



Welcome Spring!



Springtime

Spring is that time of year when many of us reflect on the change of seasons and the growth our students have made. We, the West Hartford Public School teachers, have worked hard to plan lessons that help our students learn the skills and strategies that they need for their future.

We believe that our public schools reflect the understanding of our community and commitment to each child. The West Hartford Education Association (WHEA) is a community of West Hartford educators and colleagues that dedicate their time and effort in the classroom and outside of the regular class time to provide educational experiences and support students in a variety of meaningful opportunities. Teachers give many hours to help and encourage students to pursue additional challenges.

Think about this coming of spring as a chance to reflect on all that we have done this year with and for our students. It is a wonderful time to look at the growth that each student has made as they continue on their educational journey.

Enjoy this edition of the "WHEA World" with our colleagues' awards and accomplishments.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

YOUR 2009-2010 OFFICERS:

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Workshops

The West Hartford Education Association (WHEA) along with the Connecticut Education Association (CEA) will continue to support teachers. The following are workshops that were offered: Social Security and Retirement; The Mark Twain House & Museum Circus Works—the Teachers' Workshop; Meeting the Challenges of RTI with Dr. Nancy Boyles; CEA 2010 Legislative briefings.

Upcoming events: 'CEA/RA,' 4/30 and 5/1; 'Planning for the Future: Pension Issues for Beginning Teachers,' presented by WHEA 5/13, Sedgwick, MultiPurpose Room, 4:15pm; 'WHEA Recognition Dinner' 5/20, Farmington Club 5pm; 'Wine Tasting' presented by the CEA Minority Affairs Commission, 5/21, Crowne Plaza, Htfd. 5:30-7:30pm; 'Celebrate West Hartford!' WHEA booth 6/12 and 6/13; 'CEA Summer Academy,' Mohegan Sun, 8/2-8/4.



'WHEA World' Purpose

The latest issue of the West Hartford Education Association's 'WHEA World' is here! The WHEA has been working for the advancement of West Hartford's public school teachers, children and schools since 1928.

The purpose of our 'WHEA World' is to keep members informed with the latest news and highlight achievements of our colleagues. The 'WHEA World' will be able to showcase, highlight and share the accomplishments of the top-notch teachers of West Hartford.

Please pass along any information about awards and achievements that you and your colleagues have received so that we can publish them in upcoming newsletters. Please e-mail or complete the "Award and Achievement Form" and send the information to the PR chair at wheaoffice@gmail.com. The form can be found on the last page of this edition. Let's share our wonderful accomplishments with our colleagues!

Life's Challenges

By J. Bogdan © 12/09

Each day a new chance
to begin again. To try anew
by reviewing the past with
its memories, lessons,
joys and sorrows. To think
about the future with the hopes,
blessings, and strife. Today the
accomplishment is giving,
living, and achieving the best. While
continuing to triumph over
Life's Challenges.

Leading Students

Environment

Tim Decker is the advisor of the Conard Environmental Club and an Environmental Science Teacher, as well as a member of the district's Energy Conservation Committee. He guided the members of the Environmental Club to take a leadership role in promoting energy conservation.

The Conard Environmental Club was the winner in the People's Choice voting for Connecticut Light & Power (CL&P) *Live Green-Win Green* contest. This is the second annual contest among high schools in Connecticut. The students participated by submitting a two-minute video showing what they are doing to conserve energy. They also wrote an essay explaining how their school will use the "go green" grant money. They received 31.47% of more than 16,000 votes cast according to Mitch Gross of CL&P in his School Stuff article on January 14, 2010. The final results awarded Conard with \$5,000. To view the video and essay go to www.clpenvironments.com, click on *Live Green-Win Green*. Congratulations!



ESOL Game Night

Beverly Moody, Duffy ESOL teacher, held a family ESOL Game Night earlier this year. Families enjoyed playing and sharing their games. The ESOL students had researched the games from their country. They made the game, and a poster to explain the object of the game, the materials needed and the rules. They enjoyed playing and sharing a snack with others. Everyone had a great game night!



Beverly Moody at the
ESOL Game night

Leading Students cont.

Be the Media

The Sedgwick Video Club led by Jennifer Hunt, Quest teacher, has had several video submissions telecast on WHC-TV. This young team of mostly sixth graders started out learning the skills of a production company by creating a montage called "Peanut Butter and Jelly." The members wrote voice over scripts and rotated rolls piecing together the final video of the best way to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. "Barack Obama's Back to School Speech" outlined our president's expectations for students, teachers, and parents and was probably the most challenging editing so far. The club also worked on vocal techniques using tongue twisters producing, "Peter Piper" and "Billy Botter", a spoof on the traditional "Betty Botter." During the cold months they put together "2009 Winter Safety PSA," giving tips on sledding safety. January's school-wide Geography Bee provided them with opportunities to interview contestants and record the lightening round which produced a winner. New stories are in production. **Be the Media** videos may be viewed at www.whctv.org/bethemedia.



