



President's Message

By Dr. James Newell, PhD

My wife and I had the good fortune to experience a Pilgrimage to France in November. Two priests accompanied our tour and alternated as celebrants for daily mass. Masses were held in the chapels and crypts of the world-famous cathedrals we visited, such as Lourdes and Chartres. One of our stops was the famous Mont St. Michel, which lies off the coast of Normandy on the English Channel. Mt. Saint Michel is a towering mountain containing an Abbey, a Romanesque Church, and a Gothic Cathedral. We climbed many steps to the top of the mountain and had spectacular views of the English Channel and the Atlantic Ocean. We also traveled to see some secular sites such as the Chateau of Catherine de Medici at Chenonceau, the American Cemetery at Omaha Beach and the tapestry of Bayeux, which chronicled the events leading up to the Battle of Hastings in 1066. Our tour ended in the "City of Lights," where we took a bus trip of the city, visited the Eiffel Tower, Montmartre, and the Louvre. Our last day was spent shopping and dining at a traditional Paris café.

Travel is a great learning experience. You always come back with new knowledge and a more global perspective. On this trip, we were impressed with the agelessness of the Catholic Faith and the beauty and grandeur of the churches the French people built for worship.

Teachers are fortunate to have the means and ability to travel. Collette Travel has advertised with RENY for a number of years. I would encourage members to investigate their offerings and select a country for your visit. When I returned from our trip, I described our experiences in France with Kathi Bassett. She said that France was definitely on her "bucket list," when she retires!

As you know, the Northeastern Zone has been tasked with sponsoring the next Convention. The Workshop Committee under the capable leadership of **Gayla LePage** met in October and December. Committee members are brainstorming ideas for a dynamic keynote speaker as well as many workshops of interest to all. The RENY Convention is our yearly event designed to showcase the many reasons why retired educators should join our Association. This event also provides opportunities for our members to learn about the many regions of our state, to make new friends and to discover new interests.

During the new year, the Website Working Group consisting of **Kathi Bassett, Marilyn Dominick, Terry Satterley, David Schryver, Lois Thornberg*CR**, and your President will meet via Microsoft Teams with our website host and discuss ways to refresh and improve our website. If you have suggestions, please contact me or one of the members of this working group.

As I began to compose this message, sad news reached us. **President Emerita Judie Byndas*CR**, former President of Central Western Zone and NYSRTA/RENY passed away on November 30, 2023. My wife, Patricia, and I last saw Judie in September when we visited the Central Western Zone. Although she was quite frail at the time, she was determined to attend the Zone meeting and present an award. She did so with grace and sincerity. Throughout her life Judie kept busy with her husband and family, RENY and her sorority at Cornell. She lived a full life and will be sorely missed by her family, friends, and everyone she knew.

As the year unfolds, my wife and I will continue to visit zones. To date we have visited WZ, CZ, EZ, NCZ, and CWZ. As I close this message, I trust that you are keeping active, participating in life, and continuing to learn. I thank you for continuing to be a part of this great organization. Please help us to grow membership by persuading a friend or colleague to join.



- Dr. James Newell

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Gayla LePage

Hi, all! I hope you had a very happy and healthy holiday season with family and food. What else do we need!

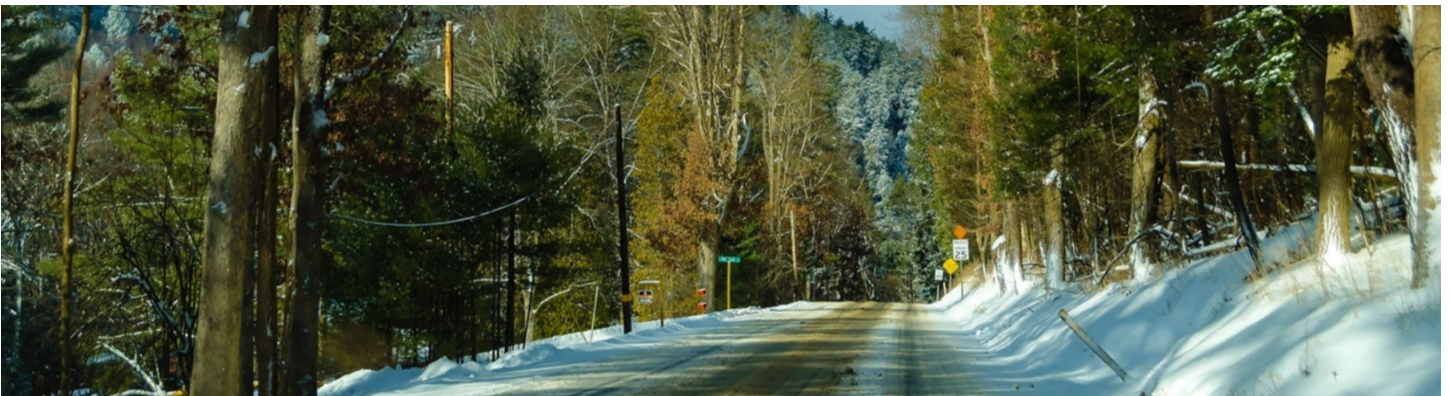
I wish you all a very happy 2024. Speaking of 2024, our 2024 convention plans are well underway. The dates are October 7, 8, and 9, 2024 at Turning Stone Resort and Casino. It will be hosted by Northeastern Zone.

