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Fall 2021

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



Kevin Mulligan

A Message From Our President, Kevin Mulligan*CR

This will be my final *York State* message as President of RENEY. I guess you could say it is my “Swan Song”. On November 1, 2019, I took office as President of NYSRTA. Our membership at that time numbered just over 15,000 members. I will be leaving office with just over 12,000 members in RENEY. That is certainly no measure of success, but I will not accept it as a failure. Socialization is a critical component of our membership efforts. For the last year and a half we have been unable, due to the pandemic, to have face to face meetings. Not being able to meet and greet people in person has had a terrible impact on not just RENEY, but other organizations such as the K of C, The Elks, Lions Clubs, etc.

The Insurance Trust for RENEY has agreed to extend the membership incentive for 2021 to include 2022. That incentive provides a 3 yr. membership to new, and 1 year or more delinquent members, for just \$75. The Insurance Trust will pay the zone \$20 for each 3 year membership. Zone and Unit luncheons/meetings have begun to take place again. Members are asked to safely take advantage of these social gatherings and bring new recruits to them. We all hope and pray that this opportunity, during the pandemic, is allowed to continue.

A wise decision was made by the RENEY Board of Directors, during a special meeting in August, to discuss and decide on offering a new member benefit plan for RENEY. The new benefit being considered is a Medicare Advantage Plan through United Healthcare. The Board of Directors voted to table the motion until more information and assurances can be obtained from UHC. It is imperative that this plan be properly communicated to our members, and that assurances be made to provide quality customer service to our RENEY members who may partake in this benefit. It is anticipated that a decision will be made by the RENEY BOD at the March Board meeting.

I step down as president with the two aforementioned membership initiatives being either undertaken, the Insurance Trust incentive or, on the drawing board, the UHC Medicare Advantage Plan for RENEY members only. We can only hope that these measures will bring an uptick in our membership.

Continued on the next page...

President's Message, cont'd

Dr. Jim Newell (North Central Zone) will take over as President of RENY on November 1, 2021. As Senior Vice President, he has demonstrated a keen awareness of the job at hand. He too, has a willingness to, at times, think "out of the box". During these times for retirees and educators alike, that will be much needed. As the NCZ President, he oversaw the initiation of zone sponsored retiree excursions to nature and/or historical landmarks. Under his leadership, NCZ got involved with collecting winter clothing for kids and the less fortunate in the greater Watertown area. Jim is "that guy in the blue jacket", as **Mary Lou Wood**, past President of SZ, once referred to him as. He is a "dapper" looking guy in that blue sports jacket, and will serve RENY well as our 20th President.

I would be very remiss if I did not give acknowledgement to the people that assisted me these last three years. **Immediate Past President Angelo Grande *CR** was always there to give me words of encouragement, both as Sr. Vice President and President. **Past President Ron Wilson *CR** has always been my barometer throughout my service to NYSRTA/RENY. **Bob Joyce *CR**, Chairman of The Insurance Trust, and **Tom Reed**, Treasurer of The Insurance Trust, have been very supportive of the many initiatives that have been undertaken during my presidency. The late **President Emeritus Terry Trudeau *CR** was always there for sound advice, especially on fiscal matters. **Lois Thornberg**, VP for Membership, has taken on numerous tasks that I have delegated to her, especially the encompassing two year Unit Project. I wish to extend my appreciation to the RENY Board of Directors. More than once have they given their complete support to many of my "out of the box" ideas, including a controversial logo for the all new RENY. Thank you all.

Ms. Kristen Cecala and recently retired **Debbie Barnes** have always been there to lend me a helping hand, especially with membership and *York State* assistance. Their efforts oftentimes made me look good. Thank you.

Throughout my teaching and administrative career, I have been blessed to befriend and work well with the office secretaries, and later my administrative assistants. I never experienced an Executive Office Manager (EOM) until I met **Mrs. Kathi Bassett**. An EOM is kind of like a 2nd wife. She is the one to offer sage advice when others do not. She is also the one to remind you that you must work under a budget. She is the one that calls you after a BOD meeting to offer support, compliment (s), and/or where you screwed up. It is with the EOM that you share truisms with. Prior to my presidency, **Kathi Bassett** and I were mere acquaintances. We now share a friendship that I will forever be grateful for. Thank you Kathi!!!!

In closing, I leave those that I have served with my fondest appreciation for providing me the opportunity to serve you, especially during a pandemic. You have all been most understanding.

Thank you,

Kevin Mulligan*CR - President of RENY



WITH COLLETTE, YOU CAN BE SURE YOU HAVE A **SAFE**, FUN AND EXCITING TIME!

YOU, YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY CAN RECEIVE MEMBER PRICING THROUGH **RENY!**

SANTA FE NASHVILLE EGYPT TUSCANY

ALASKA COSTA RICA SOUTH AFRICA HAWAII

ROME AND THE AMALFI COAST POLAND GREECE



ORAL HEALTH by Mary Ella Moeller, RENY Health Chair

Aging comes with gray hair, wrinkles, forgetting things, and some very important health issues. Dental care is often an overlooked aspect of overall healthcare among older adults. Even those with dentures need to practice good dental care.

Many retirees do not have dental insurance which may cause difficulties. Pressure is being put on Congress to prioritize dental care not covered by Medicare.

The health of your mouth, teeth, and gums can affect your general health. The mouth teems with mostly harmless bacteria, but it is also the entry point to your digestive and respiratory tracts, and some of the bacteria can cause disease. Good daily dental care is often overlooked. Usually with normal daily brushing and flossing there is no problem.

With poor daily hygiene, bacteria can cause tooth decay and gum disease. Some medications can cause dry mouth which can lead to disease.

