

# S.S.R.A. NEWSLETTER

Volume 18, Issue 4

May - June 2018

## From the Editor's Desk

**O**n February 26th the Supreme Court heard arguments in the case of Janus v AFSCME. This case will have dire implications for unions.....teachers, police officers, firefighters and all other public safety employees. Mark Janus is a child support specialist in Illinois represented by AFSCME (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees). The issue in contention is that Mr. Janus has elected not to join his union yet he must pay dues including public sector fair-share fees. Mr. Janus claims that these fees violate his first amendment rights.



In 22 states, including Illinois, New York, Connecticut and California workers covered by collective bargaining, are not obligated to pay fees for the political activities of their union. Janus is paying 78 per cent of the full union dues called fair-share. He claims collective bargaining is equal to lobbying and that as such it is a violation of his first amendment rights. AFSCME argues that much of collective bargaining involves wages, pensions, health benefits, holidays, working conditions etc. and is non-political and as such is not lobbying.

In 1977, the Supreme Court heard the case of Abood v Detroit Board of Education, where the Court unanimously upheld the maintaining of a union shop in a public workplace. Public school teachers in Detroit had sought to overturn the requirement of paying union dues on the grounds that they opposed public sector collective bargaining and objected to the political activities of the union. There is a lot

more involved in this case and in the pending Janus v AFSCME, too numerous to go into in this column. A favorable decision for Janus would not bode well for unions. The court is expected to make a ruling prior to the end of this session.

In the last issue I commented on the shootings in the Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. I was concerned how our elected representatives show verbal outrage but do very little to assuage the situation from occurring again. Since Parkland there have been a total of 17 more school shootings. The latest mass shooting occurred in May in Santa Fe High School in Texas with another 10 fatalities including students and teachers with many, many more injuries. A few days later the Lt. Governor, Dan Patrick, exclaimed that "Guns are not the problem." He blames the schools, stating that they have too many doors, as well as other factors in society.

Shortly after the Parkland shootings, I contacted my local congressman to voice my indignation that another mass shooting had occurred and asking for his support in preventing another one. About a week later I received a letter from him thanking me for calling and then expounding how much he has done to prevent terrorism in America. "Hear no evil, see no evil." All I could think of is Pete Seeger's song written in 1955, "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" and its lyrics, "When will it ever end? When will it ever end?"

Carl Haymes  
Editor

## Smithtown Schools Retirees' Association

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President.....George Makris  
Vice President.....John Pettit  
Treasurer.....Susan Fink  
Recording Secretary.....Donna Milgrom  
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Social Committee.....John Pettit  
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Sunshine Committee.....Winnie Snyder  
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The Smithtown School Retirees' Association is affiliated with the Smithtown Teachers' Association,  
The New York State United Teachers and the American Federation of Teachers

Monthly meetings are held on the second Monday of each month at 9:30 AM  
at the STA office

### *Congratulations 2018*

#### Retirees

Helene Suarez Doheny

Kim Emery

Claire Heatley-Mueller

Ingrid Hrvatin

Roseann Lazarus

Jeff Netter

Louise Prescott

Dolores Seyffert

Linda Stackow

Laurie Sweeney

Amy Mannarino

### **Our Deepest Sympathy to:**

The family of James (Jim) DeLouise,  
former science teacher at HSW on his pass-  
ing in February.

The family of Anna Gallo, former middle  
school Spanish teacher who passed away in  
March.

The family of Anita Grube, former adminis-  
trative secretary at several secondary schools  
who passed away in April.

Barbara O'Callaghan on the loss of her  
mother Kathleen, in April.

Larry Hohler on the loss his mother Marie,  
in April, four days short of her 100th birth-  
day.

Phyllis Heger-Heinen on the loss of her  
brother in May.



# News of Members



*As retirees, we have the opportunities to undertake many diverse and interesting activities and trips. Why not share them with us? We welcome any stories, poems, adventures or whatever you would like to tell your former colleagues.*

**Larry Hohler** says a pretty good year came to a less than perfect conclusion at our Children's Home in Kenya. A good harvest early in 2017 enabled us to sell over \$7,500 worth of maize flour and provide our kids with a large part of their consumption of porridge, ugali, and maize and beans. We began the September planting season with the hope of bringing in another bumper crop. However, in early December the entire Eastern Province was devastated by an infestation of army beetles and we were forced to spend \$2,000 to defeat them. In January we eagerly awaited rains that never came. The lack of rain drives up the cost of food and too many poor people are experiencing a food deficit. Kenyans, however, are a particularly resilient group. Our kids continue to eat on a regular basis because we were able to store maize meal before the drought. All of our young people started a new school year in January and several of the orphans we took off the streets in 2005 are employed and living independently. Two have married and become mothers.

