



PORT OF CALL

The newsletter that keeps Port's retirees connected and informed.

**PWTA RETIRED EDUCATORS CHAPTER
PORT WASHINGTON, NEW YORK
Fall 2017 VOL.27 NO.3**

NYSUT NO. 19 080R Visit our website at: www.pwta.us/PWRE AFT NO. 9591-R

JUST SAY NO TO A CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

When you enter the voting booth on November 7, 2017, you will be asked whether or not you want a costly constitutional convention to rewrite New York's highest law. The answer is **NO**. Such a convention would be exceedingly expensive and put the many benefits and rights, including pensions that New Yorkers currently enjoy, in jeopardy.

If holding a convention were approved this November, 204 delegates would have to be elected in November, 2018. State legislators and other elected officials, as well as political party leaders, would be allowed to run for the positions. Historically, when an official runs for delegate, the official wins. Each delegate would be guaranteed a salary equal to the yearly salary of a member of the State Assembly, which is \$79,500. The delegate receives this salary whether the convention lasts a few days or many months. If the delegate is a member of the legislature, that person receives both salaries. The convention would meet in Albany in 2019 for an unspecified time. After that, whatever was done would go before the electorate and could be passed or defeated.

In addition to the huge cost of hundreds of millions of dollars, the convention would expose the rights and benefits guaranteed in New York's current constitution to change or removal. Article V Section 7 of the state constitution states, "...membership in any pension or retirement system of the state or a civil division thereof shall be a contractual relationship, the benefits of which shall not be diminished or impaired." Therefore, New York State pensions are guaranteed by its constitution, and this cannot be changed unless the constitution is changed. A convention could put this provision in jeopardy. There are many other risks as well. The constitution protects the environment, especially in the Adirondacks and Catskill "forever wild" areas. It protects public education. It protects libraries, colleges, and universities. These and other important provisions would be put in jeopardy by big money and those with a different agenda.

The state constitution requires that the question of whether or not to have a convention appear on the ballot every 20 years. The last time that a Constitutional Convention actually was held was in 1967. Even then, it cost taxpayers \$50 million. When the changes went before the electorate, they were all voted down by a margin of 3-1. The last two times the question was on the ballot, holding a convention was rejected by the voters.

However, a constitutional convention is ultimately unnecessary. There is an existing far less costly legislative process in place to amend the constitution. The Legislature would simply have to pass a constitutional amendment in two legislative sessions, and then put it before voters in an election. In fact, there will be two constitutional amendments on the 2017 ballot.

Because 2017 is an off year, the question of a constitutional convention will be decided by a small number of voters. Therefore, all of us, our families, and our friends must make sure to vote on November 7, 2017. There is nothing positive to be gained by holding a constitutional convention; there is much to be lost.

So, turn the ballot over to the back to Proposition One, and just vote NO.

Hello from Betty Stetson

It is always good to hear about our "sister and brother retirees" and keep up with their news. One of my favorite activities since retiring is volunteering at Rotacare in Uniondale, NY. It is a medical facility open two days a week providing health care to people who do not have medical insurance. Doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses, social workers, clerical staff all serve on a volunteer basis. Medicines are also provided. Many of our patients suffer from diabetes and/or high blood pressure and require daily medication. Mercy Hospital in Rockville Center also provides pro bono care for Rotacare patients. It is a true pleasure to go there every week and intermingle with the staff and patients. My "job" is to translate for our patients and medical staff.



I had a wonderful trip to Santa Barbara in August. Other than Port Washington where I have been lucky to live for many years, Santa Barbara and especially Montecito would be my second choice. My youngest granddaughter, who is a college junior, is spending the year in Tokyo. I'm hoping to visit in the spring. Her mother, my daughter-in-law, is Japanese and we would travel together which will make the trip double special. I wish everyone a good and healthy non-school year.



