

ROBS

NewsLetter

NUMBER 16 RETIREES OF BRENTWOOD SCHOOLS SEPT./OCT. 1996

ELECTIONS ARE UPON US

One of the most important elections for retired NYSUT members is the seat on our Retirement Board. NYSUT/AFT teacher retirees Emanuel (Manny) Kafka from Nassau County and Josephine (Jo) Davenport from Buffalo County are running for positions as board member and alternate respectively, for the New York State Teacher's Retirement System for a term of three years. They have vowed to represent, to be available to, and to be advocates for all retired teachers. To emphasize that commitment, both candidates distribute their home phone numbers as they travel about the state speaking to retirees. They offer the retired teachers in the state retirement system the voice needed to protect pensions, to push for inflation protection, and to press for paid health insurance for all retirees. They have both AFT and NEA endorsements.

Mail ballots are due out by October 1st and NYSTRS members (you) have 30 days to return ballots. **TO BE SURE YOU DON'T FORGET, SEND YOUR BALLOT BACK AS SOON AS YOU RECEIVE IT TO INSURE THAT A NYSUT RETIREE SITS ON THE RETIREMENT BOARD!** There is only one retiree seat, something NYSUT fought hard to pass three years ago. Unfortunately three years ago, the NYSUT candidate did not win the election! This time, with your help, our candidates can win.

RETURN YOUR BALLOTS SWIFTLY!!!

DOLE ATTACKS TEACHERS UNIONS ENDORSE CLINTON



The political party conventions are over and those of us in education came away dismayed. As Vice President Al Gore told delegates at the AFT convention this summer, "I can't remember any presidential candidate launching his campaign with an attack on teachers," referring to Bob Dole's statement that public schools are in trouble due partly to the "viselike monopoly" of unions. Dole also derided President Clinton's ties to "the very groups (unions) who have run our public schools into the ground."

Gore responded at the AFT convention: "Bob Dole accused President Clinton and me of being real close to teachers. My answer is, 'You're damn right we are!' America's teachers and school employees and those who defend them are here to stay!" He called Dole's support of deep cuts in education funding "the single most irresponsible proposal for the future of American children."

Both the AFT delegates and the NYSUT Board of Directors voted to endorse Clinton and Gore for reelection. "For years," said AFT President Al Shanker, "we've wanted a President who makes education a top priority. Clinton has done that." Shanker noted that only the President's veto prevented catastrophic cuts in education sought by Congress. "He kept his word," Shanker noted.

NYSUT President Tom Hobart said, "Dole is a strong advocate of private-school vouchers, deep cuts in public education funding, and elimination of the U.S. Department of Education and the Goals 2000 program. President Clinton is on the absolute opposite end of the spectrum -- our end -- on each of those issues."

THE 1996 POLITICAL CAMPAIGN is off and running. As Sen. Bob Dole was set to be the Republican presidential nominee, the labor movement this spring was already mobilizing the troops and building its war chest for the November elections. At a special convention in March, the AFL-CIO formally endorsed President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore and approved a special assessment to raise \$35 million for a nationwide grassroots and media political campaign.

This effort—and the AFT's activities—will focus on providing solid information and comparisons of each candidate's record on issues important to members and the institutions where they work. As a recent poll conducted for the AFL-CIO emphasized, "unions need to provide members with information, not voting instructions."

To that end we have prepared a comparison scorecard (right) that outlines the candidates' records on a number of issues important to AFT members.

KEY ISSUES

In a November 1995 poll of AFT members, you told us that issues—not partisan politics—matter most in election campaigns. Here were some of the top concerns for members over age 50:

- **Improving public education** is the top issue, with 42 percent of AFT members over age 50 saying it is most important to them that this issue be of concern to people on the national level.
- **Protecting Medicare** for senior citizens also takes a top spot for members.
- **Reforming the welfare system and meeting the needs of poor children.**
- **Working for standards of conduct and achievement in schools.**
- **Preserving the U.S. Department of Education** and opposing school voucher programs that use public tax funds to pay for private schools.
- **Raising the minimum wage.**

CANDIDATE SCORECARD



Here's how President Clinton and Republican presidential nominee Sen. Bob Dole score on issues that are important to our members. A check ✓ indicates that the candidate supports the AFT position, an X indicates the candidate opposes the AFT position.

