

RENY
RETIREDCEDUCATORSOFNY

YORK
STATE

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Winter 2025/2026

A Message From Our President, Gayla LePage



Happy New Year all! As we get older every new year is special. May you all have a healthy and happy 2026.

We seem to have had a lot of winter already, at least here in the true north and in the western part of the state. Yes, I am sure there is more to come, but it is what it is.

I know many of you are already in the South enjoying the much nicer weather. I will be down there from the end of February to the end of April. I want to stay around for my grandchildren, and Phil has a hard time being away even that long.

I need to explain why this may be one of my shortest messages. The deadline for this edition, as you know comes in the middle of December which is busy for all of us. For me, this is an even crazier time. I am all tuckered out physically and mentally from writing many letters. I am one of the elves on the Elves on Main in Malone Elf Squad which is part of the Magical Red Mailbox Project. With this project, children around the village of Malone drop off letters in the red mailbox outside the village offices. We write individual letters that are mailed back to each child. In two weeks, the four elves have answered over 700 letters. It is a crazy time, but it helps me with the spirit of Christmas with my children grown.

With all that being said, one of my **top** priorities is leading this terrific organization to a prosperous future. I am always available. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me at any time.

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT REPORT

Submitted by **Judith Farmer*CR**

Winter Greetings from Western New York. While the ground here is covered with snow, my thoughts are on next October and the 2026 RENEY Annual Meeting. The Eastern Zone will be honored at the next convention, and under the leadership of **Janice Mullins**, they have already begun planning for that event. The office staff and I are researching workshops that will be both interesting and informative. I will keep you informed as the year progresses.

Additionally, I look forward to meeting some of you in person as I travel with our Vice President for Membership, **Michelle Claus**. We will visit as many zones as possible when the weather permits safe travel. I am looking forward to meeting with you then.

In the meantime, stay safe, warm, and positive.

NEW YORK STATE RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION					
BUDGET CODE	REVENUES	2024 ACTUAL	2025 PROPOSED	2025 Revised BUDGET	2026 PROPOSED
140	Dues-Annual	\$ 135,213.00	\$ 175,000.00	\$ 175,000.00	\$ 170,000.00
140A	Refund To Zones Annual Dues	\$ (45,071.00)	\$ (\$58,500.00)	\$ (58,500.00)	\$ (5,665.00)
	Net Total Dues	\$ 90,142.00	\$ 116,500.00	\$ 116,500.00	\$ 113,333.00
142	Dues-Life	\$ -	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 1,800.00
142A	Refund To Zones Life Dues	\$ -	\$ (1,125.00)	\$ (1,125.00)	\$ (600.00)
	Net Total Dues	\$ -	\$ 3,375.00	\$ 3,375.00	\$ 1,200.00
139 & 153	Convention Revenue	\$ 1,850.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
133	Dues-90yr.Olds	\$ 2,865.00	\$ 2,700.00	\$ 2,700.00	\$ 2,700.00
143	General Contributions	\$ 576.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
144	President Appeal Letter	\$ 56,142.09	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
143A	Insurance Trust	\$ 57,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 88,625.00
154	Misc. Revenue	\$ 4,096.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
156	Travel & Misc.	\$ 3,804.60	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -
206	Advertising Revenue				\$ -
TOTAL REVENUES		\$ 216,475.69	\$ 242,575.00	\$ 242,575.00	\$ 270,858.00
EXPENSES		2024 ACTUAL	2025 PROPOSED	2025 Revised BUDGET	2026 Proposed
	<u>ADMINISTRATION</u>				
160	Office Operating	\$ 13,608.22	\$ 17,500.00	\$ 17,500.00	\$ 17,500.00
161	Office Equipment	\$ 1,255.04	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
162-145	Supplies,Print,Postage	\$ 3,660.58	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
164	Salaries	\$ 141,841.00	\$ 142,000.00	\$ 142,000.00	\$ 146,260.00
164A	Stipends	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
165-167, 179	Payroll Taxes	\$ 11,465.40	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
178	Auditing	\$ 12,044.00	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 11,000.00
178A	Legal	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
180	Insurance / Ins. Disability	\$ 4,864.10	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
180A	Employee Health Insurance	\$ 24,500.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 28,000.00
180B	Employee Life Insurance	\$ 885.60	\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00
181	Employee Pension	\$ 19,232.30	\$ 18,460.00	\$ 18,460.00	\$ 20,000.00
185	Contingency	\$ 749.02	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
186	President's Appeal Mailing	\$ 7,588.13	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00
187	Merchant Service Fees	\$ 2,724.85	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,600.00
189	Membership Project Expense	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
191	Computer	\$ 11,530.12	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 14,000.00
193	Telephones and Equipment	\$ 3,425.87	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
197	Website	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 1,150.00	\$ 1,150.00	\$ 1,750.00
TOTAL		\$ 268,374.23	\$ 254,510.00	\$ 254,510.00	\$ 279,510.00

