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YORK STATE

Spring 2022

Presidents Message



As I complete my first six months as your President, I am starting to see signs of normal life returning. The last two years with COVID have been challenging for all of us, and we don't want to go back there ever again.

During my term as President, my wife, Patricia, and I expect to visit all ten zones. We are excited and interested in these visits. Seeing firsthand how the various zones work is indispensable and a great opportunity to understand and support each zone.

We made our first visit shortly after I was elected President. Despite the pandemic, we made the trip to Elma, in the Western Zone in November 2021. We met for breakfast and shared with **Michelle Claus, Judy Farmer*CR, Doris Kirsch*CR, Beth Green, Don Lawrence** and all of the WZ members the challenges and opportunities RENY faces now and in the immediate future. The Western Zone members were very warm and gracious to us and receptive to our message.

Ray Pitcher, President of the Central Zone extended an invitation for us to attend the Central Zone luncheon in Canastota in April 2022. We shared a similar message with **William Cline, Bill Tenity, Dell Ford Jordan, Gwynne Bodle, Marilyn Dominick**, and all CZ members about the challenges and opportunities facing us. During my remarks, I also reported on the progress of the President's Appeal and mentioned how important this campaign was in supplementing the operational budget of RENY.

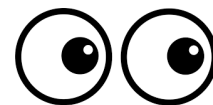
The RENY website is in need of refreshing. **Marilyn Dominick** of the Central Zone has agreed to lead a working group to be established for this purpose. If you have website and/or social media knowledge and experience, please inform Marilyn or myself of your willingness to serve. We would like to begin this project as soon as we set up this working group.

The members of the Board of Directors of RENY will be meeting in person in July in Albany. This will be the first time since the October meeting that we have all gotten together in person. It should be a very productive meeting.

RENY is in need of a Resolutions Chair! I have reached out to a few people and am waiting to hear back from them. If you are interested in helping RENY as the Resolutions Chair, please contact me!

Our members in various zones across the state are beginning to plan and conduct meetings once again for the Spring. This is such a blessing and so welcome. Recently I received a newsletter by **Sandy Kushner** from the Central Western Zone. The Newsletter was titled, "Good Times Newsletter." The tone of the newsletter was very positive and uplifting. We are confident that the coming year will be similarly hopeful and happy!

**BE ON THE LOOK-
OUT!**



**STARTING IN MID
MAY WE WILL BE
SENDING OUT, VIA
EMAIL, A ONE
QUESTION SURVEY
REGARDING HEALTH
INSURANCE. WE
WOULD APPRECIATE
YOUR
PARTICIPATION!**



The President's Appeal was launched in February 2022 and sent to more than 12,000 of our members across this great state. Included with the letter was a jar opener imprinted with the RENY logo. We have had many favorable comments on the jar opener and many of us are having far less trouble opening those pickle jars!

The President's Appeal provides funds to supplement the operating budget of our Association and is an important source of income for RENY. Members have been very generous in supporting this appeal in past years, and they have been even more generous this year.

Kathi Bassett, Executive Office Manager, and Kris Cecala, Membership and Legislative Action Coordinator, get together on some work week days to meet and discuss Association business and to open and respond to mail. They relish this time together since we all have been spending more time at home than expected. Kathi and Kris have been having fun opening your letters and reading your comments. Some of the comments received are listed below:

"A freebie in the mail that is really useful! Great. Thank you so much. Good letter also." Dorothy Mauser, CWZ

"Thanks for the jar opener, nice thought.," Mary Knapp, SZ

"Thank you for the jar opener. It is truly one of the best gifts I received. I use it daily." Judith Haggarty, SZ

If you haven't received your President's Appeal letter as of yet, please contact the office at 518-482-3509. We will gladly send you a letter and jar opener.

We are making good progress in meeting the goal we set when developing the operating budget. We hope that every member of RENY will consider making a gift. Every gift is important regardless of its size. At the end of the first month of the President's Appeal, RENY members have contributed a total of \$ 42,694.00. We are approximately 47% of the way toward meeting our goal. Thank you ever so much for your generous gifts.

If you haven't made a gift and wish to do so, you can write and mail a check to RENY or charge your gift with a credit card. Visit our website, www.retirededucatorsny.org and click on the "membership" tab. Select "make a contribution" in the drop-down menu. Fill in the requested information.

Many thanks for your continuing generosity and support,
James Newell, Ph.D.
President





HEALTH CARE REPORT BY MARY ELLA MOELLER*CR, RENY HEALTH CARE CHAIRPERSON

ARE YOU SAFE TO DRIVE?

As we age, changes in our health can affect our driving skills. See if you find yourself nodding as you read about some changes which affect our ability to drive safely:

- * Stiff joints and muscles which make it difficult to turn your head to look back, turn the steering wheel, or even step on the brake.
- * Slower reaction time.
- * Trouble seeing people, things, and movement outside of your direct line of sight, especially at night.
- * Trouble hearing horns, sirens, and even potential noise which may mean your car is not operating properly.
- * Medications which make you drowsy or lightheaded.

Consider taking a driver safety course; it will help to keep your driving skills up to date. Many of these course are geared to people over 50 years old. They are offered in person and online. The course, when completed, gives the benefit of a discount on car insurance.

Remember how excited you were as a teenager to get your driver's license? And how tortured you would feel to have it revoked? Something as simple as daily exercise to address a mobility issue or reaction time might be all you need. A doctor's appointment to solve a vision or hearing problem can go a long way to keep you alert. We all want to do what's right and diligently reading medication labels is part of our need to keep ourselves and others safe.

There may come a day, however, when using a taxicab, Uber or Lyft will more readily suit our needs. When that day comes, look at the bright side: others will do the heavy "lyfting" for you!

MOVING?

HAD A CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER???



PLEASE LET US KNOW!!!
CALL KRISTEN AT 518-482-3509 EXT 1
OR EMAIL HER BY CLICKING THIS
LINK!

