



The New York State
Retired Teachers' Association

Electronic Edition

YORK

No. 1 Vol. 69

WORKING TOGETHER TO SUPPORT AND STRENGTHEN
THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL RETIRED EDUCATORS,
THEIR FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITIES.

State

Spring 2019

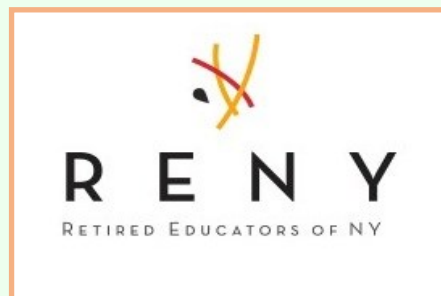


Kevin Mulligan

A Message From Our President...

Spring, the season associated with terms such as rebirth, rejuvenate, and oh yes, rejoice. The Spring Board of Directors meeting for NYSRTA echoed those words and more. Engine 7 Design, the marketing firm hired by NYSRTA to provide us with much needed assistance for improving our membership, gave a dynamic presentation to our Board that included a new name and logo.

The NYSRTA Board of Directors approved the process to move forward in changing our name, or DBA (Doing Business As) from New York State Retired Teachers' Association (NYSRTA) to **Retired Educators of New York (RENY, pronounced wren ' knee)**. The Board also accepted the concept of a new logo and color scheme. Instead of being predominately red and white, the new logo will utilize autumnal colors and represent, in an abstract fashion, traces of an apple core and an apple seed, as pictured below.



[Click here to view an animation of our new logo](#)

Lois Thornberg, VP for Membership, presented two incentives that will hopefully spur more membership initiatives taken on by the Zones and Units. Beginning May 1, 2019, and ending on October 1, 2019, the Zone with the most **new** members (proportionately) will be recognized at the Annual Meeting in October, 2019, and receive a \$1,000 check to be used for Zone/Unit (s) membership activities. The other incentive provides an appreciation incentive of \$50 to each member who brings in 5 **new** members to NYSRTA. They do not have to be in your specific Zone. For example, you could obtain the membership of a relative that would belong to another Zone that too, would count as one of your 5 **new** members. Former members that rejoin NYSRTA do not count as **new** members, but are welcomed back. These two initiatives were also approved by the Board of Directors at the April meeting.

Much is happening at NYSRTA /RENY. More than seventeen (17) monitors have come on board to help with the new Health Insurance Information Network. In January, 2019, an all new web page was opened up on the nysrta.org web site. You can now view this web page to find out information about possible changes to school district provided health insurance in your area. This Information Network is **NOT** designed to scare you, but rather keep you informed and provide useful information for you to be a wise consumer of health insurance. The Health Insurance Survey is included in this York State. **If you have not filled it out, please do so and mail it to NYSRTA Headquarters in Latham, NY.** [Click here to take you to the survey](#)

The President's Appeal as of April 5, 2019 has received \$59,314.00. To those who have contributed, a very gracious THANK YOU. I remind everybody that the **rejuvenation** of NYSRTA will entail greater participation, a need for new, bold leadership, and the realization that necessary change does come, but at a price. Should all this come together, we will be able to **REJOICE** as the new and improved **RENY**.

Robert R. DeCormier Memorial Trust; Imogene McKendrick *CR, Trustee

New & Different

In order to make sure that senior members of New York State Retired Teachers' Association (NYSRTA) are aware of the availability of help if they are in need of financial assistance, the DeCormier Trustees are trying a new approach to "spreading the word".

All 400 NYSRTA members, who are or will be 88 years of age in the year of 2019, will be receiving a special Birthday card on their birthday from one of the DeCormier Trustees. Inside the card will be a separate personal letter wishing the recipient a happy birthday, a thank-you for their membership in NYSRTA, a description of the Robert R. DeCormier Trust Fund and its

purpose, and how to apply for a financial grant. The letter is signed by the Trustee sending the card.

All six of the DeCormier Trustees agreed to participate in this undertaking. Each Trustee is responsible for assembling and mailing the birthday card, including the letter, so that it arrives on, or near, the celebration day. Names, cards, letters, the birthday dates, stamps, mailing labels, and directions were provided to each Trustee.

The trial project began on January 1, 2019 and will end on December 31, 2019. After that date, the information obtained will be collected and collated, to serve as a guide as to whether or not it is a worthwhile project.

Even if you are of an age other than 88, you are eligible for financial help from the DeCormier Trust Fund. There are grants available for any NYSRTA member (or spousal member) who needs financial help. Call **Anne Flansburg*CR**, the DeCormier Trustee Chair, at (716) 863-3631. She can give you more information and answer your questions.



Certificate of Recognition; Anne Flansburg *CR, Chair

Presidents of NYSRTA's Zones are reminded to complete and send in applications for any member (s) of their zone that they wish to nominate for receiving a Certificate of Recognition for Distinguished Service. The award recognizes living members who have contributed significantly to NYSRTA and have shown outstanding leadership, service and dedication in retirement to NYSRTA, as well as to their zone and unit (if applicable) and to their community.

Nominees should be not be informed that their name has been submitted for possible recognition. This honor is to be a SURPRISE to the recipient. Names of those selected by the nominations committee will not be divulged until certificates are presented at the Annual Convention.

Any member of a zone may nominate an individual, but the application must be submitted to the Zone President for approval and must have the President's signature. The applications were published in the April 2019 Executive Committee booklet, and are also available on the NYSRTA website in the Leaders' Manual on pages 62 and 63, or by requesting one from **Anne Flansburg *CR**. Please be sure all information on the application is complete, and include as much background as possible. **The application must be completed, signed by the Zone President, and sent by or before June 1, 2019** to the committee chair:

Anne Flansburg 24 Amherston Drive, Williamsville NY 14221-7002.

The committee members, namely **Carol Lord *CR**, **Anne Flansburg *CR**, and **John Hogan *CR** recognize and sincerely thank **Jackie Moller *CR**, who served as committee chair for many years. Her dedicated input and wisdom have helped develop a committee and procedures that have and will continue to recognize outstanding leaders. Her service and contributions are, and will continue to be, a source of inspiration to all members of NYSRTA.

Livingston Cares, By Les Buell

Retired Educator and NYSRTA Member from Central Western Zone

We all met at the Rochester, New York airport on Saturday, January 12th. We were three groups of students from SUNY Geneseo, with their adult construction supervisors/chaperones, all part of an umbrella group called, Livingston Cares. One group was headed to Puerto Rico, one to Houston and our groups headed to the Florida Keys, all to help repair damage from various hurricanes.

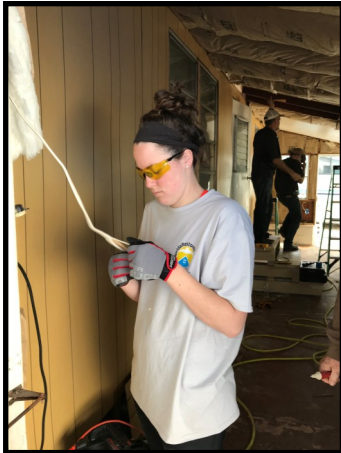
From Rochester we flew to Fort Lauderdale and drove in rented vans to our home for the next week on Big Pine Key, Florida. Since the group is loosely connected to the Methodist church, Sunday was a day of rest. Our group drove to Key West so that the students could experience The Little White House and other local sites and watch the sun set in America's most southern city.

On Monday we made the first of our daily drives to Marathon, where we were given our work assignments for the week. We were divided into two work groups of five students and two "construction supervisors." All the construction supervisors were retired New York State teachers, Tom Matthews, SUNY Geneseo, Tom Wilson, Livingston County BOCES, Doug Hollinger, Pavilion High School, and Les Buell, Williamson Central School.

One of our five student crews would assist with the extensively damaged home of a local government worker. The other group would demolish and then restore part of a home owned by a senior, retired couple, long time residents of Marathon.

