



Leigh Powell receives NYSRTA Certificate of Recognition



Executive Office Manager Kathi Bassett applauds a stunned Leigh Powell

One of the highlights of the Annual NYSRTA Convention in October was the awarding of the NYSRTA Certificate of Recognition to our own Leigh Powell. For more than a decade, Leigh has coordinated the annual convention as Site Committee Chair, among his other efforts on behalf of the zone and units since his retirement as math teacher, department chair and administrator in the South Country Central School District. Leigh is now looking forward to the 2020 convention when Long Island Zone will be hosting!

—Jo Anne Powell

2019 CALENDAR

April 24 EERTA Luncheon, Indian Island Golf Course, Riverhead
May 7@10 WERTA Board meeting, Lighthouse Diner
May 8@10 LIZ Board meeting, Hauppauge Diner
May 22@11:30 LIZ Luncheon, Irish Coffee Pub
June 11@11:30 WERTA Luncheon, Guy Anthony's (elections)
June 12@11:30 EERTA Luncheon, Paces
June 19@10 2020 Convention meeting, Royal Oak Diner
July 15-16 NYSRTA Board meeting, Desmond Americana, Albany
July 17 EERTA NEWS deadline
August 1 LIZ NEWS deadline
August 21@10 EERTA Board meeting, Riverhead Library
August 19 LIZ Annual Report due
Sept 4@11:30 EERTA Luncheon, Jerry & Mermaid (elections)
September 11 WERTA NEWS deadline
September 11@10 LIZ Board meeting, Hauppauge Diner
September 25 LIZ Luncheon, Bellport CC (elections)
October 8 WERTA Board meeting
October 9-11 NYSRTA Convention, Turning Stone, Verona
October 16@10 EERTA Board meeting, Riverhead Library
November 1 LIZ, WERTA & EERTA Officers begin 2020 terms
November 5 Election Day, please VOTE!
November 6@11:30 EERTA Lunch, Villa Paul
December 4@11:30 EERTA's Southold Holiday Party
December 11@11:30 EERTA's Shelter Island Christmas Party



Certificate of Recognition Chair Anne Flansburg presents the prestigious award to Leigh



Certificate of Recognition coordinator Jackie Moller congratulates Leigh



Congratulations to Leigh Powell who was awarded the Certificate of Recognition at the 2018 NYSRTA Convention!

Mary Ella Moeller has submitted her resignation as Health Chair due to ongoing illness. We will miss her tremendously. LIZ now must find someone to step in to fill this important position. Mary Armbruster who just celebrated her 90th birthday has stepped down as Membership Chair after over 20 years of service. Lois Thornberg, NYSRTA VP, has been assisting Mary and will continue to be a most valued person for this most challenging job, particularly since she is engaged in a statewide drive to improve membership. LIZ

must find someone to fill Mary's vital role. I thank Val Stype for agreeing to be our LIZ Historian's position. Please keep in your thoughts and prayers Mary Ella, Eileen Holmes, Jane Svoboda and Barbara Nagelberg who are recovering.

Senator LaValle, Angelo Grande and I have opposed Gov. Cuomo's State budget resolution, proposed by the NYC-dominated majority which includes a \$2 billion increase in taxes for this year alone. There is so much more to this proposal. Call the Senator's District Office at 631-473-1461 for a copy of his statement.



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The NYSRTA BOD has named Turning Stone as the 2019 & 2020 convention site. As 2020 Convention hosts, our committee will meet at the Royal Oak Diner in Bellport on Wednesday, June 19th. Anyone interested is welcomed to attend. Consider being included as a delegate for the 2019 Convention. LIZ will provide a coach bus and a \$400 stipend for all qualified delegates.

Eileen Holmes has set our LIZ Spring Luncheon at the Irish Coffee Pub on May 22nd. Details on the last page of this LIZ NEWS. We had two successful Board Conference Call meetings this past late fall and winter and we'll be returning to the Hauppauge Diner for our last two Board Meetings this spring and early fall. Please check out the dates on page one and a list of our board members at left.

I am looking for a successful year and remain enthusiastically concerned and happily committed to LIZ/NYSRTA. —Fred Conway

MEMBERSHIP



Membership of NYSRTA has recently fallen below the 15,000 mark, declining over the past few years due to several factors: fewer new members being recruited, a decrease in the retention of present members, and age. As members of NYSRTA, we not only enjoy the benefits of the organization, but should work towards increasing the membership to ensure that it remains a viable organization.

