



Happy Spring!



The WHEA
Executive Committee wishes
you a wonderful spring!

David Dippolino
WHEA President



**SPECIAL POINTS OF
INTEREST:**

**YOUR 2010-2011
OFFICERS:**

President

David Dippolino

Executive V.P.

Theresa McKeown

Administrative V.P.

Margo Parenti

Treasurer

Tom Hine

Editor

Joyce Bogdan

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Workshops

The West Hartford Education Association (WHEA) continues to plan for this year's workshops and social events. The second workshop was on Thursday, February 10, 2011. The seminar "Understanding and Planning Your Retirement" was presented by Robyn Kaplan-Cho, CEA Program Development Specialist. Several members and their spouses attended.

Another workshop presented by Robyn is being planned. An e-mail will be sent out with the topic and date.

The WHEA social event took place on Friday, March 25 at Murphy and Scarlett's in Farmington. Many colleagues enjoyed a great time.



'WHEA World' Purpose

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' newsletter is to keep members informed about the latest news and achievements of our colleagues.

Please pass along news, awards and achievements about you and your colleagues so that we can publish the information in upcoming newsletters. Please send the 'News Form' to the PR chair at wheaooffice@gmail.com. The form can be found on the last page of this edition.

Let's share our wonderful accomplishments with our colleagues!

Imagination

By Joyce Bogdan

Your thought process works quickly propelling you into action. The intricacies of your brain calculate and solve problems. Possibilities are endless when you engage your imagination.

WHEA News

Your Representatives

The following are building representatives and alternates for 2010-2011.

Rep. Council Chair: Jasdeep Singh, Sedgwick **Vice Chair:** David Simon, Sedgwick

CEA UniServ Representative: Sara Pomponi

Building Reps.: **Aiken**—Pat Vaninwagen; **Braeburn**—Kimberly Maloney; **Bristow**—Greg Burns, Marcelo Pelliccioni; **Bugbee**—Anthony Weber; **Charter Oak**—MaryAnn Muccino, Lillian Rausch; **Conard**—Carol Chase, Kim Hoffman, Chris Islaub, Sam Rader, Adam Linker; **Duffy**—Sheila Levanti, Jen Prigodich; **Ed. Center**—Christine Newman; **Hall**—Gay Adams, Tom Devine, Donna Fernandes, Michelle Nicklas; **King Philip**—Kate Kiesewetter, Jenn Ukanowicz-Parrett; **Morley**—Tony Wilusz, Megan Wares; **Norfeldt**—Wendy Baker, Mary Sheridan; **Retired**—Helen Hughlett; **Sedgwick**—Linda Gengel, David Simon, Jennifer Tauro, Joyce Bogdan; **Smith**—Sharon Courneen, Jane Macca; **Webster Hill**—Debbie Kotler, Kerri-Lynn O'Neill; **Whiting Lane**—Wendy Martin, Patricia Orticari; **Wolcott**—Bonny Butkiewicz.

Alternate Reps.: **Aiken**—Lisa Horan; **Bristow**—Allayne Sundt, Sandi Harss; **Bugbee**—Maria Bateas; **Charter Oak**—Michele Hadlock; **Duffy**—Brenda Key, Clare Taylor; **Norfeldt**—Trudy Davis; **Retired**—Anna Mae Maglaty; **Sedgwick**—Sara Tamborello.

Contract Negotiations

The 2010 WHEA Negotiation Team worked hard on our new contract which will go into effect July 1, 2011. The members of the negotiating team were Margo Parenti, David Dippolino, Theresa McKeown, Jasdeep Singh, Tom Devine, Mary Sheridan, Kim Hoffman, Tony Wilusz, and Greg Burns. Thank you for all of your hard work!

WHEA Rep. Council Meetings

The WHEA Representative Council meets monthly to discuss issues of importance for our teachers and schools. The meetings are attended by the elected Representative Council members and alternates from each school and are open to our membership. Most meetings are held at Conard High in room 169 from 4 P.M. until 5 P.M. The following are the dates for 2010-2011 school year: April 4, and the Annual meeting May 2.

WHEA News

WHEA Officers

The Officers for 2011-2013 are President David Dippolino, Conard math teacher; Executive Vice President Tom Devine, Hall social studies teacher and Treasurer Allyn Sundt, Bristow math teacher. Since there are more than one candidate for the Administrative Vice President the elections for this position will be held on Tuesday, April 12, 2011. The new officers will assume the office on the first day of July.

The two faculty members who are running for Administrative Vice President are Lillian Rausch, Charter Oak ESOL teacher and Chris Islaub, Conard social studies teacher.

Be sure to vote on Tuesday, April 12, 2011.