		<i>2024 ACTUAL</i>	<i>2025 PROPOSED</i>	<i>2025 Revised BUDGET</i>	<i>2026 Proposed</i>
	<u>OFFICERS</u>				
183	President's Travel	\$ 378.32	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
184	Other Officer's Travel	\$ -	\$ -		\$ -
182	President's Fund Outlay	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	TOTAL	\$ 378.32	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
	<u>MEETINGS</u>				
169	Executive Committee	\$ 10,161.48	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 11,000.00
173A	Annual Workshop Expense	\$ 19,332.02	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 18,000.00
172	Annual Convention Expense	\$ 28,115.13	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
	TOTAL	\$ 57,608.63	\$ 54,000.00	\$ 54,000.00	\$ 54,000.00
	<u>NEWSLETTER</u>				
163	York State	\$ 8,513.76	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 11,000.00
	TOTAL	\$ 8,513.76	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 11,000.00
		<i>2024 ACTUAL</i>	<i>2025 PROPOSED</i>	<i>2025 Revised BUDGET</i>	<i>2026 Proposed</i>
	<u>EXPENSES</u>				
	<u>COMMITTEES</u>				
170	Legislative Action	\$ 269.47	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
171	Friendly Service		\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
173	Annual Workshop Committee		\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
174	Bylaws	\$ 558.60	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
174	Certificate of Recognition	\$ 53.91	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
174	Community Service		\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
174	Finance & Budget		\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
174	Personnel Committee		\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00
174	Credentials		\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00
174	Historian	\$ 51.50	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00
174	Membership		\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
174	Nominations		\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
174	Public Relations		\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
174	Resolutions		\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
174	Site		\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00
192	Health Care		\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
185A	Adhoc UHC		\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
	TOTAL	\$ 933.48	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
	GRAND TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 335,808.42	\$ 329,510.00	\$ 329,510.00	\$ 351,510.00

LEGISLATIVE ACTION COMMITTEE REPORT

Submitted by Janice Mullins, VP for Legislative Action

The Legislative Action Committee has been meeting virtually since December to finalize the Legislative Priorities that RENY advocates will discuss with our State and Federal Representatives. These priorities are based upon resolutions passed over the years by RENY delegates and with approval of our Board of Directors.



You know the issues you face living in NYS as a retiree and as a senior. Affordability is not just a word for us; it is a survival reality. The price of a dozen eggs is trivial compared to over-all food expenses, rising utility rates, increases in prescription drug costs, co-pays for doctor visits, increases in all types of insurance premiums (health, car, homeowners, and long-term care insurances).

Our oldest retirees who have the smallest pensions are most likely living in poverty. Our COLA increases fall far short of keeping pace with inflation in an economy benefiting the rich but not you. Cuts to programs at the federal level including the dismantling of the Federal Department of Education and cuts to personnel especially in the Social Security Administration will directly or indirectly affect every resident of New York State.

There is no easy solution, but it is important that our representatives hear our stories. If you are unhappy with the state of affairs, you have the power for change, you have a voice, you have a vote. As the election process for 2026 begins, make your vote an informed vote.