Welcome to the P.W.R.E

A big welcome to our 2017 retirees, some of whom are pictured at our annual breakfast. This year's retirees are Deborah Bluver, Mark Brenner, Robin Cooper, Sheilah Fitzpatrick, Geri Ganzekauer, Catherine Harris, Helga Iannucci, Joyce Kinney, Ann Kopple, Debra Korba-Rapp, Renee Kornfeld, Jessica Marcoccia, Fredda Meltzer, Maryellen Noone, Kathleen Reilly, Risveglia Spinelli, Peter Travis, Irene Virgilio, Helene Wasserman, and Debra Zorkas.

Come to the P.W.R.E. Book Club



All are welcome whether you've read the book or not. If you plan to attend, please RSVP to the host. (Check member directory for address & phone number, or email.)

Date: Friday, November 10 @ 11:30 am
Book: A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles
Hosted by Evelyn Schonburn
Date: Thursday, December 14 @ 11:30 am
Book: Killers of the Flower Moon by David Grann
Hosted by Marilyn Gilbert
Date: Friday, January 26 @ 11:30 am
Book: TBA
Hosted by: TBA

http://www.pwta.info/PWRE/pwre_news/news_book_club

FRIENDSHIP/ REMEMBRANCE COMMITTEE *Norma Ziegel*

Get Well Wishes Were Sent To:

Trish Wright

Condolences Were Sent To:

Louise Dell on the loss of her husband
Mary Duane on the loss of her son (2015)
Linda Eckardt on the loss of her brother
Gloria Fishman on the loss of her son
Nicole Hamburger on the loss of her sister
Ann Kuhn on the loss of her husband
Lenore Illberg on the loss of her mother

The family of Joan Futter
The family of Geraldine Johnson
The family of Joy Lichten
The family of Irene McGirr
The family of Betty Smith

A \$100 contribution was sent to the P.W.R.E Scholarship Fund in memory of

Joan Futter
Geraldine Johnson
Joy Lichten
Irene McGirr
Betty Smith

PORT OF CALL
Fall 2017 Vol. 27 No. 3
Published by the Retired Educators Chapter
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A Personal Plea for Puerto Rico - Michele Weiden

Some of you know that I have owned a villa in Puerto Rico for over 30 years. Since retiring from Schreiber, my husband and I have spent the entire winter down there, on the beach, playing tennis, and building relationships within our community. Our community, Palmas del Mar, is in the town of Humacao, right about where Hurricane Maria made landfall. The devastation to this island has been horrific. There is no electricity, little potable water. Most of the communications systems have been destroyed, and food supplies are dwindling. While we do not yet know the condition of our villa, we think it survived without major structural damage, but the photo I am sharing with you is what is left of a Super Walmart Shopping Center 10 minutes from my home.



The President has declared disaster relief for Puerto Rico. The following defines the specifics. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/09/21/president-donald-j-trump-approves-puerto-rico-disaster-declaration>.

While this a good start, we all know that PR will need as much help as it they can get. The best way that we can help is to wage an ongoing campaign to keep Puerto Rico's needs in the forefront of everyone's mind once the news media stops covering it. It is great that some states including New York and Texas are sending volunteers to help with public works and other needs, but PR needs long term aid which will not be easy to obtain given its tenuous fiscal status, and the fact that it is a territory rather than a state. This aid must come from the federal government. I urge you to contact your Congressman and Senators and tell them to support an additional aid package for Puerto Rico. Below is some suggested language:

Dear Congressman or Senator

As you know, Puerto Rico was devastated by Hurricane Maria. Among the greatest damage is the loss of power and running water to most if not all of the island. While we support the President's disaster relief declaration, Puerto Rico will continue to need further aid to rebuild the country for the foreseeable future. This continued aid must come from the Legislative branch of the federal government. Puerto Ricans are American citizens and deserve equal treatment to the people of Florida and Texas who have recently had their own natural disasters. This applies to the US Virgin Islands as well. Please provide your feedback about what actions you will be taking to support these people who are in such dire straits and truly need our help.

Here is a link to a website that will easily provide you with your federal representatives. We all need to act now and keep the pressure on. <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/members>

Also, I would like every individual to consider making a personal donation to: unitedforpuertorico.com.

