

# The WCT COMMENTATOR

December 17, 2010

*FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PAD....*

## *Happy Holidays!*



Dear Colleagues,

As the year draws to a close and we prepare to celebrate the holidays with family and friends, we must also reflect upon all that is important in our lives and be thankful for the countless blessings. Many individuals should be recognized for their selfless dedication and contributions which help the union run smoothly and efficiently. I must thank the WCT Administrative Assistant, **Ronnie Dwyer**, for her dedication and professionalism that help make this union productive and successful.

An integral part of a successful organization such as ours is due to the dedication, diligence, and zeal of the executive board. My sincerest gratitude goes to: **Michael Lyons** (VP Elementary), **Raymond Koretsky** (VP Secondary), **Flip Gertler** (VP Political Action), **Mary Ann Moran** (VP External Communications), **Kim Mahusky** (VP Internal Communications), **Martha Bilsback** (Secretary), **Donna Basile** (Treasurer), **Theresa Stowell**, **Michelle Ross**, **Dawn Sala** (Elementary at Large), **Diane DiChiara**, **Paul Nostrand**, and **Jane Stockslager** (Secondary at Large)

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the members of the Welfare Trust Fund: **Christine Romano** (Chairperson), **Betty Dean** (Treasurer), **Erin Mulligan** (Secretary), **Flip Gertler** (Trustee), and **Ronnie Dwyer** (Administrator) for the invaluable service they provide in preserving, protecting, and improving member benefits. **Betty Dean** will not be returning to serve on the Welfare Trust Fund as treasurer due to professional and personal obligations. I thank Betty for the many years of dedicated service and wish her the very best in her future endeavors. **Kim Mahusky** will assume the duties of treasurer.

We also recognize **Beth Rizzi** (WCT Commentator Editor) and **Ellen Mead** (Webmaster) who keep members updated on important information. **Tad Herman** (Membership Chairperson) is recognized for his dedication and sense of duty, which are qualities that we seldom find in the reality of today's world.

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My heartfelt thanks and gratitude go to the WCT **Building Representatives** who, on a daily basis, protect and safeguard the interests and the rights of our members. Your continued hard work and involvement in resolving union issues are commendable and very much appreciated.

Oftentimes, we take for granted the contributions of the Wappingers Congress of Retired Teachers. We are indebted to them for the many benefits we enjoy today. Along with the able leadership of their president, **Susan Roger**, they play an essential role in the organization.

I know that the success of a union does not come without hard work and total commitment by its membership. As we enter into negotiations in 2011 your support and solidarity are essential to ensure our success.

As 2010 draws to a close, and a new decade begins, we are faced with difficult challenges. As I am writing this article, New York State, thus far, has not made a commitment nor given any indication of when districts will be receiving their respective state aid or the amount. Members of the State Senate were back in Albany, Tuesday, December 7. Democratic Majority Conference Leader John Sampson called back lawmakers to address the Education Jobs Fund appropriations and other outstanding issues. Especially in a negotiating year, it is extremely important for districts to have such pertinent information in order to prepare a veritable budget that reflects the educational needs and the districts' responsibilities to its employees and their collective bargaining units.

The leadership of the WCT is actively letting the elected officials in Albany know the importance of timely actions in releasing these much needed funds in order to meet its mandates and deliver a quality education to the students we serve. If these funds do not arrive by the time the budget is due, tough decisions must be made. Let's not forget that this year we are delivering services to the school community with eight million dollars less than we had last year. If Albany does not act quickly and responsibly, the district may have to cut six to eight million dollars more from the 2011-2012 budget. If this travesty happens, how can we deliver the quality education our students deserve?

The WCT, as a responsible, sensitive, and caring organization, is cognizant of the severe economic times we are facing locally, as a state and as a nation. Rest assured that we are doing everything possible to be proactive and prepared in order to make informed decisions designed to preserve positions and benefits. The negotiating team: **Michael Lyons, Raymond Koretsky, Michelle Ross, Martha Bilsback, Leslie Seigle, Jack Devine** (retiree representative) and I have met with the various PPS groups, listened to their concerns and needs, and discussed a plan of action based on members' feedback. The negotiating team is ready to commence negotiations or discussions for an extension dictated by the needs of both the district and the union. I commend Superintendent Parla for keeping an open dialogue and being candid about the state of the District. Working together, ultimately an agreement should be reached that is both educationally sound and fiscally responsible. As always, the membership will be kept informed of developments as they occur.

On behalf of myself and my family, I would like to wish you and yours a very happy and blessed holiday season filled with peace and joy. May the New Year bring you good health and prosperity!

