



ROBS - RETIREES of the BRENTWOOD SCHOOLS

Since 1991 - Still Serving

Issue 3/2010

June, July, August

MEETINGS

General Meetings are held at the Brentwood Public Library, 2nd Ave., & Third St., 10 a.m. the **first** Friday of the month.

September - no meeting

October 1 - Welcome new Retirees

ROBS CARES CONTRIBUTIONS NEEDED

Pronto, the community action group we support, is in need of dry or canned goods, paper products and toiletries. **Please** bring your contribution to each meeting. The need is great.

OFFICERS

Nick Siciliano, President
kpn1@aol.com
Kathy Guleksen, 1st VP
Harriet Pepine, 2nd VP
Lucille Fink, Secretary
Marge Kirchner, Treasurer
Dorothy Zuckerman &
Phyllis Goodwin - Presidents Emerita

AFFILIATIONS

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

ROBS 2010 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

The Next Generation of Educators



Ashley DeJesus, Lindsay Baillie, Phyllis Goodwin, Katherine Guzman and Michelle Rodriquez

Katherine Guzman is the recipient of the **Jack Zuckerman Scholarship Award**. Katherine attended Northeast Elementary, East Middle and Sonderling High School. She is a member of the National Honor Society, Future Teachers of America and volunteers for Habitat for Humanity. She will attend St. Joseph's College with a major in Secondary Spanish Education.

Lindsay Baillie is the recipient of the **Lilian Kelly Scholarship Award**. Lindsay attended Loretta Park, South Middle and Ross High School. Lindsay is a member of the National Honor Society and the Tri-M Music Society. She will attend St. Joseph's College and major in Secondary English Education.

Ashley DeJesus receives the **ROBS Scholarship Award**. She attended Twin Pines, North Middle and Sonderling High school. Ashley is a member of the National Honor Society, Future Teachers of America, a skilled athlete and an excellent community volunteer. She will major in Education at Dowling College.

Michelle Rodriquez is the winner of the **RC21 Scholarship Award**. Michelle attended Laurel Park, East Middle and Ross High School. She is a member of the National Honor Society, and has significant involvement in community service. She will major in Education at St. Joseph's College.

Good luck to all of our well-deserving scholarship winners!

**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

Carmela Criscione, ROBS Cares
Adrienne Eastman, BCA Liaison
Gloria Hanneman, Web Coord.
Marty Hochheiser, BTA/RC21
Liaison
Lynda Romano, Programs &
Hospitality
John Sherin, History Project
Nick Siciliano, Web Editor
Peter Vercillo, Project Hope
Lynn Prass, Paula Moore,
Ellen Edelstein -
Delegates-at-Large

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(tecnouuen@aol.com)
Adrienne Eastman
Lucille Fink
Phyllis Goodwin
Miriam Massucci
Paula Moore
John Sherin
Nick Siciliano

TALK TO US

The phone numbers, addresses
and e-mail address of all the
Officers, Executive and Editorial
Board Members are in the
Directory should you wish to
contact us. We really want to
hear from you!

**NOTES FROM NICK**

As your new president I would like to take this opportunity to thank Phyllis for the fine work she has done. I look forward to working with all of you and continuing to build upon the strong foundation that exists.

As we approach the **20th anniversary** since **ROBS** was formed, I would like to remind you that you are encouraged to make me and your other officers aware of any ways we can meet your needs and make this organization even better.

Let me take this moment to introduce the other officers: Kathy Guleksen as First Vice President, Harriet Pepine as Second Vice President, Lucille Fink as Secretary and Marge Kirchner as Treasurer.



Marge Kirchner, Harriet Pepine, Nick Siciliano,
Kathy Guleksen and Lucille Fink

I wish all of you a pleasant summer and look forward to seeing you at our first meeting, Friday, October 1st, at the Brentwood Public Library.

Nick Siciliano





PHYLL'S FORUM

Ten years ago when I became President of **ROBS**, Dot handed me a schedule for the monthly meetings and the format for our meeting agenda. I would like to thank Dot Zuckerman for her years of friendship, guidance and support. We have grown exponentially in these past ten years, and the overall focus of our organization has changed. We have become a community service-based chapter. Our membership has grown from 284 to a mailing list of 425.

