

# Annual Meeting

## Half Hollow Hills Active Retired Teachers

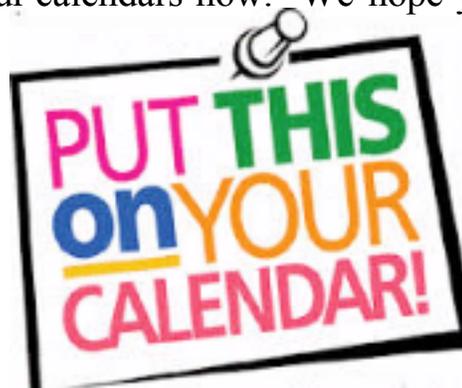
**Friday, May 20th**

**The NYSUT Regional Office, Hauppauge  
150 Vanderbilt Motor Parkway, Suite 306  
631-273-8822  
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 Noon**

Come join us for our annual HHHART meeting. Coffee, tea, juices, and morning breads will be served. Please take note of this change in venue. The Executive Board has invited Mel Stern, Richard Lee, and Richard Haase to take part in our informational meeting.

- Mel Stern is the President of RC 20 and our go-to person for political action info.
- Richard Lee will address the Health Care Advocacy Program and Insurance.
- Richard Haase, the President of HHHTA, will share current HHH happenings

This is a great opportunity to gather information that pertains to teachers in this election year. Mark your calendars now. We hope you can share a “cup of Joe” with us.





--- *The President's Message* ---

Happy Spring—although it is 29 degrees as I write this!

The featured item in Newsday today gave the statistics on the number of students opting out of the English Language Arts test, the first day of the Common Core Testing. Suffolk County had 56.7% and Nassau County had 44.6% boycotting the test. There was also a list by districts. HHH did not respond (along with 49 others) to the survey. The percentages opting out for the 74 reporting districts indicate that there is a large percentage of parents who are still opposed and consider the tests to be not in the best interests of their children. The message this sent to the Governor, the Board of Regents, and the State Ed. Department was "Fix it in its entirety and fix it now" said the founder of the Opt-Out network, Jeanette Deutermann, a parent and former teacher. It is predicted that the numbers refusing will increase over the 6 full days of testing to come.

One of the outcomes of NY's new budget was that we won the battle over the IRMA (Income Related Monthly Adjustment) reimbursement which many of our members were concerned about. Also the Part B premium of our health insurance will not be going up. It has been frozen at \$104.90. Both of these were held in place due to the outpouring of calls and messages to NYSUT and Retirees' Legislators by our members. Keep up the good work!

If you are a spouse of a deceased HHH member, you may become an Associate Member for \$50 in order to ensure your benefits such as Life insurance. Be sure that HHH Benefits Office has a copy of your marriage license and either a tax return or bank statement.

I received a copy of The Vote-Cope Retiree contributions for 2015 by district and by average contribution. It was disappointing to see that HHHART's amount went down from \$13.12 in 2014 to \$12.90 in 2015. That placed us at #17 from the top amount of \$30.53. I know that quite a few of our members did increase their contributions last year. The rest of us should consider doing the same. We need to support NYSUT's efforts on our behalf. And, in case you weren't sure, our V-C money is not used for political purposes. It is used for such things as legal actions like the recent Supreme Court Friedrich's case which we did not lose. There are several legal actions pending which are protecting our benefits.

Hope to see many of you at our Annual Meeting on May 20th at NYSUT's Suffolk office in Hauppauge. You can learn about recent developments and get answers to your questions about benefits. See the cover in this newsletter. Hope to see you. Also check the calendar on page 8 for the dates of our Annual Luncheon in September, the NYSUT Regional Conference and the CORTLI Luncheon in October.

*Joan Petroske*



**Input / Output**



The 2016 Presidential election has been sucking up the energy and it's only April. We have the conventions to look forward to – and, finally, November 8th will be here. Don't think we will have to remind people to vote.

2017 is a critical year for us. We have to be actively involved in encouraging a NO-vote for a Constitutional Convention. You will be hearing much more from NYSUT and HHHART related to the importance of a vote AGAINST it.

*Sandy and Barbara*



*--- Keep In Touch ---*



The summer (2015) has sped by with a lovely trip to Italy with my entire family, children and grandchildren. We did tours and ended our stay in the town where my Mom and Dad were born. I was happy that the kids could meet their cousins also. Everyone was thrilled with the trip. Italy is so fabulous. So much to see, we'll have to go back. I have been playing in some bridge and tennis tournaments. I'm very busy, well, and happy.