The first meeting for the convention was held on the Friday morning of our last convention and plans were started. Actually, NEZ had a lot of plans already. We had a second meeting December 6 via Teams. These meetings always excite me to see how creative our zones are in highlighting their regions.

The theme for next year's convention is **"Hit the Adirondack Trail."** The keynote speaker will be Dan Berggren who is a storyteller/musician. I believe he will keep us all entertained after our dinner on the first night. He will also do a workshop on Tuesday morning.

The committee decided to lower the number of workshops to eight for various reasons. Mostly for cost savings, and secondly we do not have the number of delegates attending as in prior years. The zones workshops, besides Dan Berggren's, will be Journaling presented by **Jim Howard**, the Life of Rockwell Kent (American painter, printmaker, illustrator, writer, sailor, adventurer and voyager) presented by **Sandy Lashua** and Carol Lowry, and Healthy Living presented by **Kathy Caron**. These have all been confirmed. The zones two confirmed workshops are TRS and "The RENY You Should Know," which will highlight information about our very own organization, presented by **Kevin Mulligan*CR** and **Gayla LePage**. Two unconfirmed but exciting ones are Natasha Farmer, a dietician who will discuss healthy eating and recipes to sustain healthy living, and Dr. Joel VanSlyke, who after last year's convention felt there was a desire for a workshop on more exercises for our group. We also have decided who will be in what session of the workshops, but I will wait to confirm this in my next report in case anything changes.

We will once again have trivia night on the second evening preceded by the cocktail hour. The theme for the cocktail hour is "Black Fly Ball." Those of you who don't live in the North Country do not know that this is one of our "plagues" in the summer. NEZ jokingly, I hope, even said they were bringing the black flies)



NOMINATION COMMITTEE REPORT

By Judith Farmer*CR

The year 2024 is full of opportunities for RENY members to get involved in their organization. Many units and zones are in need of officers, committee chairpersons and committee members.

At the RENY Annual meeting in October we will be electing officers. All offices are open for nominations but in particular we need Vice-Presidents for Membership, Friendly Service and Legislative Action. The committee will be accepting nominations and resumes in March and April. Please consider serving in one of these positions or encouraging someone that you think would be a good fit for that position to send in their resume.



VP for LEGISLATION REPORT By Mary Johnson*CR



Taxes that are always increasing, high prices for groceries and gas, lack of coverage for hearing aids, eyeglasses and dental work are common complaints we hear wherever people gather. What can we do about it? That is how many people feel about the about the government and the representatives who make the laws. It is not wonder when you hear what is going on in Washington. There are congressmen being elected who are not qualified and who are investigated for misuse of campaign monies, deceiving the public and various other crimes and misdemeanors. Did we pay attention when this person was running for office or are we so sick of political advertisements we just turn the other way. Do we know where the person we voted for stands on protecting the Social Security and Medicare that we have earned the right to have from all our years of working and contributing. Don't be so tired of it all that you ignore the important things that can impact your future well-being. Let us not forget that there are a great number of representatives in the House and Senate as well as New York's Assembly and Senate who are well-meaning and do their best to support us and meet our needs.

There are recently elected Congressional representatives who threaten the future of Social Security and Medicare by holding in abeyance bills that would help secure those funds. Rather, they propose bills that would gut the program or severely cut the programs and services they provide, programs that keep seniors and the disabled paying their bills, getting their prescriptions and getting the medical services they need to survive. They have apparently forgotten that seniors spend their money in the communities where they reside, thus adding to the local economy.

