



## February



### Winter to Spring!

This has been a strange winter! We had our first major snow-storm Albert in October. The West Hartford Public Schools closed for six days. We made up three of the days during the Winter Vacation. Since October it has been a mild winter. On Friday, February 24, 2012 we had a surprise storm with icy conditions early in the morning. Schools had a ninety minute delay. Then the temperatures went up by that afternoon.

The groundhog predicts an early spring. Even the crocuses, tulips and daffodils are equally confused as they have started to pop out of the ground.

Daylight savings time begins on Sunday, March 11. Let's hope March 'comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb!'



### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

### YOUR 2011-2012 OFFICERS:

#### President

David Dippolino

#### Executive V.P.

Thomas Devine

#### Administrative V.P.

Lillian Rausch

#### Treasurer

Allayne Sundt

#### Editor

Joyce Bogdan

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## WHEA News

### Workshops

The West Hartford Education Association (WHEA) had its first workshop on Thursday, January 19, 2012. This workshop about Retirement was presented by Robyn Kaplan-Cho, CEA Program Development Specialist. Many WHEA members attended the meeting. WHEA is working to plan future workshops. If you are interested in other workshop topics please let your building rep. know.



### '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 wheaworld@whea.org. The form can be found on the last page of this edition.

Let's share our wonderful accomplishments with our colleagues!

### Achievement

By Joyce Bogdan

Conceiving an idea,  
Having a dream.  
Setting a goal,  
Taking the steps.  
Working hard,  
Practicing again.  
Following through,  
Achieving the mark!

## **WHEA News cont.**

### **WHEA Officers and Your Representatives**

**Rep. Council Officers:** **President** David Dippolino, Conard math teacher; **Executive Vice President** Thomas Devine, Hall social studies teacher; **Administrative Vice President** Lillian Rausch, Charter Oak ESOL teacher; and **Treasurer** Allayne Sundt, Conard and Sedgwick math teacher. The new officers assumed their office on July 1, 2011. Congratulations!

#### **Building Representatives, Alternates and Committee Chairs for 2011-2012**

**Rep. Council Chair:** David Simon, Hall      **Vice Chair:** Chris Islaub, Conard

**CEA UniServ Representative:** Sara Pomponi

**Building Reps.:** **Aiken**—Lisa Horan, Pat Vaninwagen; **Braeburn**—Kim Maloney, Theresa McKeown; **Bristow**—Greg Burns, Marcelo Pelliccioni; **Bugbee**—Maria Bateas, Anthony Weber; **Charter Oak**—Jessica Kazigian, Gina Navarra; **Conard**—Steven Bassi, Carol Chase, Kim Hoffman, Chris Islaub, Adam Linker, Hannah Marks-Hamilton, Lynn Racz; **Duffy**—Lisa Garand, Sheila Levanti; **Ed. Center**—Christine Newman; **Hall**—Kristin Bieniaszek, Michelle Flaucher, Kim Hart-Kindelberger, Jennifer Lanese, Michelle Nicklas, Michael Wilkosz; **King Philip**—Kate Kiesewetter, Jenn Ukanowicz-Parrett; **Morley**—Megan Wares, Tony Wilusz; **Norfeldt**—Wendy Baker, Mary Sheridan; **Retired**—Helen Hughlett; **Sedgwick**—Joyce Bogdan, Linda Gengel, Jen Prigodich, Sara Tamborello, Jennifer Tauro; **Smith**—Sharon Courneen, Jane Macca; **Webster Hill**—Jennifer Burkey, Debbie Kotler; **Whiting Lane**—Wendy Martin, Patricia Orticari; **Wolcott**—Bonny Butkiewicz, Andrew Sparkes.

**Alternate Reps.:** **Braeburn**—Allison Raggie; **Bristow**—Sandi Harss; **Charter Oak**—MaryAnn Muccino; **Conard**—Adam Linker, Sam Rader; **Duffy**—Brenda Key, Clare Taylor; **Norfeldt**—Trudy Davis; **Retired**—Anna Mae Maglaty; **Sedgwick**—Jas Singh.

**Committee Chairs:** **Membership**—Chris Islaub, Conard; **PR**—Joyce Bogdan, Sedgwick; **Social**—Theresa McKeown, Braeburn and Bugbee.