Ideally, one should have a dental check-up two times a year, unless your dentist/hygienist recommends more often. Brushing and flossing may not be the most effective home care routines. Proxabrushes (type of interdental cleaning tool), soft-picks, and toothpicks might be a better option for cleaning between teeth. And don't be afraid to ask questions to your dentist.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION by Rod Driscoll, VP for Legislation



The Legislative Action Committee members had a productive year advocating at the state and Federal levels for issues important to our members. You never get all of what you're asking for, but there was significant progress on a number of issues.

Many thanks for your support of the LAC and its hard working members!

Legislative Highlights

In New York and at the Federal level RENY made great progress on most of our agenda, with some issues unresolved that will be the focus of future advocacy efforts and discussions at the RENY Convention in October.

- **The \$1.9 billion Federal COVID relief bill, with \$100 billion to NY, ended the state budget crisis.** Schools across the state were in danger of insolvency due to COVID and a 20% cut in school aid, endangering our retirement benefits.
- **School spending will be at record levels for the coming year!** The substantial increase in school aid bodes well for next year's budget season and also protects retiree benefits.
- **Bills requiring safe staffing of hospitals and nursing homes passed,** securing quality care for sick and elderly New Yorkers.
- **The return of the "Millionaire's Tax".** The \$4.3 billion in new money could be used for creation of a rainy day fund and will provide new revenues going forward into next year.

Continued on page 4...

Legislative Action, cont'd

- **While RENY did not advocate for legalization**, 40% of the revenues created by legalizing Marijuana will go toward counseling and drug treatment programs.
- **Committee formed at the state level to study the extent of abuse in nursing home and hospitals.**

Ongoing Issues

- **NY State is one of the few states that does not have mandated reporting of elder abuse.** We will continue to support creation of a reporting mandate for providers on this issue.
- **Increasing the COLA base amount for determining pension benefits:** Now that the 2021 budget crisis has passed, the LAC will be advocating this Fall for this issue to be addressed in the 2022 budget.
- **Lower Prescription Drug Costs:** We will continue to support bills at the state and Federal levels to regulate prescription drug costs and control fees charged by pharmacy benefit managers.
- **Most of the NY Congressional delegation supports the Senate's \$1 trillion infrastructure proposal** that would upgrade many roads, bridges and public property, statewide. It would also provide funding for expansion of rural broadband, a proposal that has widespread support.
- **The "Human Infrastructure" Bill**, regarding care giving for the disabled and elderly, universal pre-kindergarten, subsidized child care, free community college, national paid family leave, extended child tax credits, Medicare expansion and an assortment of environmental initiatives. It was recently reported out of committee by Senate Democrats. The House version is ready for a vote in the full House of Representatives.

WHERE ARE THE BEANS???



SYRACUSE, N.Y. (WSYR-TV) –If you've been searching for Grandma Brown's Baked Beans, you're not alone. In fact, the Your Stories team has gotten several questions about them.

Newschannel 9 spoke with Sandra Brown, the president of the Mexico-based company, who says they are getting a lot of calls about the beans too. Brown says like many other businesses, they too have a staffing shortage. Once they have a full production crew, they hope to

start making the beans that everyone has grown to love.

As of right now, it's unclear when you can expect to see them on store shelves. *Editors note*— I found the recipe online and made them last night...they tasted just like the original Grandma Browns!! Here is the recipe:

1 tsp baking soda
Water to cover
3oz cooked bacon
1 medium onion
(optional)

1 pound Navy Beans
1 tsp salt
1/4 dark brown sugar
1 bay leaf
(optional)

- add 1 teaspoon baking soda to 6 cups water.
- bring water to a boil.
- sort through beans for debris.
- add navy beans to water.
- boil 10 minutes then turn heat off.
- cover pot.
- let sit overnight.
- rinse beans well.
- add beans and all other ingredients to oven proof pot with tight fitting lid.
- stir well.
- add water until beans are just covered.
- cover pot with lid.
- bake 5 to 6 hours at 300°F.
- every hour stir and add water to cover if beans are drying out.
- final product should be a thick and not runny.



COMMUNITY SERVICE REPORT by Eileen Holmes*CR, Chairperson



As I reviewed the Community Service reports from November 2020 through November 2021, it was wonderful to find that despite the problems brought on by the continuing COVID pandemic, our members completed a wide range of Community Service activities in the last 12 months. A sampling of these projects include:

- ◆ **The North Central Zone's** "Coats for Kids" program provided new coats, hats and mittens for over 50 needy children thanks to generous monetary donations and planning and organizing an outdoor meeting place to present these items.
- ◆ The "Love Your Library" program donated \$600 to six different libraries and the zone, working with The Partnerships for Northern NY Community Foundation presented two \$1000 Future Educator scholarships.
- ◆ **The Central Western Zone** provided \$500 for food pantries to be split among their county units and Wayne and Wyoming counties added more money from their treasuries. Wyoming County donated \$100 to each school district in their county to be used as a Christmas gift for a needy student. Seneca County members made individual donations to an animal shelter and to the United Way. For the fall and winter 2021 season, Wayne County plans to hold a toy drive, Ontario County will donate to "The Family Promise" and the CWZ will donate items to the Coldwater House (for women and children) which is connected with the Open Door Mission in Rochester.
- ◆ **The Eastern Zone** had members volunteer at the Capitol District Food Bank in June. Individual units awarded a \$500 scholarship, a \$250 teacher grant, purchased \$200 worth of books and toys for children living in a Safe Against Violence home through their "Buckets of Joy" program. Last winter, the Green County unit donated to food pantries and gave sweat pants, socks, hats and mittens to school nurses for handouts to needy children. Throughout 2021, individuals worked to help animals through Pets Without People and others made quilts for Project Linus.
- ◆ **The Long Island Zone** delivered individual-sized toiletries to Beacon House for needy veterans, donated food to the summer breakfast/lunch program at Helping Makes U Happy and donated snacks to Maureen's Haven, a homeless shelter for adults.
- ◆ **The Northeastern Zone** ran a very successful summer food drive to assist families with children home from school, presented the NEZ Karl Kramer Scholarship and the NEZ Kramer Educator Award. The zone provided gifts to needy children through their toy drive and collected over \$600 to donate to area food banks.
- ◆ **The Central Zone** the Oneida-Herkimer unit donated \$100 each to four different food banks in their area and gave out two \$600 OHCRTA scholarships. The Oswego unit collected over \$500 through their newsletter asking for donations to help local food banks.
- ◆ **The Southeastern Zone's** Mid-Hudson Area unit presented four scholarships in June 2021. The zone continues to collect new socks for needy adults and children.
- ◆ **The Northern Zone** awarded two high school scholarships and the Clifton-Fine-Edwards unit awarded their 2021 P.A. Miranda scholarship. Individual NZ members worked on civic projects, including "Art in the Park" and a 5K walk to raise funds for the "Save our Schoolhouse" campaign in St. Lawrence County.
- ◆ **The Western Zone** continued to collect books for Flight's Honor, socks for needy individuals and person-sized toiletries. They have made a connection through a Vietnam veteran to distribute these toiletries to needy vets.
- ◆ **The Southern Zone's** Corning Area RTA awarded three scholarships in June 2021 to seniors who plan to major in education. Individual members supported local food banks, volunteered for Meals on Wheels and one member donated an entire federal stimulus check to needy persons. The Eastern Broome Branch has tentative plans to meet in November 2021 and hope to resume their support of Toys for Tots, the Humane Society, CHOW and other causes. Likewise, Western Broome/Eastern Tioga, Schuyler and Cortland area hope to resume their Community Service activities when Covid Delta variant concerns abate.

