

ROBS NEWSLETTER

Issue 39

March 2001



STATE OF THE UNION
BTA President
Joe Hogan
ROBS General Meeting
10 A.M.
Friday, April 6

BayShore-Brightwaters
Library
Montauk Highway &
Windsor Avenue
Bay Shore

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TAX CUTS AND THE ECONOMY

The 107th Congress is dealing with President Bush's massive \$1.6 billion, 10 year tax-cut as we write. The House has already passed Bush's lower tax percentages, and will soon vote on the "death & marriage" tax cuts, which don't really benefit most of us. New Democratic members, in the interests of bi-partisanship, will probably vote for these "apple pie/mother" issues because they are "easy," and may give them a leg up for reelection in 2 years. The Leadership of both parties is very focused on the reelection issue.

According to newly elected Representative Steve Israel, whom this editor met with in March, "It is going to be a very difficult two years, because the President has done a brilliant job in convincing people he's bi-partisan, meanwhile plotting the destruction of vital programs."

Most economists support some tax cuts, but believe that most of the non - Social

Security surplus should be dedicated to reducing the federal deficit. Since the Congressional Budget Office now indicates between \$500 and \$800 billion more in non-SS tax surpluses over the next 10 years, the American Federation of Teachers feels that this increases the likelihood of a significant tax-cut bill.

AFT is concerned about the size and composition of such a tax bill. Fully 43% of the President's \$1.6 billion tax-cut proposal would go to Americans earning more than \$319,000 a year, who would receive at least a \$4,600 tax cut. Americans earning under \$40,000 would receive only \$227.

AFT is committed to continue fighting to make sure tax-relief benefits go to working families. "Everyone loves a tax cut, but one that undermines the effort to reduce the federal deficit and fund essential programs - and gives most tax relief to the very wealthy - deserves to be defeated," according to AFT.

ROBS: A NEW PRES.! And an EMT presence

At the March ROBS meeting, Phyllis Goodwin was unanimously elected president of ROBS. She graciously accepted and presented a surprised acting president/vice president, Harriet Pepine, with a lovely Peace Lily.

Our speaker for the meeting was from the Brentwood Legion Ambulance Corps. She was EMT Doreen McMillan Roman, mother of two, and a 1986 graduate of the Brentwood schools (along with siblings Jim, Tim and Kim). Loretta Park, South, & Ross.

In 2000, the ambulance corps received 6,200 calls, making it clearly the busiest volunteer organization in Suffolk. Volunteers for dispatch, education, etc., are desperately

needed, and are encouraged to call Tom Schneider at 273-3701.

There was so much excellent information given; here's some: **use the direct phone number of the ambulance (273-3232, Brentwood; check other localities) rather than wasting 2-3 minutes with 911; have someone outside if possible to direct ambulance (use flashlights, put number on the mailbox, etc.); don't move patient, keep person calm; get patient's name, age, medication (s) and dosage, (good idea to keep this info on the refrigerator for emergencies); elevate bleeding or injured area above heart to stop bleeding, swelling; stay calm yourself.**



FROM THE PRESIDENT – Phyllis Goodwin

Dear Colleagues,

I would like to thank all of the members who braved the inclement weather to come out and vote for me – it was a true act of friendship. I would like to thank the Nominating Committee: Chairperson Marge Kirchner, Adrienne Eastman, Addie Lee, Irene Spano, and Chris Veech. It would be impossible for me to fill Dot or Harriet's admirable shoes. It is important to know that the basic philosophy of our organization will not change. Our goal is to improve the life styles of all retirees and to act on those issues that are paramount to us.



There are two issues which concern me most of all. With a membership of almost 400 people, it is of great concern to me as to why we don't have better attendance at our meetings. What can we do as an organization to gain more of your support? What issues and activities are you interested in? Within the next month, I will put together a survey of questions to be given out at the next meeting. I am deeply committed to determining what direction this organization wants to move. If you request information, I will respond as quickly as possible. It is very rewarding to know that there are great, supportive people on our Executive Board. I can be reached at 631-673-2971. You may leave a message on my machine. My email address is pbgoodwin@msn.com.

Phyllis Goodwin

ROBS NEWSLETTER A WINNER

This newsletter is a winner in the NYSUT 2001 *New York Teacher* Journalism Competition. According to Deb Ward, Editor-in-Chief of the *New York Teacher*, in a letter to Editor Chris Veech, "All three judges remarked on the unusually high quality of this year's entries making your achievement even more noteworthy."

