

ROBS NEWSLETTER

Issue 38

January 2001



**Special Election For
President
March 9, 2001
ROBS General Meeting
10 A.M.
BayShore-Brightwaters
Library
Montauk Highway &
Windsor Avenue
Bay Shore**

(see p. 2)

Inside this issue:

ROBS Special Election	2
From Acting Pres.	2
DON'T COUGH!	3
News Notes	4
Africa Calls	5
Project Hope	6
ROBS Meetings	7

**In 1555,
Nostradamus wrote:**

**"Come the
millennium, month
12, in the home of
greatest power, the
village idiot will
come forth to be
acclaimed the
leader."**

Current email forward

AFT & AFL-CIO OPPOSE ASHCROFT

Whatever the result of John Ashcroft's confirmation hearings for the position of Attorney General, it is important to know **WHY** Labor is opposed to his nomination.

This is the first time the AFL-CIO has ever opposed a candidate for the attorney general's job. In joining in the opposition, AFT President Sandra Feldman stated the AFT's concern that he "would not be able to effectively uphold those laws with which he so strenuously and deeply disagrees...[we] question his tolerance for the differences produced by a society as diverse as our own."

According to the AFL-CIO statement, while believing "in general the president should be able to appoint the Cabinet he wishes, free from ideological litmus tests,... Sen. Ashcroft's policy positions, taken together with his conduct, cross the line into the unacceptable.

"Were Sen. Ashcroft's views to become those of the Justice Department, they would threaten every federal labor and employment

law currently protecting working families. In the Senate, Ashcroft has consistently voted against working families and the unions that represent them on matters we care about, including worker safety and health, Social Security and Medicare, paycheck deception, the Patient's Bill of Rights, raising the minimum wage, tax cuts for the wealthy, prevailing wage guarantees, school vouchers, protecting overtime pay and the 40 hour work week, fast track, and the President's Order banning striker replacement.

"Sen. Ashcroft's highly partisan attacks on both executive branch and judicial appointments during his tenure as senator, together with his statements about litmus tests for both judicial and executive branch appointments, demonstrate a temperament at odds with that required for the attorney general."

The statement concluded with: "In the aftermath of the Florida election dispute, the nation needs a respected person, a unifier, in this post. John Ashcroft is not that person."

ROBS: A MILLENNIUM GROUP!

Ending, or beginning, the true Millennium depends on your perspective. But ROBS, like the Energizer Bunny is still going!

At our November 10, 2000 general meeting, **Elder Law Attorney, Nancy Burner** of Setauket dealt with Trusts & Estate Planning. She covered topics ranging from simple wills, By Pass Trusts, Revocable Living Trusts, Irrevocable Insurance Trusts, Supplemental Needs Trusts, Grandchild Trusts, Irrevocable Income Trusts, and Long Term Care. She may be reached at 631-941-3434.

During the business section of the meeting, three at-large delegates to the Executive Board were elected: **Bill Mullady, Irene**

Spano, and Alma Murray. Appointed as BTA Liaison was **Addie Lee**, and as Secretary/Clerical Liaison, **Adrienne Eastman.**

On snowy December 8th, about 50 ROBS members and guests enjoyed a holiday luncheon at the Irish Coffee Pub. It was so nice to share the festive time with former colleagues.

And January 19th, another blustery morning, another 50 members and guests enjoyed our annual breakfast to honor the New Year.

The southern ROBS member's luncheon will be on February 21st. Dot & Jack will be there. **Email Marilyn DePlaza at marilyn-deplaza@aol.com; phone: 561-488-1267.**

FROM THE ACTING PRESIDENT – Harriet Pepine

I never anticipated that Dot Zuckerman would leave her job as president of ROBS. As you know, Dot has accepted the NYSUT position as Retiree Consultant for Suffolk County.

Dot has been, and is, an outstanding leader. Under her guidance in the past nine years, ROBS has grown and flourished. Taking over the position of acting president of ROBS five months ago was a challenge, but with the help of a very competent executive board, the transition has gone smoothly.

Many ROBS retirees look upon this organization as an extended family. I for one have truly enjoyed being a part of ROBS, and look forward to continuing to play an active role in it in the future.