Everyone pitched in, with the students working hard to complete their projects in the week we had available. Did I mention they were all young women? The next time you hear any one say something about the lack of commitment of students today, we need to set the record straight! The student all pitched in moving furniture tearing out damaged walls, and removing debris. We had students, most of whom had never experienced using power tools, running jig saws, circular saws, table saws, doing electrical work, installing windows, dry walling, using power staplers, insulating, and doing paneling with complicated cutting work.

Continued on next page...



This is one of the girls who worked on this project. Her name is Katie. She is doing some electrical wiring. She had never done this before. After I showed her how to do this, a few minutes later I noticed she was teaching that skill to one of the other girls. They were an amazing group to work with!



The whole gang!



To work on the homes we divided into two groups this picture is of the group that I worked with personally.

This is me sitting at one of the night activities. I thought the sign in the background was very interesting. We are affiliated with the church group because they had available volunteer contractors who could take care of all the paperwork that was necessary to work on these homes and attempt to restore them. Florida past special laws because they were a little afraid of fly-by-night contractors showing up and doing half a job and then leaving or other problems like that.



Livingston Cares, *Continued from Page*

The students had the opportunity to have numerous conversations with the two families we were helping. The families shared the stories of the storm and the aftermath with the students and in return the students shared their stories and aspirations for their lives and their education.

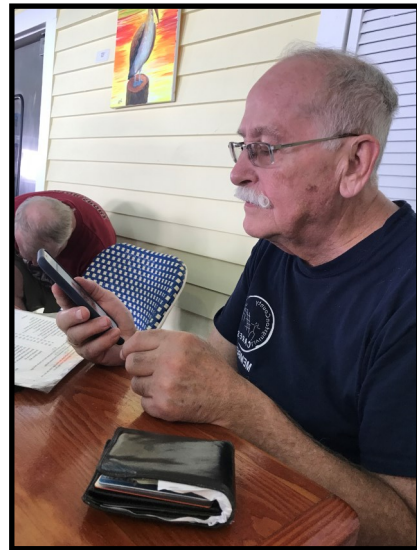
After a week of hard work, we were able to see the fruits of our labor, with one restoration complete and the other one ready for the next group of volunteers to pick up where we left off. We all came away with a real feeling of accomplishment and the feeling that our work had made a difference in the lives of at least two of the hundreds of families faced with hurricane devastation.

Speaking for the four supervisors, we too felt a great sense of accomplishment not only for helping the two families, but also a GREAT sense of pride in the ten students. They worked well together. They willingly learned new skills, and shared their new found knowledge and skills with each other. It was a RENEWING and REWARDING experience!



Since we arrived on Saturday night we should have darted right off with a day of rest on Sunday, since we were associated loosely with a religious group. We took that opportunity to take the group to Key West. This is the group standing in front of the monument or the southern most spot in the United States.

This is Dr. Tom Matthews who was the leader of the group. He is a retired college professor from SUNY Geneseo



Two of the girls measuring and cutting paneling. They learned how to install windows, stud out a wall, re-install a dryer and washing machine, do paneling, and ceiling work.

In this picture Doug is showing one of the girls how to use a Skil saw. Again this was new to all of the girls. They learned to use Skil saw, jigsaws, tablesaw, power staplers etc.



Membership Report: Lois Thornberg, Chair

The membership of NYSRTA has recently fallen below the 15,000 mark. Our membership has declined over the past few years due to several factors- lack of new members being recruited, decrease in the retention of present members and the increase of the average age of our present members. As a member of NYSRTA it is your responsibility to not only enjoy the benefits of the organization, but to also work towards increasing the membership to ensure its survival. Each and every one of us should be promoting NYSRTA so that it will remain a viable organization. Spring is a time of renewal- so let's all wake from our winter hibernation and work on reviving NYSRTA's membership.

This time of the year is a perfect time for the Zone and Units to begin to work on their recruitment process for the new year. The Zone and each Unit, working together, should be getting ready to contact the various school districts in their respective Zone and/or Unit to ascertain who is getting ready to retire. These individuals should then be notified about NYSRTA and the benefits a membership will afford them, along with an invitation to join NYSRTA being sent to them. Members whose membership is up for renewal, those who have allowed their membership to relapse, and retirees from recent years all need to be contacted and reminded of the upcoming renewal process. If a member has become delinquent in their dues, a onetime payment of current dues will ensure them an active status again. These notifications should be done on a personal level if possible since that proves to be the most beneficial means to ensure a positive response. For those educators that are looking at upcoming retirement, contacting them at their school prior to retirement might be easier than trying to locate them after they retire and leave the job.

Many members of the 60 or so units of NYSRTA are not actual members of NYSRTA. They might not be aware of this fact, so they need to be informed that being a member of a Unit does not guarantee a membership in NYSRTA itself. Membership in the Unit does not afford the member the benefits of the Zone or state organization. Make and share a list of what NYSRTA offers such as the insurance, shopping and travel discount plans, in addition to social opportunities at luncheons and the annual conference. Our Friendly Service communicates with our members, especially the older members and shut- ins, and assists members in accessing financial aid available to them from NYSRTA. Emphasize the fact that NYSRTA focuses on the needs of the retiree and advocates for legislation to improve and ensure their retirement benefits. Post this flyer at all Zone and Unit gatherings and send to any unit member that is not a member of NYSRTA. NYSRTA membership assures membership in the Zone, **BUT** a membership in the Unit does **NOT** ensure membership in NYSRTA or the Zone. A membership in the Zone is a membership in the state along with all the benefits it offers- and the cost is just 8 cents (\$.08) a day, \$30 a year. Where and what else can an individual obtain and/or benefit from for this amount?

There were two new membership incentives approved at the NYSRTA Board of Directors meeting in April, one for the Zone and one for individual **NYSRTA** members. Beginning May 1, 2019, and ending on October 1, 2019, the **Zone** with the most new members (proportionately) will be recognized at the Annual Meeting in October, 2019, and receive a \$1,000 check to be used for Zone/Unit(s) membership activities. The second initiative is for any **NYSRTA** member. This program begins May 1, 2019 and ends December 31, 2019 will provide an incentive of \$50 to each **NYSRTA** member who recruits **5 NEW NYSRTA** members from any Zone. Past due members rejoining, will not be considered new members. This is a perfect opportunity to encourage and recruit those unit members who are not NYSRTA members. The referring member must be sure to have each new member mention them as the NYSRTA referring member on their application whether completed online or by mail. Let's all move forward and promote this great organization!

Recently the Membership Committee held a teleconference to discuss the impact of non-NYSRTA Unit members in the organization. The members of the committee have been diligently working on the first step in a plan to compare NYSRTA members to non-NYSRTA members within each unit by reaching out to all the Unit Presidents of the approximately 60 local units of NYSRTA to ascertain and define how each individual unit is defined geographically, stating what county/counties/school districts each unit is comprised of. This information will be used to sort and send each Unit President a list of the NYSRTA members in their unit. Unit Presidents and Membership Chairs can then compare that listing to their full membership roster and

Continued on page 6...



Membership Report, *Continued*

The State Marketing committee, which is a sub-committee of the State Membership Committee, has recently hired a marketing firm to address the concern of declining membership on the state level. This company will work closely with the committee and state office staff in Albany on various projects to aid in the membership awareness and growth process.

In closing, I want to remind everyone that member recruitment is an essential activity for any organization. It keeps the organization alive- without members the organization would not exist. The process of recruiting and retaining members is an ongoing task involving every member. We all need to reach toward the goal of increasing our membership number to well above 15,000 this year.

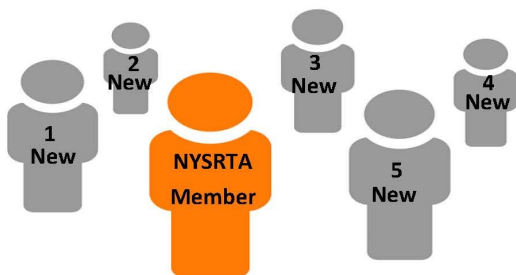
"Unity is strength . . . when there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved." --*Mattie Stepanek*



New Membership Initiative



Any current **NYSRTA** member who recruits 5 **NEW NYSRTA** members between May 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019 will get \$50 from NYSRTA! Membership applications done online by the new member need to note the name and zone of the member who recruited them in the "**Referred to by** (Referring member's name and zone)" **section of the application**. Handout or written applications need to have the **name and zone of the referring member on the top of the application**. You must be sure to have the new members identify you as the referring member to get this credit. **Promote a Great Organization and get rewarded for it - 5 (new members) for \$50 !!!!**



Sign up 5 NEW members



This could be you— all you need to do is recruit 5 NEW members for NYSRTA!