This time of the year is a perfect opportunity for the Zone and Units to begin working together on their recruitment process for the new year, contacting school districts regarding potential retirees. These individuals should be notified about

the benefits of NYSRTA membership and invited to join. Members who are due for renewal, those who have allowed their membership to lapse, and retirees from recent years also need to be contacted. If possible, these notifications should be done on a personal level, the most beneficial means to ensure a positive response.

Many members of the units are not members of NYSRTA/LIZ. They might not be aware of this and need to be informed that being a member of EERTA or WERTA does not indicate membership in NYSRTA with all its benefits. Share a list of what NYSRTA offers, what it has done for them as retirees, and what is planned for the future. Make it available at unit gatherings and send to any unit member that is not a member of NYSRTA. The cost is just 8¢ a day!

NYSRTA has recently hired a marketing firm to address the concern of declining membership which will work with the membership committee and office staff on various projects to aid in the membership awareness and growth process.

Mary Armbruster is retiring as Membership Chairman. If you are interested in taking this position, please contact Fred. We will assist the new chairman in the transition. Meanwhile, recruiting and retaining members is an ongoing task involving everyone. "Unity is strength... when there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved." (Mattie Stepanek) —Mary Armbruster & Lois Thornberg

Legislative Action



There has been an increase in the base benefit amount from \$18,000 to \$21,000 upon which COLA increases are computed; 1.2% COLA translates into a maximum monthly increase of \$18. We will be dropping the Minimum Pension Bump-Up Bill, due to lack of sponsorship. The New York Health Bill was not supported by Governor Cuomo. We will also be addressing mental health issues in the schools and analyzing student test scores connected to teacher evaluations. —Kathy & Angelo Grande

Health Issues



Beginning January 1, 2019, Bay Shore retired teachers were impacted by a \$2 million cost savings measure to their health insurance. The district indiscriminately changed NYSHIP, their longtime health insurance carrier, to Aetna Health Insurance. This change only affected retirees; active teachers and administration still remain under NYSHIP.

A grievance was filed by the BSTA with the assistance of NYSUT, but has been tabled after the Regional NYSUT Office declared that the change in insurance coverage is "comparable" to NYSHIP coverage. The Moratorium Law, however, prohibits school districts from reducing the health insurance provided to retirees from existing levels, without implementing a corresponding diminution for the active employees. Complaints include: #1 Loss of NYSHIP prescription coverage to Medicare Part D has caused undue hardship; #2 Change of Network coverage includes a major provider, Stony Brook University Hospital #3 Loss of coverage to Cancer Resource Services that was provided under NYSHIP, and others. —Mary Ella Moeller



Bylaws

Not included in our 2018 By-Laws update: a mission statement of NYSRTA's goals and the prohibition of allowing convicted felons serve as NYSRTA, Zone or Unit officers, which is expected to be added soon. —Marc Nagelberg



Resolutions

Deadline for 'Resolutions' is June 1st. There will be a resolution to hire more attendance people in the schools. —Robert Svoboda



In 2020, the Long Island Zone will have an opportunity to present another \$1,000 NYSRTA Hudson-Kramer Memorial Grant to a deserving public school teacher or team of teachers with a unique, innovative proposal for enhancing their students' education. —Eileen Holmes

Community Service



Our current project is the collection of shower supplies and new socks for The INN mission. Whether you expect to attend the Spring Luncheon at the Irish Coffee Pub on May 22nd, the 2020 Conference planning meeting at the Royal Oak Diner on June 19th, or the Board meeting this spring or fall, please bring shower items or a new pair of socks. Thank you! —Eileen Holmes

Volunteer Opportunity

The Opening Word, a non-profit literacy and job training program is urgently seeking volunteers to teach ESL to immigrant women Wednesday and Friday mornings at the Wyandanch site, off Straight Path Road. It's a stress free work environment, lesson plans and materials are provided, and you don't have to be ESL-trained. A ministry of the Sisters of St. Dominic of Amityville, the program receives Federal and state funding accessed in part through Western Suffolk BOCES. Working 1-2 jobs, many of the women work overnight before coming to school each day with the desire to learn English and job related skills like math and computer technology in order to become eligible for permanent US residency and citizenship. To learn more about our program please call Gillian at 631-643-0541. —Tom Lacalamita

Friendly Service



Join us at the LIZ luncheon! We'll be at the door May 22nd at the IRISH COFFEE PUB in Islip to welcome you and you'll be sure to enjoy the comradery and warm friendship of our enthusiastic group! We'd love to see you!

