

RENY YORK

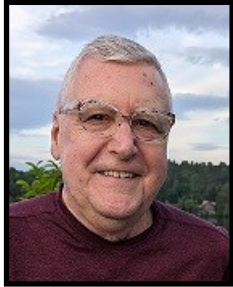
RETIRE D EDUCATORS OF NY

STATE

Vol 73
Issue 3

Summer 2024

A Message From Our President, Dr. James Newell, PhD



As temperatures climb, the sun rises earlier, the leaves on the trees sprout, the flowers bloom and the grass grows thick and green, we know that glorious summer is upon us. It is sunny, warm, and beautiful.

The future of the **Retired Educators of New York** is also sunny and bright despite some challenges. As your President, I made it a priority to visit as many of the ten zones as I could in my three-year term. My wife was gracious enough to come along with me on these visits. We learned a lot through these visits, met and greeted many wonderful people and became better acquainted with the operation of these zones. Wherever we went, we were duly impressed with the hospitality we received as well as the generosity, loyalty and commitment members have to this great organization.

Our most recent visit was to the Northeastern Zone this June at the invitation of Zone President and former RENY President, **Kevin Mulligan*CR**. This zone, which includes Clinton County and parts of Essex, will host the 2024 RENY Convention and is busy planning and raising funds for this event. Kevin opened the meeting with a tribute to the brave men who stormed Normandy Beach on June 6, 1944, and began the Allied Campaign that resulted in the total surrender of the Nazi Regime in Germany. In addition to the usual zone business, **Jim Howard**, and **Connie Lalonde**, rehearsed the workshop, "Journalling," which they will present at the convention. Judging by the reaction from people at the luncheon, this workshop should be highly successful at the Convention.

The Northeastern Zone is also doing a superb job growing membership. **Sandy Lashua** as well as the entire membership of the zone should be commended for their success. Northeastern Zone has won the RENY incentive grant for growing membership two times in the last three years.

Prior to our visit, I received an email from Kristen Valentine from the RENY office informing me that our state-wide membership has fallen below 10,000 members for the first time since RENY's inception. We are not adding new members at a sufficient rate to offset the loss of members who let their membership lapse or members who sadly enough pass away. We need to reverse this trend and stabilize membership. It is one of the two most important challenges we face as an organization.



See more from Jim on the next page....

President's Message, continued

The other important challenge RENY faces is a financial one. Many have said that the Federal Government has a spending problem, not a revenue problem. RENY has the exact opposite situation. We do not generate enough revenue to cover our expenses.

The President's Appeal is one of the largest sources of income for RENY and serves to reduce the gap between our income and expenses. This year we mailed a letter with a Valentine's Day theme asking members to show a little love to RENY by donating to the **President's Appeal**. We included a promise to write a personal thank you note to all members donating a minimum amount of \$100.

Kathi Bassett, Kris Valentine, my wife, Patricia, and I were thrilled by the response. The fiscal year is not half-way over and we received a total of 162 gifts of \$100 or more. I wrote a personal thank you to all 162 members. My wife was kind enough to help me with this project by addressing and adding postage to the thank you notes. A special thank you to all who contributed to the President's Appeal regardless of the amount. All the funds contributed are applied directly to the operating budget of RENY and move us closer to a balanced budget.

I close my message by asking members who have not contributed to the President's Appeal to consider doing so. The most recent totals show that we have raised \$49,785.09 toward our goal of \$65,000.

Thank you for your support and continuing membership in RENY. It is much appreciated and needed. As always feel free to email me with questions or concerns at skijim@twcny.rr.com



Membership Report

By Dell Ford Jordan, VP for Membership

Our membership is in a steady decline. But, we are not giving up! WE WILL STEP UP OUR RECRUITING EFFORTS AND RECLAIM OUR NON-PAYING MEMBERS!

Stats/Gentle Reminders: During May 2024, our membership numbers dropped below 10,000; we are down to 9,839, with active members down to 4,546. Since October 2023, we increased our members by 87. It saddens me to say that during that same time period we had 340 members transitioning. Let's rekindle and stir up our compassion and love for RENY and sell our association to newly retired and convince those who haven't renewed, to renew. Effective January 1, 2024 our Annual Dues are now \$39.00; Lifetime Dues are now \$900.00.

The Membership Team will hold our committee meeting at the NYS Convention on Monday, October 7, 2024 in the Chautauqua Room at 4:00 PM. We will brainstorm more ideas on how to increase membership and how to implement those ideas. If anyone who is not going to the Convention and you have an idea(s) please share it with us by email to reny.dfjordjordan@yahoo.com.

WE THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU DO AND WILL DO FOR RENY.



Robert R. DeCormier Memorial Trust Report

By Richard Brogowski. Trustee

Some of you may be unaware of the **Robert R DeCormier** Memorial Trust Committee and perhaps many do not know its history.

In 1951, at a meeting in Rochester, New York, a group of retired teachers from six different zones – Central, Central Western, Eastern, Southern, Southeastern, and Western voted to organize a state group and **Robert R. DeCormier** was asked to be the first president. The New York State Retired Teachers Association (NYSRTA) was founded. Within a year 4 more zones - Long Island, Northern, North Central, and Northeastern joined the Association.

As the president of this new retired teachers' group, Robert had two major projects in mind. He wanted to obtain insurance for retired educators, and to provide a retirement home that retired teachers could afford.

He successfully set up an insurance plan and saw the completion of a retirement complex in Dewitt, NY called York Manor. This complex consisted of a large building, cottages, and a duplex. He worked hard with state and federal legislation as well as Friendly Services.

In 1966, **Robert R. DeCormier** slipped when he was closing his garage door. The door came down on him and he died from his injuries. In 1967 the members of NYSRTA voted to honor his memory as the first president of the organization. They set up an irrevocable trust and named it the "**Robert R. DeCormier** Rehabilitation Center Trust," to be governed and overseen by six trustees.

In 1970 an amendment was made, and in 1971 the trustees adopted a resolution to change the name to the **Robert R. DeCormier** Memorial Trust Fund, whose main purpose was to provide non-contractual aid and relief for needy retired teachers. In 1995, the York Manor was sold because its expenses became larger than its income.

In 2022 the trust fund distributed \$32,300 in monthly stipends and \$20,583 in special needs grants. In 2023 the trust fund distributed \$31,600 in monthly stipends and \$19,317 in special needs grants. Individuals who could not afford repairs on their home, had overwhelming dental and medical bills, or members that were confronted with numerous monetary challenges were some of the recipients of the funds.

All zones and units in RENY are asked to send the trust an annual donation, and many do so. Individuals are also asked to donate and every donation, large or small, is appreciated. Very recently, a much-appreciated anonymous donation of \$12,000 was received.

If you would like to help assist retired teachers in financial need you can send your tax deductible donation, made out to Robert R. DeCormier Memorial Trust Fund and mail it to **Robert R. DeCormier Memorial Trust Fund, c/o Mary Lou Davis, Treasurer, 125 Andrews Road, LaGrangeville, NY 12540-6064.**

PLEASE DO NOT SEND THESE DONATIONS TO THE OFFICE



Friendly Service Report

By Lois Thornberg*CR, VP for Membership

“Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.” Leo Busciglia

Studies have shown that sharing good thoughts and kind gestures with others can make you feel better and improve your mood. Sharing these thoughts and kind gestures has become known as “Paying-It- Forward.” Simply put, it is when someone does a kind and selfless gesture for another then instead of paying that person back, in return they do something kind to someone else. These acts can become contagious, spreading good feelings across the general population. The main principle of paying it forward is that you do a good deed or kind gesture without the expectation of anything in return. Your one single act of kindness may create a ripple effect.