Through our Community Service work, RENY members provided food, clothing, financial aid, comfort and kindness across the ten zones of New York State. Congratulations and thank you to our Community Service Zone Chairs and all our generous members on a job well done!

**FRIENDLY SERVICE by
Judith Corigliano, VP for Friendly Service**



Another year has flown by and with its new and continuing challenges. We navigated more masks-wearing, vaccines, good, bad and sad news. Thank goodness for those behind the scenes who keep us going....the Zone/ Unit chairs and keyworkers....the faithful card writers, callers, bearer of gifts, etc. Consider taking the time to personally thank them. To many of us, those 200+ volunteers may not be known to you or to me as State VP for Friendly Service, but a hearty thank you goes out to all of our leaders and workers who often may wear more than one hat in service to RENY's bigger goals, but as always, helping retired educators moving forward. Just in case you are looking for low intensity, stay at home, postage provided, unpaid job.... your pay is in "feel-good dollars" and bringing cheer, smiles, solace and assistance to fellow teachers....you could offer to be a key worker for your zone/unit. Be a part of one of the additional volunteer services available in RENY.

With special appreciation, I wish to thank the ZONE CHAIRS, a hundred-times over for you service to RENY and its retirees.

- Dell Ford Jordon - Central Zone**
- Barbara Rosecrans - Central Western Zone**
- Marjorie Leibowitz - Eastern Zone**
- Dee McKinnon and Alicia Winowsky- Long Island Zone**
- Linda Holley-North Central Zone**
- Ellen Smith - Northern Zone (new)**
- Kathy Caron - Northeastern Zone (new)**
- Donna Harness - Southeastern Zone**
- Bonnie Stratton -Southern Zone (new)**
- Thomas Giambra - Western Zone**



For your pleasure below are the 2020 Friendly Service stats reported

Friendly Service 8 ZONES reported as of 2/8/21	Totals
Unit/County Chairs	48
Key Worker	151
Visits	152
Phone calls	577
E-mails	820
USPS Greeting Cards sent	4811
Electronic (E-Cards)	693
Gifts/Celebrations for 90 yr. /shut ins	187
Recognition of 80 yr.(op)	129
Reported – money expended	\$5115.70



And as always, a thank you to RENY office staff for all that you do for us**Kathi Bassett, Kristen Cecala, and Debbie Barnes, Ret.**

In the spirit of Friendly Service, I thank you all for the privilege to have served as your State FS -VP for the past 2+years.



MEMBERSHIP REPORT by Lois Thornberg, VP for Membership

“Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all.” Dale Carnegie

I wanted to share this with everyone because I feel it sums up what we all need to think about with respect to our membership recruitment efforts. This past year or so it has seemed almost impossible to recruit new and past members due to the pandemic. However if we all continue with our best efforts we will come out ahead of this and RENY will thrive again.

I realize I have shared this thought with you before, but I need to reiterate it once again, since this will be my last opportunity as the VP for Membership: Membership is the life blood of our organization! Membership recruitment must be a movement involving ALL members of the organization. Retaining present and past members is as important as recruiting new members. Each one of us should focus on ways to share the RENY experience with past, present, and future retirees.

Word of mouth and one on one personal meetings/discussions is most likely the best way. However, that has become very difficult in the past year or so. Contacting potential members by phone allows you the opportunity to talk with them about the benefits of RENY membership. A personal invitation to attend a meeting or event goes much further than having them read it on a poster or a newspaper ad. Other ways to get the message out is through social media, e-mail, posters, and social events such as book clubs and other social get-togethers, coffee breaks, luncheons, and happy hours, community fairs, and fund-raising events. Remember it is never too early to recruit members, every member is a recruiter, and should focus on the task on hand.

Think about this: If you had only 30 seconds to encourage someone to join RENY- what would you say to them? Let's try something like the following.

“Retired Educators of New York (RENY) is a dynamic organization of retired educators working together to support and strengthen the quality of life for all retired educators, their families, and communities. We are the **ONLY** statewide organization that works **SOLELY** on behalf of retired educators. Our members work within several committees to assure your pension and livelihood. These include Legislative Action both State and Federal, Health Information Network, Financial Assistance Programs, and Friendly Services. Several discounted programs are also available including dental and travel. Experience the joy of attending social events and activities our members participate in. Do you know of anywhere else you can get all this in one place? “

The past four years have been busy for the Membership Committee. The major Unit Project was completed last year, identifying the various units within the 10 Zones. It resulted in the astonishing awareness of how many unit members are not actual RENY members. We are appealing to all RENY members to encourage these unit members to join RENY. Make them aware of what would be afforded to them for just pennies a day.

