

R-UTN Newsletter

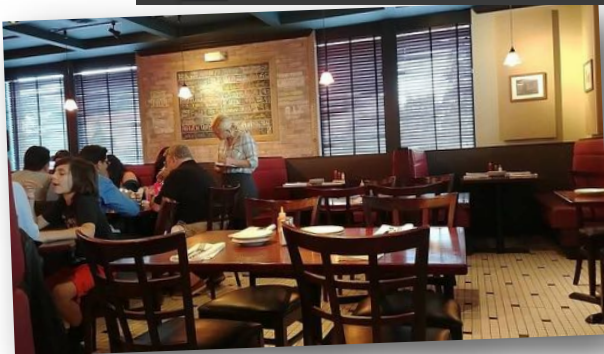
www.retiredteachersofnorthport.org

March 2022

Volume 32 Number 4

Spring Luncheon

**Tuesday, April 5, 2022
12:00 – 3:00 pm**



**6005 Jericho Turnpike
Commack, NY**
(just east of Larkfield Road)

\$40.00 p/p

Includes:

- * Appetizers
- * Salad
- * Choice of 5 Entrees
- * Dessert
- * Coffee, Tea, Soda

**RAFFLE TO BE
HELD TO BENEFIT THE
SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

RSVP By March 29th

Mail check, made out to R-UTN,
to Dave Hosie, 19 Jay Court, Northport, NY 11768

President's Message

Jane Flood

Well, hallelujah, colleagues!!

The numbers are down, restrictions are easing, and life may be returning to some semblance of normalcy! We continue to offer our thanks to all those, especially our healthcare workers, who helped to make this possible. Continue to be safe and healthy, please!

On that note, a reminder that we have a new date for our Spring Luncheon at Jackson's on April 5! Come join us for a chance to gather with fellow retirees in an upbeat atmosphere, enjoy some tasty food, take a chance on a raffle, and have some much-needed fun! (Details on the cover of this newsletter)

New members are becoming involved and it's so refreshing! Consider all we do, and hop on board the RUTN train!

Looking forward to seeing many of you at the Luncheon!

Jane Flood and the Executive Board

Slate for RUTN Executive Board Members 2022 – 2023

President	Jane Flood	jcpflood@hotmail.com
Vice President	Joanne Kroon	jmkroon@optonline.net
Secretary	Vickie Newell	vickie54@aol.com
Treasurer	Dave Hosie	631-754-3468
Membership Chair	Judy Bensimon	jkbensimon@optonline.net
Email Co-coordinator	Bobbi Scott	scotta@optonline.net
Email Co-coordinator	Donna McGinn	donna.mcgin717@gmail.com
Webmaster	Linda Quinn	lindaq@digitalquinn.com
Newsletter Editor	Suzy Travis	suzytravis@optonline.net
Corresponding Secretary	TBD	
RC-23 Representative	Larry Ryan	laryan@mac.com
UTN Liaison	Teddy Emanuel	tenick2@optonline.net
Insurance Information	TBD	
Social Secretary	TBD	
Social Committee	TBD	

The slate of candidates will be posted on our website and published in the summer newsletter. The term of office is for two years. The Board meets approximately 10 times a year. We still have positions available – please consider coming aboard! For more information, contact Nominations Committee Chair: Larry Ryan, 631-543-2462 or laryan@mac.com

The election will take place by mail. Ballots will be mailed with the membership forms in August and need to be returned by September 15. The elected officers are supported by an active Executive Board of committee chairs and other volunteers.

If not ready for elected office, consider joining one of our committees – social, communications, and newsletter.

