

## Who Are These People?



Do these people look familiar to you? If so, e-mail your answers to **WCTINK@hotmail.com** by October 7th.

If you guess correctly, your name will be placed in a raffle to win a \$25 gift certificate to Barnes and Noble. The winner will be announced in the October 21st issue of *the COMMENTATOR*.

(Members of the WCT Executive Board are not eligible to participate.)

### Inside This Issue: Vol. 34 No. 2

|   |   |                              |   |
|---|---|------------------------------|---|
| COMMENTATOR Policy                          | 2 | Insurance Program            | 4 |
| Save the Date                               | 2 | RCK's Business Honor Society | 5 |
| Words of Gratitude                          | 2 | WCSD Factoid                 | 5 |
| With Sympathy                               | 2 | Members' Classified Ads      | 6 |
| Editorial Expressions                       | 3 | 2005 - 2006 Pay Dates        | 6 |
| NYSUT Member Recounts                       |   |                              |   |
| Harrowing Escape from Hurricane Devastation | 3 |                              |   |
| NYSUT Ad: NYSUT WrapPlan Supplemental Life  |   |                              |   |



### UPCOMING '05 BOARD MEETINGS

October: 11th @ WJHS &  
24th @ WJHS

November: 14th @ WJHS &  
28th @ WJHS

December: 5th @ WJHS &  
19th @ WJHS

**COMMENTATOR Policy**

The content of the *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.")

The *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.

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

**SAVE THE DATE:****“Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk” Oct. 16th**

*Last year, NYSUT raised over \$650,000 for a cancer cure.*

For the fourth year in a row, NYSUT is a flagship sponsor for the “Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk,” a noncompetitive 5K walking event taking place at several regional locations across the state. Binghamton and Buffalo kick off the event on Sunday, Oct. 2. Every other regional walk will take place Sunday, Oct. 16. Last year, more than 6,000 members representing local unions from Long Island to Buffalo raised over \$650,000.

<http://nysut.org/makingstrides/index.html>

**Words of Gratitude**

To All –

Thank you so much for thinking of me for the award. I was so honored to be one of the few chosen for it. It is so nice to be rewarded for my hard work. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Thanks Again!  
Taryn Lippert

Dear Pasquale,

On behalf of the Goals for Hope Second Annual Women's Soccer Tournament, please accept our thanks for your contribution of \$100 for a quarter page ad to benefit the Miles of Hope Breast Cancer Foundation.

Your confidence in and support of the Foundation is deeply appreciated. Your gift will help keep our community the best for all of us residing in the Hudson Valley.

Sincerely,  
Dana Effron  
Co-Founder

**With Sympathy**

Former Vassar Road Principal, **Trudy Briggs**, passed away from Alzheimer's Disease June 10, 2005.

A memorial service is being held on the Clearwater Sloop at 1:30 PM on *Saturday, September 24th* at the Main Street Hudson River Dock in Poughkeepsie.



## Editorial Expressions

The freedom of summer is just a memory now, and our WCT members are settled into the routine of a new school year. More importantly, I am sure you are all just as ecstatic as I am that we've been paid!

Over the summer, I had the opportunity to participate in a workshop on union newsletters at NYSUT's Mid-Hudson Regional Office Summer Leadership Conference. I learned that over the years, *the WCT COMMENTATOR* has consistently been one of the leading newsletters in our region.

Our newsletter has been going strong for years, informing the members and providing a wonderful outlet for communication. No other local attending the workshop produced twenty issues a school year! Sadly, some other local newsletters were non-existent.

Due to my attendance at this workshop, you might begin to notice some slight changes to *the COMMENTATOR*. Don't worry, I won't be making any drastic changes, and our newsletter will still come out 20 times a year. However, I am excited to apply some of the

suggestions made at the workshop to our publication.

Please remember to submit your articles by e-mailing them to [WCTINK@hotmail.com](mailto:WCTINK@hotmail.com), or send them through interoffice mail to Meredith Inkeles at Kinry Road or to the WCT Office.

