



=NEWSLETTER=

NUMBER 15

RETIRES OF BRENTWOOD SCHOOLS

JUNE 1996

SUPPLEMENTATION A GO! MORATORIUM EXTENDED!

The dispute between Governor Pataki and State Comptroller Carl McCall has finally been resolved and the state's public retirees will receive their pension supplementation check dated June 28, 1996, and it will be retroactive to last September!

According to Senator James Lack, affected retirees will receive an average increase of \$384 annually, with older retirees getting more. On average, those who retired in 1960 will receive a supplement of \$1,089; 1970 retirees, \$638; 1980 retirees, 296; 1985 retirees, \$272; and 1989 retirees, \$95.

On May 15th, the governor approved NYSUT'S Health Insurance Moratorium Bill. This insures that the protections of last year's Moratorium Bill are continued until May 15, 1997.

No retiree busses had to roll to Albany this spring due to the positive feedback NYSUT had on these bills. The massive letter writing that we "old folks" engendered in the last two months played a big part in these successes as well. And it's an election year! Vote Cope has clout! Congratulations to all of us!

NEA/NY ENDORSES KAFKA

Manny Kafka's candidacy for the retired-teacher seat on the State Teacher's Retirement system (TRS) board of directors received a boost recently when the National Education Association of New York endorsed him and alternate Josephine Davenport. The pair received NYSUT's endorsement at the Representative Assembly. Retired members of TRS will vote by mail in October.



Citizens to state leaders: 'Keep the change'

More than 100,000 non-negotiable "checks" for 46 cents each were delivered to Gov. Pataki, Senate Majority Leader Joe Bruno, and Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver this week from citizens throughout the state. The message to the state leaders is "Keep the change"; delay the scheduled tax cuts, rather than continuing to slash spending on education and other programs. Forty-six cents is what the tax cuts are worth, per day, to the average taxpayer.

"In return for this pocket-change tax cut," said NYSUT Executive Vice President Alan Lubin, "working fami-

lies will have to pay hundreds -- even thousands -- of dollars more for property taxes, health care, and college tuition."

NYSUT, along with other labor unions and many community organizations, collected the "checks," which were brought to Albany in two six-foot-tall "piggy banks." The banks stopped in 14 cities during their four-day trips from Buffalo and Long Island.

Lubin said that the state's structural deficit can be attributed directly to tax cuts enacted in 1994 and 1995. And 40% of the benefits from the cuts goes to the wealthiest 5% of New Yorkers, he said.

The state's share of public school

costs has fallen to a 40-year low of just 37.2%, and would drop even more if the Executive Budget were enacted.

Furthermore, state support for CUNY and SUNY is down 39% from 1988-89, while tuition has more than doubled since then and the Tuition Assistance Program has been cut nearly \$120 million.

"Instead of giving another hefty tax break to a few wealthy people," Lubin said, "it would be far wiser to use that additional state revenue to fund school programs that help kids learn and which would keep property taxes in check."

ROBS MEMBERS STILL ACTIVE IN VOTE COPE

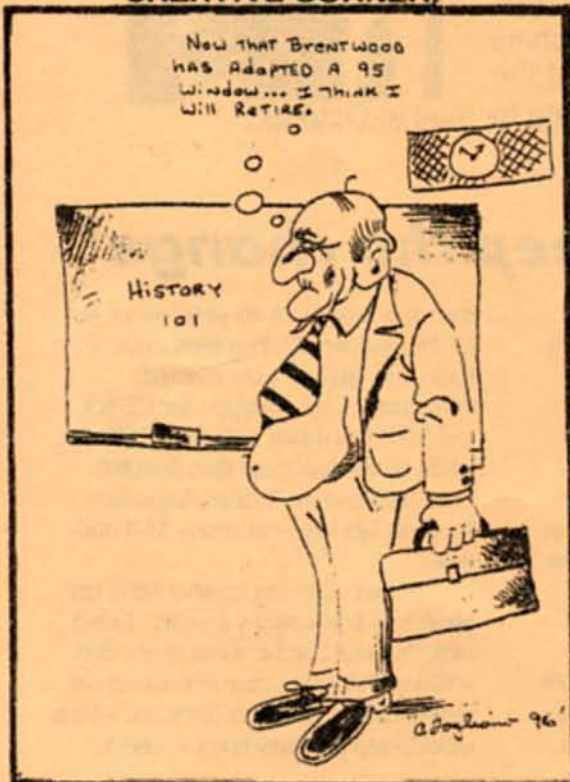
RETIREES REMEMBER !

