More communication. Better communication. Communications outreach. Notice a theme here already?

NYSUT’s 2017 Communications Awards Recognition Program on August 12, 2017 held in Latham, NY focused on this obvious and pervasive theme.

“Our #1 message is to go to NoNewYorkConvention.org to educate yourself. We have had 100 ambassadors going door to door with ConCon information who have already knocked on 20,000 doors. This program will continue in the fall.

“Communication helps us fight back. They want to drive a stake in the heart of unions, agency fees aren’t fair, and all should share the benefit from hard work.

“Janus* is Friedrichs on steroids—something for nothing by no dues. Right to work takes over.

“The value of unions is they are bigger than ourselves. It’s a 1-1 project to foster cohesion through 1-1 conversations to know them on a personal level.

“NYSUT is also concerned with the SUNY Charter Schools’ fast supervision/certification initiative.

“Research and Education Services wants to hear from you to know about the value of belonging to a union. Show how NYSUT has your back. We don’t achieve alone.

“Another program is the Educational Learning Trust at NYSUTELT.org.

“As editors, you sacrifice, prepare, and use elbow grease. The officers appreciate what you do.”

POLITICAL ACTION COLUMN
A Voice From the Past
Letter FROM the editor

Jolene T. DiBrango, newly elected NYSUT Executive Vice President, also echoed the same message in her keynote address to the award-winning editors. Excerpts follow:

“Communication is vital and even more critical these days. There are lots of ways to get your message to the general public. We hope to hear our members to fully provide for their needs. Listening is half the communications process.

“NYSUT will sponsor Listening Tours to set the record straight and educate ourselves also. It’s not easy. Threats to the union abound. Shielding editors as union reps is on our list.

“Defeat the Constitutional Convention (ConCon), which is potentially devastating to our cause. Vote NO to the hundreds of millions of dollars to pay for ConCon. The current Constitution protects our union to collectively bargain. The politicians’ priorities aren’t ours because there are cheaper and easier ways to do things like simply amending—it’s less expensive and won’t take as long.”

PostScript wins two 2017 NYSUT Communications Awards

Denyce Duncan Lacy, NYSUT Manager of Integrated Marketing, presents PostScript editor Bill Dourdis with two 2017 Communications Awards

Jolene T. DiBrango, newly elected NYSUT Executive Vice President, also echoed the same message in her keynote address to the award-winning editors. Excerpts follow:

“In Memoriam

LTC program seeks volunteers
Letter FROM the editor
NYSUT Member Benefits Ad
(WCRT Fall Luncheon, Thurs. 10/19)

www.wcteachers.org
**From The President**

**SUSAN ROGER**  
**WCRT President**

**Dear WCRT Members,**

September and October were the months of weather disasters. Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Maria and Nate caused flooding and devastation from the Gulf, Florida keys, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and caribbean islands I didn’t even know about. I hope none of you or your families faced loss.

If you would like to purchase a gift card at Home Depot and deliver them to Brinkerhoff Elementary School, please do so. John Neville’s brother is in St Thomas working on rebuilding, and says they could use these cards to get materials to rebuild.

We were in Florida closing on a new vacation house the end of August. Due to Irma we decided to leave. We spent only 6 nights in our new home. However, it was good that we left when we did. Our house is fine, and we will go back in Jan. to finish setting things up.

The most important thing for us as retirees to consider is to talk to friends, neighbors, and family members to vote “no” for the Constitutional Convention on Election day. This will cost millions and open the constitution to things like gun laws, sale of state lands for development, and employee and retiree pensions. I have learned that the place to vote “no” is on the back of the ballot. So read carefully and turn the ballot over.

Enjoy fall, and I hope to see you at the luncheon.

**Susan Roger**  

**PostScript**

**WCRT Officers and Board of Directors**

**July 1, 2017-June 30, 2019**

President........ Susan Roger 226-8285  
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Gifts and Contributions...Mary Coiteux

**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**  
280 New Hackensack Rd.  
Wappingers Falls, NY 12590  
(845) 227-5065  
www.wcteachers.org

**The WCRT PostScript is published in Oct., Dec., Feb., Apr., June, and Aug. during the school year.**  
Editor: Bill Dourdis  
williamdourdis@gmail.com  
(845) 266-0430

**The WCRT PostScript is a 2017 NYSUT United Communications Competition Winner with two awards:**

- 1st Place, Best Feature Writing, I can see for miles and miles... by Barbara Searle;  
- Award of Distinction, General Excellence, The WCRT PostScript to Bill Dourdis, editor.

