The Rochester Retired Teacher

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Retired Rochester Teachers Association is a Department of the Rochester Teachers Association NYSUT, AFT, NEA, AFL-CIO - 30 North Union St., Rochester, NY 14607
Representing RCSD teachers • retired teachers • substitute teachers • school instructors • home/hospital teachers • rochester preschool parent program

Vol. 05 No. 4 November 2015 **A Retired Rochester Teachers Publication**

Mansions and Millionaires Tour Big Hit

On Monday, September 28, fifty-three of our members and guests spent the morning visiting the East Avenue area of Rochester from the comforts of a tour bus. We learned historical facts. How East Avenue become "East" is in itself a fascinating story. Before it was East Avenue, East Avenue was Main Street; there were 2 Main Streets! Our tour guides, Warren and Pat Kling, provided us with a view of unique architectural styles, facts about the building of some of these mansions and insider information about some of the first owners and their families. We heard how some of these first residents came to make Rochester their home, where their money was made, what they may have invented or contributed and their many connections to modern day Rochester. For example, early residents left their names to streets we travel every day. Yes, there was a Culver family.

We heard about some current mansion owners' stories, as well. Amazing to find out how many millionaires have houses off East Avenue still and how much each pays in taxes.

The trip ended with a delicious, hot Italian buffet at Mario's Restaurant. A fun and educational morning for all of us. Thank you to Warren and Pat Kling for their great program. And thank you to Kathy Evans for taking the time and patience to plan this very different experience. Kathy had a waiting list for this tour, but, against all odds, every one who signed up, turned up at 8:30 a.m. on September 24, even though it was raining.

By Kathy Evans and Mary Barnum

RRTA phone banks and mailing for RTA endorsed Board of Education candidates

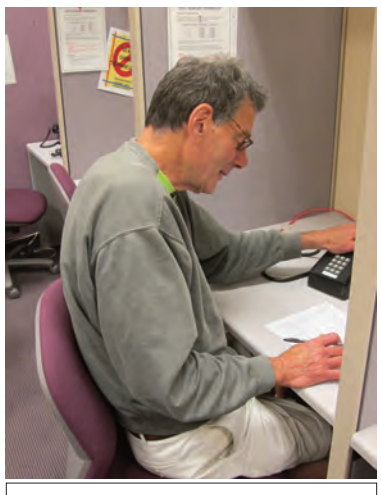
Our gratitude to all the RRTA members who helped with the mailing and phone bank in preparation for the Democratic Primary on September 10. We sent a mailing to all NYSUT members registered as Democrats living in the city and called each as a followup to remind them to vote, about 1400 people.

Willa Powell, Mary Adams and Malik Evans were all up for reelection to the Rochester Board of Education. We were mainly concerned about Powell, who had not been selected by the Democratic caucuses. In addition to these 3, RTA endorsed Liz Hallmark. All 4 of the RTA endorsed candidates were victorious and will appear on the Democratic line on November 3.

These are the people who worked to achieve their victory: Sharon Chandler, Patti Brody, Barb Buckingham, Jim Kraus, Al Silverman, Katherine Barkley, Barry Swan, Bob Allen, Wendy Wilson, Lili Bonanni, Carolyn Walker, Ed Hathaway, Ellen Robinson, David Altobelli, Ann Erwin, Mary Zimmer, Sandra Martinez, Sharon Silvio, Freddi Macek, Mary Barnum.

If you see any of these folks, thank them for giving their time to protect teacher friendly B of E candidates and, therefore, helping to protect your health insurance.

By Mary Barnum



Al Silverman spent hours calling to get out the vote.

Jim Kraus also spent hours calling to get out the vote.

2015 RRTA Calendar

An * indicates date not yet firm. More items will be added as the year goes on. Only dues paying members receive timely notification of newly scheduled events.

All RRTA activities are without profit, so be nice to the people who take the time and trouble to plan them. Please check the membership status of your guest(s) before making payment. Payment for events is accepted only with a completed registration form. Please write a separate check for each event or payment.

RRTA meetings are always 10 a.m. in the RTA office, 30 North Union Street and are open to all dues payers.

If you want to be part of an **RRTA work crew** (stuffing envelopes, collating, etc.), please call Mary Barnum to be put on the to-call list when RTA needs people power. Come help your union, enjoy a free lunch, and hear the latest buzz.