Receive \$50!

Resolutions Report; Gayla LePage, Chair

UPDATE AND SCHEDULE FOR PROPOSING RESOLUTIONS

I have received two resolutions to date. We will act on these at the July meeting. All proposed resolutions **must** be submitted to the State Chair of the Resolutions Committee "thirty (30) days before the July Executive Committee Meeting". The date of that meeting is July 16, 2019. Thirty days prior to that date is **Friday, June 16, 2019**. The deadline is Friday, **June 7, 2019** providing for a full thirty days between the due date and the date of the State Executive Committee meeting.

Continued on page 7



Resolutions Report, Continued

When submitting proposals, please adhere to all of the guidelines that are clearly spelled out on [pp. 78-80](#) (click to take you to *Leaders Manual*) of the Leader's Manual. Each proposal should be on a separate page with the proper attestation and signed and dated by the zone president at the top. Each proposal should specify which NYSRTA objective (s) is being addressed in the proposal. These are found in Article II of the Bylaws. A signed hard copy must be sent to me ([189 County Route 16, North Bangor, NY 12966](#)) along with an electronically transmitted copy to luer913@hotmail.com.

Zones considering the submission of a proposed resolution should:

1. Examine, in depth, whether the intent (purpose, aim, action required, or the like) is clearly an expression of one or more to the Article II of the By-Laws. Is the intent something that should be expressed as a resolution, something that requires a By-Law change, something that necessitates action by the STATE Executive Committee, or a change by another committee or agency?
2. Research thoroughly the proposed resolutions.
3. Make certain the "whereas" statements and the "Resolved" are clearly stated. This is extremely important as the Legislative Action Committee will return to us or table the unclear proposed resolutions.
4. Submit the proposed resolutions as early as your zone's schedule permits, allowing time for reviews by the zone's Resolution Chairs as well as by appropriate NYSRTA committees.
5. Submit up to but no more than three (3) resolutions for consideration in a given year.



Workshop Committee Report: Dr. James Newell, Chair

As I sit down to write this, there is a steady rain outside, and the sun is hiding behind a wall of gray clouds. Nevertheless, the snow has melted, the daffodils are beginning to bloom, and all the neighborhood trees are sprouting buds. Warmer weather, sunshine and lots of outdoor activities are sure to come soon. April has been described as the cruelest month, but to me April is the harbinger of many good things and experiences to come.

A large, interested and committed group of retired educators have met faithfully over the course of the fall and winter months to plan and arrange a variety of workshops as well as a keynote speaker for the 2019 Annual Convention. **Mary Lou Wood**, Chairperson, has assembled a dedicated group of retired teachers from the Southern Zone to work on this project. This group had the benefit of experienced advice and perspective of **Beth Green**, who was the Convention Chairperson, for the Western Zone during the 2018 Convention, **Kathi Bassett**, Executive Office Manager and **Kristen Cecala**, Executive Assistant.

Valuable assistance was also rendered by members of the permanent State Workshop Committee, **Diane Hahn *CR**, **Lois Thornberg**, **Pat Newell**, **Fred Conway *CR**, **Jim Newell**, Chair and **Kevin Mulligan**, ex Officio.

The 2019 Convention will be a "Journey through the Southern Tier." Those of you who are not familiar with this part of the state will note that it covers a portion of the state from the city of Binghamton in the East to the village of Bath in the West. This zone borders the state of Pennsylvania and includes the cities of Elmira and Corning in addition to Binghamton. One of American's greatest writers spent many summers at Quarry Farm outside the city of Elmira. His wife, **Livy Langdon Clemens**, who was born and raised in Elmira, was instrumental in providing **Mark Twain** the time, support and inspiration for his remarkable collection of writings. **Sheila Reed**, who is a Livy Langdon Clemens impersonator, will be the 2019 Convention keynote speaker.



Continued on next page...

Workshop Committee Report, Continued from page 7

Another well known writer will also be featured during the 2019 Convention. Most of you are familiar with the critically acclaimed television series, "The Twilight Zone." **Larry Kassin**, who is the Director of Special Projects for the Binghamton City Schools, will offer a workshop entitled "A Pioneering Mind of Television: The Life and Times of **Rod Serling**." In addition to the focus on famous authors, the 2019 convention offers a glimpse at the world class manufacturing company, Corning Glass, and its remarkable museum.

As you can tell from the description above, the 2019 Annual Convention is shaping up as a very special entertainment, educational and social event. Mark October 8-10, 2019 on your calendar and plan to join us.



Healthcare Report: Mary Ella Moeller, Chair

Contributions by Kevin Mulligan

NYSRTA is looking back to its roots. In the 1950's **Robert DeCormier**, NYSRTA's first President from 1951-1966, saw the importance of assisting retired teachers with health insurance. NYSRTA is no longer in a position to provide health insurance to its members, but has taken on the task of providing timely information about school district provided health insurance to its members. A recent Health Insurance Survey put out by the newly elected NYSRTA President, **Kevin Mulligan**, initially reflects that approximately 75% of NYSRTA members do receive school district provided health insurance in retirement.

In January, 2019 the NYSRTA Health Insurance Information Network opened up an all new web page on the NYSRTA website. To date seventeen (17) monitors representing 8 of the 10 Zones have taken on the responsibility of keeping their eyes and ears open for any changes that may be considered, or are taking place in health insurance for retirees by school districts in their Zone.

Long Island Zone reported: Bay Shore Retired Teachers were ill affected by a change made by the Bay Shore School District that began on January 1, 2019. In an effort to save up to \$2 million in cost savings the district indiscriminately changed the health insurance provider NYSHIP to AETNA for retired teachers **ONLY**. This action is currently being challenged by the Bay Shore Retired Teachers Association, as the change to AETNA is not comparable to the health insurance provided by NYSHIP.

Northeastern Zone reported: The Clinton Essex Washington Warren BOCES Health Consortium representing all seventeen (17) school districts in the Northeastern Zone has recently realigned its organization by appointing an all new Advisory Board that includes two NYSRTA members on it. The Board of Directors has also been realigned with representation from the area bargaining units. This represents a very positive change in transparency and decision making.

A "Perfect Storm" is forming about school district provided health insurance in New York State. Governor Andrew Cuomo's permanent tax cap of 2% is putting a very heavy burden on school districts and municipalities. This coupled with ever increasing medical and prescription costs, as well as the ever increasing cost of health insurances that are generally **Claims Driven** are all making the budget process for schools in New York State extremely difficult to navigate. As consumers of health insurance we all need to be cognizant of how we use this treasured benefit.

Long-Term Care

Insurance Program

The NYS Retired Teachers' Association has approved a discounted Long Term Care Insurance Program to be offered to its members and their family members.

This program is designed to help protect you, your family and your retirement security. Protection is available should you need care at home, in an assisted living facility, or nursing home.

**To request information
on this program visit
www.nyltcb.com/nysrta/
or call**

(800) 695-8224, ext. 154.

This program offers special discounts not available to the general public for you and your family members including:

Spouse / Partner

Children

Parents

Grandparents

**Brian M. Johnson, CLTC ,
NYLTCB 11 Executive Park Dr.,
Clifton Park, NY 12065
bjohnson@nyltcb.com**

Legislative Action Committee Report: Gary Germain, Chair

Article Written by Janice Mullins

UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS

Each year, your NYSRTA Legislative Action Committee works diligently to identify the top Legislative Priorities that will benefit our retired members. At the Federal Level protecting Social Security and Medicare now and for future generations, reducing prescription costs for everyone, and allowing seniors to remain in the workforce with earnings that are not limited and not federally taxed were the focus of our latest advocacy efforts.

