

S.S.R.A. NEWSLETTER



Volume XV, Issue 2

November — December 2015

From the Editor's Desk

On behalf of the officers of your SSRA I would like to wish all our members and their families a happy and healthy 2016. Thank you to all our members who have contributed to our Newsletter throughout the year and or helped in its collation and mailing. Most of all, our gratitude goes to Mary Mills, our STA secretary, who helped in countless ways to make my job that much easier. Your Newsletter would not be what it is without Mary's advice, wisdom and assistance.

As noted in the October Newsletter, after many, many discussions on how and when to join the 21st century by distributing your Newsletter online, we have decided on the following method. Beginning with the next edition, all members without emails obviously will continue to receive paper copies. However, you must complete the form at the top of page 11 and return it to us. For those with email addresses, but still prefer to receive a paper copy, you must also complete the form at the top of page 11 and return it to us.

While on page 11, notice the form at the bottom of the page. A dues reminder! If you have not yet paid your dues for 2016, kindly use this form and return it with a check for \$15 made out to the SSRA. For our recent retirees, please note that SSRA dues are separate from any dues you pay the STA. We would appreciate a quick and easy transition into next year without individual phone calls or reminders. Remember once again, if you receive any of NYSUT's benefits, you must belong to your local retiree association.

Speaking of your local association, as noted in the



last Newsletter, our website is up and running and easy to access. Just go to: myssra.com and you are there. You will find links for access to NYSUT, NYS-TRS, SSEA, a Retired Members Handbook, past copies of our Newsletter and much more.

The contentious issue of Common Core standards and teacher evaluations continue to make the headlines yet there does seem to be signs of change on the horizon. The governor has formed a task force who were to hold 12 meetings in five locations around the state. The panel would hear from people with opposing viewpoints and then open to the public for questions or statements. Of primary concern are too many tests and the validity of student scores and how they relate to teacher evaluations. Recommendations are to be announced before the end of the year.

Human interest stories are often immeasurable especially at holiday times. On Veterans Day, I joined five friends for a quiet lunch at a small restaurant in Kings Park. Sitting at a table near us were three ladies probably in their 30's or 40's. About 20 minutes after these women left, we asked the waitress for our check and that's when she informed us that it had already been paid. We were the beneficiaries of the three ladies and their appreciation for the meaning of Veterans Day. We never even had a chance to say thank you. So ladies, whoever you are and wherever you are, our kindest thanks. PAY IT FORWARD!

Enjoy the holidays and a healthy New Year.

Enjoy your retirement!
Carl Haymes
SSRA Editor

Smithtown Schools Retirees' Association

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President..... George Makris
Co-Vice Presidents..... Florence Martin
..... John Pettit
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Recording Secretary..... Donna Milgrom
Newsletter Editor..... Carl Haymes
Membership Coordinator/
Social Committee..... John Pettit
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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

All members are invited to attend. We encourage your input.

President's Message

Season's Greetings to everyone! As I write this message, I ponder as to what to write. Since Carl and John will cover all the bases, I feel that this is an appropriate time for me to thank everyone on the executive board; everyone listed above. Things get done by them quickly, efficiently and without any hassle. Their time and talent in this organization are greatly appreciated; nothing happens without the combined efforts of all of them. So many thanks for a job well done.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year !
Enjoy your retirement!

George Makris

Our Deepest Sympathy to:

The family of Diane Enterlin, former health secretary at Accomsett M.S.

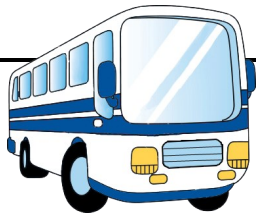
The family of Arnold (Bud) Cramer, , former district guidance counselor

The family of Michael Roussis, former Social Studies chairman at High School West

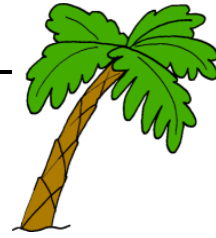
Our Congratulations to:

Elyse and Gene Magram
on the birth of their 8th grandchild, a boy, born
In Israel





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.