November
- 3 Election day
- 5 RRTA meeting
- 6 November RRTeacher mailed
- 12 CSD Medical Insurance Open Enrollment meeting
- 17 Representative Assembly
- 23 Dress A Girl

December
- 1 Deadline for January RRTeacher
- 3 RRTA meeting
- 4 RRTA Holiday Party
- 15 Representative Assembly

January
- 7 RRTA meeting
- 19 Representative Assembly
- 25 Dress A Girl
- 26 January RRTeacher mailed

February
- 4 RRTA meeting
- 23 Representative Assembly
- 29 Dress A Girl

March
- 3 RRTA meeting
- 15 Representative Assembly
- 28 Dress A Girl

April
- 7 RRTA meeting
- 19 Representative Assembly
- 25 Dress A Girl
- * Mt. Hope Cemetery tour

May
- 5 RRTA meeting
- 17 Representative Assembly
- 23 Dress A Girl

June
- 2 RRTA meeting
- 21 Representative Assembly
- 27 Dress A Girl
- * Hurd Orchard lunch
- * RRTA at the Redwings

RRTA Meeting June 4, 2015

Attendance: D. Altobelli, M. Barnum, L. Bonanni, P. Brody, C. Dean, K. Evans, K. Fager, M. Ferenchak, K. Huey, W. Humphrey, M. Jenkins-Cox, B. Jones, M. McCarron, F. Macek, L. Rapkin, K. Schultz, A. Smith, B. Swan, F. Valente, Y. Wooten, M. Zimmer

Absent: R. Allen, Z. Artson-Crichlow, K. Barkley, C. Bonsignore-Kitchen, B. Buckingham, J. Ivanick, M. Keating, M. Overcash, S. Silvio, G. Shakes, G. Sweeney,
Also in attendance: L. DeBellis, L. Kotwas, S. Raymond, J. Wells

1. The meeting was called to order at 10:08.

2. A moment of silence was held for Josephine Bentivegna, Gloria Loiacono, Bruce Rosen, Gerald Patti, Bob Polito, Regina Holtze and Carol Hutchins who have passed away. Twenty-five dollars is donated to Books for Kids in memory of each person who was a member of RRTA.

3. The May RRTA minutes were approved with some changes of specifics about the NYSUT community service awards.

4. Linda Rapkin reported that she has sent the money for 26 reservations to Hurds Orchards for the June 25 luncheon.

5. Books for Kids — Mary Barnum shared a list of all the schools visited per year since 1996 when the program began. Polly has not been available to report, but at the RTA retirement dinner on June 15 information will be shared so that new retirees may be recruited for the committee next year. All RRTA members are welcome to join. The organizational meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 10 at 11 am. The final school visit is on June 11 at School 25.

6. Retirement Dinner — The dinner is scheduled for June 15 at Woodcliff. There are presently 106 RTA members retiring. All reps are invited to the dinner where RRTA distributes information about joining. Charlie Dean will speak about our activities and why it is important to become an RRTA member. Many other RRTA members will be helping at the dinner.

7. Vote Cope — Dave Altobelli said that the recent campaign has yielded 45 to 50 new members or members who increased their contributions. At the RTA meeting June 16 he will be drawing for the five $50 restaurant gift cards for contributors. He will also say a few words at the retirement dinner to explain to new retirees that it is important to continue being a contributor. Dave will be sending out the Vote Cope thank you gifts soon to RRTA contributors.

8. Dress A Girl — The next meeting will be on June 29 and they will start again Sept 28. Check the dates in the August newspaper for more dates.

9. Shaw Festival — June 26 there will be 36 people going to see Pygmalion.

10. United Way — Dial a Teacher (#1403) always welcomes donations through a special designation with United Way.

11. Mansions on East Avenue — 45 people have signed up for this activity. Because the minimum number has been exceeded, there may be a refund for part of the ticket.

12. Living Wage — Maureen McCarron is a member of Metro Justice and reported on a talk by Bruce Popper. This is in reference to the National Fight for 15 (minimum wage). Metro Justice members were asked to sign up fast food workers at national chains. This issue is supported by Governor Cuomo. Hearings by the Minimum Wage Commission begins June 5 in Buffalo.

13. RRTA membership is at 706.

14. Newspaper — deadline for all articles and pictures is July 14. Send any activities and pictures to Mary Barnum. If you have a school group that meets regularly or an activity that you participate in, send either articles and/or pictures to share with all members.

15. RRTA Representative Election — Prior to the meeting the following were nominated: Bob Allen, Katherine Barkley, Carol Bonsignore Kitchen, Marie Jenkins Cox, Kevin Fager, Willie Humphrey, Freddi Macek, Sharon Silvio, Grace Sweeney, Marianne Overcash, Yolanda Wooten, Ken Schultz, Gaya Shakes, Mary Zimmer, and Mary Weeks. At the meeting Deborah Sullivan and Richard Wolf were nominated. There were as many candidates as positions, therefore there will be no need for an election and all nominated will serve a 2 year term.

16. Calendar — The September picnic will be in Henrietta. A motion was proposed and passed that Sue Raymond will reserve a shelter for a Friday or Thursday depending on availability. The date will be published in the August newspaper with details.
Holiday Party — A December date needs to be reserved. June Ivanick and Barb Buckingham usually plan this but they did not attend this meeting. Maureen McCarron and Yolanda Wooten volunteered to contact them to see if they want to continue organizing the holiday party or if they would like help in doing this.
Breast Cancer Walk — Mary Barnum reported the date to be October 18 and hopes many RTA and RRTA members will participate.
More activities are needed for the calendar. If you have a suggestion for an activity or would like to organize one to bring RRTA members together, contact Mary Barnum.

