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# the WCT COMMENTATOR

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## Attention All Knitters and Crocheters

Don't know what to do with all that leftover yarn? Well, the WCT has a solution for you.....

### the "KNIT ONE, SAVE ONE" campaign from Save the Children

Something as simple as a knit or crochet cap can save a baby's life. In many poor countries newborns die each year within the first few months of life...half within the first 24 hours after birth. In addition to antibiotics, immunizations, skilled birth attendants, and education about child care, KEEPING THE BABY WARM can help save many lives. This is where your cap comes in!

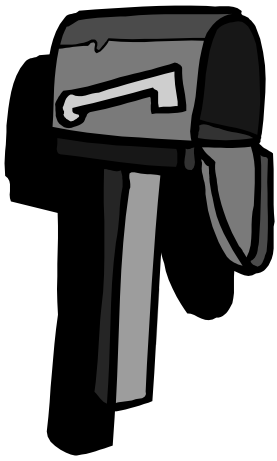
Each cap takes about 45 minutes to an hour to make. We are sure there are many WCT members who can take the time to make at least one of these adorable little baby caps. We have simple patterns for you to use, or you may be creative and use your own ideas.

When you are done all you have to do is place your cap(s) in a manila envelope and get it to Chris Romano at Myers Corners Elementary School. You can also drop them off at the union office. A box with all our caps will be sent to Save the Children in Westport, Connecticut in the name of the WCT. The deadline for sending caps is the end of December but you will have to get them delivered by December 19th.

If you would like more information about the program go to [www.savethechildren.org](http://www.savethechildren.org) and see for yourself.

Thank you in advance for your help.





# Letter to the Editor

Dear Commentator:

I was very interested in, and impressed by, the article about Conrad Gagnon and his crusade against road rage. Road rage is clearly a frightening and increasingly common phenomenon, and I applaud his efforts to curtail it.

I wondered, though, about the point that Mr. Gagnon “came up with a gesture which signals ‘Peace’,” so I checked his website. Conradpaxnobiscum.com includes an April 2008 letter to the DMV in which Gagnon states that he “created” this signal. In fact, this same gesture has been documented by archaeologists as being more than 2500 years old, and it was used by the Jewish High Priests during the Priestly Blessing. The Priests’ descendants still use this hand signal when delivering that blessing. Leonard Nimoy, raised as an Orthodox Jew, suggested this symbol, as he had seen it on the Jewish High Holidays, to be used as a peace sign in Star Trek. The first line of the blessing, translated from the Hebrew, is “May the Lord bless you and protect you.” The position of the thumb is immaterial; Mr. Gagnon’s addition of a candle may well be original, but that is obviously not part of the hand signal.

I agree that this gesture would be very appropriate to signify a wish for peace on the road. However, as the Priestly Blessing (and Judaism) predates Christianity (and ritual Latin), renaming this long-standing sign of blessing and peace “Pax Nobiscum” neither properly credits nor implies its true origin.

I would respectfully suggest that Mr. Gagnon revise his material so that it no longer implies that this peace symbol is either an original or a Christian concept, and properly publicize those revisions. In addition, I respectfully suggest he rename his crusade with an appropriate English name - although “Shalom Lanu” (Peace be with us) would be simpler and more historically appropriate.

As Mr. Gagnon continues to use his retirement as an opportunity to continue to make a difference, I hope that he will clearly give proper credit to the origin of this gesture. I am sure we all hope that this campaign to eliminate road rage is successful.

In solidarity,  
Betsy Solomon

## 2008 - 2009 Pay Days

- Friday, November 14, 2008
- Wednesday, November 26, 2008
- Monday, December 15, 2008
- Tuesday, December 30, 2008
- Thursday, January 15, 2009
- Friday, January 30, 2009
- Friday, February 13, 2009
- Friday, February 27, 2009
- Friday, March 13, 2009
- Monday, March 30, 2009
- Wednesday, April 15, 2009
- Thursday, April 30, 2009
- Friday, May 15, 2009
- Friday, May 29, 2009
- Monday, June 15, 2009
- Friday, June 26, 2009

## ELT’s Spring Course Catalog is Online

Members are just “clicks” away from professional development opportunities with NYSUT’s Education & Learning Trust.

- See the Oct. 23 *New York Teacher* or download the full Spring 2009 Schedule of Courses at [www.nysut.org/elt](http://www.nysut.org/elt).
- Register online with ELT Web services

Questions? Contact the NYSUT Education & Learning Trust at [ELTmail@nysutmail.org](mailto:ELTmail@nysutmail.org), or call (800) 528-6208.

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

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\* Next issue of the *WCT COMMENTATOR* -  
November 21, 2008.

## Board of Education Meetings

### Schedule *(meetings are held at the District Offices at 8:15 PM)*

- November 17, 2008 - Evans, John Jay, Myers
- December 1, 2008 - Brinckerhoff, Oak Grove, Van Wyck
- December 15, 2008 - Gayhead, Kinry, Vassar
- January 12, 2009 - Ketcham, Orchard View, Sheafe
- January 26, 2009 - Fishkill, Fishkill Plains, Wappingers
- February 9, 2009 - Evans, Myers, Van Wyck
- February 23, 2009 - Brinckerhoff, John Jay, Orchard View
- March 9, 2009 - Gayhead, Sheafe, Vassar
- March 23, 2009 - Ketcham, Kinry, Oak Grove
- April 6, 2009 - Evans, Fishkill, Wappingers
- April 26, 2009 (TUESDAY) - Fishkill Plains, Myers, Van Wyck
- May 4, 2009 - Brinckerhoff, John Jay, Vassar
- May 18, 2009 - Gayhead, Orchard View, Sheafe
- June 8, 2009 - Ketcham, Wappingers

## Financial Advisor Dates

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

- November 19
- December 3 & 17
- January 7 & 21
- February 4 & 18
- March 4 & 18
- April 15 & 29
- May 6 & 20
- June 3 & 17



Appointments are one (1) hour in length from 2 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on a first come first served basis. 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. 1-888-949-1925 directly and other arrangements may be possible.