In Kenya, education beyond primary school requires the payment of tuition. To further the goal of helping our kids to achieve free standing adulthood, we held a "Passion for Education" fundraising gala at the East Wind Inn in Wading River, NY on February 18th. Nearly 100 guests joined us for an evening of food, music, dancing and consciousness raising, highlighted by Skype communication between our Long Island supporters and the kids at the Home. They got up in the middle of their night to sing to us. The event generated enough income to pay for over two-thirds of the Spring trimester school fees for our secondary, trade school, and university scholars. Education continues to be the key for our young people who would otherwise be left behind by their rapidly developing homeland. (see more on this event on page 5)

## Congrats & Kudos

**Dieter Dose** has a band Called Flashback. This group plays 60's , 70's, 80's and some 90's music and also keeps the crowd entertained with Oldies Trivia Contests. Wear your dancing shoes. Once a month, Flashback is booked at the Pleasant Inn, in St. James, located at 268 Lake Avenue. For other gigs, dates, even a song list check them out at: [www.facebook.com/Flashbackclassichits](http://www.facebook.com/Flashbackclassichits).

**Florence Martin** is another of our talented musicians. Florence plays the bass in the Mandolin and Guitar Orchestra often known as LIMAGO. Her last performance was on April 21st in a performance at the Church of Resurrection Hall on Juniper Avenue in Smithtown.

**Bobbi Mastrangelo** is receiving wide-spread acclaim for her visual art creations. Let us know of other members who are in a "second creative career."

Special thanks go to Winnie Snyder, our "Ms. Hallmark," who acknowledges all major events among our members - Winnie sends greeting and/or sympathy cards to members.

(cont. on p.4 - see More News of Members)

(More News of Members - cont. from p.3)

**Carl Haymes** has a daughter, Linda, who is co-author of a book that is currently in its second printing. The book is entitled, *Case Studies in Applied Behavior Analysis for Students and Adults with Disabilities*. Linda is a Behavioral Psychologist, who is currently the Program Chairperson for Special Education at Touro University Graduate School of Education in Vallejo, California. Her book is intended for universities, agencies and organizations for training or course work. It is a combination textbook/workbook to prepare support providers.

**John Howe** and his wife Linda took several trips this year and sent us many beautiful pictures to go with the narration. However, physical constraints have prevented us from publishing it in its entirety in this edition. First, was a trip to Mesa, Arizona for a family wedding. Second, was a vacation on Sanibel Island, Florida. This was followed by another trip for five nights to Iceland. This was a trip with another couple and included a private tour. But you'll have to wait until the next edition to read about and see the beautiful pictures that accompany it.

### **BENEFIT HELD FOR HIGH SCHOOL WEST STUDENT**

Phyllis Myers, one of our SSRA members, has notified us of a fund raiser that was held for Patrick Kinane, a Junior at High School West, and a member of the school's soccer team. Patrick is bravely fighting a battle against Osteosarcoma Cancer. On May 26th, a benefit was held at St. Regis Knights of Columbus Hall, 2850 Pond Road, in Ronkonkoma. Food was supplied by Up In Smoke BBQ, Inc. There was a 50/50 raffle and a Chinese Auction. Sandy's daughter-in-law is a colleague of Patrick's Mom in the Huntington High School district.

If you would like to contribute to the high costs Patrick and his family are encountering, make a check out to Patrick Kinane and mail it to c/o Mrs. Janet Myers, 34 Great Oak Drive, St. James, NY 11780.



### **Congratulations 2018 Retirees**

Our best wishes to all our Smithtown retirees and welcome to the SSRA (Smithtown Schools Retirees' Association). The SSRA is an organization comprised of any former school district employees.....administrators, teachers, secretaries, custodians etc. 2018 was a dues free year but is normally only \$15 per year. We keep you up to date on any legislation that may affect your pensions, keep you tuned in to what other retirees are doing in retirement, publish a Members' Directory every two years, etc. We also publish a Newsletter four times a year and have an annual luncheon. You can visit our website at [myssra.com](http://myssra.com) and become more familiar with your retiree organization. Welcome aboard 2018 retirees!

