



New York State Retired Teachers' Assn.
DBA
RENY
RETIRED EDUCATORS OF NY



Retired Educators of New York

YORK STATE NEWSLETTER

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Spring 2020



President's Message ~ Kevin Mulligan

Before writing this article, I reviewed the winter edition of York State. My Message was written shortly after the October Convention.

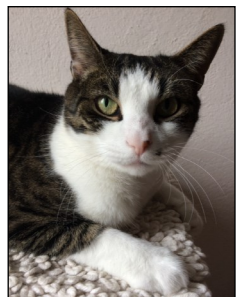
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A Message from Mary Ella Moeller*CR, Health Care Chair

Today I am sitting in my backyard looking at my Camilla tree and spring flowers, wondering if life as it once was will ever be normal again.



The COVID-19 pandemic has brought many changes to my life and with it uncertainty, altered daily routines, financial pressures and social isolation. Like most all of us, I am in the high risk group. As a result, I have been in my home since the first part of March with my cat, Pepper.



Worries and anxiety About COVID-19 and it's impact can be overwhelming. Social distancing makes it even more challenging. Below are some thoughts to

make this time more bearable.

Keep your regular routine. Maintaining a schedule is important. Stick to consistent meal times, getting dressed, exercise, activities you enjoy, and bedtime.

Limit exposure to news media. Constant bombardment about COVID-19 can heighten fears. Look for reliable sources.

Stay busy. Enjoy hobbies you can do at home, identify a new project, or clean out a closet you've been meaning to do.

Focus on positive thoughts. Consider starting each day by listing things you are thankful for. Maintain a sense of hope, work to accept changes as they occur and try to keep problems in perspective.

Set priorities. Don't become overwhelmed by creating a life changing list of things to achieve. Set reasonable goals. Recognize some days will be better than others.

Make connections. If you need to stay at home and distance yourself from others, avoid total social isolation. Find time each day to make virtual contact by email, text, phone or FaceTime.

Do something for others. Find purpose in helping the people around you. For example, email, text, or call to check on your friends, family members, and neighbors. Send a note to brighten someone's day.

Exercise your brain. Do your favorite puzzle. Crossword, word search, Sudoku are ways to keep you mind active and stimulated.

These are just a few of my thoughts to make the best of this very different life style we are now living. I am sure you have others. Stay healthy and stay safe.

~ Mary Ella

President's Message ~ *continued*



How our world has immeasurably changed since then. Spring is all about life, renewal, and rebirth. As we look outside from our “shelters” in place”, we do witness the early signs of Spring, but the Spring of 2020 is nothing like the springs we have ever witnessed before. You, the members of RENY who are reading this article, are all in the high risk category of getting the COVID 19, and many of us have underlying health conditions that exacerbate our risk, should we contract this virus. It is with that in mind that I write this article.

In mid March, the state office of RENY was closed, and the three spirited ladies that work in the office, Kathi, Debbie and Kristen were instructed to work out of their homes. The decision to do so has not compromised the office function at all. Life goes on at RENY. Early in April, the eighteen members of the Board of Directors held their April Board of Directors meeting via teleconference. All were in attendance for a three (3) hour meeting that broached a number of topics, including the possible **postponement** of the 2020 Convention/Annual Meeting in October. No decision has been made yet, but all are in agreement that the health and safety of our members is first and foremost. The control and containment of this terrible virus must be in place for RENY to hold their October Convention/Annual Meeting. The decision to hold the Convention, or not, will likely not be made until August.

On Tuesday, March 31st, I was reminded of one of many reasons why I went into teaching. My Teachers’ Retirement System monthly pension was directly deposited into my bank account. A day or two later, we all learned that 10 million Americans were on the unemployment ranks and had little or no source of income to rely on. A few days ago I had to get a non generic prescription filled that cost over \$1,000. My school district provided health insurance that covered the expense. My wife and I realize that we are blessed to have these benefits, especially in these dreadful times. We also realize the importance of keeping and protecting these benefits. RENY’s Legislative Action Committee and RENY’s new Health Insurance Information Network will be there to keep you informed, and work to protect these very important retired educator benefits.

The NYSRTA Health Insurance Survey in 2018-19 revealed that close to 80% of our members receive some form of school district provided health insurance in retirement. All of our members are recipients of the NYS Teachers’ Retirement System pension, which is one of the most solvent public pensions in the country. In these terrible times of uncertainty, we as retired educators, have much to be economically thankful for. We owe it to our families, friends, and community to practice ALL the health protocols called for. As educators we were all very good at making rules for our classrooms and schools. Now it is time for each one of us to follow the rules of our society in 2020. Be safe and stay healthy!

Thank you,
Kevin Mulligan - President of RENY



Workshop Committee Report ~ Dr. James Newell, Chair



We are living in very uncertain times and it is difficult for us to see what is down the road. Our Committee is continuing to work and plan for our annual convention at the Turning Stone in October despite this uncertainty. To date we will have had one face to face meeting and four meetings by teleconference. The level of participation and enthusiasm on the Committee has been quite high and we will wrap up our work this April.

This year is my second year as Committee Chair. We have an equally talented group of dedicated educators from the Long Island Zone including **Eileen Holmes, Val Stype, Fred Conway*CR, Angelo Grande*CR, Kathryn Grande, Agnes Dansereau, Ruth Doroski, Jo Anne Powell** and **Alicia Winowsky** planning the convention workshops and engaging a key note speaker. Representatives from the Southern Zone including **Mary Lou Wood** and **Vince Smith*CR, Woody Lyndaker**, North Central Zone and Permanent Workshop members, **Diane Hahn*CR, Lois Thornberg**, and **Patricia Newell**, have also rolled up their sleeves and worked diligently on behalf of the committee. I would be remiss not to mention that **Kevin Mulligan** and **Kathi Bassett** have participated in the Workshop Committee teleconferences and provided their valuable input. Last but not least is our Executive Assistant and Trivia Team Captain, **Kristen Cecala**. She is the newest addition to the RENY staff, the lady that coordinates the convention brochure and the lady with the last name that I continue to mangle! We couldn't do it without you, Kris!

The theme for this year's convention is **20/20 Vision**. There will be some unique workshops, an engaging keynote speaker and some special musical entertainment. Two workshops popular with convention attendees will also return. A panel of officials from the New York State Teachers Retirement System will be on hand to make a presentation and to answer retiree questions. With the wild swings of the stock market this winter, it will be especially important to learn about the health of the retirement system and how the assets of the system are being managed during these very turbulent times. We also expect the **David P. Keefe**, the board President of NYSTRS will be present to add his perspective to the presentation.

Many of our upstate members know about Long Island's many fine beaches and its NHL franchise, the NY Islanders, however, Long Island is a unique and interesting part of New York State with rich history, culture and geography that many "Upstate" Rs are only slightly acquainted with. The 2020 Convention will provide RENY members a wonderful opportunity to learn more about Long Island and to benefit from many other diverse educational experiences. This year's convention promises to be an eye opening and exciting experience for all Retired Educators of New York. We expect that this year's convention will be one of the best. Save the dates, October 14-16, 2020 and plan to join us!



CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE ~ Anne Flansburg*CR, Chair

Presidents of RENY'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 RENY and have shown outstanding leadership, service and dedication in retirement to RENY, as well as to their zone and unit (if applicable) and to their community. **IF the annual meeting is not held this year, the 2020 award will be presented in 2021. However, the Presidents must have the application sent by June 1, 2020 to be considered for this year's award.**

Continued on next page



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, namely **Anne Flansburg*CR, John Hogan*CR and Carol Lord*CR** 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 RENY 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, 2020** to the committee chair: Anne Flansburg 24 Amherston Drive, Williamsville NY 14221-7002.



Robert R, DeCormier Memorial Trust Fund
~ Anne Flansburg*CR, Chair



The recent Coronavirus Outbreak may impact the financial stability and cause additional expenses for many people. Do you know any RENY member

that has been impacted by this virus or for any other reason is in need of financial assistance? Assistance can be given for a long term or perhaps for an unexpected financial difficulty. PLEASE refer them to the DeCormier Trust, as we have funds available to assist members in need.

During the year 2019, a total of \$19,000 in monthly stipends was given to individual RENY members who were in financial distress. The aid the DeCormier Trust provided these individuals helped make their daily financial struggles a little less and we are grateful for this.