There were also three significant membership initiatives implemented: 5 for \$50 for individuals (in effect until December 31, 2021), \$1000 for the Zone with the most new members proportionately (suspended for this past year), and a discounted 3-year membership (available until December 31, 2022).

I want to thank and commend my entire committee and the staff in the RENY office for the diligent work they have continued to do, especially during this trying time of COVID. A special shout goes out to **Kevin Mulligan*CR** for all his advice, support, and assistance in making the ideas become a reality. Thank you for everything you have done to help make RENY a successful organization.



As Winnie the Pooh said: “How lucky I am to have to have something that makes saying Goodbye so hard.”

RENY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

JULY 2021 - ALBANY

Photo credit Carol Lord*CR





ZONE NEWS

Central Zone by Ray Pitcher- President

If you are planning to travel, or go to any kind of mass public event you may need to have a copy of your COVID-19 vaccination. You can take an electronic copy on your phone. Go to <https://epass.ny.gov/home> and download your shot history today.

Oswego County Retired Teachers Association by Colette Astoria - OCTRA President



Donations to the Food Bank in the amount of \$1880 were collected and divided between 9 Oswego County Pantries by RENEY of Oswego.



2021 RENEY of Oswego scholarship winners;

Ashleigh Anderson of Mexico, Hannah Sywulski of Central Square, Victoria Stoutenger of Fulton, and Maya Upcraft of Oswego all met with local officers and their parents at the Acropolis for a luncheon in their honor. All applicants are seeking a college degree in Education.





ZONE NEWS

CENTRAL WESTERN ZONE

by Phyllis Dunlap assisted by Lynn Hefferon



The Barrie Fleegel Memorial Active Educator Grant is to honor Mr. Fleegel who was very active as a teacher and administrator in Marion Schools and became very active in his retirement in the county, zone, and state teachers' retirement system. He believed "to accomplish great things we must not only act, but also dream, not only plan, but also believe." This award is given to an active teacher who is furthering his/her education and will follow this belief.

Joyce Pittenger, president of the Wayne County Retired Teachers' Association, presented this award to Ella Hotchkiss, an ESL teacher in the Sodus School District, left in the picture. Ella has always wanted to be a teacher because she loves working with kids and building relationships with them, and she wanted to follow in her father's footsteps. She enjoyed both Spanish and English in college and became

hooked on the ESL program. She taught for two years in Livingston County before coming to the Sodus School District and firmly believes in supporting literacy. She is furthering her education in working toward her master's degree at Houghton College in the field of literacy.

Wayne County Retired Teachers News

Submitted by Joyce Pittenger, President

Our county organization is pleased to have sent out our summer newsletter to our members with information from our county and inviting them to attend our autumn meeting/luncheon at the Sodus Bay Heights Country Club in Sodus Point. This summer President **Joyce Pittenger** sent out 55 letters to new retirees in the county, inviting them to the luncheon and to join our organization.

Wayne County is celebrating its bicentennial in 2023 and the committee has been active for several years planning various activities toward this celebration. Gene Bavis, Walworth Town Historian, Rosa Fox, Huron Town Historian, and Peter Evans, Wayne County Historian have spent untold hours with many other committee members to make this a special event.

A memories book and calendar are in the works. Some of the events being planned are the Williamson Apple Blossom Festival, Peppermint Days in Lyons, Wayne County Fair and Parade, Canal Town Days in Palmyra, and the Wayne County Apple Tasting Tour in October. For information you can check the website at www.waynecounty200.com





ZONE NEWS

Wyoming County Retired Teachers News

Submitted by Sandra Kushner, President

ON THE ROAD FOR RENY AND CWZ

One of the “perks” of being President of the Wyoming County Retired Teachers’ Associations and the Past Co-President of the Central Western Zone is traveling to schools to present active educators with awards to continue their graduate work or grant check to implement a unique new program for their students. During the month of June, I traveled to four schools within the zone to present both the RENY Hudson-Kramer Memorial Grant and the Central Western Zone Barrie Fleege Memorial Active Educator Award. I am pictured below with each recipient.

Each year, the Central Western Zone (CWZ) of RENY offers teachers, both in public and parochial schools, for use in defraying the costs of graduate work through a competitive grant process. Barrie Fleege served in retired teacher leadership positions for Wayne County, the CWZ and RENY. Barrie’s life motto exemplifies the award *“To accomplish great things we must not only act, but also dream, not only plan but also believe”*.

Traveling to Belmont, Genesee Valley Central School’s Kristen Sanasith is completing her Childhood Educations Certification to include Birth-2nd Grade. Her application states, “I’ve known I was meant to be a teacher since the second grade. I am drawn to the earliest stages of literacy development. My goal is to invest in the youngest years of our district’s program as we continue to support our young learners and their families”.

CWZ – Central Western Zone of RENY is made up of the ten counties of Allegany, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, Wyoming and Yates.