In Solidarity,

Pasquale Delli Carpini

Pasquale Delli Carpini  
WCT President

## PRESS RELEASE

On November 18, 2010 Mrs. Conroy's Business Law and Sports Law classes visited Judge Forman's and Judge Hayes's courtrooms at the Poughkeepsie Courthouse to observe their calendars for the day. This was the first time Roy C. Ketcham's students visited Judge Forman's chambers since he replaced Judge Dolan in his retirement in October.

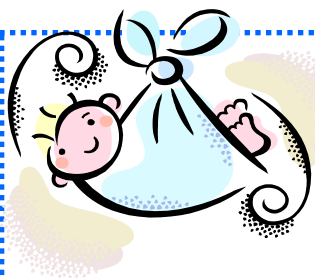


Students were given an opportunity to observe the judge's calendars, speak with Judge Forman and Judge Hayes, defense and prosecuting attorneys, court officers, court stenographers, probation officers and jury foremen. Students also watched a movie on jury selection.

Students had the opportunity to experience a real courtroom and be exposed to the many careers in the field of law.

Submitted by Kathy Conroy  
Business Education Teacher  
Roy C. Ketcham High School

## New Babies...



Congratulations to Donde McIlwee (JJ Social Studies) and his wife Shana on the birth of their daughter Fiona Grace on November 20, 2010.

Eleni Tarpey (Oak Grove) and her husband Brian welcomed twins into the world on October 26, 2010. A baby boy, Austin George and a baby girl, Madison Marie. Congratulations!

## Support Our Troops - A request from Dr. Alfred Hicks Jr.

As the holidays approach we ask you to think about our Troops. Dr. Alfred Hicks Jr. is stationed in Afghanistan. Dr. Hicks is a Hopewell community member.

Communication with family has been limited. The following is what the family has shared. He is a Dr. in a hospital so his request is for the injured soldiers who feel alone and forgotten. His Mom said that "The most treasured thing you can send are letters or cards. Any mail is a big boost to their morale". A "thinking of you" card or letter telling them how much they are appreciated for risking their life for us is what they are requesting. Also, any pictures showing patriotism are appreciated as well. You can share some happy news of home or the community. He has also asked for DVD's and music CD's which he can pass on to the others, especially the injured soldiers.

Dr. Hicks' Mom said " In my most recent update from Al, he shared that it is pretty grim there and the news gives us no idea of the horror and tragedy that he is seeing."

So please, take a moment and write a note or card or you can make one or several on the computer. Have your family and friends write some as well. The cards and letters that the troops receive showing them that we still care for them will be greatly appreciated. Respondents do not seal envelopes, so they can filter them ahead of time just in case. More than likely they will all be supportive letters, but just to be sure nothing malicious gets through.

Thank you for your help and support. Please bring/send your items to the Main Office at Van Wyck. Attention: Franca Petrillo.

## Oak Grove Peer Mediation Club Hosts Blood Drive

One of the goals of the Oak Grove Peer Mediation Club is to reach out to the community and help those in need. There is a severe shortage of blood in our area, and that 350 pints of blood are needed everyday.

Unfortunately, only 2% of the population donates blood. The Peer Mediation Club decided that they would like to help alleviate the blood shortage.



They did a great job hosting their fourth blood drive

on Thursday, November 18, 2010 from 2:00 to 8:00 p.m. in the Oak Grove Gymnasium. Our 4th and 5th grade peer mediators, made our blood drive successful by escorting donors to the registration booth, to the canteen for juice and cookies, babysitting, and greeting at the main door.

WE WERE ABLE TO SAVE 50 LIVES WITH THE HELP OF THE TEACHERS/COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS Thank you for your support of our school and the New York Blood Center.



## RCK Career Day

On Tuesday, November 9th we had the privilege of representing the WCT at the RCK Career Day. It was a great opportunity to talk with young adults and perhaps help them to shape their future. We were so pleased to have many students stop by to ask questions about teaching and ask us about our personal experience as teachers. We were very impressed with the politeness, enthusiasm, and sincere appreciation for the time that we spent with each individual. I guess once a teacher ..... always a teacher. We had such a good feeling knowing that perhaps we had made a difference!

We want to thank the administration of RCK and the student body for this opportunity to attend Career Day. Congratulations to everyone on a job well done.

Cathy Kim (RCK Science)  
Betsy MacNamee (retired 2010)  
Jeanne Paino (retired 2006)



Jeanne Paino, Cathy Kim, Betsy MacNamee

## Barnes & Noble Fundraiser for Evans Elementary School

On Tuesday, November 23, the staff and students at Evans Elementary joined together for their annual Barnes & Noble fundraiser. This was the school's third straight year holding this fundraiser. The event included students from all grade levels presenting songs, poems and book riddles. Our very own principal, Mr. Dominick did very well in a version of Are You Smarter Than a 5<sup>th</sup> Grader! There was a great turnout of staff, students and parents. A total of \$742.65 was raised and will be used to purchase books for classroom libraries from teacher wish lists. We look forward to next year's fundraiser and the continued support of our faculty, students and their families.