So how do you go about paying it forward? There are so many ways that occur in your normal everyday routine where you can pay it forward.

- ◇ Smile - at your neighbors and coworkers, when you meet someone at an entrance or door, when interacting with the man/woman who is serving you, or just maybe someone you pass on the street.
- ◇ Pay attention to those who are speaking and listen to what they have to say. We tend to hear people but not actually listen so that we may understand their thoughts and needs.
- ◇ Thank you and Please can go a long way- those who serve you, a kind gesture or thought shared from someone you know or a stranger you pass on the street.
- ◇ Simple notes placed in unusual places- the mirror in the restroom, someone’s windshield, your coworker’s desk, a lunch bag/box, on the fridge door, a locker door in the gym.
- ◇ Share your time and yourself- volunteer at a local organization, school, retirement home, hospital, animal shelter, or library.

I challenge each and every one of you to make today the start of a policy to bring more sunshine, hope, and happiness into someone’s life by sharing a simple act of kindness daily! Remember- small acts can become contagious and maybe we can change the world! Thank you in advance.



Legislative Action Committee

By Janice Mullins, Sub Committee Chair

The RENY Legislative Action Committee is always working on your behalf to advocate for legislation regarding issues important to our retiree members. In March we concentrated our efforts on protecting retiree health benefits by encouraging our NYS Assembly and Senate representatives to support the Health Equity for Retirees Act (HERA) (A07866/SO8388). Many of them became cosponsors of this legislation.

See more from Janice on the next page...

Legislative Action Committee Report, Continued

In fact, 151 Assembly and Senate representatives across NYS agreed that public employers should be prevented from diminishing the health benefits under which public employees retired by forcing them into lesser plans. It is disappointing that despite so many representatives being behind the legislation, it did not get to the chamber floors for a vote. We will continue to watch for the reintroduction of HERA in the next legislative session. RENY voices joined those of many public employer retirees to make HERA a reality, and we will not give up.

Our main Federal Priorities focused on two issues that retirees rely on for survival, namely protecting and expanding Medicare and Medicaid, and Social Security. Some refer to them as entitlement programs. Retirees over the age of 65 refer to them as lifelines. For those of us lucky enough to reach that age, we paid into these programs throughout our employment history knowing that these lifelines would be there for us at a time when working may no longer be an option. We spoke to NYS Senate and Congressional Representatives asking for their support of S842 (Medicare and Medicaid Dental, Vision and Hearing Benefit Act) and H.R. 1046 (Social Security Expansion Act). Both bills remain in committee.

The upcoming November elections will give you the opportunity to support the candidates that you feel will represent your best interests as retirees. Remember that phrase by Sister Mary Clarence in Sister Act 2— “If you wanna be somebody, if you wanna go somewhere, you better wake up and pay attention....” Are you paying attention? Do you know what policies your candidate of choice supports? Do you know what they won’t support? Do you know the policies being proposed by each party, Republicans and Democrats? What is each Party’s Platform for the 2024 election? We hear mention of “Project 2025” and “The Lincoln Project”. What are they and will they be factored into the future of America?

So much is at stake in this election beyond retiree issues. As RENY members we make no candidate endorsements, your vote, your choice. As educators, planning and research went into every lesson we prepared. Take the time to become well informed as you cast your vote in November.



Nominations Report

By Judith Farmer*CR, Committee Chair

The election of officers will be held at the October 8, 2024, RENY Annual Meeting at Turning Stone Casino and Resort. The following have indicated their willingness to serve:

President	Gayla LePage	Secretary	Mary Lou Wood
Sr. vice president	Judith Farmer*CR	Vice president for Membership	No nominee*
Treasurer	Leigh Powell*CR	Vice president for Friendly Service	Judy Corigliano
	Vice president for Legislative Action	Janice Mullins	

***Dell Ford Jordan** has served three terms as vice president for Membership. She has agreed to serve another term if there are no nominations for that office.

Nominations can be made from the floor.



Bylaws Committee Report **By William Tenity, Committee Chair**

The bylaws committee is presenting two proposed bylaw changes for consideration at the 2024 Annual Meeting, **Proposition AMQ** (Annual Meeting Quorum) **2024**, and **proposition CTNOTHCC** (Changing the Name of the Health Care Committee) **2024** as requested by the president and the Board of Directors at the March 14, 2024 Board of Directors Meeting. The proposed bylaws are attached and were approved by the Board at the July meeting. It is now up to the zones to discuss and approve them at their annual meetings and report their results to the Bylaws chair one week before the Annual Meeting in October. If two-thirds (2/3rds) of the zones vote to approve one or both of them, they will be presented to the membership at the Annual Meeting for approval.

1. Proposition AMQ (Annual Meeting Quorum) 2024

2. **Rationale:** Our Bylaws state: ARTICLE VII, Section 1, 363-365... “One hundred (100)
3. accredited delegates in attendance at each of the business sessions shall constitute a
4. quorum” . This required number could very quickly be problematic and prevent us from
5. doing business. At our 2023 October Annual Meeting the Credentials Committee reported
6. that there were 119 accredited delegates in attendance. That’s not a whole lot above the
7. necessary number. The membership is declining, which means that the number of
8. delegates allotted to each zone will also drop, lowering the total maximum number
9. of delegates based on membership. Many of our long time loyal members are no longer
10. attending due to age, mobility concerns, costs. A weather incident in one (or more) areas
11. of the state could easily decrease attendance at the last minute. October snow storms are
12. not uncommon. This Bylaw proposes that the current requirement of 100 be changed
13. Before the potential problem becomes a reality.

14. Main Amendment

15. **Presently** **ARTICLE VII** *In Bylaws booklet p. 11*
16. **Annual Meeting, Annual Workshop, and Annual Convention**

17. **Section 1.** The Annual Meeting of the Association shall be held during the month of
18. October or at such time and place as the Board of Directors may designate.
19. Voting members at the Annual Meeting shall be called delegates. Delegate count
20. is based upon membership that is current on July 1st of the year in which the
21. Annual Meeting is held. **One hundred (100)** accredited delegates in attendance
22. at each of the business sessions shall constitute a quorum.

23. Motion

24. **Amend Article VII Section 1** by eliminating the following:
25. Line 364: **One hundred (100)**

Bylaws Committee Report, Continued

26. **Amend Article XI, Section 2** by adding the following:

27. Line 757: **two-thirds (2/3rds)**.

28. **New**

ARTICLE VII

In bylaws booklet p. 11

28. **Annual Meeting, Annual Workshop, Annual Convention**

30. **Section 1.** The Annual Meeting of the Association shall be held during the month of
31. October or at such time and place as the Board of Directors may designate.
32. Voting members at the Annual Meeting shall be called delegates. Delegate count
33. Is based upon membership that is current on July 1st of the year in which the
34. Annual Meeting is held. **Two-thirds (2/3rds)** of the accredited delegates in
35. Attendance at each of the business sessions shall constitute a quorum.

1. **Proposition CTNOTHCC (Changing the Name of the Health Care Committee) 2024**

2. **Rationale:** It was moved by the Board of Directors at the March 2024 meeting to change
3. the name of the Health Care Committee to the retiree Health Benefits Committee. The
4. Primary focus of this committee would be in providing information and advisement,
5. when requested, on retiree health insurance benefits throughout NY State, especially those
6. benefits provided by the school districts to the retiree. This newly designated committee
7. would also, periodically provide health care information. This would require changes to
8. Article IX, Cabinet - Assigned Positions and Committees, Section 3, line 537 and
9. Article X, Organization and Duties of Standing Committees, Section 8, lines 661-666.

