



# ROBS - RETIREES OF BRENTWOOD SCHOOLS

Since 1991

Still Serving

Issue 2/2016

April, May, June

## MEETINGS

General Meetings are held at the Brentwood Public Library, 2nd Avenue and Third Street at 10:00 a.m. on the **first** Friday of the month unless otherwise noted.

**May 6- Election of Officers  
Video Presentation**

**June 3 - Luncheon at Butera's.  
Flyer is attached**

**July & August - no meeting**

**September - To Be Announced**

## ROBS CARES CONTRIBUTIONS NEEDED

**Pronto**, the community action group we support, is in need of dry and canned goods, paper products and toiletries. **Please** bring your contributions to **every** meeting. Thank you.

New and/or **gently** used children's books collected for the **Books to Home Program** at every meeting.

## OFFICERS

Nick Siciliano - President  
kpnici1@aol.com

Kathy Guleksen - 1st VP

Harriet Pepine - 2nd VP

Nancy Churchillo - Secretary

Carmen Roldan - Treasurer

Phyllis Goodwin - President  
Emerita

Dot Zuckerman - Founder

## AFFILIATIONS

ROBS is proudly affiliated with  
NYSUT, AFT, NEA, AFL-CIO,  
RC21 & NYSARA.

[www.robsny.org](http://www.robsny.org)

## MUSIC FILLED THE ROOM

### BRENTWOOD STUDENTS PERFORM

by Carmela Criscione

On April 1, the **ROBS** membership was treated to a performance by the Brentwood High School's a cappella groups. Jonathan Bley, the Choral Director, escorted about 35 students to our meeting room at the Library. The total Brentwood High School choir numbers about 150.

Our group was comprised of three small groups: the **Chamber Choir**, **Girls In Trouble** and **The Accidentals**.

The first number was a German lieder song by the entire group. **Girls in Trouble** then sang "Call Your Girlfriend" and "Beauty and the Beast".

The boys choir, **The Accidentals**, sang "End of the Road" a Boyz II Men song with their own unique twist at the end. Soloist Brendan sang one of his favorites **Dion's** "Run Around Sue", which of course we all knew.

The groups meet on their own after school and make up their own arrangements to their numbers.

Mr. Bley had a wide grin on his face when the membership rose to their feet to give the students a well-deserved standing ovation.

Thank you, Phyllis Goodwin, for arranging this performance.



The Chamber Choir



Girls In Trouble



The Accidentals with Brendan as soloist

All photos provided by Ronda Brooks

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

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John Sherin-History Project  
Nick Siciliano-Web Editor  
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Ellen Edelstein, Jim Nanos and  
Valerie Vismale-Delegates at  
Large  
Lynda Romano - Hospitality  
to be announced - Programs

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tecnouquen@aol.com  
Ronda Brooks - Graphic Designer  
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Phyllis Goodwin  
Paula Moore  
John Sherin  
Nick Siciliano

**TALK TO US**

The phone numbers, home addresses, and e-mail addresses of all the Officers and Executive Board Members are in the Directory should you wish to contact us.

Stories, ideas for stories or columns and news items are always welcome.

This newsletter is all about us.

[www.robsny.org](http://www.robsny.org)

**NICK'S NOTES** by Nick Siciliano

This is the article I wrote for the **Brentwood Teachers Association's** newsletter, **The Impact**.

We hope to continue to get new members. If you are a present member and know someone who is not a member of **ROBS** encourage them to join. As always, your input in how to make **ROBS** a better organization is always welcome.

**AN INVITATION FROM THE  
RETIREES OF BRENTWOOD SCHOOLS (ROBS)**

When you retire from the Brentwood Schools you can retain your ties to the school district and colleagues as well as **NYSUT** by joining the **Retirees of Brentwood Schools**, informally known as **ROBS**.

We meet once a month and present various programs to our members. In addition, we hold several luncheons throughout the year along with other enjoyable activities.

As a retiree organization we make you aware of issues confronting retirees and those still in service in the District. By joining **ROBS** you will also be a part of **NYSUT's** regional **Retiree Council 21** which also makes you aware of issues as well as providing various activities for retirees.

**ROBS** also believes in giving back to the community where we have worked. We do this in several ways: at Thanksgiving and the holiday season we adopt several families from the community and provide them with food for Thanksgiving dinner and gifts for each family member at the holidays. In the spring we give out several scholarships to those Brentwood graduates who intend to pursue a career in education.

We also have an award-winning website, **www.robsny.org** which I encourage you to check out. You can see current and past issues of our award-winning newsletter as well as other information.

**ROBS** is a worthwhile organization after you retire, and we hope you will consider joining us!



## BIRD WATCHING

by Ronda Brooks

My mom has often told this story about when I was a very young girl and we were visiting relatives for a holiday celebration. Their pet parakeet was flying around the house and happened to perch on the bottom ledge of a mirror hanging over the couch. I was standing on the couch and grabbed the bird by the tail and wouldn't let go. As feathers went flying, my tiny fingers had to be pried open to free the poor little birdie. Growing up in the Bronx, my only real experience with birds was seeing millions of pigeons scavenging the city streets. No one liked those "flying rats." It was pretty safe to say that I wasn't a fan.