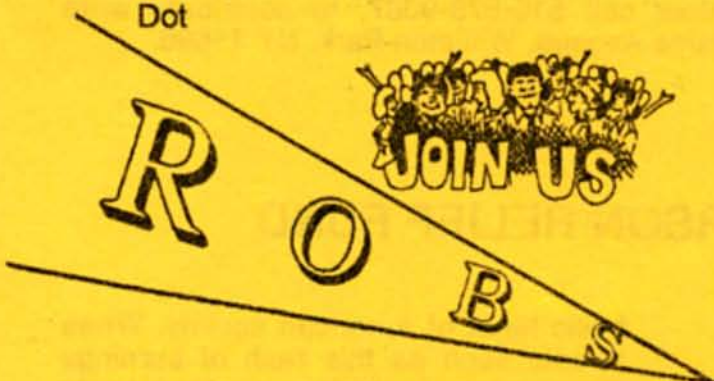


X	Medicare As a member of the House, Dole voted against Medicare when it was enacted under President Lyndon Johnson. He supported most recent efforts to cut Medicare in order to finance a proposed tax cut that largely benefits the wealthiest Americans. The <i>Washington Post</i> recently reported Dole as saying, "I was there, fighting the fight, voting against Medicare because we knew it wouldn't work in 1965." President Clinton is fighting to stop cuts in Medicare funding.		✓
X	Minimum Wage Sen. Dole has voted against efforts in Congress to increase the minimum wage. President Clinton supports increasing the minimum wage at a time when workers' real earnings continue to decline.		✓
X	Family and Medical Leave In 1993, President Clinton signed this long-overdue legislation that provides employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid job-protected leave for the birth or adoption of a child or illness of a family member. Sen. Dole was one of 27 senators who voted against it.		✓
X	Workplace Fairness In 1994, the Senate, led by Sen. Dole, killed efforts to pass legislation prohibiting employers from permanently replacing striking workers even though federal law protects workers' right to strike. Later, President Clinton issued an executive order barring federal contracts for companies that permanently replace striking workers.		✓
X	NAFTA The North American Free Trade Agreement, originally negotiated by the Bush administration, gives American firms an incentive to shift jobs to Mexico. President Clinton supported NAFTA, but he did agree to work on a set of side agreements on workers' rights and the environment. Despite strong opposition from AFL-CIO unions, the bill was passed and signed by President Clinton.		X
X	Worker and Environmental Protection Sen. Dole voted to weaken workplace health and safety regulations as well as clean air and clean water protections. President Clinton vetoed the legislation.		✓
X	Assault Weapons Ban Despite opposition from the National Rifle Association, in 1993 Congress voted to ban the manufacture, sale and future possession of most semi-automatic assault weapons and copy-cat guns. Dole was one of 43 senators who voted against the ban and has promised to schedule a vote in the Senate to repeal it. President Clinton pushed hard for the ban and opposes any efforts to repeal or weaken it.		✓
X	AmeriCorps Sen. Bob Dole was among those who tried to block AFT-supported legislation for a new national service program, proposed by President Clinton, that gives students the chance to serve their communities for up to two years and earn federal tuition assistance. Their efforts failed, however, and Clinton signed the bill into law in 1993.		✓
X	College Loans The president's Direct Lending program, which lends money directly to students for college and thus eliminates the "middleman" (such as banks), could save taxpayers up to \$4.3 billion by 1998. Sen. Dole wants to cap the program and restore a source of profits to banks and other loan guaranty agencies.		✓
X	School to Work The School-to-Work Opportunities Act proposed by President Clinton and signed into law in 1994 authorized \$300 million for programs to help ease students' passage from school to work and include partnerships among employers, educational institutions and labor. Bob Dole was one of 31 senators to vote against the bill.		✓
X	Private School Vouchers Sen. Bob Dole consistently votes for taxpayer-supported voucher programs to help parents send their children to private schools. Most recently, he voted for a \$5 million voucher plan for Washington, D.C., schools. President Clinton opposes vouchers and tuition tax credits.		✓
X	Education Department Sen. Dole has vowed to eliminate the U.S. Department of Education; the department has overwhelming support among AFT members. President Clinton supports continuation of the department.		✓
X	Goals 2000 President Clinton is fighting to save this federal program to help districts and schools achieve standards-based reforms. The program is under attack in Congress and Sen. Dole favors efforts to eliminate the program. AFT members overwhelmingly support continuation of Goals 2000.		✓