Kcecala@nysrta.org

ROBERT R. DECORMIER MEMORIAL TRUST REPORT
BY MARY LOU DAVIS, TREASURER, DECORMIER MEMORIAL TRUST



The Robert R. DeCormier Memorial Trust Fund is a charitable trust created to aid retired educators in need of financial assistance who have been a member of RENY (NYSTRA) for at least 3 years. **All information given to the Trust is confidential. Only the members of the committee see your information.**

The fund is supported by donations from zones, units, donations in memory of deceased members, donations to honor members for their accomplishments and members who remember the fund in their wills. We want to sincerely thank those who have sent donations to the fund.



Each month we send stipends to members who need help with their expenses. In the past year we were also able to help with **hearing aids, dental work, a generator, and doctor's bills.** The members who receive this help are always thankful for the support they receive. The six trustees who were elected to the board of directors find it very rewarding to help members who need our assistance.

Board member **Imogene McKendrick*CR** created a birthday card project. Board members send cards to members who are turning 88 giving them information about the fund.

If you find that you are in need of financial assistance please contact **Anne Flansburg*CR**, chair of the fund, by phone at 716-863-3631 or email at anneflanswz@aol.com.

NOMINATIONS REPORT

BY DR. JIM NEWELL, PRESIDENT OF RENY



There are two elective positions open for the 2022-23 year. These positions are listed below:

Vice-President for Legislative Action

Vice-President for Friendly Service

Applicants for these positions are encouraged from every zone. Candidates wishing to run for an open position or candidates wishing to oppose one of the incumbents should submit a letter of intent and a current resume along with a letter of endorsement from his/her Zone President. Other supporting letters from RENY members may also be included. These materials must be submitted to:

Rae Louise Tate
16 Bach Circle
Star Lake, NY. 13690

Submissions must be received no later than May 31, 2022. This is a firm deadline. There will be no exceptions to this deadline.

The Nominations Committee will meet in July. If a member of the Nominations Committee is unable to attend, his/her Zone President should send the name of an alternate via a letter or email message to the Committee Chair. Prior to that meeting, each member of the Nominations Committee will have been provided with copies of the applications sent to the Committee Chair. Candidates will present themselves to the Nominations Committee at the July meeting, The Committee will interview each candidate and then make recommendations for each position at the Annual Convention in October. Election shall be by majority vote of the accredited delegates in attendance at the session at which the vote is taken.

WORKSHOP COMMITTEE REPORT
BY GAYLA LEPAGE, RENY SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

We are back. I am so excited that my first job as Senior VP was to chair this committee for the 2022 convention. I know LIZ, as the host, and the rest of the committee have put together a convention we will all enjoy. I want to thank LIZ for being ready, willing, and able to still host after all of this time. You have done a great job.

The theme of the convention is 20/20 Vision, which I think is appropriate as this convention was supposed to occur in 2020, and we are looking towards the future with a vision for RENY. Let's have this convention be the start of a change for RENY as we move towards a bigger and better future.

The convention will be held at Turning Stone in Verona, NY, October 12-14, 2022. Turning Stone held our spot even though we have not been able to have a convention for two years. It is good to be back there also.

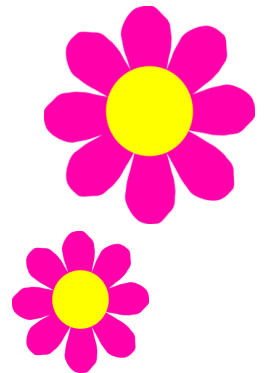
The keynote speaker is Noel Gish, a Long Island historian. He will enlighten us with a light-hearted look at the history of Long Island. This occurs on Wednesday night after our dinner.

The workshops once again will be in two sessions. These are listed below.



Session 1

Attracting Butterflies with Native Plants by Ron Boughton
Learning Calligraphy 1 by JoAnn Powell (Continued in session 2)
A Penny Postcard View of Long Island by Noel Gish
The 12 Rules of Attention by Dr. Joseph Cardillo
Healthcare Insurance - A Benefit to Know and Cherish by Kevin Mulligan



Session 2

A Way with Words by Long Island Author, Rosemary McKinley
TRS
History of the Barbershop Quartet by Fred Conway and the "Once Upon A Tyme" Quartet
The Backyard Bird Count 101 by Becca Rodomsky-Bish
Calligraphy Continued by JoAnn Powell

The theme for the cocktail party, Thursday evening, is to wear eye glasses and sparkle and shine to support this theme of 20/20 Vision. The glasses can be regular ones, crazy ones, sparkling ones, etc. Let your imagination go crazy. After our buffet dinner, we will be entertained by the "Once Upon a Tyme" Quartet featuring Fred Conway*CR. This line-up should thrill you all. I hope many of you can attend and enjoy it. The full lineup and details will be in the fall edition of York State.

I cannot close without thanking Long Island Zone led by **Eileen Holmes*CR** and her committee. I also want to thank my committee of **Patricia Newell, Diane Hahn*CR, Lois Thornberg**, and also **Woody Lyndaker**, President of the zone who will be hosting our next convention. I don't know what any of us would do without Kathi Bassett or Kristen Cecala. You girls make my job easier by always being available and willing to help.





LEGISLATIVE ACTION COMMITTEE REPORT BY ROD DRISCOLL, VICE PRESIDENT FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION



I would like to thank the members of the Legislative Action Committee for their hard work advocating for our members this year. Needless to say, it was very difficult connecting with legislators with all of the COVID restrictions, but we made it work. I would also like to thank the Board of Directors, the zones and our members for their support of our efforts.

So far, this year has gone well for our legislative agenda.

At the State Level:

- > The final NY State budget included record increases in funding for school districts, which is very good for the protection of our retirement benefits like health insurance.
- > Home health care and nursing home workers in NY State received an increase in their hourly wages. Not as much as we hoped for, but a good start. This should help with attracting new workers and retaining existing staff.
- > There was a lot of interest in finding ways to attract more new teachers into the profession via the “Underrepresented Teachers of Tomorrow Teacher Recruitment and Retention Program”.
- > There is renewed interest in creating an elder abuse registry, particularly with the new Governor indicating she will likely support the measure. Governor Cuomo vetoed bills on this subject previously.
- > The state budget also included money to expand rural broadband and repeal the “fiber tax” on new broadband cabling.
- > Legislators expressed interest in expanding K-12 civics education.