*Fran Kranz*

In December, I completed my second tenure with my Town Home Owners association --- and am looking forward to new challenges. I've begun to follow another path in my life below the Mason-Dixon Line.

As a member of the Atlanta Council on International Relations, I was recently asked to join its Program Committee in order to bring a new perspective to its long-running guest program. We host monthly luncheons at the Capital City Club where guests with foreign policy and international expertise speak, followed by a Q & A.

I'll be researching international issues as well as hosting a number of the luncheons. It will entail inviting Ambassadors, Counsels General, CEOs of major corporations with overseas offices, and federal officials whose committee assignments relate to oversight for trouble spots around the planet.

My 12 A P Government Program at Hills East prepared me in many ways for this new challenge through my Speaker's Program. I'm thoroughly enjoying life in the shadow of an international city. My very best to all my former colleagues. I hope you're all in good health and enjoying life's daily opportunities.

*Tony Cuzzucoli*

Michael Bussewitz-Quarm is a very creative composer whose works include musical adaptations of poems by Robert Frost and Longfellow. So I was extremely honored when he chose one of my poems, "I am Here," for a new anthem. The first performance of this work was at the Americana! concert on September 13th in Port Jefferson to benefit LI Veterans.

*Bill Batcher*

Myra and I spend six months in Seaford and six months in Key Largo, following the sun and the warmth. We have family in both states including five grandchildren. Everyone is doing well, good health being the rule. We still love fishing and try to go as often as the weather allows. It's a good life. If you're ever in the Keys stop by as you head towards Key West.

*Bill Russo*

The summer (2015) was a whirlwind of activity for Roland and me! All the kids came to visit us here in Myrtle Beach as well as our friends. I also had a wonderful two weeks in Seattle with my daughter and her family. I actually went camping with them and I was surprised by how wonderful it was. We are looking forward to a trip to Greece in 2016.

*Mary Ann Baillargeon*

I was the choral and musical director at West Hollow Middle School and High School East but was always an avid traveler when time permitted. When I retired from Half Hollow Hills, this love of travel prompted the creation of my travel blog and website devoted to travel for couples. Now my wife, Kita, who also directed many shows in Half Hollow Hills, and I have become full service travel agents, specializing not only in worldwide romantic travel and destination weddings, but also family vacations to Disney and the Caribbean. We can be contacted at 516-300-9924 or at [intimacytravel@gmail.com](mailto:intimacytravel@gmail.com) and would be honored to serve the Half Hollow Hills family.

*Dr. Gary de Sessa*

Eileen and I have become Florida residents living in Naples for 7 months of the year. We sold our home in Huntington and bought a condo in Wanaque, New Jersey, where we spend the other 5 months of the year. We're thoroughly enjoying retirement – tennis, grandkids, traveling, etc.

*Don Bianchi*

Ilse and I are very active. Ilse goes to the senior center here to take part in various exercises. I play golf each week at Fort Jackson. I also write articles, short stories and poems. We go down to the shore near Myrtle Beach twice a year. We stay at Litchfield.

*Ron Beattie*

**Know Your Benefits**  
**Dick Lee, Administrator, Welfare Trust Fund**



**“Explaining our New Vision Care Coverage in the E.M.M Plan”**

Beginning on January 1, 2016, our EMM/Vision Care insurer, Shelter Point, changed providers for our optical plan from Davis /Vision Works to NVA. We notified you of this change in January with an explanation of how to find participating providers in the new plan. A number of our members have let us know that they are confused on how to find local providers for their vision needs. Therefore, we will take you, step by step, through this process.

1. Log onto [www.e-nva.com](http://www.e-nva.com)
2. Select the option “Find Provider”, search by Zip Code
3. Enter Group number: **XGNY1042**
4. **Do NOT** enter anything in the *Select Group Sponsor* space
5. Enter the **ZIP Code** you want to find providers in and the mileage for the search
6. Click on the **Find Provider** space and you will be given a listing of the participating providers in your selected zip code area

When you go to one of the participating providers, give them the plan’s Group number, **XGNY1042**.

When asked for a personal ID number, use your Social Security number and your eligibility should be automatically verified.

If you have any problems with this process or with a specific participating provider you may call us or the NVA dedicated member services number: **1-877-241-7124**.