Sandra Cardoso  
Evans Elementary





## News from Gayhead

*submitted by Suzann Shaw*

This wonderful trophy, made by the art club, was presented to the children in Mrs. Temple's class for correctly solving the Math problem of the month for October. Children in Room 2A show off the Math Little League MVP Trophy they won for correctly solving the Math problem of the month for October. They also received the blue certificates on the wall behind them for participation in Oct. and Nov. The yellow certificate is the MVP award. Great job everyone!

## Oak Grove Teacher Goes To White House

On November 17, 2010, Caitlin McCabe, an Oak Grove fifth grade teacher, was invited to the White House by President Obama. Last year, Caitlin's grade five students (2009-2010), wrote persuasive letters to Mayra Montrose, Principal Investigator at the National Science Foundation, to nominate a scientist from Room 18, for a National Science and Technology Award. Caitlin contacted the White House, who posted her interview and class project on The White House Blog. This allowed Caitlin and Principal Angelina Rooney to be invited to sit in the audience at The National Medal of Science and Technology Ceremony. Flat Stanley attended the ceremony as well. The ceremony was held in the East Room of The White House and was officiated by President Obama. The evening concluded with a reception in the State Room. In Caitlin's words, "The experience was totally surreal". Congratulations to Caitlin and her class on all their hard work with this class project.





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*Free Workshop for NYSUT Members*

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The twists and turns of the economy have clarified more than ever the need for a financial plan; unfortunately, for many people, beginning a financial plan remains a daunting task.

This workshop will outline the process from beginning to end, covering the five key areas of financial planning: cash management, risk management, savings, retirement and estate planning. You may not have all the answers you need by the end of the session, but you'll know the questions you need to be asking, which will put you well on the way to successful financial management.

**Where:** NYSUT Mid-Hudson Regional Office  
201 Stockade Drive  
Kingston, NY 12401-3867

**When:** Wednesday, Feb. 9, 2011, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

**Presenter:** Evan Engler, NYSUT Member Benefits  
Coordinator of Financial Services

**There is no cost to enroll in this workshop, but seats are limited!**

**To reserve your spot:  
call**

Debra Conerty at 800-626-8101, ext. 1233

**or e-mail**

[dconerty@nysutmail.org](mailto:dconerty@nysutmail.org) (include "FPP" in the subject line)

Please provide your name, local association name, workshop date and phone number, including area code, where you can be reached in case of inclement weather.

## TWO NEW NEW YORK STATE LAWS: I. HEALTH CARE PROXY BY DEFAULT II. NEW GROUNDS FOR DIVORCE

By: MIRKIN & GORDON, P.C.

### I. NEW LAW FILLS HEALTH CARE PROXY VACUUM

New York State allows competent adults to designate a health care surrogate by executing a Health Care Proxy form. However, only about twenty percent of individuals do so leaving the majority of patients without any way of having health care decisions made on their behalf should they become incapacitated. Thus the vacuum.

Recognizing this, the Legislature passed the Family Health Care Decisions Act<sup>1</sup> (FHCDA) that was signed into law by Governor Paterson and became effective on June 1, 2010.

The FHCDA sets forth a default list of persons who are empowered to make health care decisions on behalf of an incapacitated patient. *In the absence of a designated health care proxy*, the following persons, in order of hierarchy, are authorized to make health care decisions on behalf of a patient who lacks decision-making capacity:

- Guardian appointed by law;
- Spouse/domestic partner;
- Son or daughter eighteen years of age or older;
- Parent;
- Brother or sister eighteen years of age or older;
- Close friend.

While it may be comforting to know that someone is able to make health care decisions on your behalf, this development must be considered with caution. One must remain cognizant of the

fact that the FHCDA categorizes the persons who may control your medical destiny. However it does not take into consideration your personal relationship with a particular person or that person's concern and intent, or lack thereof, regarding your personal needs or interests. Consequently, you are best served by designating your own Health Care Proxy.

### II. NEW DIVORCE LAW

On August 13, 2010, Governor Paterson signed into law an amendment to the New York State Domestic Relations Law that will become effective on October 12, 2010 adding a long anticipated new ground for divorce based upon irreconcilable differences.<sup>2</sup> Prior thereto, many parties were forced to lie in order to obtain a divorce.

Although publicized as the introduction of "no fault" divorce to New York State, the reality is different.

Under the new law, a divorce may be granted if one party swears under oath that the relationship between husband and wife "has broken down irretrievably for a period of at least six months." *However*, a divorce may not be granted *until* all ancillary issues such as child custody, visitation and support, economic issues of equitable distribution of marital property, spousal maintenance and attorneys fees have been resolved by the parties or determined by the Court.

