

# ROB'S News Letters



NUMBER 27

RETIRES OF BRENTWOOD SCHOOLS

SEPT/OCT 1998

## HOUSE PASSES SHAM BILL

After months of denial and delay, the House and Senate leadership introduced different versions of managed care reform legislation in mid-July. Their plans lacked detail, only outlining the consumer protections that the bills would supposedly address. Several important protections were not included in the plans while a number of items that consumer groups and Congress have rejected in the past were included.

House leaders bypassed the committee process, taking the bill straight to the floor for a vote only 8 days after it was introduced. H.R. 4250 passed the House by a narrow margin (216 -210) on July 24, 1998. By passing the Republican leadership's bill, with little debate and a quick end run around the committees that normally review such bills, the House hopes to fool the American public into thinking they have dealt with the problem of a patient's Bill of Rights since the elections are fast approaching. The National Federation of Independent Business was the only organization to endorse this House bill!

The Senate Republican leadership also has a bill they call "The Patients' Bill of Rights," S.2330, which they may take to the floor, skirting the committee process, in September. However, there has been some pressure on Senators this summer, and there is now an outside chance that the Senate may refuse to permit a vote on their bill or any other bill this year.

The Kennedy-Dingell "Patients' Rights Act of 1998" (S. 1890 and H.R. 3605) is by far the most comprehensive legislation introduced thus far. It is supported by consumer groups, disability groups, the American Medical Association, nurses, organized labor, women's groups to name a few.

It is important to contact your legislators now and urge the passage of S. 1890 and H.R. 3605, real reform not sham reform. Also thank those who voted against the sham bill: Ackerman, Forbes, McCarthy. If your member voted for the sham bill let them know that "they cast a vote in favor of insurance company protections, not real consumer protections." Lazio and King. (In Florida it was a party vote except for Republican Young in the 10th District who voted with the Democrats against the sham bill).

Information compiled by: FAMILIES USA

## NYSUT LEGISLATION UPDATE

On July 20, 1998 Governor Pataki signed the Pension Supplementation Bill. It covers those who retired in 1992 the first year, and those who retired in 1993 in the second year... as well as all those before. First increase will be the September check.

And important to many present retirees, the Health Insurance Moratorium was extended until May 15, 1999.



\*\*\* S. 1890/H.R. 3605 \*\*\*



## Making Sense of It all

Throughout the year I receive many calls from our retirees asking for information or advice. This year a growing number of the requests have focused on health care problems. Although we now have the security of knowing our health coverage is guaranteed by the district, other questions arise that we may not have been faced with before. Some of our out-of-state retirees have called in confusion over being required to join a managed care program that incorporates both their Medicare and Medigap health services. Other questions have arisen regarding coverage for skilled nursing facilities or long term care. I personally just had a go-around with a doctor who billed for more than the New York State limit of 5% above Medicare fee. It took perseverance and patience to resolve the problem - even contacting Assemblyman Paul Harenberg for assistance. But persistence won out and I did finally receive a refund. This is all intended to let you know that many concerns do have answers and can be settled. Think of me as your personal "ombudsman" - if I don't have an immediate answer I will make every attempt to find one for you or else direct you to a source that can provide the information.

Wall Street brokers, financial planners, and the insurance industry have launched their attacks on Social Security and Medicare. We will hear a great deal more from them this Fall. Medicare+Choice gets underway in January 1999, as mandated by the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. Access to this program will depend on where you live and what types of plans are available in that area. There will be tremendous confusion over these changes - but primarily the focus will be on dismantling the secure Medicare program we now have that has provided a guaranteed income to older Americans. You do have a choice - you can stay with the traditional fee-for-service plan. **You do not have to make a change. Your only choice should be "NO" to Medicare+Choice.** Make sure you study the changes carefully before you make any moves - and feel free to call me!

In Unity,  
Dot Zuckerman

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# **CONGRATULATIONS**

## **to our 1998 Retirees**



Eliasib Acosta  
 Ronald Albaum  
 Janet Anderson  
 Grace Ausili  
 Grace Barber  
 Christine Bardy  
 John Boughal  
 Joan Brandon  
 Barbara Brit  
 Sandra Brobston  
 Charles Brown  
 Paul Cohen

Alicia D'Amato  
 Dean Depoy  
 Richard Edwards  
 John Farina  
 Marilou Gee  
 Phyllis Goodwin  
 Mary Hermann  
 Barbara Hubbard  
 Ronald Iocca  
 Larry Johnson  
 Albert Jones  
 Walter Karp