In 2019, seven zones, namely: **Central, Central Western, Eastern, Long Island, Northern, Southeastern, and Western** contributed and we are grateful for this. Eight zones have units or Retired Teachers Associations (RTAs), and many of these also provided funds. Seventeen unit donations were received from: Central Zone - **Oswego**; Central Western Zone – **Seneca, Wyoming**; Eastern Zone – **Columbia, Fulton, Greene, Rensselaer, Saratoga Springs, Schoharie, Upper Montgomery**; Long Island – **East End**, Southern Zone – **Corning**; Southeastern Zone – **Dutchess, Newburgh**; Western Zone– **Eastern Niagara, West Seneca and Williamsville**. The **Buffalo Retired Administrators' Association (BRAA)**, the **Horseheads Area NYSUT**, and **Oneida Area Retired Teachers' Association** also donated. The **BJ's membership drive** netted \$660. In addition, **twenty five individuals** sent contributions. Many of those donations were made in memory of deceased educators. A personal note, written by the DeCormier secretary, is sent to the family of the deceased, notifying them of the donation and remembrance. This is truly a great way to honor both the living and the deceased members of a family and/or a friend.

We ask the Zone and Unit Presidents, as well as the members of Friendly Service and any member reading this article, to "reach out" to any member of NYSRTA that may be in financial need. The DeCormier Trust has funds available. For additional Information, please contact **Anne Flansburg*CR** at 716-863-3631.





It has been a pleasure working with the members of the Legislative Action Committee this year. We have worked hard to put forth a robust advocacy program this year which, we hope, will bear fruit in the current legislative session regarding the very important issues identified by our organization. We made some significant changes to our preparation for this year's state advocacy to encourage all members of the committee to actively participate in the research and creation of the advocacy documents to be utilized in our contacts with members of the state legislature and the Congress. Each member took the lead on at least one issue related to the state and Federal legislative priorities that we had decided to focus on in our teleconference in December. They submitted their research and we discussed each issue during a teleconference in January.

- Moved state advocacy window up to two weeks in early March to get ahead to the final state budget.
- After coronavirus outbreak/crisis we switched to: emails, phone calls, letters, Skype and Facetime to contact legislators regarding our advocacy positions on bills and actions at the state and Federal levels.

At the state level, the issues we focused on were:

- New Teacher Shortage-

Teacher Residency Program (A-03055 Fernandez & S-04063 Biaggi) -Establishes NY Teach Program which grants tuition waivers for participants that teach at hard to staff school districts for 4 years.

Also: reduce 175 hour professional development mandates for new teachers who are getting masters degrees, reduce eliminate tuition for student teaching internships, expand teacher centers

- Safe Staffing for Quality Care Act (A-2954 Gunther & S-04063 Rivera) -For acute care facilities and nursing homes: Sets minimum staffing requirements, nurse patient ratios, requires annual submission of staffing plans/staffing records, ensures public access to staffing information, gives nurses right to refuse illegal work assignments and shields nurses from discrimination for refusing illegal work assignments.
- Improve Pension COLA (A-07413 Steck & S-05835 Breslin) -Raise the base benefit amount upon which the COLA is computed from \$18,000 to \$21,000.
- Elderly Victimization Act (A06447 Crespo & S04540 Parker) -Supported by the Governor in his new budget proposal. Establishes an elderly crime prevention and control trust fund which allows the division of criminal justice services to issue grants to organizations that prevent crimes against elderly persons.



At the Federal level the issues were:

Note- Many thanks to Mary Johnson for putting the Federal Card together in October, so we could be ready to do our advocacy in Washington D.C. at the AARP conference.

article continued on next page....



- Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation Act (HR-3 Pallone & S 2543 Gassley/Wyden) - require the Secretary of Health & Human Services to negotiate prices of prescription drugs furnished under Part D Medicare program and cap out of pocket expenses for prescription drugs. It would hold prescription drug prices to the rate of inflation annually. Since 2006 prices have doubled that. The current average annual cost of one prescription drug is \$20,000.
- Protecting and Preserving Social Security Act (HR 2302 Dreutch & S1131 Hirono) -Development of "CPI for Seniors" and protects Social Security Benefits.
- Supporting the Teaching Profession through Revitalization Investments in Valuable Educators Act (STRIVE) - Encourage students to enter teaching profession, assist with college loans, encourage placement in high-poverty/high minority/high needs schools. Create internship/resident/mentoring programs to encourage new teachers to stay in the profession. Acts to provide long term improvements of public elementary and secondary school facilities, such as the Rebuild America's Schools Act.

Advocacy related to public health crisis.

- We added a details and a sample letter for the BOD, LAC members and the membership of the areas in need of attention due to the COVID-19 crisis. At the state and Federal levels the main focus of the first three stimulus packages has been keeping the economy afloat, with vast sums of interest-free and forgivable loans being extended to business and high finance, grants to large corporations and smaller sums being available to individuals.
- There are the areas of contention right now in Washington on the next round of stimulus. The Republican proposal for the next round of stimulus would add \$250 billion in interest free, forgivable loans to help small and medium sized businesses. The Democratic leaders in the House and the Senate are negotiating a compromise to this bill that will focus on some help for hospitals and money for expanded testing. However, the Republicans are rejecting help for state/local governments and non-profits. The Democrats and moderate Republicans need to know people support their efforts and want additional help for non-profits and state/local governments.

Right now we all need to contact state legislators, members of Congress and the Governor's office to urge support for public hospitals, public schools and non-profits. Let's urge everyone we know to do the same.

The LAC will be having a debriefing teleconference later this Spring to review the efficacy of our committee work and advocacy over the past year and discuss ways to improve our efforts in the future.

Thanks to the LAC members and thanks to the board of directors for your support.





UPDATE AND SCHEDULE FOR PROPOSING RESOLUTIONS

I have not received any resolutions to date. With the world as it is, that is not surprising. Kevin has asked that any resolutions submitted this year, be those that are not timely, but those that could be acted on in the future. This is in case we do not have a July meeting or convention this year. If there are any questions, feel free to contact me.

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 14, 2020. Thirty days prior to that date is **Sunday, June 14, 2020**. The deadline is Friday, **June 12, 2020** providing for a full thirty days between the due date and the date of the State Executive Committee meeting.

When submitting proposals, please adhere to all of the guidelines that are clearly spelled out on **pp. 78-80** 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 RENY 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 Bylaws. Is the intent something that should be expressed as a resolution, something that requires a Bylaw 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 RENY committees.
5. Submit up to but no more than three (3) resolutions for consideration in a given year.



Membership Report ~ Lois Thornberg, VP For Membership



*I will breathe
I will think of solutions
I will not let my worry control me
I will not let my stress level break me
I will simply breathe
And I will be Okay
Because I don't quit. - Shayne McClendon*

I am going to take a departure from my normal reporting of the activities of the membership committee in this article. Although the committee continues to receive the monthly statistics report and work toward increasing the membership, the non-RENY unit member identification project moves on to a new phase, and the zone and individual incentives is ongoing, there is a more pertinent topic I want to address. As I sit at home, I realize we are all going through what might be described as one of the most difficult times of our lives. Being “sheltered at home” is the new norm, and it is unclear just how long this situation will continue. Although you might be physically alone you need to remember you are not alone - you are a member of the extended family named RENY. As a member of this family you have the support of all the “family” members and their social resources. As members, we have always been here for each other, and continue to do so in this time of need.

At this trying time it is important to stay connected and support each other. We need to focus on the positive and not the unknown. With the support and sharing of each other strengths, we will come through this. Even though we are unable to be there physically for our fellow members we must be there for each other virtually. Pick up the telephone, go online, write a letter or send a card- these are some of the ways we can support each other so that we can conquer this problem and escape it's hold it has on us all. After all, isn't that what it means to be a family member- concern and support for the needs of all? Through the demonstration of love and caring displayed by all the RENY members, we can look forward surviving this and being together once again. When that time comes, I know we will continue to grow and remain a “family”.

A parting thought: *“I think the best thing we can do is to let people know that each one of them is precious.” Fred Rogers (Tom Hanks) in the movie A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*

Until we meet again- Stay safe, well, and sane (if possible!)



Health Care Report~ Mary Ella Moeller*CR, Chair

I keep in touch with our very hard working zone chairs each weekday by sending Kaiser Health News, which gives highlights on health from major news organizations by email. I also send a detailed email to each zone chair on “Coronavirus: Your Top Questions Answered.”

All zones have a health care chair, except LIZ. The LIZ position has been vacant for almost a year. It is especially important for each zone to have a person in this position at this critical time. Welcome to SZ **Daryl Hartzell** who is replacing **Sue Pierce**. Thank you to Sue for her hard work on this committee.