At the Federal Level:

- > The “Build Back Better” bill is dead, but there is interest in some of the provisions, such as lowering prescription drug prices and protection/expansion of Medicare & Medicaid.
- > The infrastructure bill that did pass includes money for rural broadband, road/bridge/school construction & repair.
- > Committed \$1.5 billion to increase staffing in the health care sector American Rescue Plan funding will Support over 22,700 providers for these programs such as: doctors, dentists, nurses, and behavioral health providers committed to working in under-served communities during a moment when we need them the most.

We are continuing our advocacy throughout the rest of the state legislative session and the rest of the year at the Federal level.



FRIENDLY SERVICE REPORT

BY JUDITH CORIGLIANO, VP FOR FRIENDLY SERVICE

“Soulshine....better than moonshine....”

In the Northeastern part of NY and the US, on the Adirondack coast it seems like we don't have a lot of sunshine. when its cloudy, rainy, snowy day the wind can blow cold 9 months.... we may not feel at our best...the joints ache, nose runs, thinking cloudy thoughts. So, what do you do when the sun doesn't shine? Do we hide, do we moan, groan, and grumble? Maybe, as complaining about the weather is a good conversation starter for Nor 'easterners. We keep going no matter what happens weather-wise. Of late, the whole world seems to need a little more sunshine....So we can see clearer and feel better on those downer days ...We really have to make our own sunshine. Let our soul be our sunshine, remember what makes you unique, smile, reflect, find a way, a lighted path: refresh and spring forward. Use that on those sunless days. Remember it's "better than rain, and you're not alone in sorrowfulnesswe all get that way from time to time." So

Be Grateful

Be Still, observe, listen....

Cloud watch the sunlight break through,

Cook, Create, Call a friend,

Dream, Dance, groove to the music,

Explore something new.

Eat in moderation.

Find your happy space and feel better.

Laugh out loud, alone or together.

Meditate, Pray, Play an instrument,

Run, Rip, Skip....

Ride, Row, Read, "Rite".

Scream. (out loud)

Share advice, but only when invited.

Sing, Whistle or Hum,

Support a charitable cause.

Talk to yourself.

Tai Chi, Qi gong

Volunteer your talent, love and wealth

Weep, for joy, relief or sorrow

Walk, even in the rain or on the "dread-mill".

Yoga, by mat or chair.

Zone, be own your soul shine.



Inspired by the lyric of Warren Haynes, sung by the rock blues band , the Allman Brothers.

Thanking Friendly Service in 2021....

All over NY state, retired colleagues were greeted with a little sunshine in the form of: 92 visits to members, 318 Telephone calls, 350 e-mails, 3926 greeting cards + e- greeting cards, 111 special celebration gifts for milestone birthdays, 185+ faithful volunteers and 10 zone chairs, all giving time to RENE.

And for the unreported undertakings, because they are the things friends do for retired teacher friends and they are counted in the heart of the receiver.



Consider joining as a volunteer to give back and share the sunshine.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT
BY DELL FORD JORDAN, VP FOR MEMBERSHIP

“Every accomplishment starts with the decision to try.” – John F. Kennedy

Success comes with the willingness to **“try”**. Trying is like shopping for vegetables. Do they look good? Do they meet my family’s need? Are they healthy? Will it give me the substance my body needs. Well, RENY is the vegetable. Yes, we look good. Yes, we are healthy and will stay that way if people continue to buy, sell, and participate. Buy into the membership and its benefits; sell the benefits to other prospective members and participate in the bonding, friendship, and community service as we did when we were actively educating others. The key benefits we offer every member is the substance of our organization. Contact your Zone’s Membership Chair for a list of these benefits. As my predecessor once stated, “retaining present and past members is as important as recruiting new ones.” She is right. We have the tools, the benefits, and the volunteers to be successful in recruiting. And that leads me to . . .

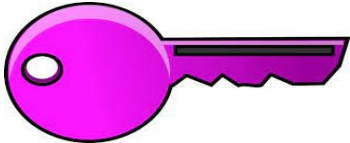


The **Northeastern Zone** is our first quarter spotlight for 2022. Since October 2021, the **NEZ** has recruited twenty-six (26) new members. **Congratulations NEZ** on a job well done! You were indeed rewarded when following through with your decision to **try**. On behalf of RENY, The Membership Team thanks you for your accomplishment.

Each quarter we will recognize a Zone for their accomplishment in helping to increase our membership. So, stay tuned! And remember to **TRY!**

Talk to non-members; Tell them about our benefits; Try, it gets easier the more you do it.

Recruit, it’s a *one-for-all, all-for-one* initiative - everyone can be a winner.

You are the  to RENY’s success!





NYSRTA Sponsored Insurance Programs

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- Umbrella
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- Pet

Pearl Insurance
13 Airline Drive | Albany, NY 12205
Visit us online: nysrtainsurance.com | Speak with an Agent: 1-866-478-8907

COMMUNITY SERVICE REPORT

BY EILEEN HOLMES*CR, COMMUNITY SERVICE CHAIRPERSON

In spite of ongoing problems with COVID and the usual slowdown that comes with cold weather, our RENY Community Service managed to provide wonderful aid to many needy people and organizations across New York State during the Winter of 2022. The generosity and volunteerism among our members is amazing!

The North Central Zone organized a very successful "Coats for Kids" project that serviced nearly 50 children with new coats. What used to be an open give-away event with used clothing donations has evolved into providing new apparel and distributing it to specifically chosen needy students on the recommendation of school personnel and public agencies, providing better sizing, along with privacy and dignity for the recipients.

The Western Zone collected winter clothing and toiletries, along with new socks from their **Socktober** drive and donated to the City Mission and Viva la Casa to be given to Afghan refugees who have been relocated to the Buffalo area.

The Long Island Zone presented a donation of clothing, toiletries and gift sets to the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency for distribution to homeless, needy men and women veterans. LIZ members also signed dozens of holiday greeting cards to be distributed on the meal trays at the VA Hospital in Northport.