Preparing our State Legislative Priority Card for this spring has not been without its difficulties. Unfortunately, those difficulties have delayed advocacy meetings with our New York State Assembly and Senate Representatives. Understanding the process of setting priorities will help explain why.

The committee begins by looking at the resolutions adopted at the Annual Fall Convention. At the last convention in October the majority of resolutions focused on school safety for students and all school personnel and related means to provide that safety. Also adopted were resolutions in support of greater protection against gun violence in schools and gun regulation in general. Protecting retirees from loss or diminished health benefits is also a concern expressed in the resolutions. Resolutions adopted at prior conventions are not ignored and are also reconsidered.

This is followed by a detailed search of proposed legislation that will address those resolutions. Often there is no legislation proposed that will address a specific resolution. We also must weigh the benefits of the legislation against the monetary fall-out that may affect our retired members. For instance, would it result in increased school taxes or health insurance premiums. Proposed legislation that does reflect the resolutions from both the Assembly and Senate are compiled and presented to the Legislative Action Committee prior to the start of the convention. Each bill is discussed in detail. Priorities for advocacy are identified. A series of teleconferences follows to finalize the priority card that will be presented to the NYSRTA Board for approval. Briefing papers and talking points are prepared and advocacy folders distributed.

As of this writing State advocacy folders have not yet been distributed. Several obstacles had to be overcome. Bill sponsorship is lost when a representative decides not to run again or fails to win re-election. Loss of senate control by State Republicans resulted in the loss of sponsorship for two of our identified priorities forcing the committee to find new bill sponsors. All legislation must be reintroduced every January with the start of the new legislative session and every two years the bill numbers are replaced with new numbers. Additionally, legislation cannot be re-introduced if its fiscal note has not been completely updated. Each of these has affected our efforts.

We did secure new Senate sponsorship for the COLA legislation that has been one of our priorities for the past three years. However, the sponsors have not been able to re-introduce the legislation due to the difficulty in getting current fiscal information from all public employee retirement systems that would be affected. We have been in constant contact with our Assembly sponsor's Legislative Director who has been working tirelessly to get the needed information.

Regarding school safety, we are requesting that schools be given more money to be used as they feel necessary to protect students and school personnel including providing additional mental health services to identify troubled students before an incident occurs.

In support of active teachers, we will continue to advocate for an improved and fair teacher and principal evaluation system. As fellow retirees we will not let you be forgotten. Your Legislative Action Committee will continue to keep its finger on the pulse of its members by advocating for your benefit.





A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE OFFICE STAFF... SPOTLIGHTING DEBBIE BARNES

Debbie Barnes, Executive Assistant/Membership Coordinator joined the NYSRTA staff in 2008. She hails from Gloversville by way of New Jersey. She has lived in the area for 25 years. She has 3 adult sons, 1 adult daughter and 7 grandchildren. When Debbie is not working you can find her at her camp in Pennsylvania, at home doing yard work or home improvements or enjoying her family.

During her 11 years, Debbie has worn many “hats”. She is first and foremost the head of our membership department. She is responsible for maintaining the membership database and making sure it is up to date with correct demographics for each member; name, address, phone number, email address, school district, subject taught, and year retired are a few items the database stores. She also receives and processes all the mail that comes into the office from you, our members. Many times she is processing hundreds of pieces of mail a day! Some of the mail she receives is renewals that you send in. She must check to make sure the email address you provided is still the most up to date email we have for you, check any corrections you may have made on the renewal card as far as change of addresses/winter addresses and the most important part; apply your payment to your account! After all that is done, a spreadsheet is created and a report is run with a breakdown, by Zone, who has paid or contributed. She uses that information to generate daily and monthly reports, which are used to send to each Zone President as well as the NYSRTA President and Membership Chairperson. After the reports are completed, she is responsible for preparing the money to get deposited at the bank.

When she receives notification of a new member, she must send each new member a Welcome Packet filled with a membership card, pamphlets introducing new members to our organization as well as a letter from the new members’ Zone President so they can have necessary information to get in contact with their respective zone personnel. Debbie takes pride in these packets since sometimes it’s the first thing a member receives after joining.

Another task Debbie does is tracking expenses, by zone, for items such as mailings. The requests and amount of postage used are kept in a binder and billed to the zones 4 times a year. Once the money is received from the zone, she applies the amount to the Zones expense account.

Need a report? Debbie’s the gal for you. Do you want to know how many members we have over the age of 90? Ask Deb, she can run a report for you. Need a breakdown, by zip code, of all the members in a specific zone? Ask Debbie...she can run a report faster than you can say “supercalifragilisticexpialidocious”.

In the months prior to the Convention, Debbie is hard at work making sure we have everyone’s meal choices so that we have an accurate tally to give to the venue, which is another spreadsheet Debbie puts into a report, but don’t get me started on reports again! Getting the Convention together is a team effort in the office and Debbie is always there to pitch in to help.

When asked what her role is at NYSRTA why she likes working for this organization, Debbie stated “My role at NYSRTA for the past 11 years has been to provide high standards for the members of our organization. I enjoy working with and giving support to the Board of Directors, Zone Presidents, Committee Chairs and everyone that holds a position in the NTSRTA organization. I am honored to work for an organization that is dedicated to retired educators.



ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...

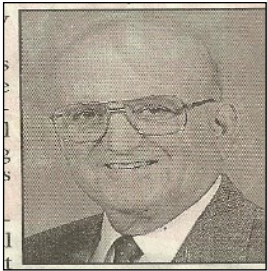
Central Western Zone; Phyllis Dunlap, Public Relations Chair

Assisted by Lynn Hefferon

Livingston County's Spring annual meeting was in May at Fratelli's Restaurant in Avon, New York. **Dr. Mary Corey** and future President of Livingston County RTA talked to us about her new book, "The Political Life and Times of Matilda Joslyn Gage" and three suffrage leaders who called Central New York home; Gage, Stanton and Anthony.

The Spring Basket Raffle at the luncheon went to support the Geneseo Parish Outreach Center. The Geneseo Parish Outreach served 240 patients with 444 patient encounters at 42 clinics with no geographical boundaries for those served. The Parish Outreach is an all-volunteer organization with people donating their time and talents.

Hopefully you read and enjoyed the article written by **Les Buell** from Wayne County. He went with a group from Livingston Cares. They went on a mission trip to the Florida Keys to help repair damage from a hurricane. ([click here to go to his article](#))



On October 21, 2018 we lost our CWZ past treasurer, **Richard M. Joseph**, who served over 15 years in this position. He was a retired industrial arts teacher in Victor Central School System, Ontario County.



John Roy was a 75-year-old Executive board member for over 3 decades died on December 25, 2018. He taught History, Social Studies, government and economics in Campbell-Savona school district. Besides being on the CWZ Executive Board he was President of the Steuben County Retired Teacher's Association.

Perhaps you remember John scooting around at the 2018 NYSRTA Convention. He's in the CWZ picture from the last York State.



Sharon J. White from Wayne County was 75 years old and died on February 5, 2019. She served on the CWZ Executive Board. You may remember Sharon bringing her mother, who was wheelchair bound, to several Conventions. She also served on the Executive Board of Directors as Vice President for Membership.



On March 15, 2019, **Bernadette E. Lally** passed. She was a Retired Teacher from Rochester, a Monroe County Officer and a CWZ Convention delegate. Once she purchased and donated to an entire 3rd grade class.

Continued on next page...

ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...

Central Western Zone; Phyllis Dunlap, Public Relations Chair

Assisted by Lynn Hefferon

On a happier note, **Jan Driscoll**, a retired Seneca Falls teacher and a member of the Seneca County CWZ received the Seneca County Women's Coalition "Woman of the Year" for 2019.



