



Retired Educators of New York

YORK STATE NEWSLETTER

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Winter 2020

Working together to support and strengthen the quality
of life for all retired educators, their families, and communities.



A Message From Our President...

“The world you live in today is a different world, it is changing fast. You must accept it and change.” NYSRTA’s founding father, Robert DeCormier, penned those words prior to his death in 1966. In this article, it is in the spirit of those words that I address you, as the President of RENY (Retired Educators of NY). At the Annual Meeting held in October, 2019, the delegates clearly voted in favor of NYSRTA taking on the new DBA (Do Business As) RENY.

The originally designed logo to accompany RENY was not accepted by a majority vote of the Zones. Due to the abstract nature of the logo, I believed a special vote by the Zones was warranted. The “abstract logo” was defeated by 3- in favor, 6 –against, and 1 – abstention. An alternate, less abstract logo was designed by the marketing firm Engine 7 Design, and was approved by the NYSRTA Board of Directors. Most NYSRTA logos have, in the past, been approved by the Board. The new “less abstract” logo was introduced to the delegates by Tim Nerney, President of the marketing firm Engine 7 Design at the luncheon on October 10, 2019, prior to the Annual Meeting.

Marketing of the new name RENY will began shortly. The DBA- RENY requires registering the new name with the State of New York and is expected to be approved by the start of the New Year. It becomes the job of all of us to use and “sell” the new name RENY. Needless to say, the transition from NYSRTA to RENY will take a few years to accomplish. For example, the office still has several hundred old NYSRTA member applications that need to be used before new RENY applications are ordered.

In September, my wife Barbara and I toured the southern tier of New York, attending the annual zone meetings of Southeastern Zone, Southern Zone and Central Western Zone. I wish to thank these zones for their warm welcome and providing me an opportunity to discuss the new initiatives started this past year. I had the pleasure to meet **Joan McClure**, the sole Health Insurance Network Monitor for CWZ. She and co President **Robyn Ballard** took the initiative to attend 6 of the 9 Unit meetings throughout the vast territory of Central Western Zone. At those meetings she raised the concerns with school district provided health insurance for retirees. **KUDOS** to Joan and Robyn! In 2020, the “RENY Roadshow” will visit Northern Zone, Eastern Zone and Long Island Zone.

The Annual President’s Appeal is wrapping up for 2019. Thus far, \$76,951.55 has been raised. My sincere appreciation goes to all who have contributed. At the time I write this article Halloween is a few days away, but all the “box stores” have had Christmas items on display for weeks. Our world today seems more concerned with making money rather than enjoying time. As the end of the year approaches holidays come and go. Be sure to take the time to enjoy family, friends and save some special time for yourself.

Thank you,

Kevin Mulligan - President of **RENY**

Workshop Committee Envisions a Great Convention in 2020

by Dr. James Newell, PhD - Workshop Committee Chair

The first meeting of the Workshop Committee was held on Friday, October 11, 2019 at the Turning Stone Resort and Casino. People came to the meeting with energy, enthusiasm and interest. There were 21 people on hand for this meeting including **Kristen Cecala** from the Association office and representatives from the permanent Workshop Committee. There were also consultants from the Southern Zone, representatives from the 2020 host zone, Long Island, and the 2021 host zone, North Central. The first meeting of the Workshop Committee is an important one since it kicks off planning for the 2020 Convention, sets the tone for the Committee and is the only face to face meeting.

Jim Newell, Chair, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and explaining how the business of the committee would be conducted. There will be a series of teleconferences with agendas provided beforehand. Each teleconference will last approximately one hour, and there will be four or five teleconferences in total. People were reminded that the Workshop Committee needs to find and decide upon 10 presenters and workshops and a keynote speaker. Five of the workshops should reflect the history, culture, people, business, natural resources and geography of Long Island while five of the workshops should be general in nature and reflect topics not limited to the zone. The primary responsibility for finding and securing the zone workshops rests with the host zone while the entire Committee is responsible for finding general workshops and presenters. The host zone is also responsible for obtaining a keynote speaker who will address the convention on the opening night.

Jim Newell complimented **Mary Lou Wood** and her entire planning group for an outstanding 2019 Convention. It was very well organized and enjoyable. The workshops appealed to varied interests, and the presenters were excellent. Many representatives from the Southern Zone were on hand at various spots in the resort to welcome people and help direct them to the Mohawk Room. Introducers for the workshops provided preliminary attendance figures for some of the workshops, which were shared with the Committee.

The floor was then opened for comments about the convention. There was a comment about the quality of the convention brochure, the beauty of its photographs and the inclusion of a table of contents. Many comments were made about the quality of the workshops and their varied content. The presentation by **Larry Kassin** about **Rod Serling** was singled out for special commendation as was the presentation on the Corning Glass Museum. At the suggestion of **Vince Smith*CR**, a new video camera was purchased so that some workshops could be videotaped and shown again. The plan was to videotape the **Rod Serling** workshop and the Corning Glass workshop and post them on the NYSRTA website. Due to technical difficulties, however, only the **Rod Serling** workshop could be videotaped.

The Long Island Zone came to the meeting with a printed list of many possible workshops as well as a list of several possible keynote speakers. They also had a proposed convention theme. Since this was the initial meeting, no decisions were made on which workshops to offer. The purpose of the early meetings is to brainstorm as many ideas as possible without evaluating them. Discussion, evaluation and selection of proposed workshops and the keynote speaker will be done at subsequent meetings. Once decisions are made, workshop presenter forms would be given to the presenter for completion and submission back to the Workshop Committee.

Before the meeting concluded, **Jim Newell** thanked everyone for their interest in the committee, their presence today and the energy and enthusiasm they brought. The next meeting, which was a teleconference, was on November 20, 2019 at 10:00 AM. Stay tuned in the next article for more information on the upcoming Convention 2020!

The 2020 Convention promises to be a stimulating, enjoyable, educational, and entertaining experience.

Save the dates!

Plan to join us October 14, 15 and 16, 2020!

Turning Stone Resort & Casino; Verona, NY



Membership Report

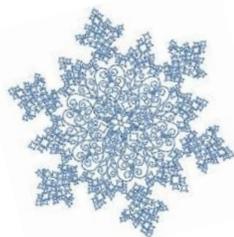
By Lois Thornberg - Vice President for Membership

First and foremost I want to take the time for a big shout out to the Northeastern Zone for being awarded the first Zone Membership initiative of \$1000. They recruited 15 new members or 2.88% between May 1, 2019 and October 1, 2019. Northern Zone came in second with 7 new members or 1.87%, and North Central Zone placed third with 5 new members or 1.04%. I also want to congratulate all the units on their individual efforts to bring new blood to the group. This was the first year of the membership incentive, however the Board of Directors voted to continue it for the upcoming year- beginning November 1, 2019 through October 1, 2020. The individual member recruitment incentive for 2019 closed on December 31, 2019, and winners will be announced in a later issue. This incentive is open to all NYSRTA/RENY members; for every 5 new members a NYSRTA/RENY member recruits, they will receive \$50. The BOD also approved extending this incentive for the year 2020- beginning January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

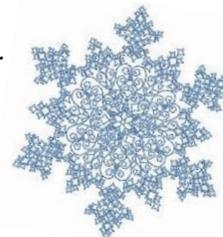
The Membership and Marketing Committees continue in their efforts to identify those members who have joined a unit, and not the respective NYSRTA/RENY Zone. The units have all been identified geographically, and the NYSRTA/RENY roster will be sorted by units. Phase 2 of this project will move forward. Individual unit rosters will be shared and compared to obtain a number/percentage of non-NYSRTA/RENY members in each unit. Once that is completed, we can move on to Phase 3, identifying those unit members who do not belong to the Zone.

