



## ROBS NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 51

RETIRES OF BRENTWOOD SCHOOLS

OCT/NOV. 2003

**NOVEMBER 7  
ROBS MEETING:  
BOB (PINE PARK) &  
RUTH MERZ**  
"LIFE IN PAPUA, NEW  
GUINEA" WHERE THEY  
SPENT 6 YEARS AFTER  
RETIREMENT..

**DECEMBER 5  
NOON-4  
ROBS HOLIDAY  
LUNCHEON**  
IRISH COFFEE PUB.  
CONTACT RUTH  
McCALLA-631-234-8013

**ROBS PROJECT HOPE:**  
JOIN THE HOLIDAY GIV-  
ING AND TUTORING SEE  
PAGE 6...



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## Dean outlines campaign strategy, promises

From "Inside AFT," 10/13/03

Showing the energy that put him at the front of the pack of Democratic hopefuls, former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean talked politics and policy with the AFT executive council for an hour on Oct. 8.

"Our strategy is to energize the daylights out of our base," he said. "Fifty % of Americans don't vote because they're too busy, don't think it matters or think politicians are a bunch of crooks. We're going to give people who have given up voting a reason to vote."

Like the three other candidates who have addressed the union's executive council, Rep.

Richard Gephardt, Sens. John Kerry and Joseph Lieberman, Dean said President Bush's tax cuts would have to go.

Dean made three promises: To balance the federal budget, fully fund special education and create a universal health insurance program that begins with coverage for every American child and young adult up to age 25, and for all older adults with low incomes.

The nation's biggest problem, he said, is the growing gap between rich and poor, noting that it undermines civil society - less patriotism, less public and military service, less voting and an overall loss of community.

Dean blasted school vouchers and privatization of public services and strongly supported workers' right to organize.

Finally, Dean said, advice from former President Bill Clinton will be his guide: "A campaign based on hope will always beat a campaign based on fear. If we don't do this, we won't have the kind of country we want to live in."

Dot Zuckerman is holding the NYSUT Third Annual Regional Conference at the Watermill on Nov. 6. The conference topic is Health and Wellness. There will be a continental breakfast, three sessions and lunch. The cost is a non-refundable fee of \$25.

## AFL-CIO, AFT defer Presidential primary endorsement

AFL-CIO president John Sweeney will not bring together the federation's general board this month to consider an endorsement in the Democratic presidential primary race. Although a number of unions already have said they will endorse Rep. Richard Gephardt of Missouri, others say they're not yet ready to decide. ...

In August, the board authorized an October meeting if a consensus on a

candidate emerged, but it became clear that the 2/3 votes among affiliates needed to endorse...would not be reached.

Sweeney noted that affiliated unions are free to make an endorsement anytime, and the AFL-CIO will revisit the question.

Meanwhile, the AFT's executive council decided at its Oct. 8 meeting not to make an endorsement at

this time. AFT president Sandra Feldman told council members there was no clear favorite among AFT members and that the union needed more time to consider the candidates and the views of its members.

Visit [www.aft.org/legislation/questionnaires.html](http://www.aft.org/legislation/questionnaires.html) to view candidates responses to the AFT questionnaire.

# PHYLL'S FORUM

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



Dear Colleagues,

1. Welcome back to an exciting year of ROBS meetings. In the past year, we have lost track of some of you. I can only hope that it had to do with our mailings from the state. Quite a few of you have let us know that you were not receiving the newsletter. Again I would like to thank you for your prompt return of membership forms.

Our November meeting will have Robert and Ruth Merz as our scheduled speakers. When Bob and Ruth retired, they went to Papua, New Guinea for 6 years. Bob worked at Pine Park as a Reading Consultant and Ruth was a Music Teacher in Middle Island. This should be an interesting session.

Many of you would like to take the Defensive Driving course offered by RC21 or AARP only to find that the classes are filled immediately. There is a course given online for \$46. It is an interactive course that takes about three hours. The state will notify your insurance company that you have passed the course and are eligible for the 10% break on your premium. The web site is [\\_](#). This is so much easier that sitting in class for 6 hours and you can brew a cup of tea.

The new NYSUT membership cards arrived recently. Take notice that you have been given a new ID# rather than your SS# or Retirement #.

