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Wayne Central School District

## LETTER to the BOARD

November 8, 2002

*"Valor, glory, firmness, skill, generosity, steadiness in battle and ability to rule -- these constitute the duty of a soldier. They flow from his own nature."* -- Bhagavad Gita 400 B.C

Greetings from Wayne Central School District. Below are some items of interest.

### Newsletter:

- Solar Panel:** I meant to inform you about this before but after Wednesday's Board meeting I realized I forgot. We have received word that we have been selected as one of 50 schools to receive one of those 2 kilowatt photovoltaic systems. We will also be getting curriculum materials, training and assistance. We applied for the grant this summer, largely through the efforts of Middle School teacher Ed Currier. Solar Works Inc. will install the solar panel this coming summer or early fall.
- High School Fire Alarm:** We have been having trouble with our high school fire alarm. Specifically the sensors in our auditorium are being tripped. This has occurred both after, before and during school. We have called in the company (Simplex) to see if the problem is in the sensors. There has been no evidence of any fire.
- Albany Trip:** Yesterday I was in Albany for a meeting as a member of the state curriculum and testing committee. We brought in Dr. James Poppin who is a nationally known testing and assessment guru. As I have talked about before, the superintendents continue to have concerns about the validity of the state testing program. The problem with last year's physics test is probably the most glaring example. It is the State Superintendents' position that if our schools and students are going to be judged on these tests, then we must be sure that the tests are accurate measures of whether the students have met the standards and must provide feedback to schools and students on the areas in which students need to improve.

The State admits that the current tests do not provide feedback on how individual students need to improve. They remain convinced however of the validity of the tests. This becomes increasingly important as we move to implement the Federal legislation of No Child Left

Behind (NCLN) sometimes called nickel-B. The sweeping federal legislation requires testing in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and high school. It also establishes improvement goals for all schools through 2014. We agree that students and schools must be assessed if we are to raise learning. The rub is basically this, "What if the tests are not valid"? If they do not accurately measure a student or school's performance there can be disastrous effects for the student or school. Schools across the State including Wayne have taken the unprecedented step of including a letter of explanation in senior transcripts who took the Physics regents. The letter asks that colleges not weigh too heavily the low score in Physics as the Council of School Superintendents believes the test did not accurately measure the ability of our students. We felt this was a necessary action in order to prevent some of our students being hurt as they apply for colleges. You see these tests are really very high stakes for many of our students.

4. **Pole Vault:** New safety regulations at the national level are requiring schools through out the nation to replace the matting surrounding the pole vault pits. Schools only other choice would be to eliminate the event. We are working with the architect to make sure the mat we choose will be appropriate and will match the new field.
5. **Ginna Remarks:** Enclosed is a copy of the remarks I made testifying in behalf of licensing the Ginna power plant.
6. **Events:**
  - Nov. 12 – Policy Committee Meeting – District Office Conference Room - 4:00 p.m.
  - Nov. 13-14 – NYS Social Studies Test – Grade 5
  - Nov. 18 – Meet the Winter Coaches Night – HS PAC – 7:00 p.m.
  - Nov. 19 – Four County School Boards – New Board member Orientation – Part II,  
Phelps Hotel, Route 96, Phelps 55:30 Social; 6:15 – Dinner; 7:15 – 9:00 program  
Dinner Selections: Prime Rib, Grilled Whitefish; Vegetable Lasagna  
*Please let Lori know if you are interested in attending*
  - Nov. 21 – Wayne County Clerk @ Wayne for Passport processing – 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
  - Nov. 21 - Four County School Boards – Presidents/Vice-Presidents Roundtable, Location TBD
  - Nov. 22 & 24 – Neighborhood Acting Company presents "Oliver" Friday & Saturday evening – 7:30 p.m. -- - Saturday & Sunday matinee – 2:00 p.m.
  - Dec. 3 – Four County School Boards – General Membership – Geneva

**Athletics:** - None at this time, winter sports have not begun yet.

7. Attachments:
  - a) Ginna Power Plant Thesis

**Thesis: The Ginna Nuclear Power Plant should be Relicensed**

**1. Introduction**

- Thank Nuclear Regulatory Commission for opportunity to speak
- My name is Michael Havens and I am Superintendent of the Wayne Central School district.
- The Wayne Central school educates 2900 students
- We are located in the Towns of Ontario, Walworth, parts of Webster, Marion, Williamson, and Penfield
- Ginna power plant is located within my school district
- 6 miles from the main campus where two elementary, a middle and high school are located
- Provide Energy East maintains the level of support for the Ginna plant demonstrated by RGE I am in support in the relicensing of the Nuclear Power Plant.
- I say that for three primary reasons
  1. 1. excellent corporate neighbor
  2. 2. tax base for the school district
  3. 3. provides a good standard of living for our families and my students

**2. Body**

**a. Economic tax base**

- The power plant has provided \$15.8 million in revenue over the last five years
- It provided \$3,182,172 last year
- 21.9% of the local taxes collected come from Ginna
- Consequently the loss of Ginna would be an economic disaster for the Wayne Central School Budget and thus its tax payers.

**b. Good corporate neighbor**

- While I must admit that the thought of an emergency at the Plant is frightening to all of us
- Especially me who is responsible for 2900 children
- But I also realize that Ginna is recognized as one of the best run Power plants in the nation
- I have confidence in plant manager Joe Widay and the people who run the site.
- We are also comfortable that it is a secure site, especially with the addition of the National guardsmen
- Wayne school practices annual emergency drills and is prepared to deal with an emergency should there be one.
- The plant has been a good neighbor. Mr. Biedenbach and the Ginna people have allowed us to use their manor house for some of our students who have special needs.
- They have also allowed us to use it as a site for staff training.
- When our booster club needed poles for press box, it was RGE that provided them

- After 9/11, when the high school wanted to do a program on safety and emergency management, Rick Watts, Joe Widay and others volunteered their time to plan and be part of that program.
- They have been a good corporate neighbor

### C. Provides a good standard of living for our children

- Ginna Provides approximately 500 RGE jobs at its plants
- There are also about 300 related jobs through private contractors
- Most of those people live in my school district and are the parents of my school children.
- Many of my children live in decent homes with middle class values and opportunities because of Ginna
- Because of this we believe we can offer the best of both worlds
  - A pleasant rural community
  - w/benefits of suburban school district

### 3. Conclusion

- Ginna has been good for the Wayne Central school district, it's community and it's children.
- So long as Energy East maintains the existing level of care we are very supportive of its relicensing
- We look forward to a continued long term relationship with RGE, its partner Energy East and the Ginna Power plant
- Thank You