NEA and CEA News

NEA

Stay informed with National issues that are affecting teachers throughout the country. Check out *NEA advocacy: Your Values and Activism in Action!* at www.educationvotes.nea.org. Log on and join today. Your voice is needed for action!



CEA

There was a Hartford County Council meeting on Monday, February 7. The next one will be on Wednesday, March 30, 2011, 4 PM at the Chowder Pot, Hartford.

There was discussion about member benefits and dues. Some of these decisions will be voted on by the delegates attending the CEA/RA (Representative Assembly) on Friday, May 6 and Saturday, May 7 at the Crowne Plaza, Cromwell, CT. Delegates are from all of the local unions in Connecticut attend the CEA/RA.

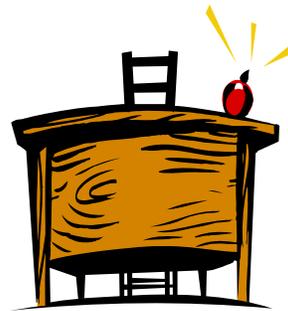
CEA News cont.

New Teacher Conference

On Saturday, April 2, 2011 CEA will have a New Teacher Conference at Mohegan Sun Conference Center, Uncasville, CT. You can register online at www.cea.org, just log in and register. The cost of the conference is \$20.00 and will be reimbursed by WHEA. Just send your receipt to David Dippolino at the WHEA office. This is an opportunity to hear the keynote speaker, attend a choice of workshops, have lunch and network with other teachers from across our state.

The keynote speaker is Dr. Jeffrey Duncan-Andrade, Associate Professor of Raza Studies and Education Administration and Interdisciplinary Studies at San Francisco State University (SFSU). He is also a high school English teacher at Mandela High School in East Oakland and directs the East Oakland Step to College Program. Besides teaching he works closely with teachers, leaders and district officials to help them with effective teaching in schools serving poor and working class children. He has published articles, book chapters and two books, *The Art of Critical Pedagogy: Possibilities for Moving from Theory to Practice in Urban Schools* and *What a Coach Can Teach a Teacher*.

To chose the workshops you would like to attend, go to www.cea.org and log in to register.



Leading Students

Spelling Bee

The second annual West Hartford Middle School Spelling Bee was held in the Town Hall auditorium on Friday, February 11, 2011. The Bee is sponsored by The Language Arts Department of Bristow, King Philip and Sedgwick Middle Schools. The program was moderated by Tom Moore, Assistant Superintendent. The judges were Kerry Meehan and Tom Paleologopoulos, both Supervisors of English. Sedgwick had 10 student participants, Bristow had 6 participants and King Philip had 10 students. The following language arts teachers from all three middle schools were involved: Monica Ahern, Sarah Burdick, Anna Capobianco, Ginny Connors, Emily DelGrego, Meghan Gagnard, Tom Hine, Tanya Kempf, Cynthia Kent, Jessica Kerelejza, Lucinda Kulvinskas, Mercy Light, Melody Moore, Liz Natale, Ellen Nichols, Kimberly Quinn, Kate Schreijack, Chelsea Smith, Sara Tamborello, Libby Wallace, and Sloane Williams. The event was filmed for WHCTV.



Sedgwick English teachers at the Spelling Bee are from left to right Ginny Connors, Monica Ahern and Sara Tamborello.



Leading Students cont.

Empty Bowls

On Wednesday, March 30, 2011 Conard and Hall students and faculty held its annual event called Empty Bowls. This event is led by Conard faculty members Penni Grigoraitis, student activity director, Mike Fadziewicz, math teacher, Alison Peake, Spanish teacher and from Hall Kim Hart-Kindelberger, adjusted curriculum teacher. The event was held in Conard High's cafeteria.



Conard Environment Club

Tim Decker, Conard science teacher is the advisor for The Conard Environment Club (Green Team). They have produced a video on living green at Conard. They are trying to win money from the CL&P "Live Green, Win Green" contest. Please help them get through the first round of the contest by voting for Conard as often as you can. Last year they won \$5,000 because of all the support from the community. Go to: <http://www.clpenvironments.com/LiveGreenWinGreen.php> to see the video and read their essay. Be sure to vote for Conard!



Leading Students cont.