We hear all the time that these elected people have all the power and we don't have any. But we do! We have the power of the VOTE. Making sure you get out to vote and that friends and family members are reminded to do the same is where our power lies. Organizations like RENY and NYSUT have legislative action committees that work on those issues and others that affect our members but we can't do it all. We try our best to keep you informed and to reach out to elected officials and present our views and ask them to cosign or present bills that are in your interest. But you make your decisions when you fill in those circles on the ballot.

There are ways you can be better prepared before you vote. In addition to what your organizations provide you, for those who use computers, all elected officials now have websites, email addresses and phone numbers both for their Washington office and their local offices. You can call and ask for their legislative aide and question them or present your feelings or concerns before you vote to put them back in office. While political ads are annoying, you can learn from them. Especially note the bottom of the screen that tells who paid for that ad. You can decide if that person or group represents your beliefs. If you visit the web site you can see what this person supports or opposes. If you go to www.congress.gov and enter the congresspersons name you can see how they voted on particular issues.

In late February and early March, the Legislative Action Committee and its local advocates will be contacting NY representatives. We will be asking their support for Health Equity for Retirees Act so that seniors that need more than three weeks of rehabilitation after an illness or surgery can get it without being penalized just because they are on Medicare. We will be advocating for changes in Tier 6 so that college students contemplating a teaching career will not turn away due to the draconian regulations of Tier 6. There are other issues such as improving public pension COLA that will be on our program as well. Thank you for all the support you give to our efforts.

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VP for FRIENDLY SERVICE REPORT By Lois Thornberg*CR



The last article demonstrated how the sharing of greeting cards for various occasions with RENY members had a positive impact on those who received them. Although this is one of the most widely performed actions of the committee, it is far from the only one. I want to share with you some of the various tasks that these committee members continue to do selflessly.

- Phone calls are made for various occasions to have that personal one on one touch and remind others that they are remembered.
- Visiting members, when possible, to keep them company and share what is going on in their lives and around them.
- Small gifts to acknowledge milestones.
- For members with special needs and financial assistance, they advise and refer them to appropriate agencies within RENY.

Friendly Service Committee members selflessly give of themselves to see that all the members of RENY will never feel forgotten or alone. However these dedicated volunteers need to be made aware of anyone who might need some extra care or special attention, so if you are aware of anyone, please share their contact information with your Zone/Unit Friendly Service Committee.

My deepest thanks and appreciation goes out to all who make this committee work. **Thank You** for caring.

“If we all do one random act of kindness daily, we just might set the world in the right direction.”- Martin Kornfeld



ROBERT R. DECORMIER MEMORIAL TRUST REPORT By Anne Flansburg*CR, Chairperson

Our 501(c)(3) Robert R. DeCormier Memorial Trust Fund has proven to be a lifeline for RENY members who have requested financial assistance. This Trust, named after the first President of NYSRTA, namely Robert R. DeCormier, is able to continue, thanks to the donations of Zones, Units, and Individuals.

There are two grants available to all members of RENY, be they educators, spousal members, or affiliate members. The individual must be a member for at least three years prior to the request. The **monthly stipend grant** is an amount determined by the unique needs of the recipient and is sent monthly. This is evaluated every two years. A **special needs grant** is a one-time grant, given for specific needs, such as hearing aids, dental work, home maintenance, and others.

Since the office is no longer located in a central area, please send donations, payable to **Robert R DeCormier Memorial Trust Fund**, to:

Mary Lou Davis, Treasurer - 125 Andrews Rd; LaGrangeville NY 12540.

The Chair, on behalf of all RENY members, wishes to thank the members of the Trust: **Colette Astoria, Richard Brogowski, Mary Lou Davis, Beth Green, and Joe Russo** for their untiring efforts and cooperation. Our heartfelt thanks to our many supporters, who enabled us to help retired educators of RENY in financial need. A very special thank you to all who have contributed to this fund!



