



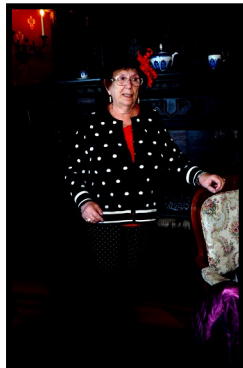
ROBS - RETIREES OF BRENTWOOD SCHOOLS

FINGER FOOD, FUN AND FASCINATORS

by Lois Morella

On Wednesday, October 23, **ROBS** held a tea in the library of the lovely Tudor mansion on the grounds of the Bayard Cutting Arboretum in Great River.

The traditional menu of scones, sandwiches, sumptuous desserts, and various flavored teas was served. Everyone received a lovely teacup and teapot as mementos of the occasion. Prizes were also awarded for the best hats and fascinators, ornate headpieces decorated with flowers and feathers favored by the Royals. Speaking of Royals, each of us chose a title comprised of our pet's name and our grandparents' first names. For example, I dubbed myself-Lady Bon Bon Stella Anthony. Some of the combinations were hilarious! Kudos to our "Queen" Phyllis Goodwin for hosting such a delightful, fun-filled afternoon.



MEETINGS

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

January 3—New Year Breakfast

February—no meeting

March 6—TBA

ROBS CARES

CONTRIBUTIONS NEEDED

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

New and/or gently-used children's books are being collected for the Books to Home Program at every meeting. Please donate.

OFFICERS

Nick Siciliano - President
kpnici@aol.com

Barbara Mascaro - 1st VP

Nancy Churchillo - Secretary

Carmen Roldan - Treasurer

Phyllis Goodwin - President Emerita

Dot Zuckerman - Founder

AFFILIATIONS

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

www.robsny.org

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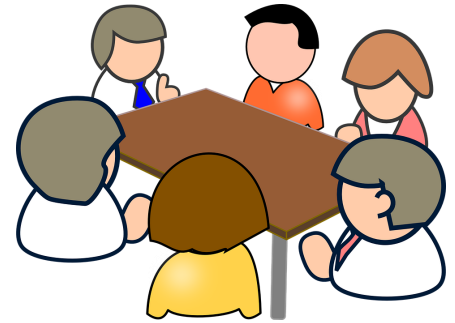
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NICK'S NOTES

By Nick Siciliano

Welcome to a new year with **ROBS**. I am pleased to announce that several new people have been added to the officers and Executive Board of our organization.



OFFICERS

- Nick Siciliano - President
- Barbara Mascaro - First Vice President
- Fern Sasso - Second Vice President
- Nancy Churchillo - Secretary
- Carmen Roldan - Treasurer

EXECUTIVE BOARD

- Marty Hochheiser - **BTA** Liaison
- JoAnn Brown - **BCA** Liaison and **ROBS** Cares
- Valerie Vismale - Programs
- John Sherin - History Project
- Gloria Hannemann - **ROBS** Website
- Ronda Brooks - Newsletter Co-Editor and Graphic Designer

DELGATES AT LARGE

- Susana Bouza
- Ellen Edelstein
- Jim Nanos

In closing, I would like to announce that Carmela Criscione has resigned as editor of the newsletter and **ROBS** Cares. She's moving to Florida. I thank her for many years of help, and I know we all wish her happiness in her new home.

ROBS EXECUTIVE BOARD

- Carmela Criscione - **ROBS** Cares
- Gloria Hannemann - Webmaster
- Marty Hochheiser - **BTA** Liaison
- Barbara Mascaro - Archivist and **RC21** Liaison
- John Sherin - History Project
- Nick Siciliano - Web Editor
- Letty Sustrin - Project Hope
- Susana Bouza, Ellen Edelstein, Jim Nanos and Fern Sasso - Delegates-at-Large
- Valerie Vismale - Programs

EDITORIAL BOARD

- Carmela Criscione - Co-Editor
tecnouuen@aol.com
- Ronda Brooks - Co-Editor and Graphic Designer
gumby5@optonline.net
- Adrienne Eastman
- Phyllis Goodwin
- John Sherin
- Nick Siciliano

TALK TO US

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

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

This newsletter is *all about us*.

www.robsny.org



FAKE EMAIL ALERT!!!