The following ROBS members have made their contributions to Vote-Cope for 1996. They have done their share of the continuing effort needed to protect their rights and benefits in Albany and Washington.



- | | | | | | |
|------------|--------------|----------|----------------|----------|-----------|
| Richard | Abato | Bernard | Hahnke | Cora | Spencer |
| Lorraine | Adams | Roland | Home | Franklin | Spencer |
| Sally | Andrews | Patricia | Hucke | Vernell | Spencer |
| Phyllis | Baumann | Maurice | Jacobs | Clement | Stancik |
| Mixine | Berlin | Marie | Jarolem | Mixine | Stromberg |
| Marilyn | Bickwid | Frances | Johnson | Eileen | Sullivan |
| Fran | Bold | Eimon | Kazandjian | Robert | Tagner |
| Florence | Briggs | Judith | Kempier | Elinor | Tepper |
| Irene | Brown | Donald | Kubicko | Sylvia | Warren |
| Jacqueline | Buccola | Bernard | Lebron | Lilye | Watts |
| Beverly | Carpenter | Addie | Lee | Ruth | Weaver |
| Marion | Carroll | Amy | Leftenant | Carole | Weissman |
| Joe | Carson | Frank | Lerche | Joyce | Whita |
| Betty | Cascone | Beverly | Lewis | Virginia | Withers |
| Peter | Cenulo | Sandra | Marka | Donna | Wyatt |
| Marvin | Cooper | Mary | Martinez | Dorothy | Zuckerman |
| Florence | Conkary | Ruth | McCalla | Jack | Zuckerman |
| Aida | Covas | Mary | McManus | | |
| Ruth | Cummings | Roif | Meier | | |
| Raymond | Cunneen | Anthony | Messina | | |
| Judith | Cunan | Adelaide | Murphy | | |
| June | Dawson | Lillian | Neal | | |
| Michael | De Sousa | Marie | Norris | | |
| Elizabeth | DeLong | Haskell | Pastor | | |
| Anthony | DeMarco | Harriet | Pepine | | |
| Marilyn | DePiazza | Bueta | Perry | | |
| Theresa | Della Bella | Marilyn | Prass | | |
| Edna | Doherty | Jean | Price | | |
| Elizabeth | Domenichelli | Vito | Proia | | |
| Lorinda | Farrington | Phyllis | Ranjattansingh | | |
| Colb | Fiosa | Virginia | Roman | | |
| Grace | Fisherfield | Ivy | Rosenthal | | |
| Kate | Fitzgerald | Richard | Roth | | |
| Marilyn | Flamberg | Mary | Ruffino | | |
| Barbara | Foreman | Sandra | Samuel | | |
| Frances | Forman | Maryann | Seuro | | |
| Calvin | Formwald | Rita | Sebatian | | |
| Wilma | Fosgate | Leonard | Seiden | | |
| Catherine | Gagliardo | Patricia | Shaw | | |
| Charlotte | Goldman | John | Shenn | | |
| Diana | Grabowski | Hemina | Silos | | |
| | | Charles | Smith | | |

CREATIVE CORNER!



ROBS NEWSLETTER STAFF
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STAFF: Cathy Tomney, officers, members
PRODUCTION EDITOR: Mary Ruffino
STAFF: Mary Bender, Beverly Carpenter, Don Kubicko, Polly Lane, Miriam Massucci, Lyn Prass
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V.PRES. - Chris Veech
SEC'Y. - Bev Carpenter
TREAS. - Harriet Pepine

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Iroquois Union

There is an Iroquois legend which had been handed down from generation to generation. In this story a tribal elder, feeling that the days left to him were few, called his sons together. "My sons," he said, "Go into the forest and each return with a twig." Each son left the lodge and doing as he was told went into the forest, found a twig and returned to his father. "Now each of you break the twig you have brought back," said the Elder. Each son immediately snapped the twig.

"Now, once again, return to the forest and bring back a twig," said the Elder. And once again each son did as he was told. This time, though, when the sons returned the old man collected twigs and bound them together into a bundle. He passed the bundle to each son saying, "Try your best to break the twigs." As hard as he tried, no son was able to break the bundle of twigs.

"You see," said the father, "one by one each of you may be destroyed by an enemy. But together you will never be defeated."

This story illustrates why we need each other and why we must stand together when we are threatened by people or groups with hostile intentions. We may be picked off one by one, but together we can be unbeatable.

