



SPRING 2023
Volume 73, Issue 1

YORK STATE

We are the only statewide organization that works
solely on behalf of retired educators.



Dr. James Newell, PhD

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



It seems like only yesterday that I had a conversation with Kris Valentine about how to title the winter edition of York State. It was titled "Winter 2022", and I thought it should be "Winter of 2023". Well, I am thinking that this is one of those issues where we are both right! Winter officially begins in December of the previous year, yet the winter includes January, February, and part of March of the next year. Hey, how about we title the winter edition of York State as "Winter 2022/23 edition?"

The Spring of 2023 is rapidly approaching, and there **will** be no need to discuss what year to label it!

As we mentioned in previous messages, we have assembled a group of interested RENY members to work on developing our website. This group consists of **Marilyn Dominick, Terry Satterley, David Schryver, Lois Thornberg, Kathi Bassett** and yours truly. We met on two occasions and decided to send out a survey to get feedback from members about RENY's website. The survey was posted on Survey Monkey and sent to all RENY members for whom we have an active email address. It consisted of 7 questions and went out in batches between February 28 and March 15. We received 292 completed surveys. The results of this survey will be reviewed by our working group, and this data will be used to plan changes and additions to our website.

We are soliciting **resolutions** from all zones. In the absence of a Resolution Chair, I will serve in that capacity. Please consider submitting a resolution by the deadline of June 12, 2023. Forms to submit resolutions can be obtained by the Resolution Committee member from your respective zone or from the RENY office.

See more from Dr. Newell, President of RENY, on the next page...

RENY HISTORY

In the early years of the 20th Century, there were no financial provisions for teachers after their retirement.

Beginning in 1913, the House of Delegates of the New York State Teachers' Association (NYSTA) was the voice of active teachers. Membership in NYSTA gave active teachers the opportunity to enhance their professional lives. Historically, retired teachers also participated in NYSTA. However, as early as 1920 there were those who were concerned for the welfare of the rapidly growing number of retired teachers. There was no New York State Teachers' Retirement System until 1921.

Meanwhile, at the far-western end of the state, the Buffalo Women Teachers' Association was encouraged to assist a group known as "Friends of Retired Teachers". For over 25 years, the "Friends" had been trying to improve the status of retired educators in the Buffalo area. Then during the 1940's, the soaring cost of living caused retired teachers throughout the country to focus on the need for statewide retired teachers' organizations that would be dedicated to protecting and improving retirement benefits.

Visit us online at www.retirededucatorsny.org

More on the history of RENY on back page

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE, CONTINUED

The President's Appeal for 2022 was launched in February 2022 and sent to more than 11,000 RENEY members. Included in the letter was a jar opener imprinted with the RENEY logo. We received many favorable comments on the jar opener and letter. You may not know this, but the President's Appeal provides one of the three largest sources of income for the Association and is essential for operating expenses. At the end of the first month, RENEY members had contributed \$42,694. However, the campaign did not sustain this strong momentum. Only \$12,630 was contributed for the rest of the fiscal year, and I am disappointed to say we did not meet our goal in 2022.

The President's Appeal for 2023 will be launched a bit later this year. The first batch of letters should be mailed in April. Included in the letter will be a RENEY bookmark. We need to do better this year, and I would ask every RENEY member to consider [making a donation](#).

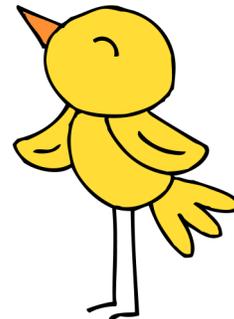
The Board of Directors met via Microsoft Teams conference on March 15, 2023. It was a well-attended meeting with several important items of business. One of the most important items was a discussion of finance. **RENEY is not generating sufficient revenues to support its operations.** Membership dues, the President's Appeal and the dividends/interest earned by our endowment all declined this year. At the same time, RENEY expenses were higher. During the last seven years, NYSRTA/RENEY has taken many steps to reduce expenses. We have reduced the Convention from three days to two days. We have reduced the number of printed editions of York State. In addition, we have moved our office from the SAANYS building to Kathi Bassett's home. Reducing expenses further will significantly affect our organization. RENEY needs to raise additional revenue. You will be hearing more about how we plan to do this as the year unfolds.

The Vice President for Membership, **Dell Ford Jordan**, has been meeting via Microsoft Teams with the Membership Committee. Although RENEY is recruiting new members, the overall membership is declining. We need to stabilize membership and attempt to reverse the decline. The Western Zone and the Northeastern Zone are providing incentives to new and renewing members. There is also a payment of \$50.00 for RENEY members who recruit five new members. Building up membership continues to be one of the most important goals of RENEY. Each one of us should lend a hand toward this effort.

My wife, Patricia, and I hope to visit all ten zones in my term of office. Thus far, we have visited the Western Zone, The Central Zone, and the Eastern Zone. We relish these visits and hope to make more visits this year. In the meantime, let us have a wonderful year in 2023. Feel free to call, email or text me with your questions and concerns.

Respectfully,

Dr. James Newell
RENEY President



CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION COMMITTEE By Carol Lord*CR, Committee Chair

Reminder:

Certificate of Recognition Nomination forms must be received by **Carol Lord*CR**, chairperson, by May 30th signed by the Zone President.

HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE REPORT

By Mary Ella Moeller*CR, Health Care Committee Chair

Make Physical Activity Part of Your Daily Life



Research has shown that regular physical activity can lead to better health, including reduced risk for many chronic diseases, such as heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes.

Aerobic activities such as brisk walking or biking are important for cardiovascular health because they work out your heart.