NEW YORK STATE RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION					
BUDGET CODE	REVENUES	2022 ACTUAL	2023 PROPOSED	2023 Revised BUDGET	2024 PROPOSED
140	Dues-Annual	\$ 136,323.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 195,000.00
140A	Refund To Zones Annual Dues	\$ 45,441.00	(\$66,666.66)	\$ (66,666.66)	\$ 65,000.00
	Net Total Dues	\$ 90,882.00	\$ 133,333.34	\$ 133,333.34	\$ 130,000.00
142	Dues-Life	\$ 4,050.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 9,000.00
142A	Refund To Zones Life Dues	\$ 1,350.00	\$ (1,666.66)	\$ (1,666.66)	\$ 3,000.00
	Net Total Dues	\$ 2,700.00	\$ 3,333.34	\$ 3,333.34	\$ 6,000.00
139 & 153	Convention Revenue	\$ 3,126.60	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 2,500.00
133	Dues-90yr.Olds	\$ -	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
143	General Contributions	\$ 933.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
144	President Appeal Letter	\$ 55,323.90	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
143A	Insurance Trust	\$ 29,520.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
154	Misc. Revenue	\$ 1,146.40	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
156	Travel & Misc.	\$ 3,920.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
206	Advertising Revenue	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,000.00
TOTAL REVENUES		\$ 187,551.90	\$ 245,666.68	\$ 245,666.68	\$ 268,500.00
EXPENSES		2022 ACTUAL	2023 PROPOSED	2023 Revised BUDGET	2024 Proposed
	<u>ADMINISTRATION</u>				
160	Office Operating	\$ 13,883.06	\$ 17,500.00	\$ 17,500.00	\$ 17,500.00
161	Office Equipment	\$ 643.42	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
162-145	Supplies,Print,Postage	\$ 4,892.27	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
164	Salaries	\$ 125,826.76	\$ 129,000.00	\$ 129,000.00	\$ 136,000.00
164A	Stipends	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
165-167, 179	Payroll Taxes	\$ 10,198.07	\$ 9,500.00	\$ 9,500.00	\$ 12,000.00
178	Auditing	\$ 13,850.00	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 11,000.00
178A	Legal	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
180	Insurance / Ins. Disability	\$ 6,179.94	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
180A	Employee Health Insurance	\$ 22,011.76	\$ 22,500.00	\$ 22,500.00	\$ 24,000.00
180B	Employee Life Insurance	\$ 874.60	\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00
181	Employee Pension	\$ 16,982.68	\$ 16,770.00	\$ 16,770.00	\$ 18,000.00
185	Contingency	\$ 347.60	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
186	President's Appeal Mailing	\$ 14,572.31	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00
187	Credit Card Fees	\$ 1,828.63	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,600.00
189	Membership Project Expense	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
191	Computer	\$ 9,772.30	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
193	Telephones and Equipment	\$ 2,116.49	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
197	Website	\$ 308.00	\$ 1,750.00	\$ 1,750.00	\$ 1,750.00
TOTAL		\$ 245,287.89	\$ 242,020.00	\$ 242,020.00	\$ 257,250.00

		<i>2022 ACTUAL</i>	<i>2023 PROPOSED</i>	<i>2023 Revised BUDGET</i>	<i>2024 Proposed</i>
	<u>OFFICERS</u>				
183	President's Travel	\$ 191.69	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
184	Other Officer's Travel	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -
182	President's Fund Outlay	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	TOTAL	\$ 191.69	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
	<u>MEETINGS</u>				
169	Executive Committee	\$ 10,132.91	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 11,000.00
173A	Annual Workshop Expense	\$ 15,740.83	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 18,000.00
172	Annual Convention Expense	\$ 37,850.97	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
	TOTAL	\$ 63,724.71	\$ 31,000.00	\$ 31,000.00	\$ 54,000.00
	<u>NEWSLETTER</u>				
163	York State	\$ 17,976.83	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 11,000.00
	TOTAL	\$ 17,976.83	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 11,000.00
		<i>2022 ACTUAL</i>	<i>2023 PROPOSED</i>	<i>2023 Revised BUDGET</i>	<i>2024 Proposed</i>
	<u>EXPENSES</u>				
	<u>COMMITTEES</u>				
170	Legislative Action	\$ 343.10	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
171	Friendly Service	\$ -	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
173	Annual Workshop Committee	\$ -	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
174	Bylaws	\$ 849.52	\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 1,000.00
174	Certificate of Recognition	\$ -	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
174	Community Service	\$ -	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
174	Finance & Budget	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
174	Personnel Committee	\$ -	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00
174	Credentials	\$ -	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00
174	Historian	\$ 36.60	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00
174	Membership	\$ -	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
174	Nominations	\$ -	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
174	Public Relations	\$ -	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
174	Resolutions	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
174	Site	\$ -	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00
192	Health Care	\$ -	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
185A	Adhoc UHC	\$ 207.36	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
	TOTAL	\$ 1,436.58	\$ 8,800.00	\$ 8,800.00	\$ 9,000.00
	GRAND TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 328,617.70	\$ 300,820.00	\$ 300,820.00	\$ 332,250.00

