

# YORK STATE

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Spring 2021



## President's Message

A few years ago, I wrote an article in *York State* that included some of the glorious features of Spring, such as rebirth, renewal, etc. For the Spring 2021 issue of *York State* I am focused on only one attribute of Spring. It is time for RENY to emerge from literally one year of "pandemic hibernation". It is time for RENY to **SPRING FORWARD!!**

The nationwide shutdown, due to the pandemic, began in March, 2020. Since then all components of RENY, Units and Zones included, have been forced to work remotely. Since joining NYSRTA in 2010, I have found this organization to offer a wide variety of benefits, but socialization, at all levels, is perhaps one of the most important benefits for our members. The last year has seen that tragically taken away.

The RENY Board of Directors, at their March 24, 2021, Spring Meeting, unanimously agreed to meet at the Desmond in Albany for the 2021 Summer Board Meeting, to be held on July 12 and 13. This meeting will include some committees, such as Finance and Budget, and Nominations. All participants are **encouraged** to be fully vaccinated, practice social distancing and wear masks in public settings. Hopefully, the anticipated success of this meeting will encourage Zones to begin holding meetings in September, 2021, when the very important Annual Meetings are held.

At the March meeting of the RENY Board, they also gave their approval/support to hold an **ANNUAL MEETING for RENY** in October 2021. This will not be a convention. There will be no workshops, baskets to raffle or "trivia night", and it will not be at Turning Stone. Plans are being made to hold the meeting on October 12th at The Desmond in Albany. Each Zone will have a modified number of delegates. Instead of 1 delegate per 100 members, the BOD approved for **2021 ONLY**, 1 delegate per 200 members. This should help with social distancing and room assignments. Again all participants will be encouraged to be fully vaccinated, practice social distancing and wear masks in public settings. The Desmond was selected for this occasion because it is not a casino. It will not have a thousand or more people from the general public on its premises.

The Annual Meeting for 2021 is an extremely important one for our organization.

See **PRESIDENT** on page 2



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## PRESIDENT, *cont'd*

The following offices are up for election at the 2021 Annual Meeting: President, Senior Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Vice President for Membership, and Vice President for Friendly Service. Anybody interested in seeking a nomination to any of the offices aforementioned is asked to refer to **Rae Louise Tate's** ( Nominations Chairperson) article in this edition of York State. More information concerning the Fall 2021 Annual Meeting will be included in the Summer 2021 York State edition.

The latest total through April for the President's Appeal is \$60,171.00 (revised 4/28/2021). The complimentary mask (s) for contributions over \$50 has proven to be quite successful. One mask is provided for each donation of \$50 or more, two masks for \$75 or more, and three masks for \$100 or more. If you have not made your contribution to the President's Appeal, please consider making a donation soon. Thank you.

It happens to be April Fool's Day as I write this article, and Mother Nature apparently has a sense of humor. She has dropped several inches of snow on the North Country and more is expected. Even that will not prevent RENY from **Springing Forward** in 2021. Stay well and continue to stay safe.

Thank you,  
Kevin Mulligan - President of RENY



## Legislative Action Committee Report

**Rod Driscoll, VP for Legislation**

The LAC members spent the winter contacting legislators and leaders at the state and Federal levels regarding the priorities we have identified over a number of previous meetings held last fall and winter. I'd like to offer praise for all of the members of the committee for their hard work researching our areas of emphasis and preparing our position talking points for our advocacy work.

Our advocacy time frame was late February through mid March to maximize the impact of our efforts on current legislation. Thanks to **Jan Mullins** we had a comprehensive set of documents that ensure a smooth and effective process for interacting with officeholders in the era of COVID virtual meetings and contacts.

During the time we were contacting legislators, the \$1.9 trillion COVID stimulus bill passed Congress and was signed by President Biden. New York's share of governmental aid from this bill is \$100 billion, with \$12.5 billion earmarked specifically for schools.

This amount resulted in the new state budget more than making up for the shortfall in state revenue eliminating Governor Cuomo's 20% reduction in state aid to public schools. The new state budget will ameliorate the budget crisis that districts have been facing over the last year. That should also assure that retiree benefits will not be under threat of reductions or cuts this year.

The budget crisis for the state, local governments and schools, is over for this year. School spending will be at record levels for the coming year!

*See **LEGISLATION** on page 3 for more on this*

## Legislation, cont'd

Recreational marijuana has passed. The catch is that it will take approximately a year and half to be implemented. Due to that, legalization will have no impact on this year's budget. It should have substantial impact on next year's spending plan, both on the revenue and expense sides. It will be taxed and bring in a significant amount of money, however the societal costs associated with legal pot, since it's likely that abuse of it will increase, may offset the monetary benefits, partially or entirely.

NYSUT and other organizations have successfully advocated for tax increases for higher income New Yorkers: the return of the "Millionaire's Tax". The money is not needed in the current state budget, but could be used for creation of a rainy day fund and will provide new revenues going forward into next year. RENY has not taken a position on this issue.

### RENY supports at the Federal level:

1. the \$1.9 trillion bill recently passed by Congress & signed by President Biden expanding COVID-19 stimulus aid to: unemployed, small business, paycheck protection, schools, state/local governments and 1st responders.
2. reintroducing the "Protecting & Preserving Social Security Act" and opposes payroll tax reductions or holidays that could undermine the financial viability of Social Security and Medicare.
3. legislation regarding prescription drug price reduction such as reintroduction of the "Lower Drug Costs Now Act".
4. supports Federal social/health mandates such as requiring mask wearing and social distancing on Federal property and interstate travel.

### RENY supports at the state level:

1. the new state budget eliminating the proposed 20% cut to school aid in the 2020-21 school year. RENY supports increasing school spending for building upgrades, expanding internet access to under served areas and increasing support for student acquisition of adequate computer technology for student learning.
2. legislation regarding prescription drugs:
  - > Synchronization of Multiple Prescriptions Act A187 (Gottfried-D) & S431 (Hoylman-D)
  - > Manufacturer Disclosure and Transparency Act S398 (Biaggi-D) Re: Generic drug development
  - > Reducing Pharmacy Benefit Manager Costs Act A291 (Cahill-D) & S01768 (Skoufis-D). Reduces pharmacy benefit manager costs and makes a clear definition of PBMs.
3. supports protection against elderly victimization by increasing penalties for scams and fraud aimed at seniors regarding the legalization of marijuana. If it is legalized we support earmarking the revenue for education and drug treatment programs.



## Pandemic Lifestyle Changes From



Mary Ella Moller\*CR, Health Chair



After a year of adjusting to life in lockdown, I have adapted some permanent changes to my life. I am sure that each of you have also made a few changes to your new normal lifestyle. Here are some of mine:

### \* The universal wearing of masks and washing hands

Masks have become second nature and having a variety to coordinate with your outfit is fun!

The virus did remind us of the proper way to wash hands (singing Yankee Doodle - twice).

### \* Telemedicine

Seeing the doctor virtually for minor illness is a timesaver for both the patient and the doctor.

### \* Staying in touch

FaceTime, Zoom and videoconferencing are the future, whether it is to talk to a relative, friend, or coworkers. before the pandemic I had never heard of “zoom,” now I use it frequently.

### \* Shopping

Having merchandise delivered from grocery stores, drugstores, and other retailers have become so easy and convenient that I will continue this practice in the future. No problem finding a parking space, no crowded stores, and I can shop at any hour of day or night!

### \* Credit cards over cash

It is not unusual to now find a sign in a store that says “Credit Cards Preferred.”

