

ROBS NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 35

MAY 2000

COLA RALLY A BIG SUCCESS

As we went to press, plans for the massive rally to support the COLA bills in the New York State Senate and Assembly on May 9th were well under way. Suffolk alone has six busses leaving from the Huntington Town House, and two from Riverhead.

NYSUT retirees received a letter from NYSUT in February, that included a postcard to be returned reserving a seat on the bus. The early response to the rally was overwhelming.

According to Alan Lubin, NYSUT Executive Vice President: "The single most important legislative objective this year for NYSUT retirees is the enactment of a permanent, automatic, fair and affordable cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for all public sector retirees. We all know what a long and difficult struggle it has been to get permanent COLA legislation we can all support. We are hopeful this will be the year that we are able to get permanent COLA enacted into law!"

A large turnout was extremely important. NYSUT, and the other participating unions made plans to have a limited number of chairs, ambulances and many portable bathrooms available in the park.

For those retirees not able to attend the May 9th rally, we urge you to WRITE, WRITE, WRITE!. Urge your members of the assembly and the senate to pass A.8516, and S.5703, and endorse the NYSUT COLA position:

"... a permanent COLA for all public sector retirees! It's badly needed! It's the right thing to do! It's the right time to do it!"

ESEA UNDER ATTACK IN SENATE

In a party line vote on March 9th, the Senate Education Committee approved a bill (S.2) that would allow states to block grant Title I and other programs contained in the Elementary & Secondary Education Act (ESEA). States could tap funds simply by agreeing to participate in an accountability plan that offers no real safeguards and could use the funds for any purpose, including vouchers. Democrat's efforts to amend the bill to support commonsense reforms such as class-size reduction, school modernization, and professional development for teachers were killed by the majority.



AFT president Sandra Feldman calls the plan "a cynical betrayal of America's children, families and schools" and an attack on a "35 year old bipartisan commitment to our nation's poorest children." Contact your senators and urge them to oppose the Education Committees bill (S.2) and instead support proposals that keep ESEA focused on programs that have a track record of effectiveness, especially for poor children. Use the "Contact Congress" feature of AFT online, www.aft.org/congress.

Adapted from *AFLACTION* 3/24/00



MAY IS OSTEOPOROSIS MONTH. GET YOUR BONE DENSITY TESTED: MEN AS WELL AS WOMEN!

Richard Carey, Sonderling Science, was pictured in *NEWSDAY* 4/28 starting work in Babylon. He feels the census process will help him use some of the skills he learned as a school teacher – clearly explaining instructions and questions and keeping the paperwork organized. He said: "I've been retired now 4 years, and I was getting bored." He added that he knows well how vital federal funding is in the school system. "L.I. has changed so quickly, and I know how important it is to see that money gets where it belongs."

RETIREES AND CHARTER SCHOOLS

"Resolved that NYSUT encourage retirees to refrain from seeking employment in or offering volunteer services to charter schools."

At the NYSUT Representative Assembly held April 6-8, 2000, at which I represented you as one of 2500 delegates, this resolution was incorporated into a larger resolution on charter schools. It was adopted and is now NYSUT policy. Charter schools are a real and potentially dangerous threat to the existence and improvement of public schools. Charter schools are not bound by collective bargaining agreements entered into by local teacher unions and school boards; they are sanctioned by state law but are not bound by the same laws that safeguard money is turned over to the charter schools based on schools. An already impoverished school district such as Brentwood, Central Islip, or Roosevelt could lose up to \$1 million or more under these circumstances; school-taxed deprived districts. Central Islip was able to turn thanks to the unified efforts of the surrounding teachers unions, the school boards, and the communities. Roosevelt was not that lucky. Although the Board of Regents rejected the proposal, the State University of New York Board of Trustees voted to approve a charter school in Roosevelt: once approved twice by the SUNY Trustees, the Board of Regents cannot veto it.



The public schools today are having a difficult time finding enough certified, qualified teachers to fill the void being left by those of us who are retiring. Charter schools are not required to hire licensed personnel. They can simply employ without regard to eligibility, with financial profit being the ultimate goal.

NYSUT policy, as adopted at the RA, gives support to those locals impacted or involved with the creation of charter schools. We as NYSUT retirees can do no less and must do a great deal more. Charter schools do not belong in the educational environment and we don't belong in the charter schools.

In Unity, Dot Zuckerman

SITES FOR SORE EYES:



The Social Security Administration at www.ssa.gov publishes a free electronic newsletter. SS Web site www.hcfa.gov is a valuable resource with links to Medicare & Medicaid information, and at www.medicare.gov you can find detailed stuff about Medicare, Medigap and HMO's. Sign up for SS weekly Newsletter directly to your e-mail address at www.ssa.gov/eneews, though it is geared to professionals. SS site includes a link to Access America for Seniors, at www.seniors.gov which is described by the designers as the site of sites for seniors.

