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HHHART BEAT

Newsletter of the Half Hollow Hills Active Retired Teachers
Winter, 2016-17

Volume 30, No. 2

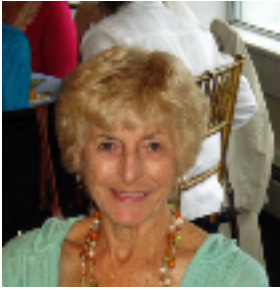
HHH Teachers Association, 6268 Jericho Turnpike, Unit #10, Local 2701, NYSUT/AFT/AFL-CIO, Commack, NY 11725-2810



In the last newsletter, an article was included about the sculpture David Haussler constructed with my assistance as a 9/11 Memorial for the Plainview Library. This is a picture of the sculpture which is over 10 feet high. Inside the globe there is a ground zero I beam.

Anthony Ingoglia

.... *President's Message*



As I wrote in our Fall newsletter, CORTLI, has been disbanded. The balance of the Treasury were donated equally between the NYSUT Disaster Fund and the NYSUT Advocacy Fund. All accounts were closed.

At the last meeting of RC 20 on October 14th, there was a guest speaker, Fred Schaefer, from the Teachers Federal Credit Union. He is an incumbent candidate for the Board with many years of service including Chairman for 28 years. He won the NYSUT Award of Recognition for his service to Retiree Councils.

He is running with Darlene Darch, who was a past President of the Bay Shore TA for 11 years, and a Doctoral candidate in Educational Leadership at St. Johns U. The third member of his team is Shalei Simms. She is currently a member of the Credit Union Supervisory Committee and has a Doctorate in Strategic Management. She has held many other Leadership positions in other Universities. Ballots will be sent out to members on December 5th, and must be returned by December 16th, or before.

A reminder The RC 20 Spring luncheon will be on Friday, June 2nd, at Captain Bill's in Bay Shore.

Next November, New York State residents will find on the election ballot the question: Do you favor a Constitutional Convention? requiring a yes or no answer. The Legislature will appoint members to the Constitutional Convention who can damage our unions and their ability to collect dues as well as diminish or eliminate our retirement benefits. Be sure to read Mel's *Political Action* article to the end. VOTE NO!

Have a wonderful Holiday! *Joan Petroske*

Political Action

As you can all imagine, I am, to say the least, very disappointed with the outcome of the election. However the voters have spoken, and have given us a loud and clear message: there is a great deal of discontent in our country and they want a change and we will just have to work even harder to maintain our hard fought union rights and values.

I expect a strong shift towards funding for charter schools coupled with increased spending for private and parochial education, at the expense of public school funding. In addition, our victory last year with the Supreme Court decision on the Friedrichs case, will most likely be overturned and we will have to redouble our efforts to maintain Union membership if we lose our ability to collect dues.

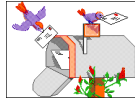
The political pendulum has a history of swinging and, being the cautious optimist that I am, we will just have to regroup, figure out what we need to do better – and do it! For those of you that helped on our phone banks thank you so much- your help is greatly appreciated.

Our next big battle will be waged on Election Day, 2017, as we concentrate on defeating the call for a New York State Constitutional Convention. Every 20 years the voters in NYS have to decide whether or not to rewrite our state constitution; for public sector union members this would be disaster! We could lose: mandatory funding for K-12 education, collective bargaining rights and even our constitutionally guaranteed pensions.

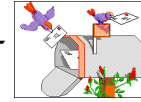
Contrary to what many believe, retirees would NOT be "grandfathered in" as we could lose our rights to the present clause that states that our "pensions cannot be removed or diminished in any way". In my future articles in our HHHART and Retiree Council 20 Newsletters, I will explain how we can STOP this from happening. We CAN and MUST win this next challenge. We have no choice!

Happy and healthy holidays and a good, easy winter to all of you.

In unity, Mel Stern, NYSUT Political Action Coordinator and RC 20 President.



