



Retired Educators of New York

YORK STATE NEWSLETTER

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Presidents Message



Kevin Mulligan,
President

This article is being written at the end of June. My wife and I are safe and comfortably living in the North Country of New York State, which opened up to Phase IV yesterday. We now fully realize what a real estate agent means when he/she says "location, location, location". Yesterday, New York State had less than 1,000 hospitalized COVID patients for the first time since mid-March, 2020. The people of New York State have risen out of a very dire occasion to "flatten and descend the curve" of COVID-19 infections. This effort took courage, common respect from our fellow man, and **LEADERSHIP**.

Three years ago, at the NYSRTA Convention, I gave a well attended workshop titled - "Public Education Enemy #1 - Governor Andrew Cuomo". Today, June 2020, I hold an all new respect for Governor Andrew Cuomo. For 100 consecutive days, beginning in mid-March, Governor Cuomo held a news conference that provided much needed factual information, details of how the State was addressing the pandemic, and reassurance that we are "NY Strong". He shared with us his personal family stories, even named a law protecting the elderly, Matilda's Law, after his 87 year old mother. We got to know the names of his daughters, and his trials as a single parent in raising them. Andrew Cuomo, in my eyes, depicted himself not as the politician we have all come to know, for better or for worse, but as a human being faced with the daunting task of a pandemic that involved life and death. Governor Andrew Cuomo displayed true non political **LEADERSHIP** at a time when much of New York State had its back to the wall.

Leadership was also exhibited by the RENEY Board of Directors on June 9th, when they unanimously acted on **postponing** the 2020 Convention/Annual Meeting at Turning Stone. Long Island Zone magnanimously accepted the task to host the 2021 Convention. Turning Stone has graciously applied our down payment for the 2020 Convention to 2021. All these actions clearly demonstrate the importance of our members' health, and safety is first and foremost.

The office ladies of RENEY, Kathi Bassett, Debbie Barnes and Kristen Cecala have been working since mid - March out of the safety of their homes. That change has worked out so well that it was decided to continue, indefinitely, with this new office format. This change represents a savings to RENEY of over \$21,000 per year. It also means that we have a new and improved phone system, along with a **new address: RENEY PO Box 490, Amsterdam, NY 12010. The phone number is still the same: 518-482-3509.**

Another savings for RENEY realized by this terrible pandemic is the use of teleconferencing for the Board of Directors meetings. The meeting in April via teleconference provided a cost savings of about \$6,500. The July BOD meeting via teleconference will provide close to \$12,000 savings. In spite of the pandemic, the President's Appeal as of mid June has realized \$59,552. During these times, that speaks volumes for those who have contributed to the appeal. I ask those who have not contributed, as of yet, to please consider doing so.

~ see more from the President on the next page....

Presidents Message, Continued....

While proofreading this article, I am soooooo thankful that I included Education in my workshop title "Public Education Enemy #1 - Governor Andrew Cuomo". Stay safe and as healthy as you can be in these times.

Thank you,
Kevin Mulligan - President of Retired Educators of New York (RENY)



Health Care Report ~ Mary Ella Moeller*CR, Chairperson

BENEFIT OF THE PANDEMIC

A result of the pandemic is that many people have started to use telemedicine. Not having to leave one's home, nor sitting in a crowded waiting room, and being seen by your actual doctor by videoconference at a prearranged time is definitely the future of medicine. Doctors will also benefit by telemedicine as patients are often more relaxed and feel less rushed in their own home. Doctors can also assess a patient's living conditions and determine how they help or hinder the patient's health problems. Telemedicine will become increasingly important in rural communities which are miles from good health care, especially for follow-up care when an office visit may not be necessary.

The COVID-19 crisis has made the delivery of healthcare through telemedicine reimbursable for any condition through Medicare and most supplemental insurance. Please remember that although telemedicine is our future, it is not a substitute for seeing and having a physical examination by your doctor in person.

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.

Membership Report ~ Lois Thornberg, Vice President for Membership

Membership- what exactly does that mean? Miriam Webster defines it as being the state or status of being a member. Now what is a member? One of the individuals composing a group. With those definitions in mind I want to impress on all of us how fortunate RENY members are. Each of you are part of our "family" and are thought of and cared for extensively by all who comprise the organization. We are there for each other in times of difficulty (such as we are facing now), as well as times of great joy. There are luncheons, meetings, community sharing, holiday parties, dinners, field trips, and conventions to name a few of the events members have the opportunity to participate in. Thanks to the Friendly Service Committee greeting cards are sent for various events and reasons, phone calls are placed to check on members well-being, and publications are shared between the members of this extended family for all kinds of occasions. The Health Care Committee has been sending out updates almost daily. Community service projects demonstrate how we are not only concerned of ourselves, but also those around us. Financial assistance and discounts are available for those who need it. All of this exemplifies how much the members of RENY bring a positive, caring, and loving attitude to our family. I, for one, am proud to be a part of an organization that has so many familial qualities. To sum it up- WE ARE FAMILY!

Now for the business part of my article- the unit membership project is moving along. At last count 22 units have responded to our requests to identify unit members who are not RENY members. These members will be contacted with a survey to ascertain why they are not RENY members. These individuals will be invited to join the RENY family- so that they too can experience what we have to offer as an organization. The two membership incentives are still ongoing – one for individuals who bring in new members and the zone which gets the most new members.