Who threatens us? A Governor who wants to create tax cuts with money taken from our pension funds. A Congress that wants to reduce the benefits that we worked for and are entitled to because we are citizens of this great land who gave to Social Security while we worked. Now we hear how they can help balance the Federal budget by denying to us what we put aside for our later years. A Legislature that wants to increase the costs of our health care while, at the same time, narrowing the scope of that health care just when we need it the most.

We are retirees. We may see each other occasionally or talk on the phone to an old friend sometimes, but we can be easy targets because, not like when we worked and saw each other every day and could do things together, now we appear to be scattered and therefore weak. How many of us took the time to write in anger and in opposition to express our feelings to our governor and our legislators? How many of us went to the state capitals and told the politicians there that we want to be heard? Do you wonder why they feel that they can get away with anything?

We have VOTE-COPE. It is an organization that works in the halls of the legislatures, the capitol, and the Congress to tell legislators in the halls, in their offices, in newspapers, and even in the media, what you want. How do we know what you want? Every issue of the ROBS Newsletter, On Track and the New York Teacher tell you what the issues are and we hear from you when you agree or disagree with what you read. Many attend our meetings and speak up so that what is felt is expressed and shared by all.

But Vote-Cope is not a part of NYSUT. Legally it cannot be funded by your dues money. It must receive its funds from contributions. In-service teachers may have their yearly contributions deducted from their pay checks. We retirees must depend on the mail. We ask you to contribute to Vote-Cope and then you must do the work of writing out the check and mailing it to us. If you do nothing Vote-Cope does less.

What exactly does Vote-Cope do? It funds our trips to Albany and to Washington so that we may see our legislators and tell them directly what you want and expect of them. Vote-Cope also gives contributions to those who support our bills and vote to support us. Is this bad? Ask the AMA, the NRA, and the School Boards Association. They know that if their members support them the legislators will know that, too. We must project the same impression. Why should anyone worry about retirees if they do nothing for themselves?

What about letters? Yes, ask any legislator if he knows which organizations have an active membership that can get angry at him or her for voting the wrong way. They may start looking for someone to replace him or her.

Is it bad to give contributions to candidates in elections? Consider: a school board race. One seat can cost hundreds for thousands of dollars. A candidate quickly learns who his or her friends are. An open door to the office to hear what the membership feels is important is not too much to ask for.

In a few days we will be on our way to Albany to speak with our legislators about health care, the moratorium, our pensions and the need to send the supplementary funds out as quickly as possible to our more senior retirees. We want to tell them, again, that a cut in funds for education threatens the very future of those communities they are supposed to serve. And so much more....

Vote-Cope will pay for our expenses to lobby for you. All the money comes from the checks sent by our members. Each one of us, a twig, has no power and no influence over the course of our future. But, together, we cannot be ignored, patted on the head, and fed a scrap from the table from which the goodies are handed out. Each check adds a twig to the bundle, an unbreakable bundle.

When the call comes for the next Vote-Cope drive search your heart as well as your wallet and give what you can. You will help yourself and all of us.

Jack Zuckerman



ROBS ELECTION UNANIMOUS

At the May 7th meeting of ROBS, members elected officers for the next two years. Elected were: Dorothy Zuckerman as president; Christin Veech, vice president; Beverly Carpenter, secretary; and Harriet Pepine, treasurer. Edy Filosa has been appointed ROBS representative to ED 21 Retiree Council.

Using slides, Brian Feil of the Bayard Cutting Arboretum presented a history of the Arboretum and the Bayard Cutting family. The next general meeting will be in September. Once on a teaching schedule, always on a teaching schedule!



WE'RE FIVE, BUT THE PARTY WAS NIXED!

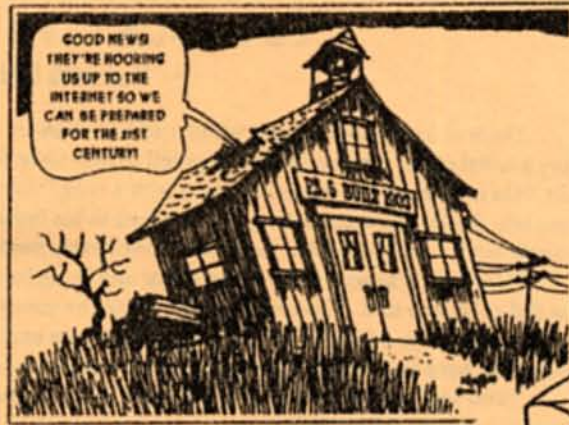
Unfortunately the well publicized party for our 5th birthday had to be cancelled due to lack of interest. We had planned a dinner dance at the Timber Point Country Club on May 29th.