FRIENDLY SERVICE COMMITTEE REPORT

Submitted by Judith Corigliano, VP for Friendly Service

The world could use a little more love, and Friendly Service is sending all of you a “**Valentine**” wishes and, for the best healthy heart* in the 2026th year.... yes, it’s good for your heart to practice some self-love/care. Studies have shown that negative thoughts/actions can have a harmful impact on your long-term heart health. Life can be overwhelming... we all experience age related health issues, changes in daily living circumstances, loss of family and close friends, increased financial pressures on limited budgets, all of this can be overwhelming. Practice self-care and love. A 100-yr old shared this advice, “Love is not always easy; sometimes you have to work at it “.

But, if you are feeling overwhelmed and a bit alone, if you are stuck in a winter rut, feeling a little sad ... finding it difficult to step outside of the negative groove? Don’t be afraid to reach out to an old friend, your church, parish, or temple. Need to just talk? Need to connect with lost friends? Stressed over about financial needs? Don’t be afraid to ask for help or guidance toward positive action. Call a RENY zone officer, and Friendly Service and ask for some help or guidance. Let this physical York State issue be a guide for you or a friend in need.

*A Healthy heart follows guidelines....to be of good cheer, eat less, but healthier plant-based foods, exercise, keep the faith, retain a stimulated mind, active social life and a life with a purpose. Be of good health.



MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

Submitted by Michelle Claus, VP for Membership



Hello everyone, this is Michelle Claus from Western Zone. I am the new RENY/VP for Membership for the state. The ten zone membership chairs have Teams (Zoom like) meetings every even month. The months are February, April, June, August, October, and December of 2026. During these meetings, we discuss and implement a variety of ways to increase membership. If you have ideas or comments, please email or call me. We also encourage members that have forgotten to pay their yearly dues to send in their payments. More information will be forthcoming in our next *York State* newsletter. If you would like to check your membership status, please email me or call joeclaus@msn.com or 716-481-5279.

Happy Valentine's Day! A 1-year membership (\$39) for a retired teacher or soon to be retired educator is the perfect gift for a friend or colleague. A card supplied by you with your sentiments inside is perfect. Remember those newly graduated educators you will be celebrating too.

Visit our website retirededucatorsny.org to see all we offer. Look at the Membership tab our page to renew your membership online and save a stamp! Or let someone know they can join RENY online.

ROBERT R. DECORMIER MEMORIAL TRUST FUND REPORT

Submitted by Beth Green, Trustee

The DeCormier Memorial Trust Fund was established to assist retired educators facing financial challenges. The Fund provides both monthly stipends to retirees who are struggling to meet their regular expenses and special grants for one-time expenses that are beyond the means of the retiree. In the past five months we have approved four grants – one to help bridge the gap between insurance and savings to pay for repairs to a roof damaged in a storm; another to pay for furnace repairs; a third to purchase a new computer for a disabled retiree which is used, in part, for teleconferencing with medical specialists that are located over 100 miles away; and a fourth to pay for the replacement of a 54-year-old front door and storm door. In addition, we are awaiting more information pertaining to a request to help fund the replacement of a leaking roof. We also performed our biennial review of the monthly stipends awarded through the trust. The circumstances of the current recipients and the increase in the cost of living over the past two years were taken into consideration and stipends were increased accordingly. Speaking for all of the trustees, I can say that it is an honor and a pleasure to be able to help fellow retirees who need financial assistance in difficult times. Thank you to all of you who have supported the DeCormier Trust and made this possible!

More information and application forms can be found on the RENY website at <https://retirededucatorsny.org/financial-assistance/>. If you, or someone you know, is in need of financial assistance, please go to the website or, if you prefer, contact **Anne Flansburg*CR**, Chair, at 716-863-3631 or anneflanswz@aol.com. She will be happy to help you with the application process. The trust exists to help when needed and we welcome the opportunity to do so.

The DeCormier Fund relies on donations from zones, units, and individuals to be able to continue to help our former colleagues in need. Donations to the fund may be tax deductible, depending upon your tax situation. Donations, in any amount, can be sent to Mary Lou Davis, Treasurer, 125 Andrews Road, LaGrangeville, NY 12540. Please make checks payable to the DeCormier Memorial Trust Fund.

CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION COMMITTEE

Submitted by **Carol Lord*CR**, Committee 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 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, well as to their zone and unit (if applicable) and to their community.



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 **Vince Smith*CR, Judy Farmer*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, **UNLESS** the nominee **IS** the Zone President- then the Vice President or any Board of Director may sign the application. The applications are available on the RENY website under the "Resources" tab, then search "Certificate of Recognition" and click on the "Responsibilities of the Certificate of Recognition Chairperson. The application is on page 3 and 4. 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 or appropriate person, and post-marked on or before May 31, 2026 to the committee chair: Carol Lord 39 Park St, Phelps, NY 14532



MOVED OR MOVING???

Don't forget to let us know!

518-482-3509

Has your phone number changed or you got rid of your landline? Let us know so we can update the database



CENTRAL ZONE



Submitted by Ray Pitcher, Zone President and Mary Ann Luciano, Public Relations Chair
Cayuga, Chenango, Herkimer, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, & Oswego Counties

Winter is a quiet time for the RENY Central Zone with many members as snowbirds or staying in place while dealing with the wintry weather.

The zone members are working on the Hudson-Kramer Memorial scholarship submissions for the \$2,000 award to active educators supporting curriculum initiatives. The Scholarship Committee members contact the Zone's 75 school districts, 7 BOCES, and 14 Teacher Centers. RENY Chenango held their annual holiday tea with a delicious array of goodies at the Sherburne Inn. In January/February there is a workshop on tax changes. For National Pi Day on March 14th, members prepare pies.



All winter events benefit the Chenango County Aging Council. Bi-monthly emails to members with email addresses, highlight individual members and current legislative action. For more information contact maryann.luciano@gmail.com

Collaborating with their area NYSUT group, RENY Cayuga held a holiday brunch. There was a lot of conversation focusing on joint initiatives.

In spring, RENY Otsego will begin their work on future educators' scholarships. RENY Onondaga members volunteer their individual efforts during the holiday season. In March, they begin to plan their 2026 three group meetings.



CENTRAL WESTERN ZONE



Submitted by Mary Beth Tyndall, Zone President and **Carol Lord*CR**, Public Relations Chair

Our CWZ Annual Meeting was held on September 18, 2025 at King's Catering & Party House in Canandaigua. Thirty-five members were in attendance along with special guest, RENY President **Gayla LePage**. **Joan Handfield**, Community Service Chair, arranged for Tiffany Smith from Safe Harbors of the Finger Lakes to speak that day. (Safe Harbors of the Finger Lakes, Inc. provides services, at no charge, for individuals, children, and families who have experienced sexual violence.)

Several CWZ members were presented with Certificates of Appreciation from their County Units: **Carol Westlake**, **Fern Bomwell**, **Dr. Mary Ellen Corey**, and **Ronald Herman**. (We are saddened to share that Mary and Ron both passed suddenly last summer.) *See more from Central Western Zone on next page-*

CENTRAL WESTERN ZONE - Continued

Submitted by Mary Beth Tyndall, Zone President and **Carol Lord*CR**, Public Relations Chair

Pat Ensman and the Melody Makers Recorder Consortium provided musical entertainment. Pat is a RENY member and a member of the Monroe County Unit and has recruited retired teachers to play in the consortium!

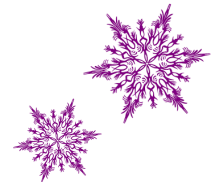
The Central Western Zone 2025 Hudson Kramer Memorial Grant recipient is Penny Newcomb, a Special Education teacher and CSE Chairperson at Jasper-Troupsburg Central School located in Steuben County. The grant of \$2,000 will be used to purchase an amplification system to comply with IEPs as students transfer to the high school. An amplification system is a microphone the teacher wears that sends out the voice to be picked up by the speaker device, helping to cancel out extraneous noise. The school is presently located in an older building in a neighboring district due to flooding in 2021 and 2024, and the classroom environment is very loud due to older heating equipment.