United for Puerto Rico is an initiative brought forth by the First Lady of Puerto Rico, Beatriz Rosselló in collaboration with the private sector with the purpose of providing aid and support to those affected in Puerto Rico Hurricane Irma and Hurricane María.

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Ileane Cooper Schwartz Scholarship for Achievement in Science - Michael Koenig

Ileane Cooper and Ron Schwartz were born, educated, and married in Pennsylvania. Both were offered teaching positions in Port Washington in 1970. Ron taught physics for one year at Schreiber HS and left for another district. Ileane taught science at Sousa Junior High until 1979 and then taught at Schreiber until her death in 1990. She taught biology, earth science, and computer science at Schreiber.

I met Ileane in Sousa. Our relationship transitioned from science colleagues to friends to Northport neighbors to godparents to her younger son.

Although she was a working mom with two children, Ileane arrived early, stayed late, and often had a 'working lunch' in her office mentoring students. She fought hard for all of her students and kept in touch with her 'kids' long after graduation. Ileane's two sons have families of their own. Ken is married to Becca and they have one son, Cooper. Ken is a nuclear engineer and lives in Florida. Jason is married to Colleen and they have two children, son Sawyer and daughter Maya Ileane. Jason is the vice president of finance for a non-profit in California.

Immediately after her passing a scholarship was established to honor her memory, work ethic, and advocacy for children. To date, 28 scholarships have been awarded and 20 more are anticipated. This is the only scholarship from the Science Department faculty. Each recipient receives a monetary award, and their name engraved on a plaque that is displayed on the wall across from the Science Department Office.

Ileane's legacy lives on in many ways. I have kept in touch with several of the recipients over the years, and they are still appreciative that we honored them. I have received many thank you letters from the annual recipients. This year's recipient, Jonathan Lin, wrote a compelling and heartfelt letter. He mentioned that he is a first generation child of impoverished Chinese immigrants. His parents worked hard and now own the Manorhaven Market. I contacted Jonathan and told him that Ileane's father and Ron's mother were immigrants, and we certainly can appreciate the challenges that faced the Lins in a new country. Ron and I arranged to have lunch at the family business. We met Jonathan, his sister and his mother. It was easy to understand why the science department selected Jonathan. He is attending SUNY Binghamton and promises to keep in touch.

Below is an excerpt from his letter:

.....I am a second generation Chinese American and a son of two once-impoverished parents that have since climbed the socioeconomic levels. I was born and raised in the United States, living in Fresh Meadows, Queens for a small part of my childhood and in Port Washington since I turned seven. Even until now, I work alongside my parents in our family-owned deli across the street from Manorhaven Beach Park. As for my future plans, I will be attending Binghamton University for this upcoming fall semester, studying business administration and management. I aspire to one day lead a corporation that develops incredible technologies to help the impoverished, the hungry, and the neglected. I am determined to make an impact on this world.

Again, I would like to thank you and the Schwartz family for honoring me with this scholarship. I hope to continue my quest in aiding those in need and to never stop teaching everyone around me. I hope that you will have faith in my abilities to accomplish these goals as I assure that I will do everything I can to never give up, to fight for what's right, and to always look out for others. I hope to stay in touch.

Jonathan H Lin

Feel free to contact Michael Koenig at mhkoenig@optonline.net if you would like to contribute to this scholarship and make the next 20 years even more memorable.



Making Strides Against Breast Cancer - Bonnie Utzig

Sunday, October 15, 2017 was the annual Making Strides walk at Jones Beach. The weather was not quite what the meteorologists had originally predicted, but we managed in the cloudy, humid 60's. Turnout was rather small from both the current P.W.T.A and P.W.R.E, but those that came were very enthusiastic.

At the time of this article our donation tally stands at \$1713.00 from the retirees. Last year's total was \$1650. Our goal for this year is \$2000.00 . Thank you to those who have already donated this year. Anyone still wishing to make a donation may send a check payable to "American Cancer Society" to Pat Lynch, 16 Beechwood Ave, Manhasset, NY 11030 or to Bonnie Utzig, 1 Ann Place, Port Washington, NY 11050. Please do this ASAP. Thank you.