Concerned about the future of SS? Study the liberal arguments of the Economic Policy Institute at www.epinet.org or at www.cbpp.org the Center for Budget & Policy Priorities.

Find the conservative view at the Heritage Foundation www.heritage.org and the far out libertarian propaganda at www.cato.org, the Cato Institute.

And then there is the huge & comprehensive home page at www.aarp.org accessible to non-members as well. A more fired up group is the National Council of Senior Citizens at www.ncscinc.org. Johns Hopkins Med School runs www.intelihealth.com; and www.caregiverzone.com is designed to give help to elderly needing care and caregivers needing resources.

Traveling? don't forget www.elderhostel.org as well as www.generationa.com and www.thirdage.com for modern seniors.



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LETTERS: TITLE I ALLOCATIONS TO TRANSFER STUDENTS

In the last two issues of this newsletter, the ROBS Writer's Group asked opinions about Congress earmarking \$134 million of Title I funds for mandated programs to give permission to parents of students in "failing schools" to transfer their children to other public schools within their district.



Writer's Group:

I wish I knew whether or not giving parents the option to relocate their children would help improve the school systems, or perhaps overcrowd better schools. However, I'm sure that these funds (and more) would do more good if applied in such a way as to improve the failing schools, or better yet, to fund improvements in schools before they fail.

Vito Proia, Coram, N.Y.

ROBS LUNCHEON
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7, 2000
12 TO 4 P.M.

BONWIT INN

COMMACK ROAD & VANDERBILT MOTOR PARKWAY
499-2068



ROBS MEMBERS: \$21 (TAX & GRATUITIES PAID BY ROBS)
NON-MEMBERS: \$25

MENU

APPETIZER:

SLICED MELON, UNLIMITED GREEK SALAD

ENTREES:

CHICKEN MARSALA: SAUTEED WITH FRESH MUSHROOMS, DEMI GLACEE, MARSALA WINE,
SERVED WITH RICE

SALMON FRANCAISE: BATTER DIPPED & SAUTEED WITH LEMON & WHITE WINE

SLICED STEAK BORDELLAISE: SERVED ON A CROUTON WITH RED WINE MUSHROOM SAUCE

DESSERT:

APPLE PIE A LA MODE

UNLIMITED SOFT DRINKS, COFFEE/TEA OR DECAFFEINATED

CASH BAR



CLIP & RETURN WITH CHECK MADE OUT TO:
ROBS BY MONDAY, MAY 26, 2000

MAIL TO:

RUTH McCALLA, 100 COLUMBUS AVENUE, CENTRAL ISLIP, N.Y. 11722

PHONE: 631-234-8013

NAME _____ NO. OF PEOPLE _____

ADDRESS _____ AMT. ENCLOSED _____

_____ PHONE _____

DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM? By Millie O'Neill

Millie, a retired Ross H.S. Aide, is living with emphysema with the help of oxygen. The disease curtails her physical activities, but not her creative ones.



Do you know who I am? I am that kid of six who struggled through the snow storm only to look ahead and see my big dad with out-stretched arms waiting for me. He bent down and said, "hop on my back," and gave me a piggy back ride the rest of the way home from school. Those feelings of elation never leave. They stay within only to be recalled to enjoy over and over again.

Who am I? I am that kid of seven who on June 7th made her First Communion — the kid who was told how beautiful she looked, and at the time she believed it.

Who am I? I am the young lady of 13 who proudly marched down the aisle at elementary school graduation to accept my diploma and scholarship award to St. Bartholomew's High School.

Who am I? I am the teenager who enjoyed being with friends, wearing bobby socks and saddle shoes, going to the ice cream parlor, the movies, roller skating at the rink; who watched her three brothers enlist in the service and was so grateful when they all returned home safely from World War II.

Who am I? Again, I'm walking down the aisle at graduation only this time it's high school. Je fini!!!!

Who am I? I'm the young lady who went to work at Stern's Department store in New York City as a cosmetician (selling cosmetics and perfumes). I'm the one who enjoyed meeting people and found work fulfilling. I also met Don there (a temporary worker) and again marched down the aisle to marry him.

Who am I? I'm the mother of three daughters. I'm the volunteer worker at school. I'm the worker for the church washing and ironing altar cloths and albs. I'm the driver for the many activities of my daughters. I'm also the house-cleaner, cook, nurse, seamstress, hostess, housepainter, lawn attendant (jack of all trades, master of none as they say). I'm the accountant, financial advisor, shopper, decorator of the Christmas tree with the village beneath it, the hanger of the homemade Christmas curtains and other decorations; and then came the role of the Easter Bunny.