The Hudson Kramer check and certificate were presented to Penny Newcomb on Thursday, June 26, 2025 by Sandy Kushner. Sandy is a Past Central Western Zone Co-President and grant administrator. The grant review committee and pictured on right is **Nettie Schiano, Meena Gehani** and **Mary Beth Tyndall**, CWZ President. Gayla was also there to share in the festivities.



EASTERN ZONE

Submitted by Pamela Love, Public Relations Chair



RENY/Eastern Zone Executive Committee met November 18, 2025 at Scotia Diner. During this meeting, initial plans for our zone being honored at the RENY State Annual Meeting & Convention at Turning Stone Resort & Casino on October 14-16, 2026 were discussed. The planning committee will include **Lisa Devaren, Diane Hahn*CR, Janice Mullins, Joyce** and **Mark Notarnicola** and **Rosalie Oliver**.



Capital District (RCRTA) held their December 2025 Luncheon Meeting at the Westgate Diner in Albany. At this luncheon meeting, members attending donated canned food, various supplies such as tooth brushes and checks for the Regional Food Bank. **Pictured with various items for the Regional Food Bank and various unit officers including: (L-R) Former President Rosalie Oliver, newsletter editor Ginny Madore, President Marge Leibowitz and Secretary, Lisa Devaren.**

Saratoga County Unit President, **Kenneth Bollerud** stated that their meetings are held monthly, September thru June. They offer various programs during the year and financial support the Regional Food Bank as well as to their member, **Karen Flewelling** for her work in Africa. *More on next page...*

EASTERN ZONE - Continued

Submitted by Pamela Love, Public Relations Chair

Schoharie County Unit Co-Presidents, **Leslie Hooper** and **Margaret Dafeldecker**, stated that their unit held a Spring Luncheon Meeting as well as a Fall Luncheon Meeting . In June, their unit gave Citizenship Awards of \$100 to a student in each of the six Schoharie County Schools as well as the BOCES in Schoharie. Letters from the unit were sent to all new retirees from area schools to inform them about the local unit as well as about RENY.



LONG ISLAND ZONE

Submitted by **Eileen Holmes*CR**, Zone President



The Long Island Zone ended the year with festive get-togethers on both the eastern and western ends. **Jo Anne** and **Leigh Powell*CR** hosted a West End RTA holiday party at their home in Centerport, complete with delicious food, beautiful decorations, lively conversation and a regifting exchange. The get together also provided an opportunity for election of WERTA board members for 2025-26. **Jo Anne Powell** will serve as president, **Dave Keefe**, vice president, **Lyn Volp**, secretary and **Leigh Powell*CR**, treasurer. **President Emeritus Angelo Grande*CR** will chair Community Service and plans are being made to restart the Scholarship program with Adelphi University.

Out east on the North Fork, the East End RTA hosted a Christmas luncheon at Sophie's Restaurant in Southold. Festivities included a visit from Santa, a grab bag gift exchange, a sing-a-long and a Christmas word game. Special thanks to **Agnes Dansereau** for all her planning!

Long Island Zone Membership Chair **Ruth Doroski** and a team of workers mailed out 55 letters to members who are in arrears on their dues. We know at least 9 rejoined quickly. LIZ also had 5 new members join and we are hoping these small steps towards improving membership will continue. Pictured is **Alicia Winowsky**, **Eileen Holmes*CR** and **Agnes Dansereau**.



NORTH CENTRAL ZONE

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

NCZ website: www.renyncz.org



"The light of winter is the poetry of patience." Author unknown

It seems like yesterday I was writing for the 2024 winter issue of York State describing two major lake effect snow storms which had hit our counties in December.

More from NCZ on next page...

NORTH CENTRAL ZONE - Continued

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

NCZ website: www.renyncz.org

Looking out the window today, as I write again in December, it is a white world out there with heavy snow falling. We wait with patience in the North Country to enjoy those sunny, sparkly days and know, with faith, that spring WILL come, along with the crocuses and tulips!