## Membership Changes and Additions

### New Members

Laurie Sweeney  
14 Thrush Drive  
Smithtown, NY 11787  
(H) 631-724-3978  
© 631-219-5164  
[red3sis@aol.com](mailto:red3sis@aol.com)

Becky (Sohn) Van Cott  
6420 Boca Del Mar Dr., Apt 105  
Boca Raton, FL 33433  
(cell) 561-789-0540

### Changes

Dorothy Becker - 355 Blackstone Blvd.,  
Providence, RI 02906; 631-766-4109;  
[dotgail138@gmail.com](mailto:dotgail138@gmail.com) (no change)  
Michael Chick - 631-544-0664  
Mary Jean Reid - [blujean5@yahoo.com](mailto:blujean5@yahoo.com)  
Carmelita Trifiletti - 303 Archers Mead,  
Williamsburg, VA 23185,  
(H) 757-345-0625, © 516-456-9409  
Jack Wrightington - [jackandsue@att.net](mailto:jackandsue@att.net)

### Correction

Vince Amato - (address should read as:)  
24 Suffolk Down, Shoreham, NY 11786

## **SSRA Awards Scholarships to Two Seniors**



As is our custom, the SSRA awards a \$500 scholarship to two deserving seniors; one from each high school. The Awards ceremony was held on May 31st at High School West. The seniors selected this year were Alexandria Lotardo from HSE and Melina Zappulla from HSW.

The recipients were chosen by the Guidance Departments based on academics, community service and character.

## **Gala Held for Hope Children's Home**

by Larry Hohler



As mentioned in the News of Members article, our February 18th "Passion for Education," was a huge success. It was held at the North Wind catering hall in Wading River with almost 100 guests in attendance. The event generated enough income to pay for the trimester tuitions of 52 young people who attend secondary schools, trade schools and universities.

The next fund raising event, our 14th annual Kenya/USA Bi-continental Run, will be held on the Port Jefferson Station - Setauket Greenway at 9:30AM on Sunday, July 8 (4:30PM in Kenya). The entrance fee is \$25 (or anything you can afford). If you have never seen the Greenway, running (or walking) 5K of it will show you a part Long Island that you have never seen before.

For more information you can contact me via email at: [hohlerlj@aol.com](mailto:hohlerlj@aol.com).

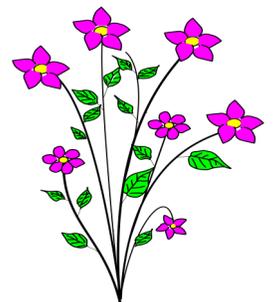
Marie Hohler, an early supporter of our Children's Home, died on April 22nd, 4 days before her 100th birthday. Her picture hangs in a place of honor in our dining hall.

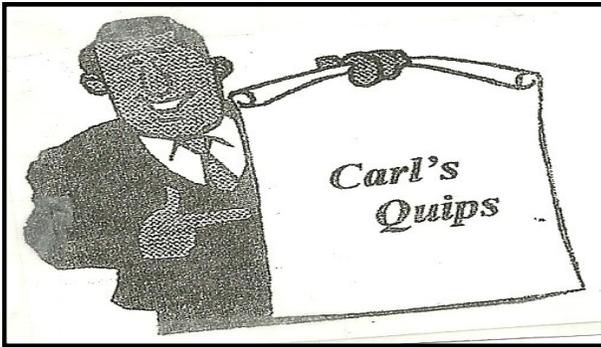


# SSRA Spring Luncheon at



# St. George's G. & C. Club





**Language is not properly the servant of thought but not infrequently becomes the master.**

••••Clulow••••

*Answers from students' papers collected over many, many years. Laugh or cry, but enjoy them. If you know of any and would like to share them, please send them to the Newsletter.*

Two difference between the earth and Mars are the color and the existence of aliens on Mars.

One factor that caused the fall of the British empire is that people got tired of eating fish and chips,.

A study can avoid being affected by individual differences by asking the same person the same question 100 times.

A liter is a nest of puppies.

