

The WCT COMMENTATOR

December 18, 2009

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PAD...

Appreciating what we have...



Dear Colleagues,

With the holiday season rapidly approaching, it is important for us to take a moment to reflect and be thankful for all that truly matter in our lives.

As President of the WCT, I am honored and humbled to serve a great organization such as ours and must take a moment to extend my heartfelt thanks to the many wonderful people who make my job a rewarding experience.

Ronnie Dwyer, the administrative assistant, has proven to be a tremendous asset to the WCT. New to the position, she is quickly responding to the needs of the members and is handling the rigorous demands and responsibilities with grace and patience.

I extend my appreciation to the executive board members: **Michael Lyons** (VP Elementary), **Raymond Koretsky** (VP Secondary), **Flip Gertler** (VP Political Action), **Mary Ann Moran** (VP External Communications), **Kim Mahusky** (VP Internal Communications), **Christine Romano** (Secretary), **Donna Basile** (Treasurer), **Martha Bilsback**, **Michelle Ross**, **Dawn Sala** (Elementary at Large), **Diane Di Chiara**, **Paul Nostrand**, and **Jane Stockslager** (Secondary at Large) for their support, guidance, and trust.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the members of the Welfare Trust Fund: **Christine Romano** (Chairperson), **Betty Seifert** (Treasurer), **Erin Mulligan** (Secretary), **Flip Gertler** (Trustee), and **Ronnie Dwyer** (Administrator) for the invaluable service they provide in preserving, protecting, and improving members' benefits.

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Appreciating what we have..... (cont'd)

Oftentimes, the forgotten heroes of the union are the building representatives who protect and safeguard the interests and the rights of our members.

As I reflect on 2009, I realize that the unavoidable Tier V arrived sooner than expected. On December 10th, Governor Paterson signed the Tier V Pension Plan that will apply to public employees in the state Teachers' Retirement System and Employees' Retirement System hired after January 1, 2010.

The new Tier V agreement is in recognition of the severe toll the global recession has taken on state and local budgets. While we are concerned this new tier will discourage some from entering the teaching profession, we recognize these are extraordinary and challenging economic times. The legislative process is often difficult and compromises are inevitable. NYSUT was successful in maintaining the integrity of the defined benefit plan for current and future members. While there are changes in some of the retirement benefit structures for those hired after 1/1/10, the vast majority of benefits provided by the Tier IV plan remain in place. The agreement delineates the following:

- Minimum retirement age for employees hired after January 1, 2010 will be 57, with 30 years of service without penalty.
- Overtime payments are capped at \$15,000 annually.
- Members will be vested in the pension system after ten years of service (up from 5) and will contribute a lifetime 3.5 percent to their pensions (current members contribute 3 percent for 10 years).
- Members will receive the 2 percent final average salary calculation at 25 years (up from 20).
- 1 & 2/3 percent per year if credited service is less than 25 years at retirement.
- Prior service costs are 3.5 percent per year, plus 5 percent interest compounded annually from the date of service.
- Members will still be eligible for death and disability benefits.
- Continuation of a permanent COLA benefit for all future retirees.

The approved bill commits the Legislature and the Governor to offer a 55/25 early retirement option for NYSUT members in the state TRS and ERS during a three month window in 2010 (June, July and August). This retirement program is expected to be available at employee election and is not subject to employer approval. Hopefully this incentive will prevent job elimination for our younger members.

Appreciating what we have..... (cont'd)

Finally, the agreement permanently protects retiree health insurance from being diminished. This is an important gain during these tumultuous economic times when many other public and private sector retirees are seeing their benefits slashed. Until now, a moratorium renewal was required every year. With the new legislation, our retirees will be covered by law and be secure in knowing that future legislators or governors cannot compromise their benefits.

I know the success of a union does not come without hard work and commitment by its members. As we enter a new year, with its many challenges and uncertainties, your support and solidarity are of utmost importance for the leadership to address tough issues and make difficult decisions.

On behalf of my family, and myself, I would like to wish you countless blessings and sincerest wishes for a Happy Holiday and a New Year filled with good health, peace, and prosperity.

In Solidarity,

Pasquale Delli Carpini

WCT President

(*Information obtained from NYSUT's Leader Access)



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also from the Welfare
Trust Fund

The attorney will be in the WCT offices to meet with members on the following dates:

December 15 Times - 2
 January 20 p.m. to 6 p.m.
 February 17 Please call
 March 17 227-5065 to
 April 21 schedule an
 May 19 appointment.
 and June 16.

