

WESTERN CURRENTS

NEWSLETTER of the WESTERN ZONE of the NEW YORK STATE RETIRED TEACHERS'ASSOCIATION, INC.

Volume 15, Number 1

www.wzretiredteachers.org

Winter 2016

Note sent to NYSED: Our group of retired educators, which numbers in excess of 3,000, is inquiring as to whether they need to register their permanent certifications. This group of educators is comprised of mostly those who will not be substituting or returning to the classroom, we do understand that those individuals that do return must register.

Response from NYSED: If they do not plan on teaching again, it would not be necessary.

Important Update on Teaching Certification Registration for those holding PERMANENT, PROFESSIONAL, and TEACHING ASSISTANT Certificates

Why the requirement? A written response from a member of the Senate Education Committee told us that this was one of the compromises in the 2015 State Budget (you heard that right – the 2015 – not the 2016 budget negotiations) in order to get the budget accepted by the legislature and signed by the governor. The original requests came from the governor's office.

All teachers who hold a Permanent Certificate (or older certificate), a Professional Certificate, or a Level III Teaching Assistant Certificate MUST establish a TEACH account if they don't already have one, AND register to stay active, or indicate inactive. Indicate "active" if you think you might work at some point in your future! You MUST register no later than the month of your birth starting with July of 2016. There is no penalty with registering earlier but your five year renewal clock starts with your registration date! Important links appear below. *Please read them as they contain much more information than we can include here. And yes, earlier certificates used your social security number and you will be asked that!* Make sure you are on the secure SED website. Your local BOCES certification officer can also help you with this. Questions can be referred to the BOCES or to the Associates at SED listed at the end of the article.

- NYSED Office of Teaching Registration and CTLE (Continuing Teacher Leader Education) Requirements: <u>http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/resteachers/Registration_CTLE_home.html</u>
- NYSED TEACH website Registration Overview: <u>http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/resteachers/Registration.html</u>
- NYSED Frequently Asked Questions regarding TEACH Registration http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/pdf/CTLE%20FAQ%2006102016.pdf

To actually log-in or create a TEACH account use: <u>http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/teach/home.html</u>

- For step by **step instructions, captions, and screen captures to create a TEACH account** follow this URL address: <u>https://nysrta.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Creating-a-TEACH-Account.pdf</u>
- To see the process to REGISTER after creating your TEACH account, refer to this URL address: <u>https://nysrta.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Permanent-Teacher-Certificate-Holder-Registration-Process.pdf</u>

For a NYSUT Fact Sheet or a Q&A on the Registration Process use these URL addresses: <u>http://www.nysut.org/resources/all-listing/2016/april/teacher-registration-regulations</u>

WESTERN ZONE OFFICERS 2016-2017

Elected Officers President Doris R. Kirsch **1st Vice President** Robert J. Metz **2nd Vice President** Gail A. Niparts Treasurer Don E. Lawrence **Recording Secretary** Audrey Seidel **Corresponding Secretary** Loretta M. Peszynski Membership Secretary **Michelle Claus Past President** Charles T. Peszynski

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SPOTLIGHT ON

Dennis Priore



In every issue of Western Currents we spotlight a WZ board member who has shown dedication to our organization as well as to his/her community. This month it is a pleasure to spotlight Dennis Priore. His own account of the satisfaction gained in volunteering to his community

is a pleasure to spotlight Dennis Priore. His own account of the satisfaction gained in volunteering to his community is a major credit to him. The old adage is true, "If you want something done, ask a busy person." Dennis is that busy person! We are honored to have him on our Board of Directors and applaud him for his service to others!

A three year Report Card on being newly retired Written by Dennis Priore

In July 2013 I retired after a 36 year career in public education. The first three years have flown by and today I'd like to report on my new passion: volunteering.

To quote my sister-in-law "you're so busy I don't know when you found the time to work!" That's true because to volunteer at over 10 different school, church, and community organizations, you either are retired or a state legislator. (Did you know when the legislature adjourns in June, the lawmakers don't go back into session until the following January?) Unless of course you are one of the former leaders that went to jail last year, in which case you are back "in session" – albeit in a different house - much sooner and year round!

In volunteering, you not only are exposed to many different ways to help mankind, but you also have the opportunity to serve in leadership roles, like the time at one meeting, when I went to use the facilities and upon returning was told "you've just been elected President!" I can assure I no longer consume liquids during meetings!

Last year I was very fortunate to have been elected to my local school board. It has been a wonderful experience to learn firsthand - from another perspective - how schools systems operate. It has also been very rewarding in this role to meet so many new students, teachers and staff. I have also had the chance to become involved with The Erie County Association of School Boards, a professional organization that advocates for public education. However, when meeting friends and acquaintances that I haven't seen lately, and after hearing that I serve on a school board, I've lost count the number of times I've heard each say "I don't know whether to congratulate you or"... at that point I finish their sentence "or offer me condolences."