---Keep In Touch---



My great grandfather, JP Reynolds, was a soldier in the Union Army in the Civil War. His brother, Charley, was a sergeant fighting for the Confederacy. Brother against brother. Fifty years earlier, their father, Davey Reynolds, before he entered his teens, went to sea as a powder monkey aboard a privateer during the War of 1812.

After more than six years of research, I've just published an account of the lives of these three men. I've titled it *The Storytellers* because when they spoke about their wartime adventures, they had a knack of using liberal doses of truth-stretching.

You can take a peek at the first chapter for free by looking at the book on Amazon.com.

Bill Batcher

I retired from Signal Hill in 2002 and moved to Florida. My children's book, *An Orangutan's Night Before Christmas*, has just been released by the Pelican Publishing Company. It's a parody featuring Santa's newest helper Oranga Claus and his team of zebras. I also write for adults. Two of my stories have appeared in *Chicken Soup for the Soul* books. In January, I won a short story contest sponsored by wordsandbrushes.com. That winning story can be read on that site.

Laura Boldin-Fournier



Check out our website: New Image Entertainment Ltd.com, featuring Rich Miranda and Ben Philip.

Richard Miranda

My involvement with the Atlanta Council on International Relations has expanded, and I'm busier in retirement than ever before. Life is good! Best wishes from Georgia. I hope y'all are well and content.

Tony Cuzzucoli

It is hard to believe that I have just completed my 25th year of retirement (Quarter of Century Club). I have been blessed with good health to enjoy my retirement years to date and hope for the best to come. I have resumed teaching a *Wine Appreciation* course (for the last 4 years) at the OLLI program at Temple University City Center Campus in Philadelphia. What a great experience having retired college professors making up half the class or more. Hildy and I just returned from visiting our youngest son, Michael, and his wife, Barbara, and our granddaughter, Emilia, and grandson, Max, in Omaha, NE. Stay well, and enjoy life!

Ed Koehler

Thank you for all you do on behalf of current and retired educators. Your dedication does not go unappreciated. As for me – life is good! With 8 grandchildren – 6 of them boys. Life is filled with many activities. Two of my daughters are high school teachers and the third daughter is a stay-at-home mother of four little ones. We recently all took the Disney Cruise together and had a wonderful time. My hope is that good health continues for all of us!

Joanne Fraser

That time of year is arriving, We'll soon be packing up to spend the winter in Florida. We've had a very eventful and fulfilling summer here, playing tennis, bridge, doing lots of gardening and spending lovely days with our family. Now all the grandchildren are in college, Two boys want to be nurses and the other two boys, doctors and researchers.

I continue to sing with the Huntington Choral Society performing Handel's Judas Maccabeus December 18th.

Whenever I can, I help many people in town who are having difficulty in English. I taught languages and ESL at Half Hollow in several schools. and had a wonderful time. Hope all is well out there with everyone.

Happy holidays, and Merry Christmas to all. Ciao for now.

Fran (Francesca) Kranz

Know Your Benefits

Dick Lee

Trust Fund Administrator

“NEA Member Benefits”

Our union is affiliated with our state organization, NYSUT, as well as two national teacher organizations, AFT and NEA. Although we are relatively familiar with member benefits from the HHHTA, NYSUT and AFT, we’re probably less informed on membership benefits from the largest teachers’ association in the country, NEA. Therefore, I thought we could highlight some of the many programs offered by our large national affiliate. More detailed information can be obtained on their website at neamb.com.