SPECIAL ELECTION FOR PRESIDENT AT UPCOMING MARCH MEETING

Dorothy Zuckerman has recently been hired as the NYSUT Retiree Services Consultant for our area. Dot has certainly been a wonderful and capable leader for ROBS, but as a result of her exciting new position, she has not been able to continue as our President.

Our Vice President, Harriet Pepine, has been filling in for Dot until a new President can be elected. Therefore, at our March meeting, we will hold a special election.

Your Nominating Committee's candidate of choice is **Phyllis Goodwin**, and she has agreed to run for the office of President of ROBS.

AT OUR MARCH 9, 2001 GENERAL MEETING, AS PER OUR CONSTITUTION, NOMINATIONS FOR THIS OFFICE WILL ALSO BE ACCEPTED FROM THE FLOOR. ANY MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING IS ELIGIBLE FOR OFFICE. Marge Kirchner, Chair

SAMPLE BALLOT FOR ROBS

SPECIAL ELECTION FOR OFFICE OF PRESIDENT TO FILL OUT THE TERM UNTIL MAY 2002

President() - Phyllis Goodwin

() -

() -

VOTING WILL BE CONDUCTED BY SECRET BALLOT

Ed. Note: Phyllis Goodwin retired from Laurel Park in 1998, and currently serves ROBS as Coordinator of Communications, and is on the Executive Board.

ROBS NEWSLETTER STAFF

CONTENT EDITOR: Christin Veech
(chrsvvech@aol.com)

COORDINATOR COMMUNICATIONS:

Phyllis Goodman (pbgoodwin@msn.com)

ROBS OFFICERS

Acting PRESIDENT /V. PRES. Harriet Pepine

SEC'Y. Lynn Pruss

TREAS. Lilian Kelly



REMEMBER? Not stepping on a crack...or you'll break your mother's back? Paper chains at Christmas, the smell of paste, buck bags and Evening in Paris? When there were two types of sneakers for girls and boys (Keds & PF Flyer) and the only time you wore them at school was for gym? When it took five minutes for the TV to warm up, when nearly everyone's mom was home when the kids got home from school, and nobody owned a pure bred dog? When you'd reach into a muddy gutter for a penny? When around the corner seemed far away & going downtown seemed like going somewhere?

Now They're Saying: "DON'T COUGH!"

Many of you have seen, either as a forwarded email, or a reprint, "How to Survive a Heart Attack When Alone." It described a coughing/deep breathing routine that may help people who are experiencing a heart attack and are alone at the time. The article was printed by Rochester General Hospital via Chapter 240's newsletter in April 2000. It was reprinted from The Mended Hearts, Inc., publication, HEART RESPONSE.

Since then, Mended Hearts has commented on this article, saying that the article was "**published without verification by a medical source. The American Heart Association does not endorse the coughing procedure, and does not teach this as part of the core curriculum in any course. This procedure has been used in a medical**

setting (not related to heart attacks) with physicians available to diagnose the specific problem, and to instruct the patient how to cough. Therefore, it is not a recommended procedure for the general public. We encourage the public to call 911 in the event of an emergency."

Mended Hearts is a support group for heart disease patients and families. Its goals are to provide hope and encouragement to others through hospital, home Internet, and telephone visiting. If you would like additional information about Mended Hearts, visit their web site: www.mendedhearts.org

Reprinted from the November 2000

THE RETIREE ORGANIZER, a publication of NYSUT

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Dear Retired Teachers of Brentwood:

Thank you for your recent contribution to the Joseph Palazzolo Scholarship Fund. As you know, teaching was Joe's passion and he dedicated his life to teaching the students in the Brentwood community. As a result of your generosity, we will be able to continue his goal of furthering the education of young minds.

Our loss is a great one, but your prayers, kind words, funny stories and thoughtful gestures have helped to ease our pain during this difficult time. Thank you again for keeping Joe's memory alive.

With sincere appreciation,

Marian, Gina and Claudia (the Palazzolo family,
11 Georgetown Pl., Smithtown, NY 11787)

Dear Chris:

I so enjoy reading about the activities of my fellow Brentwood retirees. I thought some might be interested in what I've been up to lately.

This is my 9th year lecturing in Art History at St. Joseph's College in Patchogue. One of my favorite perks is a summer course I conduct on the Art and Architecture of Western Europe. Not only interesting, but a great way to go abroad every year. So far I have taken students to just about every major country and city in Europe. Last June 2000 it was a Greek cruise; 2001 I head for Spain.

