

ESTABLISHED 1988



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# ISLIP 'CONNECTIONS'

AWARD WINNING NEWSLETTER

Summer's Bounty



## Thank a Union: 36 Ways Unions Have Improved Your Life

byTheNewDeal00

Let's get one thing straight...

The right-wing attack on unions is nothing more than ignorance, lack of education, and propaganda. Virtually ALL the benefits you have at work, whether you work in the public or private sector, all of the benefits and rights you enjoy everyday are there because unions fought hard and long for them against big business who did everything they could to prevent giving you your rights. Many union leaders and members even lost their lives for things we take for granted today.

### 36 Reasons Why You Should Thank a Union

Weekends

All Breaks at Work, including your Lunch Breaks

Paid Vacation

FMLA

Sick Leave

Social Security

Minimum Wage

Civil Rights Act/Title VII (Prohibits Employer  
Discrimination)

8-Hour Work Day

Overtime Pay

Child Labor Laws

Occupational Safety & Health Act (OSHA)

40 Hour Work Week

Worker's Compensation (Worker's Comp)

Unemployment Insurance

Pensions

Workplace Safety Standards and Regulations

Employer Health Care Insurance

Collective Bargaining Rights for Employees

Wrongful Termination Laws

Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967

Whistleblower Protection Laws

Employee Polygraph Protect Act (Prohibits Em-  
ployer from using a lie detector test on an em-  
ployee)

Veteran's Employment and Training Services  
(VETS)

Compensation increases and Evaluations (Raises)

Sexual Harassment Laws

Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)

Holiday Pay

Employer Dental, Life, and Vision Insurance

Privacy Rights

Pregnancy and Parental Leave

Military Leave

The Right to Strike

Public Education for Children

Equal Pay Acts of 1963 & 2011 (Requires employ-  
ers pay men and women equally for the same  
amount of work)

Laws Ending Sweatshops in the United States



# FROM THE PRESIDENT



*Marilyn Gutierrez*

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This has been a very traumatic year for public education in New York. You hear, on a daily basis, about Common Core, testing, teacher evaluations, charter schools, the tax cap, etc. that there is little more I can tell you. NYSUT is giving its all to keep public education alive but has its problems because of the thousands of job losses in the state and the growing number of retirees who are no longer paying dues. We hear from NYSUT almost daily in emails. We see ads on television with the governor telling us how great his plans are for education. (Keep in mind that he is a politician and not an educator.) You don't need to read more here. For this reason I have decided to look back to the start of my thirty-four years of teaching and share my experiences with you. I hope that you will do the same. ***We all have great stories to tell. Please send them to our editors for future newsletter articles.***

While attending Albany State ( SUNY Albany now ). I was fortunate enough to do my student teaching with a wonderful mentor at the Woodmere-Hewlett School District. When I was ready to begin my career, I was living in Broward County, Florida. When I applied for a teaching position to the County, I was fingerprinted and had to sign a loyalty oath to the United States. In 1961 the County's schools were segregated. I was a City kid and had no clue about this so I applied for a position at Lanier, a colored school ( as it was referred to at that time ). When I was told that it was, my response was to ask did that mean they didn't hire white teachers. Their reply was a sigh so I looked elsewhere. Because there were no openings at that time in my area, I signed on as a substitute. That turned out to be another education altogether but helped me to be a better teacher. If you can survive subbing, you can handle anything that can happen in a classroom.

The first day as a full time employee at the Henry D. Perry Junior High School started with an empty classroom. The first one through the door was a skunk. I left but soon learned that it belonged to the head of the science department and was de-scented. We were often visited by wildlife. Our building, a series of wings connected by outdoor walkways, was adjacent to a farm where the owner kept cows and donkeys. Every so often they would break out of the field and stampede through our corridors. That's when the principal and the phys-ed teachers would go on a roundup. On the other side of our buildings was a sewage treatment plant. Did you know that they treat sewerage with Vanilla?