NOW WE ARE SIX

The school clock remains active and demanding. Although we're no longer in the classrooms or the offices September still signals the season of beginnings. ROBS is entering our sixth year of being together. Imagine! At six years of age, a toddler is ready to start school and to begin the incredible road toward growth and maturity that will form the patterns of all the later years. As a fledgling organization of Brentwood retirees, we were new-born, went through an incredibly rapid learning process, learned to walk straight and with direction, and began to speak with one voice. Now we realize that we are entering the new stage of expectant maturity. A great deal has been accomplished in these past years. We have grown to a membership of over 300! Our ROBS newsletter has received NYSUT awards three years running. We have started the first innovative retiree oral history project in the state. We publish an updated Directory each year to help our members keep in touch regardless of where they live. We are organizing a travel trip with special member benefits. We organize workshops for small member groups based on their recommendations and interests. We have lobbied our legislators in Albany and Washington; we've had breakfasts and luncheons; we have received a variety of speakers at our meetings. All this has been made possible because of the interest and participation of you, our members. One or two people alone cannot achieve all that we have accomplished. **It is time to renew your membership for 1996-97.** Please return the form now, and remember to include a separate check for Vote-Cope. **For those whose membership may have lapsed, this is the only reminder you will receive.** Because of the prohibitive cost of mailing, all future newsletters will be sent to members only. **Stay informed, stay in touch, and stay with ROBS!**

In unity,
Dot



ROBS NEWSLETTER STAFF
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PRODUCTION EDITORS: Mary Ruffino
Don Kubicsko
STAFF: Mary Bader, Jackie Hartman
Polly Lane, Miriam Massucci
Lyn Prass, Cathy Tomney

ROBS OFFICERS
PRES. - Dorothy Zuckerman
V. PRES. - Chris Veech
SEC'Y. - Bev Carpenter
TREAS. - Harriet Pepine

MARK CALENDARS FOR ROBS

The ROBS Welcome Social on September 4th was a rousing success. Fifty relaxed folk showed up at the West Islip Library, and a majority of our new retirees were there. (See list elsewhere in newsletter).

The year's meetings will be held from now on at the **ISLIP PUBLIC LIBRARY, 71 Monell Ave., Islip; 581-5933.** The Library is 3 lights west of Route 111 off Montauk Highway. Please mark your calendars for the October and November meetings.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1st: 10 A.M. - Refreshments & "Sharing With Sherin."

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5th: 10 A.M. - Refreshments and we're hoping to dance in the aisles!

MEETING NOTICE

CYNICISM ABOUNDS: B U T...

Y Smile!

According to Guy Molyneux of Peter Hart Polling Service, the AFL/CIO pollster (and often seen on CNN), cynicism is showing up in a broad coalition of union members. "Busy people have no time to keep up with issues, especially when they are inundated with so much at every turn."