FINANCE

Cash Reward Card (cash back on your purchases)	neamb.com/cashrewards
Credit Card with Rewards (redeem points for cash, gift cards or travel)	neamb.com/rewards
Accelerated American Express Card (earn rewards 25% faster)	neamb.com/amex
Visa Prepaid Card (use as a debit card)	neamb.com/prepaid
Personal Loans (consolidate debt into one simple-to-manage loan)	neamb.com/personal loan
Smart Option Student Loan (Sallie Mae deferred payment loan)	neamb.com/student loan
Home Financing Program (loans on purchase and refinance mortgages, home equity, and lines of credit)	neamb.com/hf
Online Retirement Planning Center (timely tips and tools and an income calculator for current or future retirees)	neamb.com/retiree
Retirement Program (products to help manage your retirement savings and income needs)	neamb.com

DISCOUNTS

Costco Membership (discounts for new and existing memberships)	neamb.com/costco
H&R Block (save on tax preparation)	neamb.com/hrblock
Auto Buying Program (guaranteed savings on new and used cars)	neamb.com/autobuying
Click and Save (savings on online stores, local merchants and restaurants)	neamb.com/clickandsave
Heating Oil (save €15 to €25 per gallon and a free or discounted service contract)	neamb.com/heatingoil
Identify Theft (discount Life Lock identity theft protection code: NEA15MEMBERS)	neamb.com/idtheft
Vehicle Protection (\$100 saving on extended service contracts from CARCHEX)	neamb.com/vpp
Wireless Phone Service (save 15% monthly on AT&T cellphone service)	neamb.com/wireless

In a future article we’ll summarize NEA Member Benefits in the fields of Insurance, Travel and Professional Development. You may also request a summary booklet of NEA Member Benefits by calling **1-800-637-4636**, Monday through Friday 8am to 8pm.

We would appreciate your feedback on your experience with NEA Member Benefits. Email us at office@hhhta.com or call 631-499-4240.

Don’t forget your VOTE/COPE donation for next year, January 1 – December 31, 2017. Fifty dollars is suggested.



Winter of 2016 was as usual, skiing for 2 weeks (Colorado & Montana/Canada). No weather catastrophes this year, but I learned something. My knees don't want to ski 6 days in a row; they want a day off.

I went on a fascinating 13-day nature/people to people trip to Cuba in April with 11 other people. The day before we departed our naturalist guide said that we need to be patient and flexible in Cuba. The next day was the test. We had to fly to Havana with a four-hour drive and a two-hour wait for our bags. We passed the test! We encountered river crabs all over the southern coast road heading to the ocean to mate (a few weeks early). An interesting drive!

I visited UNESCO World Biosphere, bird refuges, national parks, rainforest reserve, mangroves, botanical gardens, tropical research center, organic farms (food & tobacco). We traveled to Trinidad, Ceinfuegos, Punta Gorda, Playa Giron (where 6 of us had guided snorkeling at a reef in the Bay of Pigs), Zapata Peninsula, Havana, The Sierra Del Rosario Mts., Valle of Vinales and the Cave of the Indians (the largest system: 30 miles) of underground caves in Latin America. We saw many birds. Cuba has 350 varieties, 20% of which are indigenous. I was lucky to get a photo of the world's smallest hummingbird (the Bee). So now I have seen the largest and smallest birds in the world. There are only a few kinds of mammals, 58 species of amphibians, 43 species of reptiles. We met with many people of various professions/occupations.

They were quite open about Cuba's successes (health care & education) and problems (housing: 3 generations per household: highly technologically educated children leaving rural areas; food shortages; money for infrastructure; local politicians not wanting change. The Cuban government owns everything except where there are foreign partnerships (Cuba 51%, partner 49%). The paladares, privately owned restaurants, and B and Bs are the other exceptions.

It will be interesting to see how and how soon Cuba will start to change with more American contact now allowed.

Joan Vanecek



NYSUT MEMBER BENEFITS ANNOUNCES 4 NEW ENDORSED PROGRAMS!



Office Depot/OfficeMax

This program offers NYSUT members & their families the opportunity to save up to 80% on almost 100,000 products in all Office Depot/OfficeMax locations or online through the company's website; the average savings on items is approximately 30%. NYSUT members can save on school supplies, office supplies, ink & toner, copying & printing, and much more.