17. Dues Increase — RTA dues are being raised by $40 a year if the budget passes at the RTA June meeting. If voted in, the RRTA dues, which pays 10% of the RTA dues, will increase by $4 per year. There was a lengthy discussion about why there is a need for the dues increase. Mary Barnum made a motion that passed that the RRTA reps support the dues increase to keep the RTA funded at the June meeting.

18. Other Business — Tax Credit — many are receiving phone calls from a Lisa out of Plattsburgh to contact your assemblymen, particularly Morelli and Bronson, to support the tax credit bill. She is talking about supplies and daycare, but you should actually contact them to vote no because it is supporting charter and private schools against public education.
The Labor Day Parade is Sept 7 and all are asked to participate.
Transatlantic Treaty - You are asked to contact your US legislators to vote no because it will be sending jobs overseas if passed.
The Labor Relations Board Picnic is June 25 in Genesee Valley Park. It will cost $20 for food and to meet and talk to local politicians.
Veterans News — The Korean War Vets do the upkeep of Route 441 and are having a cleaning on June 6. Because of the aging population they are looking for other groups to help them. Contact Al Smith (544-2839 or asmith1@rochester.rr.com) if you would like to help with this or any other war veteran activities. Contact him also if you would like to be put on his list serve for this information.

19. The meeting adjourned at 11:45.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Zimmer

RRTA Tri-athlete, Al Barasch

Retired East High teacher Al Barasch took a first place in the Rochester Sprint Triathlon held at Durand Eastman Park on Aiugust 22. Al won a gold medal for his age group of 75-79 and was the oldest competitor in the event. He swam 750 yards, biked 12 miles, and ran 3.1 miles. This distance is nothing for Al who did an Iron Distance race in Montreal in 2003 at age 63. In that event he swam 2.4 miles, biked 112 miles and ran a marathon, 26 miles. It had been some time since Al had donned his wet suit, and he admitted the most daunting segment of the event for him was the Lake Ontario swim. Fellow RRTA member Annette Schaff assisted him in preparing for the event. Al and Annette used Canandaigua Lake as a training site. Jim Grattan and Aggie Perry, also former East High teachers, acted as cheerleaders at the Triathlon. Following the event, Al, Annette, Jim and Aggie joined Charlie Dean (formerly of Monroe & East) at a celebratory luncheon. Al Barasch taught social studies at East High School from 1963 until his retirement in 1995.

Congrats, Al. You're an inspiration to us all.

By Agnes Perry

Rochester Teachers Association
A Union of Professionals

LEARN THE LATEST ON YOUR RTA WEBSITE

www.rochesterteachers.com

RCSD Health Insurance Open Enrollment Information Meeting

Thursday, Nov. 12

3 to 5 p.m.
for RCSD Retirees
Wilson Foundation Academy
200 Genesee Street

TO CHANGE HEALTH INSURANCE

Forms must be returned directly to the Benefits Office by

Monday, November 30

Benefits Office will be closed on Thursday and Friday November 26 and 27

Excellus Information Hacked: Protect Yourself Against Identity Theft for Free

Excellus Blue Cross/Blue Shield reports that, since December 23, 2013, its computer servers have been hacked. As a result, the personal information of its customers over 31 upstate New York counties may have been taken by the hackers. (This includes those who now may be with another company, but were once insured by Excellus.) Accordingly, Excellus has contracted with Kroll Information Assurance Company, a global leader in this area, to provide Excellus customers with free protection against identity theft for two years.

Identity theft can be a major problem, financial and otherwise, for anyone affected by it. Fraudulent loans and false contracts can be created, bank accounts can be accessed, credit histories can be impacted, and many other unsavory results can occur. We recommend that all RTA members who have been customers of Excellus Blue Cross/Blue Shield, now or in the past, should take advantage of Excellus' offer to protect them.

There are two fairly easy ways to get this protection:

1. Go to the Excellus website at: https://www.excellusbcbs.com There is an alert box at the top of their home page, providing information on the attack and the offered protection. Clicking on the highlighted boxes will lead you through the process in a fairly straightforward way. In five minutes, you can enroll in all of their monitoring services.

2. If you would prefer to work with a human on the phone, call the following number:1-877-589-3331. A person will help you do all the necessary work.

If you have questions about any of this, please call Mary Barnum, RRTA Consultant, or Paul Hetland, RTA Treasurer, at the RTA office.

By Paul Hetland

RRTA HOLIDAY LUNCHEON
Golden Ponds 500 Long Pond Rd.
Friday, December 4, 2015

Invite a retired friend to join you for a reunion at our annual Holiday party. Traditionally this event draws the most participants. It is a joyful occasion to renew old friendships.