Do you have others?

## Rhubarb Custard Cake



This cake is designed to be mixed by hand. Using an electric mixer works more air into the eggs, which lightens the batter and makes it less dense, so the fruit is more prone to sinking. Also, make sure you leave the stalks whole, as chopped rhubarb is more likely to be swallowed up by the batter and sink to the bottom.

### Ingredients

4 Tbsp. melted unsalted butter, cooled plus more for room temp for the pan  
1 cup all-purpose flour plus some for the pan  
3/4 tsp. baking powder  
1/2 tsp. kosher salt  
2 large eggs  
1 egg yolk  
1-1/2 cups sugar plus more for sprinkling  
2 tsp finely grated lemon zest  
13oz. Rhubarb stalks, halved lengthwise if thick  
1/4 cup sour cream  
2 Tbsp. dark rum

### Preparation

#### Step 1

Preheat oven to 350°. Butter and flour springform pan. Whisk baking powder, salt, and 1 cup all-purpose flour in a medium bowl. Whisk eggs, egg yolk, and 1½ cups sugar in a large bowl until very pale and thick, about 1 minute. Whisk melted butter, sour cream, rum, and lemon zest in a small bowl. Whisk butter mixture into egg mixture just to combine. Add dry ingredients and fold in until batter is smooth; scrape into prepared pan. Chill 10 minutes to let batter set.

#### Step 2

Arrange rhubarb over batter however you like, trimming as needed. Don't press fruit into batter—just place over top and let it rest on the surface. Sprinkle with more sugar and bake until cake is golden on top and browned around the sides, 45–55 minutes. Transfer pan to a wire rack and let cake cool in pan 10 minutes. Slide a knife around sides of cake to loosen and unmold. Slide directly onto rack and let cool completely.

#### Step 3

**Do Ahead:** Cake can be baked 1 day ahead. Store tightly wrapped at room temp.



## Nominations Committee

Rae Louise Tate, Chairperson



2021-2022 will be another year of change in RENY's leadership, as several three-year terms have come to an end. Open positions are:

**President**  
**Senior Vice-President**  
**Vice-President for Membership**  
**Vice-President for Friendly Service**  
**Secretary**  
**Treasurer**

Applicants for these positions are encouraged from every zone. The following officers have agreed to continue in their current positions:

**Roderick Driscoll, Vice-President for Legislation**

Candidates wishing to run for the open positions or candidates desiring to oppose one of the incumbents should submit a letter of intent and a current resume along with a letter of endorsement from his/her Zone President. Other supporting letters from RENY members may be included. These materials must be submitted to:

**Rae Louise Tate**  
**16 Bach Circle**  
**Star Lake, NY 13690**

**SUBMISSIONS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN MAY 31ST, 2021**  
**THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS**

The Nominating Committee will meet in July. Prior to that meeting, each member of the Nominations Committee will have been provided with copies of the applications sent to the Chair. Candidates will present themselves to the Nominations Committee at that meeting (date to be determined). The committee will interview each candidate and then make recommendations for each position. **If a member of the Nominations Committee is unable to attend, his/her Zone President should send the name of an alternate via a letter or email message to the Chair.**

## Membership Report

Lois Thornberg, VP for Membership



*"Spring is the time for plans and projects"* ~Leo Tolstoy

As members of RENY, with the coming of spring, we need to focus on our plans and projects to recruit past and present retirees to join RENY. The success of an organization is the result of the combined efforts of every individual member working together as a team. Now is the time for every RENY member to work towards bringing in new members, persuading unit members to join their respective RENY Zone, and encourage past and present members to rejoin and/or retain their membership in RENY. We all need to realize that it is our responsibility, as individual members, to educate perspective members as to why RENY is important. Share the benefits they will be afforded. One valuable benefit is the statewide healthcare information network. RENY has organized a statewide network of monitors who closely watch the school districts across New York State for any that may be considering a change in the health insurance benefits that are being offered to the retirees, which is then shared with RENY members.

See MEMBERSHIP on page 6 for the rest of the article

## CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

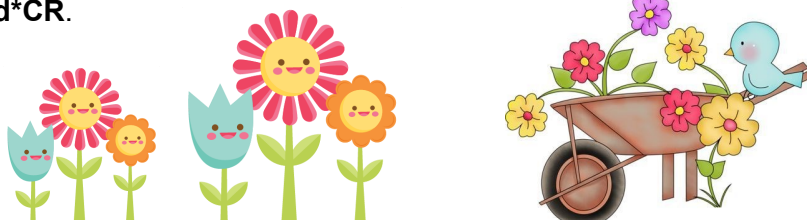
Anne Flansburg\*CR ~ Chair

Presidents of NYSRTA/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 NYSRTA/RENY and have shown outstanding leadership, service and dedication in retirement to the organization, as well as to their zone and unit (if applicable) and to their community. Since the annual meeting was not held in 2020, the 2020 award(s) will be presented in 2021. **All applications that were sent in 2020 were considered for the 2020 awards and will continue for the 2021 awards.** If you wish to nominate someone that was **not** nominated in 2020, please do so. However, any new applications must be postmarked by June 1, 2021 to be considered as an additional nominee for this year's award.

Nominees should **NOT** be informed that his/her 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 announced until certificates are presented at the Annual Meeting.

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 are available from your Zone President, or in the March executive meeting reports. 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 postmarked by or before June 1, 2021** to the committee chair: **Anne Flansburg** 24 Amherston Drive, Williamsville NY 14221-7002.

The chair wishes to acknowledge the effort and cooperation of the other two committee members, namely, **John Hogan\*CR** and **Carol Lord\*CR**.



### MEMBERSHIP, cont'd

Other benefits offered only to RENY member include having the opportunity to become officers and a voice in RENY's legislative actions, participate in social gatherings, and have access to discounts for various insurances, shopping, and travel.

Spread the word about the Insurance Trust's new membership initiative. The Zone will receive \$20 for each new member that submits the new 3-year membership application, at a discounted rate of \$75 for 3 years. This applies also to any member who has been delinquent for more than one year who renews.

If we all work together, we can succeed. This past year has been a difficult one for all of us, but the time is now for us to move forward. When we work together as a team, we can succeed. Share your time and talents to promote RENY. Take the time to engage with others, say "hi" and communicate who we are and what RENY does to ensure the quality of retired life for retired educators. It is never too early to reach out to new and past retirees to identify them as possible members. Recruit, recruit, and recruit- it is every member's task.

*"Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results."*

~ Andrew Carnegie

## Resolutions Report



Gayla LePage, State Resolution Chair

### UPDATE AND SCHEDULE FOR PROPOSING RESOLUTIONS



I have sent out information to the resolution chairs about this year's resolutions. I have not received anything to date. If I receive any, we will do a Zoom to act on them before the July meeting. Below are the instructions for this year's submissions.

I received two approved resolutions from last year that we will act on at the state meeting in the fall.

### SCHEDULE FOR PROPOSING RESOLUTIONS

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 12, 2021. Thirty days prior to that date is Saturday, June 12. I am asking for resolutions to be submitted by **Friday, June 11, 2021**, providing for the thirty days between the due date and the date of the state Executive BOD 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 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 review by the Zones' 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.
6. Be sure the proper heading is on the resolution.