Stay well everyone- we will be back doing all our events soon! See you then



Robert R. DeCormier Memorial Trust Fund Report ~ Mary Lou Davis, Treasurer

The **Robert R. DeCormier** Memorial Trust Fund is a charitable trust created to aid retired educators in need of financial assistance who have been a member of RENY (NYSTRA) for at least 3 years. The six trustees who were elected to the board of directors find it very rewarding to help members who need assistance.

Each month we have the opportunity to interact with members who are stipend recipients. They send notes thanking us for our support. Recently we were able to help with hearing aids, dental work, insurance premiums, new needed fencing, and extra unexpected expenses caused by COVID-19.

The fund is supported by donations from zones, units, friends of deceased members, donations to honor members for their accomplishments and members who remember the fund in their wills. We want to sincerely thank those who have sent donations. If you have been adversely affected by the virus pandemic and find that you are in need of financial assistance, please contact **Anne Flansburg*CR**, chair of the fund, by phone at 716-863-3631 or email at anneflanswz@aol.com.

Legislative Action Committee ~ Rod Driscoll, Vice President for Legislative Action

Since the pandemic arrived in the middle of our two week advocacy window at the end of February, the legislative landscape has certainly changed dramatically. We have been operating exclusively through email and phone calls. While our original slate of action items is still on the table, the present situation forces us to focus on a more limited set of priorities. We are happy to see that the state government has taken many positive steps to ensure that widespread COVID -19 testing and treatment is available. The cautious approach to opening up the state economy has certainly proven to be effective. The number of infections continues to move downward.

Our biggest challenge right now is to make sure that cuts in state aid to public education are kept to a minimum. As you all know, we are all dependent upon our district retiree health plans, Medicare and Medicaid. We are also concerned about the security of the TRS portfolio. We encourage all of our members to contact Federal and state legislators to try to ward off short-sighted cuts that may put seniors in financial or health-related jeopardy. Fortunately, Comptroller Tom DiNapoli has stated that TRS is in good shape and he has no intention of allowing the legislature or the Governor to use TRS funds as a revenue source for state expenditures outside of the retirement benefits for educators.

The Governor's opening statement on state aid cuts was that a 20% aid cut to public schools was likely. According to some members of the legislature that number is down to 10%. This would still be devastating for districts that are already tightly budgeted and would put pressure on school districts to make significant cuts which could affect school district specific retiree benefits.

The X factor right now is the next round of Federal stimulus aid. The House Heroes Act, which passed the House overwhelmingly, would give significant relief to state and local governments, plus it earmarks specific aid to school districts, hospitals and first responders. It will also extend unemployment benefits, give additional aid to small businesses and give a second stimulus check to all adults. The Senate has yet to act on the House measure and has proposed no alternative of its own. It's an election year, so it's likely that the Heroes Act will be addressed in the Senate at some point. The President has indicated he's in favor of the second stimulus check.

On the prescription drug front, HR 3, the "Lower Drug Costs Now" Act, was passed by the House and is awaiting action by the Senate. Senate Republicans have indicated that they will not bring this bill up for a vote. If passed and signed by President Trump, it would put an end to the massive price increases of prescription medications and cap out of pocket costs for seniors on Medicare.

The Democrats are already on board with both bills. We would ask all of you to reach out Senator McConnell and Senate Republicans to support these important pieces of legislation. Again, it's an election year and politicians would be very likely to take heed of our concerns.

Please take the time to contact members of the Senate and the President regarding the need to pass these bills into law as soon as possible.

Thanks to: Kevin, Kathi, Kris, the RENY Legislative Action Committee members and the RENY Board of Directors, for all your hard work, help and support through these difficult times.



Teacher: Johnny, please use the words "letter carrier" in a sentence.

Johnny: Yes, ma'am. "My dad said that after seeing how many things my mom was bringing on vacation, he would rather letter carrier own luggage."



Friend in a Bottle

By

Susan T. Davis

We were taking a long-awaited trip to France, the summer after our sophomore year in high school. I stood on the stern of the ocean liner and tossed a wine bottle as far as I could. Hitting the foamy wake, the bottle disappeared from sight. My heart sank. Had I done something wrong? Was the cork too loose? Inside was a letter with my name, my age, and my address, and a request for the person who found it to write to me. All this so the bottle could sink to the bottom of the ocean? Heart pounding, I watched for a few more minutes. Suddenly, my bottle rose up on the crest of a wave. Riding high, the bottle seemed to salute me before it started its long journey. Yes, I thought. I smiled and returned to my friends.

By the time I returned home, school had started and I was soon busy with homework, volunteer activities, and sports. I had forgotten all about my bottle when one day a strange envelope came for me. The return address was Denmark. Inside was a letter written in a language I couldn't read.

Because I lived in a city filled with universities, I found someone who could translate the letter for me. A ten-year-old girl named Tove had found my bottle on a beach at the very tip of Denmark. I sat right down and wrote her back. I enclosed my school picture and asked her for one in return. She was not old enough to study English, but her older sister helped Tove read my letters and write back to me.

Two years later, I returned to France for a month during the summer. I decided that I'd extend my trip and spend a few weeks in Denmark. Maybe I could meet my friend in a bottle. My translator had a relative in Denmark who invited me to stay with them.