Finally, I remind everyone it is imperative to be aware of what your school district is doing which could negatively affect your health benefits.

see more from Mary Ella on the next page...



Fall Detection

According to the National Council on Aging falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries for older Americans. Falls, with or without injury, carry a heavy quality of life impact. More older adults fear falling and, as a result, limit their activities and social engagements. This, in many cases, can result in increased physical decline, depression, social isolation and feeling of helplessness.

Recently, my daughter's family gave me a smart watch. My smart watch has hard fall detection and will ask me if I fall, do I want it to contact emergency service. Should there be no response and the watch detects that I am immobile for a minute, the watch will call emergency service and my emergency contact person automatically, sending a location. Since I live alone having the fall detection on my smart watch has brought peace of mind to me and my family. Should you have a smart watch or are thinking of buying one, check to see if it has this feature. It could save your life.

*This is an article taken from Long Island's LIZ News publication
April 2020 ~ Editor Joel Reitman*

A Message from Long Island Zone President Fred Conway*CR

After a very mild and snowless winter, we were all looking to the warmth and beauty of spring. Instead, we have been welcomed by the disastrous and very deadly COVID-19, a disease of the CORONAVIRUS. We are in a PANDEMIC and must follow the guidelines of the state and country leaders. STAY at HOME, PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING, and WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN.

This pandemic, one that we have not witnessed in our lifetime, has caused havoc everywhere and with everything. Your LIZ Officers have adjusted our 2020 Calendar to eliminate, change or postpone all events through September. Hopefully, we will be able to finish our fall and winter events, especially, the RENY 2020 Annual Convention which we are hosting.

I personally thank the efforts of our VP, **Eileen Holmes** and **Joel Reitman**, our new Liz News editor. I sincerely wish to thank **Jo Anne Powell** for publishing the newsletter over the past many years. Jo Anne brought our newsletter to superb recognition in the state.



The first important date was April 15th for a telephone conference of the LIZ BOD and the LIZ 2020 Convention Committee. We have our delegation set and have been meeting regularly under the direction of **Eileen Holmes** our VP and Chairman.

Please stay healthy, follow the guidelines, and pray for the speedy conclusion of this dreaded pandemic. I remain Yours in the interests of RENY, LIZ, EERTA, and WERTA.

~Fred



NO REGRETS, and BITTERSWEET OWNERSHIP

Anything you own can possibly own you after a long period of time and it can be a “money pit”. Be it a house, boat, pets....or yes, our four-legged furry friends. They can all cost time, money, our love. We did after all choose to own them and they can leave us too soon and leave a us hollow, sad and hollow with a hole in our hearts and life.

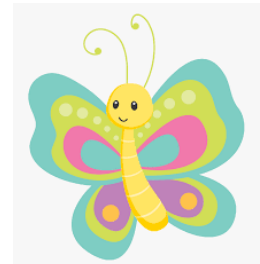
Recently my husband and I experienced a bittersweet end of our beautiful old gray- bearded Black Labrador dog. On our anniversary in early April his end came sadly in the parking lot of our Vet. Yes, Covid-19 regulations had closed all vet clinics for people and indoor visits. After carrying the old boy into his clinic, our Vet, David, returned to inform us that we had some decisions to make. We tearfully agreed to be compassionate and moved forward to say farewell to him that afternoon. We were able to say our goodbyes, give him hugs, stroke his velvety ears, touch his big paws and tug his fat tail. His vet, our friend stated that he was sorry that he couldn't give us hugs. Beau was one of the clinics favorite big dogs that they always greeted with joyhe loved going there and especially liked being a weekend vacation boarder.

It was a difficult trip home, decisions had to be made...where would he rest, how we would mark his final place in our yard and of course letting our children, grandchildren and bigger family, our neighborhood friends to know of his passing. Beau was an exceptional family pet maybe it was his breed, the way he was raised, but he was a people dog. Living as we do on a corner, across the street from the village Port Office...he hung out on that corner greeting everybody who was passing, walking their dog or going to the Port Office. He waited for treats everyday from anybody that remembered him as the dog on First Street. Delivery drivers, garbage men, mail truck people.... they all treated him, and If he wasn't outside, one special UPS driver would leave a tiny dog cookie on top of the package. We think he may have had more friends than we did....evident in the outpouring of FB messages, notes left for us and brief comments written on the small notice that we posted on a community Bulletin Board.

We miss him and like many owners have fond memories of his crazy antics...like knowing when the strawberries were ripe, putting his head in our legs and wanting some love, trying to climb into our laps as if he was a puppy again. He once retrieved a bottle of celebration champagne from outside our snowy patio and dragged it to the middle of our front yard...when found it was missing its label, but it was very, very cold and our dinner guests chuckled and we enjoyed a toast to friends and our 4-legged friends.

“My Puppy”, said the wife, but to the husband “he was your dog”, but to both of us, “he was our family”. He rests in his second favorite hangout, at the edge of our garden. We have ordered a red-stemmed Dogwood to mark where he rests. His first favorite place was near a Spirea bush where everyday he could watch the corner, rain or snow, after all he was a Labrador and a little rain or snow did not stop his watchful eyes.

Lovingly written for Beau, may he rest in peace on a corner in dog heaven. And to the fond memories of all those that we have loved and lost in 2020.





Accuracy = Savings



For every mailing, the Association and zones are spending money on unnecessary postage for members that have moved or passed away. My goal was to update the information on our database which will reduce costs for both the Association and Zones.

It is understandable that it is very difficult for the zones to continually report member updates to the office, as some zones are very large and have numerous members. Over the past months, I have been looking through records of members. Using their name, date of birth and location, I have found over 400 members have passed away and this information wasn't given to the zones or the Association.

In the future, it would be appreciated If you know of a member whose membership in RENY has changed please relay the information to their Zone President, Membership or Friendly Service chair.

Thank you-
Debra Barnes
Executive Assistant/Membership
dabarnes@nysrta.org



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Community Service Report ~ Eileen Holmes, Chairperson



These are uncertain times, anxiety levels are high and life is, well, unusual! The coronavirus pandemic has derailed our plans and our lifestyles.

At our Community Service meeting last fall at Turning Stone, we discussed ongoing and upcoming community service projects. Working in food pantries, collecting books for overseas missions, providing personal hygiene care items for shelters, gathering in malls to hand out books, visiting nursing homes and veteran homes, collecting clothing, group hiking to clean up the environment, meeting in libraries, and raising funds for scholarships at luncheons are just a sampling of our community service efforts. However, the very nature of 'community' service entails hands-on, personal contact and interaction.

Our Community Service chairs **Angelo Grande*CR** (LIZ), **Janice Hedglon** (CZ), **Joan Handfield** (CWZ), **Joyce Notaricola** (EZ), **Patty Corey** (NCZ), **Laurie Parsons** (NEZ), **Alice Galvin** (NZ), **Cheryl Fischer** (SEZ), **Mary Suffern** (SZ) and **Ann Marie Wik** (WZ) always have high hopes for success with community service projects but this year we will have to wait and see how our organized activities can proceed and what the final outcome will be.

Let's remind ourselves that we still have great opportunities to practice community 'service'. Check on your family, friends and neighbors with a phone call or an e-mail. Practice social distancing. When possible, stay home to help stop the spread of COVID19. Wear a mask when you go out. When you're cleaning out your closet, save those usable clothing items for donations. If you're able, contribute to food banks and /or animal shelters. If you're knitting, make scarves or booties and put them aside for the future. Take care of yourself and stay well.



**I promise....
You are not
ALONE**



Teachers Appreciation Week

May 4th ~ May 8th, 2020



What an understatement!!

The 14,000 members of RENY (Retired Educators of NY), formerly NYS Retired Teachers' Association (NYSRTA), would like to recognize and commend New York State teachers for all their leadership, guidance and compassion in educating the students and parent (s) across New York State.

School year 2019-2020 will never be forgotten, as the year of the COVID 19 Pandemic. The end of March, 2020, saw schools across New York State shut down, ending the school environment as we know it. Teachers across the state were left with educating their students via telecommunications. "Home Schooling" took on a whole new meaning. Teachers across the state and country had to reinvent their delivery of subject matter, as well as how they connected with their students. They also found themselves forming new relationships with the parent(s) or guardian(s) of their students. School year 2020 certainly has given new meaning to the Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

Without a doubt, this school year has also drawn new meaning to our **APPRECIATION** of teachers. Your online methods of instruction and simple acts of connecting with students and parent(s)/guardian(s) has provided a form of continuity of instruction, and the solace of accomplishment in these days of trepidation, turmoil, trying impatience and boredom. Teachers across New York State hold a new place in the hearts of the communities they serve. Thank you!!!