Muscle strengthening activities include some type of resistance, such as weights, elastic bands, or your own body

weight. Activities which help you increase muscle strength are recommended twice a week.

Both aerobic and muscle strengthening activities are known to help offer bone strengthening benefits. Activities which involve stretching can help increase flexibility and range of motion for joints.

In order to stay active, find activities that you enjoy. “MOVE MORE AND SIT LESS” needs to become an important part of everyone’s daily life as we age.

For more information, check out the Move Your Way website at: www.health.gov/move your way.



ROBERT R. DECORMIER MEMORIAL TRUST FUND REPORT

By Mary Lou Davis, Fund Treasurer

The **Robert R DeCormier** Memorial Trust Fund is able to provide help to some of our colleagues who are experiencing temporary or long-term financial difficulties because of the generous support of the zones, units, and individuals members of RENY. Eight zones contributed close to \$9000, which included a large donation of \$5000 from the South-eastern Zone. Twenty-three units contributed a total of \$5000, and many donations were made in memory of deceased members.

The board members of the trust fund had an opportunity at the convention in October to inform members about the history of the fund, monthly stipends, and special grants. During 2022 five members received monthly stipends and others were helped with unpaid medical expenses, storm damage and the purchase of a needed generator. Requests are often made for dental work and hearing aids.

The board members will miss **Imogene McKendrick*CR**, who has resigned after many years of service. She was responsible for the Birthday Card Project where board members of the Trust Fund send cards to members on their 88th birthday telling them about the Trust Fund. **Colette Astoria** will fill the vacated board position.

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FRIENDLY SERVICE COMMITTEE REPORT

By Lois Thornberg, VP for Friendly Service

Thoughts On Being Friendly

Our daily lives and responsibilities often demand that we take time away from others to focus on our current needs and desires. The feeling of being thought of and cared for is something that we all desire and should share with others as often as we can. The act of kindness and being friendly not only benefits those on the receiving end but has been found to also be beneficial to those who share these acts with others. Being kind and thoughtful of others does not require any special education, training, or experience; all of us are capable of practicing this at any time. When you take the opportunity to share some time with others in a friendly caring manner you are not only helping them, you might be helping yourself also.

Research has shown that being friendly can have a positive impact on you and possibly even your health. Being friendly might contribute to an increased feeling of well-being, self-esteem, worth, and uplift the general outlook on your life and concerns. Your stress levels might be lowered, maybe improving your general health. In today's world feelings of isolation and loneliness are commonplace and being friendly could reduce and possibly eliminate these.

We are all capable of performing the services that the Friendly Service Committee does throughout the year. Maybe it is time for everyone to reach out and share their time with not only those in need, but those in our daily lives, whether we know them or not. A simple act like holding a door open, giving up your seat, or just sharing a friendly greeting might make a difference in someone's day-and yours! I want to commend the members of the Friendly Service committee for their continued efforts to enhance the lives of those who might need it, and encourage all of RENY's members to join in their efforts.

In conclusion I share with you the words of Martin Luther King- "Somewhere along the way, we must learn that there is nothing greater than to do something for others."

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

By Judith Farmer*CR, Committee Chair

The election of officers will be held at the RENY Annual Meeting October, 12, 2023. The Nominations Committee is now accepting nominations from RENY members who wish to serve in any of the following offices:

- *** **President**
- *** **Treasurer**
- *** **Vice-President for Membership**
- *** **Vice-President for Legislative Action**
- *** **Vice-President for Friendly Service**
- *** **Sr. Vice-President**
- *** **Secretary**



Letters, stating an intent to serve or the nomination of a member, will be accepted by the Nominations Committee until June 30, 2023. Candidates will be interviewed by the committee on the evening prior to the July 2023 RENY Board of Directors meeting in Albany.

Nominations should be sent to: Judith Farmer
2199 Two Rod Rd.
East Aurora, NY 14052

OR EMAIL ME (refer to your directory if you have one or call the office to obtain)



MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

By Dell Ford Jordan, VP for Membership



“Things do not happen. Things are made to happen.”

~John F. Kennedy

Time does not stand still! Can you believe it? Spring is here. I don't know about you, but I am rejoicing in that knowledge.

The Membership Team met on March 9th to discuss our statistics and brainstorm ways to bring new members into our organization and reclaim those who did not pay dues. Before we discuss the statistics for our 1st quarters, we would like to share things planned to help us increase our revenue and membership. Our President, **Dr. James Newell**, will launch his President's Appeal in April. The revenue from this effort is an important source of income and it helps to supplement our operating expenses. We need both in order to remain sound and membership focused. The Membership Team supports all efforts to improve RENY's membership and finances and encourage you to give if you can.

The incentive of \$50.00 for every five (5) members you enroll in RENY is still in effect. There is no limit on how many members you can enroll in one year. Just remember to put your name on the application so we will know who gets the credit. The Western and the Northeastern Zones have shared two incentives for getting new members; we will pass these on to your local chairs as suggestions you may want to try. Other suggestions will also be given to your Unit chairs for possible implementation.

Now, for some staggering statistics we need to know, digest, and turn them around. For the period ending February 28, 2023, we had a total of 11,795 members. At the end of February 28, 2022 we were at 12,269. That's a 574 member drop in membership, losing on average forty-seven (47) members per month. One question we have to ask ourselves is how long can we remain in existence losing members at this rate? February 2022 showed we had 878 members choosing **not** to pay dues; this number increased to 1,144 members in February 2023. We bring these numbers to your attention because we need to find out why members are choosing not to renew their membership, and we need to reclaim them. This process begins and ends with all members. All of us together can turn our numbers positive; the Membership Team cannot do it alone.