Jennifer Hunt in her classroom



WHEA Social

On January 15th, the WHEA held a Social at Butterflies in West Hartford. Over 50 members attended and enjoyed the evening with their colleagues.



Charter Oak teachers from left to right: Gina Navarra, grade 4; Jessica Kazigian, grade 3; and Lillian Rauch, ESOL



Conard teachers from left to right: Gary Garofalo, chemistry; Holly Coleman, mathematics; and Ted Holmes, adjusted curriculum



Conard teachers from left to right: Elyse Davis, mathematics; Julie Cutler, family & consumer sciences; Tim Decker, science; TJ Rush, theatre; and Keara O'Leary, social studies



Sedgwick teachers from left to right: Christopher Jud, Spanish; Sarah Faulkner, science; Meghan Gaignard, English; Matt Celio, social studies; Patrick Nobou, world language; and Jonathan Baldwin, mathematics



The teachers from left to right: Sabrina Zaffina, 3rd grade Braeburn; Johanna Cleary, 3rd grade Whiting Lane; Margo Walerysiak, kindergarten Wolcott; and Ashley Macca, 3rd grade Braeburn

Helping Others

Braeburn Baskets' Food Drive

Braeburn Elementary School held its annual food drive for West Hartford Public School families and the local West Hartford Social Services Food Pantries. The Parent School Organization (PTB) purchased gifts and gift cards, and worked with the Braeburn students to collect food for both the Braeburn Holiday Baskets and the food pantry. Jennifer Hudner, school social worker, and Kara Kelaita, school psychologist, helped to organize the project and arranged the deliveries and pickups. Many students participated in the collection, counting and organizing the donations. Katie Feldman's 5th grade class won the classroom contest for food collection for the highest number of items collected. "We want to thank everyone, students, staff, and parents for their contributions to the food drive. Many students participated to make this event a success. They were very excited and proud of being able to contribute to the local community in this way."



Pictured from left to right: Katie Feldman, Kara Kelaita, and Jennifer Hudner

Charitable Collections

“Teens helping Teens” Sedgwick's Team 6-3 students and their teachers, Jonathan Baldwin, team leader and math teacher; Sarah Faulkner, science teacher; Liz Natale, English teacher; Pamela Matway, social studies teacher; Chris Jud, world language teacher; and Eva Golden, special education teacher, collected personal toiletry items to give to teens who are in homeless shelters run by the Bridge. They also collected 'Cash for Haiti' to help earthquake victims. They were very successful!



Helping Others cont.

Communication, Activism, Science and Technology 'CAST'

Jas Singh, 7th grade science teacher at Sedgwick Middle, helped students kick off the Water Awareness Fundraiser for the Cheleget Primary School in Kenya called 'H2O for Life.' "H2O for Life is committed to helping United States schools extend clean drinking water and sanitation to schools overseas. Through service learning projects, U.S. schools raise 50% of the funds needed for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene education (WASH) projects in the developing world. In the process, American students become more knowledgeable and engaged in creating a better global community." See www.h2oforlifeschools.com.

The project started with four eighth graders and ended with over 80 staff and students contributing over \$2500 in only 10 days.

Jas explained, "The four students got more students involved by speaking to staff at their faculty meeting, making morning announcements, and speaking at student team meetings and lunches. Those that participated in the fundraiser wore blue squares for two weeks, causing their peers to ask about the squares. The squares became a fashion fad and caught on.

The fundraiser worked by having each student collect donations for each day they used less than 25 gallons of water per day. The average American uses over 100, while the average Kenyan uses only 18, thus this fundraiser forced students to share just a little experience with the Kenyan children. . . Raising awareness was the centerpiece of the project, not just the money."



This is the 63 foot sign in Sedgwick's cafeteria with 5,000 blue squares. Each blue square represents 1,000 people. This sign represents the 5,000,000 people who die each year because they lack clean water.

Kudos go to:

Board of Education Awards

On January 19, 2010 the West Hartford Board of Education held their awards presentation at Bristol Middle School auditorium. Several teachers were presented with awards. Congratulations to the following teachers!

Elizabeth Devine, Hall High social studies teacher, was named the National Social Studies Teacher of the Year. She received the 2009-2010 Outstanding Secondary Social Studies Teacher of the Year Award from the National Council for the Social Studies. She received the award in Atlanta at the annual NCSS conference.

Rachele Schiappa, reading specialist at Smith School, received the Outstanding Reading Educator Award from the CT Reading Association.

Christine Bivona, social worker at Hall, was awarded the Build No Fences Award by the Bridge Family Center. This award honors someone who works collaboratively to support young people and families.

