



PORT OF CALL

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

**PWTA RETIRED EDUCATORS CHAPTER
PORT WASHINGTON, NEW YORK
JUNE 2013**

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NYSUT NO. 19 030R Visit our website at: www.pwta.us/PWRE AFT NO. 9591-R



AFT President Randi Weingarten addressed those who attended the "Rally" against obsessive testing, held at Empire Plaza on Saturday, June 8th.

Picture Courtesy of NYSUT.org

After the dismal deluge of the previous day, the weather gods were looking favorably upon the thousands of Rally attendees who descended upon Albany as hundreds of buses converged from all around the state. The theme of the three-hour event could not have been made plainer: the main goal of education is to educate our children, not test; the idea of a core curriculum is not under attack, but there should be a moratorium on the testing of same until at least it is taught!



And paying the piper named Pearson puts untold dollars into Pearson coffers that should be spent on maintaining staff, smaller classes, meeting needs of special education and all students. The increasing influence of giant testing companies and the state's over-emphasis on standardized testing were addressed by John Nichols, noted journalist from "The Nation;" NYS AFL-CIO President Mario Cilento, AFT President

Randi Weingarten, UFT President Michael Mulgrew, many educators, including NYSUT President Dick Iannucci, Superintendents, principals, classroom teachers, and representatives of coalition partners. LI musician and activist Tom Chapin performed his classic "Not on the Test," and other musicians contributed as well.

It is to be hoped that now the "education gods," in the guise of the Governor and the Commissioner of Education, will take heed and replace all that is detrimental to good education with much more that is beneficial.



Elaine

The Two Photos of our local Council are Courtesy of Mary Anne Cariello

STAY CONNECTED! TAKE A STAND! GET INVOLVED!

From the Desk Of
Our President



Elaine Berman

Introspection: contemplation of one's own thoughts, feelings, and sensations; self-examination.

April, May seemed to be particularly tension-fraught, over-stimulated, action-packed months for me, my mind constantly working over upcoming events and agenda. As was my wont,

I pursued my usual meeting schedule, e.g. School Board and PWTA meetings, ED19 and RC19 meetings, LIRDC monthly meeting, RAC in Albany...

There were also the special events: ARA (Alliance for Retired Americans) bi-annual convention in Albany and LI chapter meeting at which Comptroller Tom DiNapoli was featured speaker; an evening event in Woodbury at which Diane Ravitch was principal speaker (addressed on page 5); an evening event for Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel; a guest appearance {mine} at a meeting of Manhasset Retired Teachers; Rally for public education in Albany; plus the myriad emails, phone calls, visits among locals and chapters needed to set up appointments and meet with the three state legislators to whom I have been assigned for lo these many years in my capacity as PAC liaison. Is my being everywhere always urgent? No. But it is my way. Sleep was becoming more restless - I was clearly on overload. But it did not strike home until my most recent auto accident - MUCH car damage, but fortunately no bodily harm. This was two days before I was to leave for a much anticipated visit to Chicago with Corey, Sonny, Sophia, Juneau, Jasmine and Jasper (the last four my grand-animals!), and five days before I was to head to the NYSUT RA in Washington. Timing, they say, is everything - and in this case, it was for me. Introspection finally kicked in, and I came to the conclusion that it was about time, in my 81-year-old life, to start to de-stress; i.e. maybe it was time to think about giving something up and "retire." **No, this is not by way of announcing anything -**

simply to think out loud.

H-m-m. I do enjoy all I do, and the friends that I have made along the way. But as I engaged in, and continue to engage in, introspection, it occurs to me to suggest it to the rest of our PWRE members. We are all members of the PWTA, NYSUT, ARA, AFL/CIO - we have hard-negotiated and fought-for pensions, health insurance, Member Benefits ... our in-service colleagues continue to maintain benefits of the Taylor Law, Triborough etc. We are urged to contact our legislators (state and federal) to sustain what has been negotiated in the past, to urge no change in Social Security or Medicare benefits and to give generously to VOTE/COPE.

Introspection time: have I helped in any way to achieve/maintain these benefits, or have I just continued to enjoy them without thinking about how they got there? Have I done the two easiest things: gone to the NYSUT.org/MAC site and contacted a legislator, and increased my VOTE/COPE contribution to try to allay the attacks on public education, unions and labor?

Have I volunteered for some one-time small action -- done something to help the smooth running of our own PWRE, or agreed to participate in one union action?

Perhaps we could each make an out-of-season resolution: post-introspection, perhaps we could each select 5 actions a year to protect our beliefs and benefits, and to aid our in-service colleagues as well as ourselves and our own families.

Then come next year's introspection, we might all find ourselves in a better place!

Have a great summer - introspection can wait until the fall!