Stuart Kaufman  
 Anthony LaScala  
 Susan Lanchantin  
 Elizabeth Maloney  
 Sally McAfee  
 Richard Mundy  
 Judith Odishoo  
 Edward O'Neill  
 Carl Perrino  
 Jacqueline Petrozza  
 Joseph Rodlitz  
 George Roth  
 Florence Rubin  
 Frank Scavone  
 Ruth Schumann

William Seifert  
 Rosalie Semente  
 Irene Spano  
 Maureen Stahley  
 Jacqueline Stark  
 Alice Stoltz  
 Letty Sustrin  
 Sheila Sustrin  
 Philippe Tache  
 Thomas Tagle  
 Wesley Trutt  
 Ernest Villatore  
 Sue Wayman  
 Robert Wilcox  
 Ann Worrell

**... and Welcome to ROBS!**

### MEETING CHANGE

Due to a conflict, our **WELCOME - GET RE - ACQUAINTED** meeting has been changed from Wednesday October 7th to **Wednesday, October 14th** still at 10 A.M. at the Islip Library. Come and greet some of the 54 new retirees, and all the rest of us elders!

The Spain travelers will have returned, and we've all had interesting summers doing what we do best: vacation!

We will also be voting for 3 at-large delegates to the Executive Board. Nominations will be from the floor.

Mark your calendars for our meeting on **Wednesday, November 4th** at the Islip Library at 10 A.M. when "Looking Back: A Time to Remember," a John Sherin video will be featured.

On **Wednesday, December 2nd**, ROBS will host a holiday celebration. And on **Wednesday, January 6, 1999** there is our annual breakfast.

Plan to be an active part of us. It's fun, interesting and proactive!

**OPEN TO SPOUSES AND FRIENDS**

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Project Hope's tutoring program has proved very successful. Here's one of the letters we received:

I would like to share with you a wonderful experience that my 2nd grade class and I had at Southwest Elementary this year. A Brentwood retiree, Mr. Frank Spencer, volunteered his time to visit my classroom on a weekly basis to lend a helping hand. He worked with children who needed some extra help with reading.

Not only did Mr. Spencer help the children academically, but he also instilled in them a sense of integrity, self esteem and worth. He let each child know how important they were to society and how they could attain any goal they had with hard work and fortitude. He made them believe in themselves, and taught them moral values as well.

My children left my classroom with great confidence, going to 3rd grade ready for any challenge and success that would follow.

I want to say "thank you" for your wonderful organization and for the opportunity of working with a very patient, gentle and kind man, Mr. Spencer

I hope in the future to continue working with Mr. Spencer. Many of my colleagues would also like the opportunity of having a volunteer in their classroom, if at all possible

Sincerely, Diane Spagnuolo

Sue and Bob Wiener of Hilton Head Island shared a bit of their doings with us. Here's a sampling:

Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined how busy we'd be in retirement!! Between us we sit on a dozen boards, are active in the Temple (Bob served as Rabbi for these past 9 months), Bob does his Eco Tours and stargazes. I'm busy with 3 gardening clubs, am an officer in Hadassah and Sisterhood, and just started playing in a regular Mah Jongg game. We both ride with the Chain Gang bike club, bird watch with Audubon, nature walk

with Sierra, kayak with friends, square dance and mentor for a new program at the local school. We auditioned for "Oliver," and both made it. I'm part of the adult chorus, but poor Bob plays 3 different characters and has a costume and attitude change for each along with several solo parts throughout a prominent song.

Before you decide we're kooky for being involved in so much, I have to tell you that the comment we read in the ROBS NEWSLETTER describing Mike Grant, is Bob's own fervent belief, as well. Well said: Much is expected of those to whom much has been given. I guess the same holds true for a lot of us...

Marilyn DePlaza wrote the following from Boca Raton, with editing by CMV...

We see family in Bogata or here every year. We've been to Aruba (too windy) and Nassau for a couple of vacations. Keep going to Dallas to visit son and family, usually 4-5 days a month.

Give my best to all my friends from Brentwood schools and thanks again to you for always making me feel like I'm still a part of such a great "family" -- also for always watching out for us retirees. I'm very grateful.

And from Myron Shapiro of 1760 SW 110 Terrace, Davie, Florida 33324 (editing by CMV)...

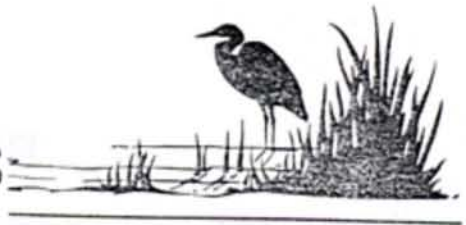
I used to teach at former North Junior High as an Industrial Arts teacher, with school nurse, Lynn Prass no secretary of ROBS. Give Lynn my regards.