One weekend during my visit, I traveled to meet Tove. I took a train for about four hours, then a bus, and walked about a mile. She lived in the country, outside a village. When I arrived, the whole family welcomed me: her mother and father, her three brothers and her older sister. We talked using a dictionary and a lot of sign language. The next afternoon, all of us piled into her father's old truck and he drove us to the beach that covers the tip of Denmark. After leaving the road, he drove out on the hard sand, to the spot where Tove had found the bottle. We took pictures of two friends brought together by a letter in a bottle.

We are both grandmothers now. In 2012 we were able to meet again in Copenhagen. With computers and technology, keeping in touch has happened on a whole new level. I never imagined such a wonderful adventure in learning and understanding could blossom out of a young girl's dream enclosed in a bottle.

Editors note - Susan Davis, a North Central Zone member, is an accomplished author with many books to her credit including Musket and Mobcap, Summer of Red Rain and more. Visit her website at www.stdavisauthor.com to view more about this author.



Tove and Susan in 1964



Susan and Tove in 2012

ZONE NEWS



CENTRAL WESTERN ZONE

By Phyllis Dunlap, Public Relations assisted by Lynn Hefferon

NYSRTA, now RENY, will be 70 years old in 2021. Therefore, I thought you might enjoy this article.

THE HISTORY OF CENTRAL WESTERN ZONE OF NYSRTA

The Central Western Zone of NYSRTA was organized at a tea held at the Mt. Hor Church Community House on Monroe Avenue, Rochester, on October 22, 1948. On a motion by **Arthur Tyler** and a second by **Mrs. Genther**, both officers of the Retired Teachers Organization of Rochester and Vicinity, the Central Western Zone was established.

On October 20, 1949, an Executive and Planning Committee, chaired by **Mrs. Osterberg**, presented a constitution for consideration that was adopted by unanimous vote. In November of 1949, CW Zone President **Nathaniel West** met with President **Smith Thomas** of the Western Zone and President **Harry Vincent** of the Eastern Zone to discuss the need for organizing a state association of retired teachers. In November of 1951 representatives of six zones met in Rochester to form NYSRTA and elected **Robert DeCormier** as its first president.

Over the years, the Central Western Zone has continued to provide leadership for the State organization.

~ From "Glimpses of the First Thirty Years" New York State Retired Teachers Association, 1951-81

CWZ gave \$1,650 for the 2020 BARRIE FLEEGEL MEMORIAL ACTIVE EDUCATOR GRANTS

The county and recipients were as follows:

ALLEGANY-Retchless, Megan
LIVINGSTON-Green, Christine (a 5th time winner)
MONROE-Coatsworth, Rob
ONTARIO-Klestinec, Danusia
SENECA-D'Eridita, Morgan
STEUBEN-Moon, Molly and Shepard, Hali
WAYNE-Berghash, Laura G., Converse, Victoria (a 2nd time winner), and Smith, Haley
YATES-Maloney, Megan

Sharon and Bruce Croucher admit these have certainly been and continue to be strange times for Ontario County Retired Teachers Association. Our spring luncheon meeting was cancelled due to the pandemic. However our chosen charity for this year, *Family Promise of Ontario County* will continue. We encourage people to make donations.

We are sure that many of our members have been reaching out to help others during the past several months. We know for certain that **Sharon and Bruce Croucher** and **Betty Pilato** from Midlakes have been regularly checking on people. **Laura Janas** from Marcus Whitman has been volunteering at a local food cupboard.

Ontario County is pleased to have a recipient of a Barrie Fleegel Memorial Active Educator Grant. Danusia Klestinec, a Special Education Teacher in Geneva Middle School has received a financial award to help further her education.

As of this writing, the end of the pandemic is not yet in sight. Due to the vulnerability of many of our active members, we will not have a fall gathering. We look forward to resuming in the spring of 2021. In the meantime, stay safe.

Mary Beth Tyndall (Co-President) of Monroe County reports that some of the Activity Groups of the Monroe Unit have been able to continue to meet! While following mandated state requirements for social distancing, etc.,

continued on next page....

ZONE NEWS



Central Western Zone continued...

the Bird Watchers and Bicycling Groups are taking advantage of the wonderful weather and opportunity for healthy activities. **The Barrie Fleegel Memorial Active Educator Grant is being awarded to two Monroe County teachers.** Heather Kemper is a language teacher at East Rochester High School and has been in the field for 13 years. **Rob Coatsworth** is a first year Special Education/Behavior Management Teacher with the Monroe II BOCES. Congratulations and best wishes for continued success in their careers! **New talent was found during this pandemic!** Retired music teacher and Monroe Unit membership co-chair, **Pat Ensman**, spent much time on the internet since March. She regularly sent updates and words of wisdom to our membership to help keep spirits up. On YouTube she calls herself "Teacher Pat" and does comical versions of being in a classroom with all this new normal. She includes current vocabulary and has even written songs. To see her, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4j0y4e43P6Y>

MONROE COUNTY ACTIVITIES

Recorder Group before social distancing



Bicycling Group practicing social distancing and face covering!



Bicycling Group viewing Marion the steam shovel from the children's book "Mike Mulligan and his Steam Shovel."



Bird Watchers in their elements with "Teacher "Pat Ensman".



Luncheon with Marge Wood (Monroe Unit Co-President), Mary Ellen Morgan and Robyn Ballard (CWZ Co-Presidents) presenting recognition award to Diane Cacicia.



Condolences to our CWZ Co-President, Robyn Ballard from Yates County for the loss of her Mother. We know she is watching over you.



