



## ROBS NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2005

RETIRES OF BRENTWOOD SCHOOLS

ISSUE 62



### ROBS

#### MEETING DATES:

Bay Shore Public  
Library  
10 AM

November 10

December 2

(Luncheon) see flyer  
in this issue

January 5, 2006

(Breakfast)

**Project Hope is at it again! We're adopting families for Thanksgiving and Holiday giving. Join us at the November 10 ROBS meeting & donate for our families.**

**Or send a check made out to ROBS: Project Hope, and bring some joy into the lives of those made homeless.**

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### STUDENT RECORDS TO MILITARY: GRANDPARENT ALERT

Congress has passed two major pieces of legislation that require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary & Secondary Education Act (ESEA) to give military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as they provide to post secondary institutions or to prospective employers.

In Section 9528 of the ESEA, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, school districts are required to release student records to military recruiters or risk losing funding. They are also required to inform families of their "Opt Out" rights of their child's directory information through a single notice. This may be "a mailing, student handbook, or other method reasonably calculated to inform parents." Notification varies widely across districts, and according to Leave My Child Alone, "it's a bit of a crapshoot whether families know or not."

Not to comply with the regulations can cost districts ESEA funding. In addition to the loss of funds a LEA that denies a recruiter access to the requested information on students after 7/1/02, will be subject to specific interventions: a senior military officer will visit the LEA within 120 days; if not resolved, the Department of Defense must notify the State Governor within 60 days; not resolved after 1 year are reported to Congress if the Secretary of Defense determines the LEA denies recruiting access to at least 2 of the armed forces. The expectation is that public officials will work with the LEA to resolve the problem.

Additionally, the DOD has developed a national HS data base to document recruiter access. Presently 95% of the nation's 22,000 secondary schools provide a degree of access to military recruiters that is consistent with current law. (Who

wants to lose funding?)

**To Opt Out your child, you must submit an Opt Out letter by "snail mail" to your School District Superintendent.**

**Don't forget to follow up with your school district to be sure they have opted your child out.**

Go to [www.leavemychildalone.org](http://www.leavemychildalone.org) to download a printed form to include in your posted letter. **Keep copies of what you sent.**

#### ARMY GETTING LESS

**CHOOSY:** Army Secretary Francis J. Harvey said he would double the numbers of recruits who score in the bottom 1/3 of the military's aptitude test, which they already have been doing. Pentagon figures, released on 10/11, showed 4% (2,900 of 73,000 recruits) scored in the bottom 1/3 of the test that monitors general science, math, and word knowledge. In 2004 the army accepted 440 from the lowest, or about 0.6%.

### NOVEMBER 10 ROBS MEETING: VOLUNTEERING

Wondering how you can keep up with the Piro sisters? Concerned about what to do with the rest of your life?

**COME TO THE THURSDAY, NOV. 10 ROBS GENERAL MEETING AND FIND OUT!**

Speakers will be Joyce Palmieri from the Visiting Nurse Service of Northport, which has just opened a hospice in East Northport, and Martin Kushnick of Senior Net, a continuing education program for adults.

All ROBS meetings are at the Bay Shore/Brightwaters Library on Montauk Highway in Bay Shore at 10 AM. We serve refreshments compliments of the Program Committee.

**JOIN US!**



# PHYLLIS'S FORUM

Phyllis Goodwin, President - (631-673-2971)



Dear Colleagues,

Many thanks to the members of the Brentwood Writers group who shared their writing skills at our October meeting. It was truly entertaining, heart breaking and enlightening. After eight days of rain, the board was thrilled with our turnout. Keep up the good work. Don't forget to bring one of your cohorts to our meetings

Medicare will soon issue information on changing to Part D. Do not change your benefit to Part D as you may jeopardize the benefits that you have with Empire United Healthcare.

We will receive notification from our health care program as to whether or not

our insurance has "creditable coverage. This is under the banner of the Civil Service Department through NYSHIP. Please keep this document in a safe place.

Recently a friend sent me a booklet that helps you put all of your important information in one place. I found it to be very effective and efficient in putting my "vast estate" in order. I will have some of these booklets available at our November meeting.