Tony Award Winner Justin Levine

Northport's Favorite Composer

by Suzy Travis



If you happen to be in Manhattan strolling west on 45th Street, as you approach the Al Hirschfeld Theater your eyes are drawn to the marquee for *Moulin Rouge! The Musical*. On closer examination, one cannot miss the name **JUSTIN LEVINE** credited with Music Supervision, Orchestrations, and Arrangements. After taking numerous photos

with my cell phone, I informed everyone in my general vicinity that I was Justin's 8th grade English teacher. Many of our fellow retirees had Justin in classes at Northport, and I encourage you all to stand outside the Al Hirschfeld Theater and proudly tell the world that YOU were Justin's teacher! While you're there, buy a ticket for the show and see what the fuss is all about. Time travel back to 1899 Paris with Toulouse-Lautrec as your guide. The party starts long before the overture begins!

Justin, 2003 NHS graduate, won a Tony Award for Orchestrations on *Moulin Rouge! The Musical*, which opened in July of 2019. Justin's Tony is currently on his mother's piano. Justin has had NO formal musical training, however, that hasn't been an issue. He also received a Grammy Award nomination as co-producer of the show's cast album. The musical is based on **Baz Luhrmann's** 2001 film starring Nicole Kidman and Ewan McGregor. The film's lyrics were updated to include current popular music – over 70 different song lyrics were expertly woven into the musical's score.

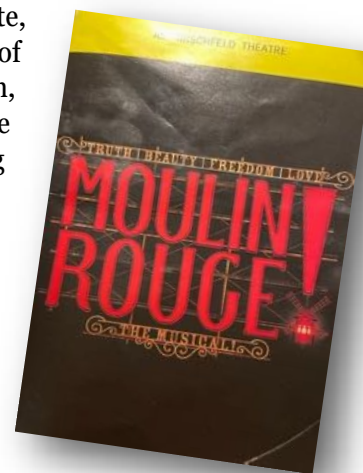


Justin attended **Norwood Avenue Elementary School** and **Northport Middle School** where he was cast as Applegate, school's production of *Damn Yankees*. Justin, who was 11 at the time, credits playing Applegate as a turning point in his life. He fed off the energy of the audience and crushed the part!

While at NHS, Justin was active in the music and drama programs. He plays the piano and guitar; he was in the choir, orchestra, and jazz band, but his main focus was the Drama Club.

After high school, Justin attended New York University for drama. His focus turned to music after he was asked to be the music director for a piece called *The History of Tears*. In 2010 he was the music director, orchestrator, conductor and musician for the Off-Broadway and Broadway runs of *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*. His credits also include music supervision, arranger, lyricist, and choreographer.

Currently in Chicago getting *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* on tour, Justin is also working with a band called Jamestown Revival on original music for a musical based on S.E. Hinton's novel *The Outsiders*. Hinton was 16 when the book was published in 1967. The book is still popular and relevant with young people, and it is still part of the curriculum in many school districts. Hinton receives letters from readers



whose lives were changed by her book. Hinton and Justin met several weeks ago, and she will be part of this project, as she was with the script and filming for Francis Ford Coppola's 1983 film *The Outsiders*. Justin expects the run-throughs for the musical to begin in Manhattan this spring and previews to follow in early 2023.

I almost forgot to mention that Justin sang backup for **ADELE...**

Northport has produced other successful entertainers, specifically, **PATTI LuPONE** and **EDIE FALCO**. Justin has met Patti twice; the first time they met, Patti was running to an important meeting, but when she heard that Justin went to NHS, she shot back, without breaking stride, "Go Tigers!" before leaving the theater. Classic LuPone! Their second meeting went much better.

If you'd like to keep up to date on Justin's career, just Google "Justin Levine Broadway" and see the evolution, so far. Watch the interviews, listen to him perform, and notice the impeccable grammar – if you taught grammar when Justin was in your class, you should give yourself a pat on the back for a job well done! Retired music teachers, you, too, deserve a well-earned pat on the back! Justin said that he pinches himself all the time to make sure his life is not just a dream. It's no dream, nor is his success any surprise to those who know him. Justin makes us all proud.