Who am I? I'm the one who went back to work when the girls were older. I was the one who really enjoyed the rapport I had working with high school students. They did more for me than I did for them

Do you know who I am? I am the grandmother of seven with one more in the wings. I am the one who retired with high hopes of free time to accomplish dreams that were set aside: dreams of writing, of thoroughly cleaning house, of freedom to come and go as I pleased. Illness put aside these dreams but I am still the six year old that ran through the snowstorm into the outstretched arms of her father.

CAR RENTAL DISCOUNTS



NYSUT members can receive discounts from Alamo, Avis and Hertz. To get the discounts, in the U.S., identify yourself as a NYSUT member and give the NYSUT discount identification number for the appropriate rental company when making reservations. Present NYSUT membership card when picking up your car to receive the discount. When renting outside the U.S., present the NYSUT car rental ID card, available upon request from NYSUT Member Benefits.

ALAMO: (800) 354-2322 and use your membership ID # 213855 and rate code BY.

AVIS: (800) 698-5685; international (800) 331-1084. NYSUT discount number is A441200.

HERTZ: (800)654-2200; international (800) 6543001 and use the NYSUT CDP # 85352

When renting from these three companies, contact NYSUT Member Benefits at (800) 626-8101, weekdays 9-5 to see if any promotional coupons are available. These may be for money off a weekly rental, free car class upgrade or a free rental day. Watch for coupons in issues of THE NEW YORK TEACHER.

RC 21 MEMBER BENEFITS SPRING TRIP



A TOUR OF HIDDEN GARDENS at the First Presbyterian Church of Sag Harbor is being sponsored by RC 21 on Saturday, June 24, 2000. Organized in 1766 and commonly known as THE OLD WHALER'S CHURCH, it is located at 44 Union Street in Sag Harbor. The 11th annual tour is 11 A.M. to 5 P.M.. Lunch will be served in the church social hall.

Tickets are \$15 in advance, and \$20 on the day of the tour. Lunch at the church is \$8, or you may wish to eat on your own.

Checks for the event should be mailed to : Mildred Hornell, 15 Hawthorne Avenue, Sag Harbor, N.Y. 11963. Be sure to indicate RC 21 ON YOUR CHECK. For questions call 725-2238 or 725-1068.

NEWS NOTES

Dot & Jack Zuckerman are wearing another hat (s). They are both on the Board of Directors of the N.Y. State Wide Senior Action Council, which may be accessed at swnys@aol.com


Ellie Steffen reports that life is beautiful up in Woodstock, where she has hosted RV-er, **Rich Edwards**, among others. A former student, **Timothy Lynch** who is a librarian and family man, had a one man art show at the Audubon Society of New Jersey which **Ellie** proudly attended. Her daughter is a bow maker, and sold one to the principal of the Pittsburgh Symphony. Her son is recovering nicely from heart problems and **Ellie** is still running an ALS support group as well as babysitting infants with special needs, currently a Downs Syndrome baby and premature twins. She is getting a special NYS license while still doing her art and flea markets. Whew! Just writing this has made me tired!



The many responses received by **Fran Graff** delighted her. Keep them coming.

Entering the computer age is 1998 retiree from the Freshman Center, **Ed O'Neil** and wife **Nancy** (neontermite@aol.com). They are enjoying Pennsylvania where their entire family lives within 1/2 a mile of them. Their second grandchild, **MacKenzie Emma** was born on Jan. 25th, and the first one who is 2 1/2 really keeps them hopping. Congratulations!

Carole Bruno is happily ensconced in Saratoga Springs, having lots of company (5 Albany couples with whom she went to school) and decorating and shopping since there is no traffic to speak of. Her husband is a bit nervous about that.

And from Calabash, N.C. we got  word that **Janet Anderson** (Ross Guidance & Freshman Center Secretary '98 retiree) is happily ensconced in her new surroundings. She too has a computer.

Traveling in the past few months were **Jim Watson**, who studied Spanish in Mexico, and **Chris Veech**, and husband **Bob** who did Greece and Zimbabwe, Africa (before the S hit the fan).

Wedding bells rang for **Bernie Kaplan** (SW Elementary, '95) on November 13th. He married **Patsy**, a Home Economics & Human development teacher in Valley Stream. He called his message the BLESSED EVENT. Congratulations.



Our sympathy is extended to **Vern and Frank Spencer** on the death of Frank's sister, **Ida Daniels**.

Anita Silverman saw an obituary in the Boca Raton paper. She called the funeral home and asked some questions, and indeed it was **Betty Cascone** from Brentwood, a '95 retiree from North Elementary. **Betty** was 61. Retired Director of Personnel, **Tom Hastings** also passed away. Our sympathy to family and friends.



