

NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 11

RETIRES OF BRENTWOOD SCHOOLS

JUNE 1995

COMMITTEE OF 100

On May 15 and 16, Chris Veech, Dot and Jack Zuckerman participated in the lobbying efforts of NYSUT in Albany as representatives of E.D. 21 Retiree Council. Alan Lubin, NYSUT Executive Vice President, thanked retirees for their phone calls on the state budget issues. Phones were tied up all over Albany. There were also over 100,000 letters written. As a result of this attention by us, many education related cuts have been restored to the budget.

While we were in Albany, the Assembly and the Senate passed the Moratorium on Health Insurance. There seemed to be a rift between Republicans and the Governor over the Supplementation veto. So it's time to make friends, especially with newly elected members of the Legislature!

There are some Tax Pac folk lurking among the new members.

Assemblywoman Debra Mazzarelli of Suffolk is one. Some of her memorable comments include: Teachers salaries did not attract the brightest and the best to the field, but she doesn't

want to "roll back" salaries, just wants to "revisit" them; tenure isn't needed anymore because "teachers don't move around much anymore"; 3021A's only protect the weak and the bad teachers; we need a group of students to make policy. But she wants to meet with teachers to work to improve education... Meanwhile, she is lodging a complaint against her daughter's teacher. This was an intriguing visit because logic seemed missing.

Patricia Acampora, another Suffolk newcomer, was different. A Republican member of the Assembly, she is every inch her mother Henrietta's daughter in terms of outspokenness. She felt "we should be more thoughtful in our budget process." What she meant by that was concern for education, long term health care, jobs, school safety, which were not being dealt with in the "Three Men and a Budget" scenario. Like some other legislators, she was pointedly angry at the Governor. She's a good one to contact continuously. Her mother, the former Supervisor of

Brookhaven, died in early June.

Assemblyman Robert Wertz was his "school districts must economize" self, and taxes are the greatest deterrent to job growth. Senator James Lack was less arrogant than usual, probably because of his increasing stature on the National level, and because he has been working behind the scenes for the Supplementaion bill. For this he should be applauded.

Paul Harenberg, Democratic member of the Assembly, spoke sadly of the programs for the aging, the poor and the ill that were due for elimination or reduction to the point where they would exist in name only. He added that we could not expect much help from the Governor, who a few weeks before at the Governor's Conference On Aging, not only did not attend himself, but sent no one to represent him or his office.

May I never be "cured" of my curiosity!

Assemblyman Tom Barraga was vehement about the debasement of the process of government, and the loss of integrity and respect for the political process that once enabled a civilized society to conduct its political affairs with dignity and openness. He also pointed out that since the ouster of Senator Marino, the Senate Majority Leader, there is no one left in the "inner circle" of the Governor who lives on Long Island, New York City, or Westchester County.

Democrat Steven Englebright spoke to the issue of the virtual destruction of the public higher education system. He felt it was more important to have a budget that protected the people rather than to have one that was just "timely."

Philip Boyle, newly elected Republican Assemblyman seemed ready to accept party leadership positions, but expressed dismay at having been double-crossed by his party over the Supplementation fiasco in February. But remember that his mother is a teacher! (He looks like a high school senior).

On the Long Island Lobby Day on May 31st, these, and other legislators were again lobbied by three bus loads of Nassau and Suffolk retirees. Senator Carl Marcellino, who was elected to Marino's seat, said as he was prepared to vote yes on the budget

negotiated behind closed door, that no one would have the opportunity to scrutinize it closely before the vote. He also volunteered that the counties around the state were pressuring the Governor strongly because of the strains his cuts would put on local budgets, forcing them to cut needed programs drastically, and/or raise local taxes significantly. Translate that to mean property taxes! Marcellino taught Biology for 20 years, and served on the Syosset School Board.

As you can see from reading this, there is a great need for us to get to know our own legislators well. Keep writing each of them on issues. Let them know you exist. Visit their home offices. Soon you'll become a known entity to each of them, and your opinion will be valued. Write, call, visit. Send greeting cards. Make sure they never forget where they came from, and who they represent!