ZONE NEWS



EASTERN ZONE

By Pamela Love, Public Relations Chair

Eastern Zone President, **Janice Mullins**, has sent me the following message for you at this time:

"I hope this message finds you healthy and well and your Eastern Zone Executive Committee would very much like everyone to stay that way. Due to the uncertainty of COVID-19 spread and the requirements for social distancing, we have decided to postpone Eastern Zone's Annual Meeting for 2020. Therefore, we will not be meeting this September. Our next Annual Zone Meeting will take place in September of 2021. Luckily, this is not an officer election year for our Zone. All current Zone Officers will remain in office until our next elections in 2021.

As Officers, Unit Presidents and Committee Chairs, we have continued fulfilling the duties of these positions, as always, on your behalf. How we conduct business may have changed but the dedication of educators across our Zone, our State and our Nation has never wavered. Our retirees continued their volunteer efforts, our teachers found creative ways to keep their students engaged in online learning, our School Administrators found ways to honor our graduating seniors as well as giving them an opportunity in some districts to walk across a stage. To all of you, all essential workers and health care professionals who keep us going, Thank you ! Thank you ! Thank you ! To all newly retiring educators, Congratulations ! "

Schoharie Unit President, **Margaret Dafeidecker**, reports that the Schoharie County Retired Teachers Association is happy to grant a Citizenship Award to one 2020 high school graduate from each school in Schoharie County. The Awards Committee of each of the six county schools selected a student who demonstrated good citizenship by giving his/her time, effort and support to others. The following seniors were chosen: Aidan Maher, Cobleskill-Richmondville Central School; Sierra Perry, Gilboa-Conesville Central School; Olivia Eppich Jefferson Central School; Jacob Wood, Middleburg Central School; Susan Shepard, Schoharie Central School and Brendon Burke, Sharon Springs Central School.



Eastern Zone Reps. Carolyn Bovee, Al Ciejska and Gloria Ciejska
At the 2018 NYSRTA Annual Convention



Eastern Zone Reps. & State Rep. Patricia DeWeese, Diane
Hahn CR* and Jack DeWeese CR*

ZONE NEWS



LONG ISLAND ZONE

A message from President Fred Conway *CR

The Long Island Zone is well and healthy. We will be co-hosting the 2021 Annual Meeting and Convention in October next year. We have a Hudson-Kramer winner. VP **Eileen Holmes** will be reporting further about this in the *York State*. Our BOD teleconference will be held on Wednesday, August 12th at 10:00 am. The nominations of the LIZ Officers for 2020-2021 will be presented. The Election of the Officers for LIZ will be held at our Annual Fall Luncheon at the Bellport C.C. on Wednesday, September 23rd at 11:30 am.

Eileen Holmes, who has done an incredible job as the chair of our hosting of the 2020 Annual Meeting and Convention, will again be leading us in the preparation for the 2021 Convention. The Liz Conference Team that did an outstanding job in this year's efforts for our convention will again be working towards the 2021 Convention.

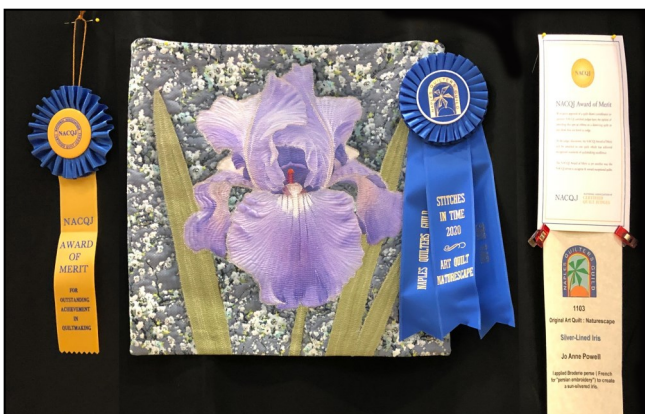
The remainder of the LIZ 2020 Calendar will be followed as initially established.

Eileen Holmes, Public Relations Chair

The Long Island Zone is delighted to announce that the winner of the 2020 RENY Hudson-Kramer \$1000 grant is Jason Malvagno, a Social Studies teacher at Shoreham-Wading River High School in Shoreham, NY. Jason's project involves developing video lessons for digital instruction. He has been working on this interactive video approach for several years, has found great success with AP and regular instruction and has even introduced video lessons to elementary students. Specifically, he will be using the grant money to purchase a newer camera and higher grade audio equipment in order to achieve better quality and longer lasting videos. Mr. Malvagno's building principal Frank Pugliese stated that Jason has been a tremendous help to other teachers in the district during the last months when students have had to study from home and the Long Island Zone is very glad to help such a deserving teacher with his endeavors.

Jo Anne and RENY Site Chair **Leigh Powell** *CR happily announced the arrival of their granddaughter Juniper Valentine Powell on June 26th. She is now at home in Centerport, LI with her 5 year old brother Wright and her parents, Dr. Reid and Emily Powell. Wright and Juniper have 6 Powell-Bache cousins--Hazel, John, Margret, Rosette, William and Zeke who live in upstate Dunkirk, NY across the street from the shores of Lake Erie.

