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the WCT COMMENTATOR

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Observations from the Emotional Rollercoaster Known as Negotiations

by Jack Devine, WCRT

At the request of the Wappingers Congress of Retired Teachers, I agreed to serve as an observer of the WCT contract negotiations. From the outset of negotiations, I was accepted into the inner sanctum of this outstanding group. The experience was an emotional rollercoaster, and as we all know now, a successful endeavor and a remarkable achievement. It was a team effort. For those of you who can't name the entire negotiating team, I'll give you a cheat sheet, in alphabetical order:

Martha Bilsback, 4th grade teacher – Myers Corners Elem School
Pasquale Delli Carpini, Italian teacher – John Jay High School
Mike Lyons, 5th grade teacher, Sheafe Road Elem School
Michelle Ross, School Psychologist, Gayhead Elem School
Leslie Seigle, Special Education teacher, John Jay High School

Each one of these negotiators was unwavering in helping achieve the goals that had been set. They all had strengths they could call upon, and they all (mostly all) maintained their sense of humor, jaundiced as it might be at times. They were never caught with their facts down, and were always ready to counter the Board proposals put on the table. They had

done their homework. The Board lawyer, John Donoghue, and Joanne Sereda were formidable opponents and there were days it didn't look possible that an acceptable compromise would be met. The health plan was the biggest stumbling block, and both sides were adamant in their positions. We now know who blinked first, but it wasn't easy. Hard work and steadfastness won the day.

For a group to be great it needs a great leader. A great leader has to be smart. Very smart is better. Very smart and very prepared is best. He or she also needs passion. Very smart, very prepared, and passionate. I just described Pasquale! Watching him in action was mesmerizing: a cross between a reality show and a demolition derby. We all know what Pasquale does to the English language even when he is relaxed. When he gets excited there is probably no literal translation to his exhortations; but at the end of the day, what he wanted was thoroughly understood, and for the most part, agreed upon by the District.

Thanks to the negotiators for a job well done and allowing me to be the "fly on the wall." It was great. I hope there are some "next generation" teachers out there willing and able to mind the store when their time comes.



Happy
Hanukkah!

Thank You

Successful negotiations must never be measured by the speed in which they are accomplished, but instead by its outcome. It is with great pleasure that I write this letter to congratulate Mr. Pasquale Delli Carpini and the Negotiating Team on the recent settlement of a very desirable, respectable, and fair contract for both the teachers and the District. It was very refreshing that every union member was kept abreast via negotiations updates and that a very exhausting and thorough analysis occurred before any issue was negotiated and agreed upon.

Unlike in the past, it is very gratifying that by finding the appropriate language for the contract, all significant longevity money will be included in the final average salary. I

would like to thank the Negotiating Team for grandfathering the percentages that retirees have to pay for their medical insurance and enable them to maintain the insurance of their choice. I know the district wanted to change health insurance not only for the active members, but also for the retirees. I am thankful that through the thorough analysis, steadfastness, and courage of the negotiating team, the District agreed to the Union proposals.

Congratulations! I wish Pasquale and the Negotiating Team continued success.

John C. Lumia

Retired Math Teacher

Sheafe Mentoring Club Helps the Community

The students in the Sheafe Road Elementary School Mentoring Group are spending their club time this year focusing on community service. Club leader, Mrs. Farley, has found that one the greatest sources of self-esteem and purpose comes from giving or doing for others. Each month she is planning to organize a project or event that will give the students the opportunity to give to those less fortunate or in need.

In September, the students gardened around the entrance of the school building and created a welcoming flower bed of mums, pumpkins, a hay bale, and scarecrows.

During the month of October, members sewed pillows to donate to the local hospital's pediatric ward. The pillows are meant to be hugged into a child's chest when they need to cough. For many of the students this was their first time sewing. Boys

and girls alike enjoyed the event and were motivated to complete all 50 pillows.

Last month, the Mentoring Club filled mason jars with the ingredients to make cookies and then donated them to the Thanksgiving baskets that Sheafe Road School puts together for local families.

If you have an idea, suggestion, or need that the Sheafe Road Mentoring Club can help with, please call the

school and leave a message for Mrs. Farley.