We are starting a new year in the recruitment process for NYSRTA/RENY. All members should take the time now to look forward and discover ways to increase our membership. Take the time to look back at the past year and create a plan of for the coming year. The membership recruitment process needs to look beyond those educators that have recently retired. We need to look at those retirees of past years who have yet to join, and the members who have not renewed for whatever reason (s). Then there are those who have joined a local unit, and not the state/Zone of NYSRTA/RENY itself. All NYSRTA/RENY members need to be pro-active in this recruitment and retention process year round. We have forged ahead with a new name and logo- we need to make these work if RENY is to continue as a vibrant active organization. Each and every one of us should be sharing the benefits of NYSRTA/RENY so that it will continue to remain a viable organization. Although NYSRTA/RENY is a social network, it is so much more. Take the time and effort to remind both past and future retirees of the benefits of NYSRTA/RENY: legislative actions to ensure their pensions; the new Health Insurance Information Network; financial opportunities such as the DeCormier Fund and Friendly Services; Community Service; travel and shopping discounts; and discounted insurances to name a few.

In conclusion, I want to reiterate that membership is the life blood of any organizations such as NYSRTA/RENY. It is the task of each and every one of us to work on increasing the awareness of NYSRTA/RENY. Only through the continued efforts of each and every member can we increase our membership enrollment.



Consider the words of Thomas Edison: "Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time."



Legislative Action Committee Report

By Rod Driscoll - Vice President for Legislation

Many thanks to the delegates at the state convention for supporting me as Vice President for Legislative Action, particularly: **President Emeritus Ron Wilson*CR, Kevin Mulligan, Mary Johnson, Janice Mullins and Gary Germain.**

My career in education has had many aspects to it. I've served as a: teacher, coach, advisor, union president, school board president, district/legislative liaison, administrator, op ed writer and advocate for public schools. I'm very excited about this opportunity to continue my life's work in the field of education. I'm also looking forward to working to protect our members from the unique federal and state issues facing retired educators and senior citizens.

I attended the AARP National Retired Teachers Association conference and lobbying day in Washington D.C. (Oct. 21-24, 2019). The presenters closely examined the top priorities for retired educators and retirees, such as: lowering prescription drug prices, preserving Social Security benefits and enlarging the pool of new educators. **Mary Johnson** and I met with members of Congress regarding the importance of federal legislation on these issues. We had some excellent discussions.

All of the legislators we spoke to expressed varied levels of support for lowering prescription drug costs. The President has also expressed support. It may be addressed in the end of the year, omnibus spending bill, or may be addressed later in the year as a stand alone bill.

Continued on the next page

Legislative Action Committee Report - *Continued*

Methods of preserving Social Security seemed to have far less agreement on how to proceed. We discussed: an “elderly CPI” to set COLAs based on the buying habits of seniors and lifting the exemption from payroll taxes for wages and income over \$133,000 to keep the trust fund fully funded.

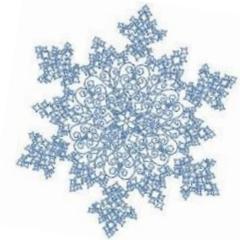
We also discussed the teacher shortage, caused by a 50% drop in participation for teacher training programs and high attrition rates for new teachers. We suggested: student loan forgiveness, lowering student loan interest rates, mentoring programs, reducing requirements for new teachers and paid internships for student teaching.

The legislative committee will be meeting this winter to follow up on the state priorities identified at our convention, such as: volunteer tax deductions, COLA increases, new teacher residency programs, protection against elderly victimization, increased staffing of elderly care facilities and boosting school attendance. We will be holding meetings with state legislators in late February or early March.

Thanks again for your support!



Certificate of Recognition Report By Anne Flansburg*CR, Chairperson



The Certificate of Recognition is presented each year at the Annual Convention to members who have shown outstanding leadership and accomplishments after retirement for The New York State Retired Teachers' Association and their community. This year we honored **Evelyn Davis*CR** from Central Zone, who has demonstrated her willingness to serve in many areas of her unit, zone and state level.

Evelyn Davis*CR...in recognition of her outstanding dedication and service in promoting the goals of the New York State Retired Teachers' Association. Her leadership as membership chair for Central Zone and two units have made her a valuable contributing member. Evelyn has served as treasurer, historian, coordinator for donations, and mailing assistant, in addition to volunteering for any other task in the unit that needs to be completed. Her enthusiasm and dedication are appreciated and admired.

Accepting the award on behalf of Evelyn was **William Cline**, Senior Vice President of the Central Zone . A loud round of applause was heard by all in attendance.

THANK YOU TO ALL!

A Request from Imogene McKendrick*CR

The Robert R. DeCormier Memorial Trust Fund is an affiliate of the New York State Retired Teachers' Association. You will often hear it referred to as the DeCormier Trust because of the length of its full name. As an affiliate, the Trustee Board works with NYSRTA, but has its own “AGREEMENT and DECLARATION” of management. The Executive Board consists of six NYSRTA members who have been nominated by the Executive NYSRTA Board and elected by the DeCormier Trust for a renewable, six year term. Meetings are held by scheduled telephone conference calls when there is a need to conduct official business. There is also a “face to face” meeting that is held during the yearly NYSRTA Fall Convention.

Would you consider having your name on the list as a possible replacement for a position as a Trustee on the DeCormier Trustee Board should a vacancy occur? If the answer to the question is yes, please contact **Anne Flansburg *CR** at (716) 863-3631, or send an e-mail expressing your interest to anneflanswz@aol.com.

The DeCormier Trustee Board recently welcomed two newly elected members: **Mary Lou Davis** from the Southeastern Zone, and **Joe Russo** from the Northern Zone. We are looking forward to having them working with us as we attempt to assist NYSRTA members who are in need of financial help. Leaving by resignation are **Agnes Hudson *CR** from Northern Zone and **David Mapes** from Central Western Zone, who both have been active and enthusiastic participants on the Trustee Board.

