



PORT OF CALL

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

**PWTA RETIRED EDUCATORS CHAPTER
PORT WASHINGTON, NEW YORK
MARCH 2012 VOL.22 NO.1**

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

Dates
to
Remember

April 19th
The PWRE
Luncheon

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and
Registration
Form
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May 10th
The LIRDC
Luncheon

Information
and
Registration
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on
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AND THERE'S MORE INSIDE

Come and Take Your Place

The P.W.R.E. 2012-2014 Slate of Officers
For Membership Approval at the Luncheon



Photo Courtesy of: www.swanclub.com

...at Our P.W.R.E. Annual Spring Luncheon and General Meeting.
Before the luncheon, we will vote on our Revised By-Laws
followed by our biennial election of officers for 2012-2014
The slate of officers is to the right.

Don't Miss the LIRDC Luncheon

Meet Your NYSUT Delegates
and National Political Leaders
From Long Island.

Important Notice

LIRDC
(Long Island Retiree Delegates Council to NYSUT)

Legislative Luncheon
(Menu On Reverse Side)

Meet your NYSUT Delegates and National Political Leaders from Long Island. Get a chance to speak with our lawmakers at this crucial time when Social Security, Medicare and Education are being unfairly attacked.

Day & Date: Thursday, May 10, 2012
Time: 11:30a.m. to 3:30p.m.
Location: Woodbury Country Club
Cost: \$ 38 per person check payable to LIRDC
First registered basis - Space is limited!
Respond as soon as possible before April 1, 2012

President Elaine Berman



Co-Executive Vice Presidents Sue Mittelstaedt



Mary Anne Cariello



Co-Vice Presidents (Membership) Rita Auerbach



Tessa Jordan



Vice President (Newsletter) Jean Sellers



Treasurer Penny D'Antonio



Recording Secretaries * _____
*** _____**

Mary Anne Cariello

Corresponding Secretary Joan Gerken



*Open positions

Revisions to the By-Laws will be voted upon at the general meeting. If approved, the term for each office will be extended to three years and there will be an additional vice president for the Website. If you wish to see these in advance, please go to the website or request a mailed copy from Elaine.

*Sandminers' History Comes Alive
Read About It on Page 5*



Photo courtesy of:
www.sandminers.com

GET INVOLVED! BE CONNECTED! TAKE A STAND!

From
the
Desk
of
Our
President



So nice to meet you again!!!

As I stuck labels on our recent letter mailing, I

actually took note of the 500+ names thereon and what memories I recalled!

I conjured up images of some of you covered in chalk dust as you used the "black" board, others waving batons to lead bands or choral groups, athletic leaders of gym-clothes-clad classes, yet others engaged in one-on-one discussions of essay drafts to be rewritten or roles to be performed. In my mind's eye also were the aides, the secretaries, the administrators - all of us instilling in students the mindset to be the best in whatever path and endeavors they would choose to follow.

We are now retirees - but only retired from that daily classroom life, not from our lives and interests as educators. Freed from a set hourly schedule, we can in fact do as much or more for education than ever. And certainly the needs are greater! Our younger colleagues are losing jobs, are being attacked in the media as never before and are largely misunderstood in terms of their value to our youth. We can take the

time and make the effort to contact our news media, our legislators, our School Boards, our neighbors, our local parent groups to impart the truth that is not always accurately reported. There is a new NYSUT website that makes learning the facts and spreading the word very easy (mac.nysut.org) with up-to-the-minute accounts of issues and how best to address them. \$\$\$ to fight those who are fighting us, and our profession, is needed more than ever - so, therefore, is whatever you can give to VOTE/COPE. **Hear and be heard!**

Come to the LI Legislative Luncheon on May 10th (**Flyer, with Information and Registration form, is on page 7**) for input on issues of urgency to us as well as to future retirees' health insurance, Social Security, Medicare, Pensions ... speak directly to our Congressional Representatives and our two state Senators. YOUR support and YOUR voice are urgent. Numbers speak loudly, whether in presence, in words or in dollars.

We are 500+ strong (well, some stronger than others...) union members. We built our profession and our union from the ground up. Let's not let those who either do not know better, do not care, or with axes to grind take it all away.

