

THE **Yonkers** Teacher

December 23, 2014

Vol. XXXX No. 4

Official Publication of the Yonkers Federation of Teachers

35 East Grassy Sprain Rd.
Yonkers, NY 10710
(914) 793-0200
Fax (914)793-7365

EDITOR:
Christine Morrone

**PRODUCTION/
DISTRIBUTION
EDITORS:**
Bryan Boyd
Doraid Ereifej
Vera Corato

**PRODUCTION/
DISTRIBUTION TEAM:**
Warren Hueber
Karen Almodovar

DISTRIBUTION TEAM:
Beth Korotkin Mary Ann Carile
Bea Chimera Sandra Hauss
Rhoda Klein Anna McGill
Marguerite Doris Karen Rubin
Kathy Vanacore Ralph Vanacore
Helene Yablon Mary Watson
Sally Turkin Martha McKernan

PROOFREADER:
Kirk Bauer

PRESIDENT:
Patricia Puleo

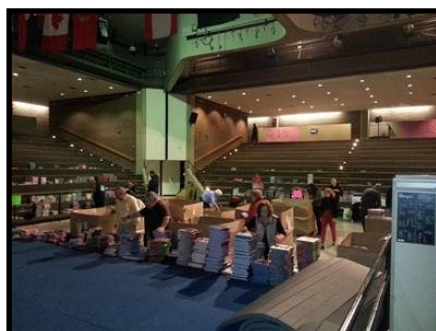
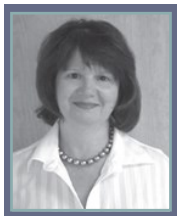
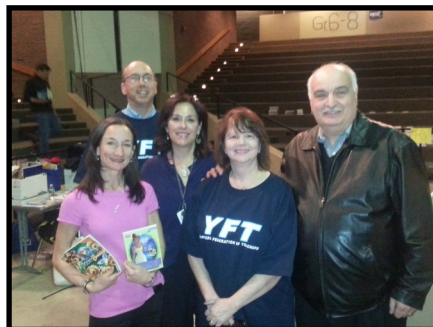
While we all hurry about our lives this holiday season, I wish to take a moment to thank everyone that helped with our YFT Holiday Season of Reading Book Giveaway. I would like to thank our retired teachers, in-service members, YFT Public Relations Committee, YFT Office staff, YFT Welfare Fund staff, YPS Custodial staff, NYSUT Tarrytown Regional Office staff, NYSUT Vice-President Catalina Fortino and our Superintendent Dr. Michael Yazurlo for all their help with unpacking, sorting and distributing 18,000 books for our YFT Book Giveaway.

I would also like to give special thanks to the following YFT Retirees for their help with our book giveaway: Michael Borachek, Carol Craft, John D. Eshoo, Margaret Fraina, Arline Frey, Olivia King, Beth Korotkin, Kathy Ryan, Sally Turkin and Barbara Ziegler.

Our event was a great success!

Paul, Samantha, Kara and I at the YFT Office, wish you all happy holidays and a happy healthy new year!

In Solidarity,
Pat Puleo, YFT President



Richard Gazzola Teacher Center
TEACHER CENTER NEWS

Kara Popiel, Policy Board Chair

Samantha Rosado-Ciriello, Director

Phone 376-8614

Fax 376-3427

www.rgteachercenter.org

OUR CATALOGUE

The Richard Gazzola Teacher Center Policy Board has approved a catalogue! Our first class is scheduled to begin on January 28, 2015. We have online and on-site Teacher Center courses free of charge for 1 or 2 credits, as well as 3-credit college graduate courses for a nominal fee.

Fliers listing our courses as well as registration forms have been sent to each school's Teacher Center Liaison while we await printed copies of the catalogue. Our courses can also be found on our website at www.rgteachercenter.org. Courses need a minimum of 10 registrants to run. Make your choices early because we can only accept 30 per class.

Courses at a Glance

Course # (On-line) 2 Credits

CCS 211	Effective Classroom Management
APPR 200	Teacher Evaluation and Evidence
CCS 205	Close Reading and the Common Core
CCS 201	Introduction to the Common Core/Literacy Standards
CCS 203	Critical Thinking, Questioning and Non-Fiction Text
CCS 202	Introduction to the Common Core 2 – Focus on Math
CMP 263	Cyber Bullying and Safety on the Net

(On-line) 1 Credit

CCS 210	Becoming an Expert Teacher Leader in the Common Core Learning Standards – MATH K-6
---------	--

(On-Site) 2 Credits

EDUCU 217	Student Services and the Educational Process
EDUCU 216	Learning Styles and the Resource Room
HIS 200	History of the Holocaust and the Lesson We Can Learn From It
HEA 215	Dynamic Elementary Physical Education