10. **Main Amendment**

11. **Presently**

ARTICLE IX

In Bylaws booklet p. 17

12. **Cabinet - Assigned Positions and Committees**

13. **Section 3. Standing Committees** shall be:

- 14. (a) Annual Workshop
- 15. (b) Bylaws
- 16. (c)Certificate of Recognition
- 17. (d) Community Service
- 18. (e)Credentials
- 19. (f) Finance and Budget
- 20. (g) Friendly Service
- 21. (h) **Health Care**
- 22. (i) History
- 23. (j) Legislative Action
- 24. (k) Membership
- 25. (l) Nominations
- 26. (m) Personnel
- 27. (n) Public Relations

Bylaws Committee Report, Continued

- 28. (o) Resolutions
- 29. (p) Site

30. Motion

- 31. **Amend Article IX, Section 3** by eliminating the following:
- 32. Line 537: **(h) Health Care**

- 33. **Amend Article IX, Section 3** by adding the following:
- 34. Line 537: **(h) Retiree Health Benefits Committee**

- 35. **New** **ARTICLE IX** *In Bylaws booklet p. 7*
- 36. **Cabinet - Assigned Positions and Committees**

- 37. **Section 3. Standing Committees** shall be:
- 38. (a) Annual Workshop
- 39. (b) Bylaws
- 40. (c)Certificate of Recognition
- 41. (d) Community Service
- 42. (e)Credentials
- 43. (f) Finance and Budget
- 44. (g) Friendly Service
- 45. (h) **Retiree Health Benefits Committee**
- 46. (i) History
- 47. (j) Legislative Action
- 48. (k) Membership
- 49. (l) Nominations
- 50. (m) Personnel
- 51. (n) Public Relations
- 52. (o) Resolutions
- 53. (p) Site

54. Main Amendment

- 55. **Presently** **ARTICLE X** *In Bylaws booklet p. 20*
- 56. **Organization and Duties of Standing Committees**

- 57. **Section 8 The Health Care Committee** shall consist of at least one (1) member
- 58. from each zone designated by the zone and a chair appointed by the President.
- 59. **The function of this committee shall be to provide members of the**
- 60. **Association with information and assistance so they may make informed choices**
- 61. **on health care.**

62. Motion

- 63. **Amend Article X, Section 8** by eliminating the following:
- 64. Line 661-666: **The Health Care Committee....The function of this committee shall**

Bylaws Committee Report, Continued

65. be to provide members of the Association with information and assistance so
66. they may make informed choices on health care.
67. **Amend Article XI, Section 8** by adding the following:
68. Line 661-666: **Retiree Health Benefits Committee**...the primary focus of this
69. committee would be in providing information and advisement, when requested on,
70. Retiree health insurance benefits throughout NY State, especially those
71. benefits provided by school districts to the retiree. This newly designated committee
72. would also, periodically provide health care information.

73. **New**

ARTICLE IX

In Bylaws booklet p. 20

74. **Organization and Duties of Standing Committees**

75. **Section 8. The Retiree Health Benefits Committee** shall consist of at least one (1)
76. member from each zone designated by the zone and a chair appointed by the President.
77. The primary focus of this committee would be in providing information and advisement, when
78. requested on, retiree health insurance benefits throughout NY State, especially those
79. benefits provided by school districts to the retiree. This newly designated committee
80. would also, periodically provide health care information.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair: **William Tenity CZ**

Pete Atchinson NEZ

President Emeritus Carlyle T. Company*CR NCZ

Bruce Croucher CWZ

Helen Horing SEZ

*DON'T FORGET
TO STOP
AND
SMELL THE
FLOWERS*



73RD ANNUAL MEETING & CONVENTION 2024

"HIT THE ADIRONDACK TRAIL"

Hosted by RENY Northeastern Zone

Monday, October 7, 2024

2:00pm - 5:00pm - Registration and Welcome Reception

Coffee, Tea, Danish Pastry

Basket Raffles on Sale

6:00pm - Dinner in the Oneida Room

**Following Dinner: Certificate of Recognition Award and
Keynote Speaker, Dan Berggren**

Tuesday, October 8, 2024

7:30am - Breakfast Buffet - Oneida Room

9:00am - 11:00am - Registration

9:00am - 10:00am - Session 1 Workshops

10:30am - 11:30am - Session 2 Workshops

12:00pm - Lunch - Oneida Room

1:15pm - 4:30pm - Annual Meeting Session 1

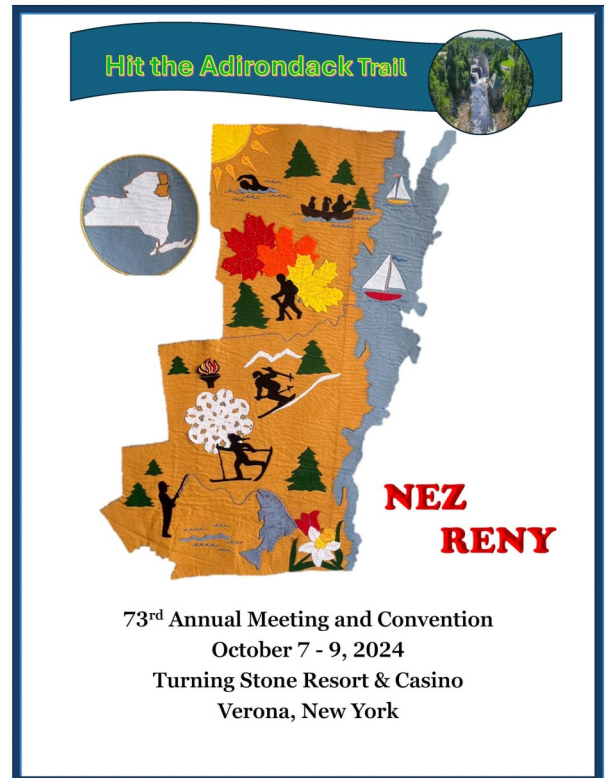
5:00pm - Cocktail Party Mohawk Room (cash bar)

The theme of this years cocktail party is "Black Fly Ball". Suggested attire is hiking boots, jeans and Buffalo Plaid. Show us your best Adirondack attire!

6:00pm - Buffet Dinner - Oneida Room

Entertainment after Dinner - Mohawk Room (cash bar)

Trivia Night!!!



Keynote Speaker, Dan Berggren, Tradition Based Songsmith

"Folk Roots and Branches"

Introduced by Marti Martin

This will be a participation concert with songs rich in tradition about hard-working people and taking care of our planet and each other. It is all woven together with humor and stories of community. Dan Berggren is a tradition-based songsmith who writes with honesty, humor, and a strong sense of place. With roots firmly in the Adirondacks where he was raised on land that had been in the family for five generations, his music has branched out across many borders in the U.S. and overseas. The award-winning musician and educator held various jobs before devoting his life to music full time. He worked in the woods with a forest ranger and a surveyor, worked as a radio producer, writer and announcer for the American Network Europe, and worked as a professor of audio and radio studies for 27 years at the State University of New York at Fredonia. Dan is currently a Trustee Emeritus of Great Camp Sagamore, co-host and coproducer of Caffè Lena's weekly online children's program Folk Club Kids, and owner of Sleeping Giant Records which has produced over twenty albums of original and traditional folk music.