I would like to thank the officers of **ROBS**: Harriet Pepine, Marge Kirchner, and Lucille Fink for all their efforts in making our organization a well-oiled machine. They are the people who make sure that the membership receives all the proper information each month. They are the backbone of this organization.

In 2001, we presented our first two **ROBS** scholarships for \$100 each. We now deliver four scholarships a year ranging from \$500 to \$1,000. Another form of scholarship was introduced with the addition of AHRC as our newsletter printer. Manager Chris Schock and Ed Cody project compiler at the AHRC Print Shop in Bohemia have greatly enhanced the production of our newsletter, saving us countless hours of collating, folding and sorting. Thank you, Chris and Ed, for all your help in getting the newsletter to our membership.

Carmela Criscione has taken on the responsibility of shepherding our newsletter to publication. She has a wonderful group to help her: Miriam Massucci, Lucille Fink, Paula Moore, Marge Kirchner, Adrienne Eastman, Nick Siciliano and John Sherin. Our newsletter was very well received by the journalism staff at NYSUT and we were graciously rewarded.

The Executive Board has been an excellent group of highly effective people who have the membership's best interest at heart. A very special heartfelt thank you goes out to Adrienne, Lynn, Lynda, Paula, Marty, Nick, Ellen, Gloria, and John for making **ROBS** such a viable organization. Ellen Edelstein efficiently and tirelessly worked on the restructuring of our Constitution and its by-laws with the aid of Carmela, Dot, Marge and Nick.

Through the generosity of our members, we have increased the number of families that are supported by Project Hope. Our Brentwood families are chosen by the Project Hope committee from the Suburban Children Network. Peter Vercillo, Chairman, Letty and Sheila Sustrin, Kris Dougherty, Lynn Tiscione and Lois Morella were our able and valued shoppers. In addition, we collect canned goods at our monthly meetings which are taken to Pronto, a local community outreach center.

Our award winning website which was initiated by Gloria Hanneman two years ago has become the perfect venue for **ROBS**. Members can visit school photos, events, locate important information and District history. Many thanks to Gloria and Nick Siciliano, for making our website the best in the state.

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**PHYLL'S FORUM** continued from Page 3

I would like to thank Ruth McCalla for her tireless service to **ROBS**. She was one of the founding members of **ROBS** and has provided us with excellent programming and well-planned luncheons for the past 19 years. We will certainly miss her gentle and pleasant nature. Our loss will be Maryland's gain.

John Sherin continues to interview our retirees for our History Project. He is pursuing the history of Northeast School and plans to continue the practice for all of the schools.

I am thrilled with the new slate of officers for the coming term. Several weeks ago, I met with Nick Siciliano and Kathy Guleksen to introduce them to all the items that concern the **ROBS** organization. Typically the paperwork has increased to 30 sheets of paper, plus flash drives, databases, emails and phone numbers. Good luck to you.

In reading this article, you will find that the same names keep reappearing. Those members are multi-taskers of the first order. I know they are up to the task and you can help by encouraging all of the retirees you know to join **ROBS** and become involved in making their work easier. I was surprised to find that ten years had gone by so quickly. I will truly miss my daily **ROBS** routines since these have been some of my happiest times as President.

In Harmony,

Phyllis Goodwin

Phyllis Goodwin



2010 NYSUT COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD WINNER

Kathy Williams-Ging



Joan Perrini, President of RC 21, Kathy Williams-Ging and Phyllis Goodwin

MUSIC IN THE AIR



Four IC music alumni and one outstanding clarinet quartet: Robert Dalpiaz '73, Paul Infante '85, Christina Carnevale-Helbock '99, and Spencer Blumenfeld '08. The four clarinetists—all current or former music teachers in the Brentwood Union Free School District in Brentwood, New York—performed in the district's annual concert, "An Evening of Music," on April 18, 2009. Before continuing their music studies at IC, Paul studied the clarinet privately with Robert, Christina studied with Paul, and Spencer studied with Christina.

Photo from the Ithaca College alumni magazine "Sound". Also, Spencer was a **ROBS** Scholarship winner in 2004. He was a very special favorite of the teachers at Laurel Park Elementary School.



THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

A FOND FAREWELL

There comes a time in one's life when our often-traveled road takes an alternate course. That time has come for me.

Looking back when I started with **ROBS**, we didn't even have a name. A few of us retirees got together and decided that we needed to have an organization. So, under the leadership of Dot Zuckerman, we came up with the name "Retirees of Brentwood Schools". Thus **ROBS** was formed in 1991.

In 1992, I took on the position of program chair and helped it to evolve into an interesting position. With the assistance of Harriet Pepine, my co-chair, we looked into many places to comfortably house **ROBS** for at least two hours on the first Friday of the month. After several years of meeting in different libraries, we found our perfect fit right here in the Brentwood Library. The personnel there have been most accommodating.

Over the years, we became quite efficient at planning the holiday luncheon in December and the end-of-the-year luncheon in June. Our programs were usually interesting as well as informational. This happened with the help of our first president, Dot Zuckerman, followed by the energizer bunny, Phyllis Goodwin, as well as suggestions from several members.

When Sheila and Letty Sustrin retired, they truly lightened my task by purchasing the bagels and goodies for our continental breakfast at each meeting.

Over the years, I have made several new friends, not only at the primary level where I taught, but also at the secondary level and beyond. I wish to thank all of you for the kind words at several meetings.

Some time during this summer, I will be moving to Maryland, and venturing on to newer pathways of interest.

My warm farewell luncheon will always bring on a smile. Thank you to all my friends in **ROBS**.

In friendship forever,

Ruth McCalla



Letty and Sheila Sustrin presenting Ruth with a depiction of all the things she's done as Program Chair and a parting gift from all of us. Panama Hattie's June 5, 2010.

WANTED!

If anyone has copies of past BTA Impact Newsletters, yearbooks, annual, or photos, please send them to Gloria Hanneman so she can put them on the website. Thanks!



EQUAL JUSTICE FOR ALL?

A Citizen's Responsibility

by Carmela Criscione

It was a very interesting April, 2010, **ROBS** meeting ...although all of them are interesting. Denise Kronstandt presented a program about the Fund for Modern Courts, an advocacy group, that monitors the proceedings in family court. This is a statewide program. New York State is a large state with over 60 counties, and it is now Suffolk's turn for scrutiny.

Family court sees everything from juvenile offenders, abuse cases, adoptions, neglect, support, custody, to orders of protection and more. Suffolk County has 4 family court judges in Central Islip and 2 in Riverhead, but the need is great and number of cases seen can be overwhelming.

Many people going to court do not have representation and may only see their court-appointed attorney minutes before their case is heard. Many have language difficulties, and a translator may or may not be available. People are confused, worried, intimidated and overwhelmed by the building, the officers, the signs and the sheer press of people.

Modern Courts asks for volunteers to observe the procedure from walking through the door, going through the metal detectors, finding the Clerk's office, filing the right form, to finding out if there is child care available. Monitors make no judgments, just impartially observe whether everyone is treated equally.

Several **ROBS** members went to the initial session to learn more, and five (**Harriet Pepine, Loretta Ellington, Paula Moore, Edie Filosa, and Kathy Maroney**) went to the training session at Touro Law School. They were given very comprehensive forms to fill out each time we attend a session. They ask that they attend 4-5 (or more) sessions.

The program will last until September and then move on to another county.

We will keep you up-dated on this unique aspect of citizenship. It is our responsibility to make sure that all of us have equal access to justice.



MEMBERSHIP POLICY CHANGE

As of January 1, 2011, the Executive Board voted to discontinue the policy of offering free membership.

This was a very difficult decision but given the cost of running the organization, it was necessary.

Members in good standing who are presently 75 or over or who will be 75 before January 1, 2011, will continue to be eligible for free membership.



TRAVELS ACROSS AMERICA

ON THE ROAD

with Rich Edwards

Rich Edwards retired from the English Department of the High School in 1998. He traveled across America and kept a journal. You will be able to follow him through these vignettes in Newsletters to come.