Now for a little housekeeping! If you are doing some spring cleaning and getting your place in order, clear out all those pesky cards you receive from charity organizations, pack them up and bring them to the May 22nd luncheon for Friendly Service use. We are doing our best to get out birthday & get well cards to the membership and those cards really cut down the cost. It will clear out a drawer for you, too! A win-win situation! Furthermore, if you know of someone who needs a cheerful card or visit, let us know! Contact yyyyyyyz1@optonline.net or mawinowsky@gmail.com, Thanks!

—Dee McKinnon & Alicia Winowsky

The LIZ Annual Meeting & Fall Luncheon



Dee McKinnon & Alicia Winowsky - always up for a party!



Fred Conway, Mary Armbruster, Leslie Conway



Lucretia Ruppel & friend, Lillie Brown, Grace Johnson, Jean Ryan, Diane Barraud



Jo Anne & Leigh Powell



Alice Martin, Jola Macario, Mary Ella Moeller, Harriet Edwards



Speaker Keith Caputo who founded a community service organization "Helping Makes U Happy" and Eileen Holmes



Ginny & Val Stype, Ruth Doroski, Barry Scot, Marc & Barbara Nagelberg



Joel Reitman, Angelo & Kathy Grande, Evelyn Paola



Keith with friends & family!



Edith Whitaker, Diana & Jim Davies



There were 14 Center Moriches retirees at the LIZ luncheon: Diane Barraud, Grace Johnson, Jean Ryan, Lillie Brown, Marietta Veligdan, Eileen Holmes; Jean Bregy, Maureen Hogan, Joan Tait, Liz Skelly, & Rosemarie Seitelman. Missing from this CM photo is Gloria Loper; Dee & Alicia are whooping it up on page 4!



NYSTRS President & active LIZ member David Keefe keeps us abreast of Retirement System news at each luncheon

East End Holidays

CHRISTMAS AT O'MALLEY'S - what a time we had! Agnes Dansereau outdid herself this year! Great turnout, too, with over 50 members there! A very festive atmosphere with each sporting Christmas colors, pretty or ugly! Good friends, good cheer, lots of fun, a busy afternoon!

First we greeted and chatted and nibbled at the lovely appetizers, then purchased our chances for the 50/50 and Christmas baskets - what an array! The table was crowded with them! Members put together some really great baskets full of delicious goodies and useful items. After

lunch we found out who won those baskets and the \$80+!

Then we were put to a memory test organized by Agnes, as we played Christmas Trivia. Do you remember who was the star of 'It's a Wonderful Life?' OK, but who produced it? Now if you're that smart, 'What are the names of the Three Kings?' Prizes were awarded to the winners.

Santa arrived while we sang 'Santa Claus is coming to Town!' He distributed the grab bag gifts to all the good boys and girls.

To round off the afternoon, the Davies played Christmas songs and by now full of good cheer we sang along. It was a grand time!

CHRISTMAS AT VIRGINIA'S "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus!" In fact, there are many of the portly elves in the impressive collection Virginia Schulze displays at Christmas in her home on Shelter Island. Each year, Virginia opens her heart and home to the EERTA members for a 'potluck' Christmas lunch. Not only does she have a beautiful home, but a fantastic water view! It was a beautiful day for the event and we were welcomed with a nice glass of Christmas cheer and a toasty fire in the fireplace! After lunch Virginia served a buffet of yummy desserts and tea & coffee. Good friends, old and new mingled to enjoy an afternoon of Christmas friendship and good cheer. Thank you, Virginia, it was so good to see you so well too!

But as we start new adventures in the new year, we bring along the memories of friends we had to leave behind. This year we had to say 'So long' to dear friends Penny Coyle, Carol Joynes, the son-in-law of the Jessups Daniel Levitt, Don Griffin, and Al Colina. They will each be a treasured memory in the hearts and minds of friends, family and the members of LIZ and EERTA.