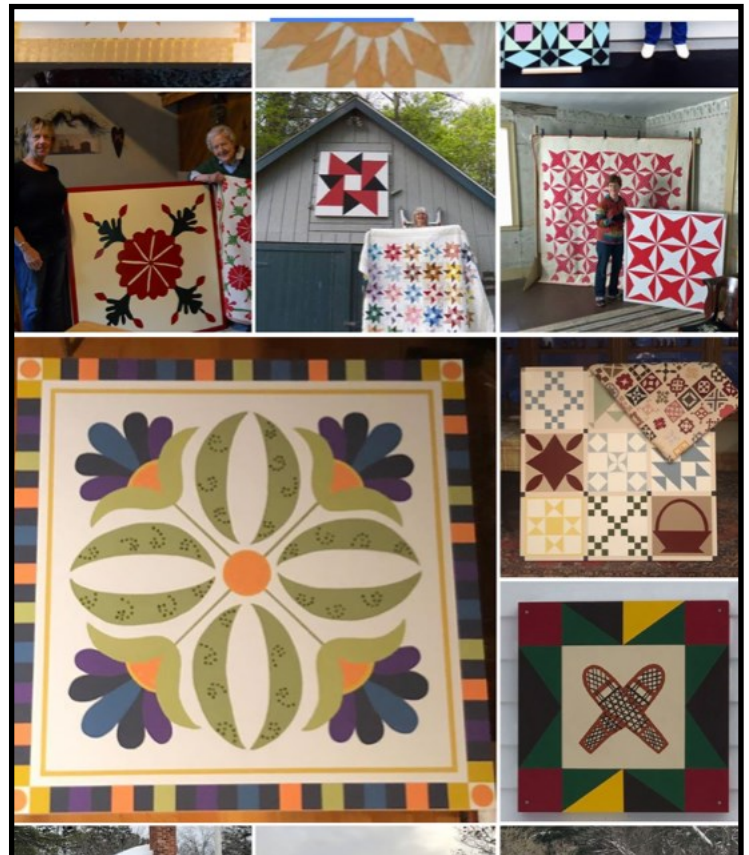
Also, retired Waterloo Elementary Teachers and Seneca County Retired Teachers' Association members, **Carol Lord *CR** and **Jane Moorehouse** were Co-chairs of Delta Kappa Gamma Sororities New York State Convention in Geneva, New York the last weekend of April.

Eastern Zone; Pamela Love, Public Relations Chair

As I was calling Eastern Zone Unit Presidents to learn about their upcoming events and news, I was really interested in a particular topic for a speaker at a Retired Teachers Meeting which is 'Quilt Barn Trail'. **Irene Hauser**, President of the Fulton Unit, said that their May Speaker is **Liz Argotsinger** who will talk about The Fulton Montgomery Quilt Barn Trail. I had not heard of it and wanted further information.

In 2001, the first barn quilt (a large hand painted wooden block) was placed on a barn in Adams, Ohio and now Quilt Barn Trails are found all over the country as well as Canada. When I talked to **Rosalind Carron**, President of the Upper Montgomery Unit, she said that their Unit had the speaker and topic at one of their Retired Teachers Meetings. There are Quilt Barn Trail bus tours that last three hours starting at The Fulton County Office of the Aging on certain Mondays from May thru October.

See more of Eastern Zone News on next page...



ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...

Eastern Zone; Pamela Love, Public Relations Chair



Morgan Kelleher

Most Units in the Eastern Zone have two or three meetings a year, the first meeting generally in May or June. The Saratoga Unit, however, meets every month for a lunch and a speaker. **Ken Bollerud**, President of the Saratoga Unit said that during the winter months, they have been averaging about 39 members in attendance at each of their meetings. One of their members, **Karen Flewelling**, is also a yearly speaker who goes to Africa on a regular basis to build wells so that the residents of each area can have clean water. As speaker for the Saratoga Unit's March meeting, Karen raised \$600 to help the funding for her next trip to Africa.

Carol Reid, Secretary of the Schenectady Unit, reported that their 'Aspiring Teacher Award' is presented every year and they give \$1,500 annually to a high school student planning on a future in the field of Education. This award is rotated between six public high schools in their county including Duaneburg Central, Mohonasen Central, Niskayuna Central, Schalmont Central, Schenectady

City and Scotia -Glenville Central. In 2018, the Schenectady Unit presented the 'Aspiring Teacher Award' to **Morgan Kelleher** who graduated from Niskayuna H.S. in June of 2018. In the fall of 2018, Morgan entered SUNY Cortland as an Adaptive Physical Education major which has a focus on special education. During her time in high school, Morgan gained experience in her future college courses through volunteer work. She coached a unified basketball team which included players with a range of physical and mental abilities. Morgan committed herself to a career exploration program by undertaking a 54 hour internship assignment at Wildwood, a local school serving mentally challenged students transported from areas within the Capital District. She was described as compassionate and knowledgeable by the physical education staff at Wildwood.

Joyce Notarnicola from the Green County Unit is Eastern Zone's new Community Service Chairperson. She will be leading the second Eastern Zone's Volunteer Day at The Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York located in Latham, NY on May 29th. from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. All units are invited to participate. **Marge Leibowitz**, President of Rensselaer County Unit, said that she was going to encourage her unit's involvement with this Volunteer Day activity.



Long Island Zone, Eileen Holmes, Public Relations Chair

Before the colder winter weather set in and the snowbirds flew south, the Long Island Zone held several luncheons to share news and celebrate the holidays. On the WestEnd, WERTA hosted a lunch at the Heritage Club at Bethpage State Park. **Ms. Rebecca Lakhani** from the Long Island-based Book Fairies was guest speaker and collected books for her organization. After an excellent lunch, WERTA raffled off great door prizes to raise money for their scholarship fund.



Rebecca Lakhani



Evelyn Paola

Article continued on page 14...

ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...

Long Island Zone, Eileen Holmes, Public Relations Chair

On the EastEnd, **Larry Strickland** organized an Election Day luncheon at Villa Paul Restaurant in Hampton Bays. Newly elected EERTA officers, **Dom LiCausi**, President, **Agnes Dansereau**, Vice President, **Susan LiCausi**, Secretary and **John Ruggiero**, treasurer were introduced. EERTA members who attended the NYSRTA convention reported on convention activities and news. Dom was pleased to announce that **Agnes Dansereau** will serve as EERTA's historian, **Ruth Doroski** is EERTA's membership chair and **Val Stype** is serving as parliamentarian and legislative action chair for EERTA. LIZ President **Fred Coway*CR** announced that **Val Stype** will also be serving as LIZ historian.



EERTA's Lady Santa
Alicia Winowsky



Larry Strickland

In early December, **Agnes Dansereau** arranged a gala holiday party at O'Malley's Restaurant in Greenport. Agnes went 'all out' and organized a holiday trivia game, Chinese auction, and door prize raffles. There was also a grab bag exchange with **Alicia Winowsky** as 'Lady Santa' and a wonderful sing-along featuring **Diana and Jim Davies**. In mid-December, **Virginia Schutze** hosted her annual Shelter Island holiday covered-dish luncheon at her home. Along with the delicious food and merry spirits, Virginia was pleased to introduce two new members from Shelter Island who have just joined NYSRTA!



Agnes Dansereau



Mary Peterson, Eileen
Holmes & Agnes Dansereau

After three months of winter quiet, in April **Eileen Holmes** organized the EERTA Celebrate Spring luncheon at Outerbanks Restaurant at Indian Island Country Club in Riverhead. **Ms. Gillian Wood-Pultz**, director of The North Fork Animal Welfare League was guest speaker. The League has many wonderful programs and some are specifically aimed at senior citizens. Matching older pets with older people for successful adoptions, helping seniors keep their pets at home during times of medical or financial problems and providing trained assistants to help older pet owners were some of the subjects she discussed.



Virginia Schulze and Marie Buscemi



Ginny Stype, Ruth Doroski and Val Stype



Diana and Jim Davies



50/50 Winners Dee McKinnon and Alicia Winowsky



Ruth Ruggiero, Jola Macario and Alice Martin

ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...

Long Island Zone, Eileen Holmes, Public Relations Chair



The Long Island Zone is saddened by the passing of two long-time members: **Al Colina** and **Don Griffin**. Al was famous for working tirelessly to help secure the COLA benefits we now enjoy as retired teachers. Don, along with his wife Mae, chaired the planning committee when LIZ hosted the state convention in 2001 and was always ready to help 'barbecue the chickens' at EERTA picnics. They were great members and they will be missed.