Protecting Yourself

We live in troubled times, and school employees need to behave in such a way (and avoid certain situations) to protect themselves physically, medically, legally, and professionally.

By: Program Services Department of NYSUT

Student Health Considerations: No one knows how many adults and students in schools are HIV-positive or suffer from other communicable diseases. All em-

ployees and students should take appropriate precautions. There are other students in schools who require health services, including the admin-

istration of medication, monitoring and/or cleaning of medical equipment, and a variety of other actions. Most of these situations are governed by the New York

State Nurse Practice Act. You should consult your union and your school nurse before providing any health services to students.

Oak Grove 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 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 first Blood Drive on Monday, November 19, 2007 from 3:30 to 9:00 p.m. in the Oak Grove Gymnasium. Our 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.

SPECIAL THANKS TO: Mrs. Peck, Jaclyn Peck, Rachel Zehnbauer, Mrs. Zehnbauer, and Mrs. Lupo for volunteering their time to help Mrs. Turpin-Orgetas and Mrs. Johnston host the first annual blood drive. Thank you for your support of our school and the New York Blood Center.



(Assistant Superintendent Dr. Hill donating blood at the Oak Grove Blood Drive)



“We were able to save 49 lives with the help of the teachers and community volunteers.” *Dawn Turpin-Orgetas, Oak Grove PE Teacher*

t-source: Professional Growth for Members

www.t-source.org

t-source is an AFT community created for teachers, by teachers. Members are invited to learn, connect and participate with the materials presented at this new site. Whether you are new to the profession or a seasoned veteran, you will find something to refresh your commitment and improve your practice.

Available under teacher resources:

- √ Planning Your First Day
- √ Arranging Your Classroom
- √ Establishing Effective Rules and Procedures
- √ Defining Consequences for Behavior
- √ Creating a Classroom Team
- √ Building Parent-Teacher Partnerships
- √ A Year in the Life of a Teacher
- √ Printable Resources
- √ Advice for New Teachers

Union PR Reps Established

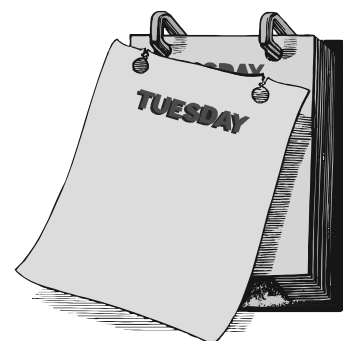
Just about each building now has a PR person to make sure building news makes it out to the rest of the membership.

Whether you have a classroom guest, a community service program, or some good news, be sure to get the information to your PR person who will then pass it on to the Commentator.

Here are the current PR reps :

Brinck -
Evans -
Fishkill -
Fishkill Plains - Kerri Rescigno & Michelle Moloney
Gayhead - Nicole Scalzo JJ -
Kinry - Meredith Inkeles

Myers - Rob Pribeck
Oak Grove - Sharon Roe & Susan Stillerman
RCK -
Sheafe - Theresa Farley
Vassar - Brenda Maiolo
VW - Ellen Korz & Emily Guthoff
WJH - Beth Green & Claudia Taschler



Dates to Know

- Retirement Planning Seminar in Tarrytown - Dec. 13, 2007
- BOE: RCK & OV - Dec. 17, 2007
- pay day - Dec. 21, 2007
- pay day - Jan. 4, 2008
- pay day - Jan. 18, 2008
- pay day - Feb. 1, 2008
- pay day - Feb. 15, 2008
- pay day - Feb. 29, 2008
- pay day - Mar. 14, 2008
- pay day - Mar. 28, 2008
- pay day - Apr. 11, 2008
- pay day - Apr. 25, 2008
- pay day - May 9, 2008
- WCT Recognition Dinner May 16, 2008
- pay day - May 23, 2008
- pay day - June 6, 2008
- pay day - June 20, 2008
- pay day - June 26, 2008

Good News!

- **Anchala Sobrin**, JJ math teacher, has received National Board Certification.

Welfare Trust Fund News

2007 Prescription Co Pay Reimbursement

The claim for prescription co-pay reimbursement for the 2007 calendar year must be received by March 31, 2008. Forms are available on the WCT website — wcteachers.org or you can call the WCT office (227-5065). Receipts or a computer printout from your pharmacy are accepted. However, a printout is much easier to process and will compensate for any misplaced receipts.