January 15, 1999



Today was Gene Autry, Roy Rogers, and John Wayne Day. I finally saw the WEST. Route 90 from Del Rio, Texas to Alpine, Texas is what you see in a western movie. Canyons, cactus, weathered brown mountains, incredible vastness. The front gate of the John V. Daly Ranch said "9 miles to the ranch-house." The trucks approaching you are visible 10 miles away.

I crossed the Pecos River and then stopped in Langtry, the home of Judge Roy Bean's courthouse/bar. Since he was the owner, he often fined "criminals" \$10 and a round of drinks for the jury. Then in Marathon, Texas, I found a real ice cream parlor with all its 1950's decor intact. The strawberry ice cream soda was delicious.

Alpine, Texas, is my stop-over before descending south 90 miles to Big Bend National Park.

This New York boy is unprepared for the colors here. This part of Texas is dry. The colors are muted -- olive green, pale brown, grey. The canyons, which in the spring splash with water, are empty and silent and white, the ground washed and bleached. During mid-day it's almost a black and white photograph. But in the early morning and just before sunset the warm light paints the landscape a rich gold. Spectacular.

A GIFT OF READING

F.A.N. NEEDS OUR HELP!

by Miriam Massucci

F.A.N. is an acronym for the Food and Nutrition Program administered by Catholic Charities. The program has an annual "A Gift Of Reading" book drive for children in the program. Individuals and groups are asked to donate NEW and UNWRAPPED books for young children under the age of eight.

Books reflecting the ethnic and cultural diversity of the community are appreciated.

I have been collecting books for ten years from both **ROBS** and the AAUW (American Association of University Women) and the generosity of both groups has resulted in a contribution of 100 books each year. The books are put in baskets at Thanksgiving and Christmas. All of us as members of the educational system know the importance of establishing a love of reading in beginning students.

Thank you for your support.

Miriam retired in 1987. She taught Math at the High School.





IT'S ALL ABOUT US - by Carmela Criscione

Rick Zuckerman, a very successful attorney who has appeared on the NY Times best attorneys list for several years, will in October go through a ceremony which will allow him to argue before the US Supreme Court. His proud mom, **Dot Zuckerman**, will be attending the ceremony. Congratulations on quite an honor.

Jim Nanos' daughter Janelle, who writes the National Geographic blog on the Internet, is getting married on July 3rd. Much happiness to all.

Dennis Flynn who will be retiring in June is recovering from a stroke. **Herb Laub** and **Vinnie DeRiggi** are both recovering from auto accidents in April. Best wishes for recovery from everyone.

We are sorry to report that **Charlotte Deschamps'** mom passed away in April. We were saddened to learn that **Cathy Browman's** mom also passed away. **Virginia Datre** died in April. Virginia was secretary to the business manager going back to the mid-1950's. She ran the Business Office. She hired me back in 1965 when I didn't know how to turn on an electric typewriter or that telephones could have multiple extension lines. She did not break through the glass ceiling, but she certainly gave it a good whack and made it easier for those of us coming up. She was a lovely, generous person and will be missed. We also lost **Linda Gibson** (Elementary/NE) in May. Our condolences to her husband, children and friends.

Marty Hochheiser relates another "Brentwood Connection" story. It happened when his wife, Marcia, was in the hospital. A new roommate was wheeled into her room. She looked at Marty and exclaimed, "Mr. Hochheiser!" It was Tracy Evans, and Marty was her guidance counselor 28 years ago and her son, Devon's, counselor 10 years ago. He also related that **Bob Rosenblatt**, a fellow teacher, student council advisor and founder of the North Junior/Middle School Honor Society, have kept in touch since Bob retired in 1982. He is a youthful 89 and lives in Massachusetts with his wife, Roz. They recently attended a community Seder and while talking to another couple discovered they were the Bastows, formerly of Brentwood, who sent Marty regards. Marty had visited their son Joel in the hospital, and they fondly remembered him.

The Mid-Island Club, the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc., had its 52nd annual scholarship luncheon on May 1st at Captain Bill's. Brentwood members, **Paula Moore**, **Ida Donald**, **Betty Brown-Greene**, and **Lois Branch** and **Mae Lane** (still working) were there. Of the club's 14 past presidents 4 were Brentwood teachers: **Barbara Ford**, **Constance Nichols**, **Leora Heyward** and **Lois Branch**. This year's recipient of the Guidance Counselor Excellence award was **Antoinette Ringo-Servington** (still working) who dedicated it to Betty Brown-Greene who has been her role model.