Some **ROBS** members have reported that they are getting disturbing emails from Nick Siciliano, Nicole Valenti and other members of the **ROBS** and Brentwood community. These emails often ask if you are available to talk or if you can help immediately. Please be aware that these emails are **FAKE**. Do **NOT** open any emails unless you are certain they are legitimate, otherwise you can risk getting a computer virus or giving away personal information to a scam artist. If you are unsure, it's better to proceed with caution and perhaps call the person who allegedly sent you the email rather than open it.



IT'S ALL ABOUT US

By *Carmela Criscione*

The holidays have come and gone and the Christmas trees are out at the curb. The air has turned nippy and sweaters and coats are being put in closets for ready use. Amazing how time zips by us.

There are things to report:

Congratulations to **Letty Sustrin** who celebrated her Bat Mitzvah on Saturday, October 9th. Mazel Tov!!

Alert: Will **June Dawson** please get in touch with **ROBS**. We've lost touch with her and want to reconnect.

Condolences to **Claudia DeBellis** on the passing of her mother, Helen. Claudia's dad was **Mike DeBellis**, long time principal at South Middle.

Get well wishes to **Ed Koenig**, **Barbara Springer** and **Harriet Helman**. We hope you are feeling better each day.

Sad news to report. **Claire Sullivan** lost her husband, John, in July and **Frank Bart**

ley's wife, Maryann, also passed in July. **Joan Byrnes** passed away in September and **Louise Stoffa** and **Lois Heinley** died in July. We lost **Tom Dwyer** in early December. Condolences to **Debbi Warsaw-Curley** on the passing of her brother, Wayne Warsaw.

We have just been made aware of the passings of **Maureen Staley** (Phys Ed—SMS) in April 2019, **Phyllis Ramjattansingh** (English) December 2018, **Rita Rosenthal** (Elementary) December 2016, and **Jean Erlandi** (Secretary at Maslow Toffler) in December 2018.

All this is sad news but we need to let our members know. We remember all our colleagues and this is the final thing we can do: seek remembrance of them. If you have news, please let me know. My e-mail is tecnoquen@aol.com.

I'd like to give a "shout out" to **Connie Gennaro**. One of her articles appears in this newsletter. She has sent me six or seven draft articles.

The subjects are varied and all are interesting. I hope she keeps sending articles and we continue to include them in the newsletter.

I am very proud of our newsletter and the hard work everyone involved puts in. It's member interest and informative articles that made, and will continue to make, our newsletter award-winning.

Check out the website, robsny.org for the latest video interviews on tap. Also check out the ANNOUNCEMENTS page. There you will be advised of events and news in a more timely way since ours is a quarterly newsletter. If you have something that needs to be reported quickly, please contact **Gloria Hannemann**, web editor, at webmaster@robsny.org

Remember, **IT'S ALL ABOUT US!**



Missing Something?

If you, or someone you know, has not received the 2019-2020 directory or regular issues of the newsletter, it may be because **they have not renewed their membership in ROBS**. We cannot continue to send out the directory or newsletters to non-members. Renew your membership or contact someone you know who has not joined or whose membership has lapsed. The membership application is on the **ROBS** website: www.robsny.org. We want to hear from you.

HEROES

By *Connie Gennaro*

One of the most solemn sites in America is the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.

It dates from the first World War, which had been the worst war the world had ever experienced, and it represents the resting place of an unknown warrior from any one of the services.

Veteran's Day is the time to remember the sacrifice many made to keep us free. Everyone has had, or may still have, a service person in their lives, so it is fitting to know the particulars of this Tomb.

It was dedicated on Armistice Day 1921 (now known as Veteran's Day) by President Warren G. Harding. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Westminster Abbey, London, was dedicated in 1920 by King George V of Britain.

The Tomb is guarded 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, regardless of weather. The sentinels follow precise procedures regarding the facing of east and west and must perform specific motions in a set number of seconds.

Army Guards are from the Third US Infantry Regiment and are known as the Old Guard. The Old Guard has served America since 1784.

The sentinels are between the ages of 19-34. They serve for 18 months. They hold no rank because the Unknown Soldier has no known rank and therefore cannot, and should not, be outranked.

