



Wyoming County Retired Teachers' Association

FALL 2021

Good Times Newsletter

.. To Continue the Calling..

A Unit of the Central Western Zone
New York State Retired Teachers' Association
www.cwzretiredteachers.com

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President's Message

Welcome Back!

We are meeting on Wednesday, September 8, 2021 for our "NOT BACK TO SCHOOL" luncheon meeting at the Glen Iris Inn. Welcome New Retirees to the Wyoming County Retired Teachers' Association (WCRTA). I would like to welcome all new 2020 and 2021 retirees to the WCRTA. We usually meet twice a year, in the spring and fall, for a luncheon meeting at various locations around the county. Besides seeing and catching up with old friends and colleagues, we enjoy a delicious meal and have a chance to win a door prize or a 50/50 cash raffle. Programs are varied and many showcase local talent, businesses, agencies or organizations located "right in your own backyard" that may be new to you. For new retirees, the first year of membership is free, and for those of you who retired in 2020 this has been extended for you to 2021. Membership is open to retired educators from any school in Wyoming or Allegany County or any retired educator residing in Wyoming County. Guests are also invited to join, as well.

Retired Educators of New York *(RENY) Membership is for Everyone! This is the only NYS organization that advocates solely for the concerns of retired educators. Membership also offers cost saving benefits to members for a variety of programs. A RENY Membership application is included in this newsletter. *(RENY is the Doing Business As or DBA for the state organization formerly referred to as NYSRTA - New York State Retired Teachers' Association.) If you are a member of RENY and are experiencing unexpected financial needs, the DeCormier Fund offers a special grant for those who need immediate financial assistance as well as a monthly stipend grant for continuing assistance. This grant helps pay for hearing aids, dental or optical needs, medicines, necessary house repairs or any such expenses. For additional information or an application you may contact Karen Ritenour, WCRTA Friendly Service, myself or Anne Flansburg at 716-863-3631. Applications are also available on the RENY website, www.nysrta.org.

WCRTA Membership Form - It is very important that you complete and return the Membership Form. We need your contact information to keep our records up to date and accurate. As a cost saving measure, we would like to send you the newsletter by email in the future, if you choose. We will continue to mail you a copy if that is your choice.

I would like to say THANK YOU to the Executive Committee, listed to the left, for their continued commitment to WCRTA. They work very hard "behind the scene" for all of us. If you have any questions about WCRTA do not hesitate to give any of the Executive Committee members a phone call. I hope to see many of you, in person, on Wednesday, September 8, 2021 at the Glen Iris Inn.

Please continue to be safe and stay well.
Sandy Kushner, WCRTA President

Friendly Service Chairperson: Karen Ritenour

As the Friendly Service chairperson, my role is to support members by sending cards(birthday, get well, thinking of you, and sympathy), handle requests for financial assistance- Robert DeCormier (see below for more information), send emails, and present Certificate of Appreciation. I need help from all members especially directors to help me to fulfill this service. Remember, if you have reached your 85th birthday your membership is free and you become an honorary member as long as I have your birthdate. Contact me if you are willing to be a key worker to assist me in taking care of all members. Please call me at home 716-592-3962, cell 716-982-2046, or email at karen.ritenour1@gmail.com.

Here is my home address: 60 East Hill Run Springville, NY

Robert R. DeCormier Memorial Trust Fund

The recent Coronavirus outbreak may have impacted the financial stability and cause additional expenses for many people. Do you know any member that has been impacted by this virus or for any reason is in need of financial assistance? This assistance can be given for a long term need or for an unexpected financial difficulty. PLEASE refer them to the DeCormier Trust, as we have funds to assist. Money has been given to members for unplanned expenses such as: dental work, hearing aids, hearing bills, roof repairs, house maintenance, health bills and other such needs. The money is given as a grant with NO reimbursement is ever requested or expected from the individual applying. You may download an application from the RENY website:

<https://retirededucatorsny.org> listed under DeCormier Trust or under financial need”. For additional information or to request an application, please contact me at 716-592-3962 or Karen.ritenour1@gmail.com.

We lost two members 2020-2021 year. Alice Wilson died on December 23, 2020 at the age of 91. She retired from Wyoming and wanted to remembered as an educator, having taught for nearly 50 years (kindergarten to graduate level). Lucinda “Cindy” Parker , 65 on May 31, 2021. She retired after 34 years from the Warsaw School District as Family Consumer Science teacher. Cindy was very active in the community and was on Board of Directors for the Wyoming County Retired Teachers. Please keep these ladies in your prayers.