Barrie Fleege Memorial Active Educator Award Recipients



Allegany County
Genesee Valley CSD
Kristen Sanasith is
working toward Birth to 2nd
Grade degree



Wyoming County
Perry Central School
Kyle Russell 7th grade Science teacher and
Giancarlo Levano Instrumental Music teacher



Allegany County
Cuba-Rushford Elementary
Physical Education Teacher
Janet Prentice



ZONE NEWS

EASTERN ZONE

by Pamela Love, Public Relations Chair



Eastern Zone President, **Janice Mullins**, said that the Annual Meeting of the Eastern Zone was held on September 23rd at Turf Tavern in Scotia, NY. There was a business meeting including election of officers followed by a luncheon. Pictured to the left is the lickem-stickem get together to send out invitations to members for the Annual Meeting. Pictured : (left - right) **Joyce Notarnicola, Mark Notarnicola, Warren Burton, Gloria Ciejka, Albert Ciejka, Janice Mullins, Virginia Madore, Diane Hahn CR, Jack DeWeese CR, Carolyn Bovee, Mary Boice and Rosalie Oliver**

Many county units in Eastern Zone will be holding Fall Meetings, the majority for the first time in person since the pandemic started. **Bill Naple**, President of the Fulton County Unit, said that they was a meeting on September 22nd and their unit was looking for a new slate of officers. **Penny Bellinger**, President of the Otsego County unit, said that their unit hosted a 'Not Going Back To School' Golf Tournament on September 1 in order to raise funds for Family Services so that they may get school supplies for needy children in their area. She also said that they had a Business and Social Meeting on October 6th. **Marge Leibowitz**, President of Retired Educators of the Capital Region (RCRTA), said that their unit had a meeting on September 15th for a business meeting and social luncheon. **Margaret Dafeldecker**, President of the Schoharie County unit, said that their unit had their meeting on September 15th and that meeting included election of officers. **Rosalind Carron**, President of the Upper Montgomery unit said that their unit held a luncheon meeting on September 9th. New retirees will be entitled to a free lunch. **Mary Boice**, Proxy for Columbia County, said that their unit has decided to wait before having a meeting. Their unit is proceeding with an abundance of caution at this time. **Ellie Cusick**, President of Green County, said that their unit is waiting for the booster shot before conducting an in person meeting. **Pat Reynolds**, President of the Delaware County unit, said that their unit has not finalized the Fall plans at this time.



Pat Reynolds, pictured was Recording Secretary of Eastern Zone for many years and just stepped down at the Eastern Zone Annual Meeting held this September. The picture where she is in sitting with an instrument was taken as a member of The Walton Community Band in Delaware County.



1. Ann Stafford and Rosalie Oliver roasting hotdogs
2. Marge Leibowitz and Virginia Madore enjoying the weenie roast



Labor Day Weenie Roast



ZONE NEWS

LONG ISLAND ZONE by Eileen Holmes*CR, Zone President

Continuing concerns about the rising infection rate of the Delta variant pushed the LI Zone to postpone its September Annual Meeting. Plans are now being made to hold an in-person luncheon/meeting on April 27, 2022 at the Bellport Country Club. In-person board meetings are also on hold and teleconferencing has become the go-to method for the board to carry on business about Community Service activities, newsletter deadlines, Friendly Service undertakings, news from RENY, membership concerns, Health information and planning for the 2022 RENY Convention at Turning Stone, which the Long Island Zone is scheduled to host.

In Community Service news, in spite of COVID problems, the zone was able to make food donations in July and August, and get personal toiletries delivered to Beacon House for distribution to needy veterans in October. **Robert Svoboda**, Community Service Chair for the East End RTA unit presented the unit's annual holiday donation to a local school district for a needy family.

The Long Island Zone is saddened by the loss of long-time member **Lucretia Ruppel** who passed away on August 1, 2021 in her 95th year. Lucretia was awarded the Zone's prestigious Silver Tray Award for her years of service to LIZ and she served on the state level as Vice President of Friendly Service. Lucretia was very conscientious about attending LIZ annual meetings and NYSRTA/RENY conventions. She was with us in September, 2019, the last luncheon before the COVID shutdown and she was a delegate in 2018, traveling on the charter bus to Turning Stone, 92 years young with her walker and her cheerful, keen interest in all the convention meetings and news! Her spirit and dedication will be missed.



LIZ President **Eileen Holmes*CR** and Helping Makes U Happy founder Keith Caputo at the donation drop off office in Center Moriches



Liz members **Gini Stype** and **Eileen Holmes** at Maureen's Haven's Homeless Shelter with house managers Dwayne and Matt

With Deepest Sympathy



Lucretia Ruppel at the 2018 Convention



ZONE NEWS

NORTH CENTRAL ZONE

by Patricia Newell and Nancy Roberts*CR, Co Public Relations Chairs

It has been a summer mixed with sunshine and clouds. A thread of hopefulness has run all through these days. People have been getting together enjoying each other’s company and engaging in activities once again. NCZ members have made the most out of this sweet season.



On July 21st, **David J. Schryver**, co-author of the book Waterfalls of New York State, and his wife, **Marcia Schryver**, lead a tour of the St. Lawrence County waterfalls. **Dr. Jim & Pat Newell** were lucky enough to be on this trip. They hiked on beautiful trails through the woods to view breathtaking waterfalls. Full of enthusiasm, they took in such sights as Basford Falls, Sinclair Falls, Rainbow Falls, and Copper Rock Falls. This hungry group of explorers feasted on a hearty lunch at the Village Inn in Harrisville on the way home. It was an exciting, memorable day. David’s skill as a photographer can be appreciated in the photos posted with this article. Pictured to the left are Pat, Jim, Marcia and David.

trip to the Wild Center in Tupper Lake, below, on August 12th. **Bill Haller** served as an informal guide for nine NCZ visitors who enjoyed the amazing sights, sounds & challenges of the Wild Center. This group also enjoyed sharing a dinner together at the end of their adventurous day at the Village Inn in



David Schryver, pictured to the right with his wife Marcia, is the NCZ Travel & Leisure Chairperson. He organized a trip to the Wild Center in Tupper Lake, below, on August 12th. **Bill Haller** served as an informal guide for nine NCZ visitors who enjoyed the amazing sights, sounds & challenges of the Wild Center. This group also enjoyed sharing a dinner together at the end of their adventurous day at the Village Inn in Harrisville. David has two theatre trips planned to the Rev Theatre Company in Auburn for August and September. These fieldtrips are wonderful social outings that provide fun and educational opportunities for our members. From hiking in the woods to attending entertaining musicals, there is something for everyone to enjoy.