I was awe struck by the fact that corporal punishment was a popular form of discipline in Florida. There were rules. Only administrators could paddle and it had to be administered between the waist and knees before a witness, usually the teacher who reported the misdeed. I couldn't bring myself to report a student so I usually handled my own discipline problems with detention or extra assignments. In those days boys were sent home if they (*continued on page 3*)

wore pants with belt loops and no belt. A student could be punished for calling another student a queer. Can you call them the good old days? There are so many stories I could tell, some funny some sad, about: being assigned to a portable classroom with a potbelly stove for heat, classrooms that we couldn't get to when it rained, the disparity between the resources of the white and non-white schools; the time when integration was finally ordered by the federal court and teachers resigned rather than have African-American students in their classrooms; when hundreds of Broward County teachers resigned in protest to the refusal of the county to negotiate a contract because it was illegal to strike; and the dark days of the Cuban Missile Crisis. I will save those stories for another newsletter. I am sure that you agree with me when I say that I never regretted my choice of a career, except on those late nights when I had to compute and agonize over report card grades.

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## May and June Holidays

May 1: National Tuba Day and  
Save the Rhino Day

May 2: Siblings Day

May 4: Star Wars Day

(May the 4<sup>th</sup> be with you!)

May 11: Twilight Zone Day

May 25: Tap Dance Day

June 4: Hug your Cat Day

June 8: Best Friends Day

June 9: Donald Duck Day

June 16: Fresh Veggies Day

June 20: Ice Cream Soda Day

Along with a few unusual ones, May and June open the season of familiar family and patriotic holidays. Mother's Day, Fathers' Day, Memorial Day and Flag Day all have interesting origins.

**Mother's Day** was first celebrated in 1908, when [Anna Jarvis](#) held a memorial for her mother in [Grafton, West Virginia](#). Her campaign to make "Mother's Day" a recognized holiday in the United States began in 1905, the year her mother, Ann Reeves Jarvis, died. Anna's mission was to honor her own mother by continuing work she had started and to set aside a day to honor mothers.

In 1910, a **Father's Day** celebration was held in [Spokane, Washington](#) by [Sonora Smart Dodd](#). Her father, the [Civil War](#) veteran [William Jackson Smart](#), was a single parent who raised his six children there. In the 1930s, Dodd returned to Spokane and started promoting the celebration again, raising awareness at a national level. She had the help of those trade groups that would benefit most from the holiday, for example the manufacturers of ties, tobacco pipes, and any traditional present to fathers. In 1966, President [Lyndon B. Johnson](#) issued the first presidential proclamation honoring fathers, designating the third Sunday in June as Father's Day. Finally, six years later, the day was made a permanent national holiday when President [Richard Nixon](#) signed it into law in 1972.

**Flag Day** is celebrated on June 14. It commemorates the adoption of the [flag of the United States](#), which happened on that day in 1777 by resolution of the [Second Continental Congress](#). The celebration began when, working as a grade school teacher in Wisconsin, in 1885, [Bernard J. Cigrand](#) held the first recognized formal observance of Flag Day at the [Stony Hill School](#). In 1916, [President Woodrow Wilson](#) issued a proclamation that officially established June 14 as Flag Day.

**Memorial Day** is a [holiday](#) for remembering the people who died while serving in the armed forces. The holiday, which is observed every year on the last Monday of May, was formerly known as **Decoration Day** and originated after the [American Civil War](#) to commemorate the [Union](#) and [Confederate](#) soldiers who died in the war. By the 20th century, Memorial Day had been extended to honor all Americans who died while in the military service.

# *IRTA Health News*

What inoculations do senior citizens need?

You may need one or more vaccines, even if you received vaccines as a child or as a younger adult. Ask your doctor which ones are right for you. Vaccines recommended for older adults can prevent:

Influenza (Flu)

Shingles (Herpes Zoster)

Diphtheria/Tetanus

Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

Pneumococcal (Pneumonia) (2)

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Vitamin D again...