The Magna Carta was signed between the English and the Morons.

Three relative pronouns are my Aunt, my Uncle, and my brother.

**97.6% Passage for School Budgets**

On May 15th, voters across the state approved 659 school budgets and defeated 16, a 97.6% passage rate. Of the 16 school districts that experienced budget defeat, seven were attempting to pierce their Tax Levy Limit and therefore needed a super-majority of 60% for approval. A revote on the same budget or a revised one must take place on June 19th.



**Summer/Winter Rental** - sleeps 14, 2 full kitchens, 2 fireplaces, loft with twin pop up beds, queen futon and full bed. Gas grill on large deck overlooking the lake. Raft to swim to and relax, outdoor dining tables, canoe available, minutes from town with shopping and restaurants. Golf at Okemo GC.

5 min. from OKEMO mountain for summer activities, bungee jump, and summer concerts, disc golf, Timber Coaster, mini golf, Swimming and fishing at your doorstep.

Winter skating on lake at your doorstep, sleigh riding down the hill, skiing and snowboarding and at Okemo Jackson Gore 5 min. rt. turn off Rte. 100 and no traffic. Killington, 25 mi. FUN FOR ALL FOUR SEASONS.

Still Available summer week Aug. 11-18;

Partial week is Aug. 18-22.

Fall foliage and winter times available except Dec. 23-Jan. 7, 2019.

**Call Mary Jane Casey 516-971-5101**

**SONY 52 ' TV MODEL KDL-52XBR**, in perfect

condition, plays, looks and sounds like new

Display technology: LCD

Maximum resolution: 1080P

Screen size: 52 inches (measured diagonally)

Display resolution: 1920 x 1080 pixels

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Depth- 4.9 inches

Note: Does not include stand

**Price; \$200**

**Call Sue - 516-658-7491**

## Financial advice shouldn't be a one-size-fits-all approach!

Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. -- the program provider of the NYSUT Member Benefits Corporation-endorsed Financial Counseling Program -- understands the unique benefits and retirement options of NYSUT members and how to address your specific financial needs.

**There are two types of services available: a Full-Service Program and a 403(b) Advisor Option.**

### Financial Planning Center

Member Benefits also offers NYSUT members access at no charge to an online Financial Planning Center. Choose from more than 100 modules on a variety of financial topics.

### **NEW! -- Student Loan & Debt Consolidation Services**

The NYSUT Member Benefits Corporation is pleased to announce the endorsement of Cambridge Credit Counseling as a provider to assist NYSUT members and their loved ones with better understanding their student loan re-payment options and/or debt consolidation. **Learn more about this new endorsed program by visiting [memberbenefits.nysut.org/cambridge](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org/cambridge).**



## Expert legal assistance for NYSUT members



### The program offers:

- Low annual cost of just \$85 (\$55 for retirees)
- Unlimited toll-free legal advice
- Includes Simple Will, Power of Attorney, Health Care Proxy & Living Will
- Two, free, hour-long consultations with a plan attorney

Did you know NYSUT members have access to expert legal assistance for everything from preparing crucial estate planning documents to dealing with traffic violations?

Provided by Feldman, Kramer & Monaco, P.C., the NYSUT Member Benefits Trust-endorsed Legal Service Plan offers access to a national network of attorneys that deal with personal legal matters.

For an additional fee, Plan participants can add an Elder Law Rider and/or Business Protection Rider that provides access to attorneys who specialize in these areas.



Learn more by visiting [memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org) or calling 800-626-8101.

For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.

May/June '18

## Protect Yourself From Scammers

Most of us are aware of common scams, emails from princes using poor grammar or phone calls about phony sweepstakes prizes. And we are confident that we would never fall for these schemes. Still, con artists steal billions of dollars every year from sensible, intelligent people. And you're most likely to encounter a con artist on the phone. Con artists work best when their victims are in a heightened emotional state - excited about their prize money or terrified because they owe a large debt. And that emotional state makes it hard to spot the red flags. But if a caller is trying to scare you or manipulate your emotions, that should be a red flag in itself.



### Red Flags and Common Ploys

There are other red flags to watch for. Does the caller use high-pressure sales tactic or threatening language? Do they ask for payment in advance for a product or service or require an unorthodox payment method, such as wire-transfer, pre-paid debt card? Do they insist that you act now?