The Northeastern Zone collected unwrapped gifts to be donated to the local Christmas Bureau. They collected three shopping carts full of gifts and \$60.00 in cash which was delivered in plenty of time for Christmas!

In **the Central Zone** the Oswego unit collected \$632 from members and donated it to Blessings in a Backpack.

The Eastern Zone collected personal hygiene products and distributed to those in need in Greene County. They will continue these collections at future meetings and rotate the donations throughout the counties in the Zone. The Eastern Zone donated \$600 to the Regional Food Bank and members volunteered in the salvage room at the Regional Food Bank. Local projects also included collecting for local food pantries and animal shelters and donations to a domestic violence shelter and to the Columbia-Greene Humane Society/SPCA.

The Central Western Zone units undertook many activities. The Ontario Unit donated needed items and a generous monetary gift to Family Promise of Ontario County. The Wayne County Unit collected at their October meeting to purchase toys for Wayne County Toys for Tots. In Wyoming County, the unit donated to a local food pantry, donated hand knitted scarves and hats to Operation Gratitude, donated school supplies to Angel Action and collected \$150 to be used for the Autism Nature Trail that opened in October 2021 at Letchworth State Park. The Orleans unit presented \$140 to the Cobblestone Society and individual members participated in Wreaths Across America in December. The Yates County unit established a new scholarship for a high school senior who will major in education.

The Southern Zone had Western Broome-Eastern Tioga donating to Mom's House and Tioga Ministries. The CARTA (Corning) unit has five donations pending the completion of paperwork needed to set up a new bank account. The Schuyler County RTA awarded \$500 in scholarship money to a student enrolled at Fredonia.

The Northern Zone and **the Southeastern Zone** have been hampered by COVID concerns and unable to hold meetings but individual members continue to work for community service causes. In the Northern Zone members have been volunteering at food pantries, working on church committees and worked with the town highway departments setting up holiday decorations. In the Southeastern Zone, members continue to collect socks and knit hats and scarves that are hung up along the fences by community centers and offered to needy folks on a 'help yourself' basis.

Sincere thanks to Community Service Zone Chairs **Joan Handfield** (Central Western), **Mary Suffern** (Southern), **Art Menard** (Northeastern), **Alice Galvin** (Northern), **Joyce Notarnicola** (Eastern), **Angelo Grande*CR** (Long Island), **Ann Marie Wik** (Western), **Cheryl Fischer** (Southeastern) and **Patty Corey** (North Central) for the great job they did in overseeing the projects, collections, donations and distribution efforts that brought aid, relief and holiday joy to so many this past winter.

ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS

CENTRAL ZONE

BY RAY PITCHER, PRESIDENT, CENTRAL ZONE

Central Zone is working to get to the new normal. The beginning of April was our first zone meeting of the year. It was held at Theodore's Restaurant in Canastota. We welcomed about twenty attendees. This was our first meeting of the year. As tradition dictates the first meeting is an all committees meeting, and RENY members are encouraged to attend. How it works is that the attendees are broken into groups to discuss concerns and issues within their respective points of interest or concerns. Out of the breakout sessions it was recommend to increase the zone reimbursement from \$0.25 to \$0.50. They also recommended an increase in reimbursement for the delegates at convention. The membership committee discussed different ways to attract new members and hope that they would become involved. The presidents looked at the bylaws in each unit to have them updated to be matched to RENY. They also began the study of possible consolidation and reconfiguration of the units in the zone in hopes of filling unit leadership and committees' openings. More work will be done on this issue at our July meeting.

It was a great honor for us to welcome our President **Dr. James Newell** and his wife **Patricia**. With their attendance it gave our members an opportunity to talk directly to our president. They gave RENY a more human touch.



Pat Newell, Ray Pitcher, Dr. Jim Newell



Rosa Park, Ray Pitcher, Marilyn Dominick,
Dr. James Newell,
Dell Ford Jordan and Ruby Beal

RENY Chenango- By William Cline



We find our unit in great shape in the spring of 2022. We have a full slate of officers for the first time in years. We have raised our student scholarship from \$600 to \$1000 a year. Our two annual meetings attract anywhere from 40 to 60 retirees each gathering. We are anticipating our spring luncheon meeting to be held at the Chenango County Historical Society. We will be hearing about the history of the early days of education in Chenango County. We are currently working on our by-law needs and correcting our membership lists in accordance with RENY by-laws. We also hope to change our leadership at the top this fall.

ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS

CENTRAL WESTERN ZONE

BY PHYLLIS DUNLAP, PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIR

Assisted by Lynn Hefferon

Ontario County Retired Teachers held an in-person meeting on October 7, 2021, at Club 86 in Geneva, NY. Our business meeting included an overdue election of new officers. **Laura Janas** was elected President to succeed **Bruce and Sharon Croucher**. **Joan Handfield**, Vice President, **Jane Crosby**, Treasurer, and **Nancy Gray**, Secretary, were re-elected to their offices. Brenda Spratz spoke to us on Family Promise of Ontario County, a program to provide temporary shelter to homeless families in the county.

We will meet again on May 12, 2022, at Warfield's in Clifton Springs. At this meeting we will take time to "Reach Out and Reconnect." **Barbara Rosecrans**, CWZ Friendly Service Chairperson will be our guest speaker and will discuss ways that we can stay in touch with our fellow retirees.



EASTERN ZONE

BY PAMELA LOVE, PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIR



RENY/EASTERN ZONE will be holding their Executive Board Meeting on Tuesday, May 24th. at the Turf Tavern in Scotia. President, **Janice Mullins**, said that during this meeting there will be discussion of the revisions and amendments to the Bylaws as being recommended to the Executive Committee as well as updates on the units of the zone.

Ann Marie Dufresne, President of the Amsterdam Unit, said that their unit is looking forward to their June Luncheon when they will honor teachers who have recently retired so they are hoping for a good turnout since they have not had a June Luncheon since 2019. Their unit is also involved with student scholarships on a regular basis.