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HAWAIIAN ADVENTURE: *Aloha!* Your adventure begins on the sun-drenched beaches of Waikiki. Remember Pearl Harbor with a visit to the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument, viewing artifacts from the attack and a short documentary on the "Day of Infamy." Travel by naval launch to view the white marble-clad USS *Arizona* Memorial, honoring those who lost their lives in the Pearl Harbor attack. After, take a city tour of Honolulu, highlighting the historic Iolani Palace, the impressive state capitol building, King Kamehameha's statue, and the National Cemetery of the Pacific. Dive into Hawaiian history with a visit to Iolani Palace to learn about the Hawaiian monarchs and the takeover of Hawaii by the United States with a stop at the Pali lookout in O'ahu's rainforest.

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ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS

CENTRAL ZONE

By Ray Pitcher, Zone President & Mary Ann Luciano, Public Relations Chair

As we are in 2024, Central Zone units have been actively working on their scholarship programs, legislative advocacy, and community service projects.

RENY Cayuga unit is renewing its *Teacher in the Classroom Grants* that were put on hold during the pandemic.

RENY Chenango collected non-perishable goods for the county food banks and holds raffles at each meeting and pop-in for their benefit. They will provide a scholarship to a future public school educator awarded during *Teacher Appreciation Week*.

RENY Onondaga continues its *Scholarships for Future Educators*. This unit provides two or three scholarships depending on funds.

As one of their community service projects, RENY Oswego presented a \$724+ check to Melissa Russell for the county's schools' *Blessings in a Backpack*. Donations for this were collected at their fall meeting.

Advocacy for RENY's legislative priorities is ongoing here in the Central Zone. RENY Chenango convened legislative pop-ins and Zoom meetings focusing on the state legislative priorities. A challenge was to communicate each of the issues clearly to RENY members so that they could be effective advocates. A process for communication with RENY members and legislators was outlined, developed, and is ongoing.

All RENY Central Zone Committees will meet at an April meeting at Theodore's Restaurant, watch for the date.



CENTRAL WESTERN ZONE

By Mary Beth Tyndall, Zone President



Our lives are richer because of Judie Byndas*CR. Judie, a Home Economics/Family & Consumer Sciences professional, gave tirelessly to her family, friends, community and especially to retired teachers. She served in many offices including president in Seneca County, Central Western Zone, and Retired Educators of New York. Colleagues have used these words to describe her—kind, caring, loyal, dedicated, and true friend to all. Her absence will be deeply felt.

Counties in CWZ keep on giving the whole year through. *Wyoming County*, under the leadership of **Sandy Kushner**, is supporting their community through an on-going collection of food pantry items, school supplies, and programs including Angel Action and Operation Gratitude.

Yates County holds fundraising events to generate income for the high school scholarship they sponsor. President, **Linda Snyder** reports that many of their members are active in other volunteer activities including Christmas distributions.

Monroe County has a singing group that entertains at assisted living facilities throughout the year. They also hold a 50/50 raffle at each of their luncheons and the members vote on a worthy organization to receive the funds. Co-presidents, **Meena Gehani** and **Nettie Schiano** are working diligently to provide a variety of volunteer opportunities to the membership.

The *Barrie Fleegel Award Split Club* disbursements are going on now. This is with thanks to the efforts of **Pat Dick** and her committee.

ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS



EASTERN ZONE

By Pamela Love, Public Relations Chair



Eastern Zone Executive Committee met on November 14th at the Turf Tavern in Scotia. President, **Janice Mullins** presided over the meeting. Unit Presidents or unit proxy gave reports of their activities and needs. New Business included member voting on monies to be spent in 2024 including delegate reimbursement, Food Bank Donation, DeCormier Fund Donation and President's Appeal Donation. Openings on the Executive Committee include Senior Vice President and V.P. for Membership. Meeting dates for 2024 were also planned.



Joyce Notarnicola, Chairperson of Community Services, said that RENY/Eastern Zone took part in working at the Regional Food Bank in Latham in the fall of 2023. Pictured at left is **Joyce Notarnicola** at the Food Bank.