**NO** claim form is needed if you use a participating provider. It will be processed directly on-line. If you use an out of network provider, you have to file a claim form and send it to: NVA, Attn: Shelter Point, PO Box 2187 Clifton, NJ 07015.

Claim forms can be found on [www.HHHTA.com](http://www.HHHTA.com). In a trial run, I was able to obtain 5 participating providers within a one mile radius of our office and 40 within a ten mile radius. Please let us know about your experience with this new vision plan either by calling ([631-499-4240](tel:631-499-4240)) or e-mail us at [office@HHHTA.com](mailto:office@HHHTA.com).

## HHHART NEEDS HELP

The Board of HHHART wishes to thank Malinda Dobrins, our Secretary, for her dedication to all HHH retirees. When she started with the HHHART Board, she took on the task of Recording Secretary. As the world became more "tech oriented," she took on all the responsibilities listed below. At this time, Malinda has asked that **one or more persons take on the following job(s)**. We need people to step-up and volunteer. Each can be done from your home.

### 1. HELP NEEDED-

We need someone to e-mail important info from our HHHART Board to our members. Can you spare some time to help with this e-mail correspondence?

### 2. HELP NEEDED -

Please consider helping us e-mail the *HHHART Beat* (our newsletter) to our members. Can you spend a half hour four times a year to help HHHART?

### 3. - HELP NEEDED -

Can you keep the e-mail database up-to-date? Do you know how to use EXCEL?

**Please consider helping your union on any (or all) of the above. Contact Malinda Dobrins at: [lotsofdimples@optonline.net](mailto:lotsofdimples@optonline.net)**

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### Volunteers Wanted

Would you like to take part in a project that has the potential to be a game changer for children living in under-resourced areas who do not learn to read even though they are attending school? If so, I would love your help.

There's lots of work to be done researching and contacting organizations that can sponsor the program I have developed and field tested.

Please contact me at [rhodak272@aol.com](mailto:rhodak272@aol.com) or call 631-275-3044.

*Rhoda Koenig*

## Upstate Tragedy

Larry Genovese, a retired teacher from Burr's Lane and Candlewood, returned to his Roscoe, New York home on January 25th to find it completely gutted by a massive fire. The fire began in the fireplace and quickly spread to the rest of his home. Larry lost all of his belongings and memorabilia but, fortunately, no one was home when the fire began. Larry is living at a local motel while he oversees the rebuilding of his home. If you are interested in reaching out to Larry, you can contact him on his cell number (516) 639-4485.

The **2016** **Vote** **drive**  
continues. **COPE**

**\$30 or more suggested.**

This year, more than ever, we need to back candidates who are pro-teacher and pro-education and **Vote-Cope** provides the means to vet the candidates that meet these criteria.

**Vote-Cope** helps strengthen political action at all levels. The single largest expenditure is rebates to locals for their own communities for support with school budget votes and local campaigns.

Funds also go toward political action expenses. **NYSUT and Vote-Cope are non-partisan** and intend to remain non-partisan providing funds to pro-education and pro-labor candidates of all parties. Issues matter, not party.

**Please** send to the TA Office a check made out to **Vote-Cope** or you may opt to use the convenient NYSUT automatic pension deduction. (Contact NYSUT if you are interested) The 2016 **Vote-Cope** drive began in January and ends in December.

**HHHART dues are coming due.**

**Watch for the letter in the mail.**

## **POLITICAL ACTION**

### **by Mel Stern, Political Action Coordinator**

This has been quite a crazy political time, to say the least – surprisingly relatively good for us. We have, at least temporarily, averted the threat of losing the Friedrichs vs. California Teachers Association case. The US Supreme Court, in a 4-4 decision upheld the right of unions to collect fair-share fees from everyone who benefits from representation. If this had gone the other way ALL public sector unions nationwide would have been threatened, as dues collection would no longer be mandatory. This decision underscores the importance of electing, as the next president, someone who will nominate Supreme Court Justices who will be pro-labor. As for the NYS Budget, often at odds with our needs, we did rather well. K-12 State Aid received an additional \$1.4 billion along with increases to Higher Education Teacher Centers, which were funded at \$14.6 million which the Governor's proposal did not address. Two million dollars for the mentor-intern program and an additional \$11 million for pre-K 3 year olds were included.

We were also able to defeat the Parental Choice in Education Act (a back door voucher scheme) that would have taken millions of dollars away from public schools. We, with the help of our brothers and sisters in other labor unions, were able to increase the minimum wage and also add paid family leave for private sector employees as well as public sector employees.