Kevin Mulligan - President of RENY (Retired Educators of NY)

Retired Educators of New York
8 Airport Park Blvd
Latham, NY 12110
518-482-3509
<https://retirededucatorsny.org/>

ZONE NEWS! READ ALL ABOUT IT...

Central Zone News

By Ray Pitcher-Zone President

I hope that the pandemic has not touched you or your families. I hope that this finds you all safe and healthy. Enjoy the time with your families. Since mid-March our outside appointments, meetings, and work have all come to a sudden stop. All of us can't wait to get back to some kind of normal existence. Keep your masks handy.

The Zone board will be having elections at our fall meeting. **Dell Ford Jordan** has been filling in as our Vice President of membership and doing a wonderful job. We need a permanent replacement. We also need a public relations person. Many of our officers and committee members have been serving a long, long time. Please consider stepping up and taking over elected and appointed positions on the unit and zone levels.

New York State Retired Teachers Association will now be called Retired Educators of New York. (RENY). It is hoped that the name change will help to attract newly retired educators to our organization. We are now down to less than 14000 members statewide. How long can we hold on without a new infusion of younger members? We as a zone may need to begin looking at merging some of our units. Our units may need to look at our membership and have new members join both the state and the local units. Our future is in all of our hands.

Future meetings: I postponed our April all committees meeting until June the 11th. I am hoping that groups will be allowed to gather by then. As of this writing, I have scheduled the use of the RENY conference call system for this meeting. By May 1st I will advise as to how this meeting will be conducted. If you didn't get instructions, please contact me. Our July meeting is canceled. Our annual meeting is being coordinated by **Bill Cline** for September the 14th., tentatively at the Canasawacta Country Club in Norwich More information to follow.

Oneida-Herkimer Co. Retired Teachers Assoc. Legislative Activities

By Ray Pitcher

On March 12th, our local lobbyist met with our local Senator Joseph Griffo, Assemblymen, Brian Miller, Marianne Buttenschon and Robert Smullen. We presented the RENY (formally NYSRTA) state legislative priorities. This year they included: A teacher residency program, (A.03055, S. 04063), Safe staffing for quality care act, (A.2954, S. 01032), and Improve Pension Cola (A.07413, S. 05835). All of our representatives indicated that they would support them.



Assemblywoman Buttenschon, Pat Soposki, Judith Schad, Chris Jones, Johnnie Jones and Senator Griffo



Assemblymen Miller, Judith Schad, Johnnie Jones and Pat Soposki



Johnnie Jones, Ray Pitcher, Judith Schad and Assemblyman Smullen

ZONE NEWS! READ ALL ABOUT IT...

Chenango County Retired Teachers

by Bill Cline

Over the last couple of years, I was becoming Eeyore from Winnie the Pooh. I bemoaned the shrinking attendance at our dinner meetings, as well as a lack of new blood in our leadership. Well, we have entered a new era with a much-needed infusion of talent. I thank those now on the team and encourage more new faces to join us. Let me briefly note a few issues as we move forward.

As I write this it is April 6th. These are difficult times. We basically fit into two camps. Many of us are hunkered down in our homes. We are nervous, missing our family and friends, watching our future finances under attack and clueless about our ability to publicly gather in the near future. There are some who are already encountering Coronavirus. We must pray for each other as well as reach out to others by phone, letters and social media. Our next dinner meeting will be held in the Fall of 2020, perhaps at the Canasawacta Country Club.

There is no spring dinner meeting, remember to send in your scholarship contribution to **Steve Runion** at 5351 County Road 32 Norwich, NY 13815.

Mark Granan is continuing to make slow progress. Our prayers for Mark and Chris are much needed and appreciated. He is back home now. Mark was also the Zone membership person.

State Budget woes (again) threaten State Aid.

Try to stay calm over your investments.

Privatizing of support staff and substitutes is the new game in town. RENY formerly NYSRTA wants to identify those who belong to the county versus those who belong to the state organization or both. Research is being done about educator health insurance and acceptable coverage.

Oswego County Retired Teachers

By Colette Astoria

Here in Oswego, like everyone else in the world, we have been watching history unfold before our eyes. We've cancelled our June meeting and we will do a 'wait-n-see' for the September meeting. At our past 2 meetings we have done 50/50 raffles to raise money for Blessings In a Backpack and the Gilisano Children's Hospital in Syracuse.

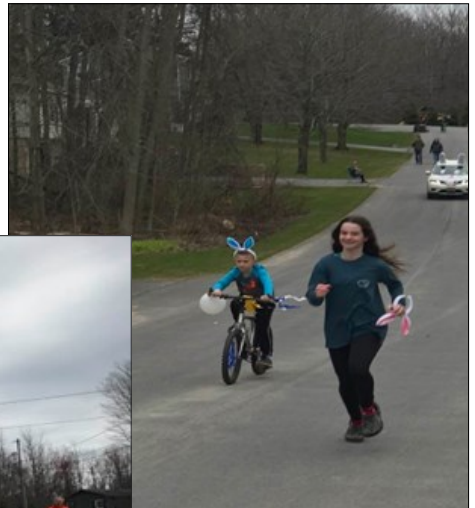
Our retirees have been lending a helping hand in this crisis too. A retired principal in our district, **Julie Burger**, who now owns a business in town; Quilt with Passion, organized many seamstresses to sew 2020+ cloth masks for Oswego Health these past weeks. She created a partnership with Novelis Corporation who paid for the materials. Julie also created kits in ziplocs for people to pick up on her front porch and even managed to get elastic - a very scarce item right now - for the project. Thank you Julie for all your work and thank you to the many retirees in your sewing army!

read more From Colette on the next page...

ZONE NEWS! READ ALL ABOUT IT...

Oswego County Retired Teachers

Colette Astoria organized an Easter Parade in her development on Easter Sunday. She put fliers on everyone's mailbox on Saturday and had over 13 families participate in the socially distanced parade for onlookers who sat or stood in their yards and waved. There were many wishes of "Happy Easter!" and one wagon delivered daffodils to all the spectators.



ZONE NEWS! READ ALL ABOUT IT...

Central Western Zone News

By Phyllis Dunlap, assisted by Lynn Hefferon

Linda Snyder reports even though Yates County is one of the smallest in NY State, our retired educators are making a huge community impact during this time of the Coronavirus pandemic. Even before requests were being made to fill a need, many of our unit's members rallied together to begin sewing masks at home to be donated to workers in various medical and essential employment settings - not just in our community, but also by sending them to neighboring counties. Our retired educators have also been busy supplying, packaging, and delivering meals for families in need, while others are sharing their talents reading to children on Facebook and other platforms. Our June 1st meeting is cancelled, but we are staying in contact with our members through our newsletter and other means. Many of us are participating in Take 5 for New York, a new county-wide campaign that is being launched to encourage Yates County residents to take five minutes out of each day to call a friend, loved one, or acquaintance who may be alone and feeling isolated during this period of social distancing. It is safe to say that our community would be at a loss without our retired educators!

Quilt raffle raises funds for Honor Flight

This year's recipient of the Keuka Quilters Quilt Guild raffle is the Yates County Honor Flight. Yates County Honor Flight organizer, Norm Koek was presented a check for \$2,100 at the guild's meeting. These proceeds will allow up to eight veterans and guides to take part in a future flight.



These members of the Opportunity Quilt committee are CWZ Co- President, MaryEllen Morgan, Jen Mosich, Kathy Moon and Ellen Hey with Norm Koek (center).

Former Medina Teacher Leaves Legacy for Scholarship Fund Mariann R. (Davies) Holcomb



Medina High School will begin to give out a new scholarship this year in honor of a former teacher. It was in the amount of \$35,274.86 for a scholarship in Mrs. Mariann Holcomb's name. She was a former Business teacher at Medina High School. Mrs. Holcomb taught from 1974 until her retirement in 1997. As part of her estate, she left money to fund a scholarship to be awarded annually to a deserving Medina graduate business student (s) to further their education.

more from the Central Western Zone on page 18...

ZONE NEWS! READ ALL ABOUT IT...

Central Western Zone News

By Phyllis Dunlap, assisted by Lynn Hefferon

Joan Handfield, Community Service for CWZ reported that the CWZ counties have been very busy:

Wayne - personal care items and \$200 to the Victim's Resource Center

Steuben - Monetary donation to St. Thomas Episcopal Church Scholarship Fund in memory of **John Roy**

Seneca - United Way Red Bookshelf Project, Fill the Bus Campaign and collect new and gently used books birth to grade 5 that are donated to county agencies, including WIC.