Elaine



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

Date: June 18th
Time: 11:00 a.m.
Book: *My Beloved World*
Author: Sonia Sotomayor
Where: Marian Weissman's home
and

Date: Sept. 3rd
Time: 11:30 a.m. Right after the PWRE Brunch
Book: *Quiet*
Author: Susan Cain
Where: Norma Ziegel's home

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MAY 9TH: THE PWRE SPRING LUNCHEON



Elaine with guest speaker:
Michelle Schimel

Guest Speaker
State Senator Jack Martins

Jack Martins and
Elaine Labrocca



Nancy and Jane

Eleanor and Nicole

Ernie, Marilyn and Barbara

Dorothy, Rosemarie and Pat



Sue, Anne and Dot

Jean and Elsie

Evelyn, Anne and Mary Lou

George and Mary Ann



Bernadette, Elaine and Gail

Louise, Rosemary and Christine

Jackie and Mary Lynn

Merry and Donna



Barbara, Harriet and Elsie

Judy and Steve

Erlyn, Anne Marie and Kathleen

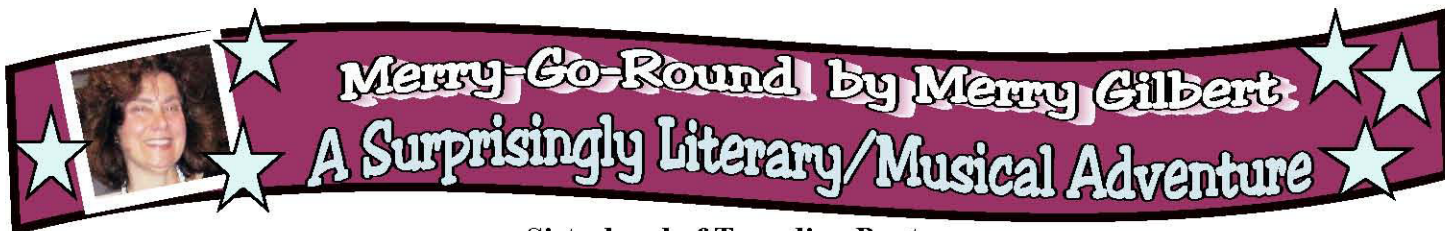
Mary Anne



Deanna and Carla

Rita and Sally

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Sisterhood of Traveling Pants
(& Shoes&Sweaters&Boots&Scarves&Gloves)

After the fire, we had to buy new stuff. When asked by friends, “What do you need?” I requested used clothing, since going into the boarded up house made clothing stinky, in need of daily washing.

It felt so good to walk in Yvonne’s shoes and boots, wear Elaine’s pants and T-shirt, Maria’s shirt, socks and pullover, Linda’s shirts, and Robi’s scarf, hat and mittens, etc. I was literally clothed in love.

Lots of people donated to our clothing cause (my husband is the exact size of Linda’s husband Bill), and we appreciated it all. When Bill meets Alan, he can see himself coming and going.

Musical Interlude:

Gonna Wash that (Stink) Right “Outa” My Hair

followed by:

“I Believe in Miracles” (& an ad for Staples)

Amazing how the smoke smell attached to our hair, as well as to our clothing. We had to shower immediately on arriving at our temporary quarters, so the smell wouldn’t transfer to the furniture and bedding, especially since, for the first month, we were lucky to be living in our neighbor’s parents’ home.

I learned how to “destinkify” clothing: aggressive detergent that comes with Febreze already added, and the addition of Oxyclean—soaked for at least half an hour, and washed twice or three times.

A far cry from the natural laundry products I have been using.

Now the miracle:

Once, in our apartment, the dryer’s timer knob ceased to function. I had to bring clothing to the local laundry: washed, dried and folded. No more smell: easy!

50 Latex Gloves

(actually 150, but not so titillating as a title)

When I bought the first box of 100 gloves, I wondered if I’d use them all. I am now on my second box.

The Wind Beneath My Wings

For calls, for emails, for a new mixer, an iron (thought you could straighten me out!), for a lovingly selected kitchen kit, for meals delivered, for lunches together, for offers of help, for wonderful advice, and words of hope: live, by phone, and by email. For the loan of things to replace mine that are being cleaned to be returned to me when the house is finished—

Thank you, thank you, you are all the wind beneath my wings!

Who says pigs can’t fly?

VOTE/ COPE DEPENDS ON YOU *from Mary Anne Cariello*

Before you retired, VOTE-COPE depended on you to make the voices of educators heard. It still depends on you. That voice still needs to be heard as there are still many reasons that retirees have to speak. We must speak against the many tests students are forced to take. We must speak against the teacher evaluations based on student test scores. We must speak against the efforts to diminish pensions and Social Security. We must oppose a two percent tax cap in New York. We must speak for more state money for local districts. What can we do to be heard? We can make the voices of educators count by

contributing to VOTE-COPE.