I live here in western Broward County, which is called "Horse Country." There's a rodeo here with shows from all over the country. I'm in an area surrounded by lakes and all we see are ducks and their ducklings. And the many horses and riders.

I just became the grandfather of a bouncing baby girl on May 13th, via my daughter. She's named "Kayla Rachel Taus."

WE WELCOME LETTERS TO THE EDITOR  
Chris Veech  
11 Yates Avenue, Commack, N.Y 11725

## NEWS NOTES



We extend our heartfelt wishes for a light at the end of the tunnel for the family and friends of all those who perished on Swissair flight 111 on September 2nd, especially Paul and Joan Hammond, closest and dearest friends of this editor and family...

Losses abound in our ranks: **Gerald Stratmann** of Yaphank died in June. He retired from North Junior High in 1988. Andrew Spencer, **Frank Spencer's** brother, passed away this summer. **Elle Steffen's** son-in-law died tragically also. We extend our wishes for healing to the families.

On August 14th, former principal **Harvey Brickman** died after a long illness. Our sympathies to his wife **Leila** and family.

And on September 3rd, **Gene LaColla** died after a 3rd by-pass and a bout with an infection. He left 6 children and 8 grandchildren. His youngest daughter, Toni, graduated from high school in June. May our thoughts help lessen the grief you feel.


Our thoughts are with **Diane Grabowski** of Rhode Island as she faces the care of her husband who has Alzheimer's Disease and is now in a long term care facility.

**Elle Steffen** was involved in an accident with a truck in July. The car was totaled, but she's O.K. In fact she's quite excited that she's beginning to see commercial success with the sale of her paintings! She's also taking premed courses! **Rick Edwards**, a recent retiree from the high school English department visited her this summer. He's about to begin a motor home excursion around the country for a year. We hope to hear from him and report his location and experiences during his travels. In fact we hope he'll do a piece for us now and then ??

Retirees who are doing well after surgery are **Hal Paster** of West Islip, and **Jim Watson** of Maine and Phoenix. **Jim's** daughter Caroline presented him with a granddaughter, Chloe, in August. She has red hair like her mother. **CONGRATULATIONS**

We hear tell that **Lou Cairo** works out every day, and is doing well. Good to hear **Bill Heran** continues to do well too. Both were at **Gene LaColla's** wake.

**Anita Silverman** is back on track after being ill, and visited her daughter in Huntington this summer. Her daughter wrote a screen play that won a high recognition at the Nantucket Film Festival. She is a Brentwood High graduate.

 Former Coordinator of Art and Administrator of Secondary Education at Brentwood, **Manny Vega**, is being featured at an Art Exhibit, "L.I. Inside and Out," at BAFFA (Bay Area Friends of the Fine Arts), 47 Gillette Avenue, Sayville, 589-7343. There is an Artist's Reception on Sunday, October 4 from 1-4. The exhibit runs from October 2-4, and October 9-12 from 1-4. He hopes you'll come!

**Don Kubicsko** and wife Barbara went to Juneau, Alaska in August and cruised for 7 days with a 3 day visit to Vancouver. They were awed by the scenery and recommend Alaska highly. Next summer they plan to travel to Valencia, Spain.

The 6th generation of **Chris Veech's** family joined her and husband Bob in her grandparent's home on an island in Norway with a fjord on one side, the North Sea on the other and a canal connecting the two. In spite of rain, it was a wonderful July.

## BITS AND PIECES

→ If you pay too much for medications for your pets, try PetMed Express on the Internet ([www.petmedexpress.com](http://www.petmedexpress.com)) or call (888) 223-PETS. This service is best used by multiple pet owners because there is a \$20 fee to join.

→ In some places, gardeners can get mulch from government departments which grind up trees and collect leaves, either free or at a great savings.

→ A service called CarFax will give you information available on the car you're about to buy for a small fee when you call (800) 346-3846. You can also get some of that data for free on Edmunds car-news web site ([www.edmunds.com/edweb/carfax](http://www.edmunds.com/edweb/carfax)).

→ SAVE: When you buy a car, drive it for 100,000 miles or more. Why? It will cost you \$13,959 less over 10 years - you'll spend \$1,400 less each year than if you had bought and sold a new car every 2 years. When you drive your new car off the lot, its value plummets. The cost of repairing a car in its first 10 years is almost always less than the cost of depreciation. Visit the on-line SmartCalc calculator ([www.smartcalc.com](http://www.smartcalc.com)) for more info.

→ Your engine will last longer if you routinely replace your fuel filter every 24,000 miles or 2 years whichever

comes last. It's a waste to change it more often. You'll save at least \$30.