Monroe - Musical performances at local nursing homes in May/June 2020

Ontario - Humane Society at Lollipop Farm and half the 50/50 to Budding Readers

Orleans - military funerals

Livingston - one project a year begun at spring meeting: Geneseo Methodist Parrish Center Health Clinic

Wyoming - Operation Gratitude, Angel Back Pack Program: school supplies and nonperishable snacks and Food pantry items

At CWZ's last meeting, the Community Service Project was women veterans at the VA in Canandaigua. We donated \$257 and multiple bags of items on their request list.

Thanks to all the CWZ for their generosity

Friendly Service and the Corona Virus-Spread Cheer

If the iPad, Facebook, or computer is your thing, please communicate with friends and neighbors and let them know you are willing to cook or shop for them. "I'm not online, don't have a computer, what might I do?" Pick up your phone and call anybody to let them know they are thought of. Young, older, and in between like to know they are thought of. Nursing home residents are now confined to their rooms. Please call and let them know that they can vent to you. If walking is your thing, stop and chat with neighbors and children while observing the 6 feet rule. You have so much to give, dear friends.

Then, there is always the tried and true handwritten notes, letters and cards that people enjoy reading and rereading. Offer your help in whatever way you can lend a hand. You made a difference when you taught, you still can! Try it, you will benefit and so will the folks you contact.

~ Yours in Friendly Service, **Barb Rosecrans**, Seneca County

Community Service

In the spring the Seneca County Retired Teachers donate items and make monetary contributions to the Beverly Animal Shelter. Please drop off donations at the shelter. Suggested donations to leave outside include dog and cat food (canned or dry), kitty litter, detergent, towels, and old blankets.

If you know any active teachers, send a greeting of encouragement with a card via snail mail or email. Everyone needs something that brings a smile to their face each day.

~ Reported by **Cornelia Johnson** from Seneca County.

More from Phyllis and Lynn and the CWZ on next page...

ZONE NEWS! READ ALL ABOUT IT...

Central Western Zone News

By Phyllis Dunlap, assisted by Lynn Hefferon

Vice President's Report

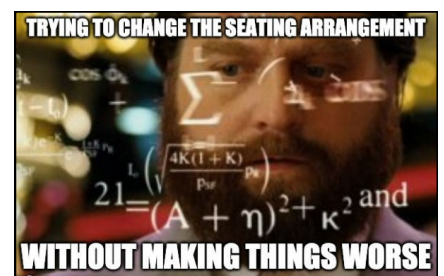
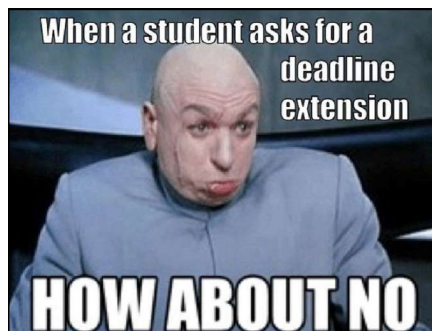
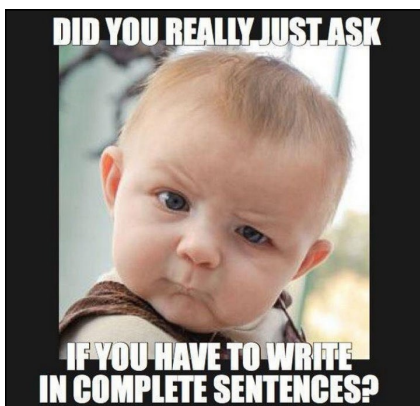
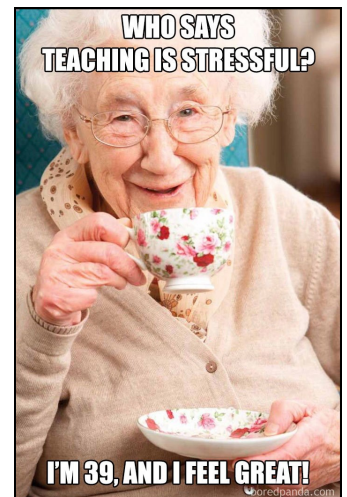
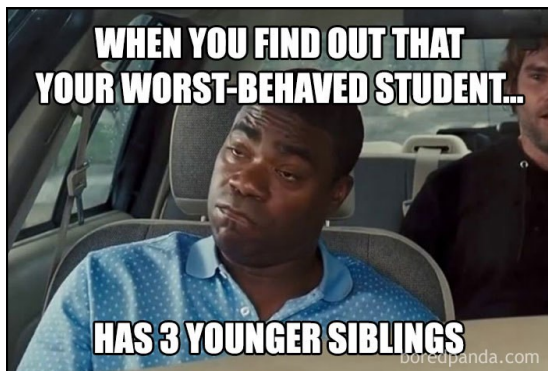
We are hoping that our organization will be able to host a "meet and greet" coffee hour this August for the 2020 retirees in our county. Last year's event was a wonderful success and resulted in several retirees joining our "ranks".

We have planned our October 22nd meeting in Waterloo's Quality Inn. We have secured as our guest speaker, New York State Senator, Pam Helming. She will discuss legislation pertinent to us as retired teachers and hold a question and answer session.

~ Karen Moretti and Jane Spiwak from Seneca County

When they take out an appendix, it is an appendectomy; when they remove your tonsils, it is a tonsillectomy. What is it when they remove a growth from you head?

Solution to the Medical Question: A Haircut from above



ZONE NEWS! READ ALL ABOUT IT...

Eastern Zone News

By Pamela Love, Public Relations Chair

Eastern Zone's 2019 Recipient of the \$1,000 Hudson-Kramer Grant was given to **Ted Arndt**, a Special Education Teacher at Fort Plain Jr/Sr. High School. The money he received from the grant will be used to build a portable technology demonstrator. His students who are 7th and 8th graders will be doing the building when assembled, it will allow students to see how changes in land forms will change topographic information as it is shown through colorful 3- D modeling through which the students can directly interact. Students of all ages will benefit from this augmented box. **Mary Monk**, a member of the Upper Montgomery Retired Teachers Unit was Chairperson for the Hudson-Kramer Grant of 2019 offered to Eastern Zone.



Mary Monk, Ted Arndt and his students from the 7th and 8th grade at Fort Plain Jr/Sr High School

During the 2019 Annual Meeting of Eastern Zone held last September **Tor Shekerian**, Grandson of **Robert DeCormier**, was the featured Speaker. After his presentation on the life of **Robert DeCormier** who was the First President of NYSRTA, he gave President Rosalie Oliver **Robert DeCormier's** desk, glasses with case and leather desk pad. Since then, Rosalie Oliver has donated these items related to **Robert DeCormier** to The New York State Museum. She recently received a letter from Aaron Noble, Senior Historian of The New York State Museum expressing his sincere thanks for the items stating they are a valuable addition and will aid in interpreting the story of labor and education history in the Empire State.



Robert DeCormier's leather desk pad and glasses in the case



Rensselaer County Retired Teachers Unit President, **Marjorie Leibowitz** presented former Unit President and former Eastern Zone President, **Rosalie Oliver**, with a Certificate of Recognition from New York State Retired Teachers Association, Inc. at the Unit's December 2019 Meeting Luncheon.

read more From Pamela on the next page...

ZONE NEWS! READ ALL ABOUT IT...

Eastern Zone News

By Pamela Love, Public Relations Chair



Spring Meetings for RENY/Eastern Zone and its Units have been cancelled for 2020. RENY/Eastern Zone President, **Janice Mullins** has requested the Executive Committee of the Zone to send her their meeting reports and updates at this time. Janice also urged members to contact State Legislatures, members of Congress and the Governor's Officer regarding the present non-funding of States by the Federal Government which would result in 20 per cent cuts to public hospitals, public schools and non-profits.



Long Island Zone News

By Eileen Holmes, Public Relations Chair

In the Fall and early winter, before the COVID19 pandemic and the stay-at-home, social distancing rules went into effect, the Long Island Zone was fortunate to have held several luncheons and holiday parties. Our west end unit held its fall luncheon at Guy Anthony's in North Merrick and longtime WERTA leader **Evelyn Paola** reported it was a very well attended and spirited meeting. Besides great food and generous raffle prizes, **Fred Conway*CR** shared information from the 2020 RENY convention planning committee, **Dave Keefe** spoke on the state of affairs with our NY Retirement System pension fund and special guest speaker, Nassau County Legislator Tom McKevitt provided information about some of the hot issues being discussed in local politics. A question and answer follow-up about topics such as early release of prisoners produced a lively discussion!

