

# FOCUS

ON JERICHO  
TEACHERS  
AND THEIR ISSUES  
November 2007

## President's Message for November

I had hoped that, by this issue of *Focus*, we would be celebrating a new contract. Alas, that is not to be. We still wait for the written documents from the District's legal counsel. NYSUT has sent a certified letter to the lawyer advising him of the need to meet with us or be called to a PERB hearing on improper bargaining practices.

We await a date for one or the other. The HS has begun exploring a new venture. Each department has sent a volunteer to a "Principal's Committee". This group will meet with Joe Prisinzano on an ongoing basis in order to try to alleviate the issues that have brought the faculty to wearing black and signing a letter of grievances. We are

hopeful that this broadening of communication between faculty and administration will allow for some long awaited challenges in the building. We look at this as a positive step forward, yet reserve judgment until we see results.

We will keep the rest of our membership informed on both of these topics.

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Focus Editor/WebMistress

[www.jerichoteachers.org](http://www.jerichoteachers.org)

## Numbers Numbers Numbers

by Chuck Koppeis  
VOTE/COPE Chairperson

Congratulations and thank you to all the teachers throughout the district who participated in our VOTE/COPE campaign last year. Your positive response was overwhelming: Jericho teachers are presently **2<sup>nd</sup> in the state** in VOTE/COPE contributions (considering average dollar amount contributed per teacher and percent of teachers participating). We missed becoming #1 in the state by only a couple of dollars per teacher. We were edged out by another Long Island district.

JTA received the "Albert Shanker Award plate" for outstanding participation. In a letter to the President of JTA, Maryann Risi, Richard Iannuzzi

(chairman) stated that, "Once again, your efforts and those of your members who supported VOTE/COPE have made us the leading advocate for public education in New York State. Please accept this award with my thanks and my sincerest congratulations."

Now we do not participate in VOTE/COPE to get plaques and awards but because we believe in public education; we believe in our children; we believe in the future of our country. And our participation gives me and other NYSUT lobbyists a very strong voice in Albany when we meet with our state legislators in the

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## FOCUS

is the monthly newsletter of the Jericho Teachers Association. We welcome input, articles, viewpoints, and questions from all members. If there is an issue you would like to see addressed or if you would like to contribute please e-mail Denise Ryder, at [ryder@jerichoteachers.org](mailto:ryder@jerichoteachers.org)

## Will Proofread for Food

By Mellene Hederian

My husband works with computers. He does technical support. I can't think of anyone in our family and friends who doesn't have a computer - and I can't think of anyone who hasn't had computer trouble.

Before we moved into our house, we lived in a co-op development and I told him he should put fliers on every car in the parking lot trying to get himself a computer or two to fix. We could make some extra money. But he has yet to make his first dollar for doing privately what he does professionally, and the same can be said of me.

I'm an English teacher. I help kids with their writing. I can't think of anyone in my friends or family that doesn't have a writing question from time to time.

"You're an English teacher," they'll say. "How do you spell 'guacamole.'" Because for 6 hours a day in the classroom, that's what I do - I spell guacamole.

If I can spell it, I'll spell it for you - whatever.

Try this one on for size. I saw an acupuncturist this summer who charges seventy-five dollars for a half hour appointment and is not covered by medical insurance. We got to talking, and I told her I was a high school teacher. "Oh," she said. "I have a nephew who's in tenth grade.

Could you recommend books he should read to help him do better in English?" She told me I didn't

have to think of them now, but I could e-mail her at her website as I think of titles. Great, I thought.

When I get home, that's just what I'll do - unless of course our computer is disconnected because my husband is fixing his father's or someone else's. But first, I should really get to proofreading my cousin's resume and cover letter for him. Then I'll go onto the internet and look for titles for Dr. Lin's

nephew.

We all know how annoying and uncomfortable it is when doctors are asked in social settings for medical advice. Make an appointment! A couple of my cousin's husbands are very handy and do home improvement around their own homes. Whenever I

**"You're an English teacher," they'll say. "How do you spell..."**

need something done that I can't handle myself, (my husband can't identify a wrench in a tool box) I ask them

for their help in exchange for something. I don't offer them money, I offer to cook them dinner: eggplant parm, maybe some chicken cutlets. Why is it that people are so comfortable asking me to do what I do for a living for free?

Are they entitled?

My uncle is a CPA and for years he's done the family's taxes. But, we'd get him something - tickets to a show, a gift card to Applebee's - something to show

our appreciation. I don't pay the bills with "thank yous," unfortunately.

Even now as we speak I'm doing something other writers get paid for. Am I not filling pages in the FOCUS newsletter? Am I not taking time out of my life to write an article to submit for publication? Five dollars a word, Ryder. Five dollars a word!

Who am I kidding? I've gotta go edit my cousin's resume.

Not even a lousy chicken cutlet.

Editor's note: instead of \$5 per word, how about I (*as the librarian*) whip-up that book list for Dr. Lin's nephew!

## Numbers Numbers Numbers (*VOTE/COPE continued*)

(Continued from page 1)

spring.

If just a few more teachers join the campaign this year, we will become #1. I say let's go for it. Please consider joining the campaign this year, if you have not done so already. Teachers must always show their unity. During the next couple of weeks your building reps will have forms for you to start payroll deductions for VOTE/COPE contributions. Deductions begin in January. Ten equal amounts are deducted from ten consecutive paychecks beginning in January. The "standard amount" (for the past 10 to 15 years) has been a deduction of \$13 for each of the ten checks (\$130.00 total). Of course you can contribute more or less. Payroll deduction is **easiest** for you and us. If you prefer to write one check for the entire amount instead, you may do so.

With VOTE/COPE we gain influence in the debate. Without that influence we cannot effectively advocate for public education. Please give.

### How often does this happen...

by Denise Ryder (HS Librarian)

Someone recommends a great mystery or a crime thriller in a series that they're *sure you're going to love*, but they can't remember the title of the first one, or which order they go in. I hate that! If you hate that too you must check out **Stop, You're Killing Me**, a resource for lovers of mystery, crime, thriller, spy, and suspense books. It lists over 2,300 authors, with *chronological lists* of their books (over 26,000 titles), both series and non-series. There are alphabetical author and character lists and the special indexes such as job, location, time period, and diversity. So if you love mystery, crime, thriller, spy, and suspense books, you've got to check out this site!



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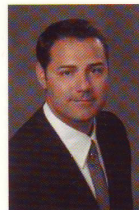
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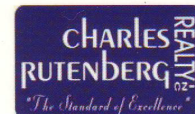
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