## Bylaws Committee Report

William Tenity, Chair



The Bylaws Committee is presenting two proposed bylaw changes for consideration at the 2021 Annual Meeting, **Proposition ZUUORENY** (Zone/Unit Use Of RENY) **2020** and **Proposition ASZAUM** (Association State, Zone And Unit Membership) **2020** as requested by President **Kevin Mulligan** and the Board of Directors at the April 2020 Board of Directors meeting. The proposed bylaws were presented at the July Board of Directors meeting and approved by the Board. The proposed Bylaws now go to the zones for approval. If 2/3 of the zones approve them then they will be presented for approval at the 2021 Annual Meeting. The rationale for **Proposition ZUUORENY** (Zone/Unit Use Of RENY) **2020** is that a considerable amount of money has been spent to create and market a new name for NYSRTA - RENY, and the creation of a new logo, therefore all zones and units need to adhere to the use of RENY and the new logo. Zones need to change their names to RENY/Zone name (example: RENY/Central Zone). Unit names would be RENY/Unit name (example: RENY/Cayuga County). Any checking accounts, stationary, etc. with the old names could still be used but new orders would have to have the new name. Rationale for **Proposition ASZAUM** (Association, State, Zone and Unit Membership) **2020** is that based on the fact that a considerable number of unit members are not dues paying members of the Association and that in some zones and units there are elected officers and committee chairs that are not members of the Association the following Bylaws changes are being proposed. All unit members must also be dues paying members of the State Association.

Respectfully submitted, **William Tenity** - CZ Chair, Bylaws Committee

Committee Members: **Peter Atchinson** – NEZ **Bruce Croucher** - CWZ President **Emeritus Carlyle T. Campany\*CR** – NCZ **Helen Hoering** – SEZ **Patricia Miceli** - WZ **Rae Louise Tate** – NZ

## COMMUNITY SERVICE REPORT

Eileen Holmes, Chairperson



*"You have two hands. One to help yourself and one to help others." (Audrey Hepburn)*

Over a year ago, the corona virus pandemic threw a monkey wrench into meeting, planning and carrying out Community Service projects, but thanks to the creativity and perseverance of our Community Service chairs, RENY volunteerism and community service activities have continued to help needy folks throughout New York.

Pandemic or not, using Zone and unit newsletters, teleconferencing and Zoom, Community Service efforts have collected money and goods for food banks, clothing drives, scholarships, military hospitals, school supplies and toy drives. Volunteers have been helping with YMCA childcare and tutoring, working at local food pantries, knitting hats and scarves, offering rides to seniors, and serving on library boards and town committees, and performing many other acts of service to their families, friends, communities, hospitals and civic organizations.

Our hard-working and productive RENY Community Service Zone chairs include **Janice Hedgon**, Central Zone, **Joan Handfield**, Central Western, **Joyce Notarnicola**, Eastern, **Immediate Past President Angelo Grande\*CR**, Long Island, **Ann Marie Wik**, Western, **Cheryl Fischer**, Southeastern, **Patty Corey**, North Central, **Alice Galvin**, Northern, **Mary Suffern**, Southern, and **Angela Angelos**, our newly appointed Community Service chair from the Northeastern Zone

It is always rewarding to read the details of all of RENY's successful Community Service activities in the Zone News articles of *York State*. If we can accomplish all these projects during a pandemic, we look forward to all we hope to achieve in the future!



## Robert R. DeCormier Memorial Trust Fund

### Anne Flansburg\*CR, Chairperson

The **Robert R. DeCormier** Memorial Trust Fund was established to assist retired educators in need and has continued this mission for over fifty years. During the pandemic, members of RENY have exemplified the true spirit of giving and loving.



"No man is an island,  
No man stands alone,  
We need one another, and  
When I help my brother  
Then I know that I  
Plant the seed of friendship  
That will never die."



Joan Baez wrote and sang these words in 1968, and more than 50 years later they still ring true. The COVID-19 pandemic has made this past year feel unbearable at times, but members of RENY have demonstrated how kind and generous we can be to our community, our friends, and our colleagues. We have given time, energy, emotional support and financial assistance. Many are extremely grateful for this.

An all-volunteer phone committee in several zones made monthly calls to cherished members to keep in touch in the early days of the pandemic. In addition, when possible we continued our collaboration with Meals on Wheels, helping deliver nutritious meals to community members during the lockdown. Birthday cards and greetings were sent to several members.

Members of RENY have demonstrated outstanding generosity to the **Robert R. DeCormier** Memorial Fund this past year, helping fund important necessities like mobility solutions, medical supplies and dental treatment for members who needed it. Your membership in RENY keeps us motivated, and the work that is done at all levels, including State, Zone, and Local, makes us all stronger. It has been a difficult year for many, but our community, friends, family and neighbors made it better. We mourn the members that we lost and extend heartfelt sympathies to those who lost loved ones. We have truly lived the spirit of our first President **Robert R. DeCormier**, who cared for and supported members in need.

## Friendly Service Report

### Judith Corigliano, VP for Friendly Service

### Friendly Service Makes a Difference

The author, AA Milne wrote " *A little Consideration, a little thought for others makes all the difference.*"\* And in 2020 Friendly Service made a difference. Two-Hundred and Eight plus total volunteers ( key workers, country/ unit chairs and zone chairs ) served the membership with the following acts of consideration!

152 Visits  
577 phone calls  
820 e-mails  
4811 mailed greeting cards  
693 e-cards, greeting  
187 gifts/celebrations for 90+ yr. retirees

This is a total of 8997 acts of consideration ...it's what our Friendly Service does for our members. But only with people making those choices to use their time and often their own monies ( RENY reimburses submitted expenses and furnishes stamps for workers ) to complete the goals of the service.

See FRIENDLY on page 10

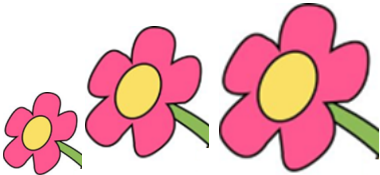
## FRIENDLY, cont'd

An unexpected pay-back might be a call or note thanking you for your consideration that you and RENY remembered them on a birthday.

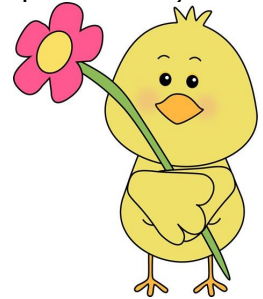
Impressive.... during a year that was marked by missed funerals, cancelled events, limited normal contact with family and friends, meetings by teleconference and zoom and certainly abnormal circumstances....early AM grocery shopping, in home delivery, mail order gifts, etc.

Friendly Service always needs workers, and if you want to make new/renew friendships and really make someone's day with mail....step up, volunteer and make a difference.

\* quoted from Pooh's Little Instruction Book.



## What Did You Learn By Doing?



*"The teacher learns more than the student. The author learns more than the reader. The speaker learns more than the attendee. The way to learn is by doing."* \* This has truly been a year of learning, seeking to make the best of a strange world of missed funerals and cancelled events.

What did you learn by doing? You learned how to order everything and more from online stores, ugh! You learned how to find your way around Zoom meetings and religious services via the internet. You mastered solo exercising on the TV, you walked/hiked and social distanced in boats and kayaks. You tried new recipes, baked bread and realized that everyone in your world was buying flour! Oh yes, and we learned about empty grocery shelves. We learned to share supplies. I think we all learned as our war time/ depression families did ....that you make due or without. You made from scratch, started a garden; you grew more veggies (again, dirt became as precious as gold, black at that ). Some cleaned, some downsized and made plans to someday *really* travel somewhere other than the grocery store, pharmacy, medical appointments( maybe by video conferencing) and hardware stores. And let's not forget drive up banking! Yea.