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Questions and/or comments may be forwarded to our Zone President, Doris Kirsch, at (585) 457-3315 or wdkirsch@gmail.com

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2016 WZ Citation Winners



Irene Zinter, Sandy Kelley, Don Lawrence, and Anne Flansburg

Four very worthy WZ Board members were honored at the annual meeting for their contributions to WZ and NYSRTA by receiving the 2016 Citation Award. Congratulations to Irene Zinter, chairman of the WZ Awards Committee and member of Teacher Grant Committee, Sandy Kelley, chairman of the WZ History Committee, editor of Western Currents and member of the Nominations Committee; Don Lawrence, WZ treasurer, chairman of WZ Finance & Budget Committee and member of Investment-Founder's Fund; and Anne Flansburg, chairman of WZ

Travel Committee, member of Friendly Service Committee, NYSTRA Certificate of Recognition Committee, NYSTRA Site Committee and a NYSRTA Trustee for the DeCormier

Trust. These WZ members were well deserving of the honor.

Spotlight on Dennis Priore

Continued from page 2

Volunteering has been tremendously rewarding not only because of the satisfaction of giving back and making a difference in people's lives, but also because of the numerous friends and acquaint-ances I've been fortunate to make.

I'm very grateful to be a part of a group of volunteers that are helping to bring back a local chapter of Honor Flight. This group has chapters or hubs in many cities across the country, as it locates and sends World War II veterans for an unforgettable day of visiting our nation's capital, including the monuments and Arlington Cemetery. To see the enthusiasm of these men and women - the youngest that are just shy of 90, the oldest around 100 - is awe inspiring. There are only 5% remaining of the Greatest Generation, and many of the volunteers like I, serve in gratitude of our late fathers.

Another group that I'm proud to be a part of is The Teacher's Desk. Five years ago retired autoworker John Mika began substitute teaching in several city schools and witnessed firsthand the lack of school supplies that students bring to school. He now runs a non-profit corporation with 200 volunteers that distributes nearly \$1000.00 in new school supplies - free of charge - to every teacher whose school has a 70% or greater poverty level. Last year 180 schools and nearly 5,000 teachers in seven Western New York counties received school supplies with a value of \$4,500,000.

Close to my educational roots, I am beginning my third year as President of the Kenmore Retired Educators Association, representing the nearly 400 active and retired teachers and administrators of the Kenmore Town of Tonawanda School District. Related to that positon I serve as a board member of the Western Zone of the New York State Retired Teachers' Association. In these roles it is a pleasure to advocate for our retired educators on local, state and national issues.

There are endless opportunities for volunteering in Western New York, and literally volunteering at one organization often leads to another opportunity. It's true; I wish I didn't find the time to work sooner, because I'm having the time of my life.

Betty Browne's Health Tip:

Keeping your Joints Healthy

(NAPSA)-Knowing a few facts about the wear and care of you joints can help you take steps to keep them healthy. Healthy joints have cartilage, which acts as a spongy shock absorber on the ends of the bones so they don't rub against each other. When you don't have enough cartilage, you can have pain.



To Keep Your Joints Healthy

*Exercise: Walking, jogging or swimming helps keep muscles strong & takes strain off of joints.

- *A healthy diet & a healthy weight: Carrying extra weight stresses you joints eat less fat and sugar, and more fruits and vegetables.
- *A healthy lifestyle: Get enough sleep and eat a balanced diet.

ENCRTA October Meeting

Sandy Kelley



The Eastern Niagara County Retired Teachers' October luncheon was well attended with 70 in attendance. Officers were installed by Western Zone President, Doris Kirsch. Sandy Kelley and Gail Niparts will share the office of president for the next two years. Liz Egan will be the Vice President. The other officers will remain the same. Four recent retirees joined the Unit.

Everyone enjoyed local anthropologist, Rosanne Higgins' presenta-

tion of how she was inspired to write her Novels, of which "Orphans and Inmates" was her first. The Donations of socks for the "Socktober" project were greatly appreciated. We collected 251 pairs of socks!

There were 26 wonderful baskets for our Basket Raffle which helps support the Scholarship Fund. It was a huge success raising almost \$500. Every year we give six \$500.00 scholarships to high school seniors who are pursuing a career in education.

The next meeting will be December 8, 2016 at the Lockport Town and Country Club. We will be collecting canned goods for the Salvation Army and cash donations for Sister Loretta's Soup Kitchen. Entertainment will be the Lockport Senior High Jazz Ensemble.



Embrace Aging.

The desire to evade an entire season of life is bound to leave us all questioning what is important. You do not need to question, though. You have nothing to evade, no empty promise to cling loosely to. You do not grieve for life past. You are too busy embracing your life today. Aging is not the enemy. Underestimating it is. Others might think it is time to slow down. Good luck convincing your heart.