Other units starting their first luncheon meetings in June include Columbia County (**Joan Mattson**, President), Delaware County (**Patricia Reynolds**, President), Otsego County (**Penny Bellinger**, President) Retired Educators of the Capital Region (RCRTA-**Marjorie Leibowitz**, President) and Schoharie County (**Margaret Dafeldecker**, President).

Fulton County (**Bill Naple**, President) and Upper Montgomery (**Rosalind Carron**, President) are having their first luncheon meetings in May of this year.

Saratoga County (**Kenneth Boullerud**, President) has been having regular monthly meetings since January of this year, taking July and August off and then restarting in September. They have speakers at their luncheon meetings and still highly support retired teacher, Karen Flewelling, founder of 'Drilling for Hope', a philanthropic organization that drills wells for fresh water in villages of Africa. At the unit's most recent luncheon meeting, they raised \$500 for her next project.

ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS

LONG ISLAND ZONE
BY EILEEN HOLMES*CR, ZONE PRESIDENT

Lo, the winter is past, flowers appear upon the earth, and the time of singing birds has come....

Spring has arrived and the Long Island Zone has been *engaged in 'spring cleaning'*,....finishing up projects and getting old business up to date. New stationery and return labels with the RENY logo has been printed, Special thanks to **Jo Anne Powell** and **Lois Thornberg** for their help in getting the logo from a template to an actual thumb drive that could be taken to Staples and used for printing! Lois has also been serving as proxy Membership Chair for LIZ and with her expert help the Zone sent out letters to those who need to renew their membership. The list seemed to grow longer and longer as COVID dragged on and we have high hopes these members will rejoin.

Vice President **Val Stype** has been putting the finishing touches on plans for the LIZ Spring luncheon that is scheduled for May 18, 2022. This will be the first LIZ luncheon since September 2019 and we are hoping for a great turnout. **Fred Conway*CR's** barbershop quartet "Once Upon a Tyme" will be performing at the luncheon, giving us a preview of what we will be enjoying for entertainment at the 2022 RENY Convention in October.

Information and application forms for the \$1,000 RENY Hudson-Kramer award have been sent to public school teachers in Nassau and Suffolk counties. The deadline for entries was set for May 15th and **Eileen Holmes*CR** is organizing a team of five LIZ members to judge the applications and choose a winner. The Zone is looking to early-mid June to have the process completed and the award given out.

On the 2022 RENY convention, which the Long Island Zone is hosting, **Eileen Holmes*CR** announced that the final teleconference for planning workshops was held in early April and the workshop line-up and keynote speaker are finalized. LIZ will use the next few months to complete details concerning table decorations, raffles, a journal, a delegate list, travel arrangements and other important zone-related details.

On the East End, EERTA Vice President **Agnes Dansereau** has been putting a lot of effort in planning a Flag Day luncheon on June 14th. She has chosen a new location for this get-together, the Birchwood Restaurant which is located in "Polish Town USA", a quaint area set aside in Riverhead that is home to many Polish businesses.

Like singing birds and blooming flowers are signs of Spring, we are hoping ambitious plans will signal that the worst of COVID is over and we can get back to our usual busy social agenda!



Did you hear about the flower who went on a date
with another flower?

It's a budding romance.

ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS

NORTH CENTRAL ZONE

BY NANCY ROBERTS*CR AND PATRICIA NEWELL, PUBLIC RELATIONS CO-CHAIRS



Although we have experienced a true winter season, students at Harrisville Central School were well able to brave the cold. **Patty Corey**, NCZ Community Chair, and **Toni Gigliotti** made sure that calls for help were answered. This Dynamic Duo delivered 49 coats along with boots and snow pants to needy children at the school. NCZ members have very generously supported the Coats for Kids community service project. Patty and Toni have wisely devised an effective way to use these funds for families in need. Bravo, Ladies!

Another winter project was undertaken by **Jannet Seelman**, our NCZ Bylaws Chair. Jannet's face always lights up when she starts talking about the bylaws! It didn't come as a big surprise when she took on the formidable task of editing and reprinting the bylaws. This was a labor of love which took two months of designing, proofreading, and consistent go-between with NCZ members and the print shop. The result is a beautiful, handy, up to date booklet. Thanks, Jannet, for a job well done!

Spring is a season of hope that blooms with possibilities. This spring is no exception. **John Gaffney**, our NCZ Scholarship Chair, has been hard at work. He heads a capable committee consisting of members **Bruce & Candice Buckingham, Dr. George Forbes*CR, Bill Haller, Marianne Malatino, Patti Scordo, and Tom Van Emmerik**. They have the challenging task of selecting two winners from an outstanding pool of graduating seniors who are interested in entering the field of education.

It is with great pride that NCZ together with the Northern New York Community Foundation announces its 2022 Future Educator Award winners.



Zoey Anderson, top left from Carthage Central High School and **Rayne Peterson, on right** from Sackets Harbor Central School will each receive a \$1,000 scholarship. These awards will be presented at our 2022 Spring Luncheon on June 14th at the Ramada Inn in Watertown. These outstanding young scholars and their parents will be our honored guests at this luncheon event. This will be a double celebration since the winner of our 2022 Hudson Kramer Award for Educational Professionals will also be honored. A grant for \$1,000 will be awarded to support an innovative project for the 2022-2023 school year.



Erika Flint, bottom left, will be our exciting guest speaker at the Scholarship Luncheon. She will acquaint the audience with the Safe Schools Endeavor Program. This program works in partnership with the Northern New York Community Foundation. Nine Jefferson County school districts have received grant money from this initiative this year. Erika will highlight some of these Safe Schools projects that have been implemented. We are looking forward to this luncheon. We have a lot to celebrate!



Dates to Remember:

NCZ Scholarship Luncheon-Tuesday, June 14, 2022, Ramada Inn, Watertown
NCZ Executive Council Meeting- August 16, 2022, 10am, NNYCF
NCZ Fall Business Luncheon-Tuesday, September 20, 2022, Ramada Inn, Watertown



ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS

NORTHEASTERN ZONE

BY TRACEY HOWARD, PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIR

NEZ has been busy preparing for a big 70th anniversary celebration in June. It's going to be quite a party. We can't wait to share the fun in the upcoming issue.



