



## ROBS NEWSLETTER

JULY/AUG. 2008

RETIRES OF BRENTWOOD SCHOOLS

ISSUE 74

WEB ADDRESS FOR  
ROBS: [robsny.org](http://robsny.org)

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year books, newsletters  
and more...

See yourself as you were  
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General meetings  
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**WELCOME NEW  
RETIRES**

**FRIDAY  
SEPTEMBER 12**

**10 AM**

**JOIN US**

### AFT READIES ENDORSEMENT OF OBAMA

Citing Sen. Barack Obama's commitment to take on the key challenges facing AFT members and our nation as a whole, the 42-member AFT executive council voted unanimously on June 24 to approve a motion recommending that delegates to the 2008 AFT national convention endorse his candidacy for president of the United States. The 3,000-plus delegates are scheduled to convene July 11-14 at Navy Pier in Chicago. "The executive council agreed that Sen. Obama offers the best solutions to the important issues facing the country today," said AFT president Edward J. McElroy. "When the AFT's delegates meet in convention in July, we will ask that they accept the council's recommendation and place the AFT's full support behind electing Sen. Obama the next president of the United States." Two days after the AFT council's action, the AFL-CIO's general board en-

dorsed Obama and launched a new Web site introducing Obama to union voters.

#### **Seniors' Votes May Be the Key to Victory in 2008**

Results of the first *Washington Post*-ABC News poll since the Democratic nomination contest ended, published on Tuesday, showed Sen. **John McCain** (R-AZ) leading Sen. **Barack Obama** (D-IL) among all seniors. Among all voters, Sen. Obama is running ahead of Sen. McCain, 48% - 42%.

In contrast to the *Washington Post*-ABC numbers, a Reuters/Zogby poll released on 6/18 had the two candidates essentially tied among voters over the age of 65. According to CNN political analyst **Bill Schneider**, "We're going to see an age division in this election bigger than we have

usually seen. Older voters have been trending more Republican ever since 1992."

Like many of the current polls show, Sen. Obama also did better with younger voters than with seniors during the Democratic primaries. Combined exit polls from the primaries plus the Iowa and Nevada caucuses found that Sen. **Hillary Clinton** (D-NY) won 59% of voters age 65 and older, compared with 34% for Sen. Obama.

"Older voters will be crucial in November," said **Edward Coyle**, Executive Director of the Alliance of Retired Americans. "If Sen. Obama were to capture the older vote in addition to the other demographics that he currently carries, it would be very difficult for Sen. McCain to catch him."

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### MEDIA HALL OF SHAME

Those who have been inspired by the historic presidential campaign of Hillary Clinton, have been disturbed by the unrelenting sexist smearing by the media, which has ranged from offensive to downright vile.

The National Organization of Women (NOW) is inaugurating its "Media Hall of Shame," which documents the worst of the sexist media aimed at Senator Clinton during primary season, and gives activists an opportunity to Talk Back to the media.

NOW will continue to track the media

through the General Election, and beyond -- encouraging individuals to take ongoing media action as part of NOW's Talk back Team.

"Hillary Clinton, showed nothing but courage and dignity under fire. This must not happen again to the women who have been inspired by Hillary to run for office themselves.

"We owe it to ourselves, our daughters, sisters, mothers, not to allow a sexist media to ever discourage any woman from reaching for her dreams," says the release. *Now.org* and then click on *Media Hall of Shame*.

# PHYLL'S FORUM

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



Dear Colleagues,

I would like to thank the incredible group of people who always make our programs and projects such a complete success. Ruth McCalla, Harriet Pepine, Letty and Sheila Sustrin have worked overtime to provide us with great programs, goodies for our programs and, of course, our luncheons.

Our 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was program was an academy award winner. Carmela Criscione, John Sherin and Nick Siciliano have worked on this project for 3 years. Eileen Kelly, Adrienne Eastman and Paula Moore were instrumental in vetting all of the school records. Superintendent Les Black gave us permission to access all of those records. A special thanks to the ROBS Choral: Charleen Keely, Joy Licari, Kevin McNicholas, Marie Poppo and AnnMarie DiSibio. Their performance has created an interest in reviving "Brentwood in the Pines" for use in the schools. The attendance at this meeting was phenomenal. We hope you will continue to support our programs.