SUFFOLK & NASSAU STATE SENATE

- 1 Kenneth LaValle R-C
- 2 James Lack R
- 3 Caesar Trunzo R
- 4 Owen Johnson R-C
- 5 Carl Marcellino R
- 6 Kemp Hannon R
- 7 Mike Tully R-C
- 8 Norman Levy R-C
- 9 Dean Skelos R

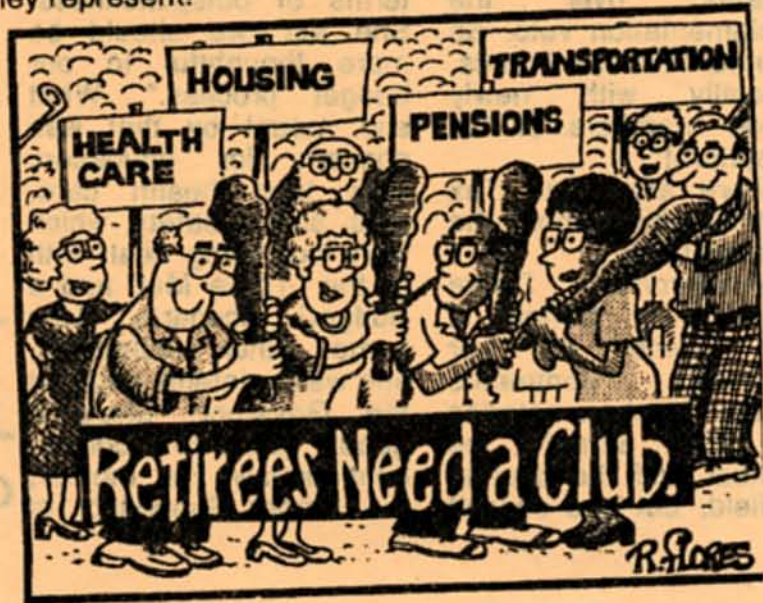


SUFFOLK ASSEMBLY

- 1. Patricia Acampora R-C
- 2. Fred Thiele, Jr. R
- 3. Debra Mazzarelli R
- 4. Steven Englebright D
- 5. Paul Harenberg D
- 6. Robert Wertz R
- 7. Thomas Barraga R-C
- 8. Philip Boyle R
- 9. John Flanagan R
- 10 James Conte R-C
- 11 Robert Sweeney D

NASSAU ASSEMBLY

- 12. Philip Healey R-C
- 13. David Sidikman D
- 14. Marc Herbst R
- 15. Donna Ferrara R
- 16. Thomas DiNapoli D-L
- 17. Michael Balboni R-C
- 18. Earlene Hill D
- 19. Charles O'Shea R-C
- 20 Harvey Weisenberg D
- 21 Gregory Becker R-C
- 22. Vincent Muscarella R-C



JUNE'S BEEN BUSTIN' OUT ALL OVER



It's been a very busy time, often frustrating but with a few rewards thrown in. The New York State Budget was finally resolved, pension supplementation was agreed to, and a one-year moratorium was extended that prohibits the school boards from making any changes in health care benefits for retirees. As of this writing, nothing has been finalized with the governor's signature. To those hardy folks who rode the bus to Albany and who talked with the legislators - congratulations and thanks! Our voice was heard and the message was received. An agreement on pension supplementation, the first since 1988, was included in the budget agreement. But, as part of the legislation, Governor Pataki and the State legislature are attempting to raid pension funds from the State Employees Retirement System to balance the State budget rather than to use that money solely for retiree pensions. State Comptroller H. Carl McCall is threatening to bring suit to block the raid (See *New York Teacher*, June 12). If he must go to court, that could hold up long anticipated supplementation payments for retirees. But a delay now could mean securing our pensions for tomorrow. If the State is allowed to raid one pension fund to fill in growing budget deficits, they would surely attempt to pull funds from all State pension systems, including ours. We must support Comptroller McCall in his efforts to protect us. Write today and tell him how you feel: Honorable Carl H. McCall; Office of State Comptroller; State Office Building; Albany, NY 12247.