The CT Association of Schools' Statewide 2009 Challenge to Educational Citizenship Award was presented to the Conard and Hall Unified Theater Program. Congratulations to Keely Connery, advisor to the program and physics teacher at Conard.

Nick Moffo, head coach accepted the National Soccer Coaches Association (NSCAA) Award for Conard High School's Girls Soccer Team. Nick taught physical education at Duffy and retired last year.

Students in the Technology Student Association (TSA) at Sedgwick under the direction of Maggie Kaiser, Cathy Lukas, and Bridget Hooper, technology education teachers, received 5th Place at the National Convention in the Leadership Challenge.

Sean Harris, theatre teacher at Hall, is the director of the Hall High drama department. Hall's program was selected to perform at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Edinburgh, Scotland as part of the American High School Theater Festival.

For more information go to whps.org home page and click on WHPS News.

Kudos go to cont.:

Poetry Prize

Ginny Connors, 7th grade English teacher at Sedgwick, won first place in this year's Sunken Garden Poetry Prize for "Under the Porch." Along with the prize, her poetry chapbook will be published and she will give a reading this summer at the Sunken Garden Poetry & Music Festival at the Hillstead Museum, Farmington, CT. For more information see www.hillstead.org. Congratulations Ginny!



Scholastics

Several art teachers guided students who won awards for excellence in art through Scholastic, a state wide competition. The students' artwork was exhibited at the University of Hartford Art Gallery at the Gilpe Gallery earlier this year. The show includes the best works in the state. The teachers were Sheri Ellis, Conard; Joanne Barry-Dutro, Anthony Billard, Robert Loebell, Hall; and Christina Carroll, Sedgwick. There were ten student winners. For more information see <http://www.caea.net/Scholastics/Scholastics.html>.

Your Credit Union



Franklin Trust Federal Credit Union

All West Hartford Public Schools staff, employees, volunteers, and students are eligible for membership in Franklin Trust Federal Credit Union. The credit union offers a wide variety of products and services, including savings accounts, checking accounts, loans, mortgages, credit cards, debit cards, direct deposit, and on-line banking. In addition, they are part of a network of over 30,000 surcharge-free ATMs nationwide.

Franklin Trust was founded as a teachers credit union in 1934. Now the fourth oldest federal credit union in the country, they are celebrating their 75th anniversary this year.

The credit union's West Hartford office is located at 927 Farmington Avenue, near Blue Back Square. Their Main Office is at 632 Franklin Avenue in Hartford. For more information, including a form that allows you to sign up through the mail, call Franklin Trust at (860) 296-4379, ext. 203. They can be found on the web at www.franklintrust.org, as well as on Facebook and MySpace.

Quick Tips

"Life's challenges are not supposed to paralyze you, they're supposed to help you discover who you are."

Bernice Johnson Reagon



- Check out upcoming events, school reps, e-mail addresses for the executive board members at www.whea.org.
- Attend your Building Rep's monthly 10 minute meetings. Stay informed!
- Check out the home mailings from NEA & CEA. If you are not receiving them contact your building rep. Check out the websites at www.nea.org and www.cea.org.
- Stay informed with school policies and information by visiting www.whps.org.
- Read 'WHEA World' at www.whea.org. To add your news, please complete the 'Award and Accomplishment' form on the last page of this issue. Watch for your news in upcoming editions.
- Questions, concerns? talk to your building rep.

Current Issues

National, State News

Check the websites at www.cea.org and www.nea.org for ongoing information on important state and national issues. Stay current with the latest information. You can sign up for updates through the blog at the CT Education Association website.



At the state level there are several changes for teacher certification. All teachers will be affected by proposed certification changes in these areas: Special Education, Teacher Leadership, Reading/Literacy. Be sure to get involved by attending certification hearings and/or writing to your legislators. Keep posted to www.cea.org.

Local News



You can access your local, state and national elected officials on the West Hartford Public Library website at www.westhartfordlibrary.org. On the website click on 'Town of West Hartford Links' on the left column, then click on Local Elected Officials. The list includes the elected official's position, their name, address, phone number and e-mail address. You can log onto the website for further information.

At the local level the budget is being discussed for our schools. There are several budget hearings. Log onto www.whps.org for the future dates for the Board of Education meetings.

Award and Accomplishment Form

Date:

Name(s):

School(s):

Subject/Area:

Grade level(s):

Name of the Award or Accomplishment:

Description:

When and where was this received?

Why and how did you receive this honor?

Awarded by whom?

A quote from you:

Attach a photo.

Congratulations on your achievement!

Please e-mail this form to WHEA at wheaooffice@gmail.com. If you have any questions or suggestions, please call me at 860-463-2547.

Joyce Bogdan

PR Chair