We have moved into the 21<sup>st</sup> century by establishing our website ([www.robsny.org](http://www.robsny.org)). Gloria Hannemann, our web mistress, has literally worked 24/7 on this project. Information that she receives is put on the site almost immediately. A very special thank you goes out to all who submitted their pictures and memories of Brentwood. We will continue to post our newsletter on the web site. Your pictures and news memos are paramount to making this venture a success.

This was quite a successful year for our Project Hope. Peter Vercillo ran the campaign without a single snag and more people were willing to help distribute the gifts to the individual families. We hope that next year more members will get involved. A special thanks goes out to Letty & Sheila Sustrin, Lois Morella, Kris Dougherty, Lynn Tiscione, Mary Pat Lyons, Ginger Battiste, Charleen Keely and Scott Lyons.

On May 10<sup>th</sup>, the ROBS newsletter received two awards for articles written by Marge Kirchner and Chris Veech. Each year, we continue to impress NYSUT with our informative newspaper.

On May 22, 2008, I attended the High School Scholarship awards night. Donna Spano was awarded the Jack Zuckerman Scholarship for \$1000. Adrianna Earl received the Lilian Kelly award for \$500. Gina Tibke and Crystalina DeNicola received the ROBS scholarships for \$500 each.

The new membership form is included in this newsletter. Please take the time to complete all the information requested. We cannot guess the year that you retired or the building that you retired from. We don't have a crystal ball when it comes to only 4 digits in your zip code. Likewise, email addresses that are not complete. It must say .com .net or .org. Handwriting must be legible. It is very hard to decipher some hand writing and cryptography is not one of my strong points. This is the year that our directory goes out and your help would be most appreciated. Included in the newsletter is a form for Vote/Cope pension deduction. If all of our members would sign up, it would make Marge's bookkeeping easier, save you the worry of whether you wrote the check or not, saves us extra postage and we would get a substantial increase in our Vote /Cope participation. The minimum deduction is \$3 and you will receive a biannual statement.

Enjoy a happy and healthy summer. We look forward to your joining us on September 12th for our welcoming of new retirees. We meet at the Brentwood Public Library at 10 AM on the lower level.

In Harmony,  
Phyllis Goodwin

Correction of email address: Sherry Calderaro (Hemlock Oak '01) should be [scalderaro@cfl.rr.com](mailto:scalderaro@cfl.rr.com)

## ROBS NEWSLETTER

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## ROBS OFFICERS

PRES. Phyllis Goodwin  
V. PRES. Harriet Pepine  
SEC'Y. Lucille Fink  
TREAS. Marge Kirchner

Six year olds finish the first half of a well-known proverb in First Grade!

An idle mind is a great way to relax.

**TRY TO DO THAT THIS SUMMER!**



## ROBS Newsletter Editorial Board:

Carmela Criscione  
Adrienne Eastman  
Phyllis Goodwin  
Marge Kirchner

## THE M-T CORNER

We look at the present through a rear-view mirror. We march backwards into the future.

Marshall McLuhan

**GEORGE CARLIN CALLED IT AS HE SAW IT** by Chris Veech

George Carlin died on June 22. He was 71. He said once that "By and large, language is a tool for concealing the truth."

It seems this holds true today as we face a crucial election in November. A big issue is our economic health, and words do make a big difference as does telling the truth. Euphemisms are a way of sidestepping the truth.

Words of economic euphemisms to avoid the dreaded word Recession include some recent one's by the current president: slow economic growth; tough times for many Americans; the risk of a downturn; period of uncertainty; a slowdown; very difficult times, very difficult; a rough patch ...

In 1937, FDR's administration, rather than use the dreaded word Depression, coined the word Recession.

It was Herbert Hoover who coined the word Depression, - meaning a little dip, - which served his purposes better because it sounded less severe than Panic. Hoover/FDR also gave us rough patch and tough times, which President Bush still uses.

Later euphemisms for Recession include:

- Truman: downward correction
- In 1958 JFK made up an Ike quote to say, 'We're now at the end of the beginning of the upturn of the downturn.'
- Which led us to the 1960's term, economic downturn
- Alan Greenspan, during the Ford administration, coined sideways waffle
- Carter gave us pause in the recovery, and someone in his administration used banana waffle rather than recession waffle.