(On-Site) 1 Credit

CMP 264	Introduction to Online Databases: Elementary Digital Resources for the Common Core
---------	--

Undergraduate Course at a Glance

	NYSUT Learning Trust/ Cazenovia College
ED 441	Cooperative Discipline: Marilyn Fanelli

College/Graduate Course at a Glance

	NYSUT Learning Trust/ Manhattanville College
EDAD 5003	Communicating Effectively as a Teacher Leader

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

We want to hear from you! What topics would you like to see offered in terms of courses and/or workshops? The Richard Gazzola Teacher Center, in collaboration with the Yonkers Public School District's Professional Development Planning Committee, will jointly develop a Needs Assessment Survey. Surveys should be completed anonymously and time should be provided to do so. Of course, we are open to suggestions any time.

DEFENSIVE DRIVING

The Defensive Driving Class was a success. As a result, the Richard Gazzola Teacher Center, in collaboration with the National Safety Council six hour program, will again offer Defensive Driving for all Yonkers teachers, teaching assistants and their family members.

Registration will be handled on a first-come, first-served basis, with a maximum of 30 in a class. The cost of the program is **\$25 per person**. We must have the check before the course start date.

Benefits of the Program:

- 10% discount on personal injury, bodily injury & property damage, liability coverage and collision
- Discounts for 3 years
- Removal of up to 4 points

Make checks payable to: Bill Troy, Instructor

DEFENSIVE DRIVING

DATE: Saturday, February 28, 2015

TIME: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Grinton Will Library
 1500 Central Park Avenue
 Yonkers, NY 10710

Member Name _____

Address _____

School _____ Home Phone _____

Cell Phone # _____

Name(s) of family members – (must be licensed drivers)

Name: _____

Check #: _____ Date _____

Name: _____

Check #: _____ Date _____



YFT Welfare Fund Important Information

MEMBERSHIP

RE-HIRED AND NEW TEACHERS MUST COMPLETE NEW ENROLLMENT FOR THE UNION AND WELFARE FUND. NO CLAIM WILL BE PROCESSED WITHOUT THIS INFORMATION. WHEN SUBMITTING THIS INFORMATION YOU MUST ALSO ENCLOSE DEPENDENT INFORMATION (MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES AND BIRTH CERTIFICATES).

RETIREES

NEW BILLS WERE SENT OUT THE FIRST WEEK IN DECEMBER. THE BILL YOU RECEIVED FROM THE YFT WELFARE FUND INCLUDES THE BILL AMOUNTS FOR BOTH THE WELFARE FUND AND THE UNION. PLEASE WRITE SEPARATE CHECKS FOR EACH ENTITY. BOTH CHECKS CAN BE MAILED TOGETHER TO THE YFT WELFARE FUND AT 35 EAST GRASSY SPRAIN ROAD, SUITE 502, YONKERS, NY 10710.

IF YOU DID NOT RECEIVE A BILL, PLEASE CALL THE WELFARE FUND. THE PRESCRIPTION DRUG REIMBURSEMENT FORM WAS ALSO SENT AT THAT TIME.

FINANCIAL CONSULTATION PROGRAM

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE YFT FINANCIAL COUNSELING PROGRAM. CALL STACEY BRAUN ASSOCIATES FOR AN APPOINTMENT AT 212-888-949-1925 OR CALL THE WELFARE FUND OFFICE FOR MORE INFORMATION.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG

CLAIM FORMS HAVE BEEN SENT TO THE SCHOOLS. OBTAIN THIS FORM FROM YOUR BUILDING REP. SUBMISSIONS OF CLAIMS ARE DUE BY **MARCH 31, 2015**. WE DO NOT START PROCESSING THE CLAIM UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF FEBRUARY. PLEASE BE PATIENT- ONLY ONE PERSON PROCESSES THE CLAIMS BECAUSE OF HIPAA ISSUES. **ONLY ONE SUBMISSION PER FAMILY.**

**PLEASE CONTACT THE WELFARE FUND
AT (914) 793-0393 WITH ANY QUESTIONS**

REFLECTIONS

by John Eshoo

From all the literature, media coverage, comments and positions of politicians and organizations we can see public schools and public school teachers are under attack. Yes, this is not news to you; but do you know and understand what they want to change that could have a negative impact on in-service teachers as well as retirees? In this past election, some candidates in New York referenced the need to have a New York State Constitutional Convention. We must be more vigilant and pro-active on this issue because our benefits and rights for our pension system, as well as the rights for all other public employees, are protected in the State Constitution.