If you have not yet responded to the PWRE letter asking you for a contribution, please do so. If you contribute by pension deduction and can increase your monthly deduction by one or two dollars, this is the time to do so. Whatever you do to increase the sound of our voices will make a difference.

In the past, our contributions made many good things happen. Now we can help others and ourselves by continuing to contribute. Education and educators are counting on you.

Diane Ravitch Addresses Nassau Teachers - *by Mary Anne Cariello*

Over 1000 people, most of them teachers and other educators, attended a presentation by Diane Ravitch, research professor at the New York University Steinhardt School, and critic of **No Child Left Behind**, **charter schools**, and **testing**.



Diane Ravitch

and who turned over quickly so as to reduce expenses. Programs such as **Teach for America** are damaging because they send young people into difficult classrooms with five weeks of training. With high turnover and lower salaries more can be earned by the companies that create and fund charter schools.

Diane Ravitch was an early supporter of No Child Left Behind and charter schools, but after study and further consideration, she became a vocal opponent citing the intrusion of profit making corporations into education and the fallacies underlying Testing in the **Race to the Top** program. As the author of a number of articles and books, she has forcibly defended America's public schools and teachers.

Public schools, she declared, are essential to democracy. **Race to the Top** doesn't produce equal educational opportunity: it just produces winners and losers. Achievement gaps have not been closed, just measured by tests. She believes that kids need multiple ways in which to excel. Poverty (25% of kids live in poverty) and segregation are the root causes of the lack of achievement, not teachers.

She raised significant points in her well-researched and well-received address. She stated that corporations and other moneyed interests had become involved in education and were working toward making it a profit driven business for them. It was in their interest to have teachers who did not have due process protection

The presentation was organized by Nassau teacher associations to inform teachers, administrators, parents, and school board members of what is happening in New York and in the country. A panel made up of representatives of teachers, administrators, and parents followed Ms Ravitch's presentation.

Congratulations to Our 2013 NYSUT Journalism Contest Winners!



Marilyn Gilbert won First Prize in the 2013 NYSUT Journalism Contest Category: *Best Opinion Writing* for her March 2012 column: *1,2...Latest in educational improvement or the pitfalls of Reform*

Mary Anne Cariello won First Prize in the 2013 NYSUT Journalism Contest Category: *Best Profile* for her December 2011 article: *We Remember Matt*

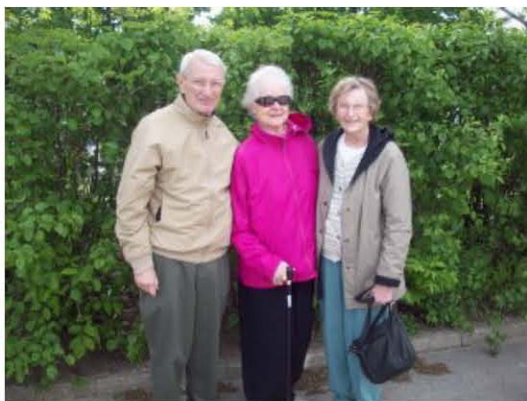


We Asked To Hear From You...And We Did!

From Sue Mittelstaedt: Art and I were on a trip to Indianapolis where Art had ASTM meetings to attend. Afterward, we drove up to see Jinny and Carl Burkland in Arlington Heights, Illinois. We had a great visit with them. They have a lovely place and really seem to enjoy it there. Here are some pictures of our visit.



Sue and Jinny



Carl, Jinny and Sue



Art and Sue with Jinny and Carl Page 5

YELLOW DOT COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE!

The Yellow Dot Program

A Project of the New York State Sheriffs' Association
in partnership with NYSUT



[Tape or staple here for privacy]

What is the Yellow Dot Program?

Yellow Dot is a free program designed to help first responders provide life-saving medical attention during the first "golden hour" after a crash or other emergency. A Yellow Dot in the driver's-side rear window of your vehicle will alert the first responders that vital medical information is stored in the glove compartment.

Background: At the 2012 Retiree Contiguous ED 51-53 Meeting, RC 43 delegate Tina Sharp proposed a resolution encouraging NYSUT to promote the Yellow Dot program. This resolution received widespread support and was adopted at the 2013 NYSUT Representative Assembly. As a follow-up to the passage of this resolution, NYSUT has entered into a partnership with the NYS Sheriffs' Association and has begun the process of distributing the Yellow Dot kits to NYSUT Retiree Services Consultants for bulk distribution at NYSUT events.

How does the Yellow Dot Program work?

