

# The WCT COMMENTATOR

September 24, 2010

## From the President's Pad ...



# In Solidarity, We Prosper...

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome back! Hopefully everyone enjoyed a well-rested and well-deserved summer. As we enjoy the beginning of a productive school year, we must also look forward and embrace the challenges that lie ahead.

Congratulations to the WCT (World Class Teachers)!!! Through tremendous efforts, along with the solidarity of the school community, we helped pass a budget with a 9.9 tax levy. The voter turnout May 18<sup>th</sup> was particularly impressive: 87% of the WCT members voted, far surpassing the 53% of 2009. The successful outcome ensures students the quality education they deserve.

Although the budget passed by a resounding 2,762 votes, the \$6.1 million reduction in state aid resulted in the elimination of 51 teaching positions as of June 30, 2010. Working together with the district, at the beginning of this academic year, less than ten members did not have employment with the WCSD, but will remain on the recall list. In addition, seven new special education teachers were hired to meet the needs of our students.

Due to the increase in Vote/Cope contributions and the successful NYSUT lobbying efforts of elected officials in Albany and Washington, the Federal Education Jobs Act restored \$608 million to New York State, saving an estimated 8,200 jobs. Wappingers' allocated funds of \$2,801,106 are essential to reinstate the remainder of the excess members.



*(continued on page 3)*

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## Editor's Note ... New Year, New Commentator



If you've visited our website recently you already know that thanks to the hard work of Ellen Mead, [www.wcteachers.org](http://www.wcteachers.org) has a brand new look! In addition to our gorgeous new website, you are now again able to access the *Commentator* online,

including back issues!

Please remember that I am dependent on all of you for the content of the *Commentator*! Keep the news updates, reader ads, and anything else your fellow members need to know about coming!

If you have any questions or would like to contribute an article, please email me at: [commentator@wcteachers.org](mailto:commentator@wcteachers.org)

*Beth Rizzi*

## NYSUT welcomes Race to the Top award

New York state was named a winner this afternoon in the latest round of the federal Race to the Top program. "This announcement continues our work in leading excellence in our professions," said NYSUT President Dick Iannuzzi. Information continues to come in. We will share more as details become available. Other winners are: the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Ohio and Rhode Island.

The next steps for school districts and locals will be to develop and agree on a final scope of work. This final scope of work will be due to SED in 90 days. We are consulting with SED to determine the timeframe and what will be needed in the plan. At this point, we expect the final scope of work to be an agreement that the district and local will negotiate any necessary changes to allow the district to implement the state plan over the four years of the grant. NYSUT is already preparing materials to assist locals with this process.

Reprinted from NYSUT Leader Briefing of August 24, 2010

Read the [NYSUT](#) and [SED](#) news releases online.

**From the President's Pad ...**  
(cont'd from page 1)

On June 30, 2011 the WCT contract expires, but we are hoping to commence negotiations as soon as possible. We invite the district to sit with us and work together as a team. I am confident we will be able to construct a proposal that is both educationally sound and fiscally responsible, meeting the needs of both the district and our members. Working with **Michael Lyons** (VP Elementary) and **Raymond Koretsky** (VP Secondary), we have already begun to formulate a well-balanced negotiating team that will reflect the varied priorities and concerns of the membership. You have already received a survey to express such interests. Please take the time to complete the survey by **Friday, October 8<sup>th</sup>**, so we can correlate the information in order to create the best plan of action.

Many of you may have already heard about Davis Guggenheim's upcoming documentary entitled "*Waiting for 'Superman'.*" Although it is a moving account of five children and their families as they seek better schools, the opportunity for a great public education should come not by chance or by choice, but by right. Unfortunate and misleading, charter schools are portrayed as a better choice, or a solution, to public education. Research shows "successful" charter schools barely meet the standards that public schools not only achieve, but surpass. It is ill-informed and irresponsible for this film to blame teachers and unions for failing institutions.

As educators, we should be appalled at such inaccurate information that attacks the very fiber of our profession. We cannot be swayed by rhetoric and demeaning propaganda by individuals and organizations that have no idea of the valuable service we provide every day to the future of this country. This movie may have brought forth needed dialogue to improve the quality of education, but it should be addressed by intelligent, responsible individuals that "know" the process of education from kindergarten to graduation. It is of utmost importance that we remain focused and censure these attacks that aim to destroy such a noble and valuable profession.

I am confident that working together in solidarity, we can weather this storm as we have in the past. It is important for us to remain committed to the excellent education we provide and I wish all of us "great expectations" throughout the year.