Another issue of major interest to us is the recently negotiated changes in the Statewide Health Insurance Plan (Empire). Traditionally, benefits of the health insurance plan are negotiated between CSEA and the State. The school districts then decide voluntarily if and to what extent they wish to participate in the agreement. Brentwood is one of the Participating Agents (PA). Under the new agreement, by 1997 Empire will become a managed health care network referred to as a Point of Service Plan (POS.) A panel of physicians, including general practitioners and specialists, will be assembled in various locations throughout the State. All medical services will stem from a primary care physician from within the plan. This POS will be the one to recommend specialists from within the panel of participating physicians. If none are available, outside specialists may be used only with prior approval from Empire. Where non-participating physicians are used, there will be higher individual and family deductions as well as a 75%/25% payment of reasonable and customary costs. There are many other detailed changes that will occur. At the present time, our health benefit coverage is still protected by the contract as it was when we retired. Any changes that I have referred to will affect all participants throughout the State. As we receive more information we will keep you informed.

June is also a month for joy and expectation. It's time to offer congratulations and welcome to our 1995 retirees - all 49 of them! We look forward to having them all - teachers, secretaries, and clericals - join with us in the fun and stimulation of retirement through ROBS. If the new State retirement incentive is offered before school ends, we happily anticipate greeting the largest number of new members we have had since we first organized! Isn't it exciting?

While everyone else makes plans for summer vacations, put your feet up, put on your biggest smile, and remember that your summer vacation is forever. Have a great one.

In unity - Dot Zuckerman

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

NATIONAL

KEY LAWMAKERS ON SENIOR ISSUES

SENIORS NEED TO FAMILIARIZE THEMSELVES WITH THOSE LAWMAKERS IN THE NEW CONGRESS WHO WILL PLAY KEY ROLES in deciding major issues affecting older Americans. Following is the line-up of committee chairs:

In the Senate, **Robert Packwood** (R-Ore.) is chair of the Finance Committee, which has jurisdiction over Social Security, Medicare, Supplemental Security Income, and some pension and health care legislation.

Nancy Kassebaum (R-Kansas), who has taken over as chair of the Labor and Human Resources Committee, is expected to push for program oversight and consolidation, rather than new programs. Her support is vital to senior employment programs and other discretionary social programs.

Mark O. Hatfield (R-Ore.), the new chair of the Appropriations Committee, will be under strong pressure to reduce funding for social programs.

The Budget Committee, under **Pete V. Domenici** (R-N.M.), made passage of a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution its first act of business. Domenici also will be under pressure to make deep cuts in Medicare, Medicaid and other domestic programs.

Alfonse D'Amato (R-N.Y.) chairs the Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, which has jurisdiction over senior housing programs.

The Senate Special Committee on Aging is alive and well and its new chair, **William S. Cohen** (R-Maine)—a moderate on social issues—is expected to continue to emphasize Medicare and Medicaid reforms, pensions, other benefits and crime's impact on older Americans.

In the House, Rep. **Bill Archer** (R-Texas) has taken over as chair of the powerful tax-writing Ways and Means Committee, which, along with the Finance Committee, handles entitlement health care (Medicare) and Social Security bills. Archer opposes the whole idea of universal health coverage, calling it "socialized medicine."

The House Committee on Energy and Commerce, under the chairmanship of Rep. **Thomas A. Bliley** (R-Va.), will handle discretionary health care plans and is likely to continue to focus much of its energy on protecting the elderly from high pharmaceutical costs.

The Education and Labor Committee—now the Economic and Educational Opportunity Committee—is chaired by **William Goodling** (R-Pa.), who principally has been interested in educational and work-related issues.

Adapted from an item in Senior Citizens News with permission of the National Council of Senior Citizens.

NO COMMENT

Serenity is the process of accepting life as it is and letting ourselves savor each moment of it. Expectations are the death of serenity.





NEWS NOTES

We were saddened to learn of the death of active high school teacher **Mike Campanile's** 18 year old son Michael on April 13th in an auto accident.

Gabe Gengler, who is retiring this year, lost his wife in the middle of May. **Gabe** is assistant principal at Ross High School.

Former principal of North Elementary School, **Ralph Saikin** died last month of heart failure in Pennsylvania. He retired in the '80's. Our thoughts go out to his wife, **Mary**, a member of ROBS, and the family. P.O. 215, Pocano Pines, PA. 18350.