11:00 Meet and Greet, Cash Bar
12:00 Lunch served

Please note the special discount for dues payers
$14.00 Dues payers $18.00 Non dues payers

Price includes buffet: roast sirloin with gravy, baked chicken, meatballs in sauce, ziti with sauce, hot vegetables, assorted relishes, salad with assorted dressings, Italian bread and butter, dessert, beverage, tax and gratuity. Deadline for reservation: November 20, 2015.

Again this year, we ask that you bring a nonperishable food item to donate to a local food cupboard.

RRTA Holiday Luncheon December 4, 2015
Deadline for reservation: November 20.

Name _____Phone_____
Address_____
City/Town_____Zip _____
No. of $14 dues paying member lunches _____total $ _____
No. of $18 Non dues paying lunches _____ total $ _____
Total amount of check in payment to RRTA $ _____
Please print the names of your guests.
_____
_____
_____

Make checks payable to RRTA. Return completed form and payment check, Attention: Mary Barnum, to Rochester Teachers Association, 30 North Union Street, Rochester, NY 14607.

Retiree Marie Jenkins-Cox

Retirees Valerie Huff-Jones and Marilyn Shapiro

Retiree Charlie Dean

Thanks to all who walked or/and donated on October 18 in the WALK AGAINST BREAST CANCER for the American Cancer Society. People were especially generous and it was a cold morning for walking but spirits were warm. A special thanks to retirees Dave Altobelli, Marie Jenkins Cox, Marilyn Shapiro, Val Huff and Mary Barnum who passed out RTA walk shirts.

RRTA 2015-16 RRTA Membership Application

Name _____
Former School _____ Year retired _____
Address _____Phone_____
_____ Zip ____

If you wish to be added to our listserve, please print your email address:
_____

Send this completed form with your check for $39.30 to RTA 30 North Union Street, Rochester, NY 14607

Books For Kids
MAKES PLANS FOR 2015 - 2016

2015-2016 Books for Kids Committee Row 1 Kathy Evans, Margaret Finch, Lillian Bonanni, Cile Nix, Liz Pollock, Florence Jones, Ann Sexton, Diane Voellinger, Marie Ferenchak, Maureen Van Buren, Rosemarie Milliman, Mary Barnum Row 2 Mary Beth Knowles, Dorothy Taylor, Mary Zimmer, Ellen Best, Karen Huey, Katherine Barkley, Sharon Chandler, Karen Melville, Chris Chaffer, Linda Rapkin

On September 10, the RTA Books for Kids Committee held its annual meeting to make plans for this school year. Polly Bradbury is taking some time for herself. Therefore, her duties, which she has been performing since B for K started in 1996, were divided among several. Kathy Evans will lead our book shopping trips to Barnes and Nobel in Pittsford. Rosemarie Milliman and Diane Voellinger will keep track of contributions, make deposits and send thank you letters. Mary Barnum will notify committee members by email of shopping and school dates.

Mary Beth Knowles, Liz Pollock, and Diane Voellinger will organize our book giving at School 25 in October. Margaret Finch, Florence Jones, and Sharon Chandler at School 57 in November. Al Silverman, Katherine Barkley, and Joe Deroller at School 12 in December. Chris Chaffer and Marie Ferenchak at School 3 in January, Karen Melville, Ann Sexton, and Rosemary Eichenlaub in February. Dot Taylor, Celeste Wilson and Mary Zimmer at School 28 in March. Randy Bradshaw, Maureen Van Buren, Ann Lame and Linda Rapkin at School 52 in April. Rosemarie Milliman, Ellen Best, Diane Voellinger and Mary Beth Knowles at School 45 in May.

We spend about $300 for books at each school and are in good shape financially for this year. We are grateful to all of our retiree contributors for allowing Books for Kids to thrive. If you wish to contribute or join the committee, please use the form below.

Books for Kids is supported totally by contributions from RRTA retirees. Checks should be made out to "RRTA Books for Kids FLACE" and returned with the form below completed to Books for Kids, RTA office, 30 North Union Street, Rochester, NY 14607. (**FLACE designates Finger Lakes Community Endowment** which is managed by Canandaigua National Bank, which sends acknowledgement of donations of $50 or more). For all donations, Books for Kids sends thank you notes which include the amount donated.

Books for Kids Donation

My donation is enclosed in the amount of _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

_____

Return completed form with your check to RRTA 30 North Union Street, Rochester, NY 14607

Checks should be made out to **RRTA Books for Kids FLACE** and returned with this completed form to Books for Kids, RTA office, 30 North Union Street, Rochester, NY 14607.

Check here____if you want to join the Books for Kids Committee. If you want to hear more about Books for Kids, call Mary Barnum 546 2681 or Kathy Evans 455 6161.

Return completed form with your check to the RTA office, Attention Rosemarie Milliman

RRTA Fall Picnic

It was a beautiful, sunny, almost summer-like day on Friday, September 18th when a group of retirees met at the Henrietta Veteran's Memorial Park for our Fall picnic. The hots, hamburgs and Italian sausages were aptly grilled by chefs Willie Humphrey and Charles Boyar. Kevin Fager provided the corn-on-the-cob and our attendees provided the extra dishes to round out the meal. Conversation was lively as old and new friends socialized.