For this issue, we would like to take the time to honor a very special member of our unit, **Bob Joyce*CR**. Bob recently decided to step back from his Health chair position with Northeastern Zone RENY. He has been an invaluable resource for teachers in our area for nearly 70 years. To say he will be missed, would be an understatement. Please look back with me at his remarkable contributions on behalf of so many educators.

In his position at our regional BOCES, Bob always served as a troubleshooter for various problems in different areas of operations. He was always incredibly knowledgeable about school law and was a resource of information about policy and procedures. He served as the intermediary for uncertified teachers and worked through the process to help many teachers become certified. Retired teachers

always felt free to call him at any time if they needed help.

Bob became involved with health insurance for teachers in our area starting in the late 1950's. Back then, insurance was still provided on an individual basis. Several years later, districts were finally able to move to the NYS Health Insurance Plan which was a much better alternative. Unfortunately, in the 1970's costs kept rising making health insurance coverage difficult to maintain for local school districts. Coverage was being limited, and neither schools nor employees were pleased.

Realizing change was needed, BOCES began looking at improvements and was instrumental in developing a plan which was better for school districts and employees. Finally, in early March 1976, schools opted to participate in the BOCES Health Plan which was the beginning of the current Health Consortium. Bob served as a participant in all the original plans, and at times even led the negotiations.

Bob joined NYSRTA in 1990 and was appointed to serve on the Health Committee. **Karl Kramer** recruited Bob to write for the *Nor-Easter* on Health issues affecting our membership. Bob was then appointed as a delegate to the State organization for the Northeastern Zone on the Health Committee, and has served selflessly for many years. We owe Bob a tremendous debt of gratitude for his service to our organization, and for providing peace of mind when it comes to taking care of our health needs. He will be a difficult man to replace in our organization. On behalf of our membership, thank you for your service to all of us!

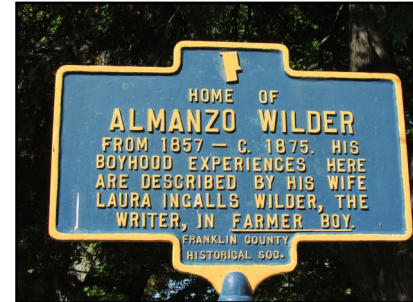


NORTHERN ZONE
BY LINDA CROSBY, PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIR

At the February 22, 2022 Northern Zone Executive Board of Directors Zoom meeting, members conducted the usual zone business and gave reports. President **Gayla LePage** relayed details of the upcoming March 15 RENY meeting, the healthcare meetings attended by NZ representative **Phil LePage**, and recent meetings of the 2022 convention planning committee. **Alice Galvin** gave a report on the 2022 spring meeting. Gayla is also preparing materials for the 2022 H.S. Senior scholarships for Franklin and St. Lawrence Counties soon to be sent to area schools. The NZ BOD also met on May 3 to prepare invitations/mailings to members concerning the spring membership meeting among other items discussed.



Northern Zone members are looking forward to gathering for a Spring 2022 membership meeting on Wednesday, May 25, at The Wilder Farm, pictured left in Burke, N.Y., which is the childhood home of Almanzo Wilder, husband of Laura Ingalls Wilder, who wrote the Little House on the Prairie book series. Laura's book, Farmer Boy, describes Almanzo's early life on his family farm, built in 1843. Meetings and Programs Chair Alice Galvin is busy planning the final details of the meeting which includes coffee/donuts and registration at 9:30 a.m., meeting at 10 a.m., a tour of the farm's homestead, schoolhouse, barn, gift shop and outbuildings with a later



lunch in Malone, N.Y. at As We Like It Cafe. As always, members are welcome to bring guests to attend. **Photo credit Alice Galvin.**

NZ would like to welcome new member **Philip Giardino** from our very active Clifton-Fine-Edwards Unit, and **Judy Tebeau** from Owls Head, NY. We truly appreciate your support and camaraderie!

NZ would like to send best wishes for a full recovery to our dear friend **President Emerita Agnes Hudson*CR** on her recent hospitalization. Agnes celebrated her 96th birthday in January. **Alice Galvin** spoke with her; Agnes said she was very fortunate to have her son and grandsons nearby.

Just a reminder: Gayla LePage is asking that you send her your email address, for NZ, if you wish, if you have not sent it in to the RENY office. Her email address is luer913@hotmail.com. She has the list of those who sent email addresses to RENY.

NZ wishes to acknowledge the passing of **Pauline Bassette** of Star Lake, NY, at the age of 108; Pauline was a sweet lady who was actively involved in the Clifton-Fine-Edwards Unit and RENY well into her 100's. She was a founding member of the CFE Unit in 1974. Her colleagues remember her with deep affection and respect.

NZ members were saddened to hear of the passing of **Ron Frank** of Canton, N.Y. Ron was a long time NZ Executive Board member, who served the NZ in many capacities and often attended conventions with us.



Marcella Trudeau, pictured left, of Brushton, N.Y., wife of the late, long time member, **President Emeritus Terry Trudeau*CR** and mother of new NZ member **Lee Trudeau** and daughter **Lynn Trudeau**, passed away recently. A dear lady, who always attended our NZ and RENY meetings, Marcella had kind words for all and a great attitude on life. It was always a pleasure to chat with her. She often helped at the registration table at our conventions. She will be deeply missed.



ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS

SOUTHEASTERN ZONE

BY MAUREEN COFFEY, PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIR

"In the Spring,
I have counted 136 different kinds of weather
Inside of 24 hours."
~Mark Twain

Seeing this quote made me wonder if Mark lived through a Spring much like the one we've witnessed so far in 2022! We've had all kinds of crazy weather, but hopefully that means beautiful, warm and sunny days ahead. Time will tell! **Donna Harness**, Zone President, had an Executive Board meeting at Denny's in Newburgh on April 27, 2022. Our Exec. Board voted unanimously to help an organization called World Central Kitchen (WCK) as they respond to the crisis in Ukraine.