On the east end, our EERTA unit held its annual Election Day luncheon at Villa Paul in Hampton Bays. This South Fork "Hamptons" get together was organized by **Larry Strickland**. In early December, EERTA Vice President **Agnes Danserau** arranged the annual holiday party at O'Malley's Restaurant in Greenport, on the North Fork. Agnes put together a giant Chinese auction, Santa and Mrs. Claus handed out grab bag gifts and RENY members **Diana and Jim Davies** led the holiday sing-along. Ah, we look back and fondly remember those gatherings as the 'happy days' before face masks and social distancing became a way of life and caused all our Spring gatherings to be postponed.

Before the holidays, **Robert Svoboda**, EERTA's Community Service chair presented a gift check to Rocky Point High School to be used for a needy family. Principal Jonathan Hart and Guidance facilitator Matthew Poole gratefully accepted the donation and published a very nice photo op in their school newsletter.

Planning A Move???

Please include us in your moving plans!

Call us at (518) 482-3509 to update your

Address and phone number.

Returned mail results in additional costs to the Association.

Plus, you miss out on York State Magazine!!



ZONE NEWS! READ ALL ABOUT IT...

Long Island Zone News

By Eileen Holmes, Public Relations Chair



May the *love* of those
around you
help you
through the
days ahead.

The Long Island Zone is deeply saddened by the passing of long-time member **Virginia Schultz** of Shelter Island. Virginia was 92 years young and stayed active with EERTA and LIZ activities. She was famous for hosting an annual Christmas pot luck lunch at her lovely home where she took delight in decorating with her huge collection of Santas. She was 89 on her last trip upstate for the NYSRTA convention and her journey from Shelter Island made her our farthest traveling delegate.

She'd get up at 3AM in order to catch the first ferry off the island, **Agnes Dansereau** would pick her up at the ferry dock in Greenport, they'd travel 35 miles to my house in Jamesport, we'd get in my car and head 40 miles west to be at LI Expressway Exit 63 Park 'n Ride by 7:30AM. There we'd board the motor coach for 6-7 hour ride (depending on traffic off LI and through the city) to Turning Stone Resort in Verona. Virginia was a true trooper, a charming hostess and hard-working, dedicated member of our Zone. She will be greatly missed.



EERTA Holiday Potluck



Virginia Schultz is pictured in red sweater; Behind is SuzAnne and Frank Jessup directly behind Virginia and Marie Buscemi is on her right.

Northern Zone News

By Linda Crosby, Public Relations Chair

Just as we thought a quiet, placid end of winter in the North Country had reached us with so little snow in March, a storm of a very unprecedented kind raked its vicious claws across our state; corona virus has devastated our communities causing unforgettable hardship, fear, and the death of family members and friends. As we sadly acknowledge and grieve our painful losses, we should also give thanks for dear ones who have survived the virus and for those folks who, with heroic courage, accept the risks and continue to care for all of us in so many ways in our communities. With the unity and support of all New Yorkers doing their best to protect us all, there is hope we will weather the turbulence of this very different storm.

see more on the next page...

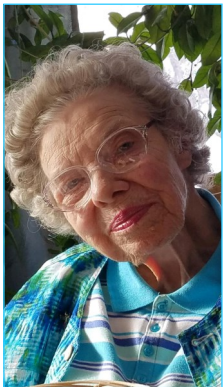
ZONE NEWS! READ ALL ABOUT IT...

Northern Zone News

By Linda Crosby, Public Relations Chair

After a planning meeting in January, the Northern Zone Executive Board had a teleconference meeting on March 12, 2020. After the Treasurer's Report was presented by **Roxann Finley** and approved, President **Gayla LePage** gave her report; she said she has used the new name and logo on the high school senior scholarship application materials she sent out in late February to area high schools in Franklin and St. Lawrence Counties. She stated that NZ and NEZ will still promote a Collette Travel trip to Greece next year; the trip to the Grand Canyon was cancelled. Membership numbers went from 359 in January to 357 in February. Gayla said Friendly Services Chair **Ellen Smith** has all work completed through March, but, will need help after that due to a family member's illness.

NZ Healthcare Chair **Joe Russo** reported on some changes in the St. Lawrence Healthcare Consortium; three school districts will be managed by The Foley Group and the rest will be managed by Blue Cross/Blue Shield in St. Lawrence County. Meetings and Programs Chair **Alice Galvin** said the spring membership meeting is scheduled for June 3 at the St. Lawrence Power and Equipment Museum in Madrid with registration/refreshments at 9:30 a.m., meeting at 10:00 a.m., and a program presented at 11:30 am by a re-enactor at the 1850's School House. Lunch is planned for 12:30 a.m. Donations for the museum will be our Spring Community Service project. **Please note: The above mentioned June 3 NZ membership meeting was cancelled on May 1, 2020 at a NZ BOD teleconference due to the corona virus pandemic. The plans/program for the meeting will likely be rescheduled for the Fall 2020 or Spring 2021 meeting.**



Clifton-Fine Unit President **Joe Russo** sadly reported the passing of a very dear lady, Star Lake resident **Mary Sherman**, on February 23 at the age of 95. Mary retired after 38 years at Clifton-Fine Central School District as a first grade teacher. She served for 25 years as the Clifton-Fine Unit Friendly Services Chair until the age of 93 and, also, as a high school scholarship chair. She always attended the NZ meetings as well as her unit meetings. She lovingly served her community as the recent Vice-President of the Clifton-Fine Hospital Auxiliary and as a member of the Senior Citizen Club, the local home bureau and the Birthday Club.



Long-time NZ member and former NZ Executive Board Member **Harry Matteson** passed away on February 21. Harry and his wife, Shirley, provided dedicated leadership for NZ by serving as our Membership Co-Chairs for many, many years until they moved from their Malone, N.Y. home to be closer to children and grandchildren. He always was willing to help out our NZ. Always a wonderful gentleman dearly loved by his family of five children, 18 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren, Harry was a U.S. Army veteran and a Malone Central School District Elementary Principal for 27 years at Flanders School. He was devoted to serving his town in many volunteer community groups and his church in Malone, often lending his musical talents in creative support.

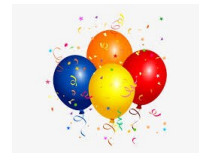
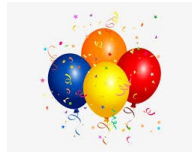
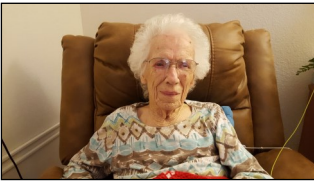
continued on page 24...

ZONE NEWS! READ ALL ABOUT IT...

Northern Zone News

By Linda Crosby, Public Relations Chair

NZ members sadly note the peaceful passing of long-time member **Jack Ward** on November 22, 2019 at his home in Waynesboro, Virginia. A Gouverneur, N.Y. native, Jack worked as an editor of a mining magazine in New York City after college and then returned to the North Country. He retired in 1996 after a long, 28-year career as an Earth Science and Physics Teacher in Edwards, N.Y. and at Brushton-Moira Central School District; he initiated the Earth Science program at both school districts. His BMCDSD colleagues have many happy memories of Jack, his wife, Joan, and their daughters, Amy and Jill. His witty sense of humor and his boisterous laughter always kept us entertained and in good spirits at school.



Clifton-Fine Unit Historian Alice Galvin announced that Star Lake community members joyfully turned out in force, with horns blowing, with lots of balloons, in many cars, firetrucks, and emergency vehicles to form a long caravan that arrived at the C-F Hospital Nursing Home to honor a very special lady on her 107th birthday on April 21, 2020; **Pauline Bassette** viewed her birthday bash safely from her window as her neighbors celebrated in the streets below. Happy birthday, Pauline!

Northern Zone would like to recognize and thank the following people who donated items for the raffle baskets for the 2019 convention: **Roxann Finley, Joe Russo, Alice Galvin, Linda Crosby, Gayla LePage, Jean Theobald, Paula Towne, Tom Cook, Betty Cook, and Rae Louise Tate.**

That's all, folks. Please take care and remember to protect yourself, your families, your friends and your neighbors!