This Easter break I plan to take a small group to Egypt;

hopefully the troubles in the Middle East will subside by then.

My real treat last August was to be invited as a guest lecturer on Flemish Art & Architecture in a four week study abroad program sponsored jointly by St. Joseph's and Molloy College. Classes were held at Leuven University, Belgium. Leuven is a lovely 17th century college town, an absolute delight, and only 20 minutes by train from Brussels. Not only was I able to take students to major museums in Brussels, Antwerp, Bruges and Ghent, but because of all the wonderful express trains out of Brussels we were able to spend glorious three day weekends in London, Amsterdam and Paris.

My wife, Loraine, was with me for the last two weeks. She studied menus and I ran off to museums.

Yes, there is life after retirement and, health permitting, I hope for more of the same.

Frank Lerche Commack



Hi everyone:

Good news. You can now see my paintings on the internet. Check out (onsiteart.com). You can click on me as an artist, or through my gallery, Bellport Lane. This is very exciting. This type of exhibit will change every 4 to 6 weeks, or as often as I send him the work to be scanned for the site. This is amazing to me! Let me know what you think. I will be delighted with your input.

Lilian Masten, Oakdale

FABLES OF ANCIENT GREECE: October 8 – 24, 2001

Aegean to Mykinos,
Olympia, Mycenae,

Start thinking about a 16 day trip that includes a 3 day cruise in the Rhodes, and the buried city of Ephesus; then Meteora, Korfu, Delhi, Athens and the Parthenon! Carmen Pittinaro (631-363-2198) is leading the Go Ahead tour.
Cost = \$2330 – \$2405.

N E W S N O T E S

Have been hearing a lot about **Marilyn DePlaza** and hubby, Henry. She still lives in Boca, has daughter Marcie and grandkids Tara, 1 1/2 and 3 year old Danielle just 4 miles away. Son Lawrence (Bubba) lives in Dallas, TX with Maya, 7 and Ariana, 5. She sees them about every 5 weeks or so. She's definitely a "hands on Mimi." **Grace DiRiggi** invented that name. She reports that her house "looks like Toys r'us, which I could care less about." Henry is an avid golfer in his 12th year of retirement, and feeling great. They spent New Year's in the Bahamas at a casino/resort with sister & husband. She reports they had a ball as quarter slot junkies. Other fun things are Fantasy Fest at Key West (and the Bahamas) which are only a half hour away by jet, and they go to Disney World once a year. "This time in my life is such fun as long as one feels good!" **Marilyn** misses all her old friends and really wishes they would call, and do their best to come to the southern ROBS Luncheon if they are in or around Boca on February 21st. (see p.1).

Marilyn heard from **Howie Block** recently. She used to have lunch with him back in '86, '87, '88, and reports that is "very bonding." She and **Claudette Benjamin** lunched in January. **Claudette** and this editor have been emailing about the Florida chads, disenfranchisement, and general ugly election debacle. She & husband Bill were in NYC in September for 5 days, and did the city like they never did in the 30 – 40 years they lived here. They saw "Aida," "Riverdance," the Bronx Zoo, Brooklyn's River Café, the Staten Island Ferry and much more. "Do I miss NY? Yes I do. There is no other place like it in the world."



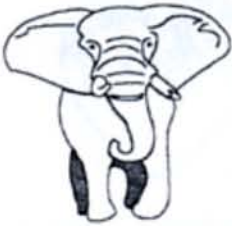
Calvin Fornwald, (Cal) a '91 retiree (English, Ross), died suddenly of congestive heart failure on November 16th. He was buried with his pen and the N.Y TIMES Crossword, something he was an expert at solving. This poem was a selection of his daughters: "**Grieve not... nor speak of me with tears...but laugh and talk of me as though I were beside you. I loved you so... 'twas heaven here with you.**" He leaves his wife Esther, daughters Ruth & Juanita and families; sons Javier and Alex, all of whom attended the Brentwood schools.

Frank Spencer lost his brother, William, just after Thanksgiving in New Jersey. **Jack Zuckerman** lost his mother on New Years Day.