You may have learned which of the multitude of hand sanitizes that your skin would tolerate, which masks were most comfortable and actually fit your size of face and then fought with eye glasses and fogging up. You also worried about always carrying extra masks in pockets, and remembering to put them on before entering a building.... How about not recognizing newer friends, masked up.... You may have realized you really know some people by their voices.

What I did learn beyond eating, sleeping and praying is that I am grateful that I could vote by mail and that I could protect my family and myself with a vaccine, that even without the physical hugs and sharing meals that family was just a call, text, or facetime away. I am thankful that I had time to reflect to write letters for my family to be read after I am no longer with them, that I really enjoyed the quietness of soothing music, and on the flip side enjoying singing in the car with my partner to old rock songs (we are awful but no one can hear us ) that I could listen to wireless music with planned playlists. I am thankful that I had time to read; a glorious escape into another time or place that I will maybe never visit and learn. I was grateful to a dear retired teacher friend of 40+ years to weekly check in... I was grateful for UPS, FedEx and USPS, pumpkins on doorsteps, holiday lights on houses, candles in windows, first and last show, seasonal blooming of spring/summer flowers and planting of the 2021 veggie garden...and the freedom to be who I am, with short-comings, but ageing with grace and waiting to get off pause. As my children often asked, "Are we there yet?" My answer is....I'll let you know after you tell me what you learned today! I learned to rejoice in the little things.

Do you want to share what small things you are grateful for ....I'm just an email away, surprise me. Please put "grateful" in your reference line. All will be shared as a team effort in a long poem/prose.

**Judith Corigliano**

\* James Clear, 3-2-1 Thursday, "Learning by Doing" 2021

**VP for Friendly Service**

[Jcorigliano9915@gmail.com](mailto:Jcorigliano9915@gmail.com)

# ZONE NEWS



## Central Zone, By Ray Pitcher - Zone President

Central Zone organized a face to face and Zoom meeting on 4/13/2021. There were over twenty members who were in attendance. While zoom was offered, and no member took advantage of this offer All members in attendance social distanced, and wore masks as they moved around the room. The buffet was served by the restaurant staff. It was great to finally have a meeting after all this time. Future meetings will be July 20th, and September 16<sup>th</sup>. Both will be face to face, with the virtual option.

To date, our legislative folks have been unable to schedule a meeting with our legislators. I have been informed that some of the chairs have mailed a copy of the cards to them.

The Central Zone, as with individual units needs members to accept some of leadership roles. Please contact **Bill Cline** ([wecline129@gmail.com](mailto:wecline129@gmail.com)) or myself ([rpitcher1@twcny.rr.com](mailto:rpitcher1@twcny.rr.com)) if you are interested in running for one or more of these positions.

### Chenango County-Bill Cline President Reports:

Chenango County Unit has been hard at work these several months of COVID isolation by:

1. Revamping all our recruitment materials.
2. Rebranding our print material as RENY of Chenango.
3. Donating to the United Way toward educational and senior citizen programs.
4. Producing an additional newsletter (a total of three) thanks largely to the talents of **Kathy Pfeifer** our Corresponding Secretary.
5. We plan to return to an in-person luncheon/meeting in September.

A guy goes in for a job interview and sits down with the boss. The boss asks him, "What do you think is your worst quality?" The man says "I'm probably too honest." The boss says, "That's not a bad thing, I think being honest is a good quality." The man replies, "I don't care about what you think!"





# ZONE NEWS



**CENTRAL WESTERN ZONE** by Phyllis Dunlap, Public Relations Chair  
assisted by Lynn Hefferon

News from Monroe Unit, CWZ

**MaryBeth Tyndall**, Co-President reported that while adhering to COVID precautions and guidelines, many of our activity groups have been meeting in person!

**Birdwatching**—The group has been gathering during the winter and spring.

**Bicycling**—Their annual “Icicle Bicycle” ride took place on January 1<sup>st</sup>! The Tuesday and Friday Ride schedule for 2021 has been published.

**Recorder Class**—**Pat Ensman** continues to hold classes outside on any unseasonably pleasant day.

**Hiking**—The members are finalizing plans for in person outings.

**Book Club**—They will be meeting at a new venue this season and are awaiting the lifting of the indoor group gathering restrictions.

**Garden Club**—They are anticipating the return of group meetings. As we wrote this article a year ago, we certainly hoped and expected to be back to a normal routine by fall. Unfortunately, we were unable to hold our fall meeting.

**Board Meetings**—Outdoor sessions were held in August and November 2020.



Recorder Class with Pat Ensman

Recent bicycle trip



One of our Board Meetings



# ZONE NEWS

## CENTRAL WESTERN ZONE—cont'd



*With heartfelt gratitude-*

**Foodlink** ([foodlinkny.org](http://foodlinkny.org)) serves 10 counties in the Rochester and Finger Lakes region of New York: Allegany, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates.

Thank you to the Central Western Zone for making it possible to support our communities during this time of crisis! With the \$500 contribution from CWZ, the Monroe Unit was able to designate Foodlink as the recipient. We felt that it had the greatest impact

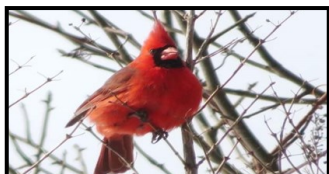
across all life stages and throughout our entire region.

As we wrote this article a year ago, we certainly hoped and expected to be back to a normal routine by fall. Unfortunately, we were unable to hold our fall meeting. BUT there was a silver lining to meetings being cancelled. Since no local meetings or the state convention were held, Central Western Zone decided to share money it would have spent on meetings with county units for charitable purposes. Each county unit was given \$500.00. Ontario County identified community food cupboards within each school district – Geneva, Marcus Whitman, Naples, Canandaigua, Honeoye, Bloomfield, Victor, Red Jacket and Midlakes (Phelps-Clifton Springs). Ten food cupboards each received \$50.00. We felt this was a good way to help families provide nutritious meals for their children. Good nutrition contributes to good learning.

We have distributed forms to each district for nominations for the Epke-Meagher award for a newly retired teacher. This award recognizes a retiring teacher who has shown exemplary service and leadership in their school and community. Due to the pandemic, nominations may be made for both 2020 and 2021 new retirees. This award is given by Central Western Zone.

At this time, no decision has been made regarding our usual spring meeting, but we are hopeful that we can arrange a gathering later in the spring or early summer. In the meantime, take care, get vaccinated and continue to follow guidelines so that we may finally put the pandemic behind us.

**Bruce and Sharon Croucher**, Co-Presidents  
Ontario County Retired Teachers



By the time you read this Seneca County will have decided whether to have a Spring/Summer meeting.

Also, by that time Central Western Zone will have decided about a fall meeting.

# ZONE NEWS

## EASTERN ZONE by Pamela Love, Public Relations Chair



Picture of Past President, Rosalie Oliver  
on her home deck



### Welcome Spring!

Units in Eastern Zone are starting to get excited about getting vaccinated and welcome more socialization. Unit Presidents are hoping to have unit meetings, mainly for the fall.



Picture of Virginia Madore Historian for  
Eastern Zone, getting vaccinated

**Penny Bellinger**, President of the Otsego County Unit says that their unit is planning on holding their annual Golf Tournament in August with proceeds going to Family Services for school supplies to help children in need. This tournament usually brings in \$2500 annually.