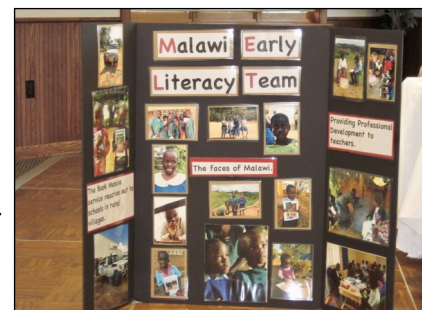


PHOTOS FROM THE NORTHERN ZONE



Meetings & Programs Chair Alice Galvin(center) presents NZ Community Service donations to Malawi Early Literacy Team members Andy Barnes and Heather White at the Fall meeting.

MELT presentation board at Fall meeting.



ZONE NEWS! READ ALL ABOUT IT...



PHOTOS FROM THE NORTHERN ZONE



Agnes Hudson and Roxann Finley enjoy lunch at the Fall meeting at Malone Golf Club.



New member Debbie Yartz at the Fall membership meeting.



Doug and Jean Theobald at the Fall membership meeting.



The Corning Glass Museum presenter at the 2019 convention was terrific!



NSYRTA 2019 Convention delegates: Phil LePage, Gayla LePage, Rae Louise Tate, Tom Cook, Betty Cook and Linda Crosby



One of our wonderful NZ raffle baskets at the 2019 convention



Betty Cook, Tom Cook, Rae Louise Tate and Gayla LePage enjoy the spirited Trivia Contest along with spirits of another kind.



Clifton-Fine Unit President Joe Russo greets and toasts arrivals at the annual Christmas Party at the Pine Cone Restaurant in Wanakena, N.Y.

ZONE NEWS! READ ALL ABOUT IT...

PHOTOS FROM THE NORTHERN ZONE



Clifton-Fine Unit members enjoy lunch at the Christmas party.



*In late Fall 2019, a special certificate of appreciation was presented to NYSRTA President Emerita **Agnes Hudson, *CR**, for her many years of dedicated service and leadership as a trustee and as Secretary for the Robert D. DeCormier Memorial Trust.*

Northern Central Zone News

By Nancy Roberts & Patricia Newell, Public Relations Co-Chairs

We are weathering through turbulent times and looking forward to returning to normalcy once again. To put it frankly, the British understood this approach with their iconic saying and poster campaign, "Remain Calm & Carry On." And carry on, we have.



With the closing of schools, active teachers in the field quickly surmounted technical challenges and set up Zoom & Google class meetings and on-line homework assignments for their students. They proved within a very short period of time just how skillful they truly are. During this coronavirus crisis, NCZ members have provided child

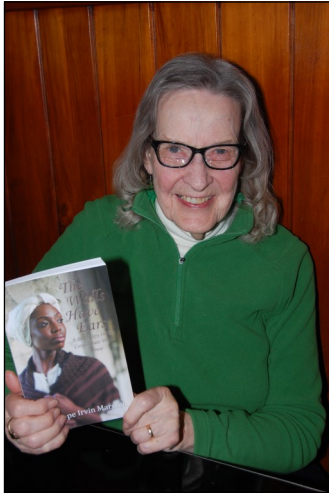
care, have helped assemble materials for needed medical masks, and have home schooled grandchildren, etc. Many individuals are pitching in and using their talents to help out. Out of it, a new appreciation for educators and the teaching profession seems to be emerging.

News from the North Central Zone continued on next page...

ZONE NEWS! READ ALL ABOUT IT...

Northern Central Zone News

By Nancy Roberts & Patricia Newell, Public Relations Co-Chairs

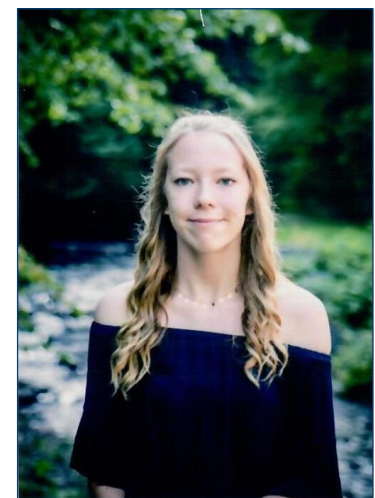


We are so proud that NCZ's **Hope Irvin Marston** has published a new book entitled The Walls Have Ears: A Black Spy in the Confederate White House. It has been released by White Bird Publications and is a Charlotte Award 2020 nominee in the high school category. Hope has authored more than 30 books. This is her first e-book which is available in Kindle version through Amazon as well as in paperback format. It is also in Barnes & Noble NOOK book format. For talented Hope, this is her third book that has been honored as a finalist for the Charlotte Award. We are believing that three times is a charm! Good Luck, Hope!!

Photo courtesy of the Johnson Newspapers Corp.



Natalie Monnat



Courtney D'Ambrosi

Under challenging circumstances, **John Gaffney**, Chair, of the Scholarship Committee has carried on with his responsibilities. He is ably assisted by an outstanding committee consisting of **Bruce & Candice Buckingham, Tom Van Emmerik, Dr. George Forbes*CR, Bill Haller, Marianne Malatino, and Patti Scordo**. The committee is proud to announce the recipients of the 2020 Future Educator Scholarships. **Courtney D'Ambrosi** from South Lewis Central School and **Natalie Monnat** from Beaver River Central School will each receive a \$1,000 scholarship. NCZ is awarding these scholarships in partnership with the Northern New York Community Foundation. Miss Ambrosi intends to major in Secondary Education in Science at Manhattan College. Miss Monnat will pursue studies in Secondary Education in Science at SUNY Potsdam. Our 2020 Hudson Kramer Award for Educational Professionals will also be awarded. Funded by RENY, this award assists an active educator in the field to carry out an innovative program in his/her classroom.

Our award winners are typically guests of honor at our June luncheon. It is scheduled for June 16th at the Ramada Inn in Watertown, NY. At the time of this article, our June luncheon date is understandably in question. Nevertheless, we look forward to honoring our outstanding educational professional and exemplary scholars. The presentations may be worked out in another fashion.



more from Pat and Nancy continued on next page...

ZONE NEWS! READ ALL ABOUT IT...

Northern Central Zone News

By Nancy Roberts & Patricia Newell, Public Relations Co-Chairs

We are also excited to have **Denise Young**, Executive Director of the Watertown YMCA, as our guest speaker at this June luncheon. She will acquaint the audience with some of the innovative plans for the new Watertown YMCA Community Center. This complex will include two main pools, a large wellness center, and tennis courts with an above running track. If necessary, Ms. Young's presentation will be given at a future date. Although we are working on Plan B right now, we are still carrying on.

Dates to Remember:

NCZ Scholarship Luncheon-Tues, June 16, 2020, Ramada Inn, reserved pr. \$19 (TBD)

NCZ Fall Business Luncheon-Tues. Sept. 15, 2020, Ramada Inn, reserved pr. \$19

RENY Convention-October 14-16, 2020, Turning Stone, Verona, NY



Southeastern Zone News

By Mary Ellen Colombo

Please read the following and consider making a donation. I know I was looking for a way to be helpful in this unbelievable time.

RIP is able to swoop in and offer to buy up debt at a deep discount with donations from individuals who wish to help. Often, a \$1 donation can be used to buy \$100 in medical debt. RIP also focuses on wiping out debt for those who are facing financial hardship or insolvency.

Help cure medical debt:
RIP Medical Debt
80 Theodore Fremd Avenue
Rye, New York 10580
RIPMedicalDebt.org



CURE MEDICAL DEBT

You Have the Power to Forgive Millions in
Medical Debt for Pennies on the Dollar

Fundraise or donate now to help RIP Medical Debt forgive \$1 billion in oppressive medical debt.

RIP
MEDICAL
DEBT

THE CURE FOR MEDICAL DEBT

ZONE NEWS! READ ALL ABOUT IT...

Southern Zone News

By Mary Lou Who Wood, Public Relation Chair

Hopefully by the time you read this article we will have emerged from our social quarantine from the Wuhan Pandemic. While we were in quarantine, we celebrated Easter and Passover, we've kept in contact with family and friends, we've cleaned our houses/ apartments, we've cooked everything in our freezers, we've added a few pounds, we've walked for exercise, we've read books and articles, and we've watched television stations we never knew we had. We've been forced into relaxation and reflections on life.

"The tide of life is sometimes very rough but each storm
ridden through makes us a better captain of our souls"

Things Your Mother Always Told You But You Didn't Want to Hear
Thomas Nelson Publishers

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Because of social distancing practices our units have canceled their meetings, however they've been able to conduct business 'as usual'. Units who provide scholarships for students going into the teaching profession have found ways to contact school guidance counselors even during school closures.