In March 2020 the National Association of Certified Quilt Judges awarded Jo Anne Powell their National Award of Merit for Outstanding Achievement in Quilting as well as First Place at the Naples (FL) Quilt Show. Congratulations!! Jo Anne serves on the LIZ Board as Awards Co-Chair, is a member of LIZ's 2020 (now 2021) RENY Convention planning team, and will be presenting a unique quilting workshop at the 2021 RENY convention next October.



Jo Anne Powell's award winning quilt



Congratulations to Leigh and Jo Anne and the entire Powell family!!

ZONE NEWS



NORTH CENTRAL ZONE

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

North Central Zone members have welcomed the slow, but steady reopening of the North Country. We are enjoying the opportunities to leave our homes, be with nearby family members more often, take part in outside activities, see friends in small groups, and shop in more venues including the Farmers' Markets. We appreciate being able to eat in outside dining and now inside dining with restrictions, and to attend church again. It is encouraging to see people wearing masks and following the social distancing guidelines. A result of the slow lifting of the quarantine is the not always welcome increase in the amount of traffic on the roads!

Our Executive Council meeting on May 6th was replaced by a teleconference, which was new technology for a few of our members, but went very smoothly. It was with a heavy heart that our President, **Elwood (Woody) Lyndaker** informed our members by mail that the decision by the Executive Council was to cancel our scholarship luncheon scheduled for June 16th. As an alternative, on this same date, our Future Educator Scholarship winners were invited to receive their awards at the offices of Northern New York Community Foundation, our financial partner. Mary Perrine, Coordinator of Partnerships for NNYCF, greeted **John Gaffney**, Scholarship Chair, **Woody Lyndaker**, NCZ President, **Jim Newell**, NCZ Past President, **Barbara Cole-Russell**, NCZ Treasurer, and **Pat Newell** and **Nancy Roberts**, NCZ PR Co-Chairs as we entered the building. Presentations and photos were taken in the Reading Room with the emblem, done in copper, of the NNYCF hanging over the fireplace. Each of our scholarship winners attended with her father.

Courtney D'Ambrosi from South Lewis Central School and Natalie Monnat from Beaver River Central School each received a \$1,000 scholarship. NCZ awards these Scholarships in partnership with the Northern New York Community Foundation. Miss D'Ambrosi plans to major in secondary education in science at Manhattan College. Miss Monnat will major in secondary education in science at SUNY Potsdam. We wish these young women success in their future endeavors.



Also, on this same day and location, NCZ was honored to present the RENY Hudson Kramer Memorial Grant for Professional Educators to Michael H. Comet, a biology teacher at South Lewis Central School. Mr. Comet will be using his \$1,000 grant to construct a "Classroom Observation Hive" for a honey bee colony at the South Lewis High School. We wish Mr. Comet and his students success with this exciting project.

Dates to Remember:

Executive Council Meeting: Wed. August 5, 2020, Watertown BOCES/Teleconference, 10 a.m.

NCZ Fall Business Luncheon: Tues. September 15, 2020, Ramada Inn, reserved pp. \$19

NOTE: RENY Convention: **CANCELLED** Oct. 14-16, 2020, Turning Stone, Verona, NY

ZONE NEWS



NORTHEASTERN ZONE

By Marti Martin, Public Relations Chair

*Editors note~ this article was inadvertently omitted from the Spring Edition of York State, some of the information has changed.
Contact your Zone representative for any questions*

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 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 a 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 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. An informational meeting will be held with our Collette representative, Colby Yeaton on January 18, 2020. A webinar will also be available for those who are unable to attend the informational meeting. 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.

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

ZONE NEWS



NORTHERN ZONE

By Linda Crosby, Public Relations Chair

Folks in the Northern Zone are burning their tootsies off with so many days of 90+ degree weather. It's very unusual for the North Country to swelter like this; if the border was open, I'd be heading to the Northwest Territories of Canada--Yellowknife sounds good to me right about now. However, we are keeping busy, despite the heat and the corona virus bugs running amok.

The NZ Board of Directors met in teleconference on May 1, 2020 and on June 25, 2020. At the May 1st meeting, the BOD conducted the usual business procedures, including a presentation by Treasurer **Roxann Finley** on the new budget for 2020-2021, which was later voted on/approved electronically by the BOD on May 19 due to the fact that our members could not vote on the budget since our Spring NZ membership meeting was cancelled. The President's Report was given by **Gayla LePage**, who said she will send out the new RENY name/logo templates to anyone who needs it. She stated that Engine 7 (the graphic design company that created the new RENY apple logo) is working on the RENY website and a new membership brochure. Gayla also reported on details of the April 7 state RENY BOD meeting held by teleconference: **President Emeritus Terry Trudeau*CR**, State Treasurer, said RENY is in much better shape financially.

NZ needs a representative for RENY Finance Committee meetings (anyone interested?). The RENY President's Appeal has raised \$45,000 so far. Later, the NZ BOD decided to cancel the spring membership meeting due to the corona virus pandemic. Committee chairs gave their reports: Gayla said high school scholarship applications were due by May 15. **Linda Crosby**, P.R. Chair, said she would send **Kevin Mulligan's** Teachers' Appreciation Week letter to the usual newspapers for publication and asked all members to send news stories/ideas/photographs to her (lindac.crosby@twcnny.rr.com) for inclusion in York State. Historian **Jean Theobald** asked members to send her news items/stories/photographs, also, for the NZ newsletter and the NZ scrapbook. The Winter 2020 York State has a directory of officers/committee members names and phone numbers should NZ members need to contact any of us. **Alice Galvin**, Meetings and Programs Chair, said she would take care of cancelling plans/venues for the Spring meeting.