Health Care Chairperson: Judy Haberer

Congratulations to all the retirees of 2020 and 2021. I hope those who retired in 2020 have had an enjoyable year doing the things that you put off doing while you were working. To those who have just retired the next chapter is just beginning. Let this chapter in your lives be one that is all you dreamed of.

I am so glad for everyone that things are beginning to be like they were before March of 2020. It feels so good not to have to wear a mask in the grocery store or other stores in our area. I do continue to keep a distance in the store isles or in the check-out lanes, more out of habit i guess but I don't think it is a bad idea to give each other space. It is still a time of uncertainty because of the variances of the virus, and we don't know at this time whether we will need a booster vaccine to combat the Delta and the COVID virus only time will tell. It is up to each of us to do what we can to keep ourselves and others safe. We need to have good social manners, cough into our elbow crease, wash our hands, don't put our fingers in our mouths to open the produce bags, wipe off the handlebars of the grocery carts or other carts or baskets we use and give each other the space in stores we want for ourselves. Please stay safe and remember social manners.

Enjoy your summer, keep hydrated, use sunscreen, wear a hat, and enjoy the summer weather of Western NY. See you in September.

Community Service Chairperson: Claudia Cerasani

As we have done in the past, we will continue to support our military, Angel Action, and the local food pantries. At our fall meeting, I will **only** be collecting hats, scarves, and socks (dark colors) for Operation Gratitude due to the increase in postage. These items will be sent out in late fall.

Angel Action needs items for the children's Backpack Program. Some suggestions are: non-perishable foods for children, paper, crayons, other school items, and gently used books.

As usual, we will collect food for our local pantries. Please bring two or more non-perishable items that will be donated to our host's pantry.

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ON THE ROAD FOR RENY AND CWZ*

One of the "perks" of being President of the Wyoming County Retired Teachers' Association and the Past Co-President of the Central Western Zone is traveling to schools to present active educators with awards to continue their graduate work or a grant check to implement a unique new program for their students. During the month of June, I traveled to four schools within the zone to present both the RENY Hudson-Kramer Memorial Grant and the Central Western Zone Barrie Fleegel Memorial Active Educator Award.

Mary Coolbaugh and Jonathan Pragle, two science teachers from Marcus Whitman High School located in Ontario County, received a check for \$1,000 on June 4, 2021, as recipients of the Retired Educators of New York Hudson-Kramer Memorial Grant. The science department is designing and building a maple sugaring facility on the school campus. The grant money will be used to purchase an electric steam finisher and bottler that will allow the syrup to be brought to the appropriate temperature before bottling immediately. The facility will provide hands on, technology based lessons giving students real life experience for future college preparation, career and/or sustainable hobby skills. The facility will increase STEM skills as students benefit from the latest technology and engineering in an agriculture business setting. Students from all grade levels will benefit from the maple syrup facility at the school.



The RENY Hudson-Kramer Memorial Grant was established to support and encourage our active educators teaching in New York State public schools who have a vision to implement a unique project for their students at their school. The grant is given to honor the memory of Ross C. Hudson and Florence Coulter Kramer. The grant is awarded every two years by the RENY Central Western Zone. This year there were twenty-nine applications for this grant. The grant will be available again in 2023 for the ten counties that make up the Central Western Zone.

Each year, the Central Western Zone (CWZ) of RENY offers the Barrie Fleegel Memorial Active Educator Award to teachers, both in public and parochial schools, for use in defraying the costs of graduate work through a competitive grant process. Barrie Fleegel served in retired teacher leadership positions for Wayne County, the CWZ and NYSRTA. Barrie's life motto exemplifies the award: *To accomplish great things we must not only act, but also dream, not only plan but also believe.*"

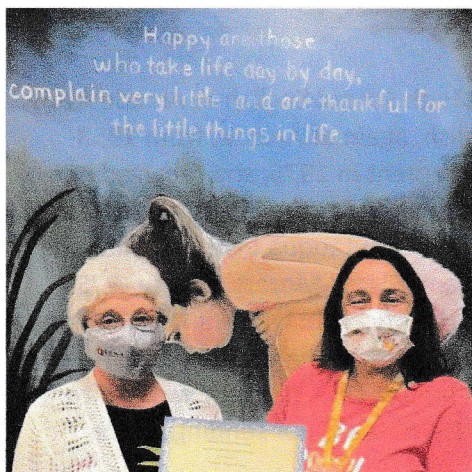
It was my pleasure to visit, in person, and award certificates to four enthusiast teachers who are greatly contributing to their students and their school districts. Their comments, stated in their applications, reflect their goals and aspirations for entering the field of education, and can most definitely make us feel proud to call them colleagues.