Who would have guessed that all these years later, one of my favorite hobbies would be taking pictures of birds? After retiring, I started vacationing in South Florida several times a year. I was introduced to a wildlife sanctuary called Wakodahatchee Wetlands in Delray Beach and I was hooked. As you walk around the half-mile boardwalk, you can see dozens of varieties of beautiful birds along with alligators, iguanas, snakes and swamp rabbits. Now I spend hours there just enjoying and photographing the flora and fauna.

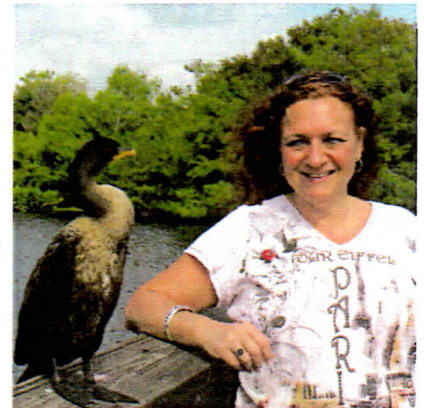
My interest quickly expanded and thanks to a friend's gift of a small wire-cage birdfeeder, I can sit in my kitchen, drinking my morning coffee, while watching and taking pictures of my little backyard visitors. I never knew that Long Island was host to so many different birds. I often find myself seeking local venues to explore in my search for new aviary species. And on my travels around the world, I'm always sure to include pictures of my international bird friends.

Birding, or bird watching, (the difference, according to The New Yorker columnist Jonathan Rosen, is "bird-watchers look at birds; birders look for them) can be both relaxing and exciting. It's the perfect combination for retirees because it can be done from the comfort of your home, on walks in local parks or on international adventures. Camera aren't even necessary, though a nice pair of binoculars and a good bird guidebook can come in handy. You can put in as much effort as you like and make it a hobby to suit your own preferences.

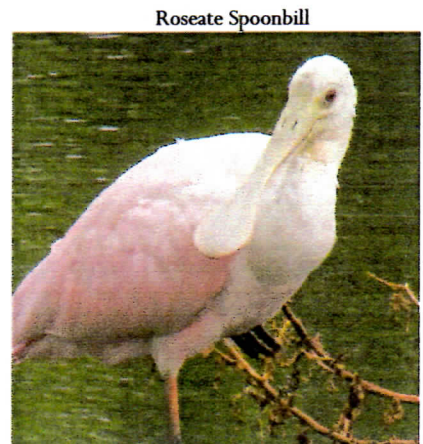
Happy birding!



Great Egret



Ronda with a Double Breasted  
Cormorant



Roseate Spoonbill





### THEY NEVER FORGET

#### YOU WERE MY THIRD GRADE TEACHER

This letter (paraphrased) from a former student was received by **Ruth Teich**, who was an elementary teacher at Northeast School.

She writes that and Ruth was her teacher in 1978-1979. She has thought about her so much throughout the years and wondered how she was. Lately she has been thinking about her even more since her daughter has just started 3rd grade herself. She has been telling her about the things she remembered and the fond memories she has of her 3rd grade class. Her daughter, like her, had a very rough time in the 2nd grade where the teacher didn't resonate with her. Ruth made an impact on her in such a positive way that it carried over for the rest of her academic years. She's hoping that her daughter will have the same experience and it seems that, so far, she is.

Ruth really inspired her to want to read and she appreciated it so much. She remembered that Ruth wrote a book. That impressed her very much. She asked for the title so she could get a copy to finally read it for herself.

Because of the reminiscing she went on an internet search for Ruth and found her.

It may take many years and the marvel of the internet but students who were touched by caring, supportive and imaginative teachers can still reach out to say "thank you".

If you have a **They Never Forget** story please send it on to Carmela so we can all share in the memory.



Standing left to right: Carole Comerford, Dolores Rezza, Lois Morella, Marie Poppo, Ed Nolan, docent, Carol Anacreante, June Dawson and Carmela Criscione. Phyllis Goodwin took the picture at the ROBS High Tea, Westbury Manor, in December.



Maria Canale and Ronda Brooks the lucky raffle winner, of the six layer chocolate whipped cream confection topped by a giant strawberry!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY IVY!

**THE HISTORY PROJECT NEEDS****YOU!**

At the May, 2015 Celebration **ROBS** meeting we gave out DVDs of everyone interviewed during the twenty years of the project.

Most of them were picked up. Some, however, were not. We have listed the names of the DVDS that need homes. There are two lists.

If you know someone on the list or the family of a deceased colleague please have them contact John Sherin (contact info in the Directory) so he can send the DVD to them.