Resolutions Chair **Gayla LePage** said we are looking for resolutions that can be presented next year also. Clifton-Fine Unit President **Joe Russo** said that although the usual August meeting will probably be cancelled, the P.A. Miranda Scholarship for a senior at CFCSD will be presented soon. New banners for Star Lake's Route 3 will be done.

At the June 25th NZ BOD teleconference meeting, Treasurer **Roxann Finley** discussed state dues refunds as well as the usual financial business with BOD members. President **Gayla LePage** reported that the 2020 convention has been cancelled/postponed to 2021 and that most zones are cancelling their fall membership meetings. **Linda Crosby** suggested that if the fall meeting is cancelled, maybe we can have a Christmas bash, if conditions are better. Gayla is working on creating an email contact list of NZ members; if you would like to be included, contact her (luer913@hotmail.com)--she does have all the email addresses that the RENY office has received from 188 of our NZ members. Gayla and membership committee member **Cathy Devins** are working on contacting June retirees. The names of our NZ scholarship recipients will be announced in the next York State after we receive photos of the two seniors.

Congratulations go to Clifton-Fine Central School District ninth grade student Brianna Hanley, whose artwork entitled Hope! has been chosen to represent the U.S. Congressional District 21 (all of Northern New York)! Her mixed media (tempera, acrylic, India ink) two panel work of a cherry tree will hang at the U.S. Capitol Building Art Exhibit for one year. Brianna will receive airfare and a trip/tour for two to attend a reception/ceremony in Washington, D.C. in the Fall.

Kudos go to her very supportive Visual Arts teacher at CFCSD, Becky Milone, who is extremely proud of Brianna's accomplishment.

ZONE NEWS



SOUTHEASTERN ZONE

By Maureen Coffey, Public Relations Chair

The year 2020 thus far is presenting itself unlike any other time period we have ever witnessed! We saw many parts of our every-day lives either change radically or come to a grinding halt! "Adjusting to our new normal" became somewhat of a mantra for many of us. But through all of this craziness and uncertainty, time did march on. The sun rose and set everyday; babies were born and people died; celebrations were put on hold but events that deserved to be celebrated continued to unfold! Let's take a few minutes and share some successes.

Barbara Topps, President of MARTA, writes:

"The Mid-Hudson Area Retired Teachers Association had a very quiet spring due to COVID. We wound up canceling all our spring activities, but we were pleased that our scholarship committee was able to work with the county districts to provide applications to their graduating students planning on studying education. The committee did a great job working together on Zoom to choose the following winners. Each student will receive a \$3000 scholarship."

Christina Mania from Pine Bush hopes to become an adolescent teacher who is able to encourage students to love learning and have them be able to take the history lessons that she teaches and incorporate them into their own lives. She really would like to inspire and bring learning to life as her students are figuring out who they are.

Jianna Chapman from Washingtonville shared that what inspired her to want to pursue a career as a special education teacher are the educators. Jianna writes that, "They are there to support their students through academic and emotional growth. Having the ability to change a student's life the way teachers have done with mine is exactly what I want other students to experience". She will be attending SUNY Oneonta in the fall.

Matthew Cerniglia from Pine Bush hopes to teach European/global history at the secondary level. Through the SUNY New Paltz Excelsior Education Academy, Matthew has already written two lesson plans, observed over thirty-five different classes and experienced many teaching methods/styles in his four years at Pine Bush High School. He will be continuing his studies at SUNY New Paltz in the fall.

Kaelyn Flanagan from Minisink plans to pursue a major in adolescence education with a concentration in mathematics. She has always enjoyed school and has a special love of math. Kaelyn feels she is destined to become a teacher!

Ray Leduc, co President with **Cheryl Fischer** of the Newburgh Area Retired Teacher's Association (NARTA) reports that "NARTA awarded a \$2,000 scholarship to Ashley DeBenedictus, a 2020 graduate of Marlboro High School. Ashley will be attending the College of Saint Rose and majoring in education."

Congrats to Christina, Jianna, Matthew, Kaelyn and Ashley! We wish you all the best as you step into this new and exciting chapter in your lives! Your enthusiasm and high ideals will certainly serve your students well!

On another note, **Cheryl Fischer** reports that NARTA also canceled activities planned for this past spring. Going forward, the unit continues to collect socks for homeless programs in the Newburgh area through its "Sock it to 'Em" program. A welcome back breakfast is planned for September 10th, a luncheon to honor members 85 and older for October 8th and a holiday luncheon on December 3rd. Let's keep our fingers crossed!

So there we have it! Young people whose dreams make us smile and have hope while older people plan and pray for a better tomorrow. I'd say that's a winning hand in any game! Be well and safe!

NO MATTER
HOW LONG
THE WINTER,
SPRING IS
SURE TO
FOLLOW

ZONE NEWS



SOUTHERN ZONE

By Mary Lou Wood, Public Relations Chair

After spending months inside, we are finally out enjoying the sun, birds, flowers and walking while social distancing. Some of us have been lucky to make a church service with restrictions. We are still being very cautious by wearing face masks, and constantly washing our hands.

Our Southern Zone and unit members are becoming more familiar with communication technology. We have all canceled meetings yet we continue to stay active through emails, teleconferences, and zoom. Southern Zone Board of Directors held a teleconference to discuss unit 'meetings'.