NEW YORK STATE RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

BUDGET CODE		REVENUES	2018 ACTUAL	2019 PROPOSED	2019 REVISED BUDGET	2020 PROPOSED BUDGET
140	Dues-Annual		\$ 213,933.00	\$ 230,000.00	\$ 230,000.00	\$ 215,000.00
140A	Refund To Zones Annual Dues		\$ (71,311.00)	\$ (76,666.66)	\$ (76,666.66)	\$ (71,666.66)
	Net Total Dues		\$ 142,622.00	\$ 153,333.34	\$ 153,333.34	\$ 143,333.34
142	Dues-Life		\$ 7,200.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
142A	Refund To Zones Life Dues		\$ (2,400.00)	\$ (1,666.66)	\$ (1,666.66)	\$ (1,666.66)
	Net Total Dues		\$ 4,800.00	\$ 3,333.34	\$ 3,333.34	\$ 3,333.34
139 & 153	Convention & Exhibitor Revenue		\$ 2,786.50	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
133	Dues-90yr.Olds		\$ 2,409.00	\$ 4,400.00	\$ 4,400.00	\$ 4,400.00
143	General Contributions		\$ 3,431.27	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
144	President Appeal Letter		\$ 71,505.00	\$ 80,000.00	\$ 80,000.00	\$ 90,000.00
143A	Insurance Trust		\$ 28,000.00	\$ 28,000.00	\$ 28,000.00	\$ 28,000.00
149,150A,151A	Interest Income/Dividend		\$ 23,021.76	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 35,000.00
154	Misc. Revenue		\$ 3,590.06	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
156	Travel & Misc.		\$ 5,135.50	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 1,000.00
206	Advertising Revenue		\$ 3,800.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 2,500.00
TOTAL REVENUES			\$ 291,101.09	\$ 318,566.68	\$ 318,566.68	\$ 318,566.68
EXPENSES			2018 ACTUAL	2019 PROPOSED	2019 REVISED BUDGET	2020 PROPOSED BUDGET
<u>ADMINISTRATION</u>						
159	Rent		\$ 20,400.00	\$ 21,000.00	\$ 21,000.00	\$ 21,000.00
160	Office Operating		\$ 26,174.72	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 23,000.00
161	Office Equipment		\$ -	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
162-145	Supplies,Print,Postage		\$ 10,174.10	\$ 13,000.00	\$ 13,000.00	\$ 13,000.00
164	Salaries		\$ 146,940.93	\$ 152,559.99	\$ 152,559.99	\$ 160,828.70
164A	Stipends		\$ 1,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
165-167, 179	Payroll Taxes		\$ 12,148.51	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
178	Auditing		\$ 10,311.80	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 11,000.00
178A	Legal		\$ 22.06	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
178B	Broker Fees		\$ 7,999.12	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 1,800.00
180	Insurance / Ins. Disability		\$ 3,059.09	\$ 1,450.00	\$ 1,450.00	\$ 1,450.00
180A	Employee Health Insurance		\$ 19,575.20	\$ 19,200.00	\$ 19,200.00	\$ 21,600.00
180B	Employee Life Insurance		\$ 957.08	\$ 1,334.68	\$ 1,334.68	\$ 1,334.68
181	Employee Pension		\$ 16,910.68	\$ 17,615.52	\$ 17,615.52	\$ 18,606.73
185	Contingency		\$ 1,711.58	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
186	Special Project (President Appeal)		\$ 7,772.95	\$ 7,700.00	\$ 7,700.00	\$ 7,700.00
187	Credit Card Fees		\$ 1,893.41	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,600.00
189	Membership Project Expense		\$ 568.13	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
191	Computer		\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 2,500.00
193	Telephones and Equipment		\$ 4,318.14	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
197	Website		\$ 792.32	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
TOTAL			\$ 292,729.82	\$ 292,960.19	\$ 292,960.19	\$ 310,420.11

		<i>2018 ACTUAL</i>	<i>2019 PROPOSED</i>	<i>2019 REVISED BUDGET</i>	<i>2020 PROPOSED BUDGET</i>
	<u>OFFICERS</u>				
183	President's Travel	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
184	Other Officer's Travel	\$ -	\$ 100.00		\$ -
182	President's Fund Outlay	\$ -	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ -
	TOTAL	\$ -	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,000.00
	<u>MEETINGS</u>				
169	Executive Committee	\$ 16,922.77	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
173A	Annual Workshop Expense	\$ 5,677.37	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
172	Annual Convention Expense	\$ 25,421.17	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 40,000.00
	TOTAL	\$ 48,021.31	\$ 53,000.00	\$ 53,000.00	\$ 53,000.00
	<u>NEWSLETTER</u>				
163	York State	\$ 20,684.54	\$ 21,500.00	\$ 21,500.00	\$ 21,500.00
	TOTAL	\$ 20,684.54	\$ 21,500.00	\$ 21,500.00	\$ 21,500.00
		<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2019 REVISED</i>	<i>2020 PROPOSED</i>
	EXPENSES	<i>ACTUAL</i>	<i>PROPOSED</i>	<i>BUDGET</i>	<i>BUDGET</i>
	<u>COMMITTEES</u>				
170	Legislative Action	\$ 641.08	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
171	Friendly Service	\$ 38.67	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
173	Annual Workshop Committee	\$ 128.54	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
174	Bylaws	\$ 9.94	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,000.00
174	Certificate of Recognition	\$ -	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00
174	Community Service	\$ -	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
174	Finance & Budget	\$ 642.41	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
174	Personnel Committee	\$ -	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
174	Credentials	\$ -	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00
174	Historian	\$ -	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
174	Membership	\$ 65.55	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
174	Nominations	\$ -	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
174	Public Relations	\$ -	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
174	Resolutions	\$ 939.88	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
174	Site	\$ 61.60	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
192	Health Care	\$ -	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
185A	Adhoc	\$ 9.90	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
	TOTAL	\$ 2,537.57	\$ 11,500.00	\$ 11,500.00	\$ 11,300.00
	GRAND TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 363,973.24	\$ 380,260.19	\$ 380,160.19	\$ 397,220.11

Resolutions Report - Gayla LePage, Chair

At the 2019 Annual Meeting six Resolutions were presented, discussed and voted upon. The following resolutions were passed by a majority vote by the membership in attendance.

Resolution D-26: Supporting the Rebuild America's School Act (Southern Zone)

WHEREAS, many old American school buildings are deteriorating and need to be repaired; and
WHEREAS, the present Education Secretary has made it clear that monies should be used for vouchers; and
WHEREAS, the Education Secretary has also made it clear that without legislation requiring money be spent on public schools, it won't be done; now
Be IT RESOLVED, that the NYSRTA support The Rebuild America's Schools Act which has been introduced in both the House and the Senate by informing our Federal Legislators that we want them to support the Rebuild America's School Act.