We heard over the years how important to families the interviews are and want to make sure that everyone receives his/her copies.

Dick Carey  
Frank Carnese  
Barry Finkelstein  
Ed Franchi  
Arthur Freed  
Michael Garramone  
Cathy Gerolomon  
Audrey Kutin  
Lou Lotito  
Alma Murray  
Diane Neesham  
Warren Swensen  
Evelyn Vannoy

**Deceased Members**

Louis Cairo  
Beverly Carpenter  
Peter Cerullo  
Virginia Datre  
Conrad Fornwald  
Linda Gibson  
Jack Goldstein  
Gae Grobluski  
Jacquie Hartman  
Shirley Hodges  
Walter Karp  
Florence Koehler  
Bill Lane  
Bernard LeBron  
Robert Leiterman  
Ruth Weaver  
Joan Young

**A LITTLE OF THIS  
AND  
A LITTLE OF THAT**

Please remember to send in your Scholarship donations. We will be selecting our graduate recipients very soon and the award ceremony is the middle of May.

The summer issue of the newsletter will have the renewal application attached. Please send in your dues quickly. We will be preparing a new directory and want to include you.

In addition to foodstuffs collected for **PRONTO** (thank you for your donations), we are also collecting gently used books for children. The books will be given out at the end of school for reading pleasure during the summer.

We will be celebrating our **25th** year as an organization this September. If you have any ideas about events, programs or outings, please contact any of the officers or mention it at the meetings.

If you haven't submitted a name for the **ROBS** mascot, our owl, please do so by sending Carmela an e-mail. We will vote on a name at the June 6 Luncheon.

If you have anything you want to have noted in the newsletter, or have a column or article idea please contact Carmela.





**IT'S BEEN A YEAR!**

**AND WHAT A YEAR IT WAS!**

by Jim Nanos

The waterfall splashes in an ice-rimmed pool. The chilly steam rounds the bend to flow over rapids which lead to a cold water lake. Sounds so idyllic doesn't it? However, when the water is cascading off the kitchen range, the icy pool is the entire kitchen floor and the steam is the one rippling down from the stairs into the basement lake..this becomes the stuff of nightmares.

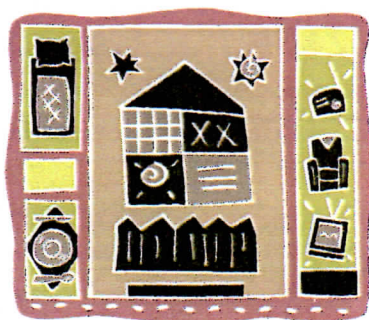
So it was one year ago, upon our return from a one-week tropical get-away. You might remember that February 2015 cold snap. Yes, our adult children did check the house! Somehow between the Wednesday recon and our Saturday return, all hell broke loose!

At first, I thought perhaps it was an ice dam off the gutters. No, too much water. I put on big boots saying, "I have to shut off the water main. I'm only going to touch the valve. If I'm not back in a minute, honey, call the EMTs. I'm either floating face up or down!"

So the adventure began. We stayed with neighbors for a week. Luckily we were able to get a pump-out squad and an insurance adjuster the following day. We still had no heat, so rocket engine heaters were set up to begin thawing out the house. The adjuster took photos and things were looking okay. Just then, as the house warmed, water flowed from everywhere...ceiling, walls, from floor to floor. The ceilings and walls collapsed. Eventually, over sixty breaks were discovered crashing through tiled walls in bathrooms, sheet-rocked walls and ceilings. Rip out and reconstruction began. Ruination abounded. Many belongings and mementos flew into dumpsters. The process continued for five months. After the first week we moved into a long-term hotel. Homeowners insurance thankfully covered most of our expenses. So much had to be done in a very short time before we could move back in. It was tiring having to select all new carpets, appliances, paint, etc., all at once.

Now a year later, we still don't know what caused the dilemma. The theory is that an oil delivery in subzero temperatures clogged the burner, shutting the heat off. No way to be sure. We are now back, settled in with a new gas heating system and Nest thermostats that can be read by phone from anywhere.

We hope never to experience that devastation again.





ROBS LUNCHEON  
BUTERA'S

100 S. Main St. Sayville NY 11782

June 3, 2016 12-3PM

First Course

*Mixed baby green salad with house vinaigrette*

Choice of Three Entrees

*Chicken Marsala, Grilled Salmon  
or Grilled Steak*

*Served with roasted red bliss potatoes  
and a vegetable with fresh baked bread.  
Unlimited soda, coffee or tea. Cash bar.*

Dessert

*Custom baked occasion cake*

*Cost per person is \$35.*

*Make your check payable to ROBS with  
Luncheon written on the memo line.*

*Checks should be sent to :*

*Valerie Vismale 1586 Lincoln Blvd  
Bay Shore NY 11706.*

*The deadline is May 27, 2016*