In solidarity,

Pasquale Delli Carpini

WCT President

## PR NEWS

By Emily Guthoff

May was a busy month for the WCT. Ellen Korz and I wanted to make the most far reaching positive impact on the communities that we serve. I knew that the local town libraries summer reading program budgets were cut from the Dutchess County Budget, and after we discussed it, we could not wait to help out. Our WCT union, through its membership with the Dutchess County United Teachers, was able to help fund the vital summer reading programs at the Blodgett Memorial Library in Fishkill, the East Fishkill Community Library, and the Grinnell Library in Wappingers Falls. All three libraries



wrote glowing letters of praise and gratitude to our WCT union in the Southern Dutchess News and The Poughkeepsie Journal. We should all feel proud that as teachers, we were able to expand opportunities that encourage literacy to the children of our communities. The money that our Public Relations Committee donates goes a long way to support the goodwill that our union perpetuates in the communities that we serve.

WCT members had reason to celebrate during the late spring and over the summer! Our congratulations and best wishes go out to all!

### New Babies...



Monica Schor (Evans Elementary) & her husband Jordan welcomed a girl, Izabella Hania, on April 22, 2010

### Wedding Bells ...



Michelle Oldenburg (John Jay) married Dan Pettigrew on August 6.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Gianna Marsh (Sheafe Road Elementary) & her husband welcomed a boy, Landon Myles, on May 9, 2010



### It's Not Too Late

#### To Knit or Crochet for a Good Cause

Our crafters have been busy throughout the summer and donations for shawls and lap afghans for the patients at The Pines at Poughkeepsie Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation have already started pouring in. Shawls are often easier to manage than sweaters, and a simple pattern consists of three 12x12 inch squares, the middle square set on the diagonal with a chain stitch tie at the front. Lap afghans are an option for those patients who prefer them. Questions or completed projects can be sent to Dawn Sala at Myers Corners. This will be an ongoing project, so keep those needles going.

# Another Successful Community Day

By Emily Guthoff & Ellen Korz

Thanks to a few volunteers on a very dreary, cold Sunday, at the Wappingers Community Day, the participation by the WCT was a success. Although attendance was down at the event, many people stopped by our table to talk to us, including Steven Saland and Joel Miller. They wished us luck on the new school year.

I want to take this opportunity to thank, Lauren Korz, who helped set up and break down our booth, **Laura Sylvester, John Lane, who almost didn't make it because he thought he was scheduled for East Fishkill, and Karen MacLeod** who was able to get most of our raffle ticket participants. Without these volunteers, our participation would not be possible. The community really enjoys talking to the teachers about our District and it gives us the opportunity to reach out in a positive way.

**Our \$50 gift certificate to Longobardi's went to Mr. and Mrs. Harten of Wappingers Falls.** They were very appreciative.

This was my last Community Day as an



East Fishkill Community Day  
Ellen Mead, Kathy Shekitka, Emily Guthoff

active WCT member. After having worked at the Wappingers Community Day as a Recreation Committee member for 25 years and now as a WCT member, today I thought about how important it is to be involved in community events. I have enjoyed living in Wappingers for 30 years and I think part of the reason for that was always taking part in the community and getting to know the people who are my neighbors. As a teacher, living in the community where I work has helped in my relationships with parents and other community members. I hope some of you become more **involved in public relations. I think you'll see how it helps the community to see us in a positive way and will help us to have their support.**

Saturday, September 11, 2010 was a beautiful sunny day and participation at the East Fishkill Community Day was memorable because the WCT gave service to our community by our involvement in a National Day of Service to commemorate the anniversary of 9/11.

I want to thank Kathy Shekitka, Ellen Meade, Ann Hack, and Paula Fusco for volunteering to sit at our WCT table and to chat with community



Wappingers Community Day  
Ellen Korz, Karen MacLeod, Lauren Korz

residents, hand out free pencils and magnets, and run the free raffle for a \$50.00 gift certificate to Tiramisu. Mrs. Marge Cleary of Hopewell Junction was thrilled to win our East Fishkill raffle and she was very thankful to our union.

As my co-chair Ellen stated above, as members of this union we can be seen as contributing members of our communities who giveback and make positive change or we can do nothing and get nothing in return. We are hopeful that many more members will participate in future PR activities.