Joanne McEnroy - During the month of July my husband and I chaperoned a group of foreign exchange students on a bus trip across the United States. Call us crazy! I'm supposed to be retired from teaching! But, we volunteered to be part of the "Discover America 2015" rotary Exchange Student Tour - (105 kids, 7 adults, you do the math) - who would visit 22 states in 31 days! It was not always easy but it was an adventure! As a group we represented twenty-seven countries from around the world. The students had spent the year prior attending high schools, largely in the upstate NY and southern Canadian regions and this would be their 'dernier hourra' before returning home. Despite the fact that we visited some of the most beautiful and man made natural wonders that our country has to offer. The best part of the trip was the students themselves! It takes a certain kind of gumption to leave, at the age of 15, 16, or 17, everything and everyone that you know, for destinations unknown! To come to a place where you do not speak the language, ("I thought I could," most of them said, when asked about their English skills upon arrival) and live with a family that you know nothing about until you land on their doorstep!

But these kids did just that! And that "gumption" is what delighted us on every one of our days together! Their enthusiasm was contagious and their thirst to learn everything "American" made us pause to reflect on so many of the things we have taken for granted. (Like 30-pack donuts from Walmart and high school elective classes, for example) What I liked best about them though was the tolerance, maturity and kindness that I witnessed from each and every one of them throughout our journey. No cliques, no bullies, no drama, no angst, None of the craziness that we-who-have-lived it, has come to expect from a group this large (and that co-ed!). These kids were different because *they were different!* What set them apart is what set them apart!

"Why can't people be like this all the time?" a student from Taiwan asked after one particularly joyous day that ended with a jump-up cultural exchange dance party around a motel pool. "Well, that is why you are here, Ryokah. So that some day, they might be." He understood. No language barrier there! And so that is how we spent our summer vacation! We learned more than we taught We received more than we gave. And for sure, we were two very tired old souls by the time we got off the bus!!!

Larry Hohler - Yvette and I made our annual visit to Kenya in September to help celebrate the 10th anniversary of the opening of the Jerusha Mwiraria Hope Children's Home in Meru. The celebratory feast included goat, rice, chapattis, and cake for dessert, accompanied by many speeches and much singing and dancing. The orphans who were taken off the streets 10 years ago are now in their late teens and early 20's. Two are in technical training schools, four are enrolled in Kenyan universities, one is living independently, and most of the rest are in secondary schools. During our visit we took 20 year old Catherine Nkatha to Chuka to enroll at Rubati Teacher Training College. While driving her there, she told us she didn't plan to be a teacher for very long, and expected to be a head mistress with a school of her own before she was 30. We are very proud of our collegians but we are finding it daunting to cover the increased expense involved in providing for their educations. Several of our donors

(cont. on p.6, (see Members))



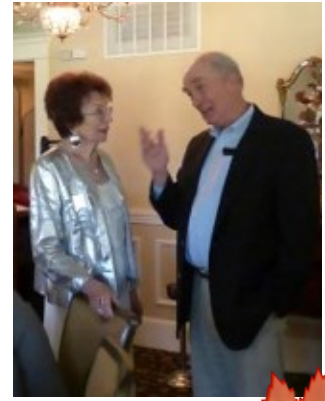
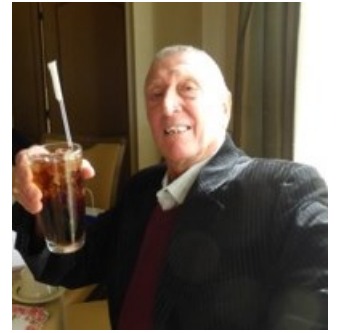
Fall 2015 S. S. R. A. Luncheon

October 14th, 2015

St George's Golf & Country Club

Setauket, New York





Members (cont. from p. 3)

have stepped up to help. Rocco Damato, a former Smithtown teacher who is CEO of the Bazzini Foods Corporation, has provided a grant for the purpose of buying and marketing maize, and part of the profits are being used to defray some of the educational costs.

Another highlight of our visit was the unpacking and shelving of thousands of books that were collected by the Global Club at Shoreham Wading River High School and sent to Kenya over a year ago. (Some of the books were donated by students at Smithtown High School East, Accomsett Elementary and St. James Elementary schools) Shelving had to be built in two rooms of our Technical Training Centre in order to accommodate them. We spent several days working with our kids to sort and organize this avalanche of reading material. Teachers from several local elementary schools came later to pick up books that will stock their buildings..