With November elections fast approaching, Congress is set to vote on Medicare provisions that may impact our insurance benefits. Eli Pariser has a web site called [\\_Eli](#) tracks all legislation in the House and Senate. There is a ton of information available including write-in campaigns.

As a news filler, I added birthday congratulations in the summer newsletter. A few complained about not finding their birthdays listed. Many of you did not list your birth dates. We are not asking for proof of age and age is only a number. We will periodically update this list.

Recently, I have received numerous complaints from the membership about emails from travel agents, business supply companies and home repair. It is obvious to you and me that our Directory is being used to solicit business. The Executive Board policy for the Directory has been that it is not to be used to enhance a business. If you find yourself receiving these mailings, please contact the individual and opt

out of their mailings. Rather than use the list in an unauthorized manner, we would appreciate your placing an ad in our newsletter provided that you are a member. If the complaints continue, we will have to discontinue the Directory, which is one of our primary benefits. I personally feel that it a great benefit and I love keeping track of friends old and new.

Our Holiday Luncheon is set for December 5, 2003 at the Irish Coffee Pub. We have booked a larger room for this year. Please get your money in early to Ruth McCalla. We are hoping to have 75-80 people attend. We look forward to seeing you.

In Harmony,  
Phyllis Goodwin

Dot & Jack Zuckerman are traveling again in May 2004 to Vienna, Budapest and Prague. If interested in joining them call at 631-567-3866.

We haven't published the official format of this newsletter since the May issue. The reason: Complete computer melt down. So many were attacked by the 'super worm' or the 'virulent virus,' that you may understand my inability to cope with starting over from scratch in July.

What I did do was leave town, first to Disney World with the grand girls, then Vermont and finally to the British Virgin Islands to sail with friends on a 38' catamaran. Let me tell you the escape to snorkel in my own private aquarium in the Caribbean and storing up all that vitamin D gave me the strength I needed to tackle this computer re-do with gusto. **Here's to the eleventh year of the ROBS Newsletter!**

Chris Veech, Editor

## ROBS NEWSLETTER

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## FLORIDA LUNCHEON SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY February 19, 2004

This date is during Brentwood winter vacation. **Marilyn DePlaza would appreciate reservations for the date NOW so she can find a place to accommodate the correct number.** Send a note to her at: 10609 Mendocino Lane, Boca Raton, FL 33428 or email [Marilyndeplaza@aol.com](mailto:Marilyndeplaza@aol.com)

For Chris Veech's (Ross '91) 9/11 "big" birthday, besides all kinds of festivities with family, son Gregg, gave her her own web site up and running. There are links to posters, books, political and community issues from her point of view. Brentwood Schools, NYSUT, ROBS & RC 21 too. Check out [www.Listen2Christin.com](http://www.Listen2Christin.com)

## HEALTH BEAT

- On October 19, AFT president **Sandra Feldman joined other breast cancer survivors** to cut a pink ribbon marking the start of the American Cancer Society's 'Making Strides Against Breast Cancer' 5K walk around Central Park in NYC. NYSUT and AFT are flagship sponsors of the event.
- Social Security benefits will increase 2.1% in January 04. The average monthly benefit for an individual will rise from \$903 to \$922; for an average couple, \$1,492 to \$1, 523. **HOWEVER**, the premium for Medicare Part B, which pays for doctors' services & other out patient care will increase \$7.90 in January 04, an increase of 13.5%, lifting the premium to \$66.60 per month.
- Despite the broad bipartisan support the Sen. Paul Wellstone Mental Health Equitable Treatment Act

(S.486, H.R. 953) enjoys in Congress, momentum to pass this law has slowed in both chambers. More than 270 national organizations support the legislation. To coincide with the one year anniversary of Sen. Wellstone's death, 10/24, Families USA is urging a grassroots mobilization effort to awaken leaders to the necessity of passing this critical legislation. See [HealthAction@familiesusa.org](mailto:HealthAction@familiesusa.org) for more information.