If you missed out on the fun, the next picnic will be in June. Watch the newspaper for the date.

By Sue Raymond

Enjoying our picnic: Judi Flanders, Agnes Wright, Sharon Chandler, Deborah Sullivan

Thanking Sue Raymond (2nd from left) for arranging the picnic: Polly Bradbury, Mary Barnum, Genevive McKee, Kevin Fager

Enjoying our picnic fare: Noreen Murphy, Phyllis Harris, Bruna Evangelista, Freddi Macek, Barbara Buckingham, Selma Berger, Paul Berger

What is the Difference between Original Medicare and Medicare Advantage?

Original Medicare is the traditional **fee-for-service** program. Fee-for-Service is a payment model where services are paid for as itemized as one would see in a hospital invoice. This payment method gives an incentive for physicians to provide more treatments because payment is dependent on the quantity of care, rather than quality of care.

Original Medicare is administered directly by the U.S. government. Under *Original* Medicare, you can see any doctor in the country who participates in the program, and most doctors do participate.

Original Medicare includes parts A, Band D:

- Part A covers **Inpatient hospital** costs,
- Part B, covers **Outpatient medical** costs;
- Part D covers **Prescription drug plan**; in order to have prescription drug coverage under *Original* Medicare, you must actively choose and enroll in a stand alone Part D prescription drug plan.

With *Original* Medicare, after you pay your monthly premium you also pay a co-insurance (meaning you share in the costs of a covered health care service for each service that you receive). To cover coinsurance, with *Original* Medicare, you can purchase a Medigap supplemental insurance product to assist you with Parts A and B premiums and copays. Note: Medigap products do not assist with Part D prescription drug costs. Some NYSUT members also have supplemental insurance products through retiree insurance from their former locals or other union member benefits.

Medicare Advantage is a plan that contracts with the Medicare system to provide Medicare-styled benefits. Unlike *Original* Medicare, Medicare *Advantage* is administered by **private insurance companies**. Most Medicare *Advantage* payment models are different than that of *Original* Medicare's **Fee-for-service** model in that private insurance companies are paid a fixed amount by the U.S. government to provide Medicare *Advantage* services. Under Medicare *Advantage* a person must live in the plan's service area in order to enroll in the program. These providers make up the *Advantage* plan's network.

The most common types of Medicare *Advantage* plans are called Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs), Preferred Provider Organizations (PPOs), and Private Fee-for-Services (PFFS).

Even if you join a Medicare *Advantage* plan you still belong to *Original* Medicare: You must still pay your Part B monthly premium (and a Part A premium, if you have one). Each Medicare *Advantage* plan must provide all Part A and Part B services, but they can do so with different costs and restrictions than *Original* Medicare. This can affect how and when you can get care. For example, Medicare *Advantage* plans require members to use their networks of doctors and hospitals. If you use an out-of-network provider, you may have to pay more for your care.

Medicare *Advantage* plans must limit the amount you spend out-of-your own pocket for health care. These limits tend to be high but are helpful if you need a lot of care. *Advantage* plans can also offer additional benefits that *Original* Medicare does not cover, like routine vision or dental care. Generally, if you want to enroll in a Medicare *Advantage* plan and also need drug coverage (Part D), you must join a plan that includes drug coverage. If you have a Medicare *Advantage* plan, you cannot purchase a Medigap policy.

Even if you are satisfied with your current Medicare coverage, it is important to investigate options during the annual Fall Open Enrollment period. In reviewing your plan, you need to decide whether other Medicare options may better suit your individual needs in the next calendar year. Research shows that people with Medicare prescription drug coverage (Part D) could lower their costs by shopping among plans each year. Being proactive about your coverage can help to reduce costs and make sure that your health care needs are met.

Consult the Experts! If you have questions about your Medicare coverage, NYSUT has contracted with the Medicare Counselor Hotline: 800-333-4114 (hours 9:00a.m.- 5 p.m.). This service is provided by the Medicare Rights Center.

If you have questions about this article please contact Mitchell Clark [mailto:mclark@medicarerights.org].

The Medicare Rights Center is a national, nonprofit consumer service organization that works to ensure access to affordable health care for older adults and people with disabilities through counseling and advocacy, educational programs and public policy initiatives.