Columbia County Proxy, **Mary Boice**, reported that they were working on trying to increase their membership with packets to twenty possible new members. During their fall meeting, the program presented was "Senior Safety". Columbia County Sheriff's Investigator, Peter Merante and Under Sheriff, Jacqueline Salvatore talked about their shared experiences and accounts and ways to avoid problems.

Otsego County President, **Penny Bellinger**, said that they have scheduled their Spring 2024 meeting in June and will have a presenter who will talk about her travel to Morocco.

Capital Region (RCRTA) President, **Marjorie Leibowitz** reports that they held their holiday luncheon meeting on December 13th which included some new members and also collected canned goods and personal items for the Regional Food Bank in Latham.



LONG ISLAND ZONE

By Eileen Holmes*CR, Zone President



The Long Island Zone kicked off the New Year 2024 with a triple-play LIZ/EERTA/WERTA breakfast board meeting on January 3rd. The LIZ Spring luncheon was set for May 22, 2024 at the Irish Coffee Pub in East Islip and the East End unit set their spring luncheon date for April 10, 2024. Everyone was hoping that the local spike in COVID like flu cases and the recommendation to start wearing masks again will just be a winter problem and not affect our spring meeting plans!

The East End unit held its annual Holiday party on December 4, 2023 at a new venue, Little Fish Restaurant in Southold. The entree choices were eclectic: swordfish Milanese, blackened monkfish tacos, hot honey baby back ribs and a vegetarian Voodoo Rice (all served with wonderful cornbread muffins shaped like fish, of course!) but the celebration was traditional, with Santa Claus, grab bag gifts, a sing-along door prizes and much good cheer. Many thanks to EERTA co-Vice Presidents **Agnes Dansereau** and **Val Stype** for organizing this fun-filled and tasty luncheon!

We have several RENY members on Long Island who are interested in actively working for the equalization of benefits for Tiers 5 and 6 in the NYS Teachers Retirement System. They not only feel strongly about the disparity between the first 4 Tiers vs. Tiers 5 and 6 on an over-all fairness level but actually have family members and friends who are struggling with facing the particularly harsh penalties of working under Tier 6. We will be reaching out in our newsletters and at meetings for suggestions on how best to organize and push this issue with the state.



ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS



NORTH CENTRAL ZONE

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

<https://renyncz.org>



We honor **Elwood “Woody” Lyndaker** in this issue of York State. After serving as Vice President of NCZ, he took over as President in November of 2019, looking ahead knowing he would be leading NCZ in hosting the Convention in 2022. He effectively led us through the pandemic year of teleconferences, canceled luncheons, and new ways of connecting. Woody is a committed leader who has focus, amazing organizational skills, timely and smoothly run meetings, great ideas, and vision. The Convention was canceled in 2019, which moved our hosting year to 2023. Woody stayed on as President, doing an outstanding job with lots of creative, inspirational help from his Executive Council, to host a memorable 2023 RENY Convention. We thank you, Woody, for a job well done! We welcome **Rick Morris** as our new NCZ President and wish him well. Pictured at left is Woody along with Association President, Dr. Jim Newell.

We also thank **Jim** and **Pat Newell** for their commitment to RENY and NCZ. They are a dedicated couple who work tirelessly in many capacities making life better for our retirees and our organization. **Jim** and **Pat** took an amazing trip to France to relax after the convention.

So far this year, NCZ Community Service Chairs AND new Co-1st Vice Presidents, **Patty Corey** and **Toni Gigliotti** have given 18 coats from “Coats for Kids”. As winter progresses, they will receive many more requests through Lewis County schools, churches, and agencies. These two ladies do a tremendous job!

Dates to Remember:

May 7, 2024 NCZ Executive Council Meeting
June 19, 2024 NCZ Scholarship Luncheon



NORTHEASTERN ZONE

By Cindi LaFountain, Public Relations Chair

As a recently appointed Public Relations Chair, I am in the learning as I go mode. I thank **Tracey Howard** for her wonderful guidance and organization for this position. She has moved onto Senior Vice President and I know she will do amazing work for our zone. I have big shoes to fill!

We have a full slate of officers. Some remained in their position where others stepped up and filled empty spots. They have a lot on their plate as we are hosting the RENY Convention in 2024. There has already been one fundraiser that was very successful and others are in the works. This is a huge undertaking as many of you know but we have an amazing leadership team and members that will make it a successful convention.