Favorable statistics are that we have 788 90-year olds and 158 100-year olds still supporting our organization, either by donating to scholarship programs, attending luncheons, donating to the President's Appeal or sending notes when they receive a newsletter. That is truly a blessing. We took in forty-seven (47) new members (statewide) since October 1, 2022. Not favorable and beyond our control, this same period of time, we experienced the loss of 189 members.

We hope a vivid picture is being painted as we bring these alarming statistics to you. We know that you will see it, get it, and help us to paint a more positive picture in the coming months. Your Zone's Membership Chair has an application packet including a list of our benefits for you to give to potential new members. Some Zones have incentives for getting new members. All Zones have the enthusiasm and the passion to help rejuvenate RENY. If interested and they are not in your zone, we will reach out to them. You can also brainstorm ideas and pass them on through your Unit's Membership Chair, your Zone, or directly to me. We are here to help.



The Northeastern Zone is in the **Spotlight** this quarter. They increased their membership by fifteen (15) holding the First Place win. **Central Zone** holds Second Place with eight (8) new members and Third Place goes to **Central Western Zone** who added five (5) new members. **Congratulations!**

To all of RENY Zones and members, we thank you for your initiative and commitment as we continue to add new members to our totals. **THANK YOU!**

Recalling the quote above from John F. Kennedy, If his statement is true and I believe it is, let's turn our numbers around. **Let's make it happen.**

Visit us online at www.retirededucatorsny.org

COMMUNITY SERVICE COMMITTEE REPORT

By Eileen Holmes*CR, Committee Chair

When I was in tenth grade, back in the early 60's, I was enrolled in academic courses but my guidance counselor assigned me to a typing class to fill-in an empty period. I loved it; I was in class with juniors and seniors and could check out all the upperclassmen! Looking back, typing was one of the most useful skills I've ever learned and for 60+ years it's gotten me through the countless term papers, reports, letters, and articles I've had to write.

In second year of typing, our teacher started a Friday "speed" contest and she'd time us to see who could type "Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their country." Over and over, over and over, we'd pound those keys and slap the carriage return on those manual typewriters. I never won the weekly contest and I've never forgotten the keyboard or the sentence: *Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their country.*

Working with RENY's Community Service is a fulfillment of the sentiment in this sentence. Feeding needy people, supplying gifts and warm clothing to children, donating to veteran causes, funding scholarships for future educators, volunteering in hospitals, supporting group homes for needy and abused families are just a sampling of the ways our RENY members work together to come to the aid of our country by helping those in need. Way to go, Community Service Chairs and members!!!

There will be a Community Service Food Drive at the 2023 RENY Convention. The host zone North Central and RENY Community Service will collect the food and 'pass it on' to the 2024 host zone for distribution in their area. Please remind your delegates to bring along a food donation for this statewide project.

P.S. In that typing class there was a guy who had been kicked out of 2 high schools and one Catholic school. Now days, he'd probably be labeled ADH and be on meds but back then on eastern Long Island, if you cut up and you were over 16, the principal could give you the boot. Fortunately, he found his niche in our small high school. In this class all that nervous energy went into typing and he was fast! At graduation, he was not up for any academic or sports awards but the business teacher went up on the stage and announced a speed typing award and his name. The whole class broke into applause and it was a great moment. I'm sure there was never that kind of speed typing award before or after that night. Remembering it now, as a retired educator, I am awed by the ingenuity and kindness of that teacher who found a way to make sure he got some praise and recognition.

MOVING?

**DID YOU HAVE
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



**THE TRS PENSION SYSTEM ALSO NEEDS
TO KNOW!**

**EVEN IF YOUR PENSION IS DIRECT
DEPOSITED, LET THEM KNOW OF YOUR
NEW ADDRESS!**

CALL THEM AT (866) 805-0990

CHOICE 1 DENTAL

offered to RENY Retiree Members by Cigna Dental



13 Airline Drive
Albany, NY 12205
1-866-478-8907

Retiree Dental Care Program CHOICE 1 is a managed dental health program that offers you significant savings over traditional dental plans. The plan offers low out-of-pocket costs while providing access to economical care.

Choice 1 lets you pick a network dentist and there are no charges for most preventive services. With CHOICE 1, you have no waiting periods, deductibles, annual dollar maximums and no claim forms to fill out.

- Available to members, spouse/domestic partner, & dependent children.
- The network general dentist you choose will manage your overall dental care.
- No charges for most preventive services.

Preventive Care at No Charge to You

- Examinations
- Routine Cleanings
- X-rays

More complex procedures will require a preset co-payment.

Please see the Patient Charge Schedule for details and any limitations.

CHOICE 1 BY CIGNA MONTHLY RATES:

Member Only	\$ 30.99
Member +1 (Spouse or Child)	\$ 58.25
Family Coverage	\$101.64

Contact your RENY Insurance Representative at 866.478.8907 to enroll in the Choice 1 Dental Program by Cigna Dental or call for more information.



CHOICE 2 DENTAL

offered to RENY Retiree Members by Metlife



13 Airline Drive
Albany, NY 12205
1-866-478-8907

Retiree Dental Care Program CHOICE 2 is a more traditional dental benefit plan. You are never locked into any specific dentist and if you choose to visit a participating dentist, it may help you to maximize your benefit plan savings and reduce out-of-pocket expenses.

With Choice 2, participating dentists agree to accept negotiated fees as payment in-full for services they provide. The fee typically ranges from 30% to 45% less than average fees charged by dentists in the same area for the same services.

- Available to members, spouse/domestic partner, & dependent children.
- Provides first-day coverage for preventative services.