We find it amazing that 10 years have passed since we got in the business of providing for orphans. It is very satisfying to observe the transition from very needy street children to young adults who are on the way to developing their full potential. (See the photo on p. 9)

Bobbi Mastrangelo - In October, Bobbi received the National DAR "Women in the Arts Recognition Award" at the Lake Wales Florida Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The award recipient is expected to have contributed to her artistic field in an outstanding manner beyond mastery of technique. Ellen Gordon, who nominated Bobbi, was especially interested in the art work calling for environmental action: "When the People Care."

Two short TV interviews about Bobbi were presented followed by questions from the audience. The audience chuckled when they heard the name of the grass roots environmental Adopt-A-Spot group she founded in St. James in the 1990's: CLEAN (Committee for Litter Elimination and Neatness.) The audience laughed out loud when they discovered that Bobbi was on the Moscow website entitled: "Sewers of the World Unite!" The DAR was very receptive and interactive. (See photo on p.9)

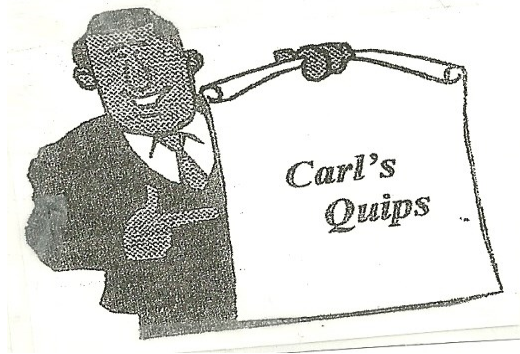
Elyse Magram - Elyse and Gene Magram are now living in Boynton Beach, FL after selling their East Northport home two years ago. At a Halloween party in our clubhouse, I won first prize as the wicked witch of the West. We spent some of the summer in gorgeous Alaska and Seattle. We took a cruise with a Cancer group (PAP) to South America and Central America. We did Israel and just last week added another grandson to our collection making one grandson, Ethan, in CT. and seven grandkids in Israel: 4 girls and 3 boys. I have a super special place in my heart for the kids and try to talk to each of them every week.

It is so beautiful here, although really hot. I do the pool a lot, paint in oils, play bridge, and enjoy the warm friendships which abound. I am treasurer of PAP and secretary to the Duplicate Bridge I also do a lot of the event photography for the community magazine. There is so much entertainment down here. One could be busy every moment if that was a goal.

The bones are getting old, shoulder surgery is scheduled soon, but life without snow for me is heaven. Wishing all of you a healthy and happy holiday season. (See photo on p.9)

Peggy Mulligan - Hello all! My daughter Deirdre K. Mulligan and colleague Kenneth A. Bamberger's book was published after seven years of diligent research and hard work. Deirdre and I were in Amsterdam, Holland, Dee at a privacy conference, and I as a tourist. Her book was released while in Amsterdam and I was thrilled to be at the book signing. Its title is: Privacy On the Ground: Driving Corporate Behavior In the United States and Europe and can be purchased through Amazon.

(See p. 11 for paper copy form and 2016 dues form)



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.

Q. What hemisphere do you live in?

A. I don't live in a hemisphere. I live in an apartment.

Two plays by Shakespeare are Romeo and Juliet.

An epitaph is a short, sarcastic poem.

Two qualities of Richard the Lionhearted were long, flowing hair and sharp teeth.

One of the main features of baroque music is it can't be fixed.

Two common pollutants in the home are my brother and my dog.

Fall Luncheon a Big Hit

By Florence Martin

Our recent SSRA fall luncheon was successful in several ways. First, it was a beautiful fall day, mild with the trees just starting to acquire their autumn foliage. Then, there were 70 retirees attending, a record number for our recent luncheons. Third, we collected more than \$750 for our donation to the Smithtown Food Bank. The food bank is a non-denominational organization that provides food for anyone in our area that is in need. We are informed that there are many hungry people in the Smithtown area and our contribution was graciously received.

When a food bank receives money rather than non-perishable food, they can purchase at low cost the food essentials that their clients need.