We are proud to announce that 293 people have sent in their membership application in a timely fashion. You will not receive this in time but remember the cutoff date is October

31, 2005 to have your name in the directory. Many members did not fill out the forms completely as we had asked. This will make collating the information more difficult. We hope to send out the Directory in November.

Dot Zuckerman has been elected President of the Long Island Alliance for Retired American. Congratulations. Dot will chair the NYSUT Suffolk Retiree Conference on November 15, 2005 at the Watermill in Smithtown. Letty and Sheila Sustrin will be the keynote speakers. These conferences are full of great ideas and information so please plan to attend.

In Harmony, Phyllis Goodwin

## CONTINUED KATRINA / RITA FALLOUT

The AFT executive council has approved major fundraising to boost the union's disaster relief fund and directly help thousands of AFT members devastated by hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Vice president Herb Magidson reports. The losses among AFT members-15,000 along the Gulf Coast, including 6,500 in New Orleans alone-are unprecedented in the union's history. Although the union has raised nearly \$300,000, the need is so great that an extraordinary effort must be undertaken to increase donations. Even as these hurricanes have faded from the headlines, the plight of thousands of AFT members-including those who have lost their jobs and will soon lose their healthcare coverage must not be forgotten. ("Storm Stories," now online). The union is asking every state federation to participate in the campaign. AFT has applied for tax-exempt status for the disaster relief fund. Once approved, all donations from the date of the hurricane (Aug. 28) will be eligible for tax deductibility to the extent permitted by law. To make a donation online, go to [www.aft.org/katrina](http://www.aft.org/katrina). Note that the online donation form provides a field to indicate your local/affiliate, so these donations also will count toward the local or state campaign.

A storm of a different type was brewing in New Orleans this month. The city school board moved to balance the books in the devastated school system by gutting health insurance coverage for school employees and by approving charter school conversions in hopes of capturing millions in federal assistance earmarked for charter initiatives. The United Teachers of New Orleans/AFT blasted the school board's attempt to save dollars by replacing employees' regular health insurance plans with catastrophic insurance that will kick in only after employees have paid a deductible of up to \$5,000 for individual participants and \$10,000 for those with family members. Currently, the only glimmer of hope for school employees victimized by insurance cuts would be speedy federal approval of a \$2.4 billion emergency aid request for Louisiana schools—a desperately needed cash infusion that would allow regular insurance coverage to continue.

Separately, the school board is engaged in a legal battle over its effort to reopen public schools in several sections of the city as charter schools. The move was an effort to capture a portion of a \$20.9 million federal grant to expand, repair and create charter schools. Community groups in New Orleans filed suit in Orleans Parish Civil Court, claiming that planning for the charter school conversion shunned public input. Judge Nadine Ramsey agreed and blocked what she called the board's "flagrant disregard for the constitutional right of public participation in government" (*Inside AFT: October '05*)

### ROBS NEWSLETTER

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My dog is worried about the economy because Alpo is up to \$3.00 a can. That's almost \$21.00 in dog money. -Joe Weinstein

(It's a good thing dogs don't drive!)



### ROBS Newsletter Editorial Board:

Carmela Criscione  
Adrienne Eastman  
Linda Gibson  
Phyllis Goodwin  
Marge Kirchner

## THE M-T CORNER

"Don't worry that children never listen to you.

Worry that they are always watching you."

—Robert Fulghum



**NYSUT NOTES**

**Dorothy Zuckerman, NYSUT Retiree Services Consultant**  
 (631-273-8822) (e-mail: dzuckerm@nysutmail.org)

The new Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage (Medicare Part D) will go into effect on January 1, 2006. There is a great deal of confusion over how Medicare Part D will impact the prescription drug coverage you already receive from the school district from which you retired.