The *ROBS Newsletter* won in the Class II category of retiree chapters to 500. ROBS won General Excellence. The category were: *HARTE*, Huntington Association of Retired Teachers Employees, Award of Merit, General Excellence; and *Retired Times* of Pittsford District Retired teachers Association, First Award, General Excellence.

The awards will be presented at the NYSUT Journalism Awards Luncheon at the RA in Rochester in May.



"NUFF SAID"

New Ergonomics Standards, to protect hundreds of workers who annually suffer repetitive stress, were overturned by President Bush in early March. This was one of the last actions of President Clinton, and had been developed over a 10 year period.

NEED A BIRTH OR MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE?

The National Center for Health Statistics provides up to date info on where to write for birth, death, marriage and divorce records in each state and territory: (www.cdc.gov/nchs/howto/w2w/alphabet.html).

PLANNING A TRIP IN THE NEAR FUTURE? Possibly including your grandchildren? If so, you will want to take advantage of AFT's discounted hotel, theme parks and car rental programs. You can access this money-saving info on the Web at (www.aft.org/aftplus/parkpkg.html).

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- It is well documented that for every mile you jog, you add one minute to your life. This enables you, at 85 years old, to spend an additional 5 months in a nursing home at \$5000 per month.

- My grandmother started walking 5 miles a day when she was 60. She's 97 now and we don't know where she is.

- The advantage of exercising every day is that you die healthier.

- I joined a health club last year, spent about 400 bucks. Haven't lost a pound. Apparently you have to show up!

News From Around the Quad

IN FLORIDA.....

AFT retirees in Florida are backing a campaign for better training and staffing of nursing homes. NYSUT retiree leader, Bill Cea traveled to Tallahassee recently to support patient advocates and trial lawyers in their campaign to improve the quality of nursing home staff.

Florida Governor Jeb Bush and Republican legislative leaders are backing a bill limiting patients' rights to sue nursing homes, as well as protections under the state's Bill of Rights for nursing home residents.

Nearly 20% of the state's nursing homes are owned or run by companies or owners in bankruptcy, and the industry is blaming patients and their lawyers.

Patient advocates have called for improved standards of patient care, higher insurance rates for homes that have a record of abuse and neglect and breaks for homes with good records. About 82,000 Floridians live in the state's 746 nursing homes.

Medicare beneficiaries who suffer heart attacks are less likely to receive angiograms if they are in an HMO, according to a study recently published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. The mammoth study of 50,000 Medicare patients carried out by researchers from several Boston hospitals, and the U.S. General Accounting Office, found that only 34 % of Medicare HMO patients receive angiograms, while 46% of fee-for-service patients do. Researchers found that, in both cases, about 10% of the tests were unnecessary.

Angiograms check blood flow through clogged heart arteries after heart attacks. The procedure consists of pumping a specific dye through a tube into the heart muscle and X-raying the heart while the dye travels through it. Angiograms, which average about \$2,500, enable doctors to make critical decisions about treatment.

CAN'T HURT TO LAUGH MORE! A recent U. of Maryland study found people suffering from heart disease were 40% less likely to laugh in humorous situations. And, they displayed more anger & frustration than the control group.

VT. WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH HONOREE: MARION GRAY

On March 15 at the Montpelier Plaza Hotel in Vermont's capital, a gala dinner reception was held to honor 1982 ROBS retiree from Laurel Park, Marion Gray "in recognition of her contributions to Vermont women."

This editor never knew Marion Gray, but from all accounts about her and her activities in her native Vermont, after retirement, I assumed she would be a physically imposing person. I was quite surprised when I slipped into the studio at the high school where John Sherin was conducting an interview with her for the History Project. There sat this diminutive woman answering questions like a warrior. I was very impressed by the strength of her views and memories, and the forthrightness of her words.

A LITTLE BACKGROUND

"Marion was born in 1917 on the family farm in Lyndon, Vt. Alongside her daughter, she graduated from Lyndon State College in 1958, where she received a teaching degree. Now retired from teaching, Marion has far from retired from activism, as is evident from her continuing participation in community and political activities.

"She actively works on reproductive rights, environmental and elder issues. Her work is honored and appreciated by countless Vermonters.