The Yellow Dot Kit contains a personal information card and a Yellow Dot decal.

1. Complete both sides of the personal information card as fully as possible, in pencil.
2. Attach a recent photo of yourself and place it in a visible location in your car's

glove compartment. Complete one card for each person who regularly occupies the vehicle. See below to request additional medical information forms.

3. Place the Yellow Dot decal on the rear driver's side window to alert first responders to look in the

glove compartment for your medical information.

4. Update the card annually yourself or bring it to your annual medical check-up.

If you sell your car, remove the Yellow Dot sticker.

How Do I Get a Yellow Dot Kit?

Contact your [NYSUT Retiree Services Consultant](#) to find out where and when you can pick-up your Yellow Dot materials at a NYSUT event near you. If you are not sure who to contact in your region, contact Geralyn O'Reilly, NYSUT Retiree Services at goreilly@nysutmail.org. NYSUT is piloting this project for **retired members only** at this time.

Use Yellow Dot at Home

A Yellow Dot kit can also be used to alert those who respond to an emergency in your home. Simply place a Yellow Dot decal on or beside your front door and place a completed card for each occupant in a clear plastic freezer bag and place in a visible location in the freezer compartment of your refrigerator.

The **Yellow Dot Program** began in Connecticut in 2002. In addition to Connecticut, more than 25 states including New York, Maine, Florida, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Alabama, Alaska, etc. now participate in the program in some form or other. In some areas, townships or counties may have inaugurated the program but not the entire state.

FRIENDSHIP/ REMEMBRANCE COMMITTEE *Joan Gerken*

Condolences Were Sent to:

*The Family of Edith Cocopardo
The Family of Shirley Dailey
The Family of Rose Eisenberg
Charlie Lehmann on the death of his Mother
(Also the Mother-in-Law of Don Voss)
The Family of Mary McLean*

A \$50 contribution, in memory of each, has been sent to the PWRE Scholarship Fund

*Edith Cocopardo
Shirley Dailey
Rose Eisenberg
Mary McLean*

Welcome Our Newest Retirees!

COME TO OUR ANNUAL “*WE DON’T HAVE TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL BRUNCH*”
AND GIVE A HEARTY WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST RETIREES

<i>Liz LeSueur</i>	<i>Lenora Matricardi</i>	<i>Vickie Migatz</i>	<i>Jan Effman</i>
<i>Camille Corbisiero</i>	<i>Joe Bozzono</i>	<i>Mariann Dragunas</i>	<i>Bob Pfizenmayer</i>
<i>Kathy Reilly</i>	<i>Stephanie Tolbert-Johnson</i>	<i>Denise Johnert</i>	<i>Lisa Gewolb</i>
<i>Aldona Marijosius</i>	<i>David Baylen</i>	<i>Marlon Villalva</i>	
	<i>Barbara Pollock</i>	<i>Laura Giordano</i>	

Congratulations and best wishes for good health and much enjoyment in the days ahead.



We Don’t Have To Go Back To School Brunch
at Ayhan's Fish-Kebab Restaurant in Port Washington

Date: Tuesday, September 3rd

Time: 9:45 a.m.

Where: Fish Kebab Restaurant on Main Street

Cost: \$20.00 per person

Please make your check out to the:

Port Washington Teachers Association or **(PWTA)**

and mail it, by **August 22nd**, along with the completed form below to:

Penny D’Antonio
1425 Port Washington Blvd.
Port Washington, NY 11050

Please list your name as well as the names of any others who will be attending with you.
Please include a check, in the amount of \$20 for each person included on this form.
Send this form and the check to Penny’s address above.



will attend the “**We Don’t Have to Go Back to School Brunch**” at the
Fish Kebab Restaurant on September 3rd, 2013.
Enclosed is my check to cover the \$20 cost
for each person included in this reply.



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 the website for any meeting changes.**
These meetings aren't just for the PWRE officers. All members are welcome to attend.

2013 Meeting Dates

August 8, 2013 at 10:30 a.m.

September 26, 2013 at 10:30 a.m.

WANT TO GO GREEN? You can read Port Of Call right on the new website: www.pwta.us/PWRE. Choose the "PORT OF CALL" option and the issue you wish to view. The new PDF format allows you to print right from the website. Notify P.W.R.E. if you no longer need the paper copy.

PLEASE NOTE: Checks for contributions to the PWRE Scholarship Fund should be made out to the PWTA Scholarship Foundation and mailed to the PWTA office at 99 Campus Drive.

PORT WASHINGTON
RETIRED EDUCATORS CHAPTER, PWTA
99 CAMPUS DRIVE
PORT WASHINGTON, NY 11050

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

FORWARD SERVICE REQUESTED

FIRST CLASS MAIL