"WCK responds to natural disasters, man-made crises, and humanitarian agencies around the world. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has left millions displaced, hungry and desperately in need of help. Chef Jose Andres and WCK have so far provided 5 million meals to Ukraine's refugees. This hunger relief organization now operates at 41 Ukrainian border crossings to get food to the needy." SEZ will donate \$200. **Joan Schauer**, SEZ Treasurer, will also collect money from our members who are being asked to send a personal donation as well.

Leon Harrold*CR, President, Sullivan County Retired Teachers' Association (SCRTA) reports that their April meeting was canceled due to conflicts with Easter and Passover, being in public settings and continuing COVID concerns. Going forward, meetings are scheduled for June 8th, September 14th, and December 14th. Let's hope all goes as planned with the remainder of their 2022 agenda!

Once again, **Barbara Topps** and the Mid-Hudson Area Retired Teachers' Association's Activities Committee have provided MARTA's members with an array of interesting events. Scholarship recipients, (who are now in the process of being chosen) will be honored at a breakfast on June 1, 2022. ZOOM meetings were offered with topics like the Newburgh-Walden Trolley, Then and Now; Remembrance of Black Patriots who served the Union during the Civil War; the Erie Railroad's Newburgh Branch; Gomez Mill House; and Legal Documents. In addition, classes were offered in CPR, Leaded Glass, Pickleball and Headstone Cleaning. Members met to play billiards, take hikes, enjoy lunch, and tour West Point and The Arboretum. There's always lots to do in the Hudson Valley so get out and enjoy!

Ray Leduc, Treasurer and Membership Chairperson of the Newburgh Area Retired Teachers' Association (NARTA) reports that NARTA will have their annual meeting and election of officers at their luncheon/meeting on June 9th at The Lakeview House in Newburgh. In 2021 and 2022 NARTA did not award college scholarships because of COVID and delays in getting student information. Instead, two scholarships per year will be awarded in 2023 and 2024. And, the unit continues its very successful "**Sock It To 'Em**" program, where socks are collected at every one of their events from members for homeless shelters.

Before we go, I have one last item I'd like to share with all of our RENY membership. **Betty Martuscello**, a retired NARTA member, turned 100 on March 27, 2022. Ray had the honor of visiting with and interviewing Betty in early March. He shared with me a beautiful tribute he wrote for his local newsletter. I was so moved and inspired by his words, I asked for his permission...which he gave me... to include his article just as he wrote it. He did a wonderful job of singing the praises of a woman who can be a role model for a life well lived. Many congrats to both Betty and Ray. Happy Reading! Be well and stay safe! 'Til next time...

see Ray's article on the next page

ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS

SOUTHEASTERN ZONE, continued from the last page

A Centenarian Woman



Betty Martuscello was born on March 27, 1922 and grew up in Marlboro. She worked with her parents and two younger siblings on the family farm and graduated from Marlboro High School in 1939.

Upon completing a Bachelor's Degree in education from Hartwick College in 1943, Betty returned to Marlboro and became a teacher in the Marlboro Central School District.

She taught social studies and English for thirty-seven years before retiring in 1985. While working, Betty became the chairperson of the English Department and President of the Marlboro Teachers' Association.

Nicknamed Mrs. Mott, Betty often served as class advisor, organized school dances, and took students to New York City for shows or movie premieres, in addition to being involved in the community with activities such as serving as secretary with the Marlboro Free Library for many years.

In retirement, Betty has been the Retiree Representative to the Marlboro Faculty Association, is a life-time **EIGHTY-FIVE PLUS** member of the Newburgh Area Retired Teachers' Association (NARTA), a member of the Mid-Hudson Council for Retired Teachers, and a member of NYSUT for whom she often wrote articles. She also became a member of AARP, coordinating many of their activities, and enjoyed traveling with new found friends. Betty has often organized annual luncheons for the retired Marlboro teachers, began a year-round sale of flowers with proceeds going to student scholarships, assisted with church food baskets, the 1000 Book Club, the local playground fundraising project, the school backpack program, and worked with the Lions Club Scholarship Committee for many years as one of their judges.

In 2010, Betty was chosen as an **American Federation of Teachers Everyday Hero** for the profound impact that she had in the workplace when she was teaching and has performed extraordinary community service in retirement.

Being a widow since 1977, Betty is blessed with three children, five grandchildren, and three great grandchildren. When asked what she attributed to living a long life, she thought for a minute and responded, "Maybe it's hard work, having a positive attitude, eating good food, **having a strong faith**, and most of all having the love and support of my family, my former coworkers, and my many, many friends. I am truly blessed".

Betty indicated that she would enjoy hearing from her fellow NARTA members. Her mailing address is P.O. Box 29, Marlboro, NY 12542.



ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS

SOUTHERN ZONE

BY MARY LOU WOOD, PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIR

Sun shining, flowers blooming, birds singing, and people are socializing. Life is nice. Some of our BOD's are recuperating from COVID and ready to move on.

The Southern Zone Board of Directors, pictured to the right, met and started making plans to move on after the COVID lock down. Our units are struggling trying to have meetings. In order to increase our membership, we really need to meet and socialize in person but for the time being we're exercising caution.

Schuyler County RTA has awarded a \$500.00 scholarship to Shannon Ervay of Watkins Glen High School. She is presently enrolled at SUNY Fredonia and has finished her first semester.

Western Broome – Eastern Tioga (WBET) has donated to Mom's House and Tioga Ministries. A donation to Parents as Reading Partners is pending.

Corning Area RTA (CARTA) have donated money to Heritage Village and So. E. Steuben County Library, Children's section. They will be awarding 3-5 scholarships to graduating seniors who will be entering the field of education while in College.



During these past few years, we have all tried to maintain a healthy lifestyle, walking, exercising, working with Bone Builders on Zoom. **Paula Gillies**, pictured at left, is a CARTA member and was awarded by Guthrie HealthWorks Wellness & Fitness Center as its Most Inspirational Member of the Year. This award is given annually to a member in recognition of their motivation and commitment to living an active, healthy lifestyle. Paula is recognized for her dedicated efforts to improving her health and inspiring those around her. We congratulate Paula for her accomplishments and encouragement for all of us to keep living that healthy lifestyle.