In Solidarity,

*Meredith Inkeles*

*COMMENTATOR* Editor

## NYSUT Member Recounts Harrowing Escape from Hurricane Devastation

Kevin Hart

September 1, 2005

When Hurricane Katrina made deadly landfall in late August, killing thousands of people and devastating a wide swath of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, one NYSUT member and her husband were engaged in a round-the-clock struggle to escape its path.

Kathi Cullinane, a fifth-grade teacher and member of the North Babylon Teachers Organization on Long Island, was enjoying a "relaxing" vacation with her husband, Chuck, at a time-share in New Orleans. They took in the rowdy sights of the French Quarter, watched the New Orleans Saints play in a pre-season football

game and toured the "haunted" parts of the city.

Then came the prospect of disaster. Katrina, which had many meteorologists guessing where it would make landfall, bore down on New Orleans.

On Saturday, Aug. 27, a voluntary evacuation was issued in New Orleans. But evacuating was easier said than done.

"There were no flights out," said Cullinane. "Amtrak was closed. Greyhound didn't have any buses we could get on, and there were no rental cars available. We just bought all the

*(Continued on page 5)*

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### *the WCT COMMENTATOR*

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*COMMENTATOR* deadline for the next issue is the Monday after the pay-check. Send all information for the October 7th issue to [WCTINK@HOTMAIL.COM](mailto:WCTINK@HOTMAIL.COM), or to the WCT Office by Monday, September 26th.

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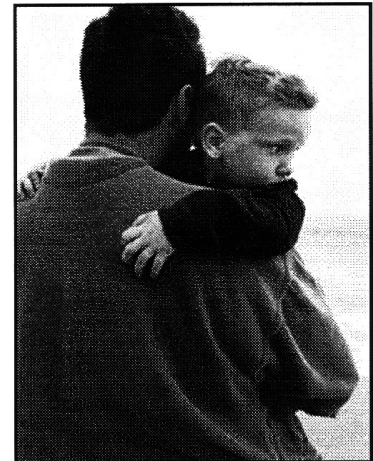


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## **Financial obligations don't end at retirement... Neither should your life insurance!**

The NYSUT WrapPlan® Supplemental Life Insurance Program complements term life insurance coverage available to members. The plan coordinates easily with the NYSUT Term Life Insurance Plan and any term life insurance coverage provided to members from their local union affiliation or employer.

The common characteristic of term life insurance is that coverage typically terminates or dramatically decreases at upper ages or at retirement. When this loss of coverage occurred in the past, the options were limited. Members could apply for an expensive conversion policy, apply for fully underwritten coverage if they were healthy, or simply forgo the needed protection.



The WrapPlan allows members and spouses who are age 65 or younger to apply for a lesser amount of coverage (as little as 50 percent of their current term benefit), and have the protection increase when their term insurance decreases or terminates. This benefit, which can be custom designed for a member's individual family, financial and career needs, includes the following features:

- Coverage may be continued to age 95.
- Premiums may be set to produce as much or as little cash value as desired.
- Up to \$200,000 of coverage is available without a physical examination or blood test.
- Retirees (up to age 65) are eligible to apply for up to \$100,000 of coverage.
- Coverage amounts and increase dates may be adjusted to meet a member's changing financial picture.
- Account values accumulate at competitive interest rates on a tax-deferred basis.

You must live or work in the state of New York to participate in this program.

NYSUT Member Benefits negotiated several other features that make this plan unique. To find out more, call the plan administrator, Future Planning Associates, Inc., at 1-866-697-8897.

For more information about this program or for disclosure information about contractual expense reimbursement arrangements with endorsed providers, please call NYSUT Member Benefits at 800-626-8101, e-mail [benefits@nysutmail.org](mailto:benefits@nysutmail.org), or visit [www.memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://www.memberbenefits.nysut.org).