In June, **Rudy Puloso**, Attendance Officer for the Brentwood District until his retirement in the '80's, passed away. Our sympathies to the family. The address is: 10 Beaver Dr., Bayville, N.Y. 11709.

Rachel Barr was looking fine and well at the BTA Awards Dinner Dance on June 3rd. Several retirees attended. There are 49 people retiring this year. And that was before the state retirement incentive kicked in.

Partying at the Faculty End of the Year Party of North Elementary School on June 19th was **Ed Harris** and wife. **Ed's** daughter and son are having weddings five weeks apart. This is a festive season for the **Harris'**.

You may have noticed **Chris Veech's** reprinted article on Charles Cogen in the New York Teacher. Unlike the article in the ROBS Newsletter, this one had a reprint of her senior class picture with Mr. Cogen. Very vintage the '50's. She is also celebrating the birth of a Mother's Day granddaughter, Alexandra.

Also in the same issue of the New York Teacher was a letter from retiree **Joe A. Carson** of Brooklyn. His letter was on the NYSUT Legal Service Plan.

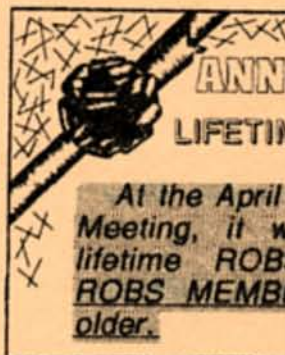
Charlotte Gross writes from Labelle, Florida that all is well. After retirement she went back for a few years teaching at the high school, then several years volunteering at Adult Ed. But now she's enjoying life: golf, reading, crafts and family. She sends regards to all.

Dancing is my life, I've heard it said. **Ellie Tepper** thinks that's true, and twirls with Annies International Folk Dance Co-op. They do Israeli, Balkan, American, Country Western, and Line at the Pulaski Road School in East Northport at 7:30 P.M. Summers they dance at the air conditioned Greenlawn Library at 7 P.M. If you'd like to join them, call **Ellie** at 585-0008.

Wilhelmina Groover, who retired due to a stroke, is recovering nicely at home: 66 Sunset Drive, Huntington 11743, 427-5718. This editor chatted with her recently on a political call, and she sounded good, but is homebound for the most part.

Another ROBS member who would love to hear from you is **Mary Louise Fitzgerald**. (See DIRECTORY CHANGES in this issue). **Mary Louise** has relocated from Huntington, L.I. to Charlotte, North Carolina, and is mastering the computer!





ANNOUNCING...
LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP

*At the April ROBS Executive Board Meeting, it was voted to offer free lifetime ROBS membership to all **ROBS MEMBERS** who are 75 years or older.*

MEMORIAL FUND

At the April ROBS Executive Board Meeting, a Memorial Fund, using dues of deceased members, was established to maintain communication with homebound retirees.

We have found that retirees with severe health problems don't always join because they have other, more pressing, concerns.

We have started the Fund with the unused dues of Betty Frankel, knowing it was something she would have thought was a good thing to do.

MEMBERSHIP

Guess what? As of May 19th, our member roll crept to **241!**

JUNE 14th BREAKFAST

About 30 ROBS members and 4 guests braved the rain to gather at the Expressway Diner for a hearty cheer for summer vacation.

(Because we still do that school-type thinking!)

It was nice seeing so many old friends, and new ones. Thanks again to Ruth McCalla and Harriet Pepine

CORTLI LUNCHEON

"Back To School" Luncheon on September 8 at the West Wind Yacht Club in Freeport. Limited seating. \$20. Call Frances D'Mario: 516-623-5339.


DIRECTORY CHANGES

Ruth Cummings: Phone- 516-741-6489

Mary Louise Fitzgerald: 5150 Sharon Road, Charlotte, NC 28211. Phone- 702-552-1289.

Ed Harris: Phone- 516-928-2521

Phone #'s were digit errors, Mary Louise relocated. **PLEASE MAKE CHANGES IN YOUR DIRECTORY.**





LETTERS TO THE EDITOR


Dear Fellow Retirees:

I would like to share with you the opportunity to participate in a nationally recognized course in Jewish Literacy. I have just completed the first year of a two year course, which is designed by Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and I found it to be very stimulating and enjoyable.