Presbyterian Village at North Church, 214 Village Park Drive, Williamsville, NY 14221 • 716-631-3430 Lockport Presbyterian Home, 305-327 High Street, Lockport, NY 14094 • 716-434-8805 Ken-Ton Presbyterian Village, 3735 Delaware Ave., Kenmore, NY 14217 • 716-874-6070



Do you?

Do you value the fact that you do not pay New York State income tax on your pension?

Do you agree that active educators should have the right to negotiate the terms and conditions of their employment?

Do you agree that **pensions should not be reduced** after retirement? Do you think that your **PENSION FUND** should continue to be **overseen by the State Comptroller**—or should politicians be able to use it as a piggy bank?

Do you know that the voters will decide in November 2017 whether to hold a Constitutional Convention in New York State—a convention that <u>could</u> throw out many public employees' protections? Did you know that NYSRTA has formed a coalition of over forty organizations to fight against a Constitutional Convention?

Do you wonder how YOU CAN HELP?

1. Maintain your membership and recruit others into NYSRTA—there is strength in numbers.

2. Become educated.

3. **Speak up and speak out**—get the word to your friends at the gym or the coffee klatch or the service club or wherever.

Proponents of the convention will be spending big bucks under the guise of cleaning up political ethics—a great goal, but one certainly achievable without throwing out the baby with the bathwater. Protect your pensions! Vote NO on the Constitutional Convention.

2016 Annual President's Appeal

Thanks to Those Who Helped ...

Austin	Mr. and Mrs. Frank	Gilbert	Robert	Mueller	Joanne
Bella	Augustino	Hanavan	Mary Jane	Natale	Joseph
Biniszkiewicz	Julia	Harrington	Rhoda Ann	Neeland	Barbara
Bulger	Patricia	Harrington	Rhoda Ann	O'Connell	Kevin
Castiglione	Maxine	Hazuda	Kathryn	O'Donnell	Vincenetta
Chase	Dawn	Herman	Irene Meta	Peterson	Helen
Clare	Judith	Hetey	Steve	Ploson	Ann
Claus	Michelle	Hetey	Steve	Postle	James
Cole	Evelyn	Horn	Earl	Reister	Peter
Collins-Coffelt	Susan	Horn	Earl	Romanowich	Emil
Czarnecki	Richard	Hrycko	Gerald and Barbara	Schumacher	Art
Damian	Kimberly	Incardona	S. J.	Snyder	Christine
Dellaccio	Felicia	Kelley	Sandra	Stephan	Dianne
Dempsey	Edward	Kirsch	Doris	Stumpf	Elaine
DiFrancesco	Sheila	Klapp	James	Szymczak	Elizabeth
Donner	Donna	Kruse	Evelyn	Thurlow	Donette
Dugo	Joanne	Kukoleca	Annette	Toner	Judith
Farmer	Judy	Kurtzhals	Susanna	Tornquist	Linda
Ferguson	RoseMarie	Lawrence	Don	Uglesich	Len
Fessard	Henry	Lee	L Janet	Vetrano	Anthony
Flansburg	Don and Anne	Lomison	Sharon	Walter	Gary
Fleig	Agnes	Loockerman	Bill	Wild	Gerald
Frey	Patricia	Loockerman	Capt. W. D.	Wild	Gerald
Garrison	Camille	McGarry	Jean	Wisniewski	Robert
Germanovich	Darlene	McManus	Marilyn	Wolfe	Robert
Germanovich	Darlene	Metz	Robert	Zilbauer	Kathleen
Gervase	Lucille	Mooradian	Ed	Zintner	Irine
Gilbert	Robert	Moslow	Arthur		

Legislative Action: Advocacy

Judy Klug, Chair

The Western Zone Legislative Action Committee is looking for volunteers to visit their state senators and assemblymen/women in April or May of 2017 to advocate for the benefit of all retired educators.

The NYSRTA Legislative Action Committee will meet in November and March to set the agenda. A WZ training session will be held in late March or early April for all state advocates. If you are able to help, please contact Judy Klug at 716-632-6251.

Those interested in Federal Legislation should contact Loretta Peszynski at 716-631-3717.

Western Currents



ASSISTED LIVING at CHEEKTOWAGA 229 Bennett Road, Cheektowaga, NY 14227 716-681-8631

ASSISTED LIVING at HAMBURG 76 Buffalo Street, Hamburg, NY 14075 716-649-7676

ASSISTED LIVING at TONAWANDA 111 Ensminger Road, Tonawanda, NY 14150 716-871-1814

ASSISTED LIVING at WEST SENECA 580 Orchard Park Rd., West Seneca, NY 14224 716-677-4242

ASSISTED LIVING at WHEATFIELD 2600 Niagara Falls Blvd., Wheatfield, NY 14304 716-731-2200

VILLAGE at WILLIAMSVILLE 5271 Main Street, Williamsville, NY 14221 716-565-9663



Get in touch with us to schedule a tour and learn more.