No Deductible for Preventive Services In or Out of Network

- Examinations
- Routine Cleanings
- X-rays

\$50 deductible per person/calendar year up to \$150 max for family.
\$1,500 Annual Maximum per person

Rates are determined based on zip code – see the area schedule on the next page

Contact your RENY Insurance Representative at 866.478.8907 to enroll in the [Choice 2 Dental Program by Metlife](#) or call for more information.

Choice Dental 2 Rates - Monthly Cost

	Member Only	Member + One Dependent	Member + Family
Area 1	\$41.14	\$72.15	\$97.00
Area 2	\$44.50	\$78.86	\$108.56
Area 3	\$49.96	\$93.45	\$118.71
Area 4	\$53.31	\$100.54	\$129.22
Area 5	\$54.99	\$103.70	\$138.33
Area 6	\$58.35	\$110.79	\$148.48

Areas are determined based on zip code – see the area schedule below.

Rates are guaranteed from April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024.

Area Schedule

To determine the appropriate premium rates for a dental plan, look up your state of residence, and then look up your 3-digit zip code, if applicable. Use the Area number that applies to your state/zip to determine the premium rate from the table above.

State	Area	First 3 Digits of Zip Code	State	Area	First 3 Digits of Zip Code
Connecticut	4	All zip codes	New Jersey	2	071-072
	Massachusetts	3		010, 012-013	3
4		011, 014-027		4	074-076, 078-079, 088-089
Pennsylvania	1	150-156, 159-161, 163-164, 171-172, 185, 187	New York	2	104, 124-129, 133-136, 142
	2	157-158, 162, 165-168, 170, 173-176, 180-184, 186, 188, 190-192		3	103, 109-110, 115, 117-123, 130-132, 137-141, 143-149
	3	169, 177-179, 189, 193-196		4	063, 105-108, 111-114, 116
			Vermont	4	All zip codes



ZONE NEWS

CENTRAL ZONE

Cayuga, Chenango, Herkimer, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego

By Ray Pitcher, Zone President

The history of many organizations is one of growing and declining of membership. As a case in point, WKTU-Utica reported that Utica Masonic Lodge is down to fifty members from the five hundred it once had. RENY and the Central Zone has the same issue. Our membership and leadership keep disappearing.

The Oneida-Herkimer Retired Teacher Association Unit has many voids on its executive board. Our membership is at around 250 members. However, many of our members have not attended our meetings or stepped up to assume a leadership role. The current officers are advocating the merger or elimination of this unit.

On April the 18th. The Central Zone will be meeting at Theodore's in Canastota. The meeting will be called to order at 10:00am. All RENY members in are encouraged to attend. The merger of units will be a major agenda item. Please sign up by April the tenth with Gwynne Bodle at or myself.

See you on the 18th to discuss the future of the Central Zone and our Units.

RENY Chenango Retired Teachers Association

By Mary Ann Luciano

“The only thing that is constant is change.” ~Heraclitus (About 500 B.C., Greek philosopher near Turkey).

The Chenango unit of the Central Zone is experiencing changes. After the able seven-year leadership of **Bill Cline**, a new president was elected at the Fall Annual Dinner meeting: **Dr. Mary Ann Luciano**. Mary Ann was previously the unit's Vice President and will continue in her role as Scholarship Chair this year. Bill was elected as Vice-President of Legislative Action continuing in a leadership role.

Mary Ann served as the Director of the Catskill Regional Teacher Center for 23 years prior to her retirement in 2015 and completed her Ed.D. in Educational Leadership at Syracuse University, graduating this past December 2022. She is also an alumnus of SUNY Potsdam and the University of Vermont. Mary Ann with her husband, retired physicist, and college educator **Dr. Brian Brennan** who serves as the Chenango unit's Interim Membership Chair, live in South New Berlin.

Other Executive Officers elected and appointed at the Annual Meeting held on September 20, 2022, in Sherburne, which was organized by the very capable Member At Large, **Sharon Wilson**, and her committee were: **Stephen Runion**, Treasurer; **Kathleen Pfeifer**, Corresponding Secretary; **Liz Cline**, Recording Secretary; **Storm Hammond**, Friendly Service Chair; **Roberta Knoll**, Historian; and aforementioned **Brian Brennan** and **Sharon Wilson**.



The Annual Meeting included raffling donated items for funding the 2023 Community Service Project: Chenango County Food Pantries; a history and current events quiz by quiz-master **Bill Cline**; musical entertainment by Elsbeth Hunter, pictured at left, a junior at Norwich City High School; special service recognitions of outgoing President, **Bill Cline**, pictured at right, and years of service by **Joyce Lawson**, former Membership Chair, Treasurer, and Scholarship Committee Chair, presentation of draft bylaw changes for a vote at the Spring meeting, a delicious dinner provided by Lewis' Restaurant, followed by Hilary Wilcox of Visions Credit Union who presented vital information on preventing and avoiding financial scams.



More from the Central Zone on the next page-



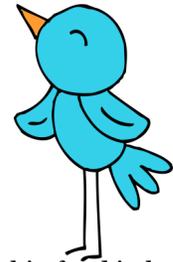
ZONE NEWS

CENTRAL ZONE, *Continued*

RENY Chenango Retired Teachers Association By Mary Ann Luciano

In 2023, the Chenango unit expects more active involvement in working on RENY’s legislative priorities; providing interim pop-ups or more informal get-togethers such as celebrating National Pi Day (March 14th) at Bob’s Diner in Bainbridge and becoming more informed about state legislation to better the lives of retirees, and in the future, visiting Chenango County’s historical and other sites of interest; continuing important work through Friendly Service, the Future Educator’s Scholarship, and selected Community Service; digitizing the unit’s historical materials for archiving with the Chenango County Historian; and exploring more and better ways to reach the members, in addition to the fine bi-annual newsletter edited by **Kathy Pfeifer**, while increasing membership in RENY.