- There are 43.6 million uninsured according to a new study by the U.S. Census Bureau, an increase of 2.4 million since 2001, the steepest since the early 1990s. Texas had the largest % of uninsured residents, Minnesota, Rhode Island and Wisconsin the smallest.
- Americans support drug re-importation. A Wall Street Journal Online/Harris Interactive poll found

the following: \*those who have bought prescription drugs from Canada is up from 5 to 7 % since November; \*those that would shop for prescription drugs abroad rose from 40% to 48%; \*77%of those polled say it is unreasonable for drug companies to stop Canadian pharmacies from selling prescription drugs over the internet. A USA/CNN poll finds that about 1 million people in the U.S. will spend about \$800 million on re-imported prescription meds from Canada in 2003. 71% support legalizing re-importation of prescription drugs.

- Medicare+Choice members enrolled in the Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield or Oxford Health Plans have automatic free access to an area fitness club for classes, workouts and saunas. To locate a club ([www.silversneakers.com](http://www.silversneakers.com)); Empire members call 800-809-7328; Oxford members call 800-234-1228.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Hi Chris: Congratulations on your recent recognition for the ROBS newsletter. ...it is indeed informative & I find myself looking forward to reading it. ... Thanks for doing what you do. Those of us who are pretty far from the old stomping ground - L.I. - really appreciate getting the news first hand and written well.  
*Claudette Benjamin, (Sonderling '98)*

WOW! Thank you so much for the copy of the award. I am so glad that it worked out so well for you. A nice honor for ROBS... GREAT!

Warm regards to all,  
*Lynn Evans Mand (Hemlock Park '90)*

*(Ed. Note: Lynn was the Chordette, featured in the article that won a NYSUT Journalism award in May).*

*The following letters are edited due to space constraints" (Ed. Note)*

Dear Editor:  
I believe George Bush is the right man for these times...He has restored respect and dignity to the White House & the presidency... Too much damage has been done by the liberal media & leftist leaning organizations. Kudos George Roth for being the first one to speak out and giving me the courage to do the same.  
*Shirley Walker-Lloyd, (Hemlock Park '95)*

Dear Chris:  
...Under his [Pres. Bush] watch we have exploding deficits, tax breaks that go mostly to the rich, a loss of almost 3 million jobs, a chaotic failure of nation build-



ing in Afghanistan, phony pretexts to get into an unnecessary war with Iraq so he could more easily pursue a hard right domestic agenda and control the world's 2nd largest oil supply. He brags he's going to be the Education President and puts forth an under funded education policy...He praises the armed services but proposes cuts in veteran benefits by billions to accommodate his tax cuts. Clinton may have lied about sex but this guy lies about everything else and I'm happy to see the ROBS Newsletter has the gumption to review the... destructiveness of this administration's policies and how they impact on public education and the lives of our retirees. Keep up the good work.  
*Hank Salerno (Laurel Park '97)*

### GROWING JOBS CRISIS - KEY FACTS ON JOBS: AFL-CIO

- ◆ Since President Bush took office, we have lost a stunning 3.2 million private sector jobs. The nation is experiencing the worst job-loss crisis since the Great Depression.
- ◆ President Bush has failed to keep his promise to create new jobs. His economic team promised 1.5 million new jobs as part of his millionaire tax cut scheme. He is falling short of job promises by 7 jobs every minute.
- ◆ Nearly 11 million unemployed workers want jobs but can't find them. Not surprising since there were only 3 million new job openings in the most recent report. There simply aren't enough jobs for the unemployed.
- ◆ The quality of jobs has gotten worse.
- ◆ The number of people without health insurance grew to 44 million. Pension coverage is down. Job security is worse.
- ◆ Millions of jobs are being exported or outsourced because of unfair trade deals, including hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs as well as white collar jobs.

## **A MOST UNKIND EVENT:** EXCERPTED FROM "GRAY MATTERS" BY Saul Friedman of NEWSDAY

On April 1 of this year, Saul Friedman had a stroke after turning in his week's column to NEWSDAY. Saul is beloved by many of us for his insightful columns on aging Americans. The ROBS Newsletter has excerpted much of his information.

Friedman made his comeback to NEWSDAY and his column (Saturday's ACT 11) on September 6 and he wrote about strokes and rehabilitation firsthand. Here are some highlights that may aid some of you...

"It came out of nowhere, without warning, without a headache, just a strange weakness in my right hand and leg." By the time Friedman reached emergency, the symptoms were gone, but they wisely kept him overnight for observation. By morning "my arm was useless, the leg felt like it weighed a ton and my tongue was tied in knots.