B U T ... there is one candidate running this year who people are not at all confused or cynical about because from here to Florida, to Vermont, and perhaps all over the country people know her story. She is **CAROLYN McCARTHY** who is running for the U.S. Congress in the 4th Congressional District in Nassau County on the Democratic ticket even though she is a lifelong Republican. She is running against freshman Dan Frisa who voted against the assault weapon ban earlier this year.

"The Long Island Railroad shooting changed my life, but after the tremendous outpouring of support I received, it's time to give something back. My campaign for Congress will be for us and the issues we care about."

McCarthy, a nurse, spoke to 500 Coalition Of Retired Teachers of L.I. (CORTLI) members at the Fall luncheon at the Milleridge Inn on September 5th about everything from stopping crime and banning assault weapons to affordable health care, creating good jobs at good wages, protecting seniors' right to Medicare, environmental concerns and making education a priority.

"I had no choice but to enter the political process," McCarthy stated, "to speak for controlling violence in this country." Her son has come back to a life that includes being back at work for the past year, and attending college again. "Don't ever say someone can't do it, because you can!"

McCarthy's support for education has strong roots. Both she and Kevin suffer from severe dyslexia. In her case, she coped with it the best she could, but in Kevin's case, it was the schools that helped him. Her support for public education is strong and she opposes vouchers. As she gazed out at the 500 youthful retirees before her she said, "Look at the power in this room! Get out the vote. Write letters, and on November 6th, wake up smiling!"

You don't have to be a resident of her congressional district to volunteer or contribute to her campaign. To volunteer call 516-873-9087; to contribute write Carolyn McCarthy for Congress, 120 Hillside Avenue, Williston Park, NY 11596.



AFT CHURCH ARSON RELIEF FUND

NYSUT Board of Directors voted in June to contribute \$10,000 to the AFT's Arson Relief Fund to help rebuild more than a score of predominately black and interracial churches that have been bombed, burned or vandalized in recent months.

AFT President Al Shanker said in urging contributions, "The right to practice one's religious beliefs and do so without fear, regardless of race, is a

basic tenet of American society. When threats such as this rash of burnings are used to intimidate or deny one's civil rights, all decent people need to mobilize."

Contributions payable to the AFT Church Arson Relief Fund may be sent to AFT, 555 New Jersey Ave., N.W., Washington DC 20001-2079, attn: Human Rights & Community Relations Department.

CREATIVE CORNER

Opening Day! ☺☹☹

"Welcome back!" "How was your summer?"

"Doesn't it feel like we just left this place?" "How many more years do you have to teach?"
by Tom O'Connor

Each September, when it's time for the new school year to begin, teachers and administrators gather for meetings on the day after Labor Day. Known as "opening day," this is easily one of the least favorite days of the year for many teachers.

At the high school where I taught, the day was usually devoted to some speeches by district leaders, followed by building and department level meetings to discuss plans for the school year. Regardless of who was in charge, though, something always seemed to go wrong. These are just some of the sights and sounds of "opening day."

In the auditorium, where the teachers and administrators of the district are the audience, the superintendent is at the podium. Seated in back of him on the stage are the high school principal, the school board president and vice president. Just as the superintendent is at a key part of his speech, the loud, sustained foghorn blast of the class change bell sounds, obliterating his message. He turns to the principal, who motions to the assistant principal to do something. The assistant principal shrugs then runs from the auditorium, as the superintendent finishes his speech and returns to his seat.

Next, the school board president rises and begins his speech. Soon, his voice is drowned out by the PA System: "Sorry for the interruption. The social studies department meeting will be at 12:30 instead of 11:30 in Room 528 instead of Room 516, as was previously announced." The school board president, visibly annoyed, turns to the principal. "Can't something be done about these interruptions?" He then continues with his speech. "As I was saying, those of us who work in education are truly blessed to have this opportunity to work with the youth of our society. Let us all...." shreeeeeek!!! "Could somebody fix this microphone?"