Collaborating with Baz Luhrmann

Check out these videos:

Justin and Holly James performing on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=artAFG29Cl8>

Justin, Alex Timbers the director of *Moulin Rouge!* The Musical, and Aaron Tveit the lead in the musical interviewed by Brittany Jones-Cooper:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VS7okRkLnNU>

Bits and Pieces

*This is a **new column** for our newsletter and webpage featuring member news as well as life hacks and events of interest for our retirees. Please send your news to newsletter editor, Suzy Travis, atsuzytavis@optonline.net.*

📅 On the last Friday of every month there's usually a small group of retired **NORWOOD AVENUE SCHOOL** staff that meets at Copenhagen Bakery (75 Woodbine Avenue) at 9 a.m. for breakfast. We'd love for you to join us!

📅 If you **struggle with opening medicine bottles**, you can request that your pharmacist not use childproof caps on your medicine. However, if you do this, remember to keep them well out of the way of any children.

📅 **CHRISTIE MOSER**, retired school psychologist, welcomed her first grandchild on January 16. Her name is Averie Paige Moser.

📅 **SANDY SCHUMACHER** (DAS) has extended her skills as a children's librarian into the Teen Room at the Northport Public Library. She works there part-time and is as enthusiastic and helpful as she always was, with recommendations and assistance for teens and parents alike.

📅 **CHUCK PERRETTI** is approaching lucky 77 this May. With two grandsons, he already has more than he ever expected. He continues to work in Prison Ministry Via Philemon Fellowship and for Peace and Justice via North Shore Peace group and is always looking for additional volunteers to join him. He has no plans for retiring yet!

📅 **LINDA McGRATH** (NMS and NHS) reports that she and her husband Jack are enjoying winter down in Florida. "We play golf, and I am now the assistant director for our local theater's production of *Hello Dolly* which opens on February 17th and runs for three weekends. I also volunteer at The Hub...

Continued on page 6

Notes From the Music Department



Don Sherman reports that **Northport Music Retirees** have found many outlets for their creativity in retirement, and the challenge of maintaining social ties and keeping active during a pandemic has met its match! Some of us were able to keep a semi-regular biweekly Zoom going, comparing grandchildren's progress, church-organist duties, and performances both virtual and in-person. We've even had an in-person brunch or two!

James Guarnieri sends a video of music recorded with **Justin Comito** in January: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XH3AXcmSkIo&t=6s>. "This is an EPK (Electronic press kit) of short highlights of his music to send to musical booking agents. This group *Sawtooth* is performing at the Bacca Arts Center in Babylon on Friday, May 6th as a fund raiser for Long Island Cares (founded by Harry Chapin)."

Chris Zacher writes, "We have been blessed with the birth of granddaughter Lucy Rose Voigt, born Jan. 6. She is an absolute joy and the light of our lives."

The music aspect of retirement has kicked up since the beginning of the pandemic. While I continued to teach privately via zoom, all live performances, rehearsals, etc. stopped for over a year. I am now back rehearsing and performing with the Nassau Pops, Island Winds Dectet, Hornucopia Horn Quartet and the Northport Community Band. Will be performing in the pit for the upcoming NMS musical "The Wizard of Oz". Am also a member of the SCMEA Executive board and co-chair of the SCMEA Day of Horn, which just completed year 17.

I also still direct the Northport Horn Club, a group of student horn players from NMS, ENMS and Npt. H.S. I still love teaching and am fortunate to be able to work with this talented group. (I started many of the high school students as 3rd graders!)

Have also been volunteering with the League of Women Voters of Huntington, which has been a nice change of pace. As for traveling, we are going on a long deferred river cruise from Amsterdam in May. Hoping to get back to traveling on a regular basis."



Chris Zacher, Frank Doyle, Remy D'Esposito, Donna Gorelick, Chris McClay, Don Sherman, Bonnie Paysen, Ellen McCarthy and Margie Janke.