The Executive Board will explore holding a luncheon in the fall. Details will follow.

Thanks to the committee which worked hard and long on the details: Ruth McCalla, Harriet Pepine, Charlie Smith, Vernelle Spencer, Shirley Walker Smith, Mary Bender, Addie Lee, Peggy Sheehan.

QUOTE OF INTEREST

From Sheldon Wolin, Professor Emeritus of Political Theory at Princeton comes this: " Democracy is not about ideological purity, nor is it simply the recognition of differences of race, gender and ethnicity. It is about how we equalize politically in acting together for shared purposes."



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

How about this for the ROBS Newsletter?

Best Regards, Dave Brown

From the Advice column of Ann Landers, a reprinted, edited, letter from the Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel:

We are probably the only members of society in the history of mankind for which the younger generation has so little respect and has demonstrated such a shameful lack of regard.

Senior citizens are constantly being criticized, belittled and sniped at for every conceivable deficiency of the modern world, real and imaginary.

I'd like to point out that it wasn't the senior citizens who took the melody out of music, the beauty out of art, the pride out of appearance, the romance out of love, the commitment out of marriage, the responsibility out of parenthood, togetherness out of family, learning out of education, loyalty out of Americanism, service out of patriotism, the hearth out of the home, civility out of behavior, refinement out of language, dedication out of employment, prudence out of spending or ambition out of achievement. And we certainly are not the ones who eliminated patience and tolerance from relationships.

Jerome J. Goldstein, Boca Raton
(not a known teacher or ROBS member)

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



NEWS NOTES

ROBS has been saddened since our last Newsletter with several losses of members or spouses of members.

Vincent Vuolo passed away on April 6th after a four month bout with kidney cancer. Since retirement he had developed a new curriculum for the Brentwood Library Literacy program which he shared with ROBS members at a meeting on volunteerism. He left his wife Josephine, an artist.

In May we also lost **Virginia Roman**, who retired from Northeast Elementary School and lived in Brentwood.

Shirley Hodges, who retired from the English Department of Sonderling lost her husband Bill on May 8th after a long illness.

Millie Singleton's husband George died in April also. **Millie** retired from Ross High School. We extend our sincere sympathies to the families and friends. Our prayers and thoughts are with you all.

Bernie LeBron's wife, Rose, is recovering nicely from by-pass surgery in April. **Bernie** retired from Ross High School, and still teaches in the Night School.



Estelle Hoyt of South Junior, and **Phyllis Baumann**, who retired from Sonderling, have been ill but are up and running again we are happy to report. **Phyllis** has been elected President of her Alpha Omicron Chapter of Delta Kappa. Happy gaveling, **Phyllis!**

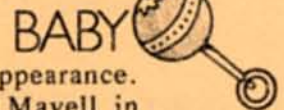
Awards are not strangers to **Grace Fishenfeld**, retired art teacher from Sonderling. She was presented the Sara Winston cash award from the National Association of Women Artists this spring in SoHo.

And **Lillian Masten**, a retired art teacher from Southwest, who ran our very successful Crafts Workshop this year, had a water color painting exhibit recently. Nice going Lillian!

Herb Laub a retired Social Studies teacher from Sonderling, was awarded a Phd from Stony Brook this May. Congratulations!

A picture of **Ruth McCalla** and **Ivy Rosenthal** taken at the CORTLI Luncheon was in the May 13th issue of NEW YORK TEACHER. Retirees have a page called "On Retirement," and it's worth reading, not only for the information, but because we Brentwood retirees seem to merit a good deal of attention on its pages. **John Sherin** was featured in the June 10th issue on the ROBS History Project. There was a picture of him interviewing Dave Martz, retired principal of Ross, and a former BTA president.,

A beaming **Edy Filosa** (retired Nurse-Teacher, Sonderling) can be seen floating through life these days. Son Alex (Sandy) was engaged on June 11th to Lynn McCarron with a wedding planned for the summer of 1997. Sandy teaches Special Ed at Ross. Lynn's father is the retired Business Department Chairperson of the Commack Schools. Edy's quote: "We're delighted!"



As this column was being written, **Chris Veech's** fifth grandchild made his appearance. Kristian Gregory Veech was born on June 14th to son Gregory and wife Mayell in Binghamton. Gregg teaches in Johnson City, and lectures on teaching innovations.