FYI - At a recent regional retiree meeting, we had the good fortune to hear David Keefe, our representative on the Teachers' Retirement system (TRS) Board, address its history and success, and explain the advantages and stalwart reputation of our own pension system. I will not summarize his very important remarks here, as I believe they -or he - will appear elsewhere. However, if you would like me to fill you in, just email or call me.

Elaine



**FRIENDSHIP/ REMEMBRANCE
COMMITTEE** *Joan Gerken*

Get Well Wishes Were Sent to:
*Edna Edelstein
Connie Fisher
Dee Girillo*

Condolences Are Sent to:
*The family of Adele Costello
Marilyn Gilbert on the loss of her Mother-in-Law
Nancy Heller on the loss of her Mother*

**A \$50 contribution has been sent to the
PWTA Scholarship Fund in memory of :
Adele Costello**

Inside PORT of CALL March 2012

From the Desk of Our President...
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Come to the P.W.R.E. Book Club

Date: March 22, 2012

Time: Noon

Book: *Big Necessity*

Author: Rose George

Where: At the PW Library after the meeting

Date: May 2, 2012

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Book: *The Marriage Plot*

Author: Jeffrey Eugenides

Where: Marilyn Gilbert's Home

CHAPTER NEWS

The Amsterdam at Harborside...Retirees "On the Road," but Not Too Far



The Lobby

We didn't have to travel very far to our latest destination, the life care community on West Shore Road in Port, adjacent to Harborlinks Golf Course. The brand new six story facility has 229 independent living apartments, with lots of amenities in the common areas such as dining venues, gathering spaces, gym and heated indoor pool, among others. The Life Care Benefit (a kind of "membership" in the community) offers continuity of care when necessary in the Tuttle Center which provides enriched housing (assisted living), memory support and skilled nursing care for the same monthly fee residents pay to live independently. There is a one time entrance fee based on the size of the apartment, and at this time, 85% refundable to the resident or the estate if the person leaves the community for any reason.

Most interesting is that rehab services at the Tuttle Center's skilled nursing facility are open to the public, not just to Amsterdam residents.

The Amsterdam hosted our meeting, and provided a delicious meal at the end of the informative presentation and tour. Tours for individuals are available upon request at 516-472-6636, or for the Tuttle Center at 516-472-6688.

(This write up is meant to be informational, and not an endorsement.)



The Pool

An apartment living room

The Dining Room

SPRING IS COMING AND SO IS OUR ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON



Come and Join Us at the PWRE Spring Luncheon

Date: Thursday, April 19, 2012

Time: 12:00 Noon

Where: The Swan Club in Glenwood Landing

Cost: \$37 per person

Please make your check out to the *Port Washington Teachers Association* or (PWTA) and mail it, along with the completed form below to: Penny D'Antonio

1425 Port Washington Blvd.

Port Washington, NY 11050

Cut along the dotted line



Please list all the names of those in your party on the lines below and send this form along with your check to Penny's address above.

will attend the spring luncheon at the SWAN CLUB at Glenwood Landing on April 19th, 2012. Enclosed is my check to cover the \$37 cost for each person included in this reply.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

The Winning Ways of Carla Rueck and Her New Paltz Players



Here's an "action shot" of me splitting a ball at the second wicket. Note the \$600 custom carbon fiber mallet.

Chilton, *Serious Croquet*. The book highlights about 70 croquet players that take the game seriously and play in tournaments.

I just finished my third tournament of 2012. In 2011, I played in 22 tournaments and ended that year ranked 279 out of 995 players. Since it is so early in this season I am ranked 24 in the nation. That will change as more tournaments are played. The USCA says that I played in more tournaments than anyone in the US. In November, I came in third in second flight in the National Seniors and Masters for players over 60 & 70. My picture also appears in a book by Bob

These pictures were taken at the Palm Beach Invitational Tournament which is held at the National Croquet Center in West Palm Beach Florida. Six players from New Paltz College came to stay with me and play in the tournament. They took all the trophies. I had to play them all. They are fantastic players. I was able to stay alive and "eeked" out a second place trophy for third flight singles.



This is the New Paltz team of which I am now an official member. All but two of us took home trophies and some took home two. If the picture looks familiar it is because we decided to recreate last year's photo.