Eileen Gavigan, who retired from Oak Park in 1999, died suddenly on December 20th. Condolences may be sent to family & friends at 3978 William Street, Seaford, NY 11783.

Marge Jones, retired South Jr. High Science teacher, died on January 21st. Donations to the **MARGE JONES MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND** may be sent to the Brentwood Teachers Assn., 350 Motor Parkway, Hauppauge, NY 11766.

Our sympathies are extended to friends and family of our colleagues.



AFRICA CALLS

SECOND EARTHWATCH EXPEDITION

By Donna-Marie Ragonese

KENYA – Something about the country: its raw beauty; its ‘origins’ of the human race; the real struggle to go from a third world nation to the 21st century; the magnificent animals; and things that I have yet been unable to put into words — all call to me!

“Elephant Survey” with scientist Barbara McKnight was conducted on private land adjacent to Tsavo East National Park. We (nine volunteers, two drivers and Barbara) were up at 6 A.M., in the vehicle by 7:15, back by lunch at 1, afternoon lectures and seminars, out to the bush by 4 P.M. and returned to camp in time for dinner at 8. A very long day to be sure, but we were excited and energized by all our newly acquired knowledge.

Equipped with notebooks, binoculars, sunscreen and insect repellent, we did a morning safari, i.e. drove specific quadrants of the ranch and identified each animal we observed (possibility of 29 different types). The PM bush expedition took each vehicle to a specific water hole or water tank to sit and identify very specific elephants. Individual elephants, family groups, bull groups, and lone bulls soon became familiar to us. Elephants are intelligent, social and truly special animals. They do not belong in zoos or circus’. They communicate vocally (about five sounds audible to the human ear), and by Infra sound — low frequency (not audible to the human ear) that carries over six miles. When they are using Infra sound, a fluttering on their forward is visible!

My vehicle was charged by a 30 year old bull elephant in ‘mustk’. Our driver very rapidly backed the vehicle out of harm’s way. What an exhilarating experience!!

Galla Camp had eight tents pitched under thatched roof pavilions, a dining pavilion, and a cooking pavilion (preparation was done on a wood stove). The camp was on a ‘rock out crop’ - about three to five stories above the thousands of acres of bush. The stars were brilliant – as one turned 360 degrees at night – not one electric light was visible! We fell asleep and awoke to the sounds of animals in the bush. I burned out three flashlight bulbs reading in bed at night.

As the researcher learns the elephant’s behavior in and around Tsavo Park, it is to be hoped that humans and animals can find a beneficial way to co-exist.

FLORIDA TIDBITS: (with apologies to our members there)

- ◊ We’ve been Gored by the bull of politics and we’re Bushed.
- ◊ Home of electile dysfunction.
- ◊ We count more than you do.
- ◊ Relax...Retire...Revote.
- ◊ Viagra voters do it again!...and again...and again...
- ◊ We don’t just cheat in football.
- ◊ This is what you get for taking Elian away from us.
- ◊ Palm Beach County: So nice, we let you vote twice.



PROJECT HOPE AND THE HOLIDAYS



When I attempted to deliver... they were no longer there...the mother had become unable to care for... and the 6 children had been taken...

During the 2000 holiday season, ROBS members through Project Hope, a project of the Community Liaison Committee chaired by Frank Spencer, collected and spent over \$1000. "We received more checks than ever before," said Vern Spencer.

This year, the same two families were adopted for both Thanksgiving and Christmas. There were 8 children and 2 adults. But this year, Frank and son Wayne, a graduate of the Brentwood schools, needed to do a bit of detective work in order to deliver the gifts from Santa.

Says Frank: "When I attempted to deliver Christmas gifts to one family at the address to which I had delivered the Thanksgiving packages, I found that they were no longer there. The mother had become unable to take care of her six children and they had been taken over by Child Protective Services (CPS).

"With the help of the good people at Suburban Children, we were able to locate the children at their new foster homes. Wayne and I delivered the presents to their new homes and met the foster parent. They all were together for the holiday with their lovely presents from you [ROBS]." The children are still in the Brentwood school district, and Frank will follow up on them.

Letty and Sheila Sustrin and Verne Spencer shopped for the holiday gifts. Phyllis Goodwin, Irene Spano, Ruth McCalla, Harriet Pepine, Vern, Wayne and Frank Spencer got together on December 21st and became Santa's wrappers.