<sup>1</sup> NYS Public Health Law, Article 29-CC

<sup>2</sup> NYS Domestic Relations Law, Article 10 Chapter §170(7)





also from the Welfare  
**Trust Fund .....**

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

January 19	Times:
February 16	2 pm—6pm
March 23	Please call
April 27	227-5065 to
May 18	schedule an
and June 22.	appointment.

## Important Information about the WCT Welfare **Trust Fund....**

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:

January 11, 2011  
February 15, 2011  
March 15, 2011  
April 5, 2011  
May 17, 2011  
June 14, 2011

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.

## 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 through 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**



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For Sale: \$1,200 for a beautiful diamond for the holidays! GIA Certified. Round Brilliant, .69 carat, VVS1, Color J, Fluorescence Strong Blue. Original purchase price in 1982 for \$2,145. GIA certificate, original receipt, two appraisals dated 1982. Contact Teresa at 485-5485

For Sale: iPod Touch--brand new (unopened package) 8 GB; no fees for portable access to the internet. (845) 494-2174

For Sale/Rent: Vero Beach Florida Condo on the Beach with pool and patio, 2 Bedrooms, 2 NEW Bathrooms and New Kitchen all renovated 2010 Ocean View, sale price \$149,000. Jan/Feb rental available view on line www.vacationrentals411.com property # 20907 contact me for special rental price. (845) 462-2510

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For Sale: Toddler's English protective riding helmet. Like new, 2 years old. Black velvet with a fully adjustable design. There is a size dial in the back of the helmet to change the size. This is an official regulation show/protective helmet made by the International company. This would fit a child age 2-4. Asking \$45 or best offer! Please call 845-661-2567 (leave a message).



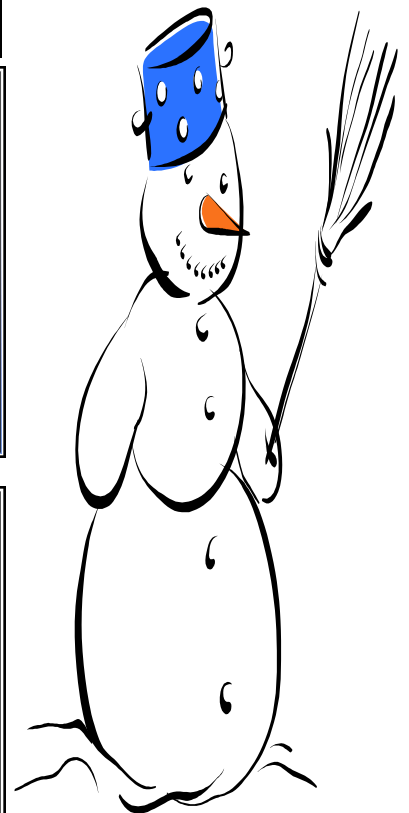
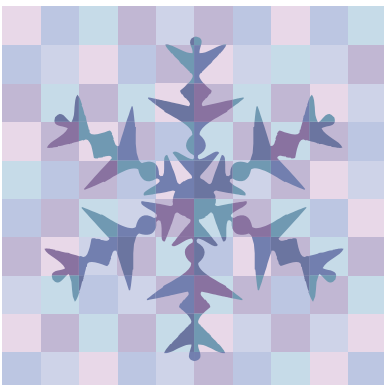
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## WCT COMMENTATOR Policy

The content of the *WCT COMMENTATOR* shall reflect the official positions and policies of the WCT, with the following three exceptions:

1. The President of the WCT should present his/her views in a message to the members from time to time, but not less than bimonthly.

2. Signed Letters to the Editor (of responsible length) containing personal views from members and subscribers shall be published subject to laws of libel.

3. Members of the WCT may place articles adhering to the Canons of Journalism concerned with WCT positions, policies, and issues of interest to teachers in the Commentary Section. (For both Letters to the Editor and the **Commentary Section, the writer's name and WCT affiliation shall be attached, and an editor's note shall accompany these sections indicating that "The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the official views and policies of the WCT."**)

Reprints of articles from the *WCT COMMENTATOR* are allowable only with the permission of the WCT President.

## WCT COMMENTATOR Advertising Policy

The *WCT COMMENTATOR* advertising policy as adopted by the Executive Board is as follows:

Noncommercial (Personal) ads for WCT MEMBERS only will be run for two issues at no charge.

Commercial (Business) ads for WCT MEMBERS only: guaranteed placement for half of the school year, \$35.00 per half year payable Sept. 15th and Feb. 1st or \$5.00 per issue.

## 2010-2011 Newsletter Schedule

12/17/10

1/28/11

2/25/11

3/25/11

4/29/11

5/20/11

6/17/11

