

# ROBS Newsletters

NUMBER 19

RETIREES OF BRENTWOOD SCHOOLS

APRIL 1997

## IN MEMORIAM

### Albert Shanker, 1928-1997

**A** memorial service for Albert Shanker, who died Feb. 22, will be held March 24 in New York City, 3:30-5 p.m., at the New York State Theater at Lincoln Center. A special tribute also is planned at the Thursday evening, May 1, general session of NYSUT's Representative Assembly in Washington.

Shanker and Tom Hobart, leaders of the 1972 merger that formed NYSUT, served as co-presidents that first year. As president of the United Federation of Teachers in New York City, Shanker was a militant and widely recognized champion of teachers' rights in the 1960s and '70s. He later became president of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and was the nation's most eloquent and influential advocate for school reform and higher standards for academic achievement and student conduct.

AFT Secretary-Treasurer Ed McElroy assumes the duties of the president until May, when the union's executive council will vote on someone to complete Shanker's two-year term, which ends at the July 1998 convention.

"Al was the heart, soul, and intellect of our union," Hobart said. "We will miss him terribly. But he has prepared us well to continue his work, and that is how we should honor his memory. Together, we can achieve his dreams."

The March 10 edition of *New York Teacher* has a special 10-page retrospective and tribute to Shanker.



## ROBS MEETING FEATURES 2nd STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

On Wednesday, March 5th, Joe Hogan, president of the Brentwood Teacher's Association addressed ROBS retirees on what has been happening on the BTA front. The medical contract with teachers has been finalized, and actives as well as all retirees will receive an individual contract with the Board of Education guaranteeing 100% health insurance coverage. The contract will be issued by the end of the school year. **IMPORTANT REMINDER: Sign the contract and return it as soon as you receive it to insure your continued**

**coverage!** Negotiations give retirees the same insurance coverage as inservice teachers.

The Secretary/Clerical contract is up for negotiation. The hope is that it will have the same individual health contracts that teachers have.

Hogan thanked ROBS for getting the positive vote out for the February 11th Bond issue reported in this newsletter in February. It passed 4 to 1 and there seems to be a new positive attitude in the district as a result. While the building plan is under way, the

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## STATE OF THE UNION *continued*



Kindergarten Center is actually welcoming portables, because they won't be permanent. By September 1998 there will be 40 new classrooms in the district. Windows will be replaced in many schools. And there will be 2500 new computers in K-6, 8 computers in each room with rewiring completed for the Internet!

In the next two years Brentwood will again be the largest district on Long Island with 900 to 1000 teachers, and 12,000 to 15,000 students. There are 142 Special Ed teachers now, and Brentwood has more social workers and psychologists than the entire staff of teachers in some schools on the Island.

40% of the teaching staff is new and have no idea of the struggles "we" had. Their starting salary is now \$32,000. (Do I hear some sighs from the reader?) But certification changes and attacks on tenure make for a painful future for school workers.

The new Report Card on schools which is released to the press, was spearheaded by current Education

Commissioner Mills. Hogan maintained that the Commissioner has no idea what Brentwood's problems really are within the social milieu of the community. In a district where there is a 40% mobility of students within the school year, the Commissioner maintains there is no impact on a district's report card. (Does this sound familiar?)

But on balance, even facing budget process problems, and the inevitable school board fights, Hogan stressed that Brentwood is a truly unique district which is facing the 21st century and the technology explosion with a focus and a staff of committed employees. He stressed that the school board has been supportive, and that the re-election of Tony Felicio, Ruth Rosenthal and Steve Coleman is a must. (Coleman has 3 children teaching in the district).

In thanking Joe Hogan for his work for both inservice people and retirees, ROBS again offered its help to get out the vote. We look forward to next year's State of the Union, and hope it will be as positive as this one was.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Spring is just a few days away, bringing with it all the stimulation and anticipation of new beginnings! It's a time to share good thoughts and warm experiences.

What could be more exciting than the wonderful news of our guaranteed health insurance coverage! No longer will we have to hold our collective breath from one negotiation year to the next. Our heartiest and sincerest thanks to Joe Hogan and the negotiating team for making our "peace of health" a reality.

This winter we drove south to visit our Florida ROBS members. What an overwhelming experience that was! Over 50 Brentwood retirees and spouses showed up for a luncheon in

Boca Raton! Thanks to the organizing skills of Marilyn DePlaza and Anita Silverman, the afternoon was such a success no one was in a hurry to leave, but stayed to talk and catch up on the latest news. Many had not seen each other since they had retired, anywhere from one to twenty years ago! The repeated message was: say hello to all the "northerners" back home - and - let's do this again next year!

Your 1997 Membership Directory is in the mail. Here is your opportunity to find lost friends, to maintain contact, and to find out who lives close by whether you live on Long Island or anywhere else on the map. Huge thanks go to Jack Zuckerman for his herculean labor that helps bind our ROBS members more tightly together.