Source: nysut doc. no. #37604. created 04/24/15, posted Program Services library

Octber 23, 2015 List of Dues Paying Retired Rochester Teachers

Joseph Abernethy
Jean Acquilano
Debra Adams Hawes
Richard Adamus
Patricia Albring
Elizabeth Alexander
Ann Allen
Bonnie Allen
Helen Allen
Robert Allen
Elaine Alma
David Altobelli
Luanna Andrews
Simone Araya
Beverly Arcarese
Janet Archibald
Frank Arena
Zelda Artson Crichlow
Samuel Attardo
Nancy Attardo Atherton
Brenda E Austin
Alan Barasch
Katherine Barkley
Mary Barnum
Patricia Bartholomay
Will Batiste
Lawrence Baxter
Marvin Bayles
Phyllis Beal
Jane Beaver
Sandra Bechard
Charles Berry
Ellen Best
Cece Maureen Betancourt
Richard Bialczak
Cynthia Bianchi
Deborah Bielecki
Samuel Bishop
Ken Bissinger
Mary Ellen Blankenburg
Patricia Bleier
Elizabeth Bloom-Dunn
Paul Bodekor
Julia Bogardus
Lewis Jeff Boice
Lillian Bonanni
Carol Bonsignore Kitchen
Carolyn Bornstein
Kathleen Bowersox
Ruby Bowman
Charles Boyar
Dorothy Boyle
Jacqueline Boyle
Pauline Bradbury
Randy Bradshaw
Michael Braell
Diane Bredes-Nies
Mary Jo Brennan
Mary-Ann Brodt
Bob Brody
Patricia Brody
M. Karen Brokaw
Kathleen Brown
Cheryl Brown
James Brown
Barbara Buckingham
Cynthia Burch
Thomas Burke
Nancy Burns
Elizabeth Bush
Mary Lou Cadena
Catherine Canty
Lea Cappella
Jeanne Carlivati
Philip Carlivati
Grace Carswell
John Casella
Mary Casey
Michael Cavallaro
Christine Chaffer
Barbara Chambers-Ekpo
Doris Chance
Sharon Chandler
Lynne Charette
Carroll Chiarelli
Marlene Christopher
Linda Cirrincione
Diane Clancy-Griffo
Julia Clayton
Beryl Clymer
Annette Coffey
Amelita Colangelo
James Collins
Barbara Compitello
Beryl Conklin
Candee Conklin
Loretta(Lorie) Cook
Patricia Cook
Cathleen Corbet
Patricia Corcoran
Barbara Corman
Maureen Corral
Constance Corsica
Jay Costanza
Marie Costanza
Mary Jean Crawford
Gary Cregan
Beatrice Crysel
Johanna Cummings
Christine Curtis
Harlow Cushman
Martha Cuthbert
Brian Daily
Carolyn Daniels
Martha Daniels
Kenneth Dardenne
Hedy Dastyck
Mary Davey
Willie Davis
Ann Davis
Charlie Dean
Lawrence Debellis
Peter Debes
David Defendis
Louise Delaus
Michael DeLaus
Deanne Delehanty
Gail Dentinger
Joseph Deponceau
Joseph DeRoller
Elizabeth Derry
Diane Desmarais
Carol Despos
Nancy Dewan
Josephine Dewey
Myrna DiBiase
Grace Dillon
Nancy DiMarco
Dolores Dinolfo
Eileen DiPalma
Hanya Dombchewskyj
Carol Domenico
Peg Donaghy
Jack Donovan
Bonnie Dorschel
Shirley Dorsey
Jane Drake
Sue Draves
Barbara Drmacich
J. Ernest Du Bois
Carol Dundas
Mary Lisa Dwyer
Jackie Eadie
Leslie Edwards
Rosemary Eichenlaub
Beth Elkin
Patricia Elliott
Marcia Elwitt
Sheila Emmert
Elaine Erbland
Anne Erwin
Bruna Evangelista
Nellie Evans
Kathleen Evans
Bedriye Evyapan
Catherine Fager
Kevin Fager
Marcia Fallon
Catherine Feinen
Marie Ferenchak
Karolina Fero
Phyllis Ferrara Shrout
Anna Ferro
Jean Fiano
Margaret Finch
Ruth Fine
Mary Fiorica
Judith Flanders
Cathleen Foster
Joseph Foster
Kathryn Franz
Louise Frederes
Barbara Frederick
Louis Friedman
Christine Fritsch
Sharon Fronheiser
Susan Gailor
Noreen Gallagher
Robert Galory
Victor Garatea
Dolores Gardner
Carolyne Garman
Susan Gaskill
Lynn Gatto
Richard Gatto
Cheryl Gavenda
Robert Gears
Anita Gelabert
Sharon Gendron
Mary Gentry
William Gerber
Wladimir Gerela
Dorothy Giangreco
Thomas Gillett
Alphonse Giordano
Andrea Giuffre
Judy Glaubinger
Judith Goldstein
Dolores Gonzalez Habes
Susan Goodwin
Ella Gourdine
Jennifer Gourdine
Judith Graham
Barbara Granite
Ivena Grantham
Marilyn Grasso
Jim Grattan
Mary Ann Green
Connie Grier
Eileen Grimaldi
Cecilia Guerand
Rose Gulley
Carol Guttman
Maureen Guyett
James Hagen
Nancy Hagenbach
James Haldeman
Margaret Haldeman
Mary Halpin
Thomas Halpin
Diana Hamilton
Arlene Hanley
Carol Hanley
Thomas Hanley
Paula Hansen
Janice Hanson
Daria Hanushevsky
Constance Hardes
Linda Hardock
Gale Harris
Paula Harris
Patricia Hart
Susan Hartwell
Judy Haskin
Anne Hasler
Patricia Hatch
Edward Hathaway
Margaret Hauser
Phyllis Haviland
Donna Hayden
Susan Heiligman
Elissa Hemming
Thomas Hendry
Nancy Herrera
Jeanne Herrick
Michael Herrman
Donald Higgins
Keith Holderness
Barbara Holland
Ellen Horn
William Howard
Carol Hubbell
Gloria Huddleston
Karen Huey
Valerie (Huff) Jones
Ann Hughes
Linda Humphrey
Willie Humphrey
Nancy Humphreys
Kristin Hunt
Nobuko Ichishita
June Ivanick
Josetta Jackson
Nina Jackson
Theresa Jackson
Richard Jacobs
Amy Jacobson
Peter James
Lesley Jarbe
Marie Jenkins Cox
Helen Jennette
Alexander Johnson
B. Jean Johnson
James Johnson
Skaidrite Johnson
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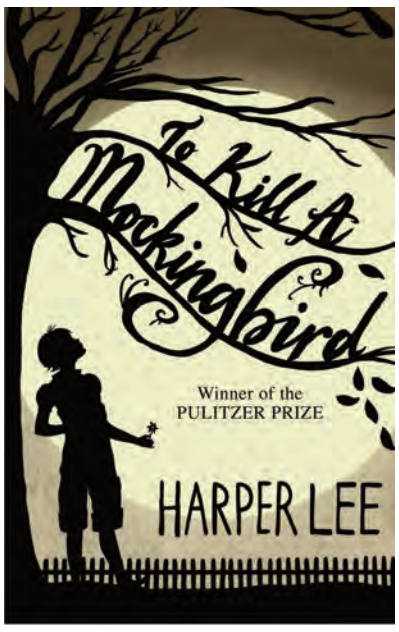
To those who taught
To Kill a Mockingbird