**Margaret Dafeldecker**, President of the Schoharie County Unit says that their unit will be giving a \$50 Citizenship Award to a graduating senior in each of the six school districts located in their county. The Citizenship Award is based on the following attributes: \*Kind, caring and shows a positive attitude, \*Supportive of thoughts and opinions of others, \*Honest and trustworthy, \*Giving of time for school and/or community activities and \*Strives to live up to his/her potential academically. Since most of our units have been hitting the pause button as far as meeting as a unit, I would like to mention a couple of local RENY members who have been actively engaged in programs that make a difference to the welfare of others including pets.



**Marge Leibowitz**, President of the Rensselaer County Unit has been involved with the program, Pets Without People, organized by Capital Vets with its veterinary clinics in Latham, Troy and Castleton. Pets Without People is a subsidized care program providing medical support to homeless animals. Dogs and cats are vaccinated, spayed and neutered and fostered while staff works to find forever homes. Marge has been involved with this program since she adopted Marshall in 2011 who had many health issues at that time and is now a happy 14 year old cat. Marge makes blankets, organizes fund raising raffles and has lately made catnip pillows during the pandemic.



# ZONE NEWS

## EASTERN ZONE –cont'd

"...a  
*Project Linus*  
blanket  
is like a big hug  
when you most need one."



Rensselaer County Friendly Service Representative, **Marilyn Seidenberg** who recently moved to a senior community has been involved with other members of her community making quilts and donating them to Project Linus. Marilyn says the quilting group has been able to enjoy being together since they are now vaccinated.



**James F. Marquit Jr.** passed away last October at the age of 87. Jim began his teaching career in 1956 in Gilboa-Conesville Central School District. In 1962 until his retirement, he was an English teacher at Middleburg Central School District and was also Track Coach from 1970 - 1995. As a retiree, Jim was very active with New York State Retired Teachers Association including being President of Eastern Zone. He was also very active in Town and Village Planning Boards of Middleburgh and had many leadership roles in Middleburgh Rotary Club including being President at one time. He leaves behind his wife, Ann Marie, as well as four children and seven grandchildren.



**TROPICAL COSTA RICA**

 **collette**  
celebrating 100 years of travel together

RENY offers many opportunities to travel domestically as well as all over the world! With Collette the world is within your reach. Whether you like land tours, river cruises, rail journeys, family trips or garden holidays - Collette has it all. With Collette, wake each morning on tour with a new experience in front of you, and when your head hits the pillow, you will know it has been an amazing day. Best of all - we seamlessly handle the details. All you have to do is enjoy the adventure!

# ZONE NEWS



## LONG ISLAND ZONE by Eileen Holmes, Zone President and Public Relations Chair

Our Long Island members are still 'playing it safe' with the corona pandemic, wearing masks, washing hands, social distancing and avoiding large indoor gatherings. Fortunately, more and more of us are getting vaccinated and we are hopeful that by the end of Summer 2021 life may be a little more normal.

With this in mind, LIZ Vice President **Val Stype** has rescheduled our annual fall meeting/ luncheon for Wednesday, September 22nd at the Bellport Country Club. If we can hold this indoor meeting, it will mark two years since the last LIZ gathering. Val and his wife Gini are so hopeful of finally having this meeting he has announced "The beer and wine are on us!" to celebrate! Details of this upcoming event will be in the next edition of the LI Zone newsletter.

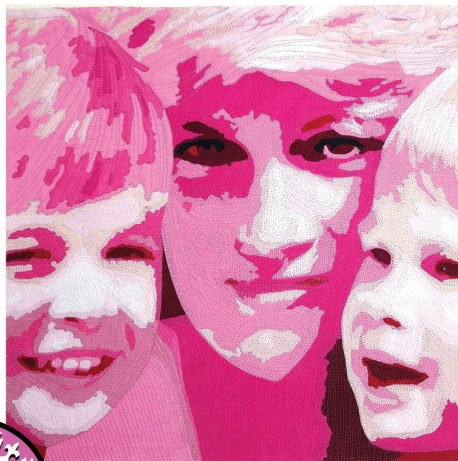
Congratulations to LIZ member **Jo Anne Powell** on winning First Place in the national quilting contest sponsored by Cherrywood Hand Dyed Fabrics "The Diana Cherrywood Challenge 2020-21". Jo Anne took top honors for her beautiful quilt titled 'A Mother's Love'.

The Long Island Zone has been fortunate to hold two successful board meetings via teleconferencing, one in March and another in April. Our next one is scheduled for August. We miss seeing each other in person but there have been murmurings that teleconferencing is actually easier than dealing with LI traffic to get to board meetings. Maybe we've discovered a little bit of silver lining' behind the big COVID - 19 cloud while having to adapt!!

CONGRATULATIONS!



JUDGE'S CHOICE



Jo Anne Powell  
Centerport, New York, USA  
A Mother's Love





# ZONE NEWS



## NORTH CENTRAL ZONE by Nancy Roberts and Patricia Newell Public Relations Co-Chairs

Here we are a year later celebrating the Pandemic Anniversary! What an unusual and challenging time this has been! We have survived and have much to be thankful for. There is a spirit of optimism growing along with the spring flowers. It's wonderful that so many people are being vaccinated. The stimulus will bring relief to many families and businesses. NCZ members are looking ahead to a healthy and productive year.



On January 27, 2021 **Kathi Bassett** reported that she had received the first three year membership application in the mail. It came in from NCZ! The new member was referred by our very own **Kathy Allan**, pictured to the left. Hopefully others will join Kathy in introducing new potential members to the benefits of joining RENY.

Our NCZ Community Service Chair, **Patty Corey**, and **Toni Gigliotti** have been doing wonderful deeds over the winter season. Although they were unable to hold their regular Coats for Kids event, that did not stop these ingenious ladies. Many families are grateful that this Dynamic Duo decided to clothe children in need on an individual basis. These ladies worked with Forest Finds, a thrift store connected to the Forest Presbyterian Church in Lyons Falls. They also made contact with the WellCare in Rome and Steve Virkler from the Lewis County Office of the Aging to provide winter wear for children. Patty and Toni once again prove that "Necessity is the Mother of Invention." Thank you for a job well done!

**Barbara Eldridge** and **Dr. Jim Newell** have continued with their tutoring services to children in the daycare program at Jefferson Community College, pictured here. They both serve one morning a week to assist children who are on remote learning for the day. Barb & Jim work with elementary aged students who are completing school assignments on their laptops. This has been a very rewarding activity for them. The students are quite appreciative of the help they receive and the friendly support they are given. Needless to say, both these NCZ members are pretty sharp now when it comes to math facts!!



It is with great pride that the NCZ together with the Northern New York Community Foundation announces its 2021 Future Educator Scholarship Award winners. The pandemic did not slow down the work of Scholarship Chair, **John Gaffney**. He heads a dedicated committee consisting of members **Bruce & Candice Buckingham**, **Dr. George Forbes\*CR**, **Bill Haller**, **Marianne Malatino**, **Patti Scordo** and **Tom Van Emmerik**. They have the formidable task of selecting the winners from an impressive group of applicants. The committee is proud to announce this year's recipients. **Madelyn Countryman** from Indian River Central School and **Delanie Miller** from Watertown High School will each receive a \$1,000 scholarship.

**Continue on to the next page to learn more about the scholarship winners!**

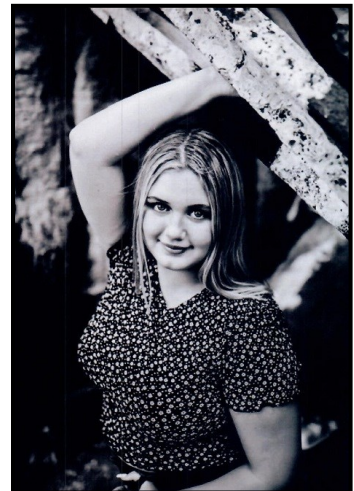
# ZONE NEWS

## NORTH CENTRAL ZONE - cont'd



Miss Countryman intends to major in Elementary Education at Jefferson Community College.

