

A "C.U.T." ABOVE

Cathy's Column

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It seems as if every day brings new challenges. We are aging. Good health, as we age as seniors, is definitely not taken for granted. Good insurance coverage was a valuable "perk" that came with our jobs as teachers. Now as seniors, many of us have reached that milestone of 65 and have MEDICARE. It's not, as I've said before, an "entitlement". We paid for it and are still paying for it. We also paid into SOCIAL SECURITY. Many Americans rely solely on those monthly benefits.

How fortunate we are that, as teachers, we could retire at an age when we could enjoy a long and satisfying retirement in a warm state. We must not be complacent and think that our situation cannot change. Many of us were Tier 1 in the New York State Retirement System and did not contribute each paycheck into the retirement system. Those days are gone for our working colleagues. There was also a time when we did not contribute toward our health benefits. That was gone even before I retired.

The challenges we are facing now are emanating from our politicians in Tallahassee and in Washington. We need to preserve the advances that have been made through the AFFORDABLE CARE ACT. Since more people are insured, it is understandable that the costs are going to be shared and be more manageable for all. Nothing is perfect, but we must let our legislators know that we are concerned about everyone benefiting-not just the top 1%.

Things could change for us too. Every twenty years, the New York State voters get to decide whether a Constitutional Convention should be held. Please tell family, friends, and those of you who are registered in NY, to vote a RESOUNDING "NO". The last convention was held in 1967 and cost the taxpayers \$12,000,000.00!

In today's dollars that figure can go well into the BILLIONS! All the revisions that were made, were voted down by the public. Hence, the only ones who benefitted were the legislators who were paid extra to work. Not only does a convention cost the taxpayers many dollars, but they will have the authority to make changes in the State Constitution. The Constitution, as it stands now, protects our pensions by not permitting a lessening of our benefits. We need to keep this provision as it stands now.

Right now the Constitution guarantees every child the right to a free public education. It prohibits the use of public tax dollars for private and/or religious schools. We need to protect this right particularly in light of all the attacks on public education.

The Trump cabinet has little regard for the environment and the need for protected public lands. We certainly don't want to have New York's beautiful parks and wildlife areas to be "gobbled up" and sold off to make the rich even richer and destroy our fragile environment. Climate change is real and we need to protect the earth for future generations.

We all have a lot to lose. Let's face our challenges and work for a better life for all Americans, present and future.

"The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well."

Ralph Waldo Emerson



OPEN HOUSE AT THE SHERIFF'S YOUTH RANCH

On Saturday, March 4th, this event was attended by: Nancy Kubecka, Joe Lanza, Cathy Lanza, Betty and Fred Egre. This is always a highlight for neighboring communities and interested citizens to find out what the youth ranch is "all about".

There were ongoing tours of the cottages given by some of the residents, many with whom we know from Egan Cottage. There was almost continuous music ranging from orchestral to country. There were many exhibitions of equipment used in the work of making our communities safe places in which to live.

We learned about the CANINE UNIT during a live demonstration that was fascinating. It seems that the German Shepherds are all foreign born and purchased when they are about 12 months old for \$10,000 apiece.

Then they are trained to help the Sheriff's department in sniffing out drugs and/or bombs. They also aid in the pursuit of criminals. A delicious BBQ was enjoyed al fresco and there was also a "silent auction". Part of the proceeds went to the Ranch.

If you have never attended one of these annual events, please put it on your calendar for next year. It is usually the first Saturday in March!



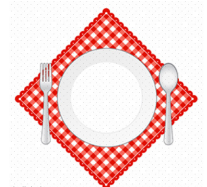
Sheriffs Youth Ranch Clubhouse Enterprise Road Safety Harbor