See more from North Central Zone on the next page...



ZONE NEWS

NORTH CENTRAL ZONE

by Patricia Newell and Nancy Roberts*CR, Co Public Relations Chairs



From L to R: NEZ President Woody Lyndaker with Dick Bushnell

At the Executive Council meeting on August 11th, **Richard “Dick” Bushnell** was recognized and honored for his 22 years of dedicated service as the NCZ Legislative Chair. Through the years, Dick has shown his savvy intuition, perseverance, and determination in representing the needs of retirees to the legislators of Jefferson & Lewis County. He will be a hard man to replace in this job. Along with gifts, Dick and his wife, **Carol Bushnell**, were wished many more years of health & happiness in their retirement.

Plans were made for the NCZ Fall Business Luncheon to be held at the Ramada Inn in Watertown on September 14th. We were delighted to have **Lawrence Kassin** from the Rod Serling School of Fine Arts in Binghamton as our guest speaker. Many of you may recall attending Mr. Kassin’s exciting workshop presentation at the NYSRTA/RENY Convention at Turning Stone in October

2019. Mr. Kassin talked about the life and times of **Rod Serling**, who continues to be a fascinating and relevant personality.



NORTHEASTERN ZONE

by Tracey Howard, Public Relations Chair



As a recently appointed Public Relations Chair, I am just beginning to get my feet wet on this new position. I continue to be impressed by the dedication of our board and our members. We recently launched our Facebook Page (Northeastern Zone RENY) and are excited about the feedback generated so far. Hopefully, it will be a great way to engage with current and future members and encourage them to participate in our zone activities.

Our educator awards committee is pleased to honor our Hudson/Kramer Memorial Grant winners of 2021. Jennifer Shutts, of AuSable Valley Middle /High School is our \$1000 award winner. Ms. Shutts will purchase a slab roller for pottery projects so that every 7th grade Studio in Art student can create tiles based on the culture and local history of the community, resulting in the installation of a mural to be enjoyed by students and the community members alike. The equipment will be used for years to come to further enhance the art program. Pictured is Jennifer receiving her check from, left, RENY from **Alison Brown**, Co-chair of educator awards, and far right, **Glenda Rowe**, our NEZ RENY president.





ZONE NEWS

NORTHEASTERN ZONE by Tracey Howard, Public Relations Chair

Our second winner is Heather Olson of Boquet Valley Central School. Her \$500 award will be used to purchase equipment and provide professional development in order to help students create original podcasts accessible to the public. Heather and Jennifer have promised to send us pictures and updates as their grants are put to good use with their students. Pictured below on left is Heather receiving her check from RENY from **Alison Brown** and **Glenda Rowe**. The picture on the right is a group photo of Jennifer and Heather along with Allison and Glenda.



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ZONE NEWS

NORTHERN ZONE

by Linda Crosby, Public Relations Chair

In the waning days of summer some thirty-plus years ago, two young teachers, thrilled to be released from summer jobs and not yet wanting to think about the impending school year, embarked upon a winding journey across the wooded center of Maine on the way to an adventure circling the Canadian maritime province of Nova Scotia. As we furtively glanced at the dense forests lining Maine’s Route 2, we were sorely disappointed to not find moose around each bend in the road. I remember thinking that this was probably the only place and time to see moose in my lifetime. Decades later, in the summer of 2021, I followed the rugged curves of the Salmon River just a few miles south of my hometown of Malone on one of my almost daily road trips. I rounded a sharp bend in the road in the Adirondack Foothills hamlet of Chasm Falls and abruptly braked to a stop behind a subcompact sedan. In awe, I watched two moose tower over the little red car and then, despite their ungainly appearance, nimbly step over a guard rail on their way down the slope to the river. They looked like twins; I named them Lucy and Ethel, although I (thankfully) never got close enough to look up and discover what gender they might be. A long ago wish fulfilled, I sat there for quite a while replaying the whimsical, stunning image of the two moose swiftly vanishing from sight. It was a summer made a bit brighter like the sparkling, rushing ripples of the Salmon River that I love to follow.

Continuing to meet in person, the Northern Zone Executive Board of Directors gathered on August 17, 2021, in Potsdam, to conduct regular business, such as, secretary’s minutes, president’s report, treasurer’s report, and committee reports. Highlights of the meeting included a discussion about how the membership incentive money (\$1,000 from the state RENY) could be spent to promote membership, a discussion about the arrangements for the upcoming September 9 membership meeting at the St. Lawrence Power and Equipment Museum, debate about the bylaw changes concerning unit membership/state membership and a review of the 2021 resolutions. The group then worked on preparing the invitations, president’s letter, and newsletter for the fall membership meeting for mailing.



Alice Galvin, Secretary/Historian, Joe Russo, Unit President and Debby Yartz, Treasurer/Friendly Service



Rae Louise Tate, Guest Miriam Parks, Edna Seifert, Sue Persson Dumke, guest speaker Allen Ditch



New retiree Mary Kay Durham, Debbie LaRocque, Sally Capone, Alice Galvin



ZONE NEWS

NORTHERN ZONE

by Linda Crosby, Public Relations Chair



While I was chasing moose this summer, other NZ members were busy volunteering at the Franklin County Fair in August. **Cheryl Learned**, pictured on right and **Pat Hooker** welcomed visitors to the Franklin County House of History Exhibit to view the display on weather. **Gayla LePage**, pictured on left worked as Manager of the Vegetable Hall helping local folks present their produce for competition; she has created several new contests, such as, Fans' Favorite Decorated Cake, the Recycling Contest, Chopped-Franklin County Fair Way and a King Arthur Baking Competition. She hung a nice, informational RENEW/NZ banner in her hall with RENEW applications available.