Rebecca Frostick, or Becky as we know her, is newly retired and has already stepped up as our secretary. She grew up in Beekmantown and West Chazy. Becky and her husband, Dave have been married for 32 years and live in Chazy. They are the parents to four adult children, a daughter in law, a son in law, and grandparents of four busy grandchildren. She taught in grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 for the Peru Central School District for 30 years. Retirement has been wonderful! In addition to joining NEZ RENY, she works part time through ARC providing Self-Directed Services, substitute teaching, tutoring, and supporting her church. The best part of retirement is having the flexibility to spend more time with their grandchildren! We are so lucky to have such a wonderful and sweet person like Becky on our board.

More from the NEZ on the next page...

ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS



NORTHEASTERN ZONE –Continued

By Cindi LaFountain, Public Relations Chair



Sandy Lashua, our membership chair, continuously amazes us. She works hard to increase our membership daily, though I know it's more like hourly. I post the welcome to the new members on our Facebook page, and she keeps me busy. Sandy has been recognized for this and it is well deserved.

We have been busy in the past few months. At our December meeting, members brought an unwrapped toy to donate to our local Christmas Bureau. The table was full and it warmed our hearts knowing we would be making a child smile. Members also donated their time at the Make-A-Wish® table at the mall selling stars for this wonderful organization. I worked with current teachers at Peru School to sell stars to the students too. We raised hundreds of dollars for local children's wishes. We have people that help out at the soup kitchen and last time we were there we served 175 takeout meals. Our Friendly Service Committee met for holiday card writing. The team addressed and prepared for mailing approximately 115 cards. NEZ has been very active in our community.

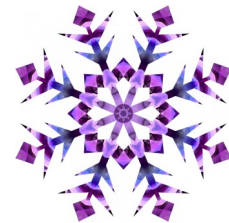


We all wish you a very happy and healthy New Year.



NORTHERN ZONE

By Linda Crosby, Public Relations Chair



The Northern Zone delegates had a great time at the very successful 2023 RENY convention. As pictured from left to right: **Holly Chorba** (convention workshop presenter/NZ member), **Betty Cook** (NZ Secretary/Friendly Services Chair), **Tom Cook** (NZ member), **Gayla LePage** (NZ President/RENY Senior Vice-President), **Helen Boyea** (new NZ member), **Ron Boyea** (new NZ member) with **Phil LePage** (NZ member) behind the camera enjoyed the masquerade cocktail party. Helen and Ron attended their first convention! Holly was thrilled to sell 22 copies of her recently published book to RENY members! Again, thanks to Holly for her well-received presentation.



The NZ Board of Directors met in January by Zoom to continue planning for the meetings and events for 2024. They will meet on a monthly basis; any NZ member is welcome to attend BOD meetings. The tentative plan for the Spring membership meeting is to visit the Franklin County House of History in Malone, NY. We encourage all NZ members to join us for the meeting and luncheon.

The Clifton-Fine-Edwards Unit had a joyous Christmas party on December 20, 2023 with over 30 NZ members and guests in attendance; photos will appear in the next York State.

We hope all RENY members have a peaceful Winter and a wonderful 2024!

ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS

SOUTHEASTERN ZONE

By Maureen Coffey, Public Relations Chair

Come with us and enjoy our journey down a snowy memory lane.

On snow days, **Ray Leduc** walked with his children through their quiet and peaceful village. Afterwards, they enjoyed cookies baked by his wife.

Cheryl Fischer always had ingredients on hand to make soup and bake bread with her children.

Like Cheryl, my kids and I made beef stew and bread. Then while the kids were sleigh riding, I'd do something extra for both home and school, followed by hot chocolate and a movie.

Gerry Gramas recalls a scary and snowy ride to school, only to be there five minutes when they made the decision to close! She was so scared, she followed a colleague just so she wouldn't be alone on her way home.

Bob Brady remembers when he was a kid and there were always chores to be done on the farm. Afterwards though, the rolling hills of that beautiful countryside made for great sleigh riding.

Likewise, **Ed Coffey** soon learned that snow days in the suburbs meant a great way for kids to earn extra money. Many people were more than happy to have Ed and his friends shovel their sidewalks!