Currently in NY State's constitution in Article 19, Section 2 is the following: "At the general election to be held in the year 1957, and every twentieth year thereafter, and also at such times as the legislature may by law, provide the question 'Shall there be a convention to revise the constitution and amend the same?' shall be submitted to and decided by the electors of the state." If the call for a constitutional convention was approved the danger lies in the changes that could be proposed and approved. Currently in Article 5, Section 7 of the constitution is an amendment which went into effect on July first, 1940 protecting our rights and benefits in our pension. This amendment basically states that membership in any pension or retirement of the state or of a civil division thereof shall be a contractual relationship, **the benefits of which shall not be diminished or impaired.**

In a number of court cases over the years this amendment has been cited to protect our benefits from being diminished. A well known case, which has been cited subsequently, is the case of Birbaum vs. New York State Teachers Retirement System. In this case the TRS tried to adopt a new actuarial table for payment of annuities. The case went up to the Court of Appeals which in its ruling in June, 1958 cited the 1940 amendment and went on to say it "precluded state teachers retirement system from computing annuities to which members were entitled by a table which would reduce the amount of their annuities to sums below those which they would have been paid if the table in use when they joined the system were used."

The bottom line is that the benefits in the Teachers Retirement System at the time you joined cannot, as the state constitution now stands, be diminished by law. Tiers 5 & 6, which were established in 2010 for Tier 5 and 2012 for Tier 6, greatly reduced the benefits for new teachers joining the retirement system. When Tier 6 was being pushed in 2012 by Governor Cuomo, he hinted of amending Tiers 3 and 4 to have teachers contribute to their pension through all the years they work. This could happen if a call for a state constitutional convention passes and an amendment is approved and then passed by the electors in a state election.

Given the negative climate out there for public employees and public schools we must fight vigorously against any election calling for a constitutional convention. There could even be an amendment made that can have retroactive effects diminishing the benefits of all tiers. Again, keep vigilant and be prepared to fight when called for by the YFT and NYSUT.

To all my sisters and brothers in the YFT, I wish you the very best in 2015.

Below for all teachers on Medicare are the charts for Medicare Parts B & D showing the basic premium and the IRMAA (surtax) amounts for 2015.

Part B premiums by income:

If your yearly income in 2013 (for what you pay in 2015) was			You pay (in 2015)
File individual tax return	File joint tax return	File married & separate tax return	
\$85,000 or less	\$170,000 or less	\$85,000 or less	\$104.90
above \$85,000 up to \$107,000	above \$170,000 up to \$214,000	Not applicable	\$146.90
above \$107,000 up to \$160,000	above \$214,000 up to \$320,000	Not applicable	\$209.80
above \$160,000 up to \$214,000	above \$320,000 up to \$428,000	above \$85,000 and up to \$129,000	\$272.70
above \$214,000	above \$428,000	above \$129,000	\$335.70

Part D premiums by income:

File individual tax return	File joint tax return	File married & separate tax return	You pay (in 2015)
\$85,000 or less	\$170,000 or less	\$85,000 or less	your plan premium
above \$85,000 up to \$107,000	above \$170,000 up to \$214,000	not applicable	\$12.30 + your plan premium
above \$107,000 up to \$160,000	above \$214,000 up to \$320,000	not applicable	\$31.80 + your plan premium
above \$160,000 up to \$214,000	above \$320,000 up to \$428,000	above \$85,000 up to \$129,000	\$51.30 + your plan premium
above \$214,000	above \$428,000	above \$129,000	\$70.80 + your plan premium

A FOND FAREWELL.....

Fran Bentivenga was hired by Walter Tice, former President of the YFT, on April 27, 1987 as the secretary for the YFT office. Fran effectively and dutifully served in that capacity for three presidents, six staff directors, and eight executive boards.

Fran's personality, ability, and skills were a perfect fit with the people who currently work or worked in the past in the YFT office. Whether it was on the phone or in the office, Fran was courteous and respectful to all teachers. She would listen attentively to each teacher thus helping in some cases to calm fears or in others to recognize issues that might have arisen or simply provide needed information. Fran's great sense of humor helped many times when things were tense in the office by making us laugh and putting us at ease.

Her skills as a secretary helped make the office run effectively and efficiently. In addition to her typing skills, Fran kept a watchful eye and did the ordering for the office, always making sure supplies did not run short and monitored the equipment so that office operations ran smoothly. Fran's ability in handling the financial aspects of the office, due to her experience with the Bank of New York, helped in making sure that all expenditures and bills were handled correctly and in a timely manner. Fran, many times, gave us suggestions to make things operate better in the office. There were even times when she would tell us what to do. The old adage that secretaries know more than the boss and run the office fits Frannie to a tee. At her recent retirement dinner, attended by more than 55 of her friends, coworkers and family, former YFT President Steve Frey jokingly summed up Fran's career, "I was elected YFT president only to walk into the office to find there was already a CEO in place."