EBB, Eastern Broome Branch, has a tentative meeting schedule containing topics on how dogs assist diabetics, a presentation by the Johnson City High School Sophisticats, nutrition for seniors, tai chi for arthritis, and many more programs.

CARTA, Cortland, had a 'Graduate Together: 2020 Commencement'. 'Dear Class of 2020' was a virtual commencement celebration bringing together inspirational leaders, celebrities, and YouTube creators to celebrate graduates, their families, and their communities. They brought Laurie Greene from Cortland YMCA and the Silver Sneakers program. THANK YOU notes were sent to Doctors, Nurses, and other heroes assisting in the care for virus patients.

A note from CARTA, Cortland:

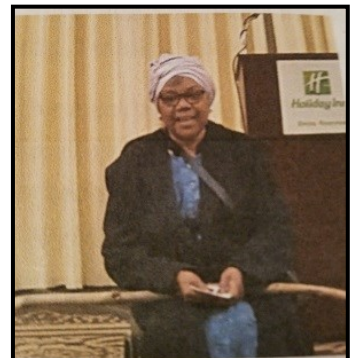
Just be careful because people are going crazy from being in lock down! Actually I've just been talking about this with the microwave and toaster and we all agreed that things are getting bad. I didn't mention anything to the washing machine as she puts a different spin on everything. Certainly not the fridge as he is acting cold and distant. In the end the iron straightened me out as she said everything will be fine, no situation is too pressing. The vacuum was very unsympathetic... told me to just suck it up, but the fan was more optimistic and hoped it would all soon blow over! The door knob told me to get a grip. The front door said I was unhinged and so the curtains told me toyes, you guessed it, pull myself together.

CARTA, Corning, presented 4 Future Teacher Scholarship awards to high school students: Addison HS—Noah Clark; Bath CSD---Nathan Yehl; Campbell-Savona HS---Lauren Crooker; Corning PP HS---Ana Buckley. Congratulations to them.

Corning area retirees presented monetary donations to the Browntown School House, the Children's Section of the Southeast Steuben County Library, Area Youth Center, and the Corning Senior Center. They are extremely anxious to get back to meetings, socializing, and enjoying programs on Mark Twain, the Tanglewood Nature Center, Elder Law, and musical entertainment. We continue to call and write notes to keep in contact with members.

EARTA, Elmira Area, were able to hold three of their five planned meetings. They had a quartet of women, 'Daybreak', who gave them the Christmas spirit, and in February Holly Strickland impersonated Harriet Tubman. They are hoping to return soon so that they may celebrate their 90 year old members for a spectacular birthday party.

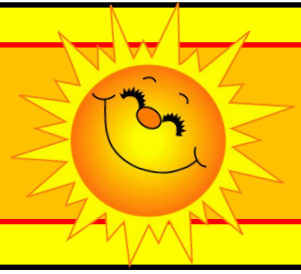
SCRTA's, Schuyler County, last meeting featured a program on Alzheimer's Disease. They are hoping to return to 'normal' with a music performance from a local school. Due to the uncertainty from the COVID-19 pandemic, SCRTA has decided to postpone hosting the Southern Zone Annual meeting till September 2021.



Holly Strickland impersonating Harriet Tubman

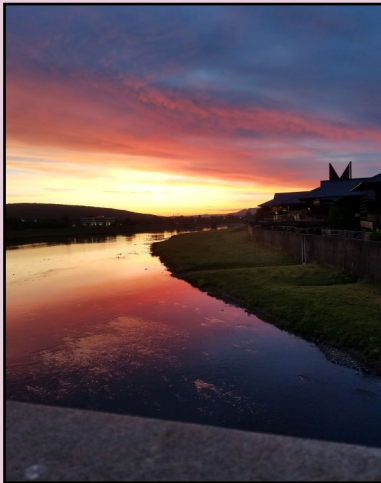
We all hope to return to some normalcy soon. We enjoy socializing but we need to stay safe and keep exercising your muscles, joints, and your brain. See next page for some pictures from Mary Lou...

ZONE NEWS



SOUTHERN ZONE

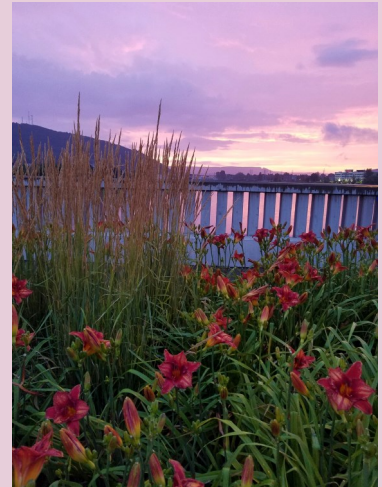
By Mary Lou Wood, Public Relations Chair



Sunset in Corning



Corning Clock Tower



Signs of summer



Southern Zone Board of Directors

ZONE NEWS



SOUTHERN ZONE

By Mary Lou Wood, Public Relations Chair



Don Cutton*CR and John Liguori

On June 19, 2020, **Donald Cutton*CR, Lois Cutton and Mary Lou Wood** presented to John Liguori of the Horseheads Intermediate School the Hudson-Kramer Grant of \$1000.00. He will teach 6th grade this year. His students will research the topic of Wartime in Chemung County, where they will study different aspect of the impact of the Revolutionary War and Civil War had on Chemung County. This includes the Battle of Newtown and Elmira Civil War Prison Camp. The students will visit the sites and will be doing projects for display.