The guard changes every thirty minutes when the cemetery is open and every two hours after the closing of gates at night.

All sentinels must swear to the Sentinel Creed which is quite comprehensive as to duty, honor and

the solemnity of their task. It speaks of the honor and respect they have for all the fallen who gave their lives in the interest of us all.

They stand proudly, knowing that a grateful nation does not forget.

Every year the President of the United States lays a wreath at the Tomb on Veteran's Day.

On a column near the tomb is a Congressional Medal of Honor bestowed on the British Unknown Soldier presented by General Pershing in 1920.



CONGRATULATIONS STEVE ROCHESTER!

By *Judi Weissman*

Greetings, Friends and Colleagues, It's nice to have some happy news to share. BHS retiree Steve Rochester was recently recognized in a Sunday "Winners" column in Newsday. I've attached a photo from the Newsday page and it's wonderful to hear about Steve's accomplishments. Most recently he was named Senior of the Year by the Suffolk County Office for the Aging and the Suffolk County Senior Citizen Advisory Board in honor of his volunteer work. You can read more about it in the attachment. CONGRATULATIONS, STEVE!




Barbara Mascaro, Phyllis Goodwin and Carmela Criscione collecting honors for **ROBS** at the 2019 RC21 Awards Luncheon

WINNERS

STEVE ROCHESTER
Volunteer

Steve Rochester of Deer Park has been named Senior Citizen of the Year by the Suffolk County Office for the Aging and the Suffolk County Senior Citizen Advisory Board in honor of his volunteer work. Rochester, who was a teacher at Brentwood High School for 37 years until his retirement in 2004, volunteers five days a week at the Suffolk YJCC in Commack, where he also teaches an American history class twice a month to 30 participants. In addition, he is on the Board of Directors of the Gluten Intolerance Group of Long Island and is a volunteer assistant coach for the boys varsity basketball team at Brentwood High School.



HEALTH AND WELLNESS BEGINS WITH KNOWLEDGE

by *Carmela Criscione*

Our September meeting kicked off with the new retirees being introduced and welcomed into **ROBS**. New retirees not present have also joined **ROBS** and, hopefully, will attend other meetings and social events.

Our guest speaker was Dr. Tom Davies, who, with his brother Dan, has a podiatry practice in East Islip. I have been a patient of theirs for over twenty years. Both Tom and Dan are Brentwood grads. Tom graduated in 1971.

He spoke to us about wellness and health. He supports products from a company called Melaleuca which only uses organic and healthy ingredients. There are, of course, other such companies.

More importantly, he spoke about the harmful ingredients in every day items. We use them, rarely, if ever, inquiring about their ingredients. We know we can't sip lemon scented Joy dish detergent—it washes dishes, and Windex cleans windows and Tide our clothes. But long-term exposure to ammonia

and bleach can have health consequences as harmful as smoking. We've all seen the law firm commercials on TV about Monsanto's Round-Up weed killer and its possible connection to Non-Hodgkins lymphoma. No mention that the stuff sprayed on weeds may kill them but what about the flowers next to the weeds or the veggies grown in the same bed? Don't the harmful ingredients transfer to our vases and salads?

Products to be concerned about range from Lysol, Formula 409, Dawn, Drano, Endust, Pine Sol -- think of a product and it will be on a hazardous list. If that wasn't enough, there are also carcinogens (chemicals that cause cancer) and neurotoxins (chemicals that can affect the nervous system, mental alertness and coordination) in products like Speed Stik Deodorant, Crest Tartar Control, Ban Roll-On, Dove and Irish Spring. There are also harmful ingredients in make-up and shampoo.

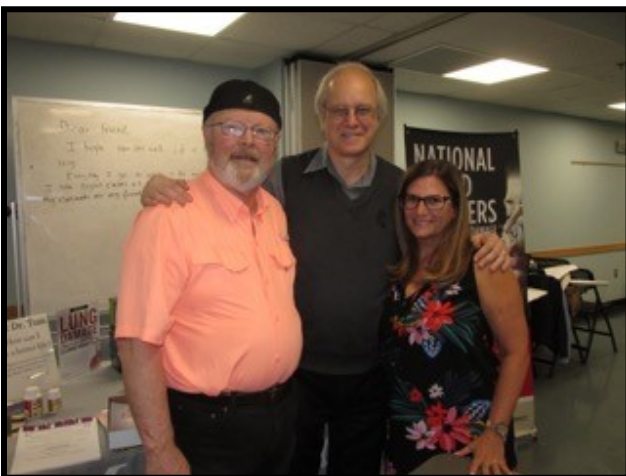
Gone are the days when hazardous ingredients were labeled with a skull and cross bones. They are now on our bathroom vanities and

under the sink.