The course is intergenerational and designed to give new insights into today's world. Upon completion, participants receive a certificate from the University. For further information, contact Barbara Lerner at the Suffolk Y Jewish Community Center in Commack at 462-9800.

Sincerely, Harriet Pepine

MARK THESE DATES

 ROBS GENERAL MEETING
Tuesday, September 12th
Brentwood Library

RETIREE COUNCIL 21
GENERAL MEETING
Tuesday, September 19th
Bay Shore Library

BOOKS ON AGING *Women and Aging*, *Older Women with Chronic Pain*, and *Women and Healthy Aging* are just some of the books available from The Haworth Press, which also publishes the *Journal of Women and Aging*. For more information, call The Haworth Press, Inc., at 1-800-342-9678 or send a note to 10 Alice Street, Binghamton, NY 13904-1580 and ask for the catalog on women and aging.

EDITORIAL

WE WELCOME LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: 11 Yates Ave. Commack
New York 11725

Former Senator Warren Rudman, now with the Concord Coalition has been touting the old saw that retirees get back all the money they have put into Social Security within the first two years of receiving benefits.

In 1993, C.P.A. Stephan Zneimer tried to discover how much people actually contributed to Social Security. He figured that if the employers contribution for a person starting in 1948 were added, that person would have put in \$84,365 by the end of 1992.

If that money had been invested in long term government bonds (which is what the Social Security Trust Fund does), It would have amounted, through the magic of compound interest, to \$223,608.

Why the discrepancy? One reason is that Rudman, like the Social Security Administration, neglects to add the employer contribution to the individual

FICA contributor's pay-in. They also forget reinvested dividends and interest.

According to Robert Sobel of Hofstra University in a May 28, 1995 article in NEWSDAY: "If you could have opted for a cash payout in 1993 and invested that amount in government bonds, now paying 7%, your income would be \$1,304 per month indefinitely. And you would have close to a quarter of a million dollars to leave to your heirs."

These are convenient omissions to make a case for the theory that "Social Security is sucking funds out of worker's paychecks and lining the pockets of retirees, many of whom are wealthy leeches," a charge made by Rudman and former Secretary of Commerce, Pete Peterson, also with the Concord Coalition. The title of Professor of Business History Sobel's article is "Will We Kiss Our Benefits Goodbye?"



RETIREE CLASS OF 1995

List of teachers, administrators, and clerical personnel retiring as of June 30, 1995.

Rhoda Agulnek
Edna Alexander
Helene Antwarg
Honey Aves
Mary Baber
Joseph Basso
Arthur Bennett
Irene Brown
Ronald Burr
Clara Cannavo
Ciro DeRosa
Madeline Dwyer
Loreita Ellington
Kate Fitzgerald
Barbara Floyd
Barry Friedfertig

Marianne Gruskin
Bernard Hahnke
Peter Healy
Bernard Kaplan
Raymond Klotz
Paul Koretzki
Donald Kubicsko
Joseph Landry
Daniel Levy
Robert Locherer
Sandra Marks
Constance Nichols
John Podstupka
Thomas Ramsden
Joyce Rosenberg
Richard Roth

Sandra Samuel
Margaret Sheehan
Shirley Smith
Anthony Spitznagel
Clement Stancik
Catherine Taylor
Bruce Van Duyne
Charles Vespa
James Watson
Larry Shreckengost

Gabriel Gengler
Joseph Rotolo

Betty Cascone
Marion DiGregorio
Mina Lynch
Betty Marrazzo

Grace Mauro
Esther Monticello
Florence Worysz

RETIREES OF BRENTWOOD
SCHOOLS
c/o Zuckerman
8 Woody Lane
Oakdale, N.Y. 11769

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United Seniors Health Cooperative has issued its annual report on changes in Medicare and Medigap. This handy guide has a clear summary of Medicare benefits and very useful consumer tips for purchasing Medigap insurance policies. For a free copy of the "1995 Medicare & Medigap Update: How to Be an Informed Consumer of Health Insurance," send \$1.00 for postage and handling to: USHC 1995 UPDATE, 1331 H Street, N.W. #500, Washington, DC 20005-4706.