CONGRATULATIONS  
to our WINNERS!



Miss Miller will pursue studies at St. Lawrence University. She will major in Elementary Education.

We are excited to honor these exemplary scholars and future educators. Our award winners and their parents are typically guests of honor at our June Scholarship Luncheon. This year it is scheduled for June 15<sup>th</sup> at the Ramada Inn in Watertown, NY.

The NCZ Executive Council met on April 29<sup>th</sup> in person at the Ramada Inn with health & safety protocols in place. The June luncheon was one of the important events discussed at this meeting. If for any reason the June 15th luncheon is not held, the Future Educator Awards will be presented at a separate event. Stay well and healthy and enjoy the spring weather!

### Dates to Remember:

NCZ Scholarship Luncheon- Tuesday, June 15, 2021, Ramada Inn, Watertown, TBD.



# ZONE NEWS



## NORTHEASTERN ZONE by Glenda Rowe, Zone President

Forward --- moving forward --- with masks and distancing and shots in the arm and HOPE. At long last, we can begin to breathe a sigh of relief. We can reach out to friends, we can finally visit family, plan a vacation and hug our grandchildren!

Our April NEZ Board of Directors will decide whether we will hold our June luncheon indoors. It's been a long time since our last meeting in December, 2019! In the interim, however long, we've communicated through our newsletter and email to keep our members apprised of important information and plans for the future. Our members have been very supportive and have participated and donated to our Community Service drives; our food drive and contributions to our scholarships and toy drive. Their generosity realized over \$1200. to benefit our community's needs.

We are pleased to announce that four members have volunteered to become chairs of three NEZ committees. We welcome **Alison Brown** and **Simone Lutz** as co-chairs of the Educator Award committee, **Athena Angelos** as Community Service chair and **Tracey Howard** Public Relations chair. Welcome! We look forward to working with you!



HAPPY 103RD BIRTHDAY !!!!



It is an honor and a rare experience to highlight and introduce you to one of our retirees at NEZ. It was a privilege to visit and celebrate retiree **Marjorie Myers' on her 103<sup>rd</sup> birthday**. That's right – 103! Just Imagine the historic events Marge has experienced in her lifetime – she was born in the year of the Spanish influenzae, 1918, has lived through several world conflicts, 19 presidents, inventions galore, a walk on the moon and artificial intelligence! She and my mother were best friends and I am best friends with her daughter.



Marge started her teaching career in a one-room school at the age of 17, but had to leave when she married husband Dick. After raising her four children, at age 50 she returned to college for her masters and settled into Northern Adirondack Central where she retired from her long teaching career.

This lively lady from Malone who exudes life and love, resides near her daughter and son. She's an active lady who enjoys politics, is always ready to lend a hand and lives an active, independent life.

She visits the spa, reads daily, looks forward to her *York and Nor'easter* and goes out to dinner weekly. "She's kind and generous and still curious at 103." She feels that anyone can lead a happy, full life if they take care of themselves and stay active. We wish her each day one which is filled with love, joy and a smile.



*Congratulations, Marge and Happy Birthday!*

# ZONE NEWS



## NORTHERN ZONE by Linda Crosby, Public Relations Chair

The NZ Board of Directors has been faithfully meeting on Zoom and regrets that we have missed our NZ members at our Spring and Fall 2020 meetings which were cancelled due to the pandemic. The NZ BOD met on October 10, 2020, where regular reports were given. President **Gayla LePage** announced that NZ has been awarded the \$1,000 RENY Membership Initiative award for the highest percentage of new members for 2020; ideas for spending the money on membership goals were generated. Membership in Units was discussed; we welcome unit members to join us in RENY. Congratulations go to **Debbie Barnes**, who retired April 2021, and thank you for your many years of dedication at the RENY office. Probable conventions dates were announced; October 12-13, 2021 and October 12-14, 2022. New RENY magnetic bumper stickers and masks are available. Healthcare Chair **Joe Russo** said walking club statistics can still be reported to him.

The NZ BOD met on January 29, 2021 and conducted regular business. President **Gayla LePage** reported that a letter to membership is done, membership numbers are steady, and the 2020 H.S. scholarship award funds were dispensed on Jan. 12 after the successful completion of the first semester of college by the students. She said 2021 applications for high school senior scholarships will be sent before April 1. Clifton-Fine-Edwards Unit President **Joe Russo** reported that 7 retired teachers have been helping at the local food pantry. Public Relations Chair **Linda Crosby** announced that, in April, applications for the \$1,000 RENY Hudson-Kramer Memorial Grant will be available in the NZ to a public school educator in the St. Lawrence/Franklin County area for an innovative program/project. State Nominations Chair **Rae Louise Tate** said she is working on a new slate of state officers for a Fall 2021 election; if anyone is interested in running for a position, contact her. C-F-E Unit Historian **Alice Galvin** said she has been calling and checking in with unit members. A wreath from NZ was sent to **Marcella Trudeau** in honor of **President Emeritus Terry Trudeau\*CR**. The NZ BOD will next meet after the March 24, 2021 meeting of the state BOD.

On March 30, 2021, the NZ BOD met on Zoom; President **Gayla LePage** reported on new state initiatives, such as, a potential Medicare supplemental healthcare insurance plan for those teachers who are not covered by a school plan and new RENY masks being distributed to members who contribute \$50 or more to the President's Appeal. There will be a small, in-person State BOD meeting in Albany in July. **Rae Louise Tate** reported that legislative priorities will emphasize lowering prescription drug costs (federal), fighting possible 20% budget cuts to state public education, support for laws to protect senior citizens, and opposing marijuana legalization in NYS. A Fall 2021 NZ membership meeting is being proposed and discussed for early September.



See more from Linda on page 21



# ZONE NEWS

## NORTHERN ZONE, *cont'd*



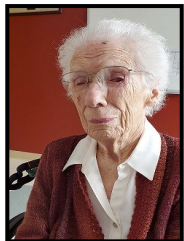
The Northern Zone has sadly lost many friends recently: Longtime member **Bruce Hastings** of North Bangor, N.Y. passed away on October 8, 2020. He was a dedicated Science teacher for 34 years at Brushton-Moira Central School as well as a baseball and basketball coach and an avid hunter. His wife, Karen, and their children, Jason, Missie, and Lisa, and their families lovingly cared for Bruce for many years after his tragic accident.

Chateaugay, N.Y. resident **Olin"Odie" Cook** passed at 91 on December 12, 2020. He and his wife, Barbara, celebrated 66 years of marriage on August 28, 2020. An avid reader, history buff, local historian and story teller, he taught in central NYS and then, taught Social Studies at Chateaugay CSD until his 1991 retirement. He is also survived by his children, Tobey and Donald and their families.

**Vedora Maloney** of Chateaugay, N.Y. passed away at 102 on December 24, 2020. Born on March 25, 1918, she sadly lost her mother to Spanish influenza in October 1918. She was believed to be the last surviving member of the Class of 1935 from Chateaugay High School. She graduated from Plattsburgh Normal School in 1939, taught in rural local schools, married Warren Hunter in 1942 and retired from Malone CSD as a 5th grade teacher in 1976. She is survived by her daughter, Elaine, son-in-law, Robert O'Connor, eight grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.