The Community Liaison Committee would like to thank everyone for their support and their work in making this holiday very happy for 8 very special children and their parents. Again, very special thanks go to the Sustrin twins and Vern Spencer.



LETTERS TO PROJECT HOPE:

Dear ROBS members:

On behalf of the families you provided Thanksgiving baskets to this year, we would like to thank you very much. Your help year after year eases our concerns of appealing to the people in our communities to help the less fortunate. Unfortunately, the number of families that come through our doors grows each year. The families appreciate your kindness, caring and giving during this time of year, as we all do. We understand the efforts and commitments that go into this project and we thank you so very much.

Sincerely, Diane Gustaw, Coordinator/Suburban Children, Inc.

Dear Frank and ROBS members:

On behalf of the homeless families you adopted for Christmas, we would like to thank you so much for your generous gifts for our children. We are so grateful that you thought about our children, and we are overwhelmed by your continued kindness and caring. Can you imagine the reaction of the children? It was priceless. The parents were so happy that their children were going to celebrate a Christmas that they would not have been able to give to their children, that many a tear was generated.

Again, we thank you for your kindness, caring and generosity. May you have a wonderful holiday and a Happy New Year.

Sincerely, Diane Gustaw, Coordinator/Suburban Children, Inc.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR ROBS EVENTS

Program Chairperson, Ruth McCalla presented her programs for the remainder of the school year at the January ROBS Executive meeting. Lock these dates in (**all Fridays**) for the remaining four gatherings:
Bay Shore-Brightwaters Library on Montauk Hwy. & Windsor Ave. in Bay Shore at 10 A.M.:

March 9 – Special ROBS Election for President
 Brentwood Ambulance Corp on intro to “CPR and Emergency Care”

April 6 – “STATE OF THE UNION”

Joe Hogan, president of BTA

May 11 – John Sherin and the ROBS History Project’s
“LOOK BACK Video”

June 1 – ROBS Luncheon at the Bonwit

A GOLF OUTING FOR EVERYONE

Even those who have never played before. We'll keep you posted as details get finalized! Addie Lee is working on it by popular request!

M-T Corner

“Have you ever noticed,” a teacher said, out of the blue, “how sometimes there are teachable days?” The teachers’ lounge, fell suddenly silent. “I know sometimes *they* are teachable,” a second teacher mused. “Some days it’s different,” the first teacher continued. “The whole thing’s different. I don’t know why.”

‘How many of those times do you remember’? *Something happens!*

George B. Leonard
Education and Ecstasy
 1968.



“Kind of reminds me of my first day teaching second grade.”



**If you're not a financial expert, here's
 a benefit available just for you!**

Why would you use the Financial Counseling Program?

Whether you realize it or not, you make multiple financial decisions every day. From going to the coffee shop to planning your next vacation, it's these many issues, large and small, that affect your financial security. Here is a sampling of situations in which the Financial Counseling Program can be of assistance:

- You've just received an inheritance.
- Your investment portfolio is growing.
- Your marital status has changed.
- You've changed jobs.
- You have a new baby.
- You have questions while preparing your taxes.
- You're wondering if you need additional insurance.
- You don't know whether to lease or buy your next car.
- You aren't sure you're contributing enough to your 403(b) tax-deferred annuity.
- Your credit card balances are eating away at your ability to save.
- Your CDs are coming due, and you're not sure if you should renew them or invest in something else.
- You have concerns about the minimum required distribution at age 70 ½.

These are some issues that have prompted others to sign up for the Financial Counseling Program. Because almost every decision you make involves money, doesn't it make sense to have access to financial professionals who offer objective and unbiased assistance? For more information, contact NYSUT Member Benefits at 800-626-8101, or e-mail benefits@nysutmail.org.

How many times have you wished you could tap into the expertise of financial professionals without paying the exorbitant fees they usually charge? With the Financial Counseling Program available from NYSUT Member Benefits, now you can!

Customized features for NYSUT members

When you enroll in the plan, you receive access to the toll-free *Helpline*, staffed by Ernst & Young LLP personal financial planning counselors. You can call the *Helpline* for quick inquiries to financial planning concerns or for more in-depth discussions. When you call, you can expect objective, confidential guidance based on your needs - Ernst & Young sells no financial products.