He does not mean to alarm us into throwing out all our products. He only wants to point out that before we use one we should understand what's in it. I use all the products mentioned. Have I had a problem using them? No, but I use a plastic glove when using some of them. Every day, we are confronted with this product/food/diet that was good for us yesterday and is no good today.

Johnson's Baby Powder is now linked to ovarian cancer. Who didn't powder a baby with Johnson's or wash their hair with No Tears Shampoo? There are no tears because something is inhibiting the tear ducts.

Wellness includes not only healthy eating and exercise but also healthy snacks and informed choices. NEVER stop taking your prescribed medicine but understand all meds have side effects. We need, as seniors, to take charge of what we use or eat so we can stay healthier longer.



September meeting presenters:
(L. to R.) Charlie Grimes,
Dr. Tom Davies, Lori McBride



Welcome to new retirees (L. to R.) Bonnie Jean Murphy,
Jacqueline Welch and Janice Brown
who attended our September **ROBS** meeting.

A FOND ADIEU

Well it's happened. I came, I saw and I bought a house in Lakeland, Florida and will be moving in around early February.

It's a beautiful house which will showcase all my collections -- little shoes, books, videos, teapots and everything ancient Egypt.

So this is a fond farewell to everyone in **ROBS**. I enjoyed working on the newsletter for the last ten or so years. The Editorial Board, proof readers and my co-editor, Ronda Brooks, produced award-winning newsletters, issue after issue. I owe a big thank you to our article contributors who live up to my motto, "It's All About Us".

There are so many people to thank: Valerie Vismale for finding interesting and thought-provoking speakers at our meetings and organizing luncheons. I enjoyed working with John Sherin on the video interviews, many of them conducted at my house. It was like having my own biography channel in my den. Working with the Executive Board was stimulating. We did some amazing things with Nick Siciliano and Phyllis Goodwin at the helm. All the officers and members worked as a team and we therefore got things done.

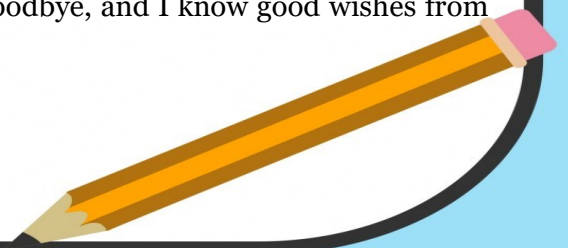
Our members are generous and because of their generosity we make holidays joyful for Brentwood families and help aspiring teachers through our scholarship program. We make a difference.

I thank Brentwood for giving me a good education, a great career, lifelong friends who are dear to me as family. I'm also grateful to be included in **ROBS** which is a warm, supportive organization.

Life in Florida will be different, and I know I will be thinking of all of you the first Friday of each meeting month. I will write articles for the newsletter. Change is inevitable and it will be stimulating to see. Because of family and friends, I will be back often and will try to attend a meeting here and there or a luncheon.

So, adieu (with a tear in my eye, I must admit) -- not goodbye, and I know good wishes from all of you will follow me.

Carmela



EDITOR NEEDED!

As Carmela moves on to Florida, (and we will miss her so much!) we are left with an opening on our Editorial Board. Clearly, no one can replace Carmela, but we are looking for someone to take up the position of Editor. The best candidate will be someone who has good writing, proofreading and computer skills, and has ties to the **ROBS** community and the Brentwood UFSD. He or she will be able to motivate **ROBS** members to write and contribute to this newsletter in a timely fashion and will coordinate with the co-editor to continue production of this award-winning bulletin. Please contact me if you are interested. Thank you!