Reference: NYSRTA Bylaws, Article II, Objective 4

Resolution E-21: Volunteer Tax Deductions (Central Western Zone)

WHEREAS, Volunteers perform necessary roles in our country such as: delivering Meals-On-Wheels to the elderly and shut-ins, working for food pantries, soup kitchens, clothes closets and assisting in literacy programs, and
WHEREAS, volunteers save the government millions of dollars each year that would be needed to fund these necessary programs, and
WHEREAS, retirees on fixed incomes are responsible for much of the volunteerism in this country; and
WHEREAS, average gas prices across the country continue to increase while IRS deductions for volunteer mileage remain at fourteen cents per mile, and
WHEREAS, the New York State Retired Teachers Association wants to encourage continued volunteerism and participation, now
Be IT RESOLVED, that the NYSRTA seek support for federal legislation to increase the IRS volunteer mileage allowance equal to one half the annual allowance given for business mileage, and be further.
RESOLVED, that the NYSRTA encourage a raise in this allowance each time an increase occurs for IRS business mileage allowances.

Reference: NYSRTA Bylaws, Article II, Objectives 1, 2, 3, 5

Resolution D-27: Teacher Residency Program (North Central Zone)

WHEREAS, it is estimated that there has been as much as a 35% reduction in the number of students entering college as education majors over the past decade; and
WHEREAS, there currently exists teacher shortages in every state, including New York, in many subjects and especially in the areas of science, math, special education and English as a Second Language; and
WHEREAS, these shortages can be harmful to student learning when positions go unfilled or are filled temporarily by unqualified or under-qualified personnel; and
WHEREAS, the short length of student teaching assignments before being hired, as well as professional mentoring after hiring that may not be extensive enough are cited for poor morale among newer teachers who leave the profession; and
WHEREAS, several states have passed laws creating "teacher residency programs" in an attempt to attract more students to consider teaching and to support and retain new teachers entering the profession; and
WHEREAS, "teacher residency programs" are defined as teacher education and preparation programs in effective teaching theory along with a year-long in school "residency" alongside and effective teacher-mentor; and new teacher residents receive stipends and commit to teaching in district for three or more years beyond the residency; now
Be IT RESOLVED, that the NYSRTA urges the New York State Legislature to create, pass, and adequately fund a "teacher residency program" to train and retain teachers in high-need school districts and subject areas.

Reference: NYSRTA Bylaws, Article II, Objectives 2 and 4

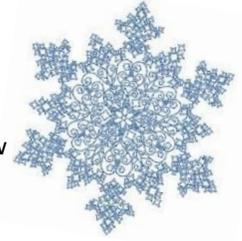
Resolution E-22: Protection Against Elderly Victimization (Western Zone)

WHEREAS, the elderly are most often vulnerable to scams or frauds; and
WHEREAS, the elderly have the most history of being victims of money and other fiscal schemes; and

Continued on page 8

Resolutions Report - Continued

WHEREAS, the elderly are open to sharing personal information; and
WHEREAS, they may be easily confused by callers and unable to distinguish legitimacy; and
WHEREAS, because they are greatly concerned for the welfare of others, they can easily be scammed; now
Be IT RESOLVED that the NYSRTA seeks legislation to protect the elderly and other
victims by increasing the penalty for scams and frauds.



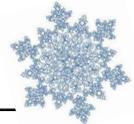
Reference: NYSRTA Bylaws, Article II, Objectives 1, 3, and 5

Resolution C-20: Staffing of Elderly Care Facilities (Western Zone)

WHEREAS, many elderly require assisted living and/or nursing home facilities; and
WHEREAS, the staffing of many facilities is inadequate to provide proper care; and
WHEREAS, the elderly require assistance for basic bodily functions; and
WHEREAS, many staff are not sufficiently trained to respond to the increase in needs as the patients age and their illness
progresses; and
WHEREAS, insufficient staffing results in an extensive delay to providing urgent care; now
Be IT RESOLVED that the NYSRTA support legislation to insure an adequate ratio of staff to the residents.



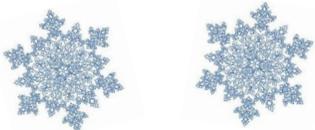
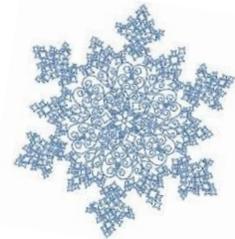
Reference: NYSRTA Article II, Objectives 1, 3, and 5



Resolution D-28: School Attendance (Long Island Zone)

WHEREAS, regular school attendance is important for educational learning to take place; and
WHEREAS, the New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli reports that absenteeism is high in New York State schools at 19%; and
WHEREAS, there is a need for more certified attendance teachers in our schools; now
Be IT RESOLVED that the NYSRTA take a strong stand to enforce the state attendance laws and account for all children attending
schools in our state.
THEREFORE, the NYSRTA resolves to request our state legislators to provide funds to allow school districts to hire more certified
attendance teachers.

Reference: NYSRTA Article II, Objective 4.



Friendly Service Report by Judith Corigliano

The Wabi Sabi of Friendship

Ahh... our friends and reflecting on the Wabi Sabi (the perfect imperfect) of friendship..... How many friends do we have? who are they? Are we linked by networking, what do they bring to the fellowship of life....better still what do we bring to that friendship table? Is a family member also your closest friend or are our friends so close that they are part of family? Whatever the friendship connection may be. It's balance could be compared to the imperfect, impermanent and incomplete aesthetic of beauty, the Wabi Sabi .

As we grow older, maybe wiser, some of us become aware of those imperfections. One basic factor in friendship, whatever form it may take, you need to work at smoothing those imperfections and nurture its continued existence. Being the best nurturing friend wherever they fit into the circles of your lives, consider the following actions that are positive ways to maintain those relationships.

- * In our busy retired lives, make time for friends.
- * Stay stimulated with activities that make you an interesting person to talk to and be around.
- * Be sensitive to how you personally use social networking, there's sharing and then their over sharing.
- * Your friends may have a bump in the road of life and assuming you think you know how they feel can be a slippery slope....just let them know that you are there for them...Be a good listener, and
- * Offer emotional support first, then ask how can I help?

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NEWS FROM THE ZONES

Central Western Zone Submitted by Lynn Hefferon for Phyllis Dunlap

Three awards were presented by the Central Western Zone of the New York State Retired Teachers at the annual meeting at Kings Catering in Canandaigua. These awards are given to newly retired teachers (2019) who have shown exemplary service to their school district and community. These awards are named after **Elsie Epke** and **Betty Meagher**, deceased retired educators.



L-R -Gina Suffredini, Randall Ott and Sherry Waltman
Gina Suffredini of Waterloo, Seneca County served as a coach, union officer, department chair and professional development presenter as well as a contract negotiations chair. She is a village trustee and has served as deputy mayor. She has been Waterloo Rotarian of the Year and a Paul Harris Fellow as well as a St. Mary's Parish council member. She retired as a speech pathologist in Waterloo.

Randall Ott of Manchester-Shortsville Schools, Ontario County taught physics as well as reading skills. He is a member of many educational service groups. He received a University of Rochester Excellence in Secondary Teaching award. He is an officer and trustee of the Red Jacket Community Library and a community leader. Randy also assists homeless students and mentors fellow educators.