I haven't spoken to anyone lately who had a physical without their doctor checking for vitamin D deficiency. "Seventy-five percent of Caucasians and 97 percent of African Americans are low in D, so I think and the community thinks we now have to reassess what is normal," This report appeared on "CBS This Morning." "A new study is casting a shadow on the "sunshine vitamin." "It's the second most prescribed or taken vitamin in the country second to a multi-vitamin but there is no benefit that anybody derives. ... It doesn't work in anybody, and yet it may cause significant harm," said CBS News medical contributor Dr. David Agus .

Despite widespread use, vitamin D supplements are ineffective when it comes to lowering blood pressure, the study [published in JAMA Internal Medicine](#) found. "People with higher blood pressure have lower vitamin D, so it was a logical trial to do, but it failed, and this is one of many trials that have failed with this vitamin," Agus said.

If a doctor recommends vitamin D, Agus suggested the patient ask for proof of effectiveness.

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Fish Oil ...

Fish oil is the third most popular dietary supplement in the nation with more than 10 percent of Americans taking it daily for heart health. The majority of the studies conducted in the last seven years don't [support](#) the theory.

Some question the benefits of omega-3s. A recent [article](#) in the [New York Times](#) indicted that from 2005 to 2012 there were at least two dozen rigorous studies of whether fish oil could prevent cardiovascular events in high risk populations.

All but two found that, compared with a placebo, fish oil showed no [benefit](#).

"I think it's important to understand that there are other studies, other meta analyses that seem to suggest there is a benefit in select populations," said Kaiser Permanente Colorado Clinical Pharmacy Specialist Don Lamprecht.

Lamprecht said the need for fish oil is patient specific and patients need to follow their doctors' advice.

# Members on the Move

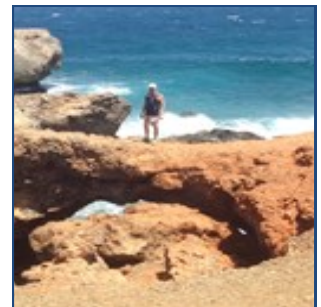
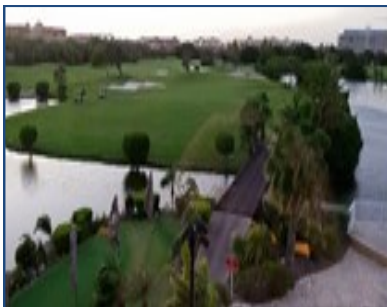
## Aruba, the Happy Island



Those aren't bandits you see; they are Glenn and Chris Drago ATVing in Aruba in March. Aruba is a dry island south of Venezuela. Though the official language is Dutch and the currency is the florin, English and Spanish are spoken everywhere and the US dollar is accepted. Water sports are the main activities on the island: swimming, kite surfing, waterskiing, tubing, parasailing, banana boating, and all kinds of wet 'n wild adventures. You can tour the underwater beauty in the Atlantis submarine or by snorkeling or scuba diving.

On land, there are many sights to enjoy. Traveling by ATV, Safari bus, or other transport you can visit museums, animal sanctuaries (including a donkey sanctuary), historic sites, varying landscapes, and a grotto dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes. For the golfers among you (Glenn), there are 3 golf courses: 2 nine-hole and one 18-hole.

Glenn and Chris enjoyed their stay at the Hyatt regency Resort and Casino, one of many casinos on the island, and highly recommend Aruba as a relaxing vacation destination.



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## The Island of Wild Horses

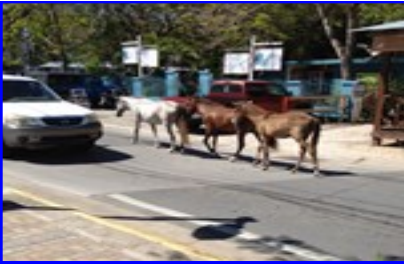
By Ann Walker



The flight to Vieques is an all day adventure. Traveling with only a carry-on bag, I left Sayville at 6:15 AM. In San Juan, PR. I connected with Cape Air, an 8 passenger two motor plane, for a 15 minute flight to the Island of Vieques off the southeast coast of Puerto Rico.

