**President's Message**

As we return from the winter break, thoughts of the second half of the year and the possibility of Spring flood our minds. The typical happenings of winter are drawing to a close as we proudly watch our seniors successfully complete their winter sports seasons with some exciting accomplishments. The senior nights complete with plans for the future are shared with the spectators and very proud parents. These seniors aren’t the only ones making plans for the future. Abi Buddington and I had the unique pleasure of engaging in a visitation day with many of our veteran teachers during early February. The enthusiasm and love for teaching was overpoweringly evident. I have never been so thankful to belong to such an elite group of educators. Some may retire, but most of our colleagues are choosing to stay. That is the strongest strategy we can offer our students at Wayne. Experience and enthusiasm for teaching are a combination that cannot be taught nor bought. For the few who will retire, we wish them the best. A more complete tribute to these individuals will be in another edition of Wayne’s World.

On a more somber note, the current outlook for the budget at Wayne is frightening. Our administrative staff are doing everything possible to maintain the environment for education that has led to the great gains we have had publicized. Programs and staff are the #1 concern and priority. To lend to the ability to keep as much as possible, the belt will be tightened. Many small money saving strategies will pass over your desk. Please do your best to tolerate and accept your role in these money saving suggestions. Every little effort is helpful. An example easy to cite is the copy machine usage. Soon your principal will explain the policy to be used in your building around the copiers. Your cooperation will be appreciated and will save money.

The last issue I need to discuss is the issue of voluntary transfers. If you are deciding to transfer to another tenure area in which you are certified, please e-mail me. There are some issues around tenure you should be aware of before final decisions are made. Involuntary transfers do not apply to this tenure discussion, but a call would still be welcomed.

Please continue to communicate with your peers and administrators. It continues to be our strength in conflict resolutions.

Pat
NEA/NY Lobby Day—Every Day

On Tuesday, March 4th, Cathy Contino, Joanne Hurley and Beth Peters will be joining the ranks of other NEA New York members to lobby our legislators regarding the upcoming state budget proposal and educational issues. The message being put forth by NEA/NY and us will be to tell state leaders to meet their responsibility to New York’s students. Greg Nash, NEA/NY President, tells us that we must push our priorities at every opportunity.

NEA/NY Lobby day is just that—one day. We, however, have the power to make our voices, our stories, and our school’s situation heard every day. We are over 250 members strong here at Wayne Central School District. Imagine if each one of us contacted a legislator or the governor and told him/her what we think!

Here are three educational issues that are the defined NEA/NY priorities. Every time we communicate with our legislators we must push for:

1. **Fully Funded Education**: It is the state leader’s responsibility to ensure that our schools have the right level of resources to get the job done especially with new levels of academic competence expected from our students.

2. **Fix the Funding Formula**: Our state leaders must research and resolve the flaws in the school funding formula. No matter where we work, we need school soundly fairly.

3. **Keep SUNY Affordable**: Our SUNY colleges play a key role in economic revival and success. Raising tuition does not support these goals.

Contact your legislators. Tell them we need resources to do the job New York is asking of us. To get more information regarding these issues check the January issue of your ADVOCATE or speak to your union representative.

Make the difference today!

**A BENEFIT FOR ALL**

Darlene’s Benefit was a monumental success in many ways. Tom Sousa, Julie Crandall and others coordinated a grand affair. You should have seen the dancers! Dinner was good and sociable. The raffle table had everything from bread baskets, and hair cuts to wine baskets and a drill and radio combo set (I wanted that one!) Darlene was there, enjoying family, friends, and fun just as a middle school girl should. And the monies raised were between $5,500 and $6,000 dollars! WTA members sure know how to get the job done in style!