"About 700,000 Americans suffer from strokes each year, 40,000 more women than men, twice as many blacks as whites, with the death toll about 12%. Caused by blood clots or bleeding in the brain, stroke is the leading cause of death after heart disease and cancer."

Friedman goes on to recount that after his 3 days in the hospital required by Medicare, he moved to one of the finest acute care hospitals specializing in strokes in his area to begin rehabilitation. The sooner it is begun, the better the chance for recovery. 64% of stroke patients given acute therapy are able to go home, most living independent lives.

According to a U of Colorado study, Medicare patients like Friedman having 21 days of 3 hours of therapy a day, are 2x as likely to recover their independence within a year than those depending on private insurance because insurance companies favor home care or less intensive care in nursing homes because it is cheaper. Medicare pays most costs for 100 days. (Outpatient facilities, hospitals are exempt from the 7/1/03 limits).

Five months after his stroke, "my walk with a cane is improving, speech is near normal, arm is on the mend, (although I cannot type with it but am practicing being a southpaw)."

In his September 13th column, Friedman went on to say that his roommate of 6 weeks at the acute care facility was a 48 year old, and many others at the hospital were younger people. **Stroke is affecting larger numbers of young people, "bewildered that they have suffered what they thought was an ailment of the old.**

"The brain can heal or find new paths to restore functions, but how and why are mostly a mystery. Although therapy helps one regain strength, no one really knows whether paralysis subsides and limbs work again as a result of therapy or because of a 'return' of function courtesy of the healing brain."

The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), part of NIH, has launched a special effort to probe these attacks and develop more effective therapies, including drugs, instead of depending almost wholly on physical therapy.

One priority seeks to understand how the brain recovers from a stroke. Patients who have suffered strokes, recently or long ago, may be eligible for newer therapies or to take part in several of the dozens of free trials sponsored by NINDS or other stroke research centers.

The U. of So. Calif., among other places, is conducting trials of 'constraint induced' therapy in which the unaffected arm is immobilized to force the weak arm to function & thus rewire the brain. U. of Maryland and the VA are putting stroke victim volunteers on a treadmill to help improve their walking and learn if improved fitness speeds recovery. Brooks Center. For Rehab Studies at U of Florida is studying the value of Botox injections to temporarily relieve

muscle spasticity. A shot of Botox in Friedman's arm helped loosen the muscle enough to improve his ability to move it. The effects of Botox last 3 months and it is hoped the brain will remember to ease the muscle tone. At the present time, this is covered by Medicare if administered by a physician.

Electrotherapy is widely used in Europe and Israel. It is not covered here. As part of a 12 week clinical trial, Friedman used an Israeli made Handmaster four hours a day to prevent his hand from clenching shut.

### WHERE TO LEARN MORE

Electrical stimulation, Botox and exercise regimens are among more than 200 therapies being studied in clinical trials throughout the country under the auspices of NINDS which can be found at [www.clinicaltrials.gov](http://www.clinicaltrials.gov)

Or you may call the National Institutes of Health patient recruitment line 800-411-1222

It also may be helpful to keep up with new therapies at the American Stroke Association, [www.strokeassociation.org](http://www.strokeassociation.org) or call 888-478-7653.

**WELCOME BACK TO "GRAY MATTERS"**

**SAUL FRIEDMAN**

**Revamping your home to accommodate changing needs?**

Center for Universal Design ([www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/resources/resources.htm](http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/resources/resources.htm))

AARP virtual tours ([www.aarp.org/universalhome](http://www.aarp.org/universalhome)).

Book: "The Accessible Home: Updating your home for changing physical needs" by the editors of Creative Publishing International, \$20

# NEWS NOTES

**Frances Brida** who retired in June '03 from teaching 10th grade Global Studies, made the "Recent Retirements" column in NEWSDAY's ACT 11 section on September 27. Nice picture of her with her cat Oreo. The article also announced the birth of her first grandchild, red headed Jonathan Luke Fisher, born in September. Congratulations on your instant fame....

**Marian Sedito** retired from the Sonderling Front Office on August 4 and **Phyllis Randazzo** from Purchasing on September 15. **Arlene Dargan** retired on September 26 from Human Resources. We wish all three the best that's yet to be!