Session One - 9:00am - 10:00am (Choose 1 of the Following)

"Adirondack Voices"

Introducer: Marti Martin

Presenter: Dan Berggren

Description: This is a musical guided tour through the backroads of Adirondack folklife, exploring the stories and songs of lumberjacks, farmers, poets, and people just trying to get by.

About Presenter: See information under keynote speaker. Awards include: Art and Literary Award, NYS Outdoor Education Association; Heritage Award, Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks; Education Award, Adirondack Mountain Club; President's Award for Excellence in Teaching, SUNY Fredonia; Distinguished Alumni Citation, St. Lawrence University; Community Service Award, Adirondack Park Institute

"Journaling Through Life and Beyond"

Introducers: The presenters will introduce each other.

Presenters: Connie Lalonde and James Howard, Jr.

Description: Connie and James will share their belief that noting in hard copy form even the most trivial events might someday be valuable building blocks to both past and future for families and communities.

About Presenters: James Howard enjoyed over 50 years of teaching via a journey through a fifth grade classroom, district professional development director, and elementary school administration. He retired in 2017 after serving as an instructor for Teacher and Administration Preparation courses at SUNY Plattsburgh for eight years. He has kept a personal journal for the past 10 years, recently published part one of a three part memoir, Reflections on a Father and His Son. Connie taught in the Peru Central School District for 25 years at the elementary level, as an AIS math teacher, and in school counseling. Since retiring, Connie has volunteered at the local hospital and served on the board of the Kent-Delord House Museum, satisfying her love of history.

"An Overview of the History of NYSRTA/RENY (1951-2024)"

Introducers: The presenters will introduce each other.

Presenters: Kevin Mulligan*CR and Gayla LePage

Description: NYSRTA, doing business as RENY is the oldest organization of Retired Educators in New York State. How it started and progressed will be discussed in the workshop. The insights and oversights of the founder and 15 year President of NYSRTA will be discussed. Have we lived up to his vision?

About Presenters: Kevin served as President of RENY from 2018-2021. He currently serves as the Immediate Past President for RENY and the President of the Northeastern Zone. He was a social studies teacher for 20 years and a school administrator for 14. Gayla is the current Sr. VP for RENY, President of the Northern Zone, and the anticipated President of RENY starting in November 2024. Gayla was an English teacher at Brushton-Moira CSD for 32 years primarily teaching seventh grade English.

"Take the First Step!"

Introducer: Tracey Howard

Presenter: Kathy Caron

Description: The collaboration and partnership of local, regional, and state entities in the Adirondack-Lake Champlain Region provides folks from all ages, backgrounds and ability levels the opportunity to immerse themselves in nature. Physical, social, and fun events are available to **KEEP ON MOVING**. Come find out how these groups come together and the opportunities available for so many. Through personal experience and mixed media, meet the folks who help each other **hit the nature trail!!!**

About Presenter: Kathy Caron has been happily retired from Peru Central School for five years. In her role at Peru, she enjoyed her career as a special education teacher as well as many years spent as a CSE/CPSE/504 chairperson. As a retiree, she enjoys spending time with her granddaughters, taking road trips, gardening, and spending time with friends, both new and old. Of course, Kathy also enjoys the outdoors in the beautiful North Country.

Session Two - 10:30am - 11:30am (Choose 1 of the Following)

"A Virtual Tour of the Rockwell Kent Gallery"

Introducer: Judy Corigliano

Presenters: Sandy Lashua and Carol Lowery

Description: Come learn about Rockwell Kent's art as influenced by his years at Asgaard Farm in the Adirondacks. Images and history of Kent's artwork will be shared through photos and presentations by two Docents from the Plattsburgh State Art Museum. He wasn't just an artist! Learn more about his many other accomplishments.

About Presenters: Sandy and Carol spent their lifetime careers as teachers in area schools. For over twenty years they have dedicated time learning about Rockwell Kent and other art exhibited in the galleries at the Plattsburgh State Art Museum. They both enjoy sharing the information as Docents by giving tours as groups ranging from youngsters to middle school and high school students to residents in assisted living and nursing homes in the area.

"TRS"

Introducer: Dr. Jim Newell, Association President

Description: As in past years, representatives from TRS will provide information about the current status of the New York State Teachers' Retirement System.

"What County Soil and Water Districts Can Do for You"

Introducer: Gayla LePage

Presenter: Chastity Miller

Description: Each county in NYS has a Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). This presentation will highlight what a SWCD does, why they are important, and what they can do for you. Soil and Water Conservation Districts protect New York's natural resources, focusing on environmental planning and conservation best practices. In addition, SWCD also focuses on education and outreach to all citizens.

About Presenter: Chastity Miller is the District Manager for the Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District. She has been in this position for over sixteen years and has over twenty five plus years working in the environmental field. She manages a staff of five focusing on Northern New York, but has also served as the president of the New York State Conservation District Employee's Association.

"Land of Fire, Land of Ice"

Introducer: Betty Cook

Presenter: Holly Chorba

Description: A flight to Iceland from JFK takes only 5 1/2 hours...or visit this island instantly by attending this workshop. Learn about this popular travel destination, largely English speaking, and the most peaceful nation in the world. Hear updates regarding continual formation via plate tectonics and volcanic activity. Watch two short videos from Holly's 2021 trip to the Land of Fire and Ice: "Geography and Architecture" and the "People, Culture, and Ecology."

About Presenter: Holly employs photography and story-telling as a way to better see the beauty and wonder of the world and to interpret it and share it with others. She used this skill in teaching biology and chemistry at Brushton-Moira Central School and as an administrator at BMCS and Potsdam Central School. Following retirement Holly traveled more extensively and developed her skills to continue educating and entertaining adults in travel clubs, adult living facilities, churches, continuing education classes and professional groups.



ASK YOUR ZONE PRESIDENT
HOW TO BECOME A DELEGATE
SO YOU CAN JOIN IN ON THE FUN!

THE RENY 73rd ANNUAL CONVENTION

Hosted by Northeastern Zone

Turning Stone Resort Casino

Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday October 7-9, 2024

Registration Monday, 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Monday: REGISTRATION BEGINS 2:00pm

* Welcome Reception – Coffee,
Tea, and Danish pastry @ Registration

* Special Recognition Presentation

* Keynote Speaker

Tuesday

* Breakfast
* Workshops
* Lunch
* Annual Meeting – Session 1
* Cocktail Party (cash bar)
* Dinner
* Entertainment

Wednesday

* Breakfast
* Annual Meeting – Session 2

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 1, 2024

Tower rooms are very limited and are on a first come first served basis. Once tower is full, guests will be placed in the hotel.

REGISTRATION FORM – ANNUAL CONVENTION --- OCTOBER 7-9, 2024

NAME _____ TELEPHONE # _____

ADDRESS _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____ (confirmation will be emailed to you)

SHARING ROOM WITH _____

ACCOMMODATIONS

FULL PACKAGE - Monday and Tuesday Nights

(Includes dinner Monday evening, all meals Tuesday, breakfast on Wednesday)

TRIPLE: \$476 Per Person _____ DOUBLE: \$536 Per Person _____ SINGLE: \$736 Per Person _____

All rates include applicable sales tax and dining room gratuities.

A CREDIT CARD WILL BE MANDATORY UPON CHECK-IN

NON-SMOKING _____ SMOKING _____ HANDICAP _____

DAILY RATES - Daily Rates include overnight accommodations, plus dinner, breakfast, lunch

TRIPLE: \$255 Per Person _____ DOUBLE: \$285 Per Person _____ SINGLE: \$390 Per Person _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____

DEPARTURE DATE _____

Please clip and mail completed form to:

Turning Stone Resort Casino

Attn: Accommodations Dept. 5218 Patrick Road, Verona, NY 13478

Upon receipt of a confirmation letter from Turning Stone Resort Casino, please call 1-800-771-7711 with your confirmation number to guarantee your room with credit card.