# Participate

## In Reverse Trick-or-Treating 2010!

On Halloween, schoolchildren, (& high school/college students, and adults)

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END poverty among cocoa farmers

END abusive child labor in the cocoa industry

PROMOTE Fair Trade

PROTECT the environment

by giving Fair Trade chocolate back to adults, along with an informational card...while Trick-or-Treating door to door in their communities.

Reverse Trick-or-Treating kits are FREE for individuals and \$24 per 150 cards/chocolates for organizations plus the cost of shipping.

### **DATES TO REQUEST KITS:**

Individuals: September 1 – October 8

Organizations: October 1-8

Order yours TODAY, before they run out!

# AFT Advances Its Leadership Role in Teacher Evaluations

Delegates at the AFT convention on July 10 overwhelmingly ratified the comprehensive overhaul of teacher development and evaluation first outlined in a speech by AFT president Randi Weingarten in January. The new policies will help the union continue and expand an aggressive outreach program that is already shaping new, union-led changes to teacher evaluations in school districts nationwide.

"We're taking the leadership role in overhauling teacher evaluations," Weingarten said. "Developing and training teachers should be a way to support good teaching—not a 'gotcha.' "

Delegates at the convention in Seattle ratified the policy after days of discussion and debate. It calls for evaluation systems that are based on professional, clearly defined teaching standards; use multiple measures of teacher practice and student outcomes; are correctly implemented by trained evaluators; require administrators to address working conditions; and focus on supporting teachers and giving them time to work with colleagues.

Since Weingarten's speech at the National Press Club in January, the AFT has worked with more than 50 affiliates, in partnership with school districts, to develop better teacher evaluations.

Rigorous research has demonstrated that neither the current systems nor the latest fad—over-reliance on a single measure of student achievement—are effective measures of teacher quality.

"The blame-the-teacher crowd wants to use teacher evaluation as a hammer to pound individual teachers for everything that happens in a child's life rather than as a tool to support good teaching," Weingarten said.

Many AFT delegates voiced strong support for the resolution from the convention floor. Among them were Colleen Callahan, professional issues director for the Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals, and Keith Johnson, president of the Detroit Federation of Teachers.

Callahan said, "This resolution positions us to take the lead on this issue at a time when people would like us to be silent."

Johnson said, "We should not fear the opportunity to define what our profession looks like. We should not be leaving evaluations to someone who hasn't been in a classroom since Moby-Dick was a guppy."

In other action, delegates committed the AFT and its affiliates to support efforts to ensure that charter schools are fully transparent, accountable and open to unions. [AFT press release]

July 10, 2010

# WAPPINGERS

Central School District



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KATHRYN POLUMBO, COORDINATOR



FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

September 17, 2010

## PRESS RELEASE

Nominations for induction are now being accepted for the Thomas D. Macrini Sports Hall of Fame, which will be holding its 20<sup>th</sup> induction ceremony on April 29, 2011. Athletes who have graduated from a Wappingers' high school, in 2000 or prior, retired coaches and special service award candidates will be considered. Please mail your nomination, along with any supporting documentation, to WCSD Athletic Office, 167 Myers Corners Road – Suite 200, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590 no later than **Thursday, December 30, 2010**.



Kathryn Polumbo, Chairperson HOF Committee  
298-5000 Ext. 166

# The Wappingers Congress of Teachers

Presents

## NYSUT's Defensive Driving Program

(Recognized by the National Safety Council)

THIS COURSE IS OFFERED TO WCT MEMBERS AND IMMEDIATE FAMILY ONLY

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2010

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2010

6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Sessions will be held at Roy C. Ketcham High School, Room Large Group Instruction.

Family members are welcome to participate. A fee of \$30.00\*\* per person is necessary to cover cost of materials. (Participants **MUST** attend both sessions).

- **\*\*If you subscribe to auto insurance through NYSUT Member Benefits (METPAY), there is a \$25.00 refund.**

### Benefit to Participants:

Upon completion of the course, members and their family members, who are principal operators of a vehicle, are entitled to a ten percent reduction in the base rate of their liability (bodily injury and property damage), no-fault (personal injury) and collision insurance premiums each year for three years.

WCT members and their family members who complete the course may receive a subtraction of up to four points on their driving records. This applies only to points for violations occurring within the 18 months immediately before course completion. It does not affect points for earlier violations and can never be used as a **“credit” for future points. Points may be reduced only once in any 18-month period.**

To register, send the clip-off below and your check to the WCT office ASAP. Reservations will be accepted on a **“first come, first serve”** basis. **No cancellations after Monday, November 1, 2010.**

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### Defensive Driving – November 3 & November 10

Member's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Are you attending? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Family Members (Attending) 1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

School (School Mail Location) \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

A check for \$30.00 per person must accompany this form. Please make check payable to **“WCT.”**  
 You must be a WCT member or WCT family member to enroll in this course.