Teaching About Philanthropy

“Casual for a Cause” at Norfeldt

by: Mary Sheridan, Early Intervention Teacher, Norfeldt School

Children are learning about philanthropy at Norfeldt School through the charitable contributions of their teachers, to causes they choose to highlight, each month. The idea for creating a *Casual for a Cause* Friday, designated as a dress-down day, to wear jeans and to collect donations from staff members, was initiated by Norfeldt kindergarten teacher, Lori Durocher, three years ago in 2009. Joined in the effort by grade four teacher, Wendy Baker, the two founders sought the approval of Principal, Caryn Falvey, to establish a Norfeldt charitable donation cycle of monthly, monetary contributions to help other people, both within and outside of our community. The staff was asked to suggest charities to which they wanted to contribute and then a list of choices emerged, with one charity selected for each month of the school year. Staff donations were suggested at a minimum of \$5.00 monthly, per charity. Next, colorful buttons stating *Casual for a Cause* were made to be worn by participating Norfeldt staff on casual Fridays. Soon, the spirit of philanthropy ignited the hearts of Norfeldt School as staff members put on their pins, wore their jeans, opened their wallets, and gave generously to the chosen charity, while looking cute and feeling the glow of giving.

Norfeldt students were the first to notice that their teachers, paraprofessionals, secretaries, nurses, curriculum specialist, and other staff members were wearing jeans and those colorful buttons pinned to their clothing and wanted to know, why. Therein, the lesson about the meaning of philanthropy began. Discussions about giving ‘from the heart’ to different groups or organizations which help people find solutions to problems ensued. Students were taught that by giving we could affect people’s lives and that no amount of money was too small, toward helping others overcome difficulties. As we approached the designated *Casual for a Cause* Friday, an email from Lori and Wendy went out to staff as a reminder for us all, to wear our jeans and support the charity for that month.

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Leading Students cont.

Teaching About Philanthropy cont.

This March 2011, we are honoring a Norfeldt colleague whose courageous battle with melanoma reminds us of the ongoing research needed to end this insidious disease. On Friday, March 18, we are donating to the Melanoma Foundation in memory of our highly esteemed friend and former Norfeldt Curriculum Specialist, Beverly Backstrom, who passed away a year ago, April 1, 2010. Norfeldt has also raised money for breast cancer by honoring survivors each fall, through donations to the cancer walk, *Making Strides Against Breast Cancer*, which is a charity close to the heart of staff member, Sheryl Simoni. Many of our charities are chosen on the basis of commitments to personal causes. For example, when the Haitian earthquake caused such heart-breaking devastation, Norfeldt established a charitable donation called, *Help the Children of Haiti* with an overwhelming response, not only from staff but also from parents. One of our families, of Haitian heritage, contributed fifty dollars toward the purchase of toys for Haitian children.

Whatever the cause, the spirit of giving at Norfeldt is unanimous. At the end of last year in June 2010, and including six months of this school year, accounting for two years and six months of our monthly contributions, Norfeldt School has raised a total of \$4,930. We anticipate adding generously to this total by June 2011. The charities to which we contribute always send a letter expressing gratitude for our donations and offer news about how the dollars are being spent. These letters are graciously posted on the Norfeldt staffroom bulletin board. By June of 2011, there will be ten letters of acknowledgement, representing the ten months of Norfeldt's benefited charities.

Philanthropy is a wonderful lesson to teach our students. They learn that by everybody giving a little, a lot can be gathered to help anyone in need. No amount is ever too small to make a difference in someone's life. We think that this effort is the best thing going at Norfeldt because it brings us all together with a warm feeling of empathy for others, especially for those who need our help in overcoming life's challenges. Our *Casual for a Cause* designated Fridays have evolved into a day of celebration at Norfeldt School to be grateful for all that we have, so that we can care for others, by sharing.

Leading Students cont.

“Hooping It Up” Unified-style!

By Denise Brezinski

On Friday March 11, the West Hartford Unified Sports basketball team traveled to Farmington High School for tournament play. Sedgwick, Bristow and King Philip Middle Schools combined forces to assemble a team of eleven special needs athletes and twenty-nine regular education partners. In addition to four West Hartford teachers, twenty five high school students from Conard and Hall helped coach the team. The teachers are Jennifer Ukanowicz-Parrett, math at King Philip, and Sedgwick’s Colin Bowie, health; Steve Garneau, physical education and Jonathan Baldwin, math.

This year brought special honors to the Unified team – “bringing home the gold.” Hard work, determination and, above all, good sportsmanship were all evident in the game play. The team practiced in the Sedgwick gym Sunday evenings during January and February. Many of the same players came out for soccer training in the fall.

In early April, a farewell celebration will be held to honor seventeen eighth graders and four seniors who will be leaving the Unified “family”.

Unified Sports is a registered program of Special Olympics that combines athletes with developmental or cognitive disabilities and their peers without disabilities on the same team for training and competition. The program provides both a forum for positive social interaction between teammates and competition experience.



The Sedgwick teachers and Unified coaches from left to right are Colin Bowie, Steve Garneau and Jonathan Baldwin.