There is a lot more to fear today than calling a Recession a Recession. We aren't Panicking are we?

Perhaps it's time to roll out Carlin's seven words and call the shots as we see them. **VOTE IN NOVEMBER!**

## ROBS 2008 Scholarship Winners



**HAPPY WINNERS HEADING INTO EDUCATION:**

(L to R): Cristalina DeNicola, Adrianna Earl, Donna Spano, Gina Tibke

# NEWS NOTES



On June 14, Solidaridad, AFT Latino Caucus, NY State Chapter presented 10 students with scholarships and laptops at a brunch at Bronx UFT Headquarters. **NYSUT Vice President Maria Neira** (shown at left) was the keynote speaker. Also present was **ROBS Editor, Chris Veech**, shown here with grandson **Peter Veech**, who was a recipient. He graduated from Binghamton High School in June and will attend the University of Buffalo in the fall. Brentwood's recipient was **Matthew J. Burgos**, who will be attending Dowling College. His parents both graduated from Brentwood and his Mom teaches in the pre-school. **Chris'** granddaughter, **Kaari Casey**, graduated from Huntington High School with honors, and will be attending Penn State in the fall. This is one mighty proud grandmother.

**Solidaridad celebrates Latino students who can, and do, excel in academics. This is the second year for this scholarship.**

There were a lot of retirement parties this year. Whenever **ROBS** members are there, it's amazing how in service teachers love to include them in the roasts. At **Patti Monsen's** (HS Eng.), the song for retirees in the Beatles Sing Along was "Getting Better." **Chris Veech, Bobbe Frankel, Betty Stosuy, Judi Weissman, Chico Frankel** whooped it up accompanied by Ross English teacher **Rob Mumo**. A great time was had by all!



We can't go anywhere without meeting fellow Brentwoodites! **Judi Wiessman ('07), Chris Veech ('91), Betty Stosuy ('03), and Patti Monsoen ('08)** bumped into **Janret Gewirtzman, (MS Librarian) and Elly Edelstein ('05)** at **Odets'** remake of "The Country Girl" in NYC in May. Had a catch-up session reunion in the lobby and were the last ones to leave.



Caring wishes go out to **Bob and Shirley Walker Lloyd (HP '95)** during a time of family sorrow.

In the last issue we asked if anyone knew where **Paula Freedman (SE '85)** was in Florida. **Edith Erder (NE '85)** in Delray Beach wrote that a recent newsletter of TRIF noted that she had died. **Carol A. Beedy, 66**, retired special education teacher died in March in Milbridge, Maine with her family around her. She waged a 7 year battle with cancer. Her husband, James survives her.

## **BIANCA PIRRO REMEMBERED: BY MARTIN HOCHHEISER**

On April 7, **Bianca Pirro** passed away at the age of 97. In a video interview by John Sherin a few years ago, **Bianca** said she wanted to reach 100. She gave it a heck of a shot! **Bianca** and her sister **Italia (86)** were an inspiration with their zest for life. Up until a few months before her death, **Bianca** was still driving (when **Italia** wasn't). They had a busy social life until then. You could see them at school events (any school in the area); senior doings – dances, shows, plays, spaghetti dinners, etc. They would even attend such diverse programs as diabetes forums at Good Samaritan Hospital even though they did not have that disease. They attended for the camaraderie and refreshments. **Bianca** will be missed. Our thoughts are with **Italia**.

**Gloria Hannemann (NMS '07)** our **ROBS** web person, lost her Mom, **Haydee Geluso**, after a short illness in April. She was a dear friend of **Marilyn DePlaza (NMS '88)**.

**Bob DeSoto**, Reading specialist at the High School, passed away in June after a long battle against cancer. He was 65. Also, in May, **Irvina Lew (JHS)** lost her husband, **Bob**. 152 So. Penataquit Ave., Bay Shore 11706. **Ellen Curio**, the wife of former school board member the late **John Curio**, also died in June. Our hearts go out to family and friends.