Cost: \$10 per person

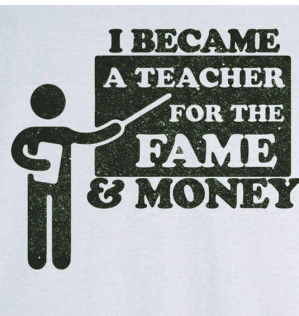
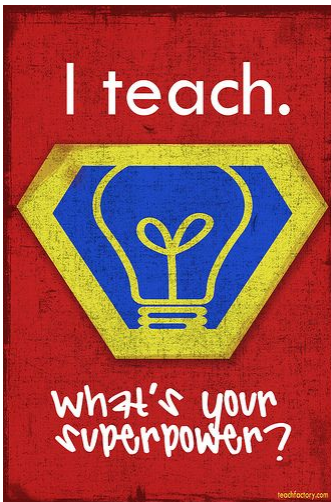
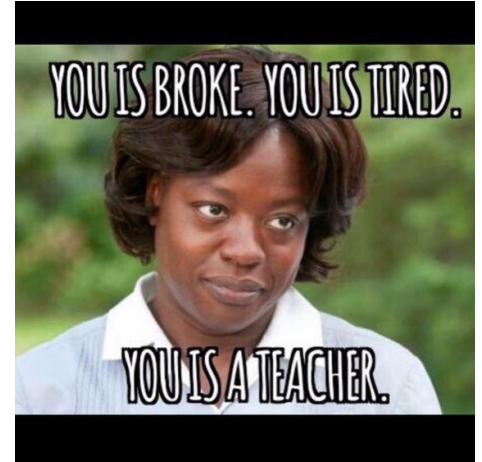
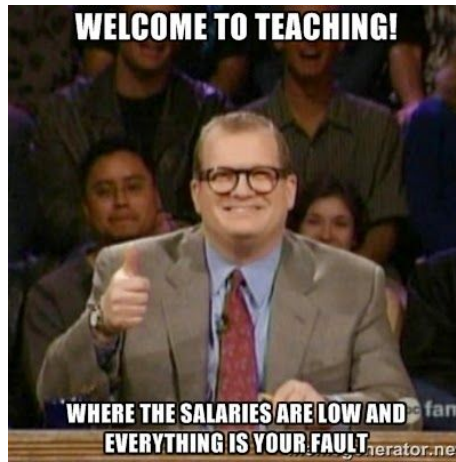
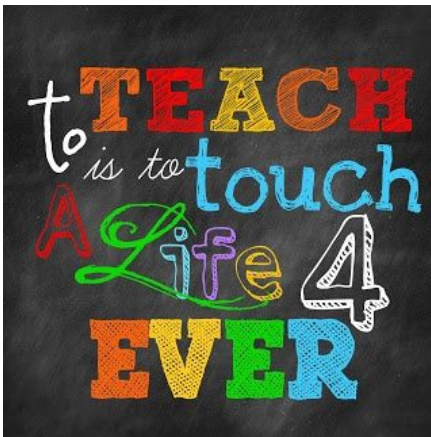
Menu: Hot rotisserie cooked chicken, barbecue baked beans, coleslaw, potato salad, rolls, assorted cookies, and both hot and cold drinks

Also, please call Maddi at 727-786-6379 or e-mail Marilyn at esatinof@tampabay.rr.com. to make your reservation. Deadline is Saturday, April 8th.

DIRECTIONS: Using McMullen-Booth to Enterprise Road, turn east for 100 yards to the entrance of the FLORIDA SHERIFFS YOUTH RANCH. Drive past the office building on the left to the large building behind with the portico entry and spacious parking area.



Ramblings from the Editor's Desk : education



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

Treasurer's Report September 2016-March 9, 2017

Balance effective 09/30/2016 is \$3810.78

Income from Participation fees

\$ 1530.00 members

120.00 associate members

\$ 1,200.00 member donations to regular project of \$1,200 donation to Sheriffs' Ranch

\$ 500.00 member donations for Egan Cottage Christmas gifts

\$ 3,350.00

Expenditures 2016-17

\$ 500.00 member donations for Christmas gifts for Egan Cottage kids

\$ 600.00 Donation Fl Sheriffs Youth ranch Dec 2016

\$ 600.00 Donation Fl Sheriffs Youth Ranch April 2017 (encumbered)

\$ 825.00 special fees to RC 43 for 57 members (at \$15 per regular, \$10 per associate) (encumbered)

\$ 50.00 Honorariums for speakers

\$ 145.80 Newsletter & Postage

\$ 120.00 RC 43 Conference on September 27th 2016.

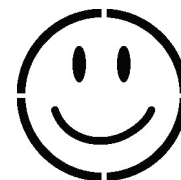
\$ 37.28 mileage & tolls for conference

\$ 2878.08

Anticipated balance \$4282.70 as of April 30, 2017.

Membership Report 2016-2017

I am happy to report a total membership of 57 with 51 retirees & 6 associate members. We lost several members, but we gained 8 new members. It was reported by NYSUT that there are 14,000 NY retirees in Florida. Our membership represents the most committed people to our profession in the Hillsborough, Pasco, Pinellas & Tampa area. Our secretary Eva Joline is one of the new people. Many of the others read our newsletter, but have not been to a meeting. I hope that they will join us in the near future.



Out and About Submitted by Eva Joline

Our March 9th meeting and luncheon was held at Positano's Italian Restaurant in Palm Harbor. The menu held many options. The food was delicious and all 31 attendees enjoyed a most social and enjoyable time.

Fred Egge talked about the Sheriff Youth Ranch Open House that was held Saturday, March 4th. All who attended enjoyed a grand time interacting with the staff and children.

Our Program Director, Rhoda Langstein, introduced the Empath Health representatives to the group. They spoke in detail to us regarding the vast services available to Pinellas County residents regarding ill and/or aging residents. It was a most enlightening presentation followed by a question and answer session.

Nancy Dittbrenner, Phil Meissner and Janet Rhoades worked as a committee on compiling a slate of officers for the coming calendar year. Nancy presented the slate to the attendees:

President- Cathy Lanza

Co 1st Vice Presidents- Marilyn Satinoff, Maddie Okun

2nd Vice President / Programming- Rhoda Langstein

Treasurer- Joe Lanza

Secretary- Eva Joline

President Emeritus and Advisor- Phil Meissner

Sunshine Committee- Betty Egge, Marilyn Satinoff

Newsletter Editor- Ellen Artale

Egan Cottage Liaisons- Janice and Stephen Drinane

Member Caroline Johnson, moved that we unanimously cast 1 vote of acceptance for the proposed slate which we did. We thank all these officers for accepting the positions.

We hope many members can attend our April picnic luncheon. Have a healthy and happy month.

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