Letty and **Sheila Sustrin** were guest presenters at the Borders Book Store, Bohemia, on March 20th, as part of their Educator's Appreciation Week. Also, on March 27th, **Marie Poppo's** daughter, Francine, launched her latest effort, "Larry Bird: The Boy From French Lick". Francine is also the publisher of Blue Marlin Publications. Congratulations, ladies.

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ALL ABOUT US - continued from Page 8

Phyllis George (Art), her children, Phyllis, Dave and Tim and seven grandchildren, all participated in a family art show at the Drew Patrick Gallery on Main Street in Bay Shore in early June. Her husband, **Dave** (Industrial Arts/HS, EMS) was the supplier of all things nutritious to the George/Romanzi Clan.

Brentwood has also lost a good friend on the passing of **Frank D'Andrea** (Foreman/Bldgs & Grounds) in early June. Frank was a driver messenger (the District's mailman) for years before becoming a foreman. He was the first union organizer for the Civil Services employees when the Taylor Law was passed. He was, for a time, president of the CSEA clericals before BCA was formed. He also worked for years as a legislative aide to State Senator Caesar Trunzo. He will be missed.

Dot Zuckerman's, Geri, is the new president of the Spinning Study Group of Long Island. Geri took up spinning a few years ago as a hobby and is quite enthusiastic about the craft. Dot was disappointed when, because of import/export restrictions, she could not bring home a fleece from New Zealand or Australia for her.

The **ROBS** luncheon held on June 4 at Panama Hattie's was a success. Approximately 50 members were there to honor **Kathy Williams-Ging**, the 2010 NYSUT Community Service Winner. Joan Perrini, President of RC21, presented the NYSUT Journalism Awards. There were parting gifts to **Phyllis Goodwin** and **Ruth McCalla** in appreciation of all their hard work on our behalf.

HATS OFF TO THE NEW GRADUATES

Elaine Cucciniello's grandson, Andrew, has received his BA in Architecture from Northwestern University this May.

Dot Zuckerman's granddaughter, Alyssa, has graduated from NYU and will be starting at St. John's Law School in the Fall.

Adrienne Eastman's grandson, Philip, graduated last summer with an Applied Science Degree in Computer Networking and Information from Briarcliffe and has landed a great job at Motorola.

Carmela Criscione's niece, T'Rea, graduated in May from Branford Hall as a Medical Technician.

And, **Phyllis Goodwin's** daughter, Traci, received her MA in School Administration from City College.

Congratulations to all.





SKEDADDLE BY PADDLE

by Jim Nanos

On some days I'm hard to reach because I've moved my "office" to the pond, river, inlet or bay. I don't answer my cell phone, or even use it, except for an emergency (mine or theirs). I'm in my kayak and loving it.

If you haven't tried, give kayaking a go. I recommend doing some research about the sport first. Then try a guided rental with qualified organizations like Long Island Paddlers (www.lipaddlers.org) or L.I. Kayak Club (www.Longislandkayaktours.com.)

There are many enjoyable activities that a kayaker can partake of on any given day. Exercise leads the list. One can get an excellent workout by stroking against the wind or tide. Often I will give myself a good workout, and then drift back with a good book and lots of fresh air.

Quite a number of paddlers are using their kayaks for fishing. When your boat is properly outfitted, you can frequently get to the fish few others can reach by other boats or from shore. This will put fresh fish on your menu.

If you wish, many clubs have weekly paddling trips at various levels of expertise. Every trip has its highlights. You may wish to photograph wild life, take in nature's beauty or observe the Long Island seashore communities. It's amazing how different a place will appear from just a little distance offshore.

Safety is the utmost for every kayaker. Learning in a club is a wonderful means of beginning. Instructors will take the novice through steps to guide each person in the safe operation of their boat.

These professionals will also be able to advise the consumer on the purchase of your own watercraft. Factors such as construction material, boat length, weight, stability, usage, transportability and, of course, safety will be some of the topics for discussion.