Justin took a picture of the trophy I won last year that is the Digby Bridges Trophy and it is on display at the National Croquet Center.

With John Osborn, I'm wearing a pink overblouse because my finals game was the previous day and on the last day of a tournament only the players that still have playoff or final games wear all white.



SNIPPETS FROM



NYSUT Leader Briefing for February 17th

NYSUT legal staff in talks on tax cap challenge

As you know, NYSUT opposes the Tax Cap legislation as highly damaging to public education. Now that it has become law, our attorneys have been reviewing every possible way to challenge its implementation and prevent the harm to student services. NYSUT's Legal Department is also talking with school district attorneys who are considering a legal challenge, including discussions about possible cooperation in any tax cap litigation.

(Courtesy of: NYSUT Leader Briefing 2/17/12)



NYSUT President Dick Iannuzzi speaks at Thursday's press conference on teacher evaluations with (left to right) UFT President Michael Mulgrew, State Education Commissioner John King, and Gov. Andrew Cuomo.

The historic agreement between NYSUT and the state that was announced Thursday finally settles the details of a statewide teacher evaluation system. It clearly limits the weight of students' standardized test scores; will help all teachers improve, and reinforces collective bargaining as the exclusive process for negotiating evaluations at the local union/district level. These were union priorities.

(Courtesy of: NYSUT Leader Briefing 2/17/12)



With recent education cuts being exacerbated by the tax cap, it's more important than ever to get out the "yes" vote on May 15, and NYSUT has online tools to help leaders do just that.

(Courtesy of: NYSUT Leader Briefing)



Phone your Legislator!
Call (877) 255-9417
NOW

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PORT-POURRI

SANDMINERS' HISTORY COMES ALIVE

By George L. Williams, Retired Weber teacher of English and Social Studies

In the 1940's and 1950's the 7th Grade Social Studies program was centered on the history of New York State. The course started with the History of Port Washington, currently taught in the 4th grade in our elementary schools. I barely remember the course on Port Washington but recall the rôle of the airplane in Manhasset Bay, the Clipper Ships, and the mansions of prominent American families, such as the Guggenheims, the Astors, the Harrimans, and the sand banks.

In the 1950's, I knew that sand mining was still a major occupation and that many of my students were descendants of sandminers. Little did I know that the sand and cement from Port Washington, called Cow Bay sand, was being transported daily to Manhattan and it was this sand that built the skyscrapers, the bridges, the tunnels, the sidewalks and the infrastructure of the metropolitan area.

Sand mining had begun in Port Washington in 1865 and ended in 1989. The largest sand bands east of the Mississippi River were along West Shore Road, but there were sandbanks throughout the peninsula – Port Washington North, Manorhaven, Baxter Estates, Bayview Colony, Manhasset Isle and even Sands Point. Over the years, there were thousands of workers and for much of the time, the work was hard, the pay was low, the injuries and deaths to the workers were many. It was a 2 ½ mile area with a giant "Washer" to purify the sands, a "Hopper" to manufacture cement, several general stores, hundreds of miles of tracks, a school (Hempstead Harbor School, part of the Port Washington School District), and barracks and homes which housed the sandminers and their families.

The sand on conveyor belts came from the "Washer" centered in the sand banks. The raw sand was cleaned in the "Washer," transported by the conveyor belts to the shaft or tunnel and sent under West Shore Road to waiting barges on Hempstead Harbor. It was shipped directly to Manhattan.

As the 20th century was coming to an end, the history of sand mining in Port was being forgotten as were the contributions of the sandminers to the building of New York City. By the end of 1990 very little remained of this once thriving industry. One of the tunnels or shafts was still there.

In an effort to preserve the history and culture of sand mining, the Port Washington Public Library's Oral History division under the director of Elly Shodell began, in the 1980's, to interview sandminers. The library published "Particles of the Past" and held an inspiring exhibit of the miners and their accomplishments, but, soon after, the impact of sand mining on the region seemed to be forgotten. After the sand mining operation ceased, the land on West Shore Road became the Harbor Links Golf Course. In addition, modern houses, a church, and the Amsterdam, a retirement community, occupy the area.