Cancellations must be made prior to September 25 to avoid penalty of forfeiture of the food and beverage portion of the package.

If you would like to attend the Annual Convention as a Day Guest
please fill out the form below

REGISTRATION FORM – DAY GUEST ONLY
TURNING STONE RESORT CASINO
THE NYSRTA 73rd ANNUAL CONVENTION
ANNUAL WORKSHOP & ANNUAL MEETING

OCTOBER 7, 2024 – October 9, 2024

NAME _____ TELEPHONE # _____

ADDRESS _____

Please check the appropriate meals.

WEDNESDAY ☐ Dinner (\$100)

Dinner Choice:

The Corporate Buffet _____

THURSDAY ☐ Breakfast (\$50) ☐ Lunch (\$50) ☐ Dinner (\$100)

Dinner Choice:

Evening Gathering Dinner Buffett _____

FRIDAY ☐ Breakfast (\$50)

*Please clip this form and mail with a check made out to NYSRTA
for the total amount to:*

Mary Kathleen Bassett, EOM
RENY
PO Box 490
Amsterdam, NY 12010

REGISTRATION
DEADLINE:
SEPTEMBER 1, 2024

CENTRAL ZONE

Submitted by Ray Pitcher, Zone President and Mary Ann Luciano, Public Relations Chair

On Tuesday, September 9, 2024, RENY of Oswego will be hosting the Central Zone's Annual Meeting at the Half-Shire in Richland, NY. Starting from 10 to 10:30 with a Meet and Greet, a luncheon at noon, and a tour at 1 p.m. Lunch costs \$28. For your reservation send your full name, local zone name, and make checks payable to RENY of Oswego. Send this information with your check to: **Lynn Grandjean**, 737 Co. Rte.1, Oswego NY 13126

The Central Zone Committees met on July 17 at Theodore's Restaurant in Canastota. The Committees conducted Zone business including discussion of the delegation appointments for the state convention, report on legislation, and planning for the Zone annual meeting. **Ray Pitcher** and **Mary Ann Luciano** presented this year's RENY Hudson and Kramer Memorial active educator award to Julie Zick of the Greene Central School District on May 17 during the Elementary School's Morning Program. Ms. Zick serves as the librarian for the district's primary and intermediate schools. This grant will support STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) activities and materials. Congratulations to Julie and thank you to Zone members, **Storm Hammond**, **Chris Granan**, **Darlene Jarvis**, Mary Ann, and Ray who worked on the application and reviewed the grant applications. Thank you to others who distributed the grant information and also reviewed the applications.

RENY of Oswego recently enjoyed a delicious buffet at RFH's in Phoenix for their Spring luncheon. Two of the scholarship winners, Trinity Lannon and Gabby Hitchcock and their parents joined them. The scholarship awards were presented by President **Colette Astoria** and Scholarship Chair **Darlene Jarvis**.

RENY Chenango announced their future educator scholarship winner, Sean O'Connor at their Spring Meeting at the Earlville Opera House. Sean is planning to become a visual arts educator, first attending Mohawk Valley Community College in the Central Zone and then SUNY Potsdam. President **Mary Ann Luciano** met with Sean and his parents at the Sherburne-Earlville Central School District's Awards Evening. Treasurer **Stephen Runion** presented Sean a \$1,000 check for his award.

This summer, RENY Chenango is presenting informal meetings and workshops. The first workshop on July 24 featured international print artist Carolynne Whitefeather working with educators on card making. On Election Day, the unit will host a buffet breakfast for members and other area retired educators.

The RENY/Onondaga County Retired Teachers' Association held the first of their 2024 luncheon meetings on May 22 at Twin Trees III in North Syracuse and their second on July 16 at Barbagallo's Restaurant in East Syracuse. A third will be on September 19.



CENTRAL WESTERN ZONE

Submitted by Mary Beth Tyndall, Zone President

2024 Barrie Flegel Memorial Active Educator Grants

From Patricia and Gary Dick

We could not have done the Grant this year, without the help of our great committee. Members include **Betty Pilato** who offered to be Treasurer for our Grant as part of her CWZ Treasurer duties, and also helped evaluate the applications, **Carol Lord*CR** who served as both the person getting the Certificates out to the winners and judge for evaluating the grant applications, **Sandy Kushner** and **Elaine Leasure** as active members with ideas and support, **Kathy Grandjean** for getting us copies of the applications and doing our bulk mailing, **Jane Crosby** for getting us the tickets to mail, **John Hogan*CR** and **Ann and Gene Czajkowski** for evaluating the applications. Ann was also instrumental in providing the framework for us to continue this Grant.

Central Western Zone is proud to announce the 2024 Recipients of the Barrie Flegel Active Educator Grants totaling \$2025:

Allegany	Brandy Hutchison	Genesee Valley Central
Monroe	Kimberly Stephenson	Monroe2-Orleans BOCES
Monroe	Mitchell Young	Greece CSD
Ontario	Jessica Mattloli	Canandaigua Academy
Orleans	Allison Larter	Kendall Central
Steuben	Erica Myers	Mt. Morris/Livingston
Steuben	Rebecca Canfield	Wayland-Cohocton
Wyoming	Gabrielle Marti	Perry Central



Pictured is **Jane Behnk** on right, presenting a certificate to the Barry Flegel grant recipient

All are cordially invited to attend!
CWZ Annual Meeting
September 12, 2024
9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

King's Catering & Party House
Routes 5 & 20
Canandaigua, NY
Picnic buffet lunch and entertainment by the Oasis Tappers
\$29 per person
RSVP by September 1st to Betty Pilato

ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS

EASTERN ZONE

Submitted by Pamela Love, Public Relations Chair

President of RENY/Eastern Zone, **Janice Mullins** reports that the RENY/Eastern Zone Annual Meeting will be held on Thursday, September 19, 2024 at the Turf Tavern, Scotia NY. If you are newly retired or have not attended this meeting, you are certainly welcome to join us.

RENY/Eastern Zone's Community Service Chairperson, **Joyce Notarnicola** reports that there are openings for volunteers at the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern NY (965 Albany-Shaker Rd. Latham) on Wednesday, August 14th. from 1-3 p.m. and Thursday, October 24th. from 1-3 p.m. We will be sorting donated food. Closed toe shoes are required. Please email her (jnotar50@hotmail.com) or call her (518) 929-6151 at least one week ahead of time to reserve a spot.

RENY/Eastern Zone Units have been having their Spring Meetings: Amsterdam Retired Teachers Unit President, **Ann Marie Dufresne** said that they held their annual June luncheon at the Raindancer Restaurant in Amsterdam honoring new retirees. The unit gave a \$1,500 scholarship to Jasmine Pena. She will be attending Buffalo State College with intention of becoming a teacher in Amsterdam.

Columbia County Unit President, **Joan Mattson**, said that they held their Spring meeting at Yanni's on May 30th. Heidi Bloc, from Columbia County Land Conservancy, gave an informative talk about activities and educational projects available.

Delaware County Unit President, **Patricia Reynolds** reports that the Spring Meeting held in May included a speaker from Cornell Cooperative Extension who gave a power point presentation on creating a pollinator paradise in your garden area. Community service project for the unit was a donation to Safe Against Violence.