North Central Zone, Patricia Newell & Nancy Roberts , Co-Public Relations Chair

*The naturalist, **John Muir**, states that "Spring work is going on with joyful enthusiasm." This quote aptly describes NCZ members as they launch ahead into the activities of a new season.*



Patty Corey

First, however, let's take a moment to look back over our shoulder at a few significant fall and winter accomplishments. On October 25, 2018 the annual Coats for Kids distribution was held at St. Stephen's Church Hall in the village of Croghan, NY. The Dynamic Duo, **Patty Corey** and **Toni Gigliotti**, worked hard all year in preparation for this event. New coats, hats, mittens, scarves, boots, and a variety of clothes in infant to teen sizes were available. Items were quickly and gratefully accepted. For many, this was indeed a heartwarming start to the long winter season ahead.

Go-to-Girl, **Kathy Allan**, will be heading up the PBS Ready-Set-Fun Book Fest on Saturday, May 11th. The Book Fest is one of over 30 different activities hosted by community organizations that will take place at the Salmon Run Mall in Watertown. This is a literacy event that is fun for everyone. Children of all ages can come and select a brand new book from Scholastic. They can also bring a book from home and exchange it for a different book. This is a very popular NCZ event. It draws as many as 16 volunteers manning several shifts. Literacy is a topic that remains close to the heart of our retired teachers.

We are also privileged to have **Gregory Ronneburger** and his colleague, **Stephen Wisniewski**, AXA Equitable in Syracuse with us. They will present "The Family Love Letter." You may have had the opportunity to attend this outstanding presentation at the NYSRTA Convention in October 2018. The presentation is designed to acquaint the audience with important estate planning strategies in case of sudden incapacitation or death. NCZ members will be encouraged to bring non-perishable food items for our Community Service drive for the Jefferson County's food pantries. We look forward to this luncheon which always proves to be so interesting and well attended.

Dates to Remember:

Spring Scholarship Luncheon, Tuesday, June 11, 2019, Ramada Inn, Watertown

Fall Business Luncheon, Tuesday, September 17, 2019, Ramada Inn, Watertown

NYSRTA Convention, October 9-11, 2019, Turning Stone, Verona, NY

Continued on next page...

ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...

North Central Zone, Patricia Newell & Nancy Roberts , Co-Public Relations Chair

On June 11th, our Spring Scholarship Luncheon will be held at the Ramada Inn in Watertown. **John Gaffney** and his Scholarship Committee consisting of **Bruce & Candice Buckingham, Dr. George Forbes*CR, Bill Haller, Marianne Malatino, and Tom Van Emmerik** have been working diligently. They have the formidable task of selecting two winners out of the many deserving students who apply. **Abigail M. Rockwood** and **Daniel O. Mayer**, graduating seniors from Lowville Academy & Central School, will each receive a \$1,000 scholarship. NCZ is awarding these two scholarships in conjunction with the Northern NY Community Foundation. Abigail intends to major in Elementary Education at SUNY Geneseo. Daniel will pursue studies in Elementary Education at SUNY Cortland. These students and their parents will be our honored guests at the luncheon.



2019 SCHOLARSHIP WINNER



Abigail is the daughter of Ronald and Susan Rockwood. She attends Lowville Academy and Central School. She plans on attending SUNY Geneseo in the fall where she will major in Elementary Education.

She currently resides in Lowville.

2019 SCHOLARSHIP WINNER



Daniel is the son of Jeffrey and Emily Mayer. He attends Lowville Academy and Central School. He plans on attending SUNY Cortland in the fall where he will major in Elementary Education.

He currently resides in Lowville.

ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...

Northeastern Zone, Marti Martin, Public Relations Chair

Hear ye. Hear ye...The North Country has been released from the grip of Winter...well almost. We finally had a taste of Spring with a 70 degree day and it felt heavenly! However, as I write, snow showers are in the forecast for April 27th. Speaking of snow...



As Nancy Olsen's photograph attests, these spring delights, aptly named Snowdrops, blossomed despite the snow! Nancy's photo was recently submitted to the *Plattsburgh Press Republican* where it received the Reader's Choice accolade. The caption noted "It is believed the thermal effect of the sun on the leaf tips melts the surrounding snow to permit their growth." What a lovely sight this photo brought to a cold Spring day!

It seems so long ago, but back in December, our membership gathered to usher in the holiday season as is tradition. "Elfie" **Ron Wilson*CR**, dressed in his holiday attire, was there to greet members with his antics. After the business portion of the agenda, and a buffet lunch, our membership was treated to our traditional holiday program. This year we were privileged to have the Chazy Central Rural School Jazz band and Chorus under the leadership of **Ms. Penny Weise** and **Mr. Alex Malsan**. These young folks were very talented and we enjoyed listening to their carefully chosen selections. There was some nostalgia... reminding a group of us of the days when WE played instruments in our school bands and sang in the chorus! We've come full circle... now we're the ones being entertained! The NEZ members were very generous with their monetary contributions and unwrapped gifts for the Christmas Bureau again this year. As is the custom, the card elves of Friendly Service spent a busy afternoon sending holiday greeting cards to our octo and nonagenarians.



Ron Wilson*CR as Elfie

Winter is a quiet time for NEZ with many members migrating south. Some like **Ron and Lois Wilson, Kevin and Barbara Mulligan, Peter and Linda Atchinson** and **Keith and Carol Lund** take this opportunity to get together for breakfast, leaving those of us back home envious, **especially this winter!!!** They looked so happy as they sent greetings to their friends back home!!



Some tidbits to report...

Our NEZ June scholarship recipient, **Colby Fortin**, was awarded a second honor during the Martin Luther King, Jr. commemoration in January, when her essay was chosen to be the winner. She has a true gift for expressing herself. Colby attends Oberlin College.

Continued on page 18...

ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...

Northeastern Zone, Marti Martin, Public Relations Chair

The **2017** \$1000 Hudson-Kramer Memorial Grant winner, **Aaron Brassard**, sent us a report and video giving an update on his project. He announced that the wind turbine and solar panel he purchased with the funds and which was installed by his students last year, made it through the wild winds, and an icy and snowy winter and was still fully operative...providing data to the students and being a perfect example of kinetic energy. The **2019** Hudson-Kramer Memorial Grant information and application was disseminated throughout the seventeen school districts in our Zone in March. The deadline for application submission is May 24, when the winner will be chosen and awarded the \$1000 in early June. We are looking forward to learning what innovative projects our local educators are thinking about. The applicant coming in second will receive \$500 from our local NEZ Kramer Educator Award. **Carol Lowery** and **Marti Martin** were members of the Earth Week Planning Committee which provided opportunities for community members to hear lectures, watch documentaries, and speak with exhibitors from sixteen various environmental groups in commemoration of the 49th anniversary of Earth Day. The theme was **"Time for Action... For a Sustainable Earth"**. The Algonquin Chapter of the ADK Mt Club, a renowned steward group providing member-led hikes and opportunities for trail maintenance and stewardship throughout the Adirondacks was represented by **Marilyn Smith** and **Nancy Olsen**. **A. Paul Scott** and his wife, Alice, and other members of the St. Peter's Environmental Stewardship Committee also presided at the informational session at the Farmers Market. Their group has provided opportunities for the public to dialog about the role they play in the movement to address climate change and the need for promoting energy conservation.

The NEZ Public Relations committee has begun a new initiative this winter. "Notes for Notables" is a way of recognizing individuals, organizations, businesses, schools, colleges, classes, and students throughout our Zone who have achieved a goal, won an award, contributed to or furthered the education of our greater community. A hand-written note is sent to individuals or groups from NEZ noting we represent the NY State Retired Teachers. The notes are tailored to acknowledge their achievement or share the excitement about their news. We let our active colleagues know that they "make our profession proud". Already, we have received comments to say the recipients have appreciated the recognition. Each member of our committee took responsibility for writing the notes for a month at a time. It is a commitment we feel will reap rewards. Getting the word out about our organization is personalized with this initiative.