I traveled to Vieques to live with the local people, where I stayed in a private home. The house is on a busy road between the two towns of Isabella Secundo, a port for the local ferry, and Esperanza.

Locals recognized my sister and brother-in-law and greeted them ( *Continues on page 6* )



as neighbors. The house was on a hillside overlooking the Caribbean with a view of passing cruise ships. We also watched wild horses moving around the area. One evening we had to shoo 5 horses that were grazing on the bushes in the front yard. Much of the island is a wild animal refuge. In previous years, the horses were a real hazard

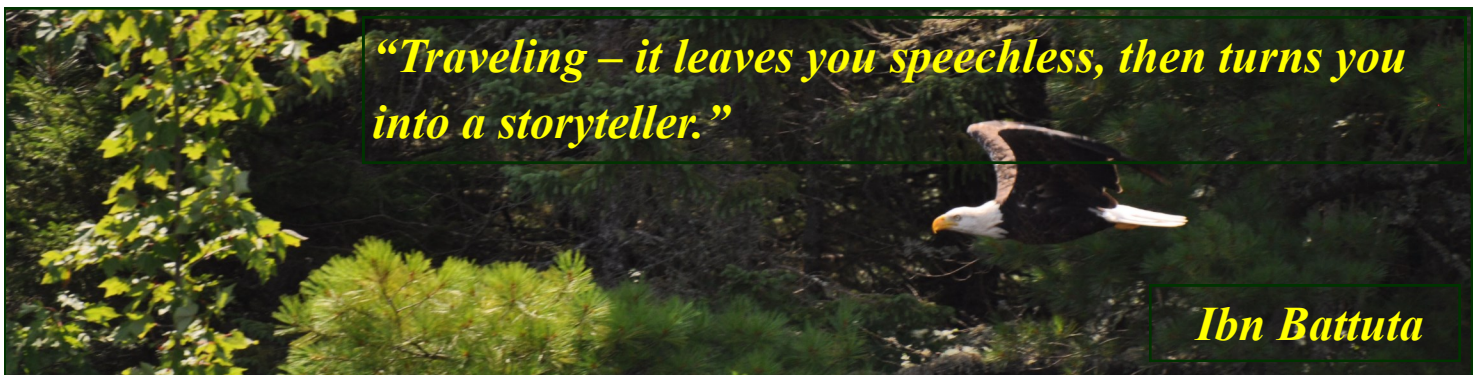
on the narrow roads. The local humane society has recently worked to get individuals to take ownership of the horses and see that animals get better care.

Vieques was once used for United States military maneuvers and bombing practice. Since then it has become a quiet retreat for nature lovers. Though not a well known stop on the tourist map, the island offers quiet beaches and natural attractions.

We were visiting my nephew, Robert Gevinski, who manages Hix Island House. His location is a collection of individual concrete buildings containing lofts. It is an upscale, eco-friendly location that doesn't have air-conditioning, room service, dining service, WIFI or TV. It is for adults - couples — NO CHILDREN, a quiet honeymoon retreat. See Hix Island House website for overview of grounds.



Vieques offers a range of accommodations from modest to luxurious. There are shops, galleries, museums and open air restaurants to explore in both Isabella Secundo and Esperanza. The island is a snorkelers' haven. If you are looking for a relaxed location with private beaches and natural wonders, put Vieques at the top of your list.



*“Traveling – it leaves you speechless, then turns you into a storyteller.”*

*Ibn Battuta*

*IRTA members, please continue to send us your travel pictures and notes. If you don't have the time to write the article, just email your pictures to :*

*[judyb126@hotmail.com](mailto:judyb126@hotmail.com)*

*with a contact number and Judy will write the article for you.*

## IRTA NEWS & NOTES



**Don't Forget to Vote on May 19th**

**School District Budget Vote**

**Board of Education Trustees**



Our in-service local, the ITA, is endorsing: Tom Leggio , Brian Clock, and Maryann Coughlin in the Islip District elections. You can check the district in which you live for their endorsements.