In 1996, I had written to the *Sons of Italy*, an organization which included many of the descendants of sandminers and asked if that organization could help to salvage what was left of the sand mining operation as a tribute to the workers.

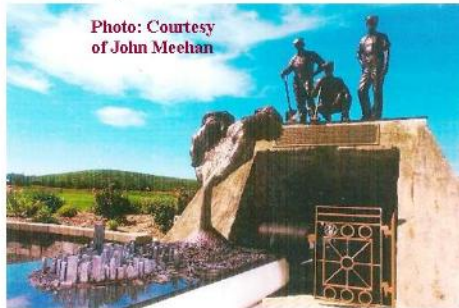


Photo: Courtesy of John Meehan

It took another ten years when the former president of the *Sons of Italy*, Leo Cimmi, suggested that we form a committee to work on the building of the park, now called the *Sand Miners Monument Park*.

We worked with former sandminers and the Town of North Hempstead, mainly Councilman Fred Pollack and Town Supervisor Jon Kairman and the Town Council, to make this project a reality.

Sand Miners Monument Inc., the organization that was formed, collected funds from residents. Ken Langone, the grandson of a sandminer, contributed to the construction of sculptures. A well known sculptor Ed Jonas was contacted and he designed several pieces. On top of the old shaft, he placed statues of three sand workers. They look over another sculpture of large hands pouring sand on a sculptured model of New York City. The entire park area, owned by the Town of North Hempstead, has been landscaped and, as visitors walk around, there are six historical pictorial plaques which explain the history of sand mining on the Port Washington Peninsula. Students from the local schools have already been brought to the area.

Frank Scobbo, a local contractor and member of the Sand Miners Committee, refurbished a conveyor belt which has been placed in the shaft, and Carmine Meluzio, a director of *Sand Miners Monument Park*, welded two handsome gates for the tunnel. As a young man, Carmine had worked as a miner in that very shaft.

In October 2011, there was a dedication to commemorate the park and the sandminers who were a vibrant part of the history of Port Washington and to the building of the metropolitan area. The accessibility of the sand led to the construction of one of the world's greatest cities, impacting the world.



The directors of the Sand Miners Foundation are: Anthony Scopas, Hon. Fred Pollack, Dr. George Williams, Saby D'Amico, Hon. Anthony D'Urso, and Robert Klugman. The president is Leopoldo Cimmi



Read Merry's views on education reforms and new programs

that go nowhere, views shared by many of us and our working colleagues.

Merry-Go-Round by Merry Gilbert

1,2...the Latest in Educational "Improvement" or the Pitfalls of Reform

Depending on how long you taught, you doubtless saw many educational reform movements come and go. Math, science, reading. No area left behind. Often worthwhile in and of themselves, these programs were designed to improve the curriculum. The problem was not the adherence to the purchased programs per se, as they had the potential to be effective. I use them as an example of reforms which were periodically applied like wallpaper (to an entire staff in the case of my former district, for example), without regard for the value of the skills developed by experienced instructors; substituting formulaic approaches without respect for a teacher's arsenal of well-developed skills, methods and effective techniques. Each of such programs was touted as the latest and best approach, that is, until the next movement/program came along. Then a new layer of "wallpaper" was applied. Learned anything that improved your teaching from the last approach? Well, don't let it bleed through.

I was involved in a stunning example at PS 48x in 1967. The school had been selected for a pilot study on the use of the Initial Teaching Alphabet, or ITA. This, a 44 symbol phonemic alphabet, had been designed (by the grandson of Sir Isaac Pitman of shorthand fame) so that each of the symbols represents one sound in a word in the English language. Unlike "traditional orthography," in which one symbol can stand for many sounds, each ITA symbol represented just one sound in a word. For example, the "uh" sound in onion would be represented in ITA as "union." (To this day, I am sure that there are some 50 year olds who had been in my 1st grade class who think that unionizing has to do with veggies.) A transition to traditional orthography ("to") would be made as the students became fluent readers in ITA. Not every child was fluent in ITA at the end of the school year. There was no plan for transition in 2nd grade. Children who read in ITA were cut off from reading for themselves the world of literature written in "to" until they made the transition. Most egregious of all, my class was a control group which was to be taught by the sight word "look say" method, using this phonemic alphabet!!

Can you say "Whole Language"?