Capital Region (RCRTA) President, **Marjorie Leibowitz** said that they held their luncheon meeting in June and welcomed, RENY Eastern Zone President, **Janice Mullins**, who spoke about present state legislation concerning public education issues. **Mary Ellen Caporta**, the units' scholarship chairperson, reported that Casey Byrne from Lansingburgh will receive RCRTA's \$1,000 Scholarship. She will be attending Skidmore College this fall and majoring in Elementary Education with a focus on science, Kyle Church from East Greenbush will receive RCRTA's \$500 Merit Award and she will be attending Russell Sage in the fall, majoring in Early Childhood Education.

Saratoga Springs Unit President, **Kenneth Bollerud** reports that his unit has been meeting once a month during the school year. They have had a speaker for all of their meetings. Their meetings have been held on the second Monday of the month at the Ripe Tomato Restaurant in Malta. **Karen Flewelling** who has been going to Africa for years to provide financial aid for building wells and supplies for schools was one of the speakers and this unit supports her with financial contributions.



LONG ISLAND ZONE

Submitted by Eileen Holmes*CR, Zone President

The Long Island Zone successfully completed its search for the 2024 Hudson - Kramer Memorial Grant winner Genevieve Caputo, a 5th grade teacher in the East Moriches School district was chosen for her proposal "A Year of Literacy Instruction and Enrichment". Ms. Caputo will use the grant to purchase sets of age-appropriate novels that portray the lives of children, thereby creating connections to the characters and providing an opening for conversations about ethics, respect, self-worth and decision making. Grant coordinator **Eileen Holmes*CR** presented the award on June 21st in Ms. Caputo's 5th grade classroom. LIZ judges had to decide between 18 worthy entries with proposals that ran from Adaptive equipment, Beekeeping, and Calming techniques through Yoga instruction! When they narrowed the choices down to 7, then 5, and finally to 2, they switched to a written ballot to finalize their choice and Ms. Caputo was the winner!



LIZ's Spring Luncheon/Meeting was held on May 22, 2024, and a highlight of the gathering was keynote speaker Tia Fulford. Ms. Fulford is the founder of "The Butterfly Effect Project", an organization that works to instill self-esteem, confidence, friendship and empathy among young girls. Ms. Fulford spoke of growing up on welfare in Flanders, the poorest section of Riverhead, a Black girl in a dysfunctional family: her mother was bi-polar, her father addicted to crack and her four older sisters unwed mothers by 16. Her story of success is inspiring. She is a published author and her Butterfly project now includes hundreds of students in school districts on eastern Long Island. LIZ made a monetary donation and a collection of personal-sized toiletries to her organization.

LIZ Community Service Chair **Angelo Grande*CR** announced a new community service project: The Warrior Ranch Foundation. Established in 2016, this foundation combines a passion for horses with a deep appreciation of our veterans. Veterans have the opportunity to help rescued horses, generally with grooming, feeding and ground exercises. During times of depression and suicidal thoughts, the ranch has turned many lives around. A donation ceremony is planned for late July at the Calverton ranch.

A joint LIZ/East End/ West End Board meeting was held on June 12th at the Hauppauge Diner. Donations were approved for the DeCormier Trust and The Warrior Ranch, nominations Chair **Kathy Grande*CR** announced the proposed slate of officers for next year, the Fall meeting/luncheon is set for September 25th at The Irish Coffee Pub and the next joint board meeting will be in August.

LIZ's East End unit held a gala luncheon on April 10, 2024 and Community Service chair **Rosemary McKinley** shared Thank You's from CAST, an east end community service group and from an after-school children's program that EERTA donated juice and snacks to. Two libraries (Center Moriches and Westhampton) were chosen to receive "Love Your Public Library" donations. The next EERTA luncheon will be held on September 4, 2024.

On June 10th, LIZ'S West End unit arranged a group outing to the Long Island Cradle of Aviation Museum which is located on Charles Lindbergh Blvd. in Garden City. More activities are being planned and the new WERTA board is hoping to revive a scholarship program with Adelphi University School of Education.

NORTH CENTRAL ZONE

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

NCZ website: www.renyncz.org

"Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere."

The above quote is a Chinese Proverb which was on the cover of our agenda card, created by **Pat Newell** for our Scholarship Luncheon on June 19th. We gathered at a new venue, The Hilton Garden Inn in Watertown, where we were seated in a bright, airy, cool room with three video screens and an excellent sound system.



The highlight of our June luncheon is meeting our scholarship winners. **John Gaffney**, Scholarship Chair, introduced our two winners: Olivia Adsit, a graduating senior from Alexandria Central School who plans to attend SUNY Cortland to become a chemistry teacher. Spencer Purvis, a graduating senior from South Jefferson Central School who plans to enter SUNY Cortland to major in physical education. Mary Perrine, Northern New York Community Foundation, presented \$1000 awards to our Future Educator winners. Pictured at left are Spencer, NCZ President **Rick Morris**, Olivia and Mary

NCZ was also honored to present the 2024 RENY Hudson-Kramer Memorial Grant for Professional Educators to Michael Comet, a biology teacher at South Lewis Central School. Michael also won this award in 2020 and used it to construct an observation hive for a honey bee colony at South Lewis Central School. He hopes to use this award to enhance and expand the honey production experience for his students and the community. NCZ thanks Ken Eysaman, NNYCF, for taking the professional photos of our award winners. Pictured at right is Association president **Dr. Jim Newell**, Michael, and Zone President **Rick Morris**.



After an Italian buffet, we watched and listened to an enlightening presentation by Suzanne Renzi-Falge, Executive Director of the Roswell P. Flower Memorial Library in Watertown. She showed a power point program about the history of this beautiful library which is on the National Register of Historic Places. It gave us a better appreciation of this jewel in our own neighborhood. **Patricia Dietrich** drew tickets for three \$50 awards for "Love Your Public Library". Drawings were held for the 50/50 raffle to benefit our scholarship fund. We enjoyed being with friends in a comfortable room on a very hot day in June!

Dates to Remember:

NCZ Executive Council Meeting- August 7, 2024 NNYCF, 10 a.m.

NCZ Fall Business Luncheon – September 11, 2024 The Hilton Garden Inn, Watertown

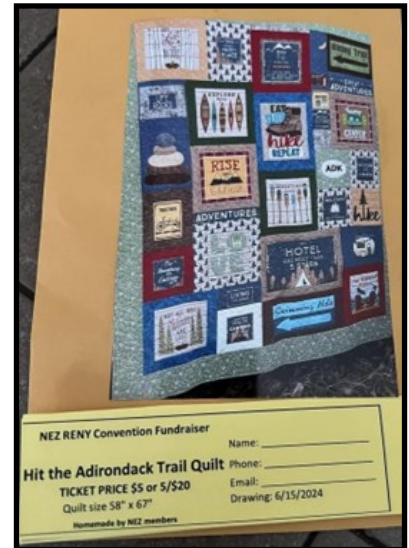
NORTHEASTERN ZONE

Submitted by Cindi LaFountain, Public Relations Chair

The countdown is on for hosting the convention this year. We hosted a concert by Beartracks that was a big hit with their fans that attended. We had the drawing for the quilt and the winner was thrilled. The quilt was made by three members who wish to remain anonymous. These two events were wonderful ways to raise money for the convention.



Pictured here is the quilt that was raffled off to raise money for convention costs.



At our monthly meeting **Connie Lalonde**, pictured at left, and **James Howard**, pictured at right, gave us a sneak peak of the presentation they will be doing at the convention this fall. Delegates will have something amazing to look forward to this fall.



We are doing a couple of food drives this month for our local food shelves that are struggling to feed those that are in great need.