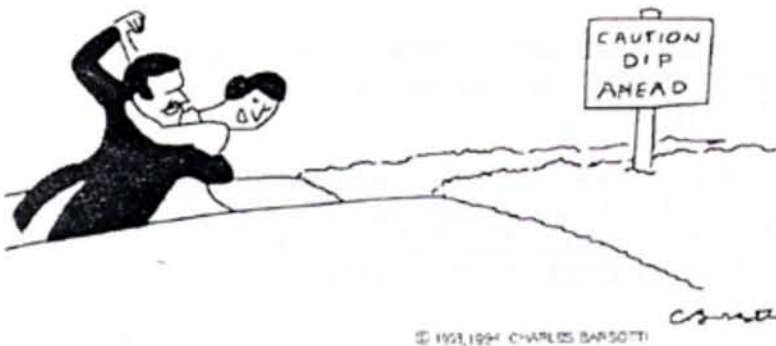
→ By logging onto the Exite NewsTracker web site ([nt.excite.com](http://nt.excite.com)) you can search more than 300 newspapers and magazines a day for free!

→ Beat the bathroom blues by giving up expensive toilet bowl cleaners. Try undiluted chlorine bleach. It will also remove mildew and surface stains - not rust - from any porcelain bathroom fixtures. For rust stains try muriatic acid available for less than \$3 at your hardware store.

→ To discover if a funeral plan is legitimate, or to make a complaint, contact your state funeral board, but be aware that directors may sit on the board. Or call the Federal Trade Commission's Consumer Response Center at (202) FTC-HELP with complaints and legal questions.

→ Visit the FAMSA site ([www.funerals.org/famsa](http://www.funerals.org/famsa)) for more info; or call (800)765-0107 for a roster of low cost mortuaries and reputable societies near you. For casket comparisons and more, visit ([www.xroads.com/~funerals](http://www.xroads.com/~funerals)) or call (602) 253-6814.

Compiled by: PENSION PLUS



### M-T Corner

M-T corners aren't empty,  
They're *power-fully*,  
framed in possibility.

Our **Modern-Times** require  
time-tested *as well as* fresh ideas  
- yours, mine, ours. Here's a  
place for us to 'corner'  
controversy. We'll quote,  
- you comment, ok?

Remember,  
**Education is dialogue!**

*John M. Sherin*

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

Social Security is under attack by the financial leaders of our nation. They want to put the surplus of Social Security into the stock market. Bills in both Houses of Congress, if passed, will erode our benefits further. Who will protect us? Only by collective action can we have any hope of turning things around. Now is not the time to stand idly by.

**GET ON OUR MAILING LIST! JOIN US NOW!**

Please check:

1.  I am enclosing \$10 for my 1998-1999 ROBS dues.\*  
 I am 75 or older. (Please return this form so that we include you as a member.)  
 I am enclosing a separate check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ made out to NYSUT VOTE-COPE to support legislative efforts made on my behalf. (Include SS# on the check)

See other side for information:

2. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax # \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

5. Building you retired from: \_\_\_\_\_

Year of retirement: \_\_\_\_\_

Please remember that if you do not want to be in the Directory no information about you will appear. **But do fill out the form because then we will be able to contact you should the need arise.** We also will be able to verify NYSUT records as well.

I do not wish to be in the Directory.

Mail to: Jack Zuckerman  
8 Woody Lane  
Oakdale, NY 11769-1515



**We Want You Now!**

1. \*ROBS retains \$5 and forwards \$5 to our NYSUT Retiree Council which represents us at the NYSUT Representative Assembly, AFT Convention, conferences and other activities. Should you belong to another Council (TRIF), send only the \$5 ROBS portion of the dues. The other Council will handle its own.

**REMEMBER!!! As a ROBS member benefit, if you are 75 and over you do not have to pay any dues.**

2. If your name has changed since you retired please indicate current and previous name.

3. Please print your name and address clearly. We want you to receive your ROBS mail. If you know your nine digit ZIP code please enter it.

If you want more than one address listed in the Directory please give both addresses. Write the addresses clearly with the ZIP codes included. If you travel from one home to another during the year, give the dates you will be in each. (October to March, for example). Don't forget phone numbers!

4. Remember, if your phone is unlisted but you want ROBS members to have it, this will be indicated in the Directory. If you wish, you may omit it altogether. This is also true for E-mail and fax information.

5. If you wish, you might use the building you are most associated with. If you have been in a dozen buildings during your career, please try to limit yourself to two buildings. You may use "District-wide".

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

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**MEETINGS:**  
**Wednesday, October 14**  
**Wednesday, November 4**  
**Wednesday, December 2**