To those of us who taught **To Kill A Mockingbird,** the publication of another Harper Lee novel was a bit of a jolt. I taught **Mockingbird** so often, the **Bird** was as comfortable to me as a pair of old shoes. I had vocabulary lists and chapter tests. And at the end, there was a *movie*. So, after all of that, most of the kids knew the story, a happy culmination which was not always true after, shall we say, **Hamlet**. As one kid wrote for his final essay, "To Kill A Mockingbird is the story of a Nergo boy accursed of rapping a white gril."



To Kill a Mockingbird was published in the early sixties. It was set in Alabama, the state which saw some of the big moments of the Civil Rights movement; Selma, Birmingham, et al. **Bird** was an instant hit, sold millions of copies, won the Pulitzer Prize and the Academy Award for Gregory Peck for his portrayal of Atticus Finch in the movie version.

After that stunning success, Harper Lee published no more. She talked about working on another novel, but no novel came. She finally just stopped talking to anyone. It was a mystery. How could the author of the most popular novel in 20th century America not have another book?

Lee is now partially blind, almost completely deaf and living in an assisted living home. Her lawyer older sister, Alice, who managed all of her affairs, died last year. A new lawyer found the manuscript of **Go Set a Watchman** and, presto, Harper Lee published a new novel, 50 years after **To Kill A Mockingbird**.

Thanks to my retired school librarian friend, Katherine Barkley, for lending me her copy of **Go Set A Watchman**. I would not have bought a copy for myself because I feared the book would be a flop. **Watchman** is set in the same Alabama town as **Bird**, 30 years later. The narrator is the same, Scout 30 years later. For a week after publication, the titillating news was that Atticus, the benevolent white hero of **Bird** is revealed as a bigot in **Watchman**.

Go Set A Watchman *is* a flop. And not because Atticus is a racist. It fails as a novel. Most of the book is a conversation about why white Southerners feel put upon by the NAACP and other Northern liberals. The reader loses interest at about page 4.

The reviewer in **The New Yorker** fixates on the question of where **Watchman** comes from. "Not since Hemingway's estate sent down seemingly completed novels from on high… has a publisher gone about so coolly exploiting a much loved name with a product of such mysterious provenance. " I think it is an important point. The voice in **Watchman** is certainly the adult Scout voice of **Bird**. However, the internal evidence does not support the theory that **Watchman** predates **To Kill A Mockingbird**. There is no attempt to introduce the characters. Scout seems to assume the reader will know all about them. And how would we know all about Atticus and Scout, et al? From reading **To Kill A Mockingbird**, of course. We will never know because Lee is not talking, but I surmise that **Watchman** was one of Lee's attempts to write a novel after **To Kill A Mockingbird.**

