Pruzak, Fran and Phil Shepherd, Paul Stich, Terry Catapane, Maureen and Dennis Skora, Sue Dexter, Alice Ruffing and Newt, and Sue Roger.

This is the product of all the hard work. Every school got between 20 and 50 cartons of books; depended on age level as there were more elementary books than HS books.

Also received were hundreds of pre-
school books given out on Community Days and other events.

Janice Clough, Foreign Language, JJHS, stands over a variety of books already prepared for distribution.

Two clubs also volunteered their help: Mrs. Fusco and the JJHS Italian Honor Society, and Ms. DiNitto with members of Masque and Mime theatre club from RCKHS.

Ann Liebergot, Special Education teacher, VWJHS, shares a “wow moment” written all over her face.

Dennis and Maureen Skora, WCRT retirees, sign in to help sort and label books.
News since last issue

The PostScript focuses this News since last issue section on events and topics of interest that happened since the previous issue two months ago. It is intended to offer context to the reader regarding articles in this edition.

PostScript policy for staff and management will not endorse any person and will not include political platforms.

Any other editorial views expressed are those of the writer with a byline as a column or letter to the editor.

SEPT. - OCT., 2016
KINGSTON--Jennifer Shaad-Derby, NYSUT Retiree Consultant, represents the five counties of RC 13 and the seven counties of RC 12, welcomed and recognized award recipients at the NYSUT Regional Conference for Retiree Council 13 at the Wiltwyck Country Club on September 15.

She stressed voting “NO” on the Constitutional Convention because of the cost, delegates can double dip as current legislators, and the importance of contributing to VOTE-COPE. The conference’s theme is “Celebrating 25 years of Service to NYSUT Retirees” and awards included a silver pin and a certificate.

Ani Shahinian, NYSUT Social Services, has been a social worker for 35 years, 10 at NYSUT, 10 working in clinics, and private practice. This branch of NYSUT is a personal consultation service that helps members with issues like struggling, health insurance, elder care, confidentiality, crisis, or general information.

Examples of calls include referrals to psychiatric, anxiety, and drug addiction help for a family member. In 2012, 200 NYSUT retirees were 99+ years old; in 2016, 800 were of that age. As we age, things can happen to a parent, spouse, or a disabled child. One can have a difficult medical diagnosis or pass away, may have questions about life or health insurance, or fear of losing independence. Member Benefits has packets with information about Power of Attorney (POA), Health Care Proxy (HCP), and Living Wills.

Retirees need to give permission to handle a crisis. Many people may also need a Do Not Resuscitate (DNR). There are two types of DNR: in-hospital DNR and the non-hospital DNR at home signed by a physician. Most states honor DNRs of New York State. Death Certificates contain raised seal death certificates. Secondary death certificates list no cause of death. When a death certificate is reissued, cause of death is not listed.

Ani encouraged all to consult the Members Benefits booklet.

The job description of Paul Pecorale, NYSUT Vice President, includes representing retirees on issues of health, safety, social justice; retirement security; and sharing union values. He urges all to vote in the upcoming election.

Two reasons to vote Democrat in the upcoming Presidential election:

We know Clinton’s record on public education and what education means to her. She will have teachers by her side on issues. Over the next four years, three Supreme Court justices may be appointed by the new President, potentially affecting what the work force looks like in the future.

Fast track to the Constitutional Convention in 2017. This summer, 69% of New Yorkers wanted a Constitutional Convention, but 2017 will be an off-year election when many won’t show up. Adirondack parks and nature will be mined, and our pensions will be targeted.

RC 13 Conference celebrates 25 years of service to NYSUT retirees

Mike Ostrander, NYSUT Member Benefits representative, is surrounded by brochures for the various services and programs NYSUT offers its membership. Member Benefits is looking into travel insurance as another of its many benefits.

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Fantasies do not involve any of the current babes on TV or the silver screen (although I do like Scarlett Johansson). I leave others to conjure up images of themselves running 90 yards for the winning touchdown (in overtime) for the New York Giants. My fantasy is being a guest on Morning Joe (Scarborough) and having Mika Brzezinski ask me what my thoughts are on candidate Donald Trump. I would be ready.

Many talking heads have a problem when discussing Donald. He has made so many ugly and unsupportable utterances it is impossible to address all of them at once, or even in bunches. I would choose ONE and go for the jugular. I have selected Mr. Trump’s dissing of John McCain’s qualification for being a hero because he was taken prisoner by the North Vietnamese. I was convinced this display of ignorance would cover him in shame and send his presidential aspirations packing. It should have ended there but, of course, it didn’t.

Here’s why I selected this particular insult. Right after WWII my parents sent me to a camp in the Berkshires. Our counselor was a guy we all loved. His name was Judd Sparling and we all knocked ourselves out to stay in his good graces. What we didn’t know, until near the end of the summer, was Judd had spent almost two years as a prisoner of war in Germany.

I was convinced this display of ignorance would cover him in shame and send his presidential aspirations packing. It should have ended there but, of course, it didn’t.