RENY Oswego Retired Teachers Association By: *Colette Astoria*



Oswego Teachers Credit Union donated \$1,000.00 to our Scholarship fund in honor of **Darlene Jarvis**, our scholarship chairperson, for many years of faithful service on their Board of Directors



CENTRAL WESTERN ZONE

Allegany, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Steuben (not Southern), Wayne, Wyoming, Yates
By Mary Beth Tyndall, Zone President and Carol Lord*CR

There has been a flurry of activity in the Central Western Zone as the 2023 year got underway! Many of our members took advantage of travel to warmer parts of the world but still kept in touch and even attended board meetings (on line, of course). Those who stayed closer to home enjoyed many wintertime activities.



Kathy Grandjean of Wayne County dedicated herself to maple syruping! This is something that she has been doing for several years and has about perfected the process.

Seneca County has hosted an on-line jewelry party and a Bunco evening. Funds raised help support their Community Service project of Relay for Life. Pictured at left is **Carol Lord*CR** with **Ann & Gene Czajkowski**.

More from the Central Western Zone on next page-

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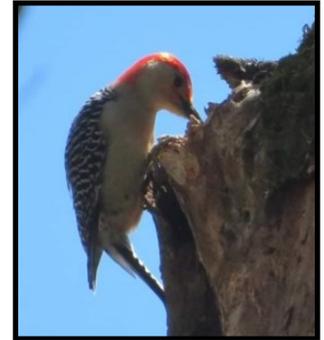


ZONE NEWS

CENTRAL WESTERN ZONE, *Continued*



Some Activity groups in Monroe County continued including Birdwatching and even Bicycling (AKA Vintage Riders.)



Yates County is working on plans for a speaker to help celebrate the upcoming bicentennial for the region.

The RENY Hudson-Kramer Grant applications were sent out in January with thanks to **Sandy Kushner**. Applications are already coming in!

The Barrie Fleegel Active Educator Award is transitioning this year. **Ann and Gene Czajkowski** have overseen this process for nearly 20 years and we are so grateful to them! **Pat Dick** and her husband Gary have stepped up to continue this wonderful award opportunity.

Friendly Service in all our counties has been very busy. **Barb Rosecrans** has sent many birthday, thinking of you, get well, and sympathy cards. We are saddened by the passing of **Dick Kennedy** who was a faithful member from Allegany County. Our thoughts are also with our other members who are experiencing some very challenging health issues.

Pictures from CWZ's Annual Meeting Sept 2023 - Canandaigua, NY



Georgia Thomas and Frank Burger (Orleans County)



Jane Benhk (Steuben County) with raffle baskets



Karen Greco, Barbara Rosecrans and Judie Byndas



Judie Byndas, Jane Crosby, and Betty Worden



Betty Pilato (CWZ Treasurer) and Janet Hilliard





ZONE NEWS

EASTERN ZONE

Albany, Columbia, Delaware, Fulton, Greene, Hamilton, Montgomery, Otsego, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Warren, Washington

By Pamela Love, Public Relations Chair

Janice Mullins, President of RENY Eastern Zone, said that the zones Executive Board Meeting will be held Tuesday, May 23, 2023 at the Turf Tavern in Scotia. The executive board will have the last meeting minutes to review as well as information concerning the meeting ahead of the actual meeting.

The following units have updates as to meetings taking place this spring:

The Amsterdam Unit President, **Ann Marie Dufresne**, said that her unit will be meeting on Monday, June 26, 2023, and will be honoring recent retirees at this meeting.

The Columbia County Unit President, **Joan Mattson**, said that they are planning a meeting on May 11, 2023, and they are still working on the plans for this meeting.

The Delaware County Unit President, **Patricia Reynolds**, said that her unit is still waiting on a speaker for the spring meeting, so the exact date is not yet set as to this writing.

The Greene County Unit President, **Ellie Cusick**, said that her unit will meet May 10, 2023.

The Otsego County Unit Co-President, **Penny Bellinger** said that her unit will meet the first part of June. She said that she will have a Co-President, **Rebecca Byam**. Penny also said that their unit will be planning to have a Golf Tournament in August and will also plan a sweater and coat drive for the needy.

The Retired Educators of the Capital Region (RCRTA) Unit President, **Marjorie Leibowitz**, said that her unit will be meeting June 14, 2023, and the members will be making donations to support animals at this meeting.

The Saratoga County Unit President, **Kenneth Bollerud**, said that his unit meets monthly, September thru June. They are now meeting at the Holiday Inn in Saratoga.

The Schoharie County Unit President, Co-President, **Margaret Dafeldecker**, said that her Co-President is Leslie Cooper. Their unit is meeting May 17, 2023 at Chieftans Restaurant.

The Upper Montgomery County Unit President, **Rosalind Carron**, said that her unit will be meeting May 17, 2023, at the Holiday Inn in Johnstown and it will be a social gathering.

Easy Sweet & Sour Meatballs

Ingredients:

1 can unsweetened pineapple chunks
1 pkg (12oz.) fully cooked homestyle
or Swedish meatballs
1 large green pepper, cut into 1 inch
pieces
3 tsp corn starch
1/3 cup cold water
3 Tbsp cider vinegar
1 tsp soy sauce
1/2 cup brown sugar
Hot cooked rice (optional)
Thinly sliced green onion (optional)



Drain pineapple, reserving juice. Set pineapple aside. Add enough water to juice if needed to measure 1 cup. In a large skillet over medium heat, cook the meatballs, green pepper and juice mixture until heated through.