"Marion currently serves as co-president of the Green Mountain chapter of the Older Women's League (OWL), of which she was co-founder as well. She is past president of COVE, and past Commissioner of the Governor's Commission on Women.



"This dinner is a special thank you to Marion for all she has done for Vermont women as co-founder and treasurer of Leadership, Education, Action and Diversity International. The mission of LEAD is through work with Northern New England Multigenerational Women's Conference, reproductive freedom initiatives, and the production of the public access cable show, *News & Views from the Vermont State House*."

Eighteen years ago Marion started work in Vermont on the Equal Rights Amendment and educating young women on the past. Though the ERA was defeated, the journey toward gender equity continues, and Marion is in the forefront of its accomplishments.

Recently, the Montpelier Library honored Marion by naming the Vermont History Room after her.

She has many fond memories of Brentwood, and her friends here, - among them Millie Fagan and Karen Storjohann, whom she visited when she was here to do her ROBS interview.

In a letter to Karen she remembered especially an early teacher's convention when Charlie Gray, BTA's 2nd president in the 1960's, was the only African American in the hall. When he stood to speak it was a ground breaker!

Though I didn't know Marion when she was in Brentwood, I do know we would have been fast friends had I met her. Through the years we've worked on the same issues. The world needs people who stand up for what is right., and fight injustice wherever it rears its ugly head!

CONGRATULATIONS, MARION!
FROM ALL OF US IN ROBS!

NEWS NOTES

Heard from Rich Edwards of "ON THE ROAD AGAIN" fame. In January he emailed this editor: "Yes, I'm in Lutz, Florida, about 10 miles north of Tampa. I'll be in Florida for two months where it was warm and sunny and 75 degrees yesterday. I played golf in shorts and a golf shirt, certainly less clothing that I would have been required to wear in frosty (or dark and damp) N.Y. I'll be heading to Alaska this summer (my 49th state). Getting my RV and motorcycle to Hawaii, the 50th state, will require more planning. (ed. note: I really wonder how one does that. Perhaps rent one there?)"



Bumped in to Jeanne Bukowski, retired Ross Front Office secretary (the one who really ran the building!) at King Kullen one blustery day in January. She looks great, and is still working at Suffolk Community College.

Also met Phyllis (Felicia) Tulipano, retired Ross aide, at the Forum Diner where I was doing my periodic "catch-up" with Judy Curran. Phyllis looks wonderful, and just turned 81. No one would ever guess that, except I printed it. She sends greetings.

Brentwood showed up in a February 4 *NEWSDAY* article on the high cost of teacher's salaries. The districts that had teachers making 6 figure salaries were: Brentwood, Central Islip, East Islip, Garden City, Jericho, Lawrence, Lindenhurst, Longwood, Northport/East Northport, Roslyn, Sayville and a few in Westchester County. And on March 15, on *NEWSDAY*'s "Accountability List," 10 Brentwood Schools fell below standards in English & Math. Brentwood had the 2nd highest poverty rate in Suffolk, 49%. Wyandanch had 68% and Amityville, 44%.

Besides seeing "Lion King" and "Beauty & the Beast" on Broadway this past February, Chris Veech and husband Bob had the honor of rubbing elbows (literally) with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and his wife Nan at a UN friend's intimate surprise retirement dinner for 30 guests at Le Perigord in Manhattan. Annan, and his wife, are down to earth, delightful, unassuming people, and Chris enjoyed every minute of the dinner conversation.



Get well wishes for a quick and successful recovery go to three of our retirees. Carmen Hill, Oak Park '99, is recently home from the hospital after an operation. Ivy Rosenthal, '84, North, had knee replacement surgery in late February. This was a re-do of one she'd had 15 years ago. And former personnel secretary, Eileen Kelly, had hip replacement surgery recently. You're not missing anything on the weather front, so stay in and vegetate until the spring thaw starts. Not too much longer. I can smell spring in the air in spite of the snow on the ground.