The walkers from Port Washington this year were Bridge O'Keefe Green (P.W.T.A) and daughter Bernadette, Fran Clark (P.W.R.E), David Lawton, Trish Wright (P.W.R.E), Bonnie Utzig (P.W.R.E), Terry Pita, David and Nance Hinchliffe (P.W.R.E), and Greg Utzig.

Hello from Stanford, California - Nancy Lobell

I am still enjoying my work with the teacher education program at Stanford. Look us up on the web if you want to find out how lucky I am to be working with such a great program, STEP. Although my 70th birthday is coming this spring , I have no interest in retiring. If Hillary was ready for 4 to 8 years, so am I.



On a personal front Richie and I celebrated our 48th wedding anniversary and we enjoy frequent visits from Ellen and Steve. My sister Lynn lives nearby in San Jose, and all of us share the good fortune of helping my mom, age 91 and in good health, who lives with me now. My grandson count is now at 7, all boys and



everyone special in his own way. They give me more joy than words can express! I count my blessings daily and have wonderful memories of my great colleagues from Port Washington. If you are passing through the Bay Area please let me know .



Tiny Target in Town.

Try saying that three times fast.

I was delighted to see the large format four page advertising insert for Target's new products in the September 17th New York Times. Especially appealing to me was the accompanying egalitarian copy (in part):

“...where style belongs to all of us. Where the must-haves can be had by all.
...where accessibility is chic and what's in shouldn't leave anyone out...”

I was particularly impressed when I compare that Target ad with the seasonally issued, glossy, tome-like New York Times “T” section on fashion must-haves. That section's featured products that have nothing to do with me: I am not remotely interested in who is wearing what, or the in styles that seem totally inappropriate to life as I know it. Imagine how weird it would be to dress, for example, in a sheer top, over nothing or not much, on public transportation, probably paired with balloon trousers and Doc Martens. For whom is this style intended, and for what occasion? When I was much younger and a rabid devotee of Lohmann's, I prided myself on keeping the total cost of an outfit to a modest amount. There is some hangover of that for me, because I will probably never spend \$14,000 on an ensemble. (doubtless pronounced *on-semb.*) Probably not even \$1,706. I'm still hooked on neat and clean.

I do regret that nowadays much of our clothing is made in third world countries in unregulated conditions for meager wages, contributing to its low cost. I just heard on NPR that even the “Made in America” label can mean made in sweatshops in L.A. I can still sing the opening to the “Look for the union label” song of the Ladies Garment Workers Union.

I hate the expression, “Who are you wearing.” I mostly wear clothing, not people, except after my house fire, when, complimented on an outfit, I'd say, thanks to Carol's generosity, “I'm wearing Kratenstein.”

Now let's turn to undershirts, which are not yet a featured article of clothing in “T,” but available in a wide range of styles at the other T. I am actually quite concerned when I see so much chest exposed – shouldn't women worry about pneumonia? Chest colds? My mom used to say you'd have to suffer for beauty, but frankly, I don't find that exposed look so beautiful either. It's just not that flattering. I propose a new product: embellished or dressy undershirts. Imagine the excitement in the fashion industry when a whole new category of “must haves” springs up. I was once surveyed by the Times on my opinion of their T sections, doubtless hoping I would say, “I must-have those sections.” You can tell that they were sorry they asked me.



Hello from Patti Reed

Tom and I took the Airstream trailer for a camping trip to Moab, Arches, and Canyonlands National Parks in August.

Each year our city Broomfield, Colorado, celebrates the community each year with a parade and fair and a car show that attracts over 300 vehicles from all over the state. This year we won the Peers Best of Show Award with our 1957 Buick Caballero Station Wagon and 1950 Airstream Trailer!