If you need any further information, please call the WCT office.



Members' Classified Ads

FOR SALE: 1. Whites 16Hp 48" floating deck Lawn Tractor in excellent condition. Electronic ignition. ~200 hrs. Replaced by Robomower (robotic). \$750 or best offer. 2. ibook G3/800 MHz with OS X. 2 USB ports, 1 Firewire, Ethernet, 128 MB DIMM upgradeable to 640, 24xCD-ROM. 12.1" SVGA display. Battery rated: 5hrs. \$240 or Best offer. 3. DELL D1025TM Sony Trinitron V. Flat 17" inch CRT Monitor, 1280 x 1024, 0.25mm Dot Pitch, Used and in excellent condition. \$70. Please call 471-7607.

LOST WEIGHT SALE: *Ladies Full Length Black Leather Coat-size L - excellent condition-very soft leather \$75.00; *Ladies Full Length Jones of NY Wool Coat-size 12 - excellent condition (dark brown) \$75.00. *Ladies evening dress (worn one time)-size 16 - gold/blk \$50.00. *Men's medium black leather coat-Charles Klein- excellent condition (detachable hood/lining) \$75.00 (mid thigh length). *Long gown-size 13/14 lgt yellow \$25.00. *Long gown-size 14 lgt blue \$40.00. *Men's blk leather jacket (waist length)-size L \$25.00. Call Jeannine at 897-3130.

FOR SALE: Solid maple Moosehead hutch with table and 6 matching chairs. Asking \$600 or best offer. Must see to appreciate. Moosehead is a furniture company in Maine. Call 298-7712.

FOR SALE: Sprint Nextel Motorola i870 and i760 cell phones in excellent condition. I-870 has bluetooth, still camera, and video camera; both include datebooks. For each, a car charger, home quick charger, and case. Also, one QWERTY keyboard, useable with both phones, and one extra wall charger. Both phones come with instruction manuals. \$125 OBO. 845/297-6529 before 8:30 PM.

FOR SALE: 1 Bedroom Co-op in Rombout Village, Beacon. Many new updates including hardwood floors, carpets, windows, & deck. Central air, tons of closet space and full attic for additional storage. Community pool, basketball and tennis courts. A must see! Asking \$130,000. Call 440-8146.

FOR SALE: Antique Steel & Brass Bed-FULL size, complete \$125; Antique Pair of BRASS NYC public school knobs \$100; Total Gym \$25; Native American Matted & Framed Art prints (set of 7) Harrison BeGay \$250 for all. Please call 845-661-2567 if interested.

FOR SALE: Charming 3 bdrm. house in the lovely town of New Paltz, with mountain views of Mohonk. Walking distance to the village and stores. Excellent neighborhood. 1200 square feet, half an acre, unfinished basement, 1 BR. Excellent opportunity for rookie teachers to complete their masters degree at Suny Newpaltz. Won't last long!! \$255,000.00. Contact Mr. Ramirez, 845-255-6732.

FOR SALE: Get a great deal, (before it is listed). 4 bedroom, 2 bath, one level home with basement. One car garage, screened porch, hot air heat, central A/C, brand new 30-year roof, new fascia and soffits, commercial gutters. Nicely wooded lot with many garden areas, sledding hill, wildlife, walk to many stores, two parks, three churches, four private schools. Great central location. Under \$300K (NOW) Call 845-462-4597.

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AFT has an expense reimbursement and/or endorsement arrangement for marketing this program. For more information, please contact AFT Financial Services at 800/238-1133, ext. 4493, send an e-mail to disclosure@aft.org, or visit www.aftplus.org/disclosure.

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Members' Classified Ads

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**We're on the Web!
see us at:**

WCTeachers.org

(Continued from page 5)

FOR SALE: two seats Bardavon Theatre, December 8th for the Nutcracker, 2 p.m. Very good seats - \$54.00 for both. Call Linda 227-5065.

FOR SALE OR TRADE: A Mount St. Mary three class voucher for a SUNY New Paltz voucher. Anyone interested? Call Bridget at 845 635-1956.

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