Retirees also scored a couple of good victories:

- 1) NYSUT DEFEATED the proposal to increase health insurance premiums for state employees who are enrolled in NYSHIP and were planning to retire on or after October 1, 2016.
- 2) NYSUT also DEFEATED the proposal to freeze the reimbursement of Medicare Part B premiums at \$104.90 for NYSHIP retirees with Medicare primary insurance and also defeated the proposal to eliminate the reimbursement of the (IRMAA), Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount for certain NYSHIP retirees.

On the negative side, language was not included in the final budget to amend the Tax Cap law, nor were we able to de-link APPR from school aid or testing results. As the legislative negotiations continue through June, we will still continue to advocate for our students and teachers as we lobby diligently to try and fix what remains broken!

### **Constitutional Convention**

Under the New York State Constitution (Article 19, section 2) the people of the Empire State are asked every 20 years a seemingly simple ballot question: "Shall there be a convention to revise the constitution and amend same?" These simple 12 words will appear on the ballot on November 7, 2017, and could have a huge and DEVASTATING impact on NYSUT members and every citizen of the state. In simple language, the present constitution guarantees of: a right to a free public education, prohibiting reductions in public pension benefits, rights to workers' compensation, right to be a member of a union and bargain collectively, and the requiring of the state to provide for social welfare needs **WOULD ALL BE PUT AT RISK!!**

Over the next seven months, we will do everything we can to EDUCATE, MOBILIZE and ORGANIZE our members to prevent this from happening. When you are contacted to help us to help you, please join our efforts.

Many of our retirees believe that, even if pension guarantees are lost, we would be grandfathered in. This is **NOT TRUE!** If the constitution changes, **OUR PENSIONS COULD BE TAKEN AWAY!** We will provide more details in future issues on what you can do to HELP.

As always, In Unity, Mel

# 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.

## MetLife Auto & Home®



Call MetLife Auto & Home to learn about the special savings and discounts you may be eligible for.

**1-866-NYSUT-22**

If you are looking for potential savings on your auto or homeowners insurance, consider enrolling in the NYSUT Member Benefits Trust-endorsed MetLife Auto & Home Insurance Program.

This program offers special group rates on personal property and liability coverage not available to individual MetLife policyholders. NYSUT members can choose from a variety of coverages that include auto, homeowners, boat, renter's, and much more.

Policyholders can earn extra discounts for good driving, multiple policies and anti-theft devices. MetLife Auto & Home recently raised the multi-policy discount on its homeowners insurance with auto from 7% to 15%. The multi-policy/multi-product discount on auto insurance with home remains at 8%.

Visit the NYSUT Member Benefits website at [memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org) or call **800-626-8101** for specific details about this program or other Member Benefits-endorsed programs & services.

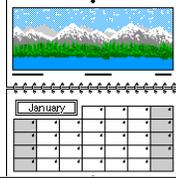
MetLife Auto & Home is a NYSUT Member Benefits Trust (Member Benefits)-endorsed program. Member Benefits has an endorsement arrangement of 5.5% of total premiums for this program. All such payments to Member Benefits are used solely to defray the costs of administering its various programs and, where appropriate, to enhance them. Member Benefits acts as your advocate; please contact Member Benefits at 800-626-8101 if you experience a problem with any endorsed program.

Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.



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.

### Mark Your Calendar



The HHHART Newsletter is a publication of the Half Hollow Hills Active Retired Teachers  
631-499-4240

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Treasurer Fred Seiden  
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HHHART Web Address <http://www.hhhart.net>

#### 2016

- Wednesday, May 20th** HHHART Annual Meeting  
NYSUT Office, Hauppauge
- Thursday, June 2nd** NYSUT RC Council #20  
Captain Bill's Restaurant
- Friday, July 1st** HHHART annual dues are due
- Wednesday, September 7th** HHHART Fall Luncheon  
Bonwit Inn
- Thursday, October 6th** NYSUT Regional Conference  
Woodbury Country Club
- TBA** CORTLI Luncheon

**HHHART dues are due July 1st.**

**Payment will be accepted no later than September 30th.**

#### IN MEMORIAM

Joan Bochat  
January, 2016  
SE

Anthony Grimaldi  
March, 2016  
MU

Elvira Sloan  
April, 2016  
LB

Elizabeth Vladimir  
January, 2016  
EE

Ronald Wright  
March, 2016  
EE