Hello from Seattle - Elaine Berman

My life could not be better. Spectacular summer weather, never humid, always sunny, gave me many opportunities to take walks through the zoo, through a variety of parks, and along lakes, and to participate in many local excursions to local islands, gardens, etc. Now that fall is starting I have already been to the Seattle Opera and Pacific Northwest Ballet (really good), have heard the Mahler Symphony No. 2 at the Seattle Symphony, and have season tickets for several "cultural" venues. I play bridge and scrabble a few times weekly and exercise in indoor classes, in the pool, and along our garden terrace walks. I have many new friends (many from "U. Dub" - University of Washington) faculty positions, retired as Boeing execs, teachers...of diverse backgrounds and interests. Some hail from New York, and I have found a few Jewish friends with whom to attend High Holiday services. Cuisine is diverse and divine - nothing short of outstanding. I follow politics here but am no longer an activist; I did participate in our 2-mile fund-raising Alzheimer's walk (to replace my annual NYSUT 5-mile Jones Beach breast cancer effort.) Life as a real retiree is GOOD!

Do I miss you all? Sure. You were and still are lifelong friends, not replaceable, continuing to form the core that is now being extended. Do try to plan a West Coast visit when you can and let me share with you what I have come to love. Meanwhile, keep in touch via phone, text, email, whatever - PWRE members and its organizational activities will always be of interest and concern.

Bayard Cutting Arboretum - A Day to Remember



The weather gods were smiling on October 19th for our trip to Great River as a crisp, sunny fall day was ours to enjoy. The Great South Bay, the air and even some of the foliage sparkled.

The Arboretum, former estate of William Bayard Cutting and his wife, Olivia Murray Cutting, 691 acres, was donated to New York State in 1936, and is now a state park. At the time of the gift, Mrs. Cutting specified that the arboretum should "serve an oasis of beauty and quiet...a source of pleasure, rest, and refreshment for those who delight in outdoor beauty."

In the company of our docent, Tony, a master gardener, we toured two of the fourteen gardens. First, was the Woodland Garden, a natural wetland habitat of streams and ponds, ducks, swans, a giant turtle (who did not appear for us), and birds. Tony pointed out combinations of usual and unusual plants and foliage, some of which we will probably try in our own gardens. Next, onto the Perennial Garden with "a wide array of unusual conifers, perennials, grasses and bulbs selected for their interesting shape, texture and color." It was all so beautiful. Lunch was in the Hidden Oak Café, located in the mansion, overlooking the great lawn and the Connetquot River. In the afternoon we toured the mansion. That knowledgeable docent filled us in on the family's background, as well as details of estate life of the time in this Gold Coast South Shore community.

In the words of Pat Lynch, "It was a double header of fun—first the garden tour and then the house tour, both excellent. As for lunch, we could not have had a more charming setting in an elegant private dining room overlooking the water and the great lawn. Bonus, the food was fresh and nicely presented."

Although the walk by itself is wonderful, and soul-refreshing, a tour provides a chance to learn in interesting detail about what you are seeing and why it is planted where it is, as well about the evolution of the spaces. Free grounds tours are offered every Wednesday and Saturday at 11:00 AM, weather permitting. I would suggest calling in advance to see about a reservation. Entrance to the garden is \$8.00, collected from April to November. Tony suggested a May spring foliage visit. Horticultural classes are also offered. As a bonus, on your visit, you can arrange to have a Victorian Tea at the Café.

For more information: bayardcuttingarboretum.com 631-581-1002 . Hidden Oak Café (tea reservations) 631-277-3895 . Lunch available on a walk-in basis.

Marilyn Gilbert



Port Washington Retired Educators Chapter

Meetings will be held on Thursdays at the Port Washington Library on the dates and times listed below, unless otherwise notified. Please check your e-mail or www.pwta.us/PWRE for any meeting changes.

These meetings aren't just for the P.W.R.E officers. All members are welcome to attend.

2017 Meeting Dates

Wednesday, November 15th at 10:30

Thursday, December 7th at 10:30

<http://www.pwta.info/PWRE/index.shtml>

PLEASE NOTE: Checks for contributions to the P.W.R.E Scholarship Fund should be made out to the PWRE. Put the name of the honoree on the memo line or in a note.

Please mail to:

P.W.T.A

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