Sherry Waltman Kramer of Wayland Cohocton Schools, Steuben County as a kindergarten teacher. She served as chairperson and assisted with high school activities and was a chaperone. She created the BOCES kindergarten math program along with coordinating the Lions Club eye screening program. She volunteers with the Salvation Army and Christmas programs and vacation Bible School. Sherry is a softball coach and a church elder. She also works with foster children.

Elaine Leasure reports from Wayne County that they collected personal care items for the Domestic Violence Center. They also took a donation at their meeting to purchase even more items.

At our luncheon at the Sodus Country Club, Special guest speaker, **Art Mason**, Director of the Elder Abuse Prevention Program at LIFESPAN since 1992, spoke. In addition to maintaining a caseload, Mr. Mason does presentations and trainings on the topics of elder abuse & financial exploitation across New York State and the U.S. He currently is a member of a national team which provides training and support to U.S. Dept. of Justice/office of Violence Against Women grantees who are funded to do law enforcement training on the issue of Domestic Violence in Later Life/Elder Abuse/Financial exploitation.

Joyce Pittenger reports over 35 new retirees from Lyons, Marion, Newark, North Rose Wolcott, Pal Mac, Red Creek, Sodus, and Williamson attended their luncheon.

Sandy Kushner reports about Wyoming County's "**Not Back to School**" luncheon that was held at the Glen Iris Inn located in beautiful Letchworth State Park.

Community Service collections for the Attica Food Pantry, Operation Gratitude and Angel Action. We collect for one of the food pantries located at the six school districts at each meeting. Operation Gratitude sends items to service men and women who are either on active duty or are hospitalized. Angel Action of Wyoming County is a "safety net" organizations for anyone in the county who needs school supplies, clothing, groceries, household goods and fills the school backpack program. Door prizes are donated by members to "liven up" the meeting!



CWZ delegates gather in front of the quilt made at a previous Convention.

President Emerita Judie Byndas*CR organized the workshop to assemble the quilt before she was State President.



L-R Marge Wood, Betty Weber-Worden and her daughter Mary Beth Tyndall

NEWS FROM THE ZONES

Eastern Zone Submitted by Pamela Love

There have been some changes of leadership at the Zone level and Unit level. **Janice Mullins** became President of Eastern Zone at the Zone Meeting held November 12th. at the Turf Tavern in Scotia. Leadership changes in Units at this time include **Joan Mattson** as President of the Columbia County Unit and **Bill Naple** as President of the Fulton County Unit. During this meeting, Units of the zone reported on their activities as well as membership totals at this time. Many of the Units are focusing on building membership and their community outreach programs. At this meeting, we learned about the passing of **Phoebe Boschi** who was involved with Eastern Zone as a committee member and delegate to NYSRTA Annual Conventions for many years along with her husband, **Alexander Boschi** who also served on the ROBERT DECORMIER MEMORIAL TRUST as a Trustee. We are very saddened by the passing of Phoebe and extend out sympathy to Alex.

I also want to add that a number of us spent three hours at the Regional Food Band on October 17th. as Eastern Zone's Community Service under the leadership of **Joyce Notarnicola**, our chairperson.

Long Island Zone Submitted by Eileen Holmes

The Long Island Zone held its annual fall luncheon at the Bellport Country Club and **JoAnne Powell** and **MaryElla Moeller*CR**, awarded the Distinguished Service Silver Pin award to **Kathryn Grande**. Kathryn has worked tirelessly for the zone and state for many years and this award was very well deserved. Congratulations, Kathryn!

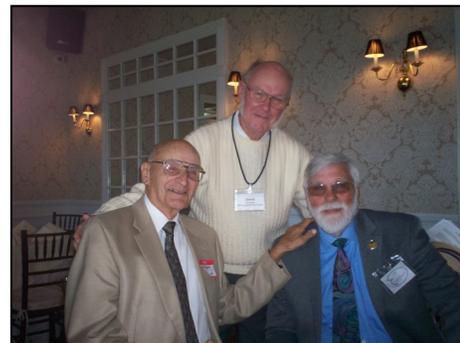
Another highlight of the afternoon was guest speaker **Cynthia Sustich** from The Inn (Interfaith Nutrition Network), a mission based in Hempstead and dedicated to serving needy Long Islanders. The Inn was founded over 30 years ago as a food bank and has done an impressive job 'keeping up with the times' by adding computer services that help with job-finding and gaining identification, providing safe shelter for abused persons, emergency housing and veteran services along with food, clothing, showers and counseling. Angelo Grande*CR, LIZ Community Service Chair, presented Ms. Sustich with goody bags containing personal-sized hygiene items and a collection of new socks to be used by the clients at the Inn.

The LIZ board was sworn in for another term: **Fred Conway*CR**, President, **Eileen Holmes** and **Evelyn Paola**, Co-Vice Presidents, **Alicia Winowsky**, Secretary and **Dominic LiCausi**, Treasurer.

The LIZ sent 20 members to the 2019 state convention at Turning Stone and everyone was in agreement that it was a great 3 days: the workshops, the Trivia Night, the food and accommodations were top-notch! We had 5 first-time attendees in our group and they all were impressed. Way to go, Southern Zone!



Agnes Dansereau and Lois Thornberg with 1st time attendees Ginny and Val Stype



John Ruggiero, Dave Keefe and Leigh Powell*CR at the fall LIZ luncheon



Kathryn receiving her award with from left to right; MaryElla Moeller*CR and JoAnne Powell

NEWS FROM THE ZONES

North Central Zone Submitted by Nancy Roberts and Patricia Newell

As this article for NCZ is being written, Jefferson and Lewis counties are enjoying the glorious fall colors of our maple trees. But as we marvel at the brilliant reds, oranges and yellows, we are preparing for the WHITE season when the trees are bare, and the temperatures take a drastic drop. Each season in Northern New York, indeed, has its own beauty.

North Central Zone elected new officers at our September 17th luncheon at the Ramada Inn in Watertown. We had 67 in attendance and were entertained by The Riverside Brass Trio. We welcome **Elwood “Woody” Lyndaker** as our new President, **Patricia Newell** as Second Vice President, **Kathy Allan** as Secretary and **Barbara Cole-Russell** as our new Treasurer. We sincerely thank **John Gaffney** for all his faithful years serving as an outstanding NCZ Treasurer. We thank **Lorraine Wiggins** for her term as Second Vice President. The position of First Vice President remains open.

John Gaffney, Scholarship Committee Chair, announced that the Northern New York Community Foundation has presented NCZ with a challenge matching grant of \$5,000. We are grateful for this opportunity to increase our funds and are confident we will meet that goal early in the New Year. John thanks our members for their generosity in supporting our scholarship program.