Ronda Brooks

gumby5@optonline.net

A STORY ABOUT SOMEONE WHO WASN'T

By Nick Geraci

Sometime around 1963, a family, like many others from the previous decade and for the decades to come, moved from Brooklyn, NY to Brentwood, Long Island. They had been working on building a house on a piece of property they'd bought about a block off of a dirt road called Fifth Ave., just north of the yet to be finished Southern State Parkway. The oldest daughter, Carmela, already had enough credits to graduate from high school, but because of her young age, she was enrolled for a final year at Brentwood High School. In addition to her classes, she served as a student worker in the Instructional Media Center, a department run by Alfred Grabowski. Back then, the student workers were trained to help with all of the latest state of the art technology, which included projectors for filmstrips and 16mm movies, as well as portable record players that were capable of playing at all the speeds (16, 33 1/3, 45 and 78).

By the time she graduated in 1964, Brentwood decided that they liked the concept of student workers so much that they created an actual program, the Business Experience Students (B.E., for short), using the work of former students, Carmela among them, as their models. The B.E. girl who wasn't (more rightly considered a pre-B.E. girl) took the Civil Service test, and was hired by Brentwood as a Clerk Typist, working for Rita Brooks in the District Principal's office.

Her title of Clerk Typist didn't change for quite a while, although upon realizing the caliber of worker they had in their midst, Brentwood changed her job description multiple times, adding more and more responsibilities to her plate. This all eventually changed when, during a district re-organization, the Personnel Department was created, utilizing the talents of

Adrienne Eastman, Eileen Kelly and of course, Carmela Criscione. By the time Superintendent G. Guy DiPietro was at the district helm, the department, then known as Pupil Personnel Services, was split into two parts. Jack Smith directed Pupil Services, while Employee Personnel was under the watchful eye of a certain Senior Clerk (you guessed it). While still a



Senior Clerk, Carmela was bearing many of the responsibilities of an administrator (without the salary, of course). This was the second time, because of her skills, abilities and dedication, that Carmela was considered the woman who wasn't; only this time, she was the District Administrator who wasn't.

Upon yet another district reorganization, the department evolved into what is now known as Human Resources, an entity in which Carmela, in her new title of Administrative Assistant (still an Operational Supervisor, something from the Civil Service table of organization, and quite literally, an administrator who isn't) with Elaine Levy and their able secretaries, helped solve the problems and answered the questions of virtually every employee in the Brentwood school District. By this I mean, EVERYONE, from the summer, part-time, student worker to the Superintendent and School Board. Everyone who was hired or retired, who got sick or pregnant or served jury duty or worked previously for New York State or who had a question pertaining to any of

these, as well as a mountain of other scenarios. If Carmela didn't know the answer, she would find the answer and we all, myself included, benefited from her determination.

She retired in 2001, having somehow acquired even more responsibilities and a new title, Human Resource Officer (still under the Civil Service umbrella). Naturally, she gravitated in the direction of the group of people she spent her entire career working with, **ROBS**. But even with the Retirees of Brentwood, she was a sort of an enigma. She wasn't a teacher; neither was she technically a member of the clericals. She wasn't officially an administrator. To the best of my knowledge, she was all of these, yet missing one element from each category to be, according to the definitions existing at the time, a member. Carmela worked for **ROBS** Cares; that wing of **ROBS** that sends out cards (greeting, congratulations, condolence, etc.) to its members. In time, when the need arose, she worked with Phyllis Goodwin on the **ROBS** Newsletter. In the roughly ten years that she was its editor, they have, almost annually, garnered from two to four awards, including Best Issue and Best Article. She has been helping people without official membership in any of these specific groups since the sixties. Her purpose has never changed since then: Do the best you can for the people who depend on you. Always be honest. Always be fair. Actually, it's a pretty reasonable mantra.

For many and varied reasons, Carmela has chosen to close these Brentwood chapters in her life, to begin a new chapter in Lakeland, Florida, where the sun always shines and the flowers always bloom. It gives one pause to wonder just who she will offer her help to here.



ROBS
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AUCTION PHOTOS

On November 1st, **ROBS** held a fabulous and successful auction at the American Legion Hall in Brentwood. Thanks to all who contributed and participated. We hope to hold similar events in the future. Stay tuned!