Mary Johnson, SZ Legislative Action, **Rod Driscoll**, Chair of Legislative Action, had a zoom meeting with Congressman Tom Reed to submit our concerns. RENEY supports Senate passage of the *Build Back Better Bill*: Expansion of Rural Broadband, Home Health Care Tax credits/Family Caregiver Compensation, among other concerns. RENEY also supports the *Reopen & Rebuild America's Schools Act*, and *Social Security 2100 Act*. Tom Reed is in favor of: 1. Increase pay for Home Health Aid and 2. Protecting Social Security.

The Southern Zone is anxious to have our 2022 Annual Meeting/luncheon opened to its members. **Lynne Hunkovic**, **Steve Cornell**, and the Eastern Broome Branch Retired Teachers hope to be hosting our SZ meeting sometime mid September. More information is forthcoming. All unit members are welcomed.

This year the Kramer Scholarship will be distributed by SZ. Applications will be sent out in the near future.

We hope that all of you stay healthy, get out, walk, and socialize. Don't forget to call a family member or friend to check up on them, and to keep you safe as well. Enjoy the warm weather and soak in some of that Vitamin D.



Front Row: Debbi Deats, Friendly Service; Gerardo Tagliaferi, President; Mary Lou Wood, Public Relations & Historian.

Second Row: Bonnie Stratton, Treasurer; Mary Johnson, State/Federal Legislation; Nancy Spaulding, Elmira and Area Retired Teachers' President; Mary Suffern, Secretary

ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS

WESTERN ZONE

BY AUDREY SEIDEL AND NANCY WHITE, PUBLIC RELATIONS CO-CHAIRS

At Western Zone's December Board of Directors' meeting there was a festive mood in the air. We had reports from various committees and collected donations for Afghanistan refugees. After our business meeting we sang Christmas carols and got a chance to catch up with our board member colleagues. It was great!

In April, the Board of Directors met again. We began plans for our September 21 annual Western Zone meeting, received a report in regards to membership, and updates about health insurance and our bylaws. Also in April, our President, **Michelle Claus**, wrote an article highlighting Western Zone and RENY in the Network in Aging April-June 2022 newsletter.



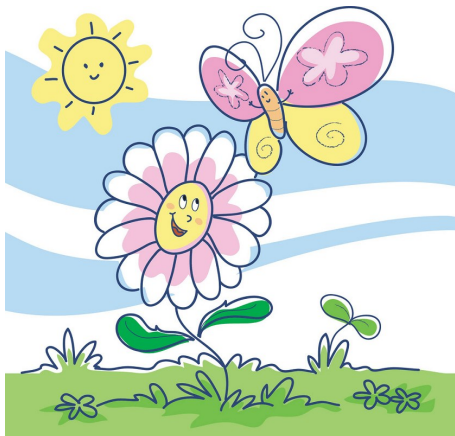
In other news, we recently became aware that a former student who grew up in a Western Zone school is now the top administrator of his hometown district. James Bialasik, who attended Springville-Griffith Institute from grade school through high school, was selected as superintendent starting in January 2022, upon the retirement of the former superintendent.

Bialasik graduated from Springville in 1999, earned his bachelor's degree in secondary education and mathematics from Canisius College in 2003 and earned his master's degree in mathematics from the University of Buffalo in 2006. He completed his certificate in educational leadership and supervision at Canisius in 2015. Mr. Bialasik had originally intended on pursuing a degree in engineering, but after working with kids from a local school the summer before graduation, he decided to go into math education.

Prior to returning to the Springville, James served in the Sweet Home District in Amherst, NY as dean of students, mathematics specialist, and coordinator of secondary education. During that time, Anthony Day, the Sweet Home superintendent, who is presently retired, was an inspiration to James.

James Bialasik became the Springville high school principal 6 years ago. As Springville high school principal, he was involved in budgeting, contract negotiations, and district capital improvements. In addition to his district leadership involvement, he was a wonderful high school building leader. During the pandemic, as we all know, many challenges continually arose. James led his building coordinating COVID-19 regulations and in his new position, as superintendent, he expands his guidance to all buildings, staff, and students. On the first day in his new position, SGI seniors celebrated Bialasik with a special presentation demonstrating their pride and gratitude for his wonderful building leadership.

Article continued on the next page...



ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS

WESTERN ZONE

BY AUDREY SEIDEL AND NANCY WHITE, PUBLIC RELATIONS CO-CHAIRS



Upon his selection as superintendent, James stated “As someone who has called the Springville community home for most of my life, having the opportunity to serve our district in this new capacity is an incredible honor. I wouldn’t have wanted to be superintendent anywhere else”. The SGI Board of Education’s President also reflected on his selection as district leader. “The SGI Board of Education knows that in Mr. James Bialasik we have a leader who will cultivate a positive school climate while moving us ever closer to our vision of being a place where everyone finds meaning and value every day. He is passionate about creating deep and powerful learning experiences for every student.”

Mr. Bialasik stated that “Our goal is to grow and improve upon a tradition of excellence, providing the best possible experiences for our students and setting them up for success in whatever life holds for them. In Springville, we like to say that we are #Redefining Rural. We are a small school, but we offer big opportunities for our students.” He

believes that by creating and providing authentic learning experiences K-12, students will learn how to take their knowledge, be creative, and apply it to new circumstances.

James Bialasik is a wonderful educator that will challenge, align, and lead his hometown school district to a bright future. We wish him all the best!



***We are excited to offer some new trips for the 2022/2023 travelling season both domestic and abroad!
It's time we all got away!***

Trips include South Dakota, Spectacular Scandinavia, Amalfi Coast to Puglia Tour, Iceland's magical Northern Lights Tour, Hawaiian Adventure Tour, Holland and Belgium Springtime River Cruise, Northern Lights Finland Tour just to name a few. More info will be coming via email.