In a small bowl, combine the cornstarch, cold water, vinegar and soy sauce until smooth. Add brown sugar and reserved pineapple to the pan; stir in cornstarch mixture. Bring to a boil; cook and stir until thickened, about 2 minutes. If desired, serve with rice and top with green onions.



ZONE NEWS

LONG ISLAND ZONE

Nassau, Suffolk

By **Eileen Holmes*CR, Zone President**

The Long Island Zone made it through a basically 'snowless' winter and is now looking forward to warm weather activities. The annual Spring luncheon will be held on May 10th at the Irish Coffee Pub in Islip and we're hoping for a good turnout. Arrangements are being made for a guest speaker from Little Shelter, an animal rescue and adoption center in Huntington, NY. Little Shelter is a no-kill, nonprofit shelter that is celebrating 95 years of saving animals!

Like many other zones, we are not back to pre-COVID attendance and participation. Our two units are having difficulties staying 'in business'. The East End unit was famous for 5-6 get-togethers a year, full of guest speakers, raffles, auctions and great camaraderie. EERTA still has over 400 members and a healthy bank account but is struggling to find folks who are willing and able to serve as officers and show up for meetings and luncheons. The members pay their dues and the 'spirit' is there but health issues, driving limitations and overall aging-out have created problems. The West End unit was a longtime supporter of the Adelphi University School of Education and hosted a gala luncheon to present a yearly scholarship to a future teacher. COVID knocked this out and the unit has not been able to rebound yet. The LIZ board will be considering these problems and working with the units to come up with viable solutions.

LIZ Community Service Chair **Angelo Grande*CR** and co-chair **Kathryn Grande** presented a donation of new clothing, including socks, shirts and underwear to the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency in East Meadow. This service provides homeless and needy men and women vets with food, coats, shoes, boots, clothing and more. Over 525 veterans were served this past winter.

NORTH CENTRAL ZONE

Jefferson, Lewis

By **Nancy Roberts*CR and Patricia Newell, Public Relations Co-Chairs**

NCZ website: www.renyncz.org



In the North Country, spring is viewed with eager anticipation. Actually, this is an understatement. This winter will be remembered for its holiday snowstorms. One blew in days before Thanksgiving. The other occurred right at Christmas time. Many church services were cancelled, and families gathered after Christmas to celebrate and exchange gifts. The holidays did not run perfectly on schedule, but those family gatherings were sweet reminders of what is really important in life.

NCZ Community Chair **Patty Corey** and **Toni Gigliotti**, the Dynamic Duo, have been hard at work on their beloved Coats for Kids project. They made sure that this was a happy winter season for many families. Fifty-five coats, nine pairs of snow pants, boots, hats & gloves were distributed. Many students at Harrisville Central School were grateful recipients. Hats off to the National Society members at Lowville Academy & Central School for making a donation to the NCZ Coats for Kids project!

Leo Tolstoy believed that, "Spring is the time of plans and projects." This is very true of NCZ as it prepares to host the RENEY Convention in October 2023. **Barbara Cole-Russell, Doug & Pat Dietrich, Elwood "Woody" Lyndaker, Jackie Maloney,** and **Jim & Pat Newell** have been participating in the Workshop Team meetings under the direction of Workshop Chair, **Gayla LePage**. They have been aided with guidance from the Long Island Zone and the RENEY staff. The committee is excited to have a dynamic keynote speaker and interesting workshops to showcase the North Country and to explore the convention theme of "Beauty, Bounty & Bravery."

More from the North Central Zone on next page-



ZONE NEWS

NORTH CENTRAL ZONE, *Continued*



NCZ member, **Hope Irvin Marston**, has remarkable news.; 7,386 copies of her historical novel, Against the Tides: The Valor of Margaret Wilson, have been published since it was released in 2007! Wow!! Now Hope has another feather in her cap...a foreign publication to her credit. This novel has been translated into Dutch. The story is set in 17th century Scotland. The central character, Margaret, must make a courageous decision. This makes for very exciting reading. Hope has authored more than 30 books, including a dozen children’s books and several historical novels for young adults. She is a Charlotte Award winner from the NYS Reading Association for her historical novel, The Walls Have Ears: A Black Spy in the Confederate White House.

Another talented NCZ member is **Richard Bushnell**, pictured on right.

Dick may be described as a “Renaissance Man.” Dick served for 22 years as the NCZ Legislative Chair. He is also quite an accomplished artist. He has two entries in the 6x6 art exhibit at the Salmon River Fine Arts Center in Pulaski. His creations entitled “Friendship” and “Lunar Loons” are wood burnings which depict nature scenes. The art exhibit & sale is a fundraiser for the Fine Arts Center where Dick generously volunteers his time on Saturday afternoons.



The NCZ Scholarship Committee under the able direction of Scholarship Chair, **John Gaffney**, is a dedicated group. This committee has the challenging task of selecting two winners from the outstanding pool of candidates for the Future Educators Awards. Each of these awards carries a stipend of \$1,000. The experienced committee members are **Bruce & Candice Buckingham, Bill Haller, Marianne Malatino, Patti Scordo, and Tom Van Emmerik**. The presentation of the Future Educator Awards is one of the highlights of our Scholarship Luncheon to be held on June 27th at the Ramada Inn in Watertown. The award winners and their parents will be honored guests at this luncheon.



This year we are also honored to have Professional Educator winner, Michael Comet-pictured at left , with us at our Scholarship Luncheon. Mr. Comet is an outstanding biology teacher for South Lewis Central School. He won the Hudson-Kramer Award in June 2020. Mr. Comet was awarded the Empire State Excellence in Teaching Award in 2022. He will acquaint luncheon attendees with an observation hive for bees. This will surely be an exciting, interesting luncheon!

Dates to Remember:

NCZ Executive Council –Tues. May 2, 2023, NNYCF, 10am.