SKILLED NURSING

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2017 ANNUAL PRESIDENT'S APPEAL

As of this writing, the Annual President's Appeal continues. Western Zone thanks all members who have made contributions and appeals to those who have not yet contributed to consider a donation.

WZ needs your voluntary contributions in order to:

- ✓ Provide financial assistance to our needy members
- ✓ Continue the excellent work of the Friendly Service Committee
- ✓ Retain granting incentive awards to active teachers
- ✓ Present informative workshops
- ✓ Maintain the publication of three newsletters per year

Should you have any questions regarding this appeal, please contact Doris Kirsch at 585-457-3315 or email her at wdkirsch@gmail.com.

PLEASE HELP US CONTINUE OUR SERVICE TO YOU BY FILLING OUT THE FORM BELOW AND SENDING IT WITH YOUR CHECK TO THE ADDRESS INDICATED.

					,
Name				Phone	
Address				E-Mail	
City			S	tate	_ ZIP
Local Unit					(if applicable)
Donation Amount:	\$10	\$20	\$30	\$50	Other
Please make checks pay	yable to:	Western Zone	-NYSRTA		
		P.O. B	ox 922		
		Williamsville, N	Y 14231-09	022	

WESTERN ZONE TRIP TO GETTYSBURG



Pictured above at Little Round Top in Gettysburg, the tour guide explained to Western Zone trip participants that this is the historical site at which the Union soldiers held off a numerically superior Confederate force during the Civil War.

"NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND and BLOCK ISLAND", June 12 - 16, 2017

Join Western Zone members and White Star Tours to enjoy a five day trip to Newport and to Block Island! Visit the "Breakers", the grandest of Newport's summer "cottages" - a symbol of the Vanderbilt family's social and financial preeminence. Experience also the "Marble House", built between 1888 and 1892, inspired by the Petit Trianon at Versailles. Relax on a narrated one-hour cruise on Newport Harbor, take part in a vineyard tour, and enjoy dinner on the grounds of the International Tennis Hall of Fame. In Portsmouth spend time at the Green Animals Topiary Garden, the most northern U. S. topiary garden. Day four, head to Point Judith to board the ferry and cruise across the beautiful Block Island. Later, enjoy a one-hour narrated tour on an island bus. An optional visit to a casino is also included.

The trip cost includes: motor coach transportation, four nights lodging, four breakfasts, as well as two dinners. The price also includes gratuities for standard meals, guides and bus driver. The price is only **\$649** per person for double occupancy, **\$619** for triple occupancy and **\$848** for single occupancy. All hotel rooms are non-smoking, unless requested otherwise. **Complete the form below and enclose a \$50 deposit per person.** Remember – this trip is on a "first paid-first served" deposit basis. Once the bus is filled, additional payees will be put on a waiting list, and will be notified accordingly. Reserve quickly! For special needs, such as a handicapped room, food allergies, or near an elevator, please advise below.

Any questions, contact Anne Flansburg at 716-863-3631 or <u>anneflanswz@aol.com</u> OR Betty Browne at 716-207-6152, OR Judy Klug at 716-632-6251. All e-mails and calls will be acknowledged.

Two pickups will be scheduled, one in Williamsville and one in Hamburg. Luggage tags and additional information will be provided. Optional travel insurance is available and may be purchased directly through Berkely Insurance at 1-800-388-1470. Press Option #1, the tour operator is White Star, operator #386097. You will be asked your cost of trip. The form will be sent or you can use a credit card to pay.

Please send a deposit of \$50 per person, payable to Western Zone RTA by or before January 3, 2017. (Reservations are accepted in order of date received.) The balance for this trip is due by March 28, 2017.

Send completed form and check to: Betty Browne, 6025 Shore Blvd So. #415, Gulfport, FL 33707-5813.

-----DETACH and send to Betty Browne by or before January 3, 2017 ------

Western Zone RTA – Deposit for trip to Newport, RI (June 12-16, 2017)
Name(s)
Address
Phone Cell E-mail
Emergency contact Phone
Pickup location preferred (circle one) Williamsville or Hamburg
Special needs or requests
Check # Amount

Western Zone—NYSRTA

P.O. Box 922 Williamsville, NY 14231-0922 Non-Profit Org. U.S. Postage Paid Buffalo, NY Permit 4574



Do you know someone who is **NOT** a member of Western Zone? Encourage them to join or ask questions by calling...Michelle Claus at 716-649-3844 or email: joeclaus@msn.com Membership Secretary-Western Zone HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



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