NCZ Travel and Leisure Chair, **David Schryver**, arranged a wonderful trip to Thendara in early October with a ride on the Adirondack Railroad to Big Moose. We enjoyed a tasty buffet lunch at the Big Moose Restaurant in the old train depot. It was a slightly rainy day for the 16 in our group, but it did not dampen our enjoyment of the ride and colors of fall in the Adirondacks.

Nine members of NCZ and one guest attended the 2019 NYSRTA Convention at Turning Stone the following week. It was a busy but productive and very enjoyable Convention.

Senator Patty Ritchie again sponsored the Senior Health Fair at Jefferson Community College on October 11th. NCZ had a booth at the fair which members **David** and **Marcia Schryver**, **Diane Ferrucci**, and **Hope Marston** manned.

Patty Corey, our Community Service Chair, and **Toni Gigliotti** will be organizing the Coats for Kids giveaway on October 24th in Lowville at the Jay Boak Center. This event continues to be a very successful program in our Lewis County communities. It is rewarding to see children receive new coats, mittens, scarves, and hats. Their families are so grateful.



NCZ Officers: Treasurer, Barbara Cole-Russell; President, Elwood “Woody” Lyndaker; Secretary, Kathy Allan; Second Vice President, Patricia Newell



Adirondack Railway Trip attendees



NCZ Convention Delegation: R to L: Elwood “Woody” and Teresa Lyndaker, Barbara Cole-Russell, Dick Bushnell, Shirley Parker *CR, Kathy Allan, Patti Stephens, President Emeritus Tom Company *CR, Pat and Dr. Jim Newell

NEWS FROM THE ZONES

Northeastern Zone Submitted by Marti Martin

The Northeastern Zone is settling down for its long Winter nap after celebrating with its members at its festive holiday meeting in early December. The American Legion Post 20 in Plattsburgh was decorated in its holiday best. After **Glenda Rowe**, our new President, presided over her first meeting, we were sated with a meal, dessert and holiday entertainment. “Cooie” delighted the crowd with her classic renditions of traditional and secular holiday music. We warmed up our voices for the season ahead with the familiar refrains of music we enjoy once a year.

All officers from last year were reelected to their positions in September. **Sandy Lashua**, Membership Chair reported that there are 17 new members who have joined since June, bringing our totals to 527, with 327 active members. This announcement accompanied the news that Past President **Bonnie Gregware** accepted the Membership Incentive Award of \$1000 given to NEZ at the State Convention for its efforts in recruiting the highest percentage of new members in zones across New York State. Some of our new members have taken on responsibilities since joining. **Laurie Parsons** is now serving at the helm of Community Service. **Connie LaLonde**, chair for the Community Service Committee for many years, will work with Laurie in the transition.

At the December meeting, members generously gave cash and unwrapped toys for the Clinton County Christmas Bureau Toy Drive. Contributions were made to the Zone newsletter and to the Scholarship and Educator Award accounts as well.

The Friendly Service Committee conducted its annual holiday greeting card project this season as a way of reaching out to our members who may have moved or are unable to attend meetings. **Judy Corigliano** has served as leader of this committee for many years, and just recently, named new member **Kathy Caron**, Chair. The folks who have faithfully served on this committee for years, will be great mentors to Kathy. Judy will continue in her capacity as Chair of the State Friendly Service Committee. Finally, **Rod Driscoll** is serving as Legislative Chair in NEZ and Vice President For Legislation at the State Level, as of October’s state convention. He attended the AARP National Convention in Washington, DC this Fall and reported the many concerns raised when visiting our legislative leaders: lowering prescription drugs costs, preserving Social Security benefits, the severe decline in teacher educator enrollment, teacher recruitment, student loan debt forgiveness and reduced student loan interest rates for graduates teaching in underserved communities, and reducing the amount of continuing education hours past the Masters level of certification.

These concerns are just a sampling of the ways our organization can maintain and strengthen our retiree benefits while offering support to our colleagues just starting out in the field of Education and to active educators who have dedicated their lives to the profession.

Northeastern and Northern Zones have arranged two trips with Collette Travel as a joint venture. They are wonderful opportunities to travel safely with a renowned name in the travel industry, for a reasonable price, with everything prearranged. The first is an 8 day trip to Canyon Country from September 16-23, 2020. The trip price for double occupancy, per person is \$3499 plus \$299 for trip insurance. Included in that price is round trip transportation to the Montreal airport, round trip air out West and back, 10 designated meals, lodging and baggage handling. Highlights of the trip include the Grand Canyon, Lake Powell, Bryce Canyon National Park, Zion National Park, and Las Vegas and more. Members, their families and friends are invited to join us. A webinar will be available for those who wish to learn more. A \$500 down payment and the \$299 for trip insurance are due by March, with the balance of payment due in July. Any NYSRTA/RENY members who are interested in this trip contact **Marti Martin** @ 518-593-5072 or **Gayla LePage** at 518-569-3612.

The second trip will be an opportunity to travel to Greece in May of 2021. More information about that trip will be forthcoming as the details are set. It will include basically the same amenities as the Canyon Country trip; round trip regional transportation to and from the Montreal airport, round trip air fare to and from Athens, Greece, lodging and a determined number of meals, transportation to and lodging on two beautiful Greek islands. The cost will be in the same range plus trip insurance. These trips are a wonderful opportunity to travel safely with a renowned name in the travel industry, Colette Travel, for a reasonable price, with no worries and everything prearranged.

The members of Northeastern Zone wish all NYSRTA/RENY members a Happy Holiday and a great New Year in 2020!



NEWS FROM THE ZONES

Northern Zone Submitted by Linda Crosby

During the Fall NZ Membership Meeting at the Malone Golf Club, NZ members reviewed the minutes, the Treasurer's Report, and the new 2019-2020 NZ Budget (prepared by Treasurer **Roxann Finley**) which were approved. **Gayla LePage** gave her President's Report and presented the Engine 7's video on the proposed new logo/new name. The new name, Retired Educators Of New York, was approved by NZ members; the proposed new logo was not approved. Our NZ Healthcare Monitors are **Kevin Walbridge**, **Phil LePage** and **Joe Russo**. Gayla happily announced that new member, **Cathy Devins**, who retired from the Brushton-Moira CSD, has volunteered to help with the Membership Committee. Our membership numbers went from 388 in October 2018 to 375 in September 2019. We may be the smallest zone in the state, but, we have a lot of North Country heart. Gayla was excited to announce that long time member **Ellen Smith** is our new Friendly Services Chair after our very dedicated **President Emerita Agnes Hudson*CR** retired from the position in October 2019. We would like to deeply thank Agnes for her many years of service in our zone leadership and in our state leadership. Her sound wisdom and good humor have blessed our zone and often lifted our hearts.

Our 2019 NZ high school scholarship award winners have been announced. **Zana Northrop**, of Oswegatchie, N.Y., was awarded the Ross C. Hudson Memorial Scholarship(\$400). As valedictorian of her class at Clifton-Fine CSD, Zana held a part-time job and was heavily involved in extra-curricular activities and volunteer work. She now attends SUNY Potsdam studying Music Education.