### **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 the 2011-2012 school year: March 5, April 2, May 7, June 4.

## **WHEA News cont.**

### **Education Reform**

Several WHEA members attended the Education Reform held by CEA on Wednesday, January 25 at the Rocky Hill Marriott. There were eight different meetings, one in each county of Connecticut, that were held in January. Many educators shared ideas, questions and concerns. These will be used to help the CEA advocate for comprehensive and meaningful education reform. Be sure to get involved. See Education Reform below.

### **Education Reform**

On Sunday, March 4, 2012 CEA members were invited to Sedgwick Middle School cafeteria to ***Meet Your Legislators***. Breakfast began at 10:30 A.M. and legislators arrived at 11 A.M. If you cannot go to this event you can write to your legislator. This is a chance for your voice to be heard!

Education Reform is coming. Are you ready? Both the new Education Commissioner and Governor Malloy have stated that Education Reform and closing the Achievement Gap will be major initiatives over the next two years. The Superintendents' Association has put forth a bold package of reforms that will also be a part of the mix.

CEA has geared up for the 2012 legislative session in which bills will be brought up by CEA and the members of the legislature that will directly impact teachers. Some of the topics include school funding, tenure and seniority, teacher evaluation, and school climate. You can contact your State Representative and/or State Senator and ask him/her to support the proposals made by you and your colleagues in "A View From the Classroom." You can call or email your State Senator using the following link: <http://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/menu/CGAFindLeg.asp>.

**WHEA & CEA News cont.****The Henry Barnard Memorial Fund**

“The purpose of The Henry Barnard Memorial Fund (HBMF) is to help needy teachers who have served but are no longer active in the teaching profession.” The fund was established in 1953 and named after Henry Barnard who served as the third president of CEA. It has been helping teachers stay independent with financial and other assistance as needed. The WHEA helps this fund by contributing. One of the ways that WHEA helps is with the posting of the *Trading Post*. You can help by starting to look in your closets, attics and garages for anything you would like to put in the first *Trading Post* of the year. Dates and further information will follow. To learn more about The Henry Barnard Memorial Fund go to [www.henrybarnardfund.org](http://www.henrybarnardfund.org)

**CEA**

The Hartford County Council met on Wednesday, January 18, 2012. This year is an election year for CEA President and CEA Vice President.

The CEA/RA (Representative Assembly) will be held on Friday, May 4 beginning at 4:00 P.M. and on Saturday, May 5 at the Crowne Plaza, Cromwell. The CEA/RA includes representatives from across Connecticut making decisions and voting for the new officers and other important items.

If you are interested in attending please call or e-mail David Dippolino.

## *WHEA & CEA News cont.*

### *West Hartford Schools News*

The West Hartford Board of Education voted to eliminate three days of the Winter Vacation. The new calendar can be see at <http://www.whps.org/2011-2012%20calendar%20amended.pdf>.

The West Hartford Schools are moving on the Technology Blueprint presented at the Board of Education meeting in December. The plan was received from the Center for Educational Leadership and Technology (CELT), an organization that was chosen by the district's technology committee. The plan will be implemented over several years and the details can be found on the WHPS website at [www.whps.org](http://www.whps.org).

The district wide K-8 summer school program has been eliminated by school administrators. The summer program had diverse courses, was a quality program and was staffed with certified teachers. The reason was because of rising expenses and a shrinking enrollment believed to be due to the economic conditions. The system will continue to have separate programs for Smith and Charter Oak elementary students, high school students and students with special needs.

The implementation process for the Common Core State Standards were introduced at the Board of Education meeting in December. They were adopted by the Connecticut State Board of Education in July 2010. The changes in the curriculum and assessments should make students become more actively engaged in their schoolwork. For more information go to: [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org)



**CEA & NEA News cont.****NEA Fund**

By Bob Brown, CEA Chair for NEAFUND

This is VITAL to our profession. Big money, to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars, is now being raised to undermine public schools, collective bargaining and our union. The only way we can fight back is political action—Congress, the President, and our state political leaders make ALL of the crucial decisions about our profession. The NEAFUND is the only way we can raise money to fight back. This money is used to support leaders that teachers endorse, to run ads, and to influence political leaders to listen to us and do what we think is best for public schools. We CANNOT use dues money by law—we depend on teachers' voluntary contributions. Please give something—even \$10 from every teacher would help enormously. Please use the envelope for your contribution.