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"I plead with you - never, ever give up on hope, never doubt, never tire,
and never become discouraged. Be not afraid."
Pope John Paul II

Don Cutton*CR has sent out the Hudson - Kramer Memorial Grant forms to 45 school superintendents. However with school closings we are in hopes that the teachers have received the information.

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Members of the Schuyler County Retired Teachers' Association of the Southern Zone are moving forward with their planning for the Southern Zone annual meeting. On September 16<sup>th</sup> they will be hosting their luncheon/ meeting at the Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel with Gary Emerson, Schuyler County Historian, as presenter. All are welcome.



Presbyterian Church  
Memorial  
Garden, Corning

~~~~~  
By the time you read this we should be out enjoying the warm air, the flowers, the birds, our family, and our friends. We thank all of the first responders, nurses, doctors, clergy, teachers, store clerks, government officials, etc. for working through this pandemic. We hope that all of you stay safe and stay healthy.



ZONE NEWS! READ ALL ABOUT IT...

Western Zone News

By Theresa Pope, Public Relation Chair



As Western Zone President, **Judy Farmer*CR**, indicates, “It is a very confusing time”—particularly with New York State, including Western Zone members “Staying at home”. The Coronavirus has affected New York State and the nation. Some members have lost their fight for life; some remain ill, or are recovering from the virus.

Western Zone units, despite the restriction to home, have still managed to conduct business or have committee meetings. They have employed the use of teleconferences. There might be a few “zoom” experiences. Business has been conducted from home. Most committees, including units, have had to limit their activities and adapt them to both state and national guidelines.

During the turmoil of the virus, Western Zone has lost one of its most active and beloved members, **Charles “Chuck” Peszynski*CR**. (*separate article in this issue*).

Western Zone will resume its activities after the current pandemic.

History of the Founders’ Fund Is Reviewed

Compilation and article by John Cardarella

In the early 1920’s a group called “Friends of Retired Teachers” was formed by retired teachers in Western New York. It helped establish the New York State Teachers Retirement System, which became a legal reality in 1921. For over twenty five years the “Friends” tried to improve the status of retired teachers and in 1947 **Emma Lodge**, Chair of the “Friends” called a meeting in Buffalo of retired teachers. At this meeting, **Mr. Smith Thomas** was elected President of this group, known today as Western Zone. This assemblage was the catalyst for the formation of the present New York State Retired Teachers’ Association (NYSRTA). From 1947-51, **Emma Lodge** was also influential in supporting the organization of the National Retired Teachers’ Association (NRTA).

In 1959 a legacy from the estate of **Miss Gertrude Tucker** of Alden, NY, was given to the Western Zone for the purpose of establishing a fund to create a Retired Teachers’ Home in Western New York. **Emma Lodge** was chosen as the Chair of this “Home Fund Committee”, which publicized the Fund and solicited gifts in memory of deceased members of the zone as well as small bequests from estates.

When **Emma Lodge** passed away, she left a bequest to this Fund. Over the years, with the interest and additional legacies that were given, the Fund grew. This fund became known as the Founders Fund, and in observance of the specifications of the fund, the interest income only of the Fund is to be used to assist the needy of Western Zone. Money has been donated to the Meals on Wheels program in the Zone, the Seneca Nation Office of the Aging, the Network in Aging, Friendly Service activities, and an Emergency Fund. **John Cardarella** is now the Western Zone chairman of the fund.



more from the Western Zone on next page...

ZONE NEWS! READ ALL ABOUT IT...

Western Zone News

By Theresa Pope, Public Relation Chair



IN LOVING
♥
memory

Charles T. Peszynski
December 18, 1941 – April 14, 2020

Charles T Peszynski*CR, a beloved Western Zone member, was active on the State, Zone and Unit level. His dedication to the cause of retired educators will long be remembered and appreciated.

On the State level, Chuck served as Membership Chair and State Bylaws Chair, as well as advisor on the State Resolutions Committee. His background as a Social Studies teacher enabled him to review changing rules and to apply them to the present.

He hosted leadership seminars in Western Zone, and served as President from 2011-2014. He was involved in many activities, and was Chair of WZ Bylaws. He was a member of several zone committees, including the Teacher Grant, Health Insurance, Nomination and Scholarship Grant. Chuck also served as President of his local unit, the Buffalo Retired Association (BRTA), and he was an active member.

His dedication extended to the community and he was President of the Polish Arts Club of Buffalo (PACB). He enjoyed music and singing, as well as hunting and fishing, and served as a leader for the Studio Arena Theatre in Buffalo.

Chuck received the State Certificate of Recognition in 2013, and the Western Zone Citation Award in 2009. His warmth, dedication, and friendship will live on and influence many in the years ahead. Western Zone members mourn the loss of **Charles Peszynski*CR**, and are grateful for his many contributions.

Special Thank you to WZ member **Rhoda Harrington** for her assistance with the information for this article.



ZONE NEWS! READ ALL ABOUT IT...

Western Zone Suggests A Travel Opportunity

"THE HILLS ARE ALIVE" TRIP

Sept 28-Oct 2, 2020

Experience the beauty and memories of New England's Fall foliage on our VERMONT and NEW HAMPSHIRE – The Hills Are Alive, Western Zone five day trip. This extraordinary trip will begin with a stop at the **Erie Canal Museum** in Syracuse and then continue to the Killington/Rutland area, where a welcome reception, followed by a dinner and an evening of entertainment will be enjoyed. The next day will be spent with a local guide in northern Vermont, which will include a tour of the Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream Factory, and a sampling of their delicious confection. In the afternoon, a visit to the Trapp Family Lodge will include a buffet and delicious Austrian pastries. Learn of all that is new in the "Sound of Music" family, and visit the property, the lodge and gift shop. Later, tour the **State Capitol Building in Montpelier**, the smallest capitol city in the U.S. with one of thirteen remaining gold domes. Journey to New Hampshire, with visit to **Quechee Gorge**, Vermont's "Little Grand Canyon" and ride on the Loon Mountain Gondola. View the movie "On Golden Pond" and visit **Squam Lake** where it was filmed. Enjoy a narrated morning cruise, and later, dinner on board the **Lake Winnepesaukee Scenic Railroad**.

Any questions, contact **Anne Flansburg*CR** at 716-863-3631. For optional travel insurance information, call directly 800-388-1470, giving Tour #386097 OR contact Anne at 716-863-3631 or anneflanswz@aol.com.



Ben & Jerry's Tour



Quechee Gorge



State Capitol Building



Erie Canal Museum



Von Trapp Family Lodge



Dear Guests & Travel Professionals, Collette Family & Friends,

It seems as if in a blink of an eye, everything changed. And in a way, it has. For so many of us our everyday is far from ordinary as we stay at home and do our part to help the world heal.

Right now, we all are keeping a greater physical distance, but emotionally, we're coming closer together. We're seeing it manifest in so many ways – from video chats with friends to daily check-in texts, nightly dinners with our families to sharing similar struggles online with others all around the world.

There is no denying we will emerge from this personally changed. But one thing we've learned in our 102-year history – the love for travel never fades.

The desire to set out and connect with new cultures, taste new foods, and experience a slice of life unlike your own is rooted deep within us all. Travel isn't just a thing we do. It's a feeling – a part of life that fills us with joy, engages our curiosity, and broadens our perspectives. It is everlasting.

While the two of us stay in our respective homes doing our part to keep our communities safe, we talk about how travel will be back again – better than it's ever been. The thing that will change is our perception of it.

Having all shared this same situation, we hope to find a more empathetic and more engaged world, creating more profound connections in every aspect of our life.

Once again, we will pick out our favorite clothes and tuck them neatly in our suitcase. Soon enough we will eagerly sit on the tarmac, ready to jet off to a new destination. We will step foot in new places and feel the energy of a new adventure. Travel will be back.

Being in business for 102 years, we've seen many trying times like these. We use learnings from the past to apply them to today. We make sure our guests and employees are safe. We support our travel professionals and their unique challenges. We take care of our families and check in on our loved ones. We talk about past adventures and future hopes.

In whatever shape or form it may take, we can promise Collette will be here for YOU – now and always.

We encourage you to recall the special moments you've had while traveling and talk about future plans. Share these stories with friends, family, and the countless communities of travelers online. Let's look fondly on our past with a hopeful eye toward the future.

Take care of yourself. Take care of your family. And when the time is right, we'll be ready to experience the joy of travel to reconnect us all.

~ Dan Sullivan, Jr.; CEO and Jaclyn Leibl-Cote, President