NZ members were pleased to present the 2021 Ross C. Hudson Scholarship(\$400) to St. Lawrence County resident Sadie O'Neil, on left, daughter of Kevin and Marci O'Neil of Ogdensburg, N.Y. An ambitious student of the Ogdensburg City School District, Sadie graduated in the top ten of her class while participating in soccer (team captain), cheerleading, National Honor Society, Business and Marketing Honor Society and other groups. She was named a NYS Scholar Athlete (Soccer/ Cheerleading) for three years making First Team-All Northern in both sports. She earned the Section X Sportsmanship Award and the Athlete of Distinction Award as a Senior. She volunteered for Youth Lacrosse and Minor Hockey, blood drives, as City Recreation Cheer and Gymnastics Camps Coach, and many other community groups/events while often holding part-time jobs. A member of a family with many educators, Katie plans to major in Physical Education at SUNY Cortland and hopes to pass on the wonderful lessons she learned from athletics and academics to her future students.

The 2021 Janet P. Dana Scholarship(\$400) was presented to Franklin County resident Adyson Miller, on right, daughter of Tasha Miller of Chateaugay, N.Y., who graduated in the top ten of her senior class from the Chateaugay Central School District. She participated in cheerleading, volleyball and book club, while maintaining a heavy academic schedule. While working at Poppydale Farm as the Assistant Herd Manager and Calf Breeder, Adyson was very active in her 4-H group, receiving many awards and honors, such as, Franklin County Dairy Princess(2019), Junior and Senior 4-H-er, and New York State Guernsey Princess(2020). She also earned many school honors including Honor Society membership, the Nicole Fleury Award(2020), and the University of Rochester George Eastman Young Leaders Award(2020). Her experiences as a Cornell University Dairy Leader, Franklin County Dairy Judging Team Member, 4-H President, and FFA Historian, Vice-President and President highly motivated her to follow her passion to become an Agriculture Educator at Cornell University this fall.





ZONE NEWS

NORTHERN ZONE

by Linda Crosby, Public Relations Chair

Joe Russo, President of the Clifton-Fine-Edwards Retired Teachers, was delighted to report that their unit members happily gathered for their annual summer meeting at the Twin Lakes Hotel in Star Lake. Guest speaker Allen Ditch, President of the Wanakena Historical Society, spoke about the Wanakena History Center, which officially opened on August 21.



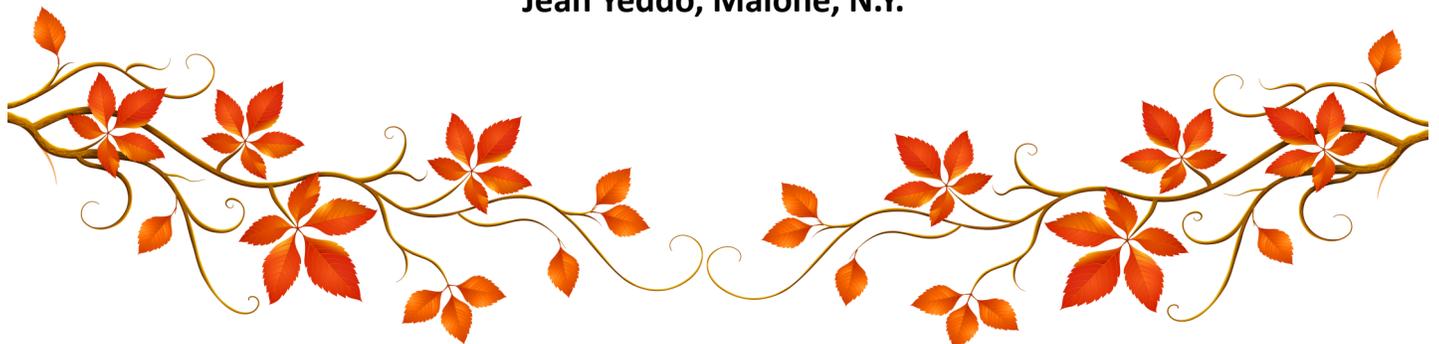
Sally Capone with Garrett Simmons

Scholarship Chairperson **Sally Capone** presented the 2021 P.A. Miranda Scholarship of \$1,500 to Clifton-Fine Central School graduate and Salutatorian Garrett Simmons, son of Mr. and Mrs. James Simmons of Oswegatchie, N.Y. Garrett will attend Clarkson University in the Fall to major in history.

Thank you to NZ members **Chuck Yartz** for all the photographs of the meeting and **Alice Galvin** for sending them on to me with much information.

In Memory of our Northern Zone Friends

- Barbara Hutchins, Moira, N.Y. Rita Murphy, Ogdensburg, N.Y.**
- William Lenney, Richmond, TX Howard Bariteau, Hammond, N.Y.**
- Elizabeth Brusso, Potsdam, N.Y. Anne Shaheen, Tupper Lake, N.Y.**
- Jean Yeddo, Malone, N.Y.**





ZONE NEWS

SOUTHEASTERN ZONE

by Maureen Coffey, Public Relations Chair

Senior year is scholarship season for the best of the best and **Barbara Topps** has shared the amazing accomplishments of this year's recipients of MARTA's awards. Here is her story.

"At the beginning of June, the Mid-Hudson Area Retired Teachers met for the first time in over a year and a half to celebrate with our four 2021 scholarship winners as well as our four 2020 scholarship winners (who were mentioned in last year's York State). We enjoyed a lovely breakfast in an open air tent overlooking the 18th hole at a local golf club. We also were inspired by the speeches these future teachers shared with us. Each student received a \$3000 scholarship.