**NEA News**

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](http://www.educationvotes.nea.org). Log on and join today. Your voice is needed for action!

The NEA/RA (Representative Assembly) will be held in Washington D.C. from Saturday, June 30 until Thursday, July 5, 2012. If you are interested in attending call or e-mail David Dippolino.



## *Leading Students*

### *International Human Rights*

Tracey Wilson, Conard social studies, teaches a course about human rights. She held the fourth annual 'Human Rights Day' with many speakers who addressed the interests of her students. The speakers addressed human rights issues from the death penalty to poverty to immigrant rights. On December 10, 1948 the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights so December 10 is known as *International Human Rights Day*. Her students completed projects based on human rights concerns.



### *Water-Filling Station*

Liz Devine, Hall social studies, teaches a Global Problem Solving Class which focuses on real world problems and develops solutions. Her students developed a taste test of tap water vs bottled water as a way to educate students on this issue. There is a significant impact on the environment with bottled water. The students are raising money to develop a water-filling station at Hall.



## Leading Students cont.

### Kid's Lit Quiz

Clare Taylor, Duffy 5th grade teacher, and Sheri Probert, Smith reading specialist, are inspiring their students in *The Kids' Lit Quiz*. This is an annual literature competition for children aged 10 to 13. They competed against four other districts—New Britain, Plainville, Middletown, Simsbury at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU). The students worked in teams of four to answer 100 questions in three hours. The questions were very tough. After each of the 10 rounds the students had a chance to win books and five dollars for answering bonus questions. There were over 100 students competing and about 130 supportive friends, family, teachers and principals. “I saw this as an enormous opportunity for great readers to enjoy the thrill of competition,” explained Clare Taylor. The winner will go on to compete in national and world finals. There are groups in New Zealand, the United Kingdom, South Africa, Canada, USA, China and Australia. For more information go to: [www.kidslitquiz.com](http://www.kidslitquiz.com).



## *Leading Students cont.*

### *Gumball Ceremony*

Gumballs at school? Dahlia Chemy, Bugbee 4th grade teacher, has incorporated gumballs to motivate students to read. The more reading and reading related activities the more gumball stickers the students receive to put in their individual gumball machine. The bulletin board is filled with the gumball machines and as students fill up their machines they are given a Gumball Ceremony. Dahlia says, "In my gumball ceremony I always say, the more you read the better you write. The better you write the better you spell. The better you spell the better you read."

Dahlia tells her student to display their completed gumball machines in their room, and to keep it there until they graduate from high school. It is a symbol of their hard work, determination, and passion for reading and learning.

The students can invite guests to the gumball ceremony. They also receive a certificate and a book. The students take pride in their work and they treasure their gumball machine.



## *Leading Students cont.*

### *Hello! West Hartford*

*Be the Media* was at Sedgwick Middle School and in the community taping a piece for Hello! West Hartford. The featured language for the month of March is Korean. Joyce Bogdan, Sedgwick ESOL teacher, helped with some of the behind the scene portions.

The first anniversary celebration of *Hello! West Hartford* will be held on Monday, April 30, 2012 from 6:30 P. M. to 8:30 P. M. at the Town Hall auditorium. Come and join the celebration. There will be a variety of activities. You can RSVP at 860-325-0852 or e-mail [hellowesthartford@gmail.com](mailto:hellowesthartford@gmail.com).

*Hello! West Hartford* is a town-wide initiative to build bridges between community members. Many schools and community groups are participating by showcasing the over 70 languages spoken in West Hartford. Check out the website at [www.hellowesthartford.org](http://www.hellowesthartford.org). See the award winning videos on the site, send in a thought on the blog, click on the globe and scroll down to print “hello and welcome” in the featured language each month to hang where you work or live. Also look for *Supper @ Seven* where you can get involved by visiting seven different world restaurants to sample their cuisine and/or have a coffee or tea. You pick the seventh item on the menu. Then write down the items that you had and post them on the website and/or at the *Hello! West Hartford* booth at *Celebrate West Hartford* in June.