**SAVE THESE DATES**

(future details coming soon)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 15</td>
<td>New Hamburg Golf Tourney for Meals on Wheels</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 19</td>
<td>WCRT Fall Luncheon, Christos, 11:30, $23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 14</td>
<td>WCRT exec board mtg. 10:00-12:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 9</td>
<td>WCRT exec board mtg. 10:00-12:00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 23</td>
<td>Deadline for February 2018 PostScript</td>
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“SHALL THERE BE A CONVENTION TO REVISE THE CONSTITUTION AND AMEND THE SAME?” NO!

Any change to the Constitution can already be done through amendments. There have been over 200 amendments to our current document. You may remember Proposition #1 in 2013 which allowed for 7 casinos in the state. We do not need a full-blown convention where 200 people, most likely current politicians, can open up anything in the document.

While we are strongly opposed to the Con Con, there are also plenty of people and groups who are looking to call such a statewide event so they can make changes to protections that exist to everything from your pension to the protected lands of the Catskills and Adirondacks. One such group has a nice name, The New York State Constitutional Convention Clearinghouse whose editor is J.H. Snider. One quote from him states, “This mechanism protects the people’s right to reform their government when the Legislature has an institutional conflict of interest with the people.” As you read earlier in this article the chance that you or I will be the delegates to protect the people is probably pretty slim. Those same conflicted people will most likely be the ones who would be able to mount the campaigns to be elected delegates.

As we approach November 7, be very wary of those who list wonderful things which can be accomplished by a convention. One of the most questionable claims which was heard recently was that a convention would guarantee clean air and water for all state residents. Really?

We urge a NO vote and we ask that you read earlier in this article the chance that you or I will be the delegates to protect the people.

NOTICE: 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 ruthellene1@icloud.com
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

JANE STOCKSLAGER
WCRT Constitution, By-Laws

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.

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

TOM DERITO
WCRT Treasurer

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@verizon.net and we’ll make arrangements to satisfy your numerical curiosity.
We provide communicative services to our former colleagues, philanthropic support through student academic scholarships, and donations to community libraries and Meals on Wheels.

Haven’t sent in your VOTE/COPE Contribution? Can’t find the form? No problem. Make out a check to VOTE/COPE and mail it to: Wappingers Congress of Retired Teachers 280 New Hackensack Rd Wappingers Falls, NY 12590

WCRT by the numbers:
WCRT membership as of July, 2017: Membership letters go out in September.
637 WCRT members
186 yearly members
384 Lifetime members
54 Complimentary Lifetime members
13 Complimentary members
61 retirees don’t belong to WCRT & not entitled to NYSUT benefits
13 about to be deleted from our files for not paying dues this year.
*145 members receiving publications & notices by U.S. mail down from
*232 members postal subscribers
486 members email subscribers.
4 2017 retirees wisely chose copay
Lifetime

*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.
Register on the website wcteachers.org
If you know a retiree who is not a member, please encourage them to reconsider joining WCRT/NYSUT for their benefit and ours.

Membership letters mailed in September. Make checks payable to WCT by November 15.
A Voice From the Past

In August of this year, I realized a childhood dream and went to the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. I had read the book as a sixth grader for the first time and reread it many more times. I often felt that I could feel Anne talking, almost as if she was talking to me.

As a sixth grade teacher, when we made it to World War II, I would illustrate the horror of the war by showing the Millicent Perkins, black and white version of The Diary of Anne Frank. Inevitably, at least one child would ask, "Where's the color?" I suppose, some would mumble, "I think this is going to be boring." But soon enough, they were all deeply engrossed in the film. Each day, I would stop it in time to have discussion of what they had seen. On the next day, the questions would come pouring in. Some children cried at the end. I wiped tears from my eyes no matter how many times I had seen the film. Some great writing assignments came from seeing and discussing this film.