Happy birthday to **Florence Koehler**, (Reading Elem. '68) 91 years young on September 11th. Hope you're enjoying South Carolina and family, **Florence!**



On Memorial Day weekend the active and retired **English teachers** from the high school threw a reunion at the home of Judi Weissman to celebrate the visit of their much beloved former English Chair, **Gilda Mantin** ('89) from Arizona.



In the beginning of June, Bill and **Claudette Benjamin** (Sond. '98) were in NYC from their home in Florida to attend Bill's 50th Cardinal Hayes HS reunion. **Claudette** reports that it was "a wonder to behold. I enjoyed it as much as he did." The rest of the summer was spent in North Carolina where they have **Claudette's** family home.

**Adrienne Eastman** (Hum. Res. '00) became a great-grandmother. The eagerly awaited Edward Robert was born on July 23.

**Carmen** (HS) & **Joyce Pittinaro** became grandparents Oct. 20. Son Justin & wife Kat welcomed David in Vermont.

Another happy birthday person, **Marilyn DePlaza**, (N Jr. Hi '89) celebrating her 70th, says "I'm so happy for the many happy lives that I've had." She and family members spent 3 days at the Grand Floridian at Disney World where Cinderella, the Prince and Fairy Godmother visited their birthday dinner. This was her 20th trip. Her 4th was with **Gloria Hannemann** and her son in 1984. Happy birthday, **Marilyn**, and many more! She also is more than happy to chat with anyone thinking of relocating to Boca Raton. She has excellent credentials in Florida real estate and offers to let you pick her brain any time -561-488-1267.

The Gallery at Stems in Woodstock presented recent paintings by **Eleanor Steffen** (Sond. '93) June 7 - 14. Congratulations!

**Bill Lane** (Ross '85) had hip replacement surgery at the end of May. His upbeat nature made his recovery excellent!

Get well wishes to: **Loretta Ellington** (E Middle/Laurel '95) who had carpal tunnel surgery in Florida; **Jim Howard** (Sond. '99) as he battles a recurrence of cancer.



Our sympathies go out to the family and friends of those Brentwood retirees we have lost.



In May, **Steven "Skip" McCormick** (NE Elem) passed away. **Lillye Watts**, ('83) who was 90, died on May 20. She worked with **Lula Gwathney** at SW. **John** and **Ellen Sherin** (Ross '92) lost Ellen's mother. **Eileen Moore Nash** passed in Fort Myers, FL. on May 29. On June 18, **Ruth Abel's** (SW) husband Norman died in Florida. **Carmela Criscione's** (Hum. Res. '02) brother Sal passed away on July 7 after battling cancer. **Elaine Levy** lost her son-in-law.

After a long battle with cancer, **Lourdes Palacios** passed on July 1. She had been the attendance person at South Junior/Middle School for many years. Her children were students there.

**Rosemary Smith** (SW '88) died July 12, a month after quadruple heart by-pass. On July 19th we lost **Betty Maloney** (NE '98) after a 9 year struggle with cancer. Donations to Sloan-Kettering in Commack.

In September, **Florence Briggs** reports that Dotti Callahan, Sonderling Guidance secretary, lost her son Kevin, 47. He had a heart attack. He was the father of two lovely girls.

October saw the death of **Jim Hansen** (SW '87) Jim was 71. Condolences may be sent to his wife, **Merry** (SW '91) 279 West Keller Street, Hernando, FL 34442. Also, **Valerie Kujawski's** mother Wanda passed away. **Valerie** taught Social Studies at North Middle and the Freshman Center. Condolences to **Valerie** at 202 Thelma Avenue, Merrick, NY 11566.

## Project Hope gears up again for 2003-04

The summer hiatus is well over. ROBS retirees are rested and back in the saddle so to speak. Frank Spencer, chair of the Communities Liaison Committee is looking again for volunteers to tutor in Brentwood schools and/or after-school tutoring programs at Suburban Children's center.

Also coming up quickly are: Thanksgiving and the December holiday season. ROBS will again be adopting families to help make these holidays happy. The Committee hopes you will join the effort with a donation of money or items needed.

The Liaison Committee extends its thanks to last school year's tutors: Vern Spencer at Hemlock Park, Maureen Finnegan at Southwest, and Frank Spencer at Southwest.