The Newest! Latest! Best! and potentially the most destructive movement currently applied to education, now ruling the delivery of content in every area, is the over emphasis of the importance of standardized tests. Gone is the opportunity to foster fluent and flexible thinkers, critical thinking skills, creative problems solvers, or go with the abilities and interests of your students. There's no time for that now—except for lots of practice testing--children have to know answers by rote to questions that already exist—in preparation for **THE TEST**.

CARING FOR OUR INTERESTS

**** ALWAYS A FRIEND ****



New York State
Comptroller
Tom DiNapoli

NYS Comptroller Tom DiNapoli continues to have our best interests at heart -- nothing new ever since he was our 16th A.D. Assemblyman (and probably long before). Despite our Governor's push for a Tier 6 which would undercut the stability of the current pension system and siphon off thousands of new hires into a Defined Contribution plan, Tom has continued to state that dismantling current defined benefit plans would not be a solution; would, in fact, cost the state more to go that way and would hurt the state's economy. (Keep in mind that some 80+% of our pension recipients remain in, and spend their pensions in, New York State.)

Thank you, Tom, for your continued support of the interests of the "middle" class, of labor, and of retirees.

THE LIRDC LEGISLATIVE LUNCHEON

Meet your NYSUT Delegates and National Political Leaders from Long Island

Get a chance to speak with our lawmakers at this crucial time when Social Security, Medicare and Education are being unfairly attacked. In view of all of our concerns re the above issues etc., it is important that we have a large number of us at this event!

IMPORTANT NOTE

If you plan to attend, please send your check in early March since all registration must be in by April 1st.

The check amount should be \$28 (not \$38) because PWRE will be subsidizing \$10 of cost;

cut out the form (the box outlined in red below) and send it with your \$28 check to:

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

Important Notice

LIRDC

(Long Island Retiree Delegates Council to NYSUT)

Legislative Luncheon

See Menu →

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Day & Date: Thursday, May 10, 2012
Time: 11:30a.m. to 3:30p.m.
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First registered basis -Space is limited!

Respond as soon as possible before April 1, 2012

Legislative Luncheon

MENÙ

☞ Greeting Table ☞
Cold Display
Fresh Fruit Display,
Imported and Domestic Cheese
Crudites with Dip,
Antipasta, Grilled Vegetables,
Fresh Mozzarella with
Beefsteak Tomatoes,
Pasta and Seafood Salad

Seated Lunch
Mesculin Salad
Chicken Champagne/Crusted Salmon
Vegetarian on Request
Served with vegetables and Potatoes
Dessert
Tartuffo
Fruit on Request
Coffee, Tea and Decaf

LIRDC – Legislative Luncheon Registration Form

Name: _____

District retired from: _____

of persons attending: _____ Check Amount:\$ _____

I would like to be seated with _____ (we will accommodate as best we can)

Make check payable to LIRDC

Directions to Woodbury Country Club

Southern State Pkwy. Exit 28A N or

Northern State Pkwy. Exit 36B or

Long Island Expressway (Rt. 495) Exit 44 N

then proceed to Seaford Oyster Bay Expressway (Rt. 135) northbound to Syosset Exit 14E (Route 25 E toward Woodbury.) Make a slight right onto

Jericho Turnpike. Go approximately 2 miles.

Woodbury Country Club is on the right.



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. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend these monthly meetings.

2012 Meeting Dates

March 22, 2012 at 10:30 a.m. in the Lapham Room

Retiree Contributions to the Scholarship Fund:

In order to make your contributions for scholarships, TAX DEDUCTIBLE, make check out to PWTA Scholarship Foundation - indicate "for retiree scholarship" on memo line of check, and mail your check to the PWTA office (NOT to Penny). The PWTA secretary will copy/make note of your check being credited to our Retiree Scholarship account and notify Penny, the Donor and, where appropriate, the donee will be notified by our retirees of receipt thereof.

WANT TO GO GREEN? You can read Port Of Call right on the website. Just follow the link and the pages will appear just as they do on the paper copy. Notify P.W.R.E. if you no longer need the paper copy.
TO VIEW THE NEWSLETTER ON LINE, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE (www.pwta.us/Retirees).

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

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FIRST CLASS MAIL