WESTERN ZONE

By Theresa Pope, Public Relations Chair

UNITS PROVIDE RECOGNITION TO SENIORS AND HELP THEIR COMMUNITIES

Western Zone supports educators, active and retired, students, and our communities. Units raise money to support the senior scholarships in their respective districts. Scholarships are financial awards to further their education. They are awarded based upon each unit's criteria. The scholarship is given for a reason, usually academic, and/or agreeing to follow a teaching career.

Members of Western Zone are proud to support high school graduates that have chosen the field of education. "The love of teaching torch is passed to the brightest students that want to be lifelong learners and teachers". Scholarship amounts vary from \$500 to \$1000. An incentive, in one district, is made to one or two eighth grade students.

Because schools closed early due to the COVID-19 virus, most scholarships could not be presented and units, thus, were unable to make presentations. Units, however, that successfully awarded scholarships were: Eastern Erie (EERTA), Genesee County, Lackawanna RTA, and Springville/West Valley RTA. Units vary in their means to provide scholarships – most are similar and the purpose is the same. Western Zone units have given thousands of dollars over the years.

Information for this article taken from "Western Currents" a newsletter publication for Western Zone.

BRTA Members Discovered Another Use for Zoom

Zoom is being used in some unique ways, as discovered by members of the Buffalo Retired Teachers Association. Some Hutch Tech retired teachers, under the Umbrella of BRTA made and used the discovery. For their June meeting, usually held at a restaurant, the group organized a zoom breakfast meeting. Attendees stayed home and zoomed while they ate or in one case, a friend joined another retired teacher for breakfast at her home. As they dined in the presence of each other, they held congenial conversations and determined or made suggestions for their next meeting. Choices, of course, were Zoom or restaurant-- that is, if restaurants opened up. They did admit that they enjoyed their Zoom experience. Members will be notified of the location.

~See back page for more from the Western Zone

RETIRED EDUCATORS OF NY NEW MEMBER ENROLLMENT FORM AND PROFILE

Name (circle one) Mr. Miss Mrs. Ms. Dr. _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone (____) _____ Date of Birth _____ Email _____

(Circle one) Retired Educator Active Educator Associate (non-certified support staff) Year Retired _____

County of Residence _____ School Dist./College/Univ Retired From _____

Subject Area _____ Level Taught _____ Level of Admin if Applicable _____

Spouse Enrollment

Referred by: _____

Spouse Name (circle one) Mr. Miss Mrs. Ms. Dr. _____

Date of Birth _____ Email _____

Retired Educator? Yes No (year retired) _____ Active Educator? Yes No State Retired From _____

School Dist./College/University Retired From _____

Payment Options

I have enclosed my check or money order made out to NYSRTA in the amount of: _____

Charge my: (circle one) VISA Mastercard Credit Card# _____

Print your name clearly as it appears on your card _____

Authorizing Signature _____

Member Dues: \$30.00

Lifetime Dues: \$450.00



Mail to:

RENY
P.O. Box 490
Amsterdam, New York 12010
518-482-3509

ZONE NEWS



WESTERN ZONE

By Theresa Pope, Public Relations Chair



In Loving Memory Of
Linda J. Schumacher

April 2, 1943 - June 11, 2020

Retired Educators

Of New York (RENY)

P.O. Box 490

Amsterdam, NY 12010

PH: (518)482-3509

Dated Material—Do Not Delay

It is said that "life is not measured by the number of breaths we take but by the number of moments that take our breath away". **Linda Schumacher**, a Western Zone Board of Director for many years, and an honorary member since 2011, certainly had a life filled with, and shared with others, innumerable breath-taking moments! Her service and dedication have been an influence on countless teachers, students and many cherished friends.

Linda attended SUNY Cortland College, earning her Bachelor's Degree in Physical Education and then her Master's in Special Education from SUNY Buffalo State College. She was a physical education teacher at Springville-Griffith Institute CSD, where she co-founded the SW AT Team (Springville Waves Aquatic Team), served as basketball and swimming coach, and filled in wherever and whenever she was needed. Upon her retirement, she joined her local retiree unit and the New York State Retired Teachers' Association.

Almost immediately, Linda began her second active career as a "retired teacher", again with innumerable breath-taking moments! She accepted the position of secretary for her local, and was elected a Board member of her zone. On the zone level, she served three years as corresponding secretary and another three years as recording secretary. She was a member of various committees, including Membership, Friendly Service, Community Service, Annual Convention and Remembrance. In 2008 Linda, together with two other Western Zone members, received a prestigious award and National Recognition for her outstanding volunteer services. The National Retired Educational Association and AARP honored her dedication and service, as well as her leadership in Western Zone's Community Service efforts and accomplishments.

Linda and her husband Dave (who passed away in 2009) met at the Erie County Fair, where their love of horses brought them together. Later, together with their two daughters, they cared for horses on their one hundred acre horse farm, and even after his death she took care of the horses on a daily basis. In 2011 Linda went to live with her daughter in South Carolina and became an honorary board of director for Western Zone. Linda was known and will always be remembered for her smile, kind words and favorite expression "okey-dokey". Her breath-taking moments filled all who were fortunate enough to cross her path, with peace and happiness!