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

On Tuesday, January 17, 2012 the Board of Education held their awards ceremony. Congratulations to the following:

The first group that was recognized included members of all parts of our community. More than 1000 volunteers helped at Conard High during the week of the October snowstorm Alfred. Representing the teachers who volunteered were Dave St. Germain, Bugbee library media specialist and Dave Volpe, STRIVE teacher.

Marcelo Pelliccioni, Bristow world language teacher, was the recipient of American Translators Association's (ATA's) School Outreach Program Award.

Hall High tennis coach Jim Solomon received the Starfish Award from the U. S. Tennis Association.

Susan Curnias, Hall coach, was chosen the National High School Girls Track and Field Coach of 2011 in Region 1A. She was selected by the National High School Coaches Association.

Joyce St. Germaine, Bristow art teacher, was recognized as the West Hartford Teacher of the Year.

Erica Newfang, Wolcott school psychologist, received the Service Award from the CT Association of School Psychologists.

Kristi Luetjen, Whiting Lane kindergarten teacher, and Joyce St. Germaine, Bristow art teacher, received the Local Hero Award by Ronald McDonald House Charities.

**Kudos go to cont.:****Congratulations!**

Sedgwick sixth grade teachers and *Sedgwick Scroll* advisors, Meghan Gaignard, English, and Matt Celio, social studies, received a rating of Excellent from the National Council of the Teachers of English (NCTE) for the literary magazine.

Conard chemistry teacher Bill Condon is the recipient of the 2010-2011 NEIC Secondary School Chemistry Teacher Award from Connecticut.

Kelly Smurthwaite, Duffy art teacher, was named Outstanding CT Elementary Art Educator for 2011. She demonstrated outstanding teaching in the field of art education.

Liz Schott, Duffy art teacher, is recognized for her work in painting. This is part of her Master's Program at CCSU. The paintings of enlarged pomegranates, figs and seed pods shows the outside and the inside of the fruit which represents their identity. Her paintings are on display in the Noah Webster Library, West Hartford.

Ted Goerner, Sedgwick eighth grade science teacher, had his 'letter to the editor' published in the Hartford Courant, December 13, 2011. Entitled 'Go Easy On the Trees,' he expresses his concern for the environment after Storm Alfred. He tells readers to consider keeping as many trees as possible and to replant those that were lost in the storm. He wrote, "Remember that the trees are actually our allies in combating climate change and are, sadly, the most visible victims of it."

## 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 77th 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](http://www.franklintrust.org), as well as on Facebook and MySpace.

advertisement

## Quick Tips

Quote:

"Setting a goal is not the main thing. It is deciding how you will go about achieving it."

Tom Landry



- Check out upcoming events, e-mail addresses for officers at [www.whea.org](http://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](http://www.nea.org) and [www.cea.org](http://www.cea.org).
- Stay informed with school policies and information by visiting [www.whps.org](http://www.whps.org).
- Read "WHEA World" at [www.whea.org](http://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.
- Check the website for the Foundation for West Hartford Public Schools Grants at [www.fwhps.org](http://www.fwhps.org).

## Current Issues

### National, State News

In national news Congress has begun reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), presently No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Senator Blumenthal is on the Health, Education, Labor and Pension (HELP) Committee which is in charge of this legislation.



Candidates are continuing their campaigns for the Presidency. The four main Republican candidates are Rick Santorum, Mitt Romney, Newt Gingrich and Ron Paul. One of the them will run against the President.

In state news Governor Dannel Malloy has announced changes he would like to make for teachers and schools. Keep up to date at [www.cea.org](http://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](http://www.westhartfordlibrary.org).



For Board of Education (BOE) meeting documents see <http://www.whps.org/whps/primary-offices/boe-page/documents>.

On Tuesday, February 7, 2012 Karen List, Superintendent of Schools, presented to the Board of Education the annual “State of the Schools Report.” She reported on the positive gains in students’ achievement. They include the highest CMT scores, the highest CAPT scores, the highest enrollment in Advanced Placement (AP) classes and a reduction in the Achievement Gap for minority students who have been in West Hartford since third grade. She outlined the ‘District Strategic Actions’ as the plan for the future. For more information see [www.whps.org](http://www.whps.org).

## *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 [wheaworld@whea.org](mailto:wheaworld@whea.org). If you have any questions or suggestions, please call me at 860-463-2547.

Joyce Bogdan  
PR Chair