Patti Deleo also shared memories. In elementary school, three blasts from Newburgh's fire alarm signaled a snow day. By secondary school, "early morning radio commandeered the job". When she started teaching in 1975, an early morning phone call would activate the snow chain. By the turn of the century, you checked your email or web postings. And finally, by the time she retired, she'd sleep next to her iPad and pray for an automated text or email. Looking back, Patti thinks three blasts from the firehouse was the most effective.



So there you have it! Sweet memories of good times. Hope you enjoyed it! - 'til next time

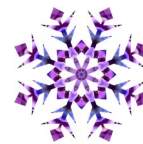


ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS ZONE NEWS



SOUTHERN ZONE

By Mary Lou Wood, Public Relations Chair

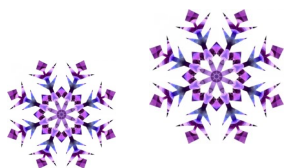


By the time you read this winter has set in. Our friends have left for warmer weather leaving some of us behind to deal with the cold.

At our RENY/ Southern Zone annual meeting, hosted by Eastern Broome Branch (EBB) Retired Teachers, we were highly entertained by Larry Kassan, an educator from the Binghamton School District, where he directs the arts program. His program featured Rod Serling's upbringing in Binghamton and how it influenced the content of all the programs that he produced notably **"The Twilight Zone."**

President **Gerardo Tagliaferri** was presented with the RENY SZ Special Recognition Award. Every year we acknowledge someone for their exemplary contributions. Thank you for your service. Congratulations.

At the NYS Retired Teachers' Assoc./ RENY 72nd Annual Meeting & Convention at Turning Stone, Verona, NY **Mary Johnson*CR**, State VP for Legislative Action, was awarded with the RENY Certificate of Recognition for Distinguished Service Award. Mary was unable to attend the convention this year. Pictured at right is RENY/SZ President **Gerardo Tagliaferri** presenting Mary with the award at the EBB meeting.



WESTERN ZONE

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



An important mission of RENY/WZ is to support educators in our state and zone. Often teachers have ideas to enhance their classroom teaching, but do not have the funds. RENY and Western Zone have grants to financially assist these educators, the Hudson-Kramer Memorial Grant awarded by RENY to the zones and the Western Zone President's Award.

Josh Garver, a teacher at Mill Middle School in the Williamsville Central School District was the recipient of the Hudson-Kramer Memorial Grant. The \$1000 grant was used for a social studies library for 7th and 8th grade students. The books are designed to encourage and motivate students in their study of American History. Pictured is Josh with WZ President Michelle Claus and a few members of the grant committee.



The second grant is the Western Zone's President's Award. The recipients were Erin Griggs and Michelle Mathews, co-winners at Alden Intermediate School. The \$500 grant was used for a project entitled "Struggling Reader Book Sets". The project revolved around a series of books geared to the needs of readers in the special education program grades 3- 5. Students can engage in read-a-louds during small group instruction and independent reading opportunities. The second Western Zone President's Award of \$500 was given to Pamela Brown at Middle Early College High School in Buffalo. The project was a student performance entitled "The History of Step". Classes in social studies, art and music learned the history of step in cross-curricular research that resulted in an audio/visual presentation to students and families.

We congratulate all the recipients of these grants and acknowledge the Teacher Grant Committee for their work: **Maria Hager**, Chairperson, **Carol Cascio**, **Therese Clarke**, **Ron Czapla**, **Elaine DeLisle**, and **Stanley Nowak**.

WINTER RECIPE



The New York State
Retired Teachers' Association
DBA Retired Educators of New York (RENY)
P.O. Box 490
Amsterdam, NY 12010
PH: (518) 482-3509

Dated Material—Do Not Delay

Turkey Biscuit Stew

Ingredients

1/3 cup chopped onion	1/4 cup butter, cubed
1/3 cup all-purpose flour	1/2 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper	3/4 cup 2% milk
2 cups cubed cooked turkey	
1 cup cooked whole baby carrots	
1 cup cooked peas	
1 tube (16.3 ounces) large refrigerated buttermilk biscuits	
1 can (10-1/2 ounces) condensed chicken broth, undiluted	



Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375°. In a 10-in. cast-iron or other ovenproof skillet, saute onion in butter until tender. Stir in the flour, salt and pepper until blended. Gradually add broth and milk. Bring to a boil. Cook and stir until thickened and bubbly, about 2 minutes. Add the turkey, peas and carrots; heat through. Separate biscuits and arrange over the stew.
2. Bake until biscuits are golden brown, 20-25 minutes.