The generous attendees at the St. George Country Club were served a delicious lunch and had much time to mingle and greet old friends and those with whom they had worked. There were many new faces and recent retirees in attendance. The next luncheon will be held in April. Why not try it out if you have never attended one? We know you will have a wonderful time and your contribution to the food drive will be a gift to be proud of.

Miscellaneous matter to clutter your grey matter.....

On cloud nine: The U.S. Weather Bureau numbers the clouds according to an arithmetic sequence according to their altitudes with nine being the highest. Those clouds that reach the 30,000 or 40,000 feet and appear as glorious white mountains in the sky. So if you were on "cloud nine" you were at the peak of existence, or floating well above worldly cares.

Passing the buck: In card games, it was customary to pass an item called the buck, (a knife whose handle was made from a buck's horn) from player to player to indicate whose turn it was to deal. If the player did not want to assume the responsibility, he would pass the buck to the next player. Now synonymous with not accepting responsibility.

Off the Cuff

by John Pettit

Membership/Dues: Let me try to clear up some of the confusion over dues:

- SSRA dues are \$15.00 per retiree to be paid annually by December 31st
- those Smithtown District employees who retire during the year are granted complimentary membership for the remainder of the calendar year
- kindly include the info. Slip (found on page 11 of this Newsletter and mail your check (made payable to SSRA) to: SSRA, c/o STA, 26 New York Avenue, Smithtown, NY 11787

Since this is a one-man, “kitchen table” operation, it would be of great help if you sent in your dues by December 31. We are looking into multiple year, as well as, on-line payment methods — but not yet. My appreciation to those who have already sent in their dues. It makes the job so much easier.

Internet: This is the last Newsletter that will be sent to you in BOTH formats: in-print-form, by regular mail, as well as, electronically by email. Since we rely exclusively on “volunteer” help to print, assemble, collate, and mail each Newsletter, as our membership has grown, it has become an over-whelming chore, to say nothing of the growing expenses for supplies and postage. I certainly hope that you took a moment to look at the September/October Newsletter which was sent out via email in October. We are very concerned about those members who either do not use email or who prefer to receive their Newsletter only in the mail. Kindly use the reply slip on page 11 of this issue to express your preference - you may return this slip in the same envelope with your dues. If we don't hear from you, the next Newsletter (in March) will be emailed to you.

Fall/Spring Luncheon News: Our Fall luncheon at the St. George's Golf and Country Club was wonderful. About seventy people attended (one of our best) and everyone had a great afternoon. While it would be quite easy to return to St. George's next spring, we traditionally vary the location for the next gathering. I hope to book that site right after the new year. Any suggestions would be most welcomed (email or phone me).

I certainly hope that you had a Happy Thanksgiving and I wish everyone a Merry Christmas/ Happy Hanukkah, as well as, a Healthy New Year.

A Thought: Freedom is a fragile thing and is never more than a generation from extinction. It is not ours by inheritance, it must be fought for and defended constantly.

~ Ronald Reagan

New or Returning Members (add these names to the 2015 - 17 Directory)

Thomas DeBello
4940 Merrick Road - #346
Massapequa Park, NY 11762
516-848-4169
setdebello@juno.com

Linda Howatt
5 Masefield Drive
Greenlawn, NY 11740
516-448-5076
ljhowatt@yahoo.com

Carol Molack
36 Hamlet Woods Drive
St. James, NY 11780
631-584-4480
cmolack@hotmail.com

George Harsch
9 Shady Tree Lane
Pt. Jefferson, NY 11777
631-473-2811
skilledbeaver4@aol.com

Robert Lynn
3 Woodrow Lane
Smithtown, NY 11787
631-265-0109

Pat Stoddard
400 Gibbs Pond Road
Nesconset, NY 11767
631-585-8316
pstoddard@gmmail.com

Changes to make in the 2015-17 Directory

Vincent Amato - 12836 Richezza Drive, Venice, FL 34293

Mary Jane Casey - mjcasey9010@tds.net

Beverly Daffner - 518-403-4037

Sara Dunne - 355 So. Spring Hill Road, Suite 2048, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050, 717-409-6563

Kenno Merrihew - 2025 NE 44th Ave., #518 Portland, OR 97213

Patricia Metz - mapj@optonline.net

Grace Pergolizzi - gperg@gmail.com

Thank you

from the Cramer family

The Cramer family wanted to thank everyone for all their care and concern. Bud had been in so many Smithtown schools, and so many people showed up at the Wednesday wakes.