And so it goes. The rest of the day isn't much better. At the building level meeting, these are the announcements of note:

"Attention all teachers: Try your file cabinet key. If it will not open your cabinet, bring it to the front office secretary. Some keys were switched and put in the wrong folders. We don't know which ones or how many."

"The new wing, including the library, will be closed due to a water leak. The estimated repair time is somewhere between two and six weeks."

The news item that sets the tone at the department meeting is that the textbooks several teachers are waiting for are not in yet. The purchase order was sent out late because it was misplaced. It is not known how long it will be until the books arrive. So these teachers (and more importantly, their students) will start the school year without enough textbooks. Fortunately, tomorrow is a new day and that's when kids and teachers meet for the first time this school year. And that's all that really matters about opening day.

WELCOME TO THE 1996 BRENTWOOD RETIREES!

ROBERT ACKER
MARGARET ACOSTA
PENNIE BALLARD
RICHARD CAREY
JAMES DAVIS
CARL FOGLIANO
RICHARD GRIFFIN
FAYE HILLMAN
ALBERT JONES
LILIAN KELLY
CORINNE LEHMAN
MARGARET LORIA
PATRICIA MICHALSKI
CAROL PERCHIK
DONNA MARIE RAGONESE
PATRICIA SAPPRAICONE
JOSEPH VAN DENBURG
ROBERT WIENER

DOROTHY ACKLEY
GEORGE BARNES
FRED BOWMAN
MARY CRISCIONE
IDA DONALD
NICHOLAS GENNARO
EDWARD HANNAN
ESTELLE HOYT
LORRAINE KEEN
EDWARD KOENIG
MICHAEL LAMBERT
VERONICA MARQUEZ
DOLORES OSBORNE
CARMEN PITTINARO
MARTIN RIGER
ETHEL TARKAN
MARY WHITE
SUSAN WIENER





Sympathy

NEWS NOTES

In the March issue of the ROBS Newsletter we happily reported on the 60th wedding anniversary of **Ann** and **Ed Mattausch**. Now we sadly must report that Ed died in August at age 88 of a cancer that was diagnosed in June. Our hearts go out to **Ann** and her family!

In August, a small band of retirees had lunch in a local Italian bistro to share some of life's insights. Hosted by **Pat Hucke**, the group included **Mary Bader**, high school business teacher who has recovered nicely from surgery; **Edy Filosa**, high school nurse teacher; future retiree **Carol Bruno**, business teacher; **Shirley Hodges**, high school English teacher/antiquer who is doing well; and **Elmon Kazandjian**, also English at the high school. Women do know how to "do lunch!"

Happy Birthday to **Vern Spenser**. Husband **Frank** threw her a BIG BASH!



Ellie Steffen threw a big party at her home in Woodstock, New York celebrating among a whole list of things, the "re-connections of Old Friends and the love of New Friends!" She is painting with great satisfaction, and living with great gusto!

Another Big Birthday Bash was for **Addie Lee**, who spent some of the summer as a camp volunteer. Happy, Happy, **Addie!**

And in August, **June Dawson** took off for a trip to Alaska. We haven't heard from her, so she's either exhausted or she found a scuba diver she decided to swim home with. Let us know, **June!**

Had a hello for all from **Phyllis Baumann** who starts her Alpha Omega presidency as we go to press. Her comment: "Don't ask."

Marianne Gruskin was on one of her many overseas travels when still-working/wishing-she-were-retired teacher, **Linda Eckert** (Social Studies), called her name. Talk about a small world...

Bon voyage to the 20 retirees who are off to Turkey with **Dot and Jack Zuckerman** October 20 - November 7th! Watch out, **Jack** is bringing his Robert's Rules of Order!