Sonia Padgett says, "Becky and I are hanging in here. TV, doing jig saw puzzles, Zooming with family and friends. Not traveling, enjoying our home. Hope you all are well and finding some fun things to do."


Don Sherman continues to direct the Northport Community Band, making music with **Chris Zacher**, **Remy D'Esposito**, **Ellen McCarthy** and many other former colleagues and students every July and December (this summer's concerts are June 30, July 7, 14, 21 and 28!). He also coordinates SCMEA's Day of Tuba and Euphonium each fall, plays in the Atlantic Wind Symphony, Long Island Wind Ensemble and Island Winds (also with Chris Z.!), will guest-conduct one of the SCMEA All-County bands this March, maintains a private studio and enjoys digging in the dirt at Huntington's Kubecka Organic Garden.


We even heard from **Henry and Gail Newbert**, who "...left Northport in '72 and spent the next 33 years in Ithaca, NY where I was on the faculty of the Ithaca College School of Music and Gail taught in the Lansing, NY Schools, where she eventually became Director of Special Services.


We retired to Sun City Hilton Head in 2005. This is a wonderful place with a plethora of activities. Gail visits one of the indoor pools several mornings each week for aqua-aerobics. I play 9 holes of golf once a week. The pandemic has not affected our routine very much. We don't go out for lunch as much as pre-pandemic days. We have cancelled 2 cruises but will resume cruising on February 23. We have not travelled north as much as in previous years, but will head to Ithaca on March 11 and to Columbus in the spring."


Bits and Pieces continued

...an art gallery of sorts. And I fool around with watercolor. Most of all we are enjoying good friends and good weather.”

 **GLENN BALDWIN** (NHS) has been involved with the school presentations for Chris Pendergast’s ALS Ride For Life for several years. At the moment, visits have been curtailed due to COVID, but he is expecting to resume these valuable events. Meanwhile, look for Glenn and his Friends of Jazz at the park this summer and fall.


 Congratulations are in order for **PETER WHITE** (NHS) on the publication of his book *Stretching Minds: Teaching in the Light of Creative Altruism*. In 72 inspiring stories and photos, it details experiences of his many years with Students for 60,000 and the wonderful volunteer work of so many (including several of our very own Northport teachers and students!), locally and in Nicaragua. Positive vibes for all the good done by children making life better for so many! To order, see Amazon.com/books with Pete’s name and the book title. All proceeds go to his charitable group’s poverty projects.

 **DR. RENEE O’BRIEN**, retired Northport HS Art Teacher, is Professor of Photography and Chair of the Arts, Media and Culture Division at SUNY Adirondack near Lake George NY. Her photo work will be featured in a two-person exhibit at LARAC (Lower Adirondack Regional Arts Council) in Glens Falls NY. *SHOW III: Times Blur* : April 8 - May 11; Opening April 8th, 5-7pm : Renee O’Brien + Terry Teitelbaum.

 **LINDA TROTT DICKMAN** (FAS, PRS, NAS) has been busy since retiring in 2018. Having already won awards for her poetry, she also has more books in production. Linda’s latest chapbook is entitled *ROAD TRIP 2 – ON THE ROAD AGAIN* (available on Amazon). She does readings as well at various local venues, including for the Northport Arts Coalition (First Presbyterian Church, Northport, last Friday of every month), and Samantha’s Li’l Bit of Heav-

en in East Northport. She also works with local museums and at the Walt Whitman Birthplace Association as an instructor. Linda and her husband David love to travel and are planning another trip soon. Congratulations, Linda!

 **FRAN McGARRY**, retired NHS and NMS English teacher has launched her new website recently and would love to share with our members: www.francesmcgarry.com. Please send comments via Fran’s FB page Frances McGarry. Give a listen to Fran’s FIRSTONLINE WITH FRAN podcast featuring ordinary people doing extraordinary things in the Arts: www.firstonlinewithfran.com. Fran and Don are both well and enjoying their three-year-old grandson.

 **JERRY BRADNICK** is about