Keep in touch. We want to hear from all of you! In unity. Dot ([dotzee@juno.com](mailto:dotzee@juno.com))

# RETIREES DON'T QUIT!

Women In The Visual Arts, Inc., 250 South Florida women artists, believes art helps children learn more about the world. The 10 year old group this year began offering considerable help and assistance to the Palm Beach County Schools.

Education Chairwoman of the group, is our own Grace Fishenfeld, 1992 high school retiree. Quoted in the SUN-SENTINEL, Grace said, "...we are very concerned about the lack of attention given to the fine arts in the public school system here."

So they decided to help, and Grace designed the two projects. One is "The Wonderful World of Art," a kindergarten/1st grade program for 5 elementary schools in which students are exposed to art reproductions and artifacts from all the continents of the world.

"We are supporting the art teachers

with this program, presenting the humanistic view of what art is and the importance of art in culture.... The experience of creating something all by yourself, something that is uniquely yours, is something every child should have, over and over," said Grace.

In addition, Women in the Visual Arts and the West Boca Medical Center have begun a new art scholarship program called the Evelyn Freedman Scholarship Incentive Award, given in conjunction with the Spring Celebration of High School Art at the Center. About 50 pieces of art will be shown, and 20 awards presented.

"Our primary purpose through the pilot art education program and the scholarship awards is to encourage the schools to keep fine arts on the priority list," said our famous retiree. For info, contact Grace Fishenfeld at 561-482-0239.

## CATHY'S CLERICAL CORNER

Cathy Tomney Contact me at: 42 Browns River Road,  
Sayville, N.Y. 11782; 516-563-3573

### ENTER LAUGHING

ROBS General Meeting  
Wednesday  
April 9, 1997  
10 A.M.  
Islip Public Library

POSTSCRIPTS  
from the  
EDGE

Join us for fun and refreshments!

Also mark your calendars for Tuesday, May 6th, 10 A.M. at the Islip Library to hear about another opportunity to volunteer, or just to know about the services of the Long Island Women's Coalition. Find out about the children from Safe Houses and the schools; about the many issues that need to be addressed. Hear Gayle Rawlings speak about her organization.



SET THE DATE ASIDE:

ROBS LUNCHEON  
Tuesday  
June 3, 1997  
DETAILS TO FOLLOW

### ROBS NEWSLETTER STAFF

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## THE Q TIP

by Edy Filosa (retired Nurse teacher)

When I was asked to write a column on Senior Health for this newsletter, I jumped at the chance.

My first thought was what to call it. After a few really bad starts I decided on "Q Tip" because my niece tells me the young crowd in Florida call the "elderly" who drive cars slowly, the Q Tips.

I decided to start slowly...very slowly...and settled on exercise as a beginning venture.

If you are like me, you look with envy at all those joggers that seem to sprout like grass every time there is a nice day. Ever look at their faces? They seem to be in such pain! How could this really be "good" for you?

How about starting slowly - with a nice walk around your neighborhood. Your doctor should of course approve any exercise you do, but most will give an O.K. to walking.

Before you begin walking be sure you have a good pair of sneakers that are comfortable. Wear a pair of white cotton socks, and layered clothing. You'll be surprised at how warm you can get. Try a few simple warm up moves such as stretching and bending and you are ready to begin.

Don't try for Olympic stature on your first outing. Take time to notice things you miss when you drive in the same area.

Keep your pace steady, swing your arms smoothly, (it is not necessary to make exaggerated arcs), and breathe. Start out at 15 minutes and gradually increase the time to 30 minutes and then 1 hour. Distance is not important; time is. Three times a week is good for starters, but if you can do more, try it.

Walking will increase your energy, help you sleep better, and may even help cholesterol levels and weight. It will reduce tension and may help blood pressure.

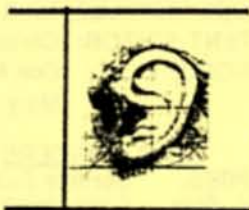
Don't walk in the heat of the day. Early morning and evening are best. Try not to walk after dark, in high winds or inclement weather. Get a friend to walk with you. Now with nice weather coming, outside walking is great. You might even try the beach. When we have bad weather, check your local malls. Many have groups that come in early and walk the entire mall. It's great to shop when almost all stores are closed!

Until next time...Stay Healthy!

### Do You Know Where Your Mammogram Is?

An AFT member from upstate New York who called the mammography facility where her baseline mammogram had been taken was dismayed to find out that the new company that had taken over the facility had purged all of the mammogram films older than one year. No attempt was made to contact the former patients nor to ensure that their films could be stored or saved. While she is willing to start over with a new baseline (the original was taken five years prior), she's concerned that something may be missed without the older film available for comparison.

This makes a perfect example of two important ground rules to follow when getting your mammogram: make sure that your radiology facility has an archive plan for older films and always send for a copy of the radiologist's written report on the finding of each of your mammograms.