We had a number of losses since our last newsletter. Mary Baber, '95 retired High School Business teacher died on February 15th, of complications of cancer, which she had battled since 3 months after her retirement. Mary's commitment to excellence in teaching resulted in her being selected twice as "Teacher of the Year" by the high school student body. Mary's hats were a hallmark, and 4 appeared on the church program, "Celebration of Life for Mary Baber." Don Kubicko and Frank Spencer were honorary pallbearers, Ida Donald, Kitty Hayes and Vern Spencer speakers. This was Don's reading about May: "When we hear her name, Mary Ella Anderson Baber, one word comes to mind - LOVE. The greatest gift we can give to May is for each of us to set aside our differences and simply Respect and Love one another as she has always done. The following paraphrased Bible reading clearly describes May. May was patient. May was kind. She was not envious. May was not presumptuous or angry. She was not impolite or selfish. May was not happy with injustice but always found joy in the truth. May forgave without limits. May believed without limits, she trusted without limits, and May hoped without limits. May will forever be in our hearts and prayers. The world is a better place for she dwelt on it." Contributions to American cancer Society or the Scholarship Fund of PiPi Omega Chapter, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, 42 Cherry Street, Central Islip, NY 11722.



Judy Kempler, retired secretary of Special Services (1989), died on February 2, of brain cancer. And Eileen Gavigan, who retired in 1999 from Oak Park, died suddenly in December.



Active teacher, Eva Efron lost her husband, Marty on February 12. He died of an embolism. Marty was a long time administrator in the Brentwood district. He began his career as a Social Studies teacher. Memorials to: Lion's Eye Bank for L.I., North Shore University Hospital, 350 Community Drive, Manhasset, 11030.

WORLD VISION'S AFRICA

by Richard Huttner (richardhuttner@hotmail.com)



I just returned from 10 days in Senegal and Ghana, Africa. I went with a group from World Vision. As many of you know, I've been involved with WV in drilling water wells in three villages in Senegal. Many of you have contributed to those wells.

The first village we visited was Keur Nygana. The Huttner's paid to have a well drilled here as a memorial to my parents, Fred and Lillian. This village was in the middle of nowhere. We traveled in 4 wheel drive Toyota Land Cruisers, 18 miles of driving through sand, dirt, and dust. The people of the village were waiting for us. The children were all excused from school and it was a day of celebration.

The villagers are Muslims, members of the Wolof tribe, the largest in Senegal. A large tent had been set up and the village members and school children were waiting for our arrival. It was a festive occasion, apparently the first of its kind. There was singing, dancing, speeches by the village chief and elders, and members of the World Vision staff.

All this was followed by a tour of the village. The buildings were basically straw huts, some with corrugated tin roofs. Some of the roofs and walls were made of 55 gallon drums – they cut out the tops and bottoms, cut the cylinder lengthwise and hammered it flat. Only the school was a concrete block building, with a combination dirt and concrete floor. All this was followed by a feast. They asked us if we would like spoons or would like to eat with our hands. We chose the spoons. They brought out huge platters of food – rice, beans, yams, cassava root, fish, chicken – all very nicely spiced.

The second day we visited the village of Ndioko Dieng. This is the village that East Middle School sponsored. Many people reading this have contributed to the drilling of the water well that is now producing lots and lots of fresh clean water. What a thrill it was for me to see the fruits of our efforts in raising the \$6,000 needed for this well. Thank you all.

Again, there was a big reception. The people were lining the road as we approached, cheering, singing, beating drums and waving their hands. What a welcome! I was treated like royalty. Again, lots of speeches and a feast.

In both these villages these people have very little by our standards. No electric, phones, plumbing, paved roads; just very simple huts. The people were so proud and thankful for the well. Previously they had to walk and carry water from as much as four miles away. Their hand pump was replaced with a solar powered pump with an auxiliary pedal pump for pumping water at night or when there is no sun.

This village had four separate concrete block school buildings, half with dirt floors. The official language in the school is French. What a time we had translating. The villagers spoke to us in Wolof, which was translated to French and then again into English.

Now that we have spent the last year and a half traveling around the world, Ginny and I have decided to settle down. It is time to have a place to come home to after traveling. We purchased a condo on the beach in Venice, Florida. The back of the condo is all glass and 10 feet from the door is the beach and the Gulf of Mexico. We move in April 1st.

DID YOU KNOW?

That you can go to (www.aft.org/retirement sites/), its Retirees and Retirement page and hook up with web sites that include: SeniorNet, Social Security Administration, Medicare Page, Thomas-U.S. Congress on the 'Net, Links to Gerontology Web Sites, Seniors On Line with 5000 links to sources of interest for those over 50', Aging Well Village, Health Insurance Information & Counseling and Assistance and more. Also, check out (www.Retired.com) wellness, travel, lifestyle, finances, free email.

Just look past the advertising.

Don't get on the "Mooch List"- list of people who have fallen for a number of scams. It is passed from firm to firm.