Happy summer from the north! Enjoy!



DO FISH GO ON VACATION?

NO, BECAUSE THEY ARE ALWAYS IN SCHOOL!

NORTHERN ZONE

Submitted by Linda Crosby, Public Relations Chair

The Northern Zone is looking mighty green with all the rain and sunshine blasting our yards. Let's hope we all, in **every** corner of our great state, have a wonderful summer with lots of enjoyment in outdoor activities.

The NZ Board of Directors had a Zoom meeting on April 16 where members discussed the usual board business, such as, minutes, treasurer's report, President's report, and committee reports. Under committee reports, President **Gayla LePage** gave a brief membership report (numbers down slightly), a high school seniors scholarship report (some applications have been received), and a request for a volunteer to take over the NZ Historian duties. There was discussion about possible Community Service projects mentioned by our Secretary, **Betty Cook**. Under Public Relations, **Linda Crosby** (Chair) said five zones are awarding the \$1,000 Hudson-Kramer Memorial Grant for 2024 and NZ is scheduled for a 2025 award. Health Care Chair **Joe Russo** reminded us to get outside, enjoy Spring, work in our gardens and move! There was discussion about the Spring Membership meeting held on May 16 at the Franklin County House of History (meeting, tour, lunch in Malone). A brief meeting was also held on May 1 in Potsdam to prepare the Spring newsletters and meeting invitations for mailing.



Members of our zone did gather for the Spring Membership Meeting on May 16 at the historic Franklin County House of History in Malone, N.Y. The membership meeting was held in the Schryer Center, the newly renovated former carriage house, where volunteers have been working on preserving the records and artifacts of local area families; it is open to the public for research. After the usual business, the Treasurer's Report

and the new 2024-25 Budget were discussed and approved. Thank you to our treasurer, **Roxann Finley**, for her hard work on both documents.

After the meeting, volunteer Phyllis Carley, introduced us to the Schryer Center where anyone may research family artifacts/records; she described all the types of materials preserved in house. Many materials

date back to the Civil War and WWII. The carriage house (Schryer Center) and the mansion (the House of History, pictured at right) were built in 1863. We then proceeded to the House of History, where knowledgeable volunteers **Cheryl Learned** (also an NZ member) and Deb Ducharme, a retired Malone teacher, escorted us through the home's beautiful, historically preserved rooms. After the tour, our group enjoyed a relaxing lunch at As We Like It Cafe in Malone. (see picture above on left)



More from Linda on the next page

NORTHERN ZONE - Continued

Submitted by Linda Crosby, Public Relations Chair

President Gayla LePage reported on news from the state level including membership dues, highlights of the March 2024 state meeting and progress on planning the fall convention, which is being hosted by our neighbors, the Northeastern Zone; they are planning some great workshops. Our own NZ member, **Holly Chorba**, is presenting a workshop.

Committee reports included membership, scholarship applications (deadline was May19), health care (Joe says "Humor is healthy for you." He passed out "much needed humor cartoons"), bylaws, fall membership meeting date/locations (possibly, Power Dam, Locks in Massena??), and nominations (we need help in several positions, please).

Joe Russo, President of the Clifton-Fine-Edwards Unit, announced that the unit will be celebrating their 50th anniversary this year. Congratulations to a great group of retirees whose spirit makes the unit endure!! At their summer meeting, the unit will be awarding a \$1,500 senior scholarship, which is pretty impressive for a small unit.

Spring scholarship donations for the meeting totaled \$380 due to the generosity of our wonderful NZ members near and far. A NZ BOD meeting was held on July 17. Members and guests are always welcome at all meetings including the CFE Unit meetings.

SOUTHEASTERN ZONE

Submitted by Maureen Coffey, Public Relations Chair

"I'm a proud retired teacher! It's just like a regular teacher, only happier!"

I recently saw this on a tee shirt and it made me smile, so I thought I'd share it with all of you! Hope you enjoyed it, too.

On May 2, 2024, Zone President **Donna Harness** met with her Executive Board at Denny's in Newburgh. It was decided that a donation of \$1000 would be made to the DeCormier Fund. An additional \$400 would be sent to The World Central Kitchens. Donna also reminded everyone of a "Save the Date" for the SEZ Fall Meeting and Luncheon on Thursday, September 19th at 10:15 AM in the KAZ Americana Diner in Middletown. A speaker from M&T Bank will discuss interest rates and ways to budget during retirement. The meeting will be followed by lunch.

More from Maureen on the next page

SOUTHEASTERN ZONE - Continued

Submitted by Maureen Coffey, Public Relations Chair

Another topic discussed was setting up annual scholarships for two high school seniors. **Patti Deleo** made a



suggestion that was both unanimously and enthusiastically received by our board. One scholarship will be awarded to a senior heading to college. The second will be used to purchase necessary tools to set up a trade for a deserving BOCES student. A committee was formed and the scholarships will begin with the Class of 2025.

Southeastern Zone has been getting together for lunch on the very alliterative "Third Thursday" of the month at the KAZ Americana Diner in Mid-

dletown at 10 o'clock. It's very informal...if you're free and want to spend a few hours enjoying time with friends, just show up. No matter how many of us are there in any given month, we always have a fun afternoon!

The individual units of SEZ have also been busy. Sullivan County Retired Teachers Association had their luncheon on June 12th at Casa Mia Restaurant in Hurleyville. Gayle Irving, a volunteer with the Alzheimer's Association, spoke to members on the "Warning Signs of Alzheimer's Disease".

The Newburgh Area Retired Teachers Association (NARTA) held their annual meeting and luncheon on June 6th at the Lakeview House in Newburgh. The following members were elected to the Executive Committee for 2024 - 2025:

President -- **Laura Fraher** VP -- **Cheryl Fischer** Secretary -- JoAnn Knabb Treasurer -- **Ray Leduc**
Friendly Service -- JoAnn Knabb Membership -- **Ray Leduc** Scholarship Committee -- Jackie Borgia.
Congrats and good luck for a successful year!

NARTA also awarded two scholarships, each one worth \$2000. Alexander Antonelli, a graduate of Marlboro HS, will put his award to good use at SUNY New Paltz as he prepares to become a math teacher and Samantha Yozzo, a Newburgh Free Academy graduate, will put her scholarship money toward tuition at William Patterson University where she will study to become a music teacher.

The Mid-Hudson Area Retired Teachers Association (MARTA) also awarded scholarships to four deserving graduates. On May 29th, members honored the recipients at a Scholarship Breakfast at The Venue at Winding Hills. **Barbara Topps**, MARTA's president, submitted a beautiful write-up about each student as they received their \$3000 scholarship. Alexa Bennett, a senior from Port Jervis HS, will be attending Manhattanville University next year to study chemistry education and hopefully minor in coaching. Being a teacher has always been a dream of hers. She loves the idea of being someone who can change a student's life in just one year. Not only has she had multiple teachers who have done this exact thing for her, but she has had multiple coaches do the same. She has been involved with sports her whole life.

More from Maureen on the next page

SOUTHEASTERN ZONE - Continued

Submitted by Maureen Coffey, Public Relations Chair

She started at the age of 3 and she is going to continue sports in college and then coach when she finds her future job. These coaches and teachers are just some of the many people that she looks up to. Not only will this scholarship help her reach her dreams but it will help her parents with their dreams coming true, too. She thanked MARTA and everyone who chose her for this scholarship and thanked all who got her here today.