The Janet P. Dana Memorial Scholarship(\$400) was awarded to Malone CSD graduate **Carter Boyea** of Malone, N.Y. In the top ten of his class, Carter maintained a heavy load of academic classes while being involved in many school activities for multiple years. He is now attending North Country Community College in Saranac Lake and Malone, N.Y.

NZ Legislative Action Chair **Rae Louise Tate** reported that our priorities will be supporting an increase in the base salary (from \$18,000 to \$21,000) used for determining COLA, promoting school safety, and trying to remove the state mandate that bases a teacher's/principal's annual performance evaluation on the state created/administered student assessments.

Historian **Jean Theobald** requested that NZ members send news, photos, newspaper clippings, and obituaries her way for the NZ scrapbook and newsletter. The beautifully themed 2019 NZ scrapbook was on display at the State Convention;

Jean also prepared NZ pages to be included in the 2019 state scrapbook. NZ P.R. Chair **Linda Crosby** said she needs the same items/information for the York State and the local newspaper articles she writes; she gave out her annual State Public Relations report which was included in the 2019 convention reports booklet.

Healthcare Chair/Clifton-Fine-Edwards Unit President **Joe Russo** introduced new NYSRTA /CFE Unit member **Debbie Yartz**, who retired from Clifton-Fine CSD. About 30 CFE Unit members enjoyed their annual summer meeting in August at the Clifton-Fine Golf Club where Gouverneur artist **Paula Townsend** gave a presentation of her artwork. Joe also suggested that to stay healthy, everyone should keep walking, take occasional naps and wake up every morning with a purpose in mind!

Proposed changes in the State Bylaws were reviewed and approved by NZ members, who were also encouraged to look over the 6 resolutions published in York State. The 2019 NZ convention delegates were **Gayla LePage**, **Rae Louise Tate**, **Tom Cook**, **Betty Cook**, **Linda Crosby** and **Phil LePage**. Thank you to all the members who donated items for the 2 raffle baskets we brought to the convention.

Meetings/Programs Chair **Alice Galvin** thanked all the NZ members who donated money (\$145) to the Malawi Early Literacy Team (Watertown) which was our 2019 NZ community service project. Treasurer **Roxann Finley** recently received a thank you card from MELT for the \$200 donation in the Spring. Alice introduced our guest speakers, **Heather White** (Founding Member) and **Andy Barnes** (Board Member) from MELT, who showed a video and spoke about their service to communities in Northern Malawi in Africa. They described their program which provides culturally appropriate literature to young readers in a politically restless country.

At the NZ Board of Directors meeting in October, members reviewed the convention events/meetings. The NZ zone membership incentive took second place in the state! Many new members have joined since the convention! All members are welcome to attend a BOD meeting on January 22, 2020 at 10 a.m. at the Potsdam Methodist Church. The NZ Spring 2020 newsletter deadline for submitted information/articles is May 2; a BOD meeting to prepare the newsletter/spring meeting invitations for mailing is May 14. The proposed date for the Spring 2020 membership meeting is June 3 at the Potsdam Golf Club. Congratulations were extended to **Rae Louise Tate**, who was named the new State Nominations Chair as of November 1, 2019. Many thanks go to the Southern Zone members for a great 2019 convention and for their hard work in producing engaging workshops, spirited entertainment and dedicated leadership.

NEWS FROM THE ZONES

Southeastern Zone Submitted by Maureen Coffey

Janus, a god in Roman mythology who is depicted with two faces, is able to look ahead into the future as well as back into the past. I think he would enjoy peeking in on the things that keep us busy in SEZ...both past and future!

Ray Leduc, co-president of Newburgh Area Retired Teachers' Association (NARTA) would like to give a very well deserved shout out to NARTA president, **Cheryl Fischer**. Cheryl was recognized by the Newburgh Town Council and received a certificate for Achievement and Outstanding Service to Seniors. Way to go, Cheryl!! NARTA also hosts an "85+ Luncheon" at the Lakeview House every year for members who are 85 or older. Twelve of their 22 members were able to attend; those who were not received personalized "thinking of you" cards. Special recognition was given to their oldest member, **Betty Martuscello** who is 97. Their holiday luncheon was December 5th at Youngest Brother in Newburgh. Members brought cookies and recipes for a cookie exchange. Everyone had a great time!

Barbara Topps, president of Mid-Hudson Area Retired Teachers' Association (MARTA) shared that the members enjoyed many activities during the fall, especially the Constitution Island trip by boat from West Point. After a docent led tour of the island and a video presentation highlighting its history, we had lunch at the Thayer Hotel. Members also enjoyed another luncheon at The Eagle's Nest followed by a funny presentation of "Aging Ain't for Sissies" by the Catskill Readers' Theater. MARTA's holiday party was also on December 5th at Tony Boffa's in Middletown. Members brought wrapped Christmas gifts for children in need. Food was collected for the local food banks and holiday cards were signed for veterans. Members who made blankets for the Linus Project donated them that day. There were games and raffles as well. If we weren't in the holiday spirit before the luncheon, we certainly were afterwards. Before long, Barbara will be calling her activities committee members together so we can begin to plan for the spring!

Leon Harrold*CR and **Helen Hoering** shared that the Sullivan County Retired Teachers' Group celebrated with a Holiday Luncheon on December 11th at the Liberty Elks Club in Liberty. The Jazz Band from Liberty Central School provided entertainment. A good time was had by all!

Jeanne Daum and **Jackie Glick** from the Pine Bush Teachers Association Retired Chapter shared some interesting future

plans, including a Canada/New England cruise on the Norwegian Breakaway from October 4 – 11, 2020. You can contact Jeanne Daum at 845-255-2205 or jjdaum@yahoo.com for more information. Their group also enjoyed a day trip to NYC for a walking tour of Greenwich Village.

All of these very active and busy units are members of Southeastern Zone. Our president, **Tony Colombo**, arranged a Holiday Party for December 12th at 11:30 at Cosimo's in Newburgh. Again, we all had fun! And, thinking ahead to a time when we're all tired of winter, he's arranged for a meeting at Denny's on March 25th at 10:30 to welcome back both spring AND OUR snowbirds!

So there you have it ... lots to keep Janus entertained as he peeks into the goings on in our beautiful Hudson River Valley!

Til' next time...



MARTA members hand painting Christmas ornaments... watch out Hallmark!



A nice turnout on a beautiful day as we explored Constitution Island

NEWS FROM THE ZONES

Southern Zone Submitted by Mary Lou Wood

Outside it's cold, white, and my bones are sore, but I'm still moving. Winter is upon us. This is where we need to keep moving even though we would much rather cuddle up in a warm blanket and read. Some of our friends have migrated south with the birds, but some of us stay north and tolerate the winter months.