Probably the proudest parents around are **Ruth and Mac McCalla** whose daughter **Kim** is a civil engineer in Baltimore, Maryland. On September 6th, the Baltimore Convention Center was dedicated. After the dedication there was an open house at the Baltimore Symphony. **Kim** was Project Manager on the job. Previously she was Project Manager on the Camden Yards Baseball Park Arena in the Baltimore Harbor area. Apparently this career started when **Kim** was three years old when she used to say to her parents: "One day I'm going to make a city, and it's going to sparkle!"



Jim Watson's Maine address was incorrect in the last newsletter. It should be: RR # 2, P.O. Box 4356, Belgrade, Me., 04917; 207-465-3356. Lots of Brentwood folk have visited with him in Maine this summer. He's soon off to an Elder Hostel in San Francisco, and then plans to winter in Arizona. In between he'll be in Maine!

Jaqueline Buccola's new address: 1732 Pondberry Lane, Port St. Lucie, Fl. 34952.



RETIREES OF BRENTWOOD SCHOOLS



IMPORTANCE OF MEMBERSHIP

Only one third of our retirees live out of state. Most of us are busy people with lives that are so full we wonder how we had time to go to work. Some of us are organizers and enjoy group activities. Others of us are solitary beings who don't get involved with meetings. **BUT ALL OF US ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE FUTURE AS IT CONCERNS OUR QUALITY OF LIFE!**

**WHAT HAPPENS IN WASHINGTON AND ALBANY AFFECTS US ALL!
WHEREVER WE LIVE, WHATEVER WE'RE DOING NOW!**

Don't let our future security and financial stability be dependent on the whim of Congress and the State Legislature. Lend us your support so we can continue to alert you to action on behalf of our retiree benefits, as well as giving us a good sized membership to represent when we try to "educate" elected officials.

GET ON OUR MAILING LIST! JOIN US NOW!

CLIP AND RETURN



_____ I am enclosing \$10 for my 1996-97 ROBS dues.**

_____ I am enclosing a separate check for \$_____ made out to NYSUT VOTE-COPE to support legislative efforts on my behalf (Include SS# on check)

****PLEASE NOTE:** If you are 75 years and older, there is no charge for dues. Please return this form so we can include you on our membership list.

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

_____ **DO NOT INCLUDE MY NAME IN THE ROBS DIRECTORY**

BUILDING RETIRED FROM

YEAR RETIRED

MAIL TO: ROBS Treasurer Harriet Pepine
82 Gloria Boulevard
Hauppauge, New York 11788

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Hi Everyone:

My congratulations to Chris Veech and Cathy Killian on their recent award for the newsletter ON TRACK. Truly this is a well deserved accolade.

Whatever you've heard about summer in Florida is all too true! It's HOT and HUMID!! However, thanks to a/c one does survive (as long as there are no hurricanes).

Your newsletters (ROBS and RC 21) leave me a bit sad and very nostalgic that I cannot participate in your planned meetings and activities. However, I am committed to life down south, and as a widow I have lots of other widows to keep me company. Unfortunately, I am not a card or mah-jong player so I am still searching for pursuits that will satisfy my need to be productive. I am planning to tutor (volunteer) in the local middle school, and that should be pleasurable.

I hope that everyone is in good health and that you had happy vacations! Was the trip to Turkey a success?

As always, my best wishes for ROBS continued growth! Stay well - have fun - keep in touch.

Rhoda K. Stamler

Please make Florida residents who have HIP as medical insurance aware of the situation which Dot Zuckerman warned me against. They are in every way trying to sign N.Y. retirees up for HIP Advantage rather than HIP through our district which is N.Y. administered by Florida. They tell us we will have more benefits, etc., that we live in Florida and cannot be covered by N.Y. HIP (not true).

Anyhow if we fall for this - Brentwood is off the hook, we lose district coverage and cannot get back in. Anyone who is on Medicare living in Florida can give up their Medicare card and be covered by any HMO. HIP Florida makes more money if we do this. Maybe an article in the newsletter would help.

Joyce Shapiro



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

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