NCZ Scholarship Luncheon-Tues. June 27, 2023, Ramada Inn, Watertown

NCZ Executive Council-Tues. Aug. 8, 2023, NNYCF, 10am.

NCZ Fall Business Luncheon-Tues. Sept. 19, Ramada Inn, Watertown



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ZONE NEWS

NORTHEASTERN ZONE

Clinton, Essex

By Tracey Howard, Public Relations Chair

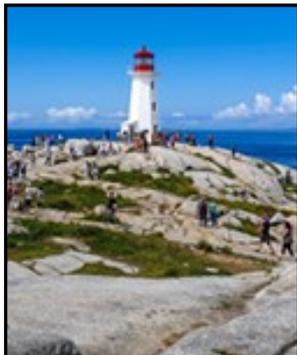
As we are moving into warmer weather, the snowbirds are returning and committees are hard at work as our entire Northeastern Zone makes plans for the upcoming months. The Scholarship Committee is busy getting the word out to interested seniors, and our Educator Awards Committee has contacted local superintendents hoping to get an avalanche of grant proposals for the upcoming school year. Membership hopefuls are being tracked down by our fearless leader, **Sandy Lashua**. The Nominations Committee has been busy looking to fill the empty spaces on our slate of officers. Our Healthcare Committee has been instrumental in staying on top of consortium news and what is happening at the state level. Friendly Service always appreciates hearing about life events impacting our members. Community Service is making plans for local food drives.

So much hard work is being done, and so much more could be accomplished with help from more of our members. One of my jobs as PR Chair is to maintain the Facebook Page for “Northeastern Zone RENY”. It has been my pleasure sharing events and giving accolades to our members. As I look at our page insights, I am thrilled to see when our posts have reached hundreds of viewers. I encourage all members to like and follow us; but even more importantly, please share news about members or contact me directly.

Recently, I was talking with a friend contemplating retirement. Her biggest concern was losing her identity as a teacher when she retires. For most of us teaching was never simply a job; it defined who we were to our very core. In a recent AARP publication, one tip for retirees was to develop new interests and create new contacts. Personally, I can attest to achieving much happiness by doing just that. When I first retired, a friend invited me to play Pickleball at a local gym. That one step outside of my comfort zone has yielded an amazing group of friends, a healthier lifestyle, and a mild addiction to the sport. Now when I meet a retired teacher on the court, I always ask, “Are you a member of RENY?” So, retirees, I’d love to play some Pickleball with you and maybe get you more involved in our organization. Happy Spring!



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ZONE NEWS

SOUTHERN ZONE

Broome, Chemung, Cortland, Schuyler, Tioga, Tompkins, Steuben (Bath, Haverling, Campbell-Savona, Corning-Painted Post-Bradford, Jasper-Troupsburg, Addison)

By Mary Lou Wood, Public Relations Chair

Time is traveling right along. There is an old saying, "April showers bring May flowers." I always add 'Worms' as well. The daffodils and tulips are in bloom; birds are singing; trees are budding; the sun is shining; the warm weather is upon us. Our snowbird friends will soon return home. It's so uplifting for our morale.

The Southern Zone board of directors have been very active deciding on plans to move forward. It was fantastic to see everyone, socializing, smiling, and sharing ideas. Zone President **Jerry Tagliaferri** reviewed a number of items from the RENY Board meeting. We are all concerned with declining membership and the inactivity of units. It makes it difficult to invite and recruit new members. The proposed changes to the RENY bylaws were also reviewed and discussed. There was discussion on how the Zone would vote on the proposals if the Annual SZ Meeting wasn't held and what the Zone bylaws allow.

Reports from standing committees and units were given:

EBB, Eastern Broome Branch, will host the September RENY/Southern Zone regional meeting at the Relief Pitcher on Wednesday, September 20th, which will provide morning snacks and beverages and a buffet luncheon (again with a variety of homemade desserts) for \$25.00. The Relief Pitcher is located on Conklin Avenue in Binhamton. Because of popular acclaim and requests, our guest speaker will be Larry Kassan, who will discuss Rod Serling and the Twilight Zone.

EBB Co-Presidents **Lynne Hunkovic** and **Steve Cornell** have successfully resurrected monthly luncheons and meetings with speakers since October 2022. Some of their speakers have included the Johnson City Sophisticats; a representative from the Bundy Museum; someone from Cooperative Extension to talk about seed starting; and individuals to talk about opioid overdoses, the Humane Society, and nutrition for seniors. Their April speaker was New York State Representative Donna LuPardo. Overall, they were very pleased with being able to resume their luncheons and to continue to inform and mingle with their local retirees at such a wonderful new location. They have received nothing but thanks and praise for this.

CARTA- Corning Area RTA President **Debbi Deats** sent a donation to the **DeCormier Fund** in honor of our 12 deceased members within the past two years. Many CARTA members also contributed to the DeCormier Fund as well. The unit also honored its 90 year old members. They continue to financially support the Children's Section within the Southeast Steuben Library, the Heritage Village (formerly known as the Benjamin Patterson Inn) which provides the area's school children with a recreation of life in the Inn, School, and activities occurring in the 1700's and 1800's. and continues to collect money toward the Annual Scholarships given to area seniors planning to enter teaching as well as continued support of area Food Pantries: Bath, Corning, Painted Post, and Savona. Some of their programs included speakers Dean Chatfield and Eileen Goodman from Bampa's House (Corning Comfort Care), Sharman Hanson (CPR instructor), and Carrie Foley (ServU Credit Union-'avoiding scams').

Schuyler County RTA - **Lois and Don Cutton*CR**, have been meeting with their members. Gary Emerson will be their next presenter from the Historic Society. He will talk on One Room School Houses; however, Lois informed me that she went to a two room school house.