Thank you members for all you do to keep alive the spirit of camaraderie and friendship of LIZ! You are the best!

—Dee McKinnon & Alicia Winowsky

WERTA Book Fairies

At our November 13th luncheon at the lovely new Heritage Club at Bethpage State Park, our guest speaker was Ms. Rebecca Lakhani from "Book Fairies," a Long Island-based non-profit organization started by Amy Zaslansky. "Book Fairies" accepts donation of new & gently-used books and educational materials, then connects them with libraries, schools and organizations in the New York area, our country and, more recently, to nations around the world. Several of our WERTA members contributed books from their home libraries at our luncheon.

Looking toward the spring and summer, the membership has voted on the Executive Board proposal to eliminate the March luncheon meeting. As a result there will be only two meetings each year for WERTA, one in November and our Scholarship luncheon in June. We look forward to seeing you on June 11, 2019 for this year's Scholarship luncheon. —Emily Caristo

LIZ NEWS on your Computer



The Spring Luncheon invitation will arrive via USPS, along with instructions to view and/or download the current full-color LIZ NEWS edition posted on the NYSRTA website. One can copy & paste this link to a browser: nysrta.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/LIZ-2019-Spring.pdf OR, if you are already on the NYSRTA.org page, you can navigate to our newsletter by clicking

"Zones & Counties" at the top of the page, then "Long Island" in the middle of the page, then "LIZ NEWS 42 Spring 2019" at the bottom left OR go to and "Like" our Facebook page: "Long Island Zone of the New York State Retired Teachers' Association" - you probably won't have to type the entire name before the page will pop up.) Incidentally, we now have a Health Care page on the NYSRTA Web Site.

Speeding up the delivery of news will keep us better informed, save a few trees & great piles of stamps. Additionally, critical information will be easier to share with colleagues, family & friends. —Jo Anne Powell

Join us at the IRISH
COFFEE PUB May 22nd
We'll have a blast!

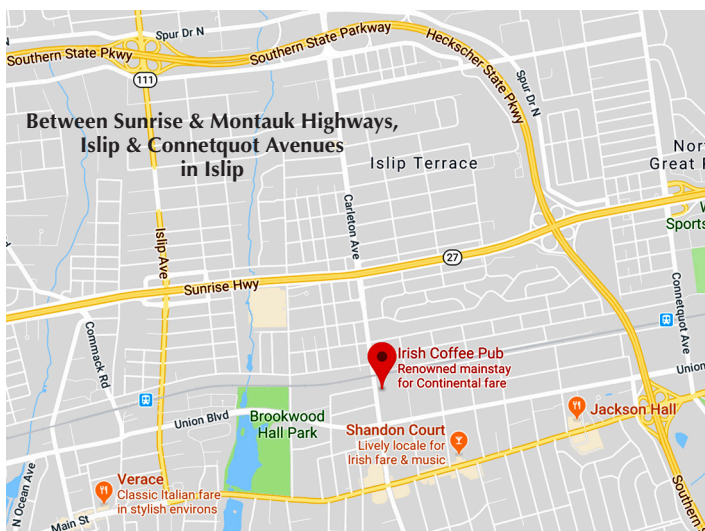


Luncheon Fun at the Irish Coffee Pub



The Long Island Zone will be hosting its annual Spring Luncheon on Wednesday, **May 22, 2019, 11:30 a.m.** at the **Irish Coffee Pub**, 131 Carleton Avenue in East Islip. Please join us to hear about our 2019 Community Service project which involves helping The INN, a mission in Hempstead. We also have arranged for a guest speaker from the Suffolk County Police Department to speak about how to avoid senior scams.

MENU: Penné à la vodka; Caesar salad; choice of chicken O'Shea, flounder française, sliced steak or shepherd's pie; brownie sundae; soda, coffee, tea; cash bar
COST: \$35



Long Island Zone's Annual Meeting & Fall Luncheon, May 22nd, 2019 at 11:30 a.m.

Member's name _____

Telephone _____

e-mail _____

Member's entrée _____

Guest's name _____

Guest's entrée choice _____

Please send a check payable to Long Island Zone for \$35/pp to LIZ Treasurer Dom LiCausi, 31 Vidoni Drive, Mount Sinai, NY 11776 by May 15th to help us plan.