Sadly, several of our NEZ members passed away in recent months. **Jane Allen, Verda Norcross, Louise Meisenheimer, Virginia Reardon, Robert Gettens, Elizabeth Gregory** and **Lendell Haskell** all had a positive influence on their students during their careers in North Country schools where they taught. They will be remembered for their years of service and the relationships they established with their colleagues.



NYSRTA Sponsored Insurance Programs

- Dental
- Vision
- Hospital & Home Care Recovery
- Auto
- Home
- Umbrella
- Renters
- Pet

Pearl Insurance
13 Airline Drive | Albany, NY 12205
Visit us online: nysrtainsurance.com | Speak with an Agent: 1-866-478-8907

ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...

Northern Zone, Linda Crosby, Public Relations Chair

Since the convention and a slippery slide through a long winter, Northern Zone members have been busily preparing business plans and activities for the upcoming year. The NZ executive board met on February 2, 2019 where **Roxann Finley** gave a very thorough treasurer's report detailing, in particular, expenses related to the Fall 2018 membership luncheon and the 2018 convention. She reported that members gave generously to the high school student scholarship fund (\$300) at the fall meeting. Roxann received a thank you letter from the DeCormier Trust Fund for our 2018 donation of \$100. President **Gayla LePage** said we have our insurance "watchdogs" set with NZ members **Joe Russo** and **Phil LePage** volunteering to observe local trends in school district health insurance plans. Under committee reports, Gayla also reported that our total membership is 387 as of December 2018 and that high school student scholarship applications will be sent to area schools in February. Friendly Services Chair **Agnes Hudson*CR** has been sending out cards this past winter.

The 2019 NYSRTA Hudson-Kramer Memorial Grant of \$1,000 will be awarded this year to an active educator for an innovative project or program in a NZ public school. School district superintendents in Franklin and St. Lawrence counties have received the grant information and applications to be distributed to staff; the **application deadline is May 26**.

Programs and Meetings Chair **Alice Galvin** announced that our Spring Membership meeting/luncheon will be returning to the beautiful shores of Star Lake at The Haven (SUNY Potsdam's former camp) on May 30, 2019. We hope NZ members will join us to spend the day in such a relaxing and gorgeous rural setting. Guest speaker Les Buell, a graduate of the nearby NYS Ranger School in Wanakena, will do a presentation on 19th C. Civil War medicine, a powerpoint program on the woman who inspired the television show Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman, and show us artifacts (old tools and guns).

Our next NZ Executive Board meeting is scheduled for May 9 at the Potsdam Methodist Church. All NZ members are welcome to attend. The NZ newsletter and spring luncheon invitations will be prepared for mailing to all NZ members after the regular business meeting concludes.

Rae Louise Tate and I attended the April NYSRTA Executive Board meetings in Albany on April 8-9th. At the Zone Presidents' meeting, zone officers were advised to visit/reach out to all the zone units to encourage all unit members to join the State Association (NYSRTA); we need everyone's support. At the BOD meeting, all officers and many committee chairs gave reports. A highlight of NYSRTA President **Kevin Mulligan's** report was a presentation by the marketing firm, Engine 7, whose services are generously supported by the Insurance Trust Fund. Under new business, the BOD approved the dates/site of the 2020 Convention (Turning Stone Resort-Oct. 14-16) and the 2021 Convention (Turning Stone Resort-Oct. 13-15). The BOD also approved the appointment of a new trustee of the DeCormier Trust, **Mary Lou Davis**, because long-time trustee, **Agnes Hudson*CR** (President Emerita), our own NZ friend, has stepped down after many years of service to the trust. Agnes has always had a fierce spirit and a big heart for NYSRTA. Thank you, Agnes, for your devoted, multi-layered commitment to our association!!

Under the leadership of Unit President **Joe Russo**, our Clifton-Fine-Edwards Unit held their annual Christmas party in December at The Pinecone in Wanakena, where all members always donate food items to the local food pantry.



ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...

Southeastern Zone; Maureen Coffey, Public Relations Chair

"April showers bring May flowers" and many new activities for the units that make up Southeastern Zone!

First though, our Southeastern Zone President, **Tony Colombo**, held a lunch meeting at Denny's in Newburgh on April 3rd. It was great to get together and catch up with one another after the winter. We still had some snowbirds who weren't back home yet so we'll meet again in May.

And now for news from our units!

NARTA (Newburgh Area Retired Teachers' Association) will award a \$2,000 scholarship to a student planning to go into the field of education. The winner will be announced at their spring luncheon at Colden Manor at Spruce Lodge on May 30th.

NARTA also honored 17 of their members who are 85 years or older. Their 85 Plus Members celebrated at Lakeview House last October 4, 2018. Community Service Chairperson, Cheryl Fischer, organized a "Sock It To Them" drive to collect warm socks for homeless shelters. Surprisingly, warm socks are the shelters most requested items.

Sullivan County Retired Teachers Association hosted their spring luncheon on April 10th at Nardi's Frankie and Johnny's Restaurant in Hurleyville. **James Farnham**, a licensed insurance agent, discussed "Everything You Wanted to Know About Medicare" at the buffet luncheon. In June, **Gordon MacAdam** and **Paul Lounsbury** will speak to members on "One Room Schoolhouses".

MARTA (Mid-Hudson Area Retired Teachers' Association) celebrated the holidays with a luncheon at De Steffano's Old Erie Pub in Middletown. Those of us who attended enjoyed games, raffles, prizes and lots of fun. Our contributions benefited Middletown Cares, the Food Bank of the Hudson Valley, Pets Alive, and the veterans at Castle Point. In addition, over 100 infant hats were knitted or crocheted by our members for the American Heart Association's "Little Hats, Big Hearts" program. On May 15th MARTA will host a breakfast at Kuhl's Highland House to honor its scholarship recipients. Thanks to the continued generosity of its members, MARTA will be able to award four scholarships, each one worth \$3,000 to deserving students planning to pursue a degree in the field of education.

Once again, the MARTA Activities Committee has been busy arranging classes in bridge, CPR, swing dancing and Google Docs, to name just a few. Trips to Broadway plays, lectures, ceramic and painting classes, and lunch outings with friends (including a standing lunch date on the first Wednesday of the month at Loughran's in Salisbury Mills) are some of the many activities being offered. There truly is something for everyone!

On another note ... April was National Volunteer Month. Southeastern Zone is proud to have many members gifting their talents and time to those in need. **Leon Harrold*CR** is an usher for services at his church. In addition to that, he spends his Wednesdays helping to prepare dinners for those in need. And, he donates his time to his local food pantry. **Patti De Leo** and **Mary Lou Davis** are both active in the American Association of University Women, Patti as the Public Policy Chairperson and Mary Lou as the New York State Convention Director. In addition, Patti volunteers at the St. Mary's Food Bank and makes beautiful scrapbooks for people in Hospice care. Mary Lou spends much of her time at the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie and the Junior League of Poughkeepsie as treasurer. **Cheryl Fischer**, a three time cancer survivor herself, goes to an oncology practice through The American Cancer Society once a week to offer information and support to patients who are going through chemo and other cancer treatment. She can also be found with the Town of Newburgh Friends of Seniors taking seniors who are unable to drive to doctor's appointments, shopping, etc. **Ray Leduc** is a member of the Knights of Columbus and is active in his parish church. He is also a Hospice volunteer, facilitating a bereavement group. **Geri Grammas** spends time volunteering at a local soup kitchen, a used bookstore sponsored by her local library, and the Paramount Theater in Middletown, NY. **Helen Hoering** volunteers at the Cooperative Extension by helping with her local 4H Club. She also lends a hand at her church with food distribution at the food pantry. She helps with music during her church's services. During the winter months while she's in Florida she continues to volunteer in their community soup kitchen. **Martha Diederich** donates her time to both her library and an animal shelter thrift shop. **Mary Ellen Colombo** babysits her beautiful granddaughters.

ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...ZONE NEWS...