More from the Southern Zone on next page-

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ZONE NEWS

SOUTHERN ZONE, *Continued*



Scholarships - **Don Cutton*CR & Mary Suffern**— The Hudson-Kramer Scholarship was ours to distribute this year and \$1000 was given to Sheri Abdullah, an elementary teacher in the Windsor CSD. For her project she plans to use the money to purchase math manipulatives for a Tier 3 intervention program to address the increase in student learning gaps related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Pictured at right is **Don Cutton*CR, Lois Cutton, and Jerry Tagliaferri** who presented the award.



We hope you all stay healthy and safe. Get out, look around at the beautiful spring/summer colors, listen to the birds sing, and smell the fresh air. Don't forget to take your allergy pills!!

Scholarship Committee Picture on left: Back row: **Jerry Tagliaferri, Lois and Don Cutton*CR** Front row: **Mary Lou Wood and Mary Suffern**

WESTERN ZONE

Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Niagara, Genesee



By Audrey Seidel and Nancy White, Public Relations Co-Chairs

Western Zone ended 2022 with a holiday meeting and luncheon in December. On this occasion we welcomed our honorary members and guests. Part of our business meeting included the presentation of our WZ, \$500 Teacher Grant to Alden teachers Erin Griggs and Michelle Matthews. Their proposal was entitled “Struggling Reading Book Set for Grades 3-5.” The goal of the project is to improve reading skills of upper elementary struggling readers by having a variety of books available at their reading level. The grant will assist in the purchasing of approximately 35 of these books. Earlier a presentation was made to Pamela Brown a teacher at Middle Early College High School in Buffalo to help fund an African American Cultural presentation to be given during Black History Month. The project will include lessons from the social studies, art and music departments. Applications for the teacher grants are accepted from all schools in the Western Zone.



Western Zone’s strength can be found in its individual members and its eleven units. We would like to highlight two of our units. First the West Seneca Retired Teachers Association, WSRTA, is a very active unit established and accepted into WZ in 1995. The unit president is **Patricia Miceli**, pictured. She has been president for 10 years. Her Western Zone Board activities include being a member of the Bylaws and Legislative Committees as well as frequently attending the RENY State Conventions. She was a teacher in the West Seneca Central Schools for 43 years. Her college degrees are in elementary education and law.

More from the Western Zone on next page-



ZONE NEWS

WESTERN ZONE, *Continued*

She is a member of the Erie County Bar Association, Women's Bar Association of WNY, NY State Bar Association and American Association of University Women Buffalo Branch. West Seneca Retired Teachers Association has 70 members in their unit and 50 to 60 members who regularly attend their meetings. The unit holds 2 meetings a year. The biannual meetings are a time to share information about RENY, its mission, and to encourage membership. The members are given yearly updates on NYSTRS in general, and pensions in particular. Most importantly meetings are an opportunity to enjoy fellowship with colleagues. This unit gives monetary and food donations yearly to the West Seneca Food Bank. If interested in becoming a member of WSRTA, contact Pat Miceli.



The second WZ unit we would like to showcase is KREA, Kenmore Retired Educators Association. The unit president is **Joan Costello**. She is a member of the Western Zone Board of Directors and on the Community Service Committee. Joan received her college education at State University College at Buffalo and the University of Buffalo. She also attended a summer course at Harvard on "Relaxation for Children" a method she used in her classroom before giving her students a test. In addition, she trained at NASA, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, in the teacher space program. Her teaching career was in the Kenmore School District., as well as at Clarence Center Elementary School. She presently teaches piano to students 6-76 years of age at Williamsville Community Education and religious education to 5th graders at her church. The Kenmore Retired Educators Association has approximately 400 members including those from out of town, out of state and locally. The unit has two meetings/luncheons a year for members. They also hold meetings of the officers for planning purposes. Attendance at the unit meetings is approximately 75-100 members. Students from the Kenmore High School music department have entertained the members at their meetings. KREA does not give scholarships, but their individual members have donated their time and money to many local charities.

These units, like others in Western Zone, offer opportunities for their members to support their communities in various ways and remain informed about issues that pertain to retired educators.



RENY HISTORY, continued from 1st page

Meanwhile, at the far-western end of the state, the Buffalo Women Teachers' Association was encouraged to assist a group known as "Friends of Retired Teachers". For over 25 years, the "Friends" had been trying to improve the status of retired educators in the Buffalo area. Then during the 1940's, the soaring cost of living caused retired teachers throughout the country to focus on the need for statewide retired teachers' organizations that would be dedicated to protecting and improving retirement benefits.

In the fall of 1946, about a hundred retired educators gathered at a grammar school in Albany to establish a Retired Teachers' Association, the first in New York, and in this country. Then in October 1947, the "Friends" in Buffalo called a meeting of retired teachers, and the Western Zone was created.

Teachers who had a voice in their welfare before retirement quickly welcomed an opportunity to have a voice after retirement. Through the action in 1923 of the NYSTA House of Delegates, New York State had been divided into zones. It was now becoming clear to the leaders of their zones that a separate statewide organization was needed to represent retirees.

In November 1949, presidents of the Eastern, Western, and Central Western Zones met to begin making this a reality. Meetings continued ~ including Central, Southern, and Southeastern Zones ~ to discuss a constitution for a state organization and legislation to benefit retired teachers.

On November 18, 1951, representatives from the six zones met in Rochester and elected officers to serve the newly formed New York State Retired Teachers' Association (RENY). By the following year, Northern, North Central, Northeastern, and Long Islands Zones had come on board, making a true statewide organization, and completing the structure of the Association.