For myself, whether it's a quick splash for an hour or two, an afternoon with a club or fishing with a buddy, I have found kayaking an asset in retirement. **ROBS** members, Dick Feldman, Brian Mangas and Clem Stancik, have joined me for a good skedaddle. We are trying to schedule dates with Gloria Hanneman too.

Jim Nanos retired in 2007 from North MS where he taught science. Ed.



RETIREMENT = HAPPY TIMES

What hobby or activity makes you happy? Was it always something you enjoyed or something that you discovered during retirement?

Tell us all about it. Share the fun. Whether it is kayaking, travel, volunteering, hiking, writing, cooking or gardening we'd be interested in knowing what's special to you and why.



SUFFOLK COMMUNITY HONORS ITS FIRST GRADUATE

Graduations are special. They mark a turning point in one's life. Childhood is behind you and the adult world and a promising future ahead. And so it was for the first student to enroll in Suffolk County College in 1960. On Sunday, May 23, 2010. Marge Kirchner was again in the audience as an honored guest with fellow graduates from every class represented.

Suffolk Community graduate and the 2010 commencement speaker was US astronaut Robert "Hoot" Gibson. You may remember "Hoot" as the first US astronaut to shake hands with a Russian cosmonaut in space at the International Space Station.

Suffolk Community College has every right to be proud of its educational mission throughout the last half century and we are very proud of our own Marge Kirchner. Congratulations!



Dean Dale B. Lake and Marge Kirchner,
first SCC enrollee, 1960

MOMENTS TO REMEMBER

ROBS HISTORY PROJECT MAY 7, 2010

John Sherin presented this year's **ROBS** History Project Video. As always, this was a well attended meeting.

This year's presentation included **Kathy Williams-Ging**, winner of the 2010 NYSUT Community Service Award. Kathy was a bilingual math teacher at East Junior/Middle School and the Center; **Vincent DeRiggi**, substance abuse counselor; **Grace Fishenfeld**, art teacher at the High School; **Vincent Carnevale**, social studies teacher at the High School; **Maxine Berlin**, special education teacher at the High School and **Rosemary Moriarty**, elementary teacher and Reading Consultant, at Loretta Park School.

In addition to these interviews, John conducted "10 minutes 10 questions" exit chats at the District's Retirement Information Days on April 28 and 29. These short interviews will be presented at the October 1st meeting where we will introduce and re-connect with this year's retirees.

See you there!





BOOKS! BOOKS! BOOKS!
THEY'RE PLOTTING AGAINST ME

by Carmela Criscione



In the first century, China develops paper making. In 15th century Germany, Gutenberg invents the printing press. In 1954, P. S. 208, Brooklyn, I take out my first library book: How To Prepare an Egyptian Mummy. In 2010, the books have overrun the shelves, tables, nooks, crannies, and garage. They are everywhere. They're breeding like Harlequin Romances. They've studied Darwin and it's all out war -- survival of the fittest.

It was a hard thing to do but I had to winnow out the shelves (gasp). Things were starting to get ugly. Hard covers were calling book club offerings nasty names, bodice rippers were slashing at the dust jackets of their stodgier shelf mates, movie books were whining that they wanted to be admired for their text and not just their pretty pictures...a real jungle. Two sections of shelves collapsed -- or it might have been a failed escape by the suspense/thriller section.

The books reside in the basement in a well-lit, carpeted, climate controlled environment. I thought I had an agreement with them. Some I will always have, some I most probably will always keep and some are there until shelf space dictates they have to move on. I try to provide good homes for ones that have to go but I sense a resentment among them.

There are mutterings when I go down there to shelf new books or take others off. "Why me?" they ask. They seek answers in the reference books. They ask their neighbors about their plots. The authors I favor look down their spines at the once-only-never-to-be-purchased-again authors.

The popcorn-for-the-mind titles whisper and spread gossip among themselves. They are not comfortable for they never know who might be next.

But right now the books are quiet. They are all on shelves (double shelved, it's the best I can do until I win the lottery) and in order by category (I'm compulsive). The history books know that it's just a matter of time before there's unrest and another purge takes place.

Want any books? I have boxes of biographies, historical fiction, non-fiction, hobbies, movies, travel, weird, mysteries and romances that need homes.