Get well wishes to....

Nanette Cuomo

as she recovers from hip surgery



↑ Elyse and Gene Magram. She won First Prize for her "Wicked Witch of the West Costume"



Yvette Hohler, at Nkubu Polytechnic Trade School, ↑ with Joseph Kirima Rwito, and 17 year old Elosy Kinya, - a student from their Hope Childrens' Foundation school in Kenya.



Bobbi Mastrangelo with her environmental mixed media art: "When the People Care" ↓

Photos from News of Members:



The Value of NYSUT Membership

You may not be aware that your NYSUT membership allows you to enjoy the benefits of the more than 40 programs & services endorsed by NYSUT Member Benefits, including a variety of quality, competitive insurance plans.

Member Benefits strives to provide the highest-quality programs for NYSUT members and closely scrutinizes all proposals from reputable vendors before any endorsements are given.

While we work continuously to maintain quality benefit programs at competitive prices, you are encouraged to shop and compare before making any purchasing decisions.



Are you ready to answer these questions?

What would happen if you suddenly died? Have you ever considered what would happen to your spouse and/or children? Take a few moments and answer these questions now:

- 1) *Would your loved ones be able to afford their current home?*
- 2) *Could your loved ones continue to pay regular bills and maintain their medical coverage?*
- 3) *Would your loved ones be able to plan for your final funeral expenses?*

If your answer to the above questions is "No" or "I don't know," consider enrolling in the NYSUT Member Benefits Trust-endorsed Term Life or Level Term Life Insurance Plans. Both of these plans allow you to select the plan and benefit amount that best meets your specific needs.

Visit the NYSUT Member Benefits website at memberbenefits.nysut.org or call 800-626-8101 for specific details about these plans.

The issuance of a Certificate of Insurance or payment of benefits will depend upon the answers given in the application and the truthfulness of those answers. Additional underwriting requirements may be needed.

Member Benefits has an endorsement arrangement with its endorsed insurance provider of 7.61% of earned premiums for these programs. All such payments to Member Benefits are used solely to defray the costs of administering its various programs and, where appropriate, to enhance them. The insurer pools the premiums of Member Benefits participants who are insured for the purposes of determining premium rates and accounting. Coverage outside of these plans may have rates and terms that are not the same as those obtainable through Member Benefits. The insurer or Member Benefits may hold premium reserves that may be used to offset rate increases and/or fund such other expenses related to the plan as determined appropriate by Member Benefits. Member Benefits acts as your advocate; please contact Member Benefits at 800-626-8101 if you experience a problem with any endorsed program.



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.

Nov./Dec. '15



I Want A Paper Copy of the Newsletter!

For all members who do not have email addresses **OR** have one, but prefer to receive a paper copy of the Newsletter, you **MUST** fill out the form below and return it to:

SSRA office
26 New York Avenue, Smithtown, NY 11787.

Name _____

Street Address _____ Phone No. _____

City/Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

You May Use One Envelope for Both Forms

Have You Paid Your Dues For 2016?

It is almost 2016 and time to once again renew your **SSRA** membership. The dues for 2016 are \$15 and as a reminder, we operate on a calendar year and these dues are independent of the STA. You can help reduce our mailing costs by completing the form below and mailing it along with a check for \$15 payable to the **SSRA**.

Please note the following:

1. If you were a member all of 2015, kindly pay the \$15
2. If you retired in June, 2015, you were an honorary member for the remainder of 2015, kindly pay the \$15 (**If you subscribe to any of NYSUT's benefits, you are required by law to belong to your local retiree association**)
3. If you joined the SSRA after Sept. 1, 2015, you are already paid for 2016

Kindly cut out the form below and mail with your check to:

SSRA
26 New York Avenue
Smithtown, NY 11787



(For those with more than one address please list only your primary one)

Name: _____

Year Retired : _____

Street Address: _____

Apt. #: _____

City/Town: _____

State: _____ Zip _____

Telephone No.: _____ Email Address: _____

Kindly circle any of the above if it is new to us. Do not circle any updates to the 2015-17 Members' Directory if you have already given it to us. These changes are already in our date base.

*S.S.R.A.
26 New York Avenue
Smithtown, NY 11787*