Our Community Service program, "Coats for Kids" had a very successful year. Co-Chairs, **Patty Corey** and **Toni Gigliotti**, report that so far they have delivered 52 winter coats, 22 pairs of boots, 7 pairs of snow pants and some gloves. The three smiling young girls in the photo benefited with cozy new winter jackets from the NCZ Coats for Kids program this fall. Our NCZ membership is very generous in supporting "Coats for Kids" throughout the year. We thank Patty and Toni for their devotion and hard work making this program successful. The local schools, churches, County Social Services, Lewis County Opportunities and Prenatal/Perinatal NNY Council work with us, making this program so worthwhile.



Dates to Remember:

NCZ Executive Council Meeting: April 29, 2026, 10 a.m. at NNYCF

Spring Luncheon: June 11, 2026 at Hilton Garden Inn



NORTHEASTERN ZONE

Submitted by Cindi LaFountain, Public Relations Chair

Happy Holidays from the snowy and cold Northeastern Zone. Winter has come early and it looks like it has settled in for the next several months. We did keep the chill away at our December meeting with cozy friends, warm, delicious food and pleasant holiday music with a singalong with Mitch Willette.

President Emeritus Kevin Mulligan*CR invited two members from our Insurance Consortium who provided information regarding the changes to the Platinum Plan A. It was a great start for December.



Our committees are working hard. We have been collecting hats, mittens, gloves and socks to keep our neighbors warm along with toys. The membership committee puts forth diligent efforts in finding our new members. Our goal next year is to meet with them and find out what talents they have to bring to our group. We continue to volunteer in our local soup kitchen serving meals to the community. When the weather warms up we will be out collecting food for our food shelf. NENY-NEZ is ready to help in any way we can while having fun. Pictured is Community Service

Chair **Connie Lalonde** with our donations to the Christmas Bureau. Happy New Year to you all.

NORTHERN ZONE

Submitted by Linda Crosby, Public Relations Chair



A very colorful crew of NZ characters brightened the road to Turning Stone for the 2025 RENY Annual Meeting and had a rainbow splash of a time enjoying all that the convention offers. Congratulations to all who made the event a smashing success. Thanks to **Alice Galvin**, for making sure a great kaleidoscopic photo was taken of our faithful NZ delegates (left to right): **Ron Boyea, Tom Cook, Diane Bonenfant, Betty Cook, Helen Boyea, Gayla LePage, Phil LePage,** and **Alice Galvin**. Do I see the ghost of Jimmy Buffett in the background in Veronaville?

The Clifton-Fine RTA, our RENY/NZ Unit, had their Christmas party on December 16, 2025 at the Packbasket Lodge in Wanakena. They always welcome everyone in the zone; photos to come in next York State.

Speaking of the party, I must mention that a very special lady, who has been an extraordinary RENY/NZ member for decades, planned on attending the Christmas party with her son, **Scott Hudson**, also, an NZ member; **Agnes Hudson**, RENY President Emerita, celebrated her 100th birthday on January 11, 2026!!! Her family hosted a birthday bash on January 17 with NZ members welcome; they were hoping for 100 birthday cards, so, if anyone would like to also join in on the celebration, here is her address: 106 Cambray Street, Gouverneur, N.Y. 13642. It's never too late to send a birthday wish!

SOUTHEASTERN ZONE

Submitted by Maureen Coffey, Public Relations Chair

Well, now that fall zone activities, our annual convention, and the holidays are just memories, it's time to reflect and remember.

"The more things change,
The more they stay the same."
Or do they?

We recently reminisced about changes that transpired during our teaching careers. **Mary Ceccolini, Patti DeLeo, Cheryl Fischer, Donna Harness, Helen Hoering, and Ray Le Duc** generously shared memories with me.

Dress codes were relaxed for everyone, creating what some might say is "both a blessing and a curse!" Of course, curriculum was a popular topic. When Helen retired, kindergarteners were learning what had previously been taught in second grade. I myself was thrilled to see challenging word problems being emphasized over straight computation in math.

More from Maureen on the next page...

SOUTHEASTERN ZONE - Continued

Submitted by Maureen Coffey, Public Relations Chair

Workspace was mentioned by Ray, who ate lunch at a corner table in the students' cafeteria and Cheryl, who saw her students in a book closet and the school basement before getting her own classroom.