The King Philip teacher and Unified coach from left to right are Jennifer Ukanowicz-Parrett and Maggie Hogan, teacher assistant at KP.

Kudos go to:**Board of Education Awards**

On Thursday, February 10, 2011 the Board of Education Awards were presented. There were several awards presented to West Hartford teachers.

Kathy Hardesty, Gifted and Talented Teacher at Aiken and Smith, was the coach of the Quest Lego Team. The team consists of 5th graders from Smith and 6th graders from KP who competed in December at the first state Lego League championship. The team won first place for their outstanding robot.

Maggie Kaiser, Sedgwick 6th grade technology education teacher, is one of the TSA Advisors. She attended the Technology Student Association National Conference in Baltimore, MD with her students. The students won first place in the Communications Challenge, and second place in Techno Talk.

Brian Cohen, business education teacher at Conard, was recognized as the Connecticut Business Educator of the Year by the CT Business Education Association (CBEA).

Jim Solomon, English teacher at Hall, was named the National High School Coaches Boys Tennis Coach of the Year by the National High School Coaches Association.

Mario Lopez, physical education teacher at Bugbee, was named Outstanding New Professional in Physical Education by the CT Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.

Pam Moffo, physical education teacher at Conard, was named the Secondary School Physical Education Teacher of the Year for 2010 by the CT Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.

For more information see www.whps.org.

Kudos go to cont.:

Awards

Steve Garneau, physical education teacher at Sedgwick, and Kerry Roller, administrative assistant at Conard, were named Outstanding Coaches of the Year by the CT High School Coaches Association.

Bill Condon, chemistry teacher at Conard, has received the 2010 NEIC Secondary School Chemistry Teacher Award from CT. The award is given annually to a secondary teacher from each of the New England states. This award is given to teachers who have encouraged an interest in the field of chemistry through innovative and inspirational teaching, improved the image of chemists and chemistry, promoted extracurricular activities relevant to chemistry and offered opportunities to students who might otherwise miss the *chemistry* experience.



WHREA Corner

When to Start Saving for Retirement

By Ken Sopelak

The most frequent question I get from young teachers is “When should I start saving for retirement?” My answer is always “Yesterday”!

In most cases, you will not be able to retire and make ends meet with just your pension. Your pension will be reduced by both income and capital gains taxes. If you decide to leave a portion of your pension to a beneficiary, it will be further reduced. You will need to purchase health insurance which will cost several hundred dollars a month. Currently, the State provides only a \$110 stipend towards your insurance premiums. Also, there is no guarantee your pension payments will be adjusted for inflation. In my four years of retirement, I am amazed how much of my spendable income has been eaten up by rising costs of goods. It is important to keep in mind that your pension is NOT guaranteed. It can be changed by the legislators at **any time – including post-retirement!**

So, now is the time to start an IRA, even if you only contribute a small amount from each paycheck. You will be amazed how it grows during the coming years. Meet with a financial advisor and decide which product is best suited for your needs. By starting now, you can avoid the financial hazards that may greet you upon retirement.

Ken Sopelak is President of the West Hartford **Retired** Educators Association (WHREA). If you have questions concerning retirement planning, issues, or concerns he may be reached at: whrea@comcast.net.

WHREA is devoted to improving and protecting your retirement benefits!



Your Credit Union



MicroSoft ClipArt



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 76th 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.

advertisement

Quick Tips

"Our thoughts and imagination are the only real limits to our possibilities."

Orison Swett Marde



- Check out upcoming events, e-mail addresses for officers 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 *News Form* on the last page of this issue. Watch for your news in upcoming editions.
- Questions, concerns? talk to your building rep.
- Apply for the Foundation for West Hartford Public Schools Grants at www.fwhps.org.

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 (CEA).



In national news the items on the agenda include the budget, health care and the reauthorization of ESEA. Be sure to log onto NEA's Education Votes at www.educationvotes.nea.org to add your voice and advocate for education.

Governor Dannel P. Malloy is working on a two-year budget and is holding town hall meeting around the state to discuss the concerns. Many state residents are attending to give their input and discuss the various issues in Connecticut. The state need to close the approximately \$4 billion deficit.

It is important to stay up to date with the issues. The funding of our public schools, our children's education and closing the achievement gap will be high on the list. Be an education activist!

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.

Board of Education meetings are held on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month. They are held in the Town Hall, Legislative Chambers, room 314. Log onto www.whps.org for further information.

On Tuesday, February 22 there was a special election for the 20th District General Assembly in West Hartford. Democrat Joe Verrengia won the seat. He will step down from his position on the Town Council effective March 22.

News 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