Ryan Lerner, a Washingtonville HS graduate, plans to major in Spanish education At SUNY Cortland. The past two years Ryan worked as a lifeguard and swim instructor where several of his students were emerging English speakers. This experience motivated him to become fluent in Spanish and build a career as a teacher. Last summer, he translated Social-Emotional Learning books into Spanish for a local K-5 school district's "Newcomer" program. He then recorded them, using a green screen and iMovie to export for teachers (including bilingual and ELL support teachers) to use with their students and post in Google classrooms. After a dozen SEL books and translations later, his confidence in speaking a second language grew. This volunteer experience showed him how creative teachers can be to find solutions to problems and inspired him to enter the dynamic field of education. His future goal is to make sure that no kid ever feels "alone" among a crowd because of a language barrier.

Sean Zupko, a Valley Central HS graduate, plans to attend SUNY Cortland where he will major in Chemistry/Physics Education. After earning the rank of Eagle Scout, Sean was able to focus on the younger scouts and help them achieve their goals. While being a scout, Sean found that he excelled at enabling the younger scouts to develop their confidence and skills. This experience played an important role in his choice of a future career. He had inspiring science teachers who encouraged him and developed his love of physics and chemistry, so he is planning on having a double major in physics and chemistry in order to become a high school science teacher. He also hoped to become a swim coach and run Science Olympiad, a club that he participated in for many years.

Tom Magee, a Warwick HS graduate, will pursue a degree in math education at SUNY New Paltz. Tom has served on the Warwick Ambulance Junior Corp, and a Chosen Leadership Team. He has been a Taekwondo instructor and a founder of a Social Justice Club. In addition to all of this, he has been a member of a Robotics Team and won a Safe Homes Community Service Award.

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ZONE NEWS

SOUTHEASTERN ZONE **by Maureen Coffey, Public Relations Chair**

Mallory Conklin, a Port Jervis HS graduate, plans to pursue a degree in Elementary Education. Mallory played softball and basketball in addition to being on the cheerleading team. She is a member of the National Honor Society. She's served on Student Council and was the City of Port Jervis Community Youth Council Liaison. She will be attending Mount Saint Mary College in the fall.

We extend our congratulations and best wishes for future success to these four impressive young people!

At this time, we'd like to take a moment to thank our outgoing president, **Tony Colombo** for an often thankless but always heartfelt job well done! Tony volunteered to take over the role of President of the Southeastern Zone seven years ago when the future of SEZ was in serious doubt. **Leon Harrold*CR**, the president before Tony, had already served his term (and then some) and no one was stepping up to take over. Tony had to literally hit the ground running because in addition to leading our zone, SEZ was scheduled to host the state convention the following year. **Ed Coffey** stepped up as chairman of the NYSRTA convention and together, with immeasurable help from our dedicated members, SEZ hosted a terrific convention! And, what's even more important, we had tons of fun and forged lasting friendships in the process! We wish Mary Ellen and Tony our best and thank them for their years of service.

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

When we think of autumn, we as retired educators, often think about school. The excitement of learning about new things, seeing our friends again and making new ones. In a way, it's the same now. We have been able to have some meetings again, learn what's new in RENY, see our RENY friends, and also make new ones.

During the past year, Western Zone has continued to hold Executive Committee meetings. In September our annual Western Zone meeting was held. Due to COVID, it was in an altered format. Only Board of Directors attended, but we were happy to be able to take care of important business and to reconnect with some members in person. In October, our delegates will represent Western Zone in Albany. That too is exciting. The fact that delegates are able to attend the state meeting this year is so important for each zone. When our delegates can interact and make decisions in person, matters can be more thoroughly discussed and therefore members are able to reach a thoughtful consensus.

There's more happy news and reasons to celebrate. This year marks milestone birthdays for two of our honorary Board of Directors. **Janice Weitz** celebrated her 100th birthday and **Allie Withers** celebrated turning 98. Both ladies so fully represent the best of Western Zone.

Continued on next page...



ZONE NEWS

WESTERN ZONE

by Audrey Seidel and Nancy White, Public Relations Co- Chairs



Allie Withers is a retired educator and certified social worker from Jamestown, NY. She spent 26 years in the classroom and has been involved in numerous community organizations. She has always been very proud of her Swedish heritage. In 2002 she received the Jamestown Community College’s Award of Merit for teaching conversational Swedish at the college for 15 years. She has held various positions in Western Zone including serving as a delegate at the annual state NYSRTA convention. At present Allie is an Honorary Board member of Western Zone. **Happy Birthday Allie!**



Janice Weitz spent 25 years as a High School English Teacher and Library Media Specialist. She also taught Journalism at St. Bonaventure University during the summers. Throughout her teaching career, Janice also served as advisor to school yearbook/publications and drama productions. She has been very active in many clubs and organizations such as Federation of Women’s Clubs, DAR, and the International Institute Women’s Council who sponsor Naturalization ceremonies for new citizens from many countries. Janice has been an active member of her unit, zone, and state retired teachers’ organizations. She has been a member of both the Chautauqua and Eastern Erie units and has served as EERTA President. Janice has been a member of Western Zone Board of Directors and is currently an Honorary Director.

An interest in travel and learning has always been an integral part of Janice’s life. Trips included visits to Central America, Africa, Asia, and Europe where she immersed herself in learning about their cultures. Also Janice takes advantage of all the educational programs that are offered at The Chautauqua Institute, near where she resides.

Janice Weitz celebrated her 100th birthday in some wonderful ways. She was presented with an official proclamation celebrating her 100th birthday from the Holland Town Board.



Also for the first time in 30 years Janice was a passenger in a Cessna Skyhawk for a 20-minute flight that included a trip around Chautauqua Golf Club course where Amelia Earhart once famously landed in 1929 as well as flying over Janice’s home near Mayville, NY. Janice also received many cards and birthday celebrations that included a surprise luncheon given by some of her Western Zone friends. **Happy Birthday Janice!**

Western Zone members wish to acknowledge the contributions of Janice and Allie to our organization and wish them many more happy celebrations.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY LADIES!