### TEST YOUR HEARING

Have you wondered about why you can't hear everything? Want to test your own hearing with as little fuss as possible? In total privacy? Dial 1-800-222-EARS. This public service is available M-F, 9AM - 5PM EST. It is sponsored by Audiology and Communications Services. The 800 number (a real person) will give you a number in your area. On Long Island, the number is 543-7939.

# NEWS NOTES

ROBS sent sympathy cards to: **Joyce Rosenberg**, retiree from Southwest, on the death of her mother; and to **Ruth McCalla**, retiree from Northeast, on the death of her brother, Basil. Our thoughts are with them in this difficult time.

**SAYING GOODBY** written for a grandmother, Florence Cades, by her granddaughter, Janice Buckner

When I sit beside you here,  
And time moves slowly by,  
We speak a language without words,  
In silence, you and I.  
Our spirits know the language  
Of two souls that touch as one,  
And the strength and love that's from that bond,  
Will radiate as one.  
So know that on your journey,  
I am with you by your side  
And gather peace in knowing,  
You can let your spirit fly.

(reprint from HOSPICE LIFE)



Our thoughts are also with **Millie Singleton** who is very ill. **Millie** retired from Ross High School in 1981. She is at home. So many of our members send their good wishes, **Millie!**



**Jack Zuckerman** is laid up literally. He is in a soft cast for 6 weeks due to an untreated heel fracture incurred in Turkey last fall. His asthma has kicked in as well. Get well fast, **Jack**.

Happiness is a beaming grandmother. And that new granny is **Rita Rosenthal**, former 4th grade teacher at Northeast. Her new grandson, Scott Selig Rosenthal, was born on January 1st, "the 2nd son of the 2nd son of the 2nd son!" Good Luck.

Back from recent trips are: **Jack and Dot Zuckerman**, Florida; **Harriet Pepine**, California; **Judy Curran**, you name it; **Chris Veech**, Paris.



**Hermione (Ermy) Silos**, Northeast 1995 retiree, left for a trip March 1st which included trekking in the Annapurna and Everest Mountain ranges, a 2 day camping and river excursion in the Seti River, and a safari in Chitwan National Forest to hopefully sight Bengal tigers and rhinoceros. "...lots of hardship but also fun and adventure with new experiences and knowledge gained about that part of the world." **Ermy** sends greetings to all! Now this is retirement!

**Jim** (Southwest, 1987) and **Merry Hansen** (Northeast, 1994), who now live in Chrystal River, Florida report that they were again hit by a hurricane, this time Josephine in October. To get away from the work being done on the house, they left on a cruise on March 3rd. **Merry** has taken a leave from teaching through August. **Jim** signed his letter "Noah," since they are going from "hell or high water," hurricanes to a cruise!

**Cathy Tomney** is heading down Florida way for a visiting trip. She hopes to see not only her sister in the Keys, but fellow Secretary/Clericals along the way. Say hi!



At the Long Island Regional NAACP dinner on February 8th at the Huntington Hilton, **Verne Spencer** received the NAACP Award for Community Service. Most of us are aware how hard **Verne** works to help others. No one deserves the award more than she! Congratulations!

Chris Veech, 11 Yates Ave., Commack, N.Y. 11725  
516-499-1680 / FAX (516) 499-1680

# Protect Yourself with Catastrophe Major Medical Plan

NYSUT members and agency fee payers can protect themselves from costly catastrophic situations by applying for the Catastrophe Major Medical Insurance Plan from NYSUT Member Benefits. This plan supplements basic medical or Medicare coverage with up to \$2,000,000 in benefits.

Benefits become available when the costs of a catastrophic illness have exhausted the limits of your basic health insurance policy and you have met the Catastrophe Plan's \$25,000 deductible. All of the eligible costs you pay out of your own pocket as well as those your basic health policy pays count toward the deductible. While the deductible amount sounds high, it doesn't take long to accumulate medical expenses in a catastrophic situation.

In addition to paying expenses for hospital, doctor, medical equipment and ambulance, the plan pays a number of additional benefits, including private duty nursing, hospice

care, and some home health care and nursing home expenses.

There are no age restrictions, so you cannot be rejected for coverage because of your age. Upon acceptance in the plan, a member can add coverage for spouse or domestic partner, parents and unmarried dependent children from birth to 21 years of age (27 for full-time students).



Special group rates have been negotiated, making this supplemental plan affordable for members. And it

comes with a satisfaction guarantee. If you're not satisfied with the plan in any way, simply return the Certificate of Insurance within 30 days of receipt for a full money-back refund with no questions asked.

For more information about this important coverage, contact the NYSUT Member Benefits department at 1-800-626-8101, weekdays from 9 A.M. through 5 P.M.

**Retirees of Brentwood Schools  
c/o Zuckerman  
8 Woody Lane  
Oakdale, NY 11769**

**ROBS MEETING**  
Wednesday  
April 9, 1997  
10 A.M.  
Islip Public Library