Many retirees have a prescription drug plan that is provided by the New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP) through the Empire Plan. **A letter was recently sent to all eligible NYSHIP enrollees which clearly stated that there will be NO CHANGES in the Empire Plan drug benefits.** You will soon receive many letters and promotions giving you information about the new drug law, including application forms from the Social Security Administration. Unless you have a very low income and few assets you should not sign any papers and **YOU SHOULD NOT ENROLL IN MEDICARE D.** The Districts will not be required to reimburse Medicare Part D payments as they do now.

A form was attached to the NYSHIP letter verifying information needed for your NYSHIP file. If the information is correct, you do not have to return the form; return it only if corrections must be made. NYSHIP will mail more information in the next few months. As of this writing, HIP has not finalized its plans but cautions its participants not to sign up for any changes in their plan. If you want more information, visit the Empire Plan website, [www.cs.state.ny.us](http://www.cs.state.ny.us) (follow the links to NYSHIP) or the Medicare website, [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) or call at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227).

As an additional member benefit, NYSUT has signed a contract with the Medicare Rights Center, a national non-profit consumer service group. The Medicare Interactive Website ([www.medicareinteractive.org/nysut](http://www.medicareinteractive.org/nysut)) provides excellent New York-related information on health care benefits, rights and options. In addition, you can also sign up for the Center's free, weekly "Dear Marci," a very informative e-newsletter.

If your retiree chapter or community organization would like more information about Social Security or Medicare, NYSUT has trained many speakers who are prepared to make presentations. Please contact me if you want to arrange for a speaking engagement.

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

To Dot Z: I'm Rozanne Petrycki, Camille's daughter. I was going over Lilian's guest book and saw ... those that were deeply touched by this wonderful, loving woman.

Since I graduated in 1979, I have been, in some form or another, keeping in touch with Mrs. Kelly. I remember going to South (Jr.) and visiting her in between classes. When I was a bus driver, one of the schools that I had to transport students from was South. I would go into her classroom or the cafeteria where I sat and chatted with her. I also remember helping her get set up for her next group of students or those that had money from her candy sales-travel club. I remember her pushing her cart from the store room underneath the stairs close by her room and sorting it out in her room.

I also remember bringing, at that time, my infant daughter Veronica-now a healthy, spry, 9 year old. And how she gushed seeing her! Even after leaving Brentwood in Sept. 2002 to live in Pennsylvania, we kept in contact through emails, instant messaging and the occasional phone call. So when I emailed her and was told by Eileen that she had left us, I was so saddened.

Now the reason for my writing, other than saying hi and let's keep in touch, is this.

I would like to know if and how we can in some sort of fashion, rename either a school, or her beloved room 123, at South the "Mrs. Lilian J. Kelly Memorial Room" /or the school in honor of her? I know that there are many, many former students from

South who may, or may not have had her as a teacher, but as a sponsor -Kickline, travel club etc. who may want to have future students in South to know who she was and what she meant to those who knew her.

I'm sorry for this being so long. I guess my mom taught me well. I miss her very much also. I cannot believe that come this January, it'll be 8 years since she's been gone!

With great sincerity and much love, Rozanne T. Therrien,  
 (nee- Petrycki), East Stroudsburg, PA

*And here are letters from a scholarship recipient & her mother:*

Dear Ms Goodwin,  
 I am greatly honored to be the recipient of the ROBS scholarship. The monies will go toward books, food, and any other college related things. I appreciate your interest in furthering my education and would be glad to keep you informed throughout my endeavors. Thanks for helping me to become a success.

Sincerely, Jessica Walker

Dear Mrs. Goodwin,  
 My name is Tracie Walker. I'm pleased that Jessica has received your ROBS scholarship. This wonderful gift will help Jessica buy books, etc.. I thank you so very much. I'm very grateful that you saw in my child, Jessica Walker what I see: a success.