CONGRATULATIONS



CATHY'S CLERICAL CORNER

BY Catherine Tomney

What is your best
"I REMEMBER"?

Did you hear? - Clerical attendance at ROBS meetings increased 300%! How many does that represent? Come to the meetings and see for yourself!

I enjoyed a visit with Maria Campain and Eleanor Love while in Vegas last month. All are happy and well with both husbands recovered from recent heart attacks.

Maria "remembers" how she was always claiming she was H.B.'s second wife, only to discover to her embarrassment that things said in jest sometimes are taken as fact!

Mary Bender "remembers" the time she demanded that a stranger entering the school report first to the front office, - only to discover that the 'stranger' was the superintendent of the Brentwood Schools!

Let's hear from you. What's your "I REMEMBER"?

Contact me at: 42 Browns River Road,

Sayville, N.Y. 11782; 516-563-3573

BITS AND PIECES

» NYSUT Member Benefit: pension deduction discount for auto insurance will increase from 5% to 8%. To receive this deduction, retirees should select convenient pension deduction as their payment method.

» New NYSUT Retiree Handbook which now has a personal organizer to help keep track of all vital papers such as wills, savings, insurance, etc.. Available from the NYSUT Retiree Office: 800-342-9304.

» Free from NYSUT Retiree Office: 99 TRAVEL TIPS FOR MATURE TRAVELERS. Covers cruises to tours. Call 1-800-750-1779.

» Free subscription: AFT is looking for 100 members to serve on an advisory group for the Electric Library, an Internet web site that allows users to quickly and easily perform keyword searches of thousands of full-text reference materials. Those selected will receive a free subscription to the Electric Library. For details, and to submit an online application to join the board, point your Internet browser to <http://www.aft.org/elboard.htm>. Also note that AFT members can subscribe to the Electric Library for only \$7.95 a month.

» Say it with UNION Flowers: Now there are "Union Made" flowers. You can use

the new Union Member Flower Service through Union Privilege, AFL-CIO and save commissions or handling fees charged by many delivery networks. 100% money back guarantee from FloraGift florists. It's easy. Call 800-823-5246 with credit card handy, enter the Zip code where you want the flowers delivered and place the order directly with the florist that will make the delivery.



» If you have an unwanted old car or truck you'd like to get rid of, call 800-590-1600 and N.Y. Special Olympics will take it off your hands through a special recycling program co-sponsored by NYSUT. You also qualify for a tax deduction. The "Recycle for Gold" program has helped recycle more than 1000 vehicles in the past year. It is also sponsored by the State DMV, Thruway Authority and Dept. of Correctional Services Education Division.

» America Online is looking for teachers to assist with tutoring, managing message boards, academic contest and peertutoring. Sign on whenever you have time (at least 3 times a week) and answer questions sent by e-mail. There already are more than 1000 teachers on staff, and the Academic Assistance Center hopes to triple that number. Contact Hal Rosengarten by e-mail at aaccoord@aol.com.

The *New York Teacher* staff will begin work this summer on a series of articles to mark NYSUT's 25th anniversary, which will be celebrated during 1997-98. July 4 is the deadline for submission of photos, printed materials, memorabilia, anecdotes, etc. Send material to *New York Teacher* History Project, 159 Wolf Road, Box 15008, Albany, NY 12212-5008. Anyone interested in being interviewed as part of the project should notify the newspaper in writing.

IF YOU REMEMBER YOU FORGOT
YOU'RE O.K.!



REPORT ON INSURANCE REFORM BILL AVAILABLE

Families USA has produced a six-page *Special Report* critiquing the anti-consumer provisions of the House insurance reform bill. For a free copy of "Bipartisan Consumer Health Bill Turned Into Partisan Bill Harmful to Consumers," send a stamped (32¢ postage), self-addressed envelope to: Harmful, Families USA, 1334 G Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005.

DON'T MESS WITH MY MEDICARE!

"Sally Alexander, 82 years old, was so upset about cuts in Medicare she wrote to her congressman. That didn't work — so she decided to run against him.

"Now Mrs. Alexander, who has never held a paid political office, is the Democratic nominee for Congress in California's 45th District. She's the oldest challenger to seek election to Congress this year — and maybe ever."

The Wall Street Journal

White House Conference on Aging Final Report Released

The U.S. should protect an increasingly elderly population by providing more home and community based care and shielding existing benefit programs from cuts according to the final report of the 1995 White House Conference on Aging released today. The report also calls for an intergenerational aging policy that ensures a continuing solvency in the Social Security system, endorses a greater investment into aging research, and embodies greater sensitivity to the nation's diversity.