**I m p o r t a n t
 I n f o r m a t i o n a b o u t
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Trustees:
 Christine Romano, Chairperson
 Betty Seifert, Treasurer
 Erin Mulligan, Secretary
 Philip Gertler, Trustee
 Pasquale Delli Carpini, Trustee
 Ronnie Dwyer, Administrator
 WCT Telephone Number:
 845-227-5065
 Daniel H. Cook Telephone Number:
 1-800-342-6651

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

from the... WCT Welfare Trust Fund

A financial consultant from Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. will be in the WCT office on the following dates:

December 9th
 January 13 & 27
 February 10 & 24
 March 10 & 24
 April 14 & 28
 May 12 & 26
 June 9 & 23

Appointments are (1) hour blocks available between 2pm & 6pm on a first come first served basis.

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

Since these slots fill up very quickly CALL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

The WCT office number is 227-5065.

If the above dates are not convenient for you, call Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. directly at 1-888-949-1925 and other arrangements may be possible.

MAKING THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE

by Bridget Choubah (John Jay)

On Columbus weekend I was so proud to find one of our own Wappinger students transforming the island at the entrance at Saint Frances hospital. Matt Detterline, a Junior at John Jay High School, spent the Columbus Day weekend planting a garden, paving a huge heart and placing a cross surrounded with lights in front of the emergency room entrance at Saint Francis Hospital. He carried out the project for the eagle rank for boy scouts. He began in June by meeting with the director of the hospital and getting approvals. He had to collect donations and the materials. He came up with four different designs for the director Bob Hess to choose from. We want to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Detterline for making this world a better place.

STUDENTS HELP DONATE ONE MILLION BOOKS TO CHILDREN IN NEED

by Donna Lahl, Myers Corners Elementary School

Second graders from Myers Corners Elementary School are joining Super Bowl MVP's Peyton and Eli Manning and Scholastic Book Clubs to help donate one million books to disadvantaged children. This fall, students in Mrs. Moran & Mrs.

Lahl's class have pledged to read 100 books as part of Scholastic Book Clubs'

ClassroomsCare program. The philanthropy based literacy campaign is designed to teach children about the joys and importance of reading and giving.

The kids in this class will get to see firsthand that their efforts can make the world a better place!

The ClassroomsCare program is open to all classrooms nationwide through Scholastic Book Clubs catalogs and the Scholastic website: www.Scholastic.com/ClassroomsCare

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Ed McKenna - 845-471-7607

Get Your WCT Gear

Short sleeve tees, long sleeve tees, and lanyards are available for purchase at the WCT Office. Shirts range in size from small though 3X. Please stop by the office to make your purchases. Payment for these items must be a check made out to WCT - cash will not be accepted.

WCT Gear is available at the WCT Office:

- **\$9 for short sleeve tee**
- **\$12 for long sleeve tee**
- **\$2 for lanyards**



2009 - 2010 Newsletter Schedule

October 2, 2009	February 19, 2010
October 16, 2009	March 5, 2010
November 6, 2009	March 19, 2010
November 20, 2009	April 9, 2010
December 4, 2009	April 23, 2010
December 18, 2009	May 7, 2010
January 8, 2010	May 21, 2010
January 22, 2010	June 4, 2010
February 5, 2010	June 18, 2010

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MEMBERS' CLASSIFIED ADS

For Rent: Gorgeous Millbrook Condominium. 1500 square feet on second floor with porch and fireplace. Two full baths, two large bedrooms with views. Separate Garage. No smoking, no pets. \$1,300.00
Call (845) 677-5265

For Sale: Remodeling Kitchen, items must go! Oak Kraftmaid kitchen cabinetry, will sell complete kitchen or separate cabinets, excellent shape! \$50 per cabinet. 30: Almond color Whirlpool self-cleaning flat top stove, not even 5 years old, rarely used, paid \$830.00 & will sell for \$350.00. Casement Anderson Window with new screens 41x48 \$200.00. Kenmore Ultra Wash dishwasher black, works well \$75.00. Almond cast iron sink, double-bowl \$100. Call Ann (845) 255-4105 or (845) 527-2555.

For Sale: Condo for sale by Owner. Immaculate 1 bedroom condo located in the Town of Poughkeepsie. Completely renovated 2 years ago. Fireplace, Granite Countertops, Stainless Steel Appliances & large deck overlooking the complex. **It's a Must See! Asking \$179,999.00.** Call Lisa at (845) 797-4972.

For Rent: Large Town of Poughkeepsie (Cherry Hill) 1 BR condo, fresh paint, new refrigerator, no pets/smoking. \$825/month. Includes heat & hot water. Lease & security required. Contact Stacy at (845) 473-8946

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