## NYSUT Member Recounts Harrowing Escape from Hurricane Devastation

continued from page 3

survival stuff, like flashlights and water, and went about our day.”

The next day, there was a knock on the door. Evacuating New Orleans was no longer optional. Emergency personnel told the Cullinanes that if they could not find a way out of New Orleans, they would have to wait out the storm in the Superdome, a sporting and concert venue that had been converted into a refugee shelter from the coming storm.

Cullinane knew if she camped out at the Superdome it could be weeks before she made it back home to her three children and teaching position at Marion G. Vedder School in North Babylon.

“We knew we had to get out now,” she said. With no small amount of reservation, Cullinane and her husband resorted to hitchhiking. Walking to Interstate 10, they were rescued by their “guardian angel,” a business owner who agreed to take them to Pensacola, Fla.

Fighting heavy traffic, they made the 200-mile drive in 13 hours, finding shelter at a hotel. But there was no way out of Pensacola, which was bracing for the outer edges of Katrina.

On Aug. 29, as rain started to fall, touching off a lashing that eventually would leave parts of Pensacola flooded, Cullinane and her husband received hopeful news. There was a rental car waiting for them in Tallahassee, 200 miles away. Chuck literally “jumped in front of a truck” carrying a fleeing business owner who agreed to transport the couple 50 miles to Crestview.

The only business the couple could find open in Crestview was U-Haul, where employees initially refused to rent any vehicles. Three-hundred

dollars later, the Cullinanes were given a 1982 model without air conditioning.

By now, family members had found the couple a flight to Long Island from Jacksonville, if they could be there first thing in the morning on Aug. 30. In Tallahassee, they traded in the U-Haul for a standard rental car and headed east. After a couple of layovers on the flight, the couple were safe and sound on Long Island again.

The experience is still catching up with Cullinane.

“We turned on CNN, and it was just horrible,” she said. “We were just there. We were so blessed to have people to help us, and I would love to find a way to give back.”

Cullinane said she did not feel right escaping the damage relatively unscathed, when she was helped along the way by people who probably lost everything.

She worked with her district and local union president Pamela Katz to establish a dress-down day every Friday in September for anyone donating to the American Red Cross.

Cullinane hopes her fellow NYSUT members will do everything they can to help those hurt by Katrina. She is heartbroken to see such a beautiful part of the country devastated.

“I’m glad we got to see New Orleans, because the city will never be the same,” she said. “This changes your life. You start thanking your lucky stars you have a guardian angel looking out for you.”

NYSUT Katrina Relief Fund:  
NYSUT Headquarters  
Attn: Accounting Department  
800 Troy-Schenectady Road  
Latham, New York 12110

Checks should be made payable to the NYSUT Katrina Relief Fund.

## RCK's Business Honor Society

By Maryalice Goodall  
Teacher-in-Charge

Eight new members were inducted into the Business Honor Society at Ketcham High School on June 14, 2005. A reception followed the induction, and certificates were distributed to the recipients from the State Education Department.



Pictured hold their certificates are (left to right): Stephen Troue, Michelle Fornabaio, Casey O’Hearn, Tina Pantaleo, and Brian Henning. Standing behind the students are Business teachers Kristen Bockemuhl, Carlo Picciotti, Karen Noye, William Hogg, and Maryalice Goodall.

Missing from the picture are Michael DeFrance, Matthew DiMarco, and Kelly Simpson.

## WCSD Factoid:

• At the June 20, 2005 Board meeting, Superintendent Powell’s contract was extended until 2010.

**MEMBERS' CLASSIFIED ADS**

**2005-2006  
Pay Dates:**

- October 7th
- October 21st
- November 4th
- November 18th
- December 2nd
- December 16th
- December 30th
- January 13th
- January 27th
- February 10th
- February 24th
- March 10th
- March 24th
- April 7th
- April 21st
- May 5th
- May 19th
- June 2nd
- June 16th
- June 23rd

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**845-471-7607**

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Members**