***Since we enacted the COLA pension law in 2001,  
the average retiree pension has increased  
more than \$100/month.***

***It is important that we  
receive the original form  
so that we can scan in  
your information correctly.***

***Please keep a copy  
for your records.***

***Please use the middle form for a direct contribution.***

***If you would like your contribution to be deducted  
from your pension check, use the bottom form.***

**Return the form to your local VOTE-COPE volunteer:**

***If there is no name and address listed above,  
you may mail your form directly to:***

**VOTE-COPE  
P.O. Box 5190  
Albany, NY 12205-0190**

## **VOTE COPE Pension Deduction Authorization Card**

The undersigned authorizes the New York State Teachers' Retirement System (NYSTRS) or the New York State Employees' Retirement System (NYSERS) to deduct from each of my regular defined-benefit pension payments the sum of ☐\$5, ☐\$3 or ☐Other \$\_\_\_\_\_ (per month) and to forward that amount to VOTE-COPE, P.O. Box 5190, Albany, NY 12205-0190. I understand that this monthly amount will continue to be deducted until revoked by me in writing.

This authorization is made voluntarily and without fear of reprisal and with the understanding that the making of contributions to VOTE-COPE is not a condition of membership in any labor organization, will not impact the provision of my defined-benefit pension and that VOTE-COPE will use the money it receives to make political contributions and expenditures in connection with federal, state and local elections. This authorization shall remain in full force and effect for all purposes until revoked by me in writing.

I expressly acknowledge and understand that NYSUT will determine the exact deduction to be withheld monthly and that any questions regarding the amount will be directed by me to NYSUT. I hereby certify to NYSTRS and NYSERS that I am a member of NYSUT, an employee organization entitled to receive union deduction payments as provided by law.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Pension # \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Local from which you retired: \_\_\_\_\_

VOTE-COPE is the New York State United Teachers' political action fund.

VOTE-COPE solicits and accepts only voluntary contributions.

Contributions or gifts to VOTE-COPE are not tax deductible.

# VOTE-COPE

## Opens Doors



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBER ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

LOCAL#: \_\_\_\_\_

The key to effecting change is VOTE-COPE. Through VOTE-COPE, the political action fund for NYSUT, we can have a voice in political decisions and regulatory changes that affect you.

The power of VOTE-COPE gives you influence in the places where the debate frames the future of public education, our health care systems, labor and the issues that are so important to you and all our members. Through voluntary political action contributions to VOTE-COPE, our union breaks through those barriers so we can advocate for the issues and legislation that are crucial to our people and those we serve.

### There's no easier way to support VOTE-COPE.

Please keep this top section for your records. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

## Contribution Card

Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_

*Make checks payable to VOTE-COPE and return this form to your local V-C volunteer (see address on back).*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

LOCAL#: \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBER ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

### This section for local records:

☐ Pension Deduction☐ Paid by Check # \_\_\_\_\_

Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

VOTE-COPE is the New York State United Teachers' political action fund. VOTE-COPE solicits and accepts only voluntary contributions. Contributions or gifts to VOTE-COPE are not tax deductible.



## Pension Deduction Authorization Card

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBER ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

LOCAL#: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I belong to the New York State Teachers' Retirement System (NYSTRS), or☐ I belong to the New York State Employees' Retirement System (NYSERS) and I hereby request monthly withholding of union deductions from my monthly benefit as permitted by Section 536 of the Education Law and Section 110-C of the Retirement Social Security Law.

NYSTRS or NYSERS is authorized to continue taking such deduction until NYSUT receives written notice from me to the contrary.

VOTE-COPE is the New York State United Teachers' political action fund. VOTE-COPE solicits and accepts only voluntary contributions. Contributions or gifts to VOTE-COPE are not tax deductible.

Return this form to your local VOTE-COPE volunteer. Please read and sign the reverse side.

## RETIREES OF BRENTWOOD SCHOOLS

### ROBS MEMBERSHIP 2008-2009

Phyllis Goodwin - President Harriet Pepine - Vice President Lucille Fink - Secretary Marge Kirchner - Treasurer

**Your dues for the year are dispensed as follows:**

**NEWSLETTER:** Whether you remain in the area or have relocated, you can stay in touch by receiving our award winning periodic newsletter that is filled with updates on member activities, topical issues as well as member written articles.