Michaela Murphy, a senior from Port Jervis HS, was honored to receive this scholarship and begin her journey at SUNY Cortland where she plans to major in Physical Education with a concentration in Adaptive Phys Ed. Becoming an educator has been a lifelong goal for her. From an early age she knew she wanted to become a teacher and give back to the community where she was raised. She has always admired the role of educators in shaping young minds and guiding them toward success. She was aware that teachers assume multiple responsibilities beyond "educator." Educators know students cannot learn without their basic needs being met. Therefore, they purchase snacks, clothing, toothbrushes, soap, and other items for their students. Witnessing her mom's dedication and impact as a teacher has inspired her to follow in her mom's footsteps. She's passionate about making a difference in people's lives, especially through education.

Chanel Taylor, a senior from Washingtonville HS, will attend Ramapo College of NJ to study Elementary Education. Chanel, first and foremost, thanked the Mid-Hudson Area Retired Teachers Association for choosing her to be a recipient of the MARTA scholarship. Being a teacher has always been something she has wanted to pursue. Seeing her father work as an educator and mold the young minds of this generation really solidified that she wanted to do the same. She also thanked her coach who motivated her with her running. She has now earned a spot on Ramapo's Track and Field Team. She is excited to study and soon join brilliant educators like the ones she has met in MARTA.

Abigail Eicher, a senior from Warwick HS, will attend Pratt Institute to study art education. Abigail, who was very grateful to have received her scholarship, knew when she was only thirteen that this was what she wanted after she job-shadowed a science teacher. She wants to teach students to find their voice through art, like she has. She was encouraged by amazing teachers her whole life to do things she never thought she could do. They helped her learn even when she struggled to understand. Each of her art teachers helped expand her knowledge and experience. One taught her foundational art skills. This, coupled with her teacher's high expectations and honest critiques, helped Abigail to continually improve her work. After she had that strong understanding of the basics, another teacher's fun projects allowed her to develop her own artistic style. Most recently, another teacher who happened to be a Pratt graduate herself, prepared Abigail for the professional art world. She pushed her to speak up in class and practice her teaching skills. Abigail attended a summer pre-college program which made her even more confident that Pratt's combined BFA/MA Art Education program will be the best way for her to achieve her goals. She thanked MARTA again and looks forward to joining the teaching community.

These six kids from NARTA and MARTA are truly impressive. They all want to make the world a better place and we know they will! We wish all of them much luck as they pursue their dreams!

So that's about all from SEZ. Keep smiling and enjoy being retired!

'til next time...



SOUTHERN ZONE

Submitted by Mary Lou Wood, Public Relations Chair

Summer is in full swing, sunshine, heat, humidity, beautiful flowers, birds singing, and gorgeous sunsets. We enjoy walking, talking, and picnicking with our family and friends.



It's sad to say we've lost a few friends along the way. Some special friends from several units and most recently, a very special friend, **Don Cutton *CR.**-pictured at left. Fifteen years ago it was Don who brought me into this organization setting me up as chair for Public Relations for the Zone. Don was dedicated to NYSRTA/RENY and served at the Unit, Zone, and State levels in numerous roles. He served as President of the Schuyler RTA, President of the Southern Zone, Chair of the Scholarship and Nominations committees, as a delegate to the RENY Convention and on various RENY committees. Don was a recipient of NYSRTA/RENY Certificate of Recognition and the Southern Zone Special Recognition Award. Don will be remembered as an invaluable mentor and advisor, colleague, and friend. He was loved and respected by all. Don is survived by his wife Lois, children Donna, Kathy, and David, 8 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren.

RENY/Southern Zone has awarded Amy Aldrich of the Jasper-Troupsburg CSD the Hudson-Kramer Memorial Grant in June, 2024. This grant would involve implementing a Senior Seminar class focused on teaching life skills through the use of cooking appliances and equipment. The equipment will help students gain valuable life skills that will serve them well in their transition to adulthood. Congratulations. Pictured L-R: **Mary Suffern, Bonnie Stratton, Amy Aldrich and Debbi Deats.**



We have three new members who will join our Southern Zone Board of Directors. **Lisa Frost** and **Sue Lemak** are serving Co- Presidents for Schuyler Retired Teachers' Association (recruited by Don and Lois). **Sue Pierce** from Eastern Broome Branch/ Western Broome Eastern Tioga Retired Teachers' Association will be taking over the position of SZ Secretary position for **Mary Suffern** who is stepping down after serving multiple terms..

CARTA (Corning) / Southern Zone/RENY will be hosting their SZ/RENY annual luncheon/ meeting on Tuesday, September 10, 2024 at the Forest View Gang Mills' Fire Department, 125 Forest Drive, Painted Post, NY 14870. The cost is \$23 which will include breakfast, fruit and danish, and a buffet lunch, and entertainment. The



program is 'Goldilocks and the Three Baris'. Reservations are due by August 30, 2024 and should be sent to **Bonnie Stratton**, SZ/RENY Treasurer, 6407 County Route 18, Savona, NY 14879. Please join us.

Enjoy the rest of the summer. Everyone should get out and observe the sunsets. They are breathtaking.

WESTERN ZONE

Submitted by Audrey Seidel and Nancy White , Public Relations Co-Chairs

<https://wzretiredteachers.org/>

The heart of Western Zone is its committees with their wonderful members. Two hardworking committees that we would like to highlight in this issue are the Health Care Advocacy Committee and the Legislative Action Committee.



The Health Care Advocacy Committee has the vital role of sharing health care topics with Western Zone members. Committee members are **Vicki Smith**, pictured at left, chairperson and **Devorah Maclin**. Vicki has chaired this committee since 2023. At the WZ Annual meeting, September 2023, Vicki received WZ's Citation Award. Vicki is also on the Legislative Action Committee, the Split Club, and on the distribution committee for Founders' Fund. She has attended the RENY annual meeting for various years, and in the past, as chairperson of WZ's Health Care Advocacy Committee, she met with other zone Health Committee Chairs and received current information to share with WZ members.

The Health Care Advocacy Committee shares its information at WZ meetings and writes articles for *Western Currents*, WZ's newsletter. The committee also includes information in our annual meeting booklet in order to inform members of various health topics. In the past the following subjects have been addressed: having a Health Care Proxy, CBD, and Memory Screening. Health care and current health related topics are of vital interest to all of us.

Another important committee in WZ is the Legislation Action Committee. The committee includes the following members: **Marilyn Stephens** (Chair) pictured, **George Stephens** (Assistant Chair), **Patricia Miceli**, **Doris Kirsch**, **Shirley Plummer**, **Patricia Keller**, **Rich Siegel**, and **Vicki Smith**. Marilyn has been chairperson since 2023. She is also a member of the Bylaws Committee, Friendly Service, and the Remembrances Committee.



The focus of the Legislative Action Committee (LAC) is to share various areas of concern that educators and senior citizens have with state and federal representatives. The LAC has always been very active. In the past, meetings have been held in person and also via Zoom. The LAC is presently planning on increasing the number of meetings it holds from 4 to 6 meetings per year. In this manner a more coordinated and effective program can be put forth. The committee also hopes to increase the number of its members. LAC members select representatives who they contact by phone, email, and/or in person. They then contact these Assembly Members and Senators to set up a meeting in order to discuss various topics of concern and to seek their support of the legislative priorities established by the RENY board. The LAC refreshes its agenda yearly in order to address current issues. This committee disseminates the information it has obtained with WZ members via WZ's newsletter, at BOD meetings, and also in the WZ's annual meeting booklet.

Western Zone's Board of Directors' Committees are actively working to inform members of relevant topics of interest to our members and others living in our communities. We are grateful for all their diligent efforts.