The 10 most common telemarketing scams of 2000, according to National Consumer's League were: sweepstakes prizes, magazine renewals, credit-card issuance's (involving up-front fees), work-at-home plans, advance-fee loans, telephone slamming (switching carriers without permission), credit-card loss-protection plans, buying clubs, telephone cramming (charging for phone options without consent), and travel vacations.

For more info on detecting telemarketing fraud, or to lodge a complaint contact: National. Fraud Information Center, 800-676-7060 (www.fraud.org); Federal Trade Commission, 877-382-4357 (www.ftc.gov/bcp); and Direct Marketing Association, (www.the-dma.org/consumers/direct).

The Retiree

Suffolk Regional Office - 330 Vanderbilt Motor Parkway - Hauppauge, NY 11788 - 631-273-8822
Dorothy Zuckerman - Retiree Services Consultant

SUFFOLK COUNTY REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Friday May 18, 2001

10 A.M. - 12 Noon

**IBEW Hall - Local 25
372 Vanderbilt Motor Parkway
Hauppauge, NY 11788
(Exit 55, LIE)**

**Guest Speakers: Laurie Kupperstein, NYSUT Social Services
Vernell Stokes, NYSUT Member Benefits**

- ✓ Are you considering moving from your home but don't know where to start?
- ✓ Do you need help arranging for an assisted living facility?
- ✓ Are you a caregiver looking for some community support?
- ✓ Do you know someone who needs in-home services which could include a personal response system?
- ✓ Are you considering a long term health care plan?
- ✓ Have you updated your estate planning?
- ✓ Do you know what services NYSUT has available to its retiree members?

Register today with a \$5 check payable to "NYSUT" - fully refundable at the door.

Mail to: Dorothy Zuckerman, NYSUT, 330 Vanderbilt Motor Parkway, Hauppauge, NY 11788

Name _____

Phone # _____

District Retired From: _____

of People Attending (List Names & District) _____



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 three gatherings: **Bay Shore-Brightwaters Library on Montauk Hwy. & Windsor Ave. in Bay Shore at 10 A.M.:**

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 for the Fall!

The M-T Corner

“If students and teachers ran their own schools, it would do more for democracy than all the government classes ever taught. But it would have to be just that: true participation in running the schools. Not those little make-believe student governments which govern in about the same way that baby’s toy steering wheel drives daddy’s car.”

The Student as N——
Jerry Farber
1970



© 2001, UCS
“Go easy with that education bill, Senator! The last thing I need is smart workers.”

NYSUT Legal Plan can help!

You’re a law-abiding citizen. You have no need for legal assistance. Right? *Wrong!*

Maybe your neighbor’s fence is on your property. Or maybe a collection agency is pursuing you for a debt under dispute. Maybe you want to refinance your mortgage or change your legal name. Maybe you want to draft a Will or update your existing one. These situations generally require legal assistance, and we all know how expensive hiring an attorney can be.

With NYSUT’s Legal Service Plan, you have access to professional legal assistance at discounted rates. Preventive in nature, the plan provides access to legal advice before a situation becomes too much to handle. By enrolling for \$55 a year, you’ll have access to unlimited legal advice from plan attorneys by calling a toll-free number. These attorneys will make phone calls or write legal letters on your behalf to help resolve your legal problem. This often is the solution for consumer protection and credit resolution matters.

If a situation can’t be handled over the phone, you’ll be referred to a participating Plan attorney located in your geographic area. These attorneys charge discounted

hourly rates for plan participants. In addition, a number of personal legal matters have guaranteed maximum fees assigned to them. As a bonus, annual enrollment in the plan yields coupons for free office consultations with a Plan attorney.

One of the most widely used features of the plan is the free simple Will. A Will allows you to name a legal guardian for your children. It also ensures that your estate will be distributed according to your wishes. Without a valid Will, these important personal decisions are made by the state.



Optional riders for Elder Law and Business Protection services can be added to expand your legal coverage. With the availability of this economical plan, there’s no longer any excuse for

avoiding legal problems.

For more information, call NYSUT Member Benefits at 800-626-8101, weekdays from 9 A.M. through 5 P.M., or e-mail them at your convenience at benefits@nysutmail.org.

Note to Retirees: Retiree members can choose between the NYSUT Legal Service Plan and the Retiree Legal Service Plan, priced at \$34.