Here’s why I selected this particular insult. Right after WWII my parents sent me to a camp in the Berkshires. Our counselor was a guy we all loved. His name was Judd Sparling and we all knocked ourselves out to stay in his good graces. What we didn’t know, until near the end of the summer, was Judd had spent almost two years as a prisoner of war in Germany.

What I want Donald to know is how difficult it is to become a POW. In Judd’s case, he first had to voluntarily enlist in the Army Air Corps. He wanted to be a pilot, but he failed the eye exam, so they sent him to gunnery school (swear to God). Judd became a waist gunner on a B-17. By the time he arrived in England, the 8th Air Force was flying missions deep into Germany, and early on, Judd’s plane was shot down. He parachuted safely (a miracle in itself) out of his crippled plane, was quickly taken prisoner, and ended up in a stalag until the end of the war. Judd told us all these things, with no embellishments, and we were mesmerized.

But what I started to say is this: I want Donald to know how hard it is to become a POW. I will repeat Judd’s first step. He enlisted. Here are some of the things he had to survive to eventually become a POW: Training accidents (there were 100’s, never reported), mechanical failures, pilot and navigation errors, German fighter attacks, anti-aircraft guns (flak), foul weather, friendly fire, administrative misjudgments, freezing to death, dying from lack of oxygen. Or a combination of all of the above. Even if Judd avoided all these lethal hazards, he still wouldn’t have achieved the prisoner-of-war status that Mr. Trump disdains.

In the Air Force, you have to be shot down. Unfortunately this did take place when Judd’s plane was mortally hit on its way to its target in Germany. After he bailed out and made it safely to the ground, he met up with two members of his crew (a B-17 has a crew of 10). Imagine your parachute landing on Helmut’s onion field that you just rotated into permanent oblivion (with his family), and Helmut is standing there with a pitchfork. Or you alight on a pile of rubble that used to be a town and are greeted by a committee of very unhappy civilian survivors. They were (lucky?) to be captured by members of the German Wehrmacht and were quickly whisked away to be questioned. They were treated roughly at first, but were then taken to the prison camp where they would remain to the end of the war. We can assume it was nothing like the Mar-a-lago Club in Palm Beach, Florida.

When I think of prisoners of war I conjure up images of tiger cages (Vietnam), Andersonville (Civil War), brainwashing (Korea), Malmedy (Belgium), “The Bridge on the River Kwai” (WWII), and I hate to say it, Abu Ghraib (Iraq). It is impossible to conceive what John McCain went through during his five-plus years as a prisoner of the North Vietnamese. How would Donald do in any of these places? I would bet the farm that he would be peeing in his pants his first night in the “Hanoi Hilton” and begging for his daddy to come and get him (in honesty, so would I). Yet millions of Americans (including veterans!) have given him a free pass on this issue. Explain it to me if you can.

Then I would take a deep breath and thank Mika, Joe, Willie, and Mike for letting me have my say (with no commercial breaks). They had no answers either.
To The Editor:

Having observed the outrageous and inappropriate antics and statements made by various well known athletes, super star entertainers, just about every politician on the planet and especially the two presidential candidates, I have determined that the individual most needed to next lead our great nation should be a CANINE.

Dogs are responsible, loyal, hard-working, dependable and TRUST-WORTHY. I’ll take an honest canine over a deceitful human any day.

Rub a dog’s belly and he’ll do anything for you. I don’t know how you feel, but the last thing I’d ever want to do is rub the belly of Hillary or Donald.

The message: In November, don’t forget to BARK!

Bill Green
East Fishkill, NY

WCRT by the numbers:

WCRT membership as of June 21, 2016:
622 WCRT members
177 yearly members
375 Lifetime members
51 Complimentary Lifetime members
15 Complimentary members
69 retirees don’t belong to WCRT & not entitled to NYSUT benefits
10 names removed from our files for not paying dues this year.
*145 members receiving publications & notices by U.S. mail down from
*232 members postal subscribers
370 members email subscribers.

*Notice the reduction in printed newsletters. We encouraged members to “go green” and help us save on mailing costs. We all benefit from their cooperation.

If you know a retiree who is not a member, please encourage them to reconsider joining WCRT/NYSUT for their benefit and ours.

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

Ladies luncheon at Pt. Lookout

Fishkill Elementary retiree luncheon, held at Point Lookout Clubhouse on Sept. 13.
Seated from left: Margaret Geary, Tiz Hanson, Dot Woessner, Fran Shepherd, Standing, from left: Pam Kara, Jeanne Lancot, Marian Pedersen-Grover, Evana Sciana, Marsha Moy, Barbara Stuck, and Donna Mackey. We all missed Elaine Crosby, the organizer of this get-together. She passed away this August. Submitted by Marian Pedersen-Grover.

Gamblers Anonymous Meeting

SARATOGA, NY–John Jay High School retired teachers’ reunion on August 15 offered a day at the horse racing track. From left, Ed Zwinscher, Jim Bogert, Bill Schoen, Ralph Capasso, Bill Green, Bob Ruopp, Dennis Craig, and guest Hank Boldrin. Not shown is John Lewis.
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