**MONTHLY MEETINGS:** You are welcome to attend our monthly general meetings. Topics such as Identity Theft, Hobbies, Home Repair for Seniors, Hospice Care and the History Project have been presented at our meetings. Refreshments are served. In addition, there are three social gatherings: the Holiday Luncheon, a New Years Breakfast and the End of the Year luncheon. There is a separate charge for these events.

**SCHOLARSHIPS:** ROBS provides scholarship money – which includes the Jack Zuckerman and Lilian Kelly Awards – for graduating seniors who are pursuing a career in education. Our newsletter is printed and collated by AHRC. This is another form of scholarship for the young people who work there.

**HISTORY Project:** You are invited to participate in an oral history where you are interviewed about your career, life and thoughts. A video (there is a minimal charge) is prepared for you. An edited composite video is shown at a membership meeting. This is a member only activity.

**MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY:** A yearly listing of all members, their addresses (including an alternate address) telephone and email address.

**ROBS WEBSITE:** [www.robsny.org](http://www.robsny.org). We have launched our wonderful website which gives you access to all things concerning the Brentwood School District. There are yearbooks, ROBS pictures, our newsletters, a calendar of events, links to other Brentwood organizations and historical information.

**PROJECT HOPE:** Each year ROBS adopts 3-5 families for the holiday season. We chose our applicants from a list supplied by Suburban Children. We will begin accepting donations at our November meeting.

**COMPLIMENTARY MEMBERSHIP:** At age 75, and after 3 consecutive years of ROBS membership.

**RETIREE COUNCIL 21:** \$5 of your dues entitles you to membership in RC21 and all of its' activities.

**RETIREE COUNCIL 43(TRIF):** If you are a permanent resident of Florida and want to join Florida based RC43, you must be affiliated with ROBS. RC 43 is a NYSUT organization. ROBS dues will be \$15.

In addition to membership in ROBS, we urge you to consider a contribution to **VOTE/COPE**. Vote/Cope tackles problems and issues facing educators still working as well as those who are retired. Vote/Cope was instrumental in obtaining a permanent **COLA** added to the TRS and ERS pensions. We recommend minimum donation of \$20 but please feel free to contribute as much as you can. We would like you to consider the VOTE/Cope pension deduction to make our bookkeeping easier.

## RETIREES OF BRENTWOOD SCHOOLS

**Welcome to ROBS.** Dues for the 2008-2009 membership years remain at \$20. This includes a \$5 participation fee for RC21 activities. **Please make your check out to ROBS. It's a great bargain.**

### **PLEASE PRINT NEATLY AND COMPLETE ALL INFORMATION. THANK YOU!**

Please complete the form in its' entirety as we will need all pertinent information for our Directory. Return the form by 10/31/08 so the Directory can be updated and mailed in a timely fashion. Dues are required by 10/31/08 and before 12/31/08. Any checks received after 10/31/08 will be deposited for 2008-09 membership but will not give you the opportunity to be included in the Directory.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Street

City State Zip

Dates\*

Phone #1 \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

- **Many of you have second homes. If you do, please list the effective dates for each address.**

Address #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Street

City State Zip

Dates\*

Phone #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Retirement Year \_\_\_\_\_ Building Retired from \_\_\_\_\_

Your Birthday is: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I **DO NOT** want to be included in the Directory.

☐ I am 75 years or older, a ROBS member for 3 consecutive years and entitled to free lifetime Membership. However, a fee of \$5 is necessary, if you wish to participate in RC 21 activities.

☐ **If you have not** filled out a Vote/Cope Pension deduction form, we have included one for your use. It would be appreciated if you would make your contribution through pension deduction. If you choose not to use pension deduction, make your check out to **VOTE/COPE** and send it with your dues to Marge Kirchner.

☐ I would like to be interviewed for the History Project. **Please do not sign up unless you intend to follow through with the interview.**

☐ I prefer to receive my newsletter only through the ROBS website ([www.robsny.org](http://www.robsny.org)).

Your check, made out to **ROBS**, **should not be stapled** to the membership form but both should be sent to:

Marge Kirchner

666 Hawkins Road East

Coram NY 11727