## 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:

September 14, 2010  
 October 12, 2010  
 November 16, 2010  
 December 7, 2010  
 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.



### also from the Welfare Trust Fund

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

September 22

October 20

November 15

December 15

January 19

February 16

March 23

April 27

May 18

and June 22.

Times - 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Please call 227-5065 to schedule an appointment.

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- 24-hour access (Fishkill)
- Kids' Club - child care
- KidZone - children's fitness and activity center (LaGrange)
- Children's Birthday Parties (Newburgh & LaGrange)
- Children's Summer Camps (Newburgh & LaGrange)
- Basketball • Volleyball • Racquetball • Indoor tracks (Newburgh & LaGrange)
- Boxing Studios

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Fishkill, 982 Main Street 896-3300 • Newburgh, 15 Racquet Rd., Rte. 17K 564-7500 • LaGrange, 258 Titusville Rd. 463-4800

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Next time you're making travel plans, be sure to check out the newest travel discount program endorsed by NYSUT Member Benefits Corporation, TripMark.travel.

When you plan your next vacation, flight or cruise with TripMark.travel, you can enjoy great deals on the most beautiful vacation spots in the world. This program provides NYSUT members and their family and friends with online and offline (toll-free travel agents) leisure travel benefits.

TripMark.travel allows you to effortlessly book flights, hotels, vacation packages, car rentals and cruises online for personal and business travel needs. With a simple interface and advanced encryption technology, your information is safe and secure, giving you peace of mind as you plan your next trip. Your information will never be shared or sold to any third parties.

Offline, toll-free agents are standing by, waiting to assist you if you prefer speaking to an agent. Agents can be reached between 8:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., ET. Please note: At this time, travel agents cannot book airline flights. You can either book flights online or call the airline directly.

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To get started, visit [www.memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://www.memberbenefits.nysut.org) and click on TripMark in the Featured Discounts section on the home page. There, you'll find toll-free numbers for reservations, cruises and group travel, as well as a link to a NYSUT member-specific TripMark website. Or give Member Benefits a call at

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Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.

## 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**



## 2010-2011 Newsletter Schedule

9/24/10

10/29/10

11/19/10

12/17/10

1/28/11

2/25/11

3/25/11

4/29/11

5/20/11

6/17/11

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**MEMBERS' CLASSIFIED ADS**

For Sale: Two J.C. Penney rocker recliners- in brand-new condition (used only one month). Normal retail cost was \$1,200 for the pair. ( Sale price we paid was \$598). Will sacrifice for \$498. Must see to appreciate. Also, 25 " Panasonic tv/vcr combination set. Asking \$50. Please call 255-7167 . Dave DeMers, retired teacher

For Sale: 2 Bench seats for Dodge Caravan in very good condition: \$50 or best offer. Contact Ed @ 471-7607 or [edmundtmckenna@gmail.com](mailto:edmundtmckenna@gmail.com)

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**\*Special 20% discount to WCT Members**

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Wappingers Congress  
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Wappingers Congress of  
Teachers  
2537 Route 52  
Suite 15  
Hopewell Junction, NY 12533

NYSUT 13-270  
AFT 1989

Phone: (845) 227-5065  
Fax: (845) 227-1977  
E-mail:  
wct@wcteachers.org

WCT President:  
Pasquale Delli Carpini

V.P. of Internal  
Communications:  
Kim Mahusky

Editor: Elizabeth A. Rizzi

Proofreader: Frank Rizzi

Distribution: Peg Nikola &  
Alice Heusinger, WCRT



## 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.

For prompt placement of advertisements and articles in upcoming issues of the *WCT COMMENTATOR*, e-mail the information to [commentator@wcteachers.org](mailto:commentator@wcteachers.org). Information can also be sent to the editor at the WCT Office. Do not send articles or ads through the GroupWise e-mail system.

NYSUT has endorsed Congressman John Hall for the upcoming November 2nd election for U.S. Congress.

HVALF Walk Staging Locations

2010 Political Campaign

Saturday 10/16/10  
Orange County  
New Windsor/Monroe  
Race:  
Hall—19th Congress  
Dunkin Donuts  
State Route 32 Vails Ct  
Vails Gate, NY 12584

Saturday 10/23/10  
Ulster County  
Kingston  
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Auerbach—  
Comptroller  
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