Frannie, who helped us for 27 years through good times and bad times and through two strikes, decided it was time to retire in September 2014. We all love her and will miss her. It is with gratitude and respect and on behalf of all YFT members we wish Fran the very best in her retirement.

By John Eshoo & Rita Seligmann



YFT LEADERSHIP WEEKEND 2014



In Memoriam



Rosalind (Roz) Mariani, a longtime Yonkers resident, passed away on November 27, 2014 at the age of 75.

Roz attended Yonkers Public Schools, graduating from her beloved Yonkers High School, and completed her degrees in Physical Education and School Counseling at Hunter College. Upon graduation from college Roz served in the Peace Corps in El Salvador for two years.

Often referred to as "the Mayor of Yonkers," Roz's life and influence warmly touched a seemingly endless stream of people. There wasn't a birthday, birth announcement, anniversary, wedding or other special occasion that Roz did not acknowledge thus earning her vast love and friendship of family, friends and colleagues.

Roz began her teaching career in Yonkers in 1965 as a Physical Education teacher. She later became a School Counselor at Whitman Junior High and Gorton High School and during restructuring of the Yonkers Public Schools in the early 1980s Roz moved to a district-wide position, which included leading the district wide PEARLS testing program. Even after retirement in 2000, she continued working until recently as a consultant for the Board of Education

Her involvement with the Yonkers Federation of Teachers began in the early 1970s as an Executive Board member and later as Special Areas Vice President. Her over 45 year involvement with the union included numerous committees such as the Social Committee, Political Action Committee, Retirement Committee, Chair of the Scholarship Committee and she also served on countless negotiating teams and was a delegate to NEA, NYSUT and AFT conventions. As a YFT retiree, Roz was an At-Large officer for the E.D. 15-16 region, planning and hosting events for current and future retirees.

Her extensive community involvement included membership in the Police Athletic League, and the Hispanic Professional Association. She was a longtime member of the Enrico Fermi Education Fund, planning and hosting their annual scholarship breakfast.

With an extensive schedule of commitments to her family, friends and community, Roz still found time to travel the globe and always "summered" in her cherished Montauk.

She is survived by her brother Gerald, her nieces Christina and Alexandra and her nephews Marc, Michael and John. Contributions may be made to the Enrico Fermi Education Foundation, 13 Ann Marie Place, Yonkers, New York 10703 Attn: Anthony Maddalena. An ongoing theme in recent comments since her passing has been that Roz was "one fun lady," always with a glass of Pinot Grigio to share.

Submitted by Lynn Edelstein and Rita Seligmann

In Memoriam.....

The YFT sadly announces the passing of the following teachers since May 2014:

Ruth Alscher-Green	Retired, Yonkers High School	Joan Carney	Retired, School 22
Marie Vassello	Retired, Burroughs Middle School	Marlene Biasiotto	Retired, Gorton High School
Nadine Markowitz	Retired, CCE	Michael Model	Retired, Gorton High School
Eileen Savage	Retired, Administrator	Robert Sutton	Retired, Lincoln High School
Mattie Smith	Retired, Emerson Middle School	Peter DiResta	Active, Riverside High School
Peter Dronzek	Retired, Saunders High School	Antonio Contreras	Active, Saunders High School
Sid Neschis	Retired, Administrator	Milka Mejia-Cervone	Active, Saunders High School
Marguerite Ferraro	Retired, Robert C. Dodson School		

“A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.”

-Henry Adams

YFT BULLETIN BOARD

January Calendar

7th	3:45pm	Executive Board	YFT
12th	7:00pm	YCPTA	Saunders
15th	3:45pm	Building Assembly	ECHS
21st	3:45pm	Executive Board	YFT
19th	7:00pm	BOE Stated Meeting	Saunders
23rd-24th		NYSUT Exec. Comm.	Albany
29th	5:00pm	ED 15/16	TRO



JOB OPPORTUNITY

Planetarium Show Presenter/Science Educator: Part-time, flexible hours, weekends at Hudson River Museum. Run live & pre-recorded planetarium programs & public science workshops. Bachelor's Degree required, 1+ years teaching experience, basic computer & mechanical troubleshooting, articulate speaking style.

Send resume to : Marc Taylor, Planetarium Coordinator
Hudson River Museum
511 Warburton Avenue
Yonkers, NY 10701
mtaylor@hrm.org