Perry Teachers receiving certificates to acknowledge their Barrie Fleegel Memorial Active Educator Awards on June 14, 2021 Kyle Russell, Sandy Kushner, Giancarlo Levano

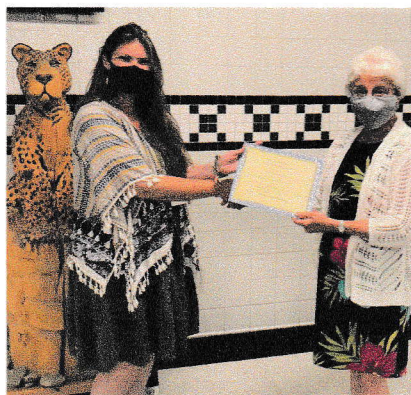
Both Kyle Russell and Giancarlo Levano teach at Perry Central School. Kyle teaches seventh grade science and stated in his application, "I entered the field of education to teach science to students in a way that they will understand and how to apply it outside of the classroom."

Giancarlo Levano is the instrumental music teacher. In his applications he states, "I am a first-generation college student in my family and have only been able to attend college by taking out loans. Education is a right that all humans should have. Being a part of that necessity and making a change in a child's life is why I chose to become a teacher. It is an honor and a privilege to create a learning environment that constantly develops the student's and teacher's mind. It is truly amazing to be a part of a field where learning can take place throughout any means, such as music education."



Cuba-Rushford Elem. PE teacher Janet Prentice and Sandy Kushner June 15, 2021

Allegheny County no longer has a retired teachers' organization, however, it is still part of the Central Western Zone. Cuba-Rushford Elementary Physical Education teacher, Janet Prentice says, "I entered the field of education because I had an amazing Physical Education teacher, and I wanted to be just like her. Physical Education is a field dominated by men, but I think it's so important for girls to see a role model that looks like them. I love that I can make an impact on a student's overall health and wellness that can help them achieve any goal they set for themselves."



Genesee Valley Central School - Kristen Sanasith and Sandy Kushner on June 15, 2021

Genesee Valley Central School's Kristen Sanasith is completing her Childhood Education Certification to include Birth-2nd Grade. Her application states, "I've known I was meant to be a teacher since the second grade. I am drawn to the earliest stages of literacy development. My goal is to invest in the youngest years of our district's program as we continue to support our young learners and their families."

Reading the applications for these awards and meeting these dedicated teachers in person was a joy.
Sandy Kushner

WCRTA President and CWZ Past Co-President

* **RENY** - Retired Educators of New York, formerly the New York State Retired Teachers' Association (NYSRTA)

CWZ - Central Western Zone of RENY is made up of the ten counties of Allegany, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, Wyoming and Yates

JANICE WEITZ TURNS 100

Janice Weitz will be 100 "years young" on August 13, 2021! Janice taught High School English at Arcade from 1944-46. She took a break to get married then went back to teaching English, again at Arcade, from 1953-1970. She was a media specialist in Ellicottville from 1972-1975. Upon retirement in 1976, she received her first retirement check for \$505 and said, "I can't live off this!" Janice went to work for the IRS as a purchasing agent. Janice has traveled all over the world, and she has been attending the Chautauqua Institute since she was five. Janice is an active member of the DAR, WNY Federation of Woman's Clubs, Mozart Society, NYS Retired Teachers, Wyoming County Retired Teachers, Mayflower Society, Historical Societies of NY and Florida, and the First Baptist Church of Port Orange, FL. She graduated in 1938 from Holland High School and Houghton College in 1942. At 100, Janice is still a snowbird traveling back to Port Orange every winter, from her summer home in Mayville, NY. Janice is still an avid Buffalo Bills fan!! Please consider sending Janice birthday wishes at her home 10 Spruce Drive, Mayville, NY 14757-9793.

(Thank you, Sarah Boehmer, for the details.)