### A LETTER FROM SUBURBAN CHILDREN:

Dear ROBS:

As the holidays quickly approach, we find ourselves once again reaching out to our supporters. The homeless families we serve have increased significantly this year. At last count we service a total of 428 people. The number changes frequently. This time of year is very stressful for our families...wondering how they will prepare Thanksgiving dinner or provide a gift under the tree for their child.

In the past you have supported us with either money donations or donations of gifts for the holiday and /or food for Thanksgiving for our families. Last year ROBS, coordinated by Frank and Vern Spencer, adopted 4 families for both holidays. We hope you will be able to support us again. I'm sure you agree there is nothing more heartwarming for a parent to see than their child smile because he or she has received a gift making them feel special and worthy...something most of us take for granted.

If you are able to help us again this year, please contact us.

Wishing you the happiest and healthiest holidays.  
Diane Gustaw, Director

### PROJECT HOPE NEEDS TUTORS FOR BRENTWOOD'S CHILDREN PLEASE, PLEASE JOIN US, EVEN FOR SHORT TERM HELP IN THIS SCHOOL YEAR

#### ROBS TO OFFER HOPE

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

#### I am able to volunteer:

\_\_\_\_\_ Brentwood Classroom \_\_\_\_\_ Suburban Educational Center \_\_\_\_\_ Both

\_\_\_\_\_ 2 hours a week \_\_\_\_\_ 2 hours a month \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Mon. \_\_\_\_\_ Tues. \_\_\_\_\_ Wed. \_\_\_\_\_ Thurs. \_\_\_\_\_ Fri.

My talents & interests are:

Return to: Frank Spencer, ROBS Community Liaison Committee

3 Nottingham Drive, Wheatley Heights, N.Y. 11798-1593. Phone: 631-253-0355



### NEW YORK STATE ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED AMERICANS by Donna Marie Ragonese

Representing ROBS at the founding convention of NYSARA in May, I was stimulated, invigorated, educated and proud to be a retired union member attending the 'birth' a very necessary and worthwhile organization that will make sure our voices are heard in Albany and Congress. 13% of Americans are over 65. With privatiza-

tion and the erosion of Medicare a priority of this administration, it is vital for our voices to be heard.

For this organization to be successful, we hope to build a strong partnership between the 2.2 million AFL-CIO members and retirees of all workers across the board.

Fred Nauman was elected President of NYSARA at this convention. 35 years ago he was in the forefront of the unionizing of teachers in New York State. May his leadership of NYSARA help us achieve 'quality of life' for our Golden Years, and assure continued protection for our children and grandchildren's retirements.

## Retirement, so sweet... by Chris Veech



No matter who you rooted for in the World Series, every one of us retirees are interested in the attention being given to Jack McKeon, manager of the Florida Marlins.

Jack McKeon, a 72 year old who was fired by the Cincinnati Reds three years ago, had retired to North Carolina to be a full time grandfather. Many thought he was too old to come back or relate to the Marlins inexperienced young players, too old to turn around a losing team. Wow, were they wrong. From May through the end of the season, the Marlins had the best record in baseball. And McKeon himself has already scored important victories in arenas much bigger than sports stadiums.

He has provided an inspiring role model for millions who have retired and long to return to some form of meaningful activity. No one wants to be stuck in front of the boob tube for the duration.

Marlin owner, Jeffrey Loria says of his manager: "McKeon isn't old. He's a wise old sage. And by the way, where does it say you can't work if you have too much experience?"

Aging isn't what it used to be, with better health, quality of life and attitude. Sixty year old Lauren Hutton, on the front cover of AARP's magazine says, "Sixty is the new thirty."

The average American lived to be 47 in 1900. Today, the average American lives to be 77, according to the National Center for Health Statistics. The question is what people will choose to do with this gift of time and what impact those choices will have on society. As our own Marilyn DePlaza said on the occasion of her 70th birthday celebration: "I'm so happy for the many lives I've had."

Older Americans offer a tidal wave of talent. McKeon's turning around the fortunes of a struggling young baseball team shows what older people with lots of experience can do when working intensely with young people and passing on those gifts.

Big Brothers & Big Sisters, one of the nation's leading mentoring organizations has stepped up its efforts to recruit older mentors willing to provide some stability for struggling young people.