NZ would like to welcome several new members!!! Welcome, **Lee Trudeau** (son of Terry and Marcella), from Brandon, N.Y. who recently retired after a long career as a Special Education Teacher in Malone, N.Y. Welcome, **Beverly Quenville**, who recently joined RENY/NZ. Bev taught Visual Arts for the Malone Central School District and is very active in Malone community arts programs. Welcome, **Kathy Scharf**, from North Lawrence, who retired from St. Lawrence CSD, Brasher Falls, N.Y. after a long career as a Library Media Specialist.



We wish longtime RENY member and Star Lake resident **Pauline Bassette** a very resounding "Happy Birthday!!!" on the occasion of her **108th birthday** celebration which took place on April 21, 2021. Her local friends and colleagues have sorely missed visiting with her due to COVID restrictions.



# ZONE NEWS



## SOUTHEASTERN ZONE by Maureen Coffey, Public Relations Chair

**"When life gives you lemons, make lemonade!"**

2020 was a challenge for all of us. Our lives, as we knew them, were turned upside down. Everyone was gripped with fear and as much as we prayed for things to go back to normal, deep down we wondered if they ever would. Now we're approaching the halfway point of 2021 and although things aren't perfect, we can see the light at the end of this very long tunnel. We're finally able to "make lemonade!"

SEZ's president, **Tony Colombo**, will plan a luncheon when guidelines deem it safe for all of us to get together. Hopefully that will be sooner rather than later. We've missed Tony's meetings and one another!

**Ray Leduc** from the Newburgh Area Retired Teacher's Association (NARTA) reports that they have tentatively scheduled their annual meeting and luncheon for Thursday, June 3, 2021 at Lakeview House in Newburgh.

**Helen Hoering** from the Sullivan County Retired Teacher's Association (SCARTA) is hopeful they will be able to meet on June 8, 2021. In order to follow CDC guidelines they had to cancel their spring meeting.

**Barbara Topps**, president of the Mid-Hudson Area Retired Teacher's Association (MARTA) reports that they are hoping to hold their annual scholarship luncheon on Wednesday, June 2, 2021. In addition to the luncheon, during May and June MARTA has hiking activities, a D & H Canal walk and museum outing, a trip to the Orange County Arboretum to see a tulip display followed by lunch, a seminar on Social Security and a Sip and Paint art project. ZOOM meetings on genealogy in Europe, how to make a container garden, and the Erie Railroad are scheduled as well. Events will adhere to CDC guidelines. Let's keep fingers crossed that everything goes as planned for all of these groups!

On a more personal level, I've asked our members to share ways they were affected by COVID and some future plans they hope to achieve moving forward.

**Patti De Leo** made an interesting contribution.

"March 12, 2020. I was on the phone with a friend discussing whether we were going into the city to see *Mrs. Doubtfire* on Friday and *Diana* on Saturday. There was a rumor an usher in a theater had the little known and greatly feared COVID. The phone beeped and another call came in. It was my doctor telling me he did not want me going to the theater "unless I was in the show." Almost to the second the tv blared that Broadway was going dark. Our phone discussion ended and our attention was now paid to the tv. Little did I know then that I would have five shows cancelled, two cruises grounded, a month in Hawaii prohibited, and a Bermuda anniversary transferred to takeout for dinner. The next weeks would bring a scramble for toilet paper, wipes, cleaning solution and paper towels. But the good news...more time to volunteer at the food pantry. No people contact, but I sure could pack grocery bags and pass them out to masked volunteers who could deliver them to the line of waiting cars with newly unemployed people trying to feed families. Fine dining was replaced with recipes found online.

Story continues on page 23



# ZONE NEWS

## SOUTHEASTERN ZONE *cont'd*

A new tv was close in size to a movie theater's. Life's adjustments were not as traumatic as anticipated. I sure can navigate an iPad now but still remain one who avoids FaceTime. Telemedicine? Not a fan but it worked. And one thing for sure, I counted my blessings that I was retired and did not have to reinvent my classroom. March 12, 2021. Vaccine complete. Theaters to open. Some changes will remain. Need bathroom tissue? I have extra. "

*I'd say Patti definitely made lemonade!*

**Mary Ellen Colombo** is appreciating simple pleasures. She wants to visit her brother in Baltimore after he and his family are vaccinated. She wants a lobster roll on a trip to Maine or the Cape. And she wants to open her pool and get back to having company.

*All good goals, Mary Ellen! Hang in there.*

**Ray Leduc** shared yet another story.

"I am glad that 2020 is now history. "Because of the Coronavirus, the Newburgh Area Retired Teachers' Association (NARTA) did not have one single social function nor were we able to have our annual meeting in 2020. The same can be said about my involvement with the other organizations that I belong to. Even though I decided not to fly to Nevada for my annual visit with my brother and sister-in-law in October and go to Kansas City to go trick or treating with my son and his family at Halloween, I had no choice when it came to visiting my sister, nephew, grand niece, and cousins or have any of my Canadian relatives come to the USA.

On July 4, 2020, my late wife and I would have celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary. The original plan of celebrating the occasion had to be canceled. However, I, along with my three sons, their spouses, and my eight grandchildren did get to celebrate "Fifty Years" at a "Leduc Family Get-Together" from July 2nd to July 5th at Green Pond Lodge in Granville, NY. It was a wonderful four days.

Now that we have the COVID-19 vaccine available to us, I trust that before the end of 2021, we will be able to return to the lifestyle that we all enjoyed prior to the Coronavirus pandemic."

*We totally agree, Ray!*

Like Patti, Mary Ellen, and Ray, I too have stories.

"We lost my younger brother to COVID April 10, 2020. I can tell you that without a doubt, it's an awful way to die. Now that I have received both of my shots and am fully vaccinated, I volunteer a few hours a week at the vaccine clinic at our local hospital. Nothing glamorous! I help manage the sign in process necessary to be vaccinated.

[Read more from Maureen on page 24](#)



# ZONE NEWS

## SOUTHEASTERN ZONE cont'd

Then in May our beautiful granddaughter, Ashley, turned "Sweet 16 in Quarantine" (complete with a surprise drive by celebration from all of her friends and their moms !) Not your typical Sweet 16 party but totally memorable just the same. Maybe these kids didn't have the party dresses and DJs, but seeing your friends forming a car parade with horns honking, music blaring, kids yelling from open windows and sun roofs, posters wishing you a "Happy Sweet 16" flying from car windows, gifts for Ashley and goody bags from Ashley being exchanged (without the usual teenage girl hugs) through those open car windows and your neighbors outside cheering ... all in your honor ... PRICELESS!

Ed and I also celebrated our 50th on July 4, 2020. We were here at our home with our children and grandchildren. It was perfect. During the summer of 2019, long before we knew anything about a looming pandemic, Ed and I took each of our three children and their families on a vacation of their choosing. They told us where they wanted to go and what they wanted to do when we got there and we started planning. We only wanted three things from the kids in return: quality time spent with dad and mom, memories that will last long after we are gone, and a scrapbook for us on our anniversary. We had three great trips followed by a wonderful anniversary and inherited three beautiful scrapbooks in the process!

This summer, if circumstances allow, we plan to go to... of all places ... Fargo, North Dakota. Ed's been to 49 states and a few days in North Dakota will bring him to all 50 and fulfill a fun goal!"