To those in the club "We taught **To Kill A Mockingbird**" and to anyone else interested in this literary arcana, I recommend **Mockingbird *A Portrait of Harper Lee*** by Charles J. Shields, a 2006 unauthorized biography. Shields received no help from Lee, her family, or her friends, but he did extensive research and does a commendable job of tracing, as far as one can go without the author's help, the creation of **To Kill A Mockingbird** and the effect of its meteoric success upon Harper Lee. In addition, Shields explores the relationship between Lee and her real life Dill, Truman Capote, to whom Lee remained loyal through the writing of **In Cold Blood** but she was upset when Capote told a reporter that Lee's mother tried to drown her twice when she was a baby. Shields also tells how in the making of the movie, Gregory Peck kept pressuring for more screen time for himself and less for the children, effectively creating a story of Atticus, rather than a story about the children.

In this year's July issue of **Smithsonian** magazine, Paul Theroux, who is an accomplished writer of novels, tells of his recent trip to Monroeville, the Alabama hometown of Harper Lee which is the model for Maycomb, the town in **To Kill A Mockingbird**. Theroux visited the black side of Monroeville and gives us a part of Alabama that Harper Lee does not. One man tells Theroux, "We took in racism with our mother's milk." When Theroux asks why black people in town are not interested in the book which made their town famous, he is told, "It's like a 400-pound comedian on stage telling fat jokes. The audience is paying more attention to the jokes than what they see."

The flurry over the "new" Harper Lee book made me rather wish for a nanosecond I had one more chance to teach **To Kill A Mockingbird.**

By Mary Barnum

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2015 Shaw Festival

Passing The Torch

Never fear loyal RRTA members who attend our Shaw Festival trips!

If you have heard (correctly) that our long serving volunteer arrangers, Polly Bradbury and Karen Huey, are stepping down, we hope you will be happy to know that Maureen McCarron and Nancy Atherton are stepping up! Arrangers Atherton & McCarron are hard at work planning the 2016 season. The January issue of the RRTeacher will include details about our upcoming 2016 RRTA Shaw Festival Trips. If you are interested in joining us to Niagara-on-the Lake, be sure to pay your dues, since only dues payers receive our January and April issues.

By Maureen McCarron

The Rochester Retired Teacher

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Published by the Rochester Retired Teachers Association, a Department of the Rochester Teachers Association affiliated with the New York State United Teachers, the American Federation of Teachers (Local 616), National Education Association, AFL-CIO, and the Greater Rochester Labor Council.

Tel: (585) 546-2681 • **Hotline: (585) 546-2768** • **Fax:** (585) 546-4123

Website: www.rochesterteachers.com

RRTeacher Staff
Mary Barnum
Bill Gerber

Proofreaders
David Altobelli, Kathy Evans, Mary Zimmer

Photographer(s)
Charlie Dean, Mary Zimmer, Bill Gerber, Agnes Perry, Margaret Sergent

Officers

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RRTA Reps to RTA Assembly

Robert Allen	544 0078	aballen@rochester.rr.com	Martha Keating	248 5945	maskerade6@aol.com
David Altobelli	247 0027	Maltobel24@rochester.rr.com	Freddi Macek	244 9611	freddimacek@gamail.com
Zelda Artson Crichlow	461 3963	zeldajac@aol.com	Maureen McCarron	346 2425	maureen.mccarron@gmail.com
Katherine Barkley	442 8865	kgbarkley@frontiernet.net	Marianne Overcash	621 4372	
Mary Barnum	377 0313	mbarnum@rochesterteachers.com	Linda Rapkin	244 9489	linroed@aol.com
Lillian Bonnani	385 3289	lbonanni@frontiernet.net	Gaya Shakes		
Carol BonsignoreKitchen	544 3947	cbkitchen@rochester.rr.com	Ken Schultz	271 2754	kzschultz@gmail.com
Patti Brody	451 8476	brody2940Aaol.com	Sharon Silvio	244 1912	Sharonpsilvio@gmail.com
Barbara Buckingham	247 5127		Al Smith	544 2839	asmith1@rochester.rr.com
Charlie Dean	865 1735	DEANSWIM@aol.com	Deborah Sullivan		
Kathy Evans	455 6161	kathleencevans@gmail.com	Barry Swan	461 5137	BASWAN@aol.com
Kevin Fager	442 3175	marinphoto@aol.com	Grace Sweeney	388 9736	sweeney1187@gmail.com
Marie Ferenchek	544 8033	billmarie138@rochester.rr.com	Frank Valente	271 7882	fpvvalente@yahoo.com
Karen Huey	227 6101	kahuey56@aol.com	Richard Wolf		
Willie Humphrey	264 9645	whumphrey14@yahoo.com	Yolanda Wooten	235 1252	lydawooten@aol.com
June Ivanick	621 2557		Mary Zimmer	352 4982	Zimval@aol.com
Marie Jenkins Cox	723 8861	jenkjoyce@aol.com	Mary Weeks		
W. Brenda Jones					