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To Marilyn and Exec Board, Thank you so much for the gift card to Relish. When I start going out, that will be one of the first visits. Let all my IRTA friends know that I'm being fitted for a brace to assist me in walking. Tony and I are working hard to assure us that I will be walking in the near future. Love, Tony and Carolyn

PS The newsletter looks great. You did us proud! I'm enjoying the lovely cards and words of encouragement.

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Just read the March-April newsletter. Amazing that we have so much talent in the group to fill in while Carolyn is recovering. They did a really good job. Eleanor Schreiber

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**Outstanding Job!!** Just a note to say the IRTA membership should be very proud of the efforts, hard work and commitment by its retirees in continuing the excellent '**Islip Connections' Newsletter**. Marilyn, Diana , Ann and other retiree contributors did a splendid job in producing the March/April 2015 Issue. The layout, articles, photos and color choices are impressive. This issue includes lots of new and enjoyable retiree newsletter creativity. A job well done. T. Caamano

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### **Feed the Mind and the Tummy**

Judy Burton is seeking a few members for a Gourmet Book Club where we will prepare foods inspired by the book while we discuss it. A suggested first book is *The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah.

If you are interested, please contact Judy at 631-656-0972 or judyb126@hotmail.com. Looking forward to hearing from you.

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### **Heads Up for Latest Visa Fraud**

The caller says he is from the Security & Fraud Dept. of VISA, giving appropriate identifying information about his ID number and your card issuer. After asking (continued on next page)

you if you purchased an item for \$497.99 from a store in another state, he claims to be able to give your account a credit for the errant purchase. He then gives you information concerning the procedure of VISA fraud investigations and give you the 6 digit number Control number. He then asks you to give the last three digits on the back of your card to verify that you indeed are the card holder. This is the information he needs. The caller continues with polite conversation ending the phone call on a friendly good bye.

VISA or any other credit company would never ask for the pin number since they have issued that number to you. Be advised and don't give out any credit card information over the phone.

## **SOCIAL SECURITY becomes FEDERAL BENEFIT CHECK**

Congressmen are playing fast and loose with vernacular. What motive did they have for changing the name of our Social Security? The government is now referring to our Social Security checks as a "Federal Benefit Payment". This isn't a benefit. It is our money paid out of our earned income! Not only did we all contribute to Social Security but our employers did too. It totaled 15% of our income before taxes. At \$30K per year that's close to \$180,000 invested in SS. At a 1% interest rate compounded monthly, after 40 years of working you'd have more than \$1.3 million dollars saved. At a 3% per year withdrawal that comes to \$39,318 per year or \$3,277 per month. Can Congress have a plan that might not be to our betterment?

## **RC 21 News and Upcoming Events**

Next General Meeting on **May 19th** at **10:15 am** at the **West Islip Library** on Higbie Lane. The benefits committee has planned two trips and is working on several others for 2015. Information and forms are available at all RC 21 General Meetings and on line at [rc21.ny.aft.org](http://rc21.ny.aft.org). We will have flyers at our own breakfast meetings.

We will have flyers at our meetings at the Oconee Diner.

June 1, 2015 - Snug Harbor on Staten Island

October 15, 2015 - Essex Steam Train & Boat Ride

August 6, 2015 Summer Theater Trip to see Billy Elliot and lunch @ Perabell

December 2-4, 2015 Holidays in the Brandywine Valley & Peddlers Village

**IRTA 2014-2015 EXECUTIVE BOARD**  
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DIANA BARANEC



"REMEMBER" TO JOIN US  
AT OUR UPCOMING BREAKFASTS  
**MAY 7TH & JUNE 4TH**  
**ISLIP OCONEE EAST DINER**  
START TIME: 9:00 A.M.  
LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING  
EVERYONE THERE.