The Southern Zone enjoyed hosting the 69th NYSRTA Convention. We hope you enjoyed our presenters. We tried to bring in topics of interest: education, entertainment, health, living, history, and places to visit. I would like to thank my SZ team for diligently working on this program this past year. Thank you for a job well done.

As all of our zones move forward, some of us have installed new/old board of directors. **Jerry Tagliaferri** is our new President, **Mary Lou Wood** as VP of Public Relations, **Vince Smith*CR** as membership, **Mary Suffern** as Secretary and Community Service, **Lois Cutton** as treasurer, and **Don Cutton*CR** as scholarship. We are eager to begin our term under the title as Southern Zone of RENY.

We hope all of you had a wonderful holiday. Stay warm, keep moving, keep in touch with family and friends, and help those in need. To our snowbirds, we'll see you in the spring.



Left to Right: Don Cutton*CR, Jerry Tagliaferri, Mary Lou Wood, Vince Smith*CR, Mary Suffern and Lois Cutton



Front row : Debbi Deats, Linda Moore, Lois Cutton, Marge McPherson, Jeanne McCormick
Back row: Mary Suffern, Jerry Tagliaferri, Lynne Hunkovic, Betty Reiter, Nancy Spaulding, Don Cutton*CR, Vince Smith*CR, Mary Lou Wood

Western Zone Submitted by Theresa Pope

Western Zone has been quite active, since the retirees took time to assemble together for its annual meeting. The following months have included a chapter meeting led by its new president, **Judith Farmer*CR** and added or new executive board members. Board members brought socks to be shared for their warmth and use. Members are now adding to the socks and bringing bags of clothing for distribution. The Buffalo Teachers Desk will be the recipient of the fundraising effort at the October board meeting.

Western Zone board members have supported attendance at its zones fall and holiday events and luncheons. Most recently 288 attendees filled the room of Salvatore's Italian Garden, listening to the music of the South Park High School Band and the chorus. Donations from that BRTA (Buffalo Retired Teachers Association) event were provided to Compass House Buffalo, assisting homeless women and families and also to the Teacher's Desk, which aides active teachers with supplies and supplements to teach students.

Western Zone board members and guests look forward to their annual holiday luncheon, which has a change this year. Members themselves will bring holiday cookies and other delicacies, which have heretofore been brought by now deceased member **Loretta Pezynski**. Member **Maria Hager** will lead the joyous songs of the season.

NEWS FROM THE ZONES

Various prepared baskets and floral arrangements will adorn the room. Folks will be attired for the season; the season will be celebrated by all.

Once an educator, always an educator...says **Dorothy Vienne**, an educator for over 60 years. She still has the desire to experience, learn, and educate herself and transfer her knowledge to others. Dorothy and her husband, Richard, are members of Western Zone, and Dick is an Honorary Director. Both previously taught in Lancaster Central School District and Dottie retired from Ken-Ton (Kenmore-Tonawanda Central School District). Dick and Dottie have two children who also have the desire to educate. Their daughter is a teacher and their son is an executive with Universal Healthcare. After Dottie's experience, her son, **Dr. Richard Vienne**, encouraged her to be part of a sepsis article written by The Buffalo News Refresh editor **Scott Scanlon** on September 28, 2019. Some of the information in this article is from the Refresh magazine. Dr. Vienne told his mom, "If you can save one person, your article will be worth it." The Vienne family are whole life educators.

Dottie is 80 years young, and has Type 2 diabetes. Not all cases of sepsis are the same. Pre-existing conditions, and age are factors for contracting sepsis. This is Dottie's story. During the week of the Super Bowl 2019, Dorothy ate a small amount of raw beef from her refrigerator and later in the week made chili for the family Super Bowl party. Dottie started to feel ill for a couple of days after the party. The next morning she had several of the symptoms of sepsis: confusion or disorientation, shortness of breath, extreme pain or discomfort, high heart rate, fever or chills, clammy or sweaty skin. Dottie had the last two symptoms. She was able to call 911. The Elma Volunteer Fire Department arrived in minutes and she was taken to the closest hospital, South Buffalo Mercy Hospital. She spent 10 out of 12 days in ICU (Intensive Care Unit) and received the best care at this hospital, recalls Dottie.

Sepsis sidelined Dottie for a while. She is back doing what she loves now including attending her four book clubs, working out at the YMCA, speaking engagements and continuing to be active. Her food regime includes eating more vegetables and not eating raw meat, fish, or shellfish, which can easily grow bacteria.

During Dorothy's educational career, she had many experiences including earning two National Schools of Excellence Awards presented to her and the Ken-Ton School District by Presidents George H. Bush, George W. Bush, and Bill Clinton.

We have chosen to write this article for you because of Dottie's educational career and experiences that helped her realize she

needed help that day. She wants to educate us by telling her story and what she has learned on the topic of sepsis. We also used the website: sepsis.org, for some of our information. We encourage you to read the article in The Buffalo News and read the sepsis website.

Alphonse "Al" Marabella was honored by Bishop Fallon High School, October 25, 2019, at the 18th Annual Hall of Fame ceremonies and dinner. Al, also, was inducted into the Hall of Fame.

A renown local graduate of Bishop Fallon, he graduated from the University of Michigan and the University of Buffalo, having majored in geology, engineering, and English. Retired now, his career was as an educator for 34 years in the Buffalo Public Schools. He was instrumental in the integration of Buffalo Public Schools, having been employed as a participant in the Quality in Education (QIE) program. His duties in the Buffalo Public School district also included coaching soccer, softball, bowling, and baseball. He retired in 1999. His post career activities have been: Secretary for the Niagara Frontier Division of the Toy Train Operators Society and participation in "Buffalo in Bloom". It must be mentioned that he is former president of both the Buffalo Retired Teachers Association and Western Zone of the New York State Retired Teachers Association (NYSRTA). Al was a former first Vice President for Federal Legislation for NYSRTA. He has added President of the Senior Citizens of St. Gregory the Great, President of the Senior Bowling League, usher, participant in the Adoration Chapel, and on the Board of the Golf League. He served as Confirmation Coordinator at St. Pius X and as a catechist at St. Christopher's.

Al is a family man with **Mary Agnes Marabella**, his wife, and three children: Mark, Michelle, and Nicole, and two grandchildren, Grace and Charlie.



Al Marabella



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members as well if they
refer to the booking#

Friendly Service Report continued from page 8

- * But be careful to not overdo....Giving advice, trying to solve their problems isn't always what a friend/family needs.
- * Do little unexpected things for friends that will show you care about them
- * Love those friends with words that speak fondly and acknowledge your many years of knowing and surviving together....call, write and always give hugs if possible.

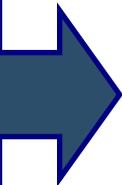
Remember that balance of Wabi Sabi in your friendships; the perfect imperfect and yes work on being a friendly, best or better friend! Remember, we are human and not perfect.

(loosely inspired by an article Habits that Push Friends Away, Christine Carter, PHD UC Berkley, Nov.2019. Bottom Line, Personal.)

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