One common ploy is a call warning that you will be locked up if you don't pay your back taxes right now. But the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) always notifies delinquent taxpayers by mail before they call. The real IRS will not demand immediate payment, ask for your credit card or debit card numbers over the phone, or threaten to arrest you.

Likewise, your bank won't call and ask for your account information. A legitimate computer company isn't going to call because they are getting messages from your computer about a technical problem. There are many variations, but a few basic principles can help you avoid scams.

Generally, NYSLRS will not call you unless we are following up on a contact from you (a phone call), email, online inquiry form or letter). If you get a call from us, you can use your NYSLRS ID to identify yourself. If you suspect someone is posing as a Retirement System representative, please notify us using our secure email form at [www.emailNYSLRS.com](http://www.emailNYSLRS.com).

### Ways to Protect Yourself and Spot Scammers

- \* Be wary. Sounds too good to be true? It is. If you didn't enter the sweepstakes, you're not going to win it.
- \* Don't provide your Social Security number, bank account information or other sensitive personal data to anyone you don't know.
- \* Sleep on it. If the call is legit, they won't mind you taking time to think it over.
- \* Hang Up! Don't engage with suspicious callers. They may be able to extract valuable information from innocuous comments (And never answer with the word "yes." They can record you and use it in a scam.)
- \* If it's an automated call or a number you don't recognize, let it go to voicemail.

# OFF THE CUFF

by John Pettit

**Spring Luncheon:** All our concerns regarding the continuation of our luncheons were set aside this April as we gathered at The St. George’s Golf and CC for what turned out to be a well-attended event. The beautiful location and guaranteed great food set the stage for a most enjoyable afternoon – virtually everyone went home with a “prize” from the Drawing Table which was the hard work of Sue Fink -- thank you, Sue.

As has been our practice, the attendees at the luncheon donated most generously to local Food Pantries (there are several to which we donate) – this year the total was \$715.00, which brings our total since 2013 to just over \$5000.00 – amazing generosity.

At our most recent Board meeting, we decided to depart from past practice of two annual luncheons and to devote our attention to a single one, next Spring. I am always open to site suggestions, but St. George’s remains the clear favorite.

**Membership/Dues:** As explained previously, 2018 is a “Dues Free” Year -- i.e., Any retiree who had paid dues for 2017, or who recently retired, gets membership for this year (as well as the “Free Lunch”). In the October Newsletter, dues for 2019 will be explained.

**ELECTION of OFFICERS:** As our SSRA Constitution states (we do have one, you know), the SSRA is to hold elections every 4 years for the offices of President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Recording Secretary. **We were shocked when, just before the Spring Luncheon, George Makris made it known that (due to family commitments) he was withdrawing his name from nomination for President.** A “Constitutional Crisis” was averted when Patty Stoddard was nominated for the office of President.

The nominees for elective offices are:

- For President: Patty Stoddard
- For Vice-President: John Pettit
- For Treasurer: Sue Fink
- For Recording Secretary: Donna Milgrom

Please vote using the mail-in ballot below to: **SSRA, c/o STA, 26 New York Avenue, Smithtown, NY 11787** or by email to [ssraeditor@optonline.net](mailto:ssraeditor@optonline.net). Ballots are due by Labor day - election results will be published in the October Newsletter - Gala Inauguration Parade and Ceremony to be announce. Write in candidates’ names may be written in for any position.

\_\_\_\_\_ cut here \_\_\_\_\_

For  
PRESIDENT: \_\_\_\_\_

VICE-PRESIDENT: \_\_\_\_\_

TREASURER: \_\_\_\_\_

RECORDING SECRETARY: \_\_\_\_\_

Print your name below (for  
book-keeping purposes)



## Witty One Liners

It is ironic that the colors red, white, and blue stand for freedom, until they are flashing behind you.

Today a man knocked on my door and asked for a small donation towards the local swimming pool. So I gave him a glass of water.

Artificial intelligence is no match for natural stupidity.

I'm great at multi-tasking ... I can waste time, be unproductive, and procrastinate all at once.

If you can smile when things go wrong, you have someone in mind to blame.

Take my advice ... I'm not using it.

I hate it when people use big words just to make themselves sound perspicacious.

Television may insult your intelligence, but nothing rubs it in like a computer.



S.S.R.A.  
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