In an age of Common Core, I don't know if I could have made time for this. I can only hope that it made a lasting impression at least on some.

I visited the site shortly after the incident at Charlottesville, Virginia. I was horrified and nauseated when I saw the Neo-Nazis marching through the town and I listened to their chants. I could not believe that this was happening! Then a friend of the family told me how there was a service in progress at the local synagogue and a group of Nazis stood outside the temple. When local authorities did not provide much assistance, the congregants made a plan to exit the synagogue in the rear. The Rabbi took the Torahs and they all fled. How could this be possible in the United States of America? Then I listened to our president the next day and could not believe what I heard from him! How could he not condemn Nazis? Does he not know anything about world history? For me, this not a Republican or a Democratic issue. It is an issue of bigotry and hatred that I never thought in my lifetime I would see or hear. Maybe this did not affect you as much as it affected me. But one would be very naive to believe that the hatred that was being spewed was only toward Jews. I would suggest reading the book, The Lilac Girls, by Martha Hall Kelly. You will clearly see that this bigotry has no boundaries.

I suppose, to many, World War II has almost become a faint memory. But I would challenge those who teach about it to make sure that the Holocaust should never be forgotten. Our country is still a "melting pot," something the alt-right clearly disdains.

"Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it." George Santayana

Remember Charlottesville!

LESLEY LEVENTHAL
WCRT 2nd VP and former WCT President
In Memoriam

Avery Mello

Avery Crandell Mello, 88, passed away quietly May 21, 2017 at her residence at Southington Care Center, Southington Connecticut. She was predeceased by her husband of 52 years, Donald S. Mello.

Avery is survived by her daughters: Susan Mello Velardi and husband Michael, Dale Mello, and Lynn Mello Fazzino and husband Vincent. Also, surviving are Avery's grandchildren, Karen Lynn Harris, Michael Don Velardi, Joseph William Fazzino, Lauren May Fazzino, Jonathan William Fazzino, and Daniel Mello Bethke. The surviving great-grandchildren are Allyson, Emmalyn and Livia Harris.

She leaves behind her brother Basil Crandell, of Ludlow, MA and was predeceased by her sister Nona MacMaster. She leaves behind many nieces and nephews.

Betty Ann Engstrom

CHATHAM, NY—Betty Ann Engstrom passed away at home August 29, 2017 with her beloved Bichon Frise dog “Lovey” by her side.

Betty Ann was born July 2, 1937 in Queens, N.Y. Daughter of the late Herman Engstrom. She is survived by her mother Marie Truran of Richmond, MA, and survived by her sister Marie Meehan of Spencerport, NY.

She grew up in Chatham being very active in 4-H which helped prepare her for a career as a home economics teacher, graduating from Chatham High School in 1955 she went on to graduate from SUNY Plattsburgh in 1959, teaching at Ichabod Crane School in Kinderhook, NY for a year and then Wappingers Central School until her retirement in 1992. During this time she lived in Wappingers and then Pleasant Valley. She had her home built on Rt. 203 in Chatham in 1988 where she lived until her death.

Betty was a woman who was totally exuberant about life. Her love of travel took her to every continent. Her travels around the world gave her the opportunity to learn other cultures and to make many friends who would later visit her beautiful home with nature all around. Betty was there to help anyone. She will be missed by her friends and those who knew her.

There will be a memorial service and get together on September 17, at 12:30 at her residence.

Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program Seeks NYS Volunteers

The LTC Ombudsman Program (LT-COP) is dedicated to ensuring that residents in long-term care facilities have good care and are treated with dignity. Being an Ombudsman volunteer is both challenging and rewarding. Volunteers receive extensive training to advocate for, educate, and empower family members and residents living in nursing homes, assisted living, and family type homes. They can make a big difference in the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in our communities.

The LTCOP is seeking volunteers who can contribute a minimum of two hours a week to help residents in facilities in their communities. The Hudson Valley LTCOP currently has volunteer opportunities in Dutchess, Ulster, Orange, Sullivan, Columbia, and Greene Counties.

To volunteer in the Hudson Valley, please call 845-229-4680 or email Gloria@hudsonvalleyltcopp.org.