ON THE ROAD AGAIN

BY RICH EDWARDS, TOURING THE U.S. BY RVMOTORCYCLE

My brother lives in Longville, Louisiana and we had a LongvilleLake Park today (4/2/00). The show featured the 20th century. John Deere green was the color of the barrel roll, the slow race, the blind man's obstacle course,



chance to visit the Antique Tractor & Engine Show at tractors and engines dating back to the beginning of day and the excitement was delivered by the tractor and the egg cracking contest.

What's an egg cracking contest, you ask? That's where a driver displays his skill backing up the tractor just enough to crack an egg held in a vise-like contraption. The winner produces the smallest cracks in two eggs. The losers squash their eggs.

The best character of the day drove down from Pineville, La., to show off his handcrafted miniature locomotive. His single remaining gold-capped front tooth had migrated to the center of his upper gum line. The rest of his mouth was filled with chewing tobacco as he explained that his coal-fired steam locomotive actually worked. I asked him where the coal was inserted. He looked at me as if I was the dumbest man in creation, then pointed to the opening in back of the engine and said, "Right here, son. I can tell you've had way too much book learnin'.

He showed us pictures of the Model-T-Ford that he restored to like-new condition. He claimed that one day he drove it into the parking lot of a shopping center and a man in a new SUV pulled in next to him. The man admired the Model-T and said, "I'll trade you my SUV for the car and I'll throw in my bird dog in the back seat and my wife in the front seat."

"No thanks," our hero claims to have said. "I have enough problems."



THE MAGIC OF ITALY
September 7, 2000 for 16 days Call
hosts Dot & Jack Zuckerman
631-567-3866 if interested



BIG, BIG BLOOPER!!!

You recently received RC 21's
ON TRACK Spring Announcements
 including one for the Spring
 Luncheon for Friday, June 9th at
 Captain Bill's in Bay Shore.

Correction: Return reservation
 to Jack Zuckerman in OAKDALE,
 not Sayville. This editor apologizes.
 The zip, 11769-1515 was correct,
 however.

RETIRES OF BRENTWOOD SCHOOLS
 C/o Zuckerman
 8 Woody Lane
 Oakdale, N.Y. 11769-1515

DON'T FORGET-
RESERVE YOUR SEAT FOR
THE JUNE 7 ROBS LUNCHEON
AT THE BONWIT INN

STOP a Thief in the Night

Determined thieves can break into just about any home, but if you follow these tips, you can make entry a lot more difficult for them.



- **Keep doors locked at all times.** It sounds simple enough, but you'd be surprised at the number of home burglaries where intruders enter through an unlocked door, garage or patio. Install deadbolt locks because they provide the best protection for the least money.
- **Keep windows and sliding-glass doors locked.** Basement windows are a popular point of entry for intruders. You can secure a sliding-glass door with a broomstick or lumber laid across the door track when the door is closed.
- **Thieves generally target homes with poor outdoor lighting.** Outside flood lighting reduces your risk of burglary by highlighting the exterior of your home at night. Use light timers on inside and outside lights to give the impression that someone is home.
- **For greater peace of mind, invest in a professionally installed alarm system.**
- **So you have a dog?** Loudly barking dogs attract attention a burglar doesn't want.
- **Leave a radio or television set on when you're out** because the sound of voices can send an intruder elsewhere.
- **Have peepholes in all solid doors.** Don't rely on chain locks to see who is at the door, for such locks can easily be forced open once a door is ajar.

- **Keep trees and shrubbery trimmed.** Overgrown bushes give a burglar more privacy.
- **Have someone collect mail and newspapers, or have delivery stopped while you're on extended trips.**
- **Don't be predictable.**

Thieves head straight for the bedroom when they enter the house. That's where most people keep their valuables. A jewelry box is an obvious hiding place. Be creative in stashing your valuables, or keep them in a safe-deposit box.

- **Thieves look for easy-to-carry items that can be quickly converted into cash:** jewelry, silver and electronic equipment. Invest in a table/desk bolt for stereos, VCRs and computers. If it's too much of a hassle to steal, most robbers won't go to the trouble.

There's no doubt that theft can disrupt your life. By following the above steps and preparing in advance, you can help decrease your chances. Plus, you can get quality insurance for your home and property by simply calling the NYSUT Benefit Trust-endorsed METPAY™ program at 1 800 GET-MET 1 (1-800-438-6381) today. You'll speak with a knowledgeable METPAY Insurance Consultant who can answer your questions and assist you in applying for coverage through the program. What's more, if you have a home security system installed, you may qualify for a premium discount.

Call 1 800 GET-MET 1 today!

MetLife Auto & Home

MetLife Auto & Home is a brand of Metropolitan Property and Casualty Insurance Company and its Affiliates, Warwick, RI

METPAY, underwritten by MetLife Auto & Home, is available in most states to those who qualify. In Texas, homeowners coverage is provided by Metropolitan Lloyds Insurance Company of Texas. In some instances, special arrangements for coverage have been made with other carriers.

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