Southeastern Zone; Maureen Coffey, Public Relations Chair

Geraldine Goumas sings in her church choir and donates time to Delta Kappa Gamma. I volunteer on the Mother Baby unit at our local medical center. I'm also a "Baby Cuddler" for babies in the NICU who need some extra love and attention. Often these little ones are going through withdrawal, having been born to mothers who struggled with addiction during their pregnancies. And last but not least, many of you give tirelessly of your talents and time to the units and zones that make up our New York State Retired Teachers Association.

So there you have it. Different people, different talents and interests, different ways to volunteer.

Winston Churchill once said,
*"You make a living by what you get.
You make a life by what you give."*



Many thanks to everyone who is making their life and those lives of the people they help just a little bit more rewarding when they volunteer! 'Til next time...

Southern Zone; Debbie Deats, Public Relations Chair

Southern Zone is the host group for the annual state conference this year. The conference is October 9-11 and the theme is "A Journey through the Southern Tiers." Our Zone President **Mary Lou Wood** and her committee are working diligently to provide our state attendees with a conference to remember. We hope to see you there!

Our featured unit this time is Eastern Broome Branch. This group meets monthly from October through June at the Holiday Inn Arena in Binghamton. They currently have about 200 members, with 50 - 65 attending meetings regularly. They have had a few volunteers to fill some of the board positions but, like most units, are struggling to fill the rest. **Lynne Hunkovic** provided me with great information. If you want to attend any of their programs, please contact Lynne at lmhunkovic@aol.com.

Western Zone; Theresa Pope, Public Relations Chair

Western Zone has undergone several changes. It has new leadership. **Doris Kirsch *CR** has stepped down as President and **Alphonse "AL" Marabella** from BRTA (Buffalo Retired Teachers Association) will be the new Zone President. He is a past president of the BRTA and member, also, of both organizations.

Western Zone has sponsored several events and tours. The annual Conference was held in September, 2018, and featured Steven Kramer whose topic was "Legal Concerns of Seniors". Emphasis was: health care proxy, power of attorney, and last will and testament. Special recognition was given to immediate past president **Doris Kirsch *CR**. The annual gathering included the presentation of Citation Awards to four very active board members for their outstanding leadership, service, participation, and contribution to the local units, community, and Western Zone. Tours are planned for a Norwegian Line Cruise (September, 2019) and Savannah, Georgia (May, 2019).

Western Zone honors active teachers in the various units for exemplary presentations in the classroom. Grants are for use with their students. Scholarships in the unit areas are provided to students for academic achievement. Scholarship amounts vary from \$1000 to \$1500. Teacher grants are as much as \$1000. Twelve units comprise the Western Zone. Each has noteworthy educational and community service programs.

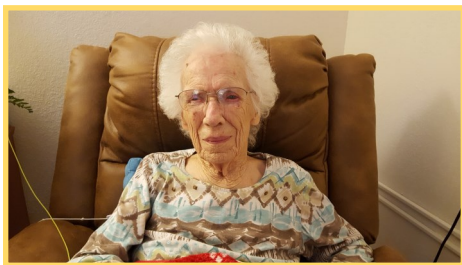


Shirley Plummer directs board members in a bell playing activity.





CFE Historian Alice Galvin just announced that longtime NYSRTA member, Pauline Bassette, recently celebrated her **106th** birthday on Easter Sunday, April 20. Pauline retired in 1970 from her Elementary Librarian position at Clifton-Fine Central School. She presently resides in Star Lake, N.Y.
Happy Birthday, Pauline!



Pauline Bassette

HAPPY
BIRTHDAY
LADIES!

Another important benchmark was reached on February 1st, NCZ member **Mary Brouty** became **100** years young! Mary worked for the Watertown City School District for 35 years. She worked with the supervisor of the elementary lunch program for all the schools in the district. Mary said in a recent telephone interview that she "loved helping the kids." We wish Mary joy, happiness, and sweet memories of her many years in the field of education. She is truly a blessed lady!!

Happy birthday! Happy birthday!

Happy birthday!

Happy birthday!

Friendly Service Report, Judith Corigliano Chair

When the words are true and kind they can change our world ~ Buddha

Yes, Friendly Service volunteer workers know that kind thoughts and deeds go along ways to effect the lives of our retirees and their families. For those who love stats, read on to learn about the 2019 year end Friendly Service reports.

Ten zones, **51** chair persons and a total of **241** key workers reported the following numbers as the pertain to our volunteer services:



273 visits to members
354 telephone calls
531 email messages
5247 cards were sent!
143 gifts to 90 year old and up shut ins
135 recognitions (total)
\$ 6336.27 expended (total reported).



We know that many of our friendly service volunteers, expend money out of pocket and choose not to be reimbursed and we heartily thank them for their unselfish commitment to remembering and honoring our members.

Ponder this thought, we really **all** can be friendly Service (without assignments) by a call, a card, an email, to your retired teacher friends. But know that your Zone may need help and you are always welcome to help your Friendly Service Zone, Unit or county chairperson. Find out who that person is and **please** volunteer for a needed and appreciated service.

Nominations Report, Bill Cline, Chair

The following officers whose terms have not expired plan to remain in office for the 2019-2020 year:

Kevin Mulligan, President

Dr. Jim Newell, Vice President

Judy Corigliano, Vice President for Friendly Service

Lois Thornberg, Vice President for Membership

Judy Farmer*CR, Secretary

Terry Trudeau*CR, Treasurer

Nominations will be needed for the office of Vice President for Legislative Action, as the term of Gary Germain will expire on Oct. 31, 2019.

Candidates for this position need to submit a letter of intent with a resume and a letter recommending him/her from his/her Zone President.

These letters may be submitted by US mail to William Cline, Nominations Chair, 2 Stever Drive, Binghamton, NY 13901, or by e-mail, wecline129@gmail.com by May 31, 2019. THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS.

Candidates should be prepared to appear before the Nominations Committee at a meeting on **Monday, July 15, at 2 PM, in Albany**. At that time, the committee will interview the candidate (s) and make a recommendation for that position to the Executive Board. If a member of the Nominations Committee is not able to attend, the zone president should provide an alternate. The name of the alternate should be provided the Chair prior to the meeting.

The purpose of the survey is to gather information from NYSRTA Zones and Units on managed school districts health care plans offered to retired educators. The information gathered from this survey will be critical in formulating a network of information for NYSRTA members across New York State. With the ever increasing costs of health insurance, it is imperative that we, the retired health insurance recipient, keep current with how our health insurance is managed.

Directions: Zone/Unit Presidents and Zone/Unit Health Care Program Chairperson (s) are asked to complete and/or distribute this survey to those Zone and/or Unit members who have a good working knowledge of their managed health care plan. Please return all COMPLETED SURVEYS TO THE ATTENTION OF Kevin Mulligan, President of NYSRTA; 8 Airport Park Blvd.; Latham, NY 12110

NAME _____

Position in NYSRTA _____

Question #1. What Zone and/or Unit do you belong to? _____

Question #2. As a retiree, do you have school district provided health insurance? _____

IF NO, SKIP TO QUESTION 3

If YES – What school district do you receive health insurance from? _____

Did the school district health insurance plan provide coverage for you **BEFORE** you became Medicare eligible?

Did the school district health insurance plan provide coverage for you **AFTER** you became Medicare eligible?

Question #3. Who manages your school district health insurance plan? _____

Example: In Northeastern Zone there are 17 school districts with the same health insurance plan (s). The 17 school districts belong to The Clinton, Essex, Warren and Washington BOCES Consortium which manages the Excellus Blue Cross/Blue Shield Health Care Plan. So, NEZ would answer CEWW BOCES Consortium.

Question #4. Who in your Unit or Zone has a good working knowledge of your school district provided health insurance plan (s)?

Please provide names, email addresses and phone numbers. It is hoped that the names provided will make up a network of information specialists we are seeking at NYSRTA.

Name _____

Zone or Unit _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Name _____

Zone or Unit _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Name _____

Zone or Unit _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Thank you for your cooperation and attention to the request. NYSRTA truly wishes to serve retired educators, therefore we need to focus our attention to health insurance.

~ Kevin R. Mulligan, President of NYSRTA