But by far, the biggest changes were due to technology.

Patti shared early memories of the hand cranked ditto machine with its distinct chemical smell and purple copies. Later, multiple computers could send data to be printed at one central printer. Phones were affixed to walls and cameras were checked out of the office for special events. Today...well, you already know!

Donna and Ray remember computing averages by hand and then recording results in their grade books and on permanent record cards.

Mary and I remember IEP DIRECT making IEP development much more manageable, but not as nuanced as we might like. The personal reports we wrote for each child became even more important as we reported each student's progress.

So there you have it. Do things really change, stay the same, or a little of both?
You decide.



'Til next time...



SOUTHERN ZONE

Submitted by Mary Lou Wood, Public Relations Chair



Brrrrrr, Winter is here. Jack Frost has blown in with a vengeance. I have planted myself on the couch with my electric blanket and cats watching old movies, doing Sudoku, or reading a book. I can only dream of our snowbird friends basking in the warm sun, golfing, playing pickle-ball, and exercising.

Our units are working diligently in finding good programs that will entice retirees to join.

CARTA, Corning Area Retired Teachers, had their memorial service. They recognized 8 members who have passed on. They are **Elaine Blowers**, Diane Huggler, **Bonnie Stratton**, Wade Irmischer, Charlie Chase, Gloria Misnick, Anne Bartz, and **Peg Wilson** will be greatly missed. At our next meeting we will continue to collect donations to support local school districts food marts, and our scholarship fund. On January 27th CARTA had their regular meeting featuring a speaker on "Decluttering."

See more from SZ on next page....

SOUTHERN ZONE - Continued

Submitted by Mary Lou Wood, Public Relations Chair

EBB-WBET had its annual December luncheon on Monday, December 8th, where the Johnson City High School Sophisticats performed a fabulous holiday song and dance routine to emphasize the joy and wonder of the season. This was the fourth consecutive year they have performed for us - back by popular demand.

Our charity for the month was Toys for Tots.

In 2026, we will have monthly luncheons where our speakers will include representatives from the Discovery Center and the Phelps Mansion, a local historian, a local politician, and a sing-along of music from the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's to honor our 90+ year old members.

EARTA, Elmira Area Retired Teachers, had a wonderful Christmas meeting/celebration. The ladies' quartet, "Dreamcatcher" entertained them with beautiful Christmas music. Singers: Jo Barlow, Jan Aiello, Charlene Zearfoss, and Becky LaBella.



SCRTA, Schuyler County Retired Teachers, haven't had a meeting due to weather and time of year. However the Board still continues to meet to make plans for its members.

We wish all of you a happy winter. Stay warm and keep moving, socializing, exercising, reading, and working on Sudoku.

Easy Vegetable Soup Crockpot style: Cook on low 6-7 hours

- ~Pieces of beef cut into small chunks
- ~Add regular cans, drained except tomatoes:
- ~Stewed Tomatoes, Corn, Peas, Carrots, Green Beans, Potatoes (cubed), lima beans (optional)
(You may use 2 bags of frozen vegetables.)
- ~Small head of cabbage-chopped
- ~Can of tomato sauce
- ~3 beef bouillon cubes or 2 c beef broth
- ~1 c water

Enjoy !



WESTERN ZONE

Submitted by Kathy Cansick & Joanne Wheaton
Public Relations Co-Chairs

Karen Thompson, our new Western Zone president's goal is to align with the mission and objectives of RENY. Primarily, it is to promote the professional, economic and social status of its members. Along with the board, the leadership would like to encourage more active participation from RENY Western Zone members and inspire more retired teachers to become members.

Community service is a key component of being a member of RENY/Western Zone for the Board of Directors. Recently, we had a donation collection at our November meeting. We collected non-perishable food, new socks, and children's books for Thanksgiving and the holiday season. Our Community Service Chair

Stan Nowak, transported these items to Feed More and Buffalo City Mission. At the December meeting new pajamas for all ages were collected, along with warm coats and winter clothing for the needy. Non-perishable food was also collected and was again distributed to Feed More to help local food pantries.

Retired Educators of New York

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