Troops to Teachers, a federal program recruits and deploys veterans of military service to launch second careers as public school teachers in hard-hit neighborhoods. And Experience Corps, a non-profit national service program, mobilizes older adults to help teach children to read and develop the confidence and skills to succeed in school and life.

**ROBS' Project Hope offers tutoring in the Brentwood Schools and Suburban Children's Center, and each volunteer has found the activity filled with many daily rewards of children learning that they are important, can learn and do! And the teachers are so grateful for the additional help.**

Retirees know the first few innings aren't a full game. And there's always a World Series!

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## BITS AND PIECES

### Staples recycles ink cartridges to benefit kids:

NYSUT and Staples teamed up to raise money for schools and help the environment in October. For every used ink cartridge members brought to their local Staples, the company donated \$1 to NYSUT Grant programs and recycled the cartridge. 80% of the half billion cartridges thrown away each year can be recycled. Staples has sponsored community reading programs, and Teacher Appreciation Day in the past. Definitely a good company...

### Simply certificates:

Purchase gift certificates at reduced rates. Access a listing of merchants from NYSUT Member Benefits or the web site: [www.memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://www.memberbenefits.nysut.org) linking to Simply Benefits. Identify yourself as a NYSUT member to receive the 10% discount. A modest shipping charge is applied. You can call Simply Certificates toll-free at 866-746-7591 weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### Working Advantage:

To purchase discount tickets for movie theatres, video rentals, theme parks, amusement parks, Broadway theater, museums and special family events (minimal shipping charge) call Working Advantage toll-free at 800-565-3712, 8 a.m.-6 p.m. weekdays; 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturdays and noon to 6 p.m. Sundays. Identify yourself as a NYSUT member and use NYSUT ID # 704689984. You can also request an order form from NYSUT Member Benefits or order through the link off [www.memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://www.memberbenefits.nysut.org)

### Lifeline:

An easy to use personal response service to ensure older adults living at home can get quick assistance whenever needed 24 hours a day. Members have reduced pricing for the service. 3 month minimum commitment. Info: call Lifeline: 800-543-3546, x 1500. (NYSUT encourages you to check with hospitals, social services & aging organizations for availability & cost through them).

# NYSUT Legal Service Plan helps thousands

The NYSUT Legal Service Plan can help resolve everyday situations before they become legal problems. That's why more than 60,000 New York State United Teachers members are covered under this plan.

When you enroll, you'll receive a toll-free number to the plan's National Legal Office, where you can call for unlimited legal advice and assistance at no charge. The National Legal Office is staffed by attorneys with expertise in real estate, domestic relations, family law, civil litigation, foreclosure, bankruptcy, business law, criminal law, landlord/tenant situations, wills/trusts/estates, elder law, personal injury and vehicle/traffic law.

Many times, these attorneys can resolve your situation by writing a letter or making a phone call on your behalf, at no charge. If other assistance is warranted, they will refer you to a plan participating attorney located in your area. The plan has participating attorneys across the country. These attorneys will charge plan members \$125 an hour or 40 percent off their usual hourly fee, whichever is lower.

The plan also provides a free simple Will each year of plan enrollment. You'll receive coupons for free office

consultations. An informative newsletter, *Preventive Law Guide*, features consumer-oriented articles and is sent three times each year. The National Legal Office will review, at no cost to you, legal documents up to six pages in length, such as purchase agreements, loan agreements and real estate documents.

- **Landlord problems?**
- **Noisy neighbors?**
- **Purchasing a house?**
- **Drawing up a Will?**
- **Speeding ticket?**

For a number of common personal legal matters, such as a real estate transaction, misdemeanor, traffic violation, separation and divorce, the attorneys will charge no more than the guaranteed maximum fees assigned to each matter.

Retiree members can choose between the Legal Service Plan and the Retiree

Legal Service Plan, which features slight variations in benefit levels.

In addition, optional riders can be purchased with either plan to provide legal coverage in the specialized areas of elder law and business protection.

Priced at \$70 a year (\$36 for the retiree plan), you can't afford not to look into this valuable benefit. For information and an enrollment form, contact NYSUT Member Benefits at 800-626-8101, e-mail [benefits@nysutmail.org](mailto:benefits@nysutmail.org), or log on to [www.memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://www.memberbenefits.nysut.org).