So like many others, we in the Southeastern Zone have been trying to make the best of a tough situation. Which brings us back to those lemons and lemonade! Who knows? Years from now when we look back and reflect on how we made it through these crazy and challenging times, we might agree that the lemonade we made from those lemons was the most sought after beverage of the pandemic!

Stay well and be safe. 'Til next time.

*We Can't*



*GRATITUDE*

*Thank You!*

*Teacher  
Appreciation  
Week*

**May 3-7, 2021**





# ZONE NEWS



## SOUTHERN ZONE by Mary Lou Wood, Public Relations Chair

Can you believe a year has already past. There is an old saying “April showers bring May flowers”. I always add ‘worms’ as well. The daffodils and tulips are in bloom; birds are singing; trees are budding; the sun is shining; the warm weather is upon us. It’s so uplifting for our morale.

The Southern Zone board of directors had their first meeting in over a year on April 8<sup>th</sup> at the renowned Curly’s Chicken House in Elmira. It was fantastic to see everyone, socializing, smiling, and sharing ideas. Everyone in attendance was fully vaccinated to boot.

Reports from standing committees and units were given though units were unable to meet due to the pandemic. Units are hopeful to resume meetings before the end of the year, but much is yet to be determined. We are also in hopes of holding our Annual SZ meeting in September. It is tentatively scheduled for September 22, 2021 at the scenic Watkins Glen Harbor Inn, hosted by the Schuyler RTA and President **Linda Moore**, pictured to the right. The speaker will come from Schuyler County Historic Society. A final decision will come in June.



Cortland Area RTA President **Debra Carlone**, pictured to the left, sent in her report from Arizona where she spends the winter. Similar to other units, Cortland has not met in over a year and hopes to meet in the Fall. Debra also informed us that she will be leaving New York State to reside in Tennessee to be closer to her sons. We look forward to a new CARTA president being named, and appreciate Deb’s offer to help, albeit remotely, with the transition. We thank her for her leadership and wish her the best on the move.

SZ President **Jerry Tagliaferri** reviewed a number of items from RENY Board meetings including the recent decision to hold an “Annual Meeting” at the Desmond in place of the convention, and the rationale. We are all concerned with declining membership and the inactivity of units because of the pandemic. It makes it difficult to invite and recruit new members when we can’t meet. The proposed changes to the RENY bylaws were also reviewed and discussed. There was discussion on how the Zone would vote on the proposals if the Annual SZ Meeting wasn’t held and what the Zone bylaws allow.

Pictured on right is the Southern Zone Board of Directors:  
Front row: **Don Cutton\*CR**, Lois Cutton, Debbi Deats, Lynne Hunkovic, **Imogene McKendrick\*CR**, and Mary Suffern

Back row: Jerry Tagliaferri, Bonnie Stratton, Nancy Spaulding, **Vince Smith\*CR**, Mary Johnson, Mary Lou Wood. Missing from Picture: Linda Moore, Debra Carlone, Daryl Hartzell and Steve Cornell



# ZONE NEWS

SOUTHERN ZONE cont'd



Nancy Spaulding



Mary Suffern



Hope your birthday was a good one, ladies!

**Student:** "Teacher, would you punish me for doing something I didn't do?"

**Teacher:** "Of course not!"

**Student:** " Good, because I didn't do my homework!"

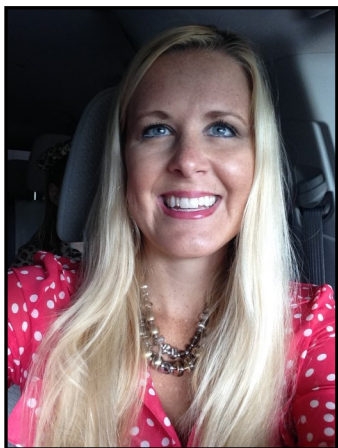


# ZONE NEWS



## WESTERN ZONE by Audrey Seidel and Nancy White Public Relations Co-Chairs

Western Zone is buzzing along and looking forward to getting back to normal. The pandemic has been challenging for us all, but has also provided us with opportunities to connect in new ways. Our executive board held meetings through November and reconvened in March. We have kept in touch with our board members through phone calls and our zone members through *Western Currents*. We also connected with members by creating RENY car or home magnets that could be purchased and displayed. We hope to have more in person contact with our members in the coming months.

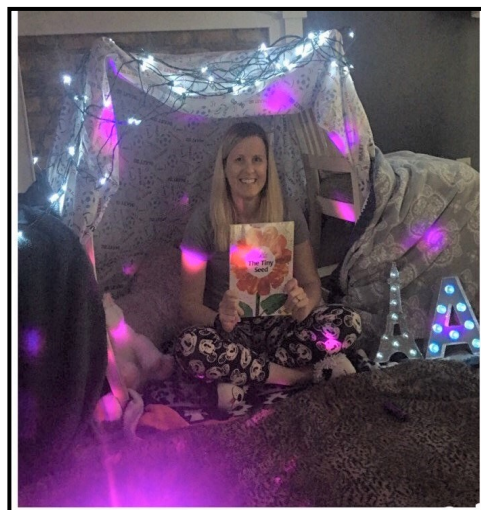


Recently, we became aware that an active teacher in our zone from the Oakfield-Alabama district was one of 20 teachers in the country who won a national contest. Stefanie Clark, pictured to the left, was a 2020 Staples #Thank a Teacher Contest winner of \$5,000 Staples gift cards to stock up on supplies for her classroom. Mrs. Clark has been teaching first grade for 17 years and was nominated by a colleague for her approach to remote learning, school support, and her positive and innovative connection to her students.

In her teaching, Stefanie created fun and engaging lessons for her students. She did one on one literacy lessons and class Google meets. Several of the themes for these lessons were Fort night, pictured, where students built their own fort, wore pj's, and enjoyed bedtime stories, and Halloween in June where students wore their costumes while she read aloud to them. Also surprise guests appeared during special lessons. These included Reid Ferguson, a Buffalo Bills player, a cardiologist, and her son who integrated his drum playing into her lesson.

Stefanie Clark also aided students in the school by distributing grab and go meals. A healthy student is able to grow and learn better. Supporting students outside the classroom is so valuable.

In addition to Stefanie using the gift cards for school supplies for her own classroom, it was important in her eyes to share with others. She shared part of her award with her other 1<sup>st</sup> grade team members and other teachers in the elementary building. Stefanie also donated part of the award to the elementary STEM room in order to purchase hands-on STEM learning activities.



More news from Western Zone on the next page

# ZONE NEWS

## WESTERN ZONE cont'd

Stefanie believes that teachers and administrators have gone above and beyond during this unprecedented time. She's proud to be an educator in these uncharted waters and states that teachers need each other. It's so important to work together.

The future of current teachers and therefore our students looks promising as we view Stefanie Clark's innovative approach, positivity, and enthusiasm. The pandemic has created a challenge and an opportunity to explore and discover new ways of connecting with students, parents, and the community. Our children's education is in good hands with dedicated teachers leading the way.

#ThankATeacher

**YOU COULD WIN \$5,000**

for your teacher's classroom.

Mrs. Clark

A message from Staples:

Staples.

"We're proud to announce the winners of the 2020 [#ThankATeacher](#) contest with a special surprise from actress and comedian, Angela Kinsey! In this year's contest, thousands of parents, students and colleagues expressed gratitude for the special teachers in their lives that have gone above and beyond to ensure the success and happiness of their students, especially in challenging times."



Mrs. Clark and her daughter demonstrating school spirit during a remote learning session

Watch the inspirational stories of the winners at <https://bit.ly/3gmEu5d> Copy and paste link if not working.