The 590 page report entitled *The Road to an Aging Policy for the 21st Century* represents a composite of the entire bipartisan White House Conference on Aging process which involved more than 1000 regional, state and local grass roots events and a three day national conference held in May of 1995. The report also contains comments by 46 of the nation's Governors on the issues raised at the WHCoA. More than 125,000 persons participated in the two year process including 2217 delegates at the national event.

"This is a report which will shape aging policy in this country for years to come. It truly represents the desires and directions of older people and their families across the country," Senator David Pryor, Chairman of the WHCoA Policy Committee said.

In the official letter of transmittal to President Clinton, Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala said "The report will be a continuing source of guidance to the Federal Government, states, local communities and national organizations concerned with the contributions and needs of older Americans."

The report is based upon the resolutions adopted at the national conference in May. These resolutions were the subject of more than 200 post-Conference events, entitled "Turning Resolutions into Results." Participants in these events developed a series of implementation strategies for each of the resolutions.

WHCoA Executive Director, Robert Blancato remarked "A prevailing sentiment expressed throughout the resolutions and their

The Retiree Organizer

implementation strategies is the need to consider future generations in the development of aging policy and for those policies to be intergenerational - recognizing that 'aging' programs affect both seniors and their families."

The following issues were the highest priority for Conference participants:

Social Security -- strong support was registered for full protection of current benefits and a comprehensive look at how to keep the system solvent now and for the next generation of beneficiaries.

Medicare and Medicaid -- Strong support was registered for preserving and protecting Medicare and Medicaid particularly provisions for home and community-based care. Specific opposition was directed at the block-granting of Medicaid, as well as, the loss of entitlement status for millions of low income children, disabled and elderly under Medicaid and using savings from Medicare and Medicaid to finance a tax cut.

Older Americans Act -- Strong support was registered at a number of post-conference forums for a multi-year reauthorization of all existing programs under the Older Americans Act especially nutrition services which include home-delivered and congregate meals, transportation, senior centers, in-home services, elder abuse prevention and nursing home ombudsman. Specific opposition was directed at any block-granting.

Research -- Strong support was registered for increased expenditures for all forms of aging research, especially related to Alzheimer's disease as an investment that will result in substantial long-term cost savings.

Diversity -- The report notes that the number of minority elderly will double by the year 2030 and that plans must be made at all levels to ensure services and programs are more sensitive to this dynamic. The report also notes the rapid growth in the number of older women and the special issues confronting them, especially related to health and economic security.

Long-Term Care -- Throughout the process strong sentiment was registered for long-

term care being an essential element in future health care policies. This includes developing home and community based alternatives to institutional care and expanded private long-term care insurance.



Grandparents as Caregivers -- The report notes that three million grandchildren are being raised by their grandparents and calls for new and or improved State and Federal laws to help grandparents in this caregiver role.

Senior Volunteers -- The report calls for the development of public and private partnerships that provide resources to support senior volunteer efforts in communities across the country. It specifically calls for the Corporation for National Service to recruit and enroll one million senior volunteers by the year 2000.

In addition, the final report directs special attention to issues related to older Veterans; the need for closer policy and service links between the aging and disability communities; the need for persons to assume greater responsibility for their health; the strengthening and expanding of public-private partnerships in aging; and improving the media's coverage of aging and the elderly.

The 1995 White House Conference on Aging, with its theme "American Now and Into the 21st Century: Generations Aging Together with Independence, Opportunity and Dignity," was the fourth such conference in history, the first under a Democratic President and the last of the twentieth century. It was authorized by the 1992 Amendments to the Older Americans Act and was officially called by President Clinton on February 17, 1994.

The WHCoA office will close March 31, 1996. Copies of the full final report or an Executive Summary may be obtained by contacting the White House Conference on Aging before March 31, 1996 at (202) 245-7116 or, After March 31, by contacting the National Aging Information Center at (202) 554-9800. Supplies are limited.

*Please note that the implementation strategies for resolution #20, *Preventing elder abuse, exploitation and neglect* and resolution #32, *Preserving and expanding Federal and State elderly housing programs*, were inadvertently omitted from the final report. Copies can be obtained by contacting the numbers listed above.



U Smile!

Overheard at an RC 21 meeting where a speaker was discussing the benefits of Long Term Care Insurance:
"I'm going to call Kevourkian!"
Response: "Do you think he'll give us a group rate?"