Tunstall Medical Alert

Tunstall offers a variety of medical alert products that ensure NYSUT members and/or their family members living alone can get quick assistance when they need it; the majority of Tunstall's products have a lightweight, waterproof activator that can be worn around the neck or wrist.

When pushed, the Tunstall activator signals a base unit that in turn communicates directly with the Tunstall 24/7/365 Emergency Response Center. Tunstall offers personal emergency response systems for both traditional landline and cell phone users that directly connect with the Tunstall Emergency Response Center when the activator button is pushed.

Premier World Discovery

This program offers a variety of group tour vacations designed for active adult American travelers specializing in domestic and international worldwide tours. NYSUT members & their family members who use the Premier

World Discovery program can save \$100 per person on specific tours and cruises.

Since the company's inception in 1999, Premier World Discovery has developed a lineup of more than 70 travel programs around the globe, including fully-escorted tours, unique rail tours, private-chartered European river cruises, festive holiday and New Year's getaways, and more.

Abenity Discounts

The Abenity discounts program gives NYSUT members access to approximately 290,000 exclusive member discounts across 10,000 U.S. cities, including discounted tickets for entertainment & sporting events; a variety of travel opportunities; and numerous local deals.

With the Abenity discounts program, you'll be able to enjoy substantial savings on tickets to the latest blockbuster movies or theater events, theme parks, museums & attractions, zoos, major appliances/televisions, restaurants, groceries, gym memberships, and much more!

NYSUT members can utilize their Abenity discounts program on any mobile device and gain access to exclusive local deals no matter where you are. Purchase tickets to more than 3,000 movie theaters and theme parks. There are no hidden fees and you'll receive electronic tickets immediately!

To learn more about Member Benefits-endorsed programs & services, visit memberbenefits.nysut.org or call 800-626-8101.

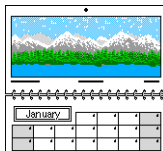
For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.

The HHHART Newsletter is a publication of the
 Half Hollow Hills Active Retired Teachers
 631-499-4240

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HHHART Web Address <http://www.hhhart.net>
 TA Office office@HHHTA.com

Mark Your Calendar



Winter

2016-17

Annual Meeting: TBA
 Friday, June 2nd RC #20 Luncheon

For Your
Information

Several of our members have contacted ASO as a result of a Medicare inquiry about a possible cash value in your term life insurance.

The answer is -- There is **NO** cash value in a Term Life Policy
 Dick Lee.

It is with great sadness that I heard of the closing of the Windsor Whip Works Gallery/Art Center, in Windsor, NY. This was such a labor of love, by owners Bill and Johanne Pesce (a former student of mine), who live in Windsor and renovated an old Whip Works Building into an art gallery 11 years ago bringing art to the whole surrounding, run-down area, near Binghamton, NY. I was there for their gala opening, and had a one-person show there later that year.

As all of you artists out there well know, opening an art gallery is an act of great courage and conviction, and an inherent belief in, not only the need, but the triumphant glory of art in this world. I am extremely grateful to have been a part of this noble endeavor, that brought so much to so many. I thought what they wrote about me in advertising my solo show there, was so very kind and sweet. Thank you, Johanne and Bill Pesce, for your great kindness and friendship, for what you've given us, and for having enriched our lives.

Shain Bard with Johanne Pesce

Input / Output

At this time, we have very few "Keep In Touch" articles for the 2017 issues of our newsletter. We'd appreciate your sending us info about your comings and goings. From the feedback we receive, this column is the most popular of our various features.

You can send them to any of the following.
barbuss@aol.com,
rgsg6H@aol.com,
bjvolpe@optonline.net
office@HHHTA.com

We send you our warmest wishes for a healthy, happy holiday season and our thanks for your generous input of newsy items which help us to publish an interesting, informative retiree newsletter.

Barbara, Betty, & Sandy