Yours Truly, Tracie Walker



# NEWS NOTES

**Charlene Keely** (Twin Pines '03) is a travel agent in her second life, and is putting some trips together for 2006: Southern Caribbean Cruise, 1/7,14,28 ; Greek Isle Cruise, 5/14; Canadian Rockies, July or August ; Sicily, Spring 2007. 631-656-6352 or ckeely@optonline.net

From **Rich Edwards** (Sond. '98): Just wanted to correct the information you got from **Jim Watson** about my travels. I started out in late May and rode my motorcycle to Sanford, FL, loaded it on the Auto-Train and took it easy until Lorton, VA, where I got back on the bike and rode to NY to greet my new granddaughter (Sara, born June 1.) Then I rode the bike to Seattle (3200 miles), rested at my cousin's place for a few days, then rode thru Canada to Alaska. Alaska is the most beautiful state by far but most see it only from a cruise ship and a bus. I recommend the motorcycle--it's the only way to explore the back-country. I did 4600 miles in Canada and Alaska over 14 days. I loaded the bike onto the Alaska Ferry in Haines, AK for the 800 mile ride back to Washington. Then I flew from Seattle to NY to greet granddaughter #2 (Lucinda, born July 13.) I'm back in Florida now but will return to Seattle in Sept. to get the motorcycle and ride east through Oregon, Utah, Colorado, etc. and on to Florida. Whew! Hope you are doing well. I'm enjoying Florida but I do miss NY friends and golf-buddies. I'm president of the local BMW Motorcycle Club (how many motorcycle clubs do you know that have seven doctors, eight lawyers, a judge, a State Representative, a dentist (and four retired teachers) as members? Also, I am a board member of the local Habitat for Humanity affiliate specializing in Family Selection and have been a pledge-week volunteer for the local NPR station (WUSF). Must keep busy. (We hear that **Rich's** trip from Seattle to Florida by motorcycle took 8 days...). *We had a running column from Rich when he first retired and spent some two years on the road in his RI with the motorcycle as his local transportation.. He had some wonderful adventures!*

**Jim Watson** (Sond. '95) reports that daughter Carolyn, a writer and illustrator of books for youngsters, has been honored on Long Island for her biography of Samantha Smith. Samantha, a child in the '80s, wrote a letter to USSR leader Yuri Andopov seeking peace. Congratulations Watson's.

Welcoming grandchild number two are Richard and **Patty Hucke** (Ross/Sond. '95). Logan Christopher Basile joined five year old cousin Trinity Ellen Marie Hucke in September. Happiness and blessings to all of you.



We sadly report that **Dolores Osborne** (East Kindergarten '96) lost her mother on September 14th. In our last issue, we noted her 101st birthday in July. Our deepest condolences to family and friends. (389 Grand Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11238).

## PRONTO: by Harriet Pepine

During the summer, I happened to visit Pronto with some donations. They are located at 128 Pineaire Drive in Brentwood, and had been open two months.

Frank Sinisi, President & Chairman of the Advisory Board, was there and offered to give me a tour of the building.

I was very impressed with the work that they do. They also offer a food pantry, as well as clothing, furniture, etc. They do not charge for these items. There are classrooms devoted to ESOL learners. There were private rooms for individual interviews.

All of their operating expenses come from different organizations, as well as from the government.

Since they make such an important contribution to the Brentwood community, I thought it would be worth passing on this information to you, our members.

## IRAQI TEACHERS' UNION

The AFT has partnered with WIRED International, a nonprofit information technology firm, to install a bank of six networked computers in the Baghdad headquarters of the Iraqi teachers' Union.

The installation of computers and backup equipment comes with support and training for 25 personnel. The project is part of the AFT's long-term commitment to help Iraqi teachers rebuild an independent, democratic and free, teachers' union.

The AFT's work in the region is grounded in a strong belief that despite the difficulties that lie ahead, the great majority of Iraqis desire peace and a society governed by democracy, freedom and respect for workers' rights. *(Inside AFT: 6/05)*

Barnes & Noble.com's online products are already discounted up to 40%. Now NYSUT members who access the online bookstore through the NYSUT Member Benefits web site will receive an additional 5% discount. It applies to: books, new & used text books, DVDs, videos, music, gifts, games, toys, prints, posters & items from the online bookstore's sale annex. Visit [www.memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://www.memberbenefits.nysut.org). Click first on Discounts & Travel tab, then click on Barnes & Noble.com Online Bookstore and click on attached link. Not available at bn.com directly or Barnes & Noble retail stores.