You are entitled to request Focused Financial Analyses from Ernst & Young. Based on your responses to a targeted questionnaire, a customized report will be mailed to you. You select your reports from a variety of specific financial topics. In addition, you'll get Ernst & Young's bi-monthly financial planning newsletter.

Finally, you may request an in-person financial planning consultation. You choose between consulting with an Ernst & Young financial counselor or an Aetna financial planner. If you do not desire this component, you may be assured that no one will call you. The in-person consultation is activated solely by your request.



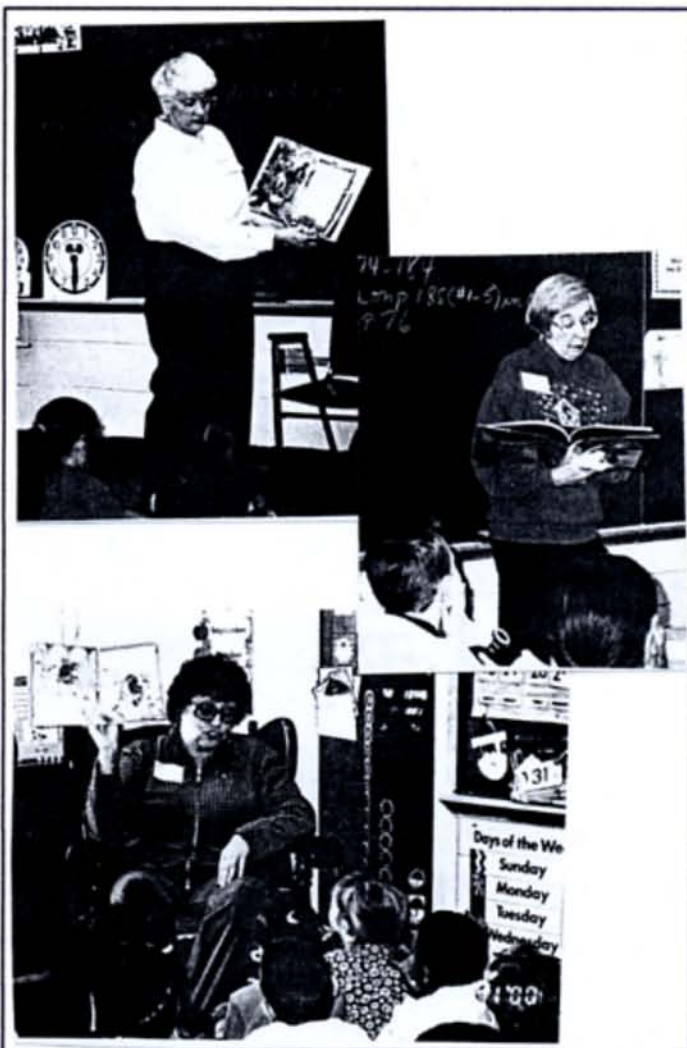
LAUREL PARK READING DAY

For the past six or seven years, Laurel Park School has invited retired teachers, administrators, and board members to participate in their annual Reading Day. Principal Kevin McWhirter and reading Consultant Noreen Miller asked for ROBS assistance in making this a special day.

I would like to thank the following people for their time and energy: Loretta Ellington, Kitty Hayes, Marge Kirchner, Ruth Goldstein Leopold, Miriam Massucci, Jan Oehler, Dolores Osborne, Mark Rabin, William Seifert, Letty Sustrin, Sheila Sustrin, and Ethel Tarkan. Mark and Bill had the additional enjoyment of reading to their daughters' class. Laurel Park was especially pleased with our response and looks forward to having us return next year.

Phyllis Goodwin

Pictures to the right are top to bottom: Marge Kirchner, Loretta Ellington, Sheila Sustrin reading to the children at Laurel Park.



RETIRES OF BRENTWOOD SCHOOLS

C/O Phyllis Goodwin
P.O. Box 2709
Huntington Sta., N.Y. 11746

PRSTD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
HUNT. ST. N.Y.
PERMIT # 101

ATTEND THE MARCH 9
ROBS GENERAL MEETING
BAYSHORE LIBRARY,
MONTAUK & WINDSOR:
10 A.M.
Speaker on CPR, & Special
Election