To volunteer in another area of New York State, please go to the Who is My Ombudsman page on the NYS LTC Ombudsman Program’s website: http://www.ltcobudsman.ny.gov/whois/index.cfm.

Editor's Note: On a related note: The current shortchange of home-health workers, especially in rural areas, is expected to get worse before it gets better: https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/29/business/economy/home-health-care-work.html?emc=etal.

Source: Dutchess County Office for the Aging’s AGING NEWS for the week of September 11, 2017.
Letter FROM the editor

by Bill Dourdis
PostScript Editor

It’s been a while. It’s about time. Stand up and speak up!

I’m about to address all three of these clichés.

As PostScript editor, I haven’t received any letters TO the editor in a couple of years. It’s been about the same amount of time since you readers received a letter FROM the editor. I sit at my computer and address you all to share some things that have been bugging me for quite a while.

Let’s start with an easy one--a no-brainer. In this day and age, we still have quite a few WCRT members who haven’t registered for the WCT/WCRT www.wcte-achers.org website. They may not be reading this right now. The webmaster doesn’t have all WCRT members on the list to receive notifications, bulletins, announcements, reminders, and this publication because they didn’t follow the eight steps. Two years ago it wasn’t done automatically in order to allow each individual to provide his/her own account security. While WCRT postal mailings of the PostScript every other even month have dropped from 232 two years ago to this issue’s total of 135, thus saving money on postage and paper, we can do better. Please reach out to your fellow WCRT colleagues to register online for receiving these notices and publications.

As editor, I’d like to publish more stories about what our colleagues are doing in their retirement. We worked shoulder to shoulder/together with each other for over 20 or 30 more years of our lives. We’ve got some skin in the game. Are those relationships over because we changed a venue? Retirement is a new way of life for us; please tell us the wonderful things that now capture the focus and attention in your life.

“What we have here is a failure to communicate.” Captain from Cool Hand Luke (1967)

One more topic to vocalize. For almost 50 years of advising and editing newspapers and newsletters, I have maintained my objectivity. I believe in our union cause but never carried a sign or walked a picket line. I’ve gone to a Board of Education meeting once a year to support the union, update my picture files, and write the stories. My personal views have never clouded my objective perspective. Until now! A Constitutional Convention looms over all of us and our futures! A vote next month could erase my investment in my career and my future. Same for all of us. Researching background information uncovered political tentacles splaying and clenching their fists for a chance to seize my pension, build a casino that will destroy a forest, and cost astronomical millions of our dollars—and that’s only half the issues! I couldn’t let it go by. I had to say something.

I’m taking a stand! Stand with me, please! I want to get back to providing what my Canons of Journalism scream at me when I touch this keyboard. Don’t let the politician delegates have a convention and a party on our dime. Vote NO to holding a Constitutional Convention. Vote “Hell No!” if you can. Make them amend the Constitution one number at a time. Pick a number and win a prize or kiss your pension bye-bye.

Cover Story

*Here are some websites that explain this in greater detail:

https://www.aft.org/column/moment-moral-clarity

You can also read more throughout NYSUT United and on the nysut.org website: https://www.nysut.org/resources/special-resources-sites/union-value.
Have you had your financial check-up lately?

**NYSUT Member Benefits launches the new Financial Planning Center!**

NYSUT Member Benefits is excited to announce the launch of our NEW online Financial Planning Center. This enhanced site will assist NYSUT members and their families with making a variety of important financial decisions.

The NYSUT Member Benefits Financial Planning Center provides helpful tools and resources to assist members with a number of crucial decisions regarding financial wellness and retirement planning.

This new site includes more than 100 modules on different financial topics along with a financial fitness check-up to see where members stand with their financial knowledge.

Whether it's planning for retirement, saving for college for your children or considering purchasing a home, the choices we need to make on a regular basis are never easy. If you're already enjoying retirement, you may be dealing with long-term care needs, managing your investments and estate planning.

NYSUT members can get assistance with these questions and more with our NEW Financial Planning Center.

To access the Financial Planning Center (and more than 100 planning modules), visit the NYSUT Member Benefits website at [memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org) and click on “Financial Planning Center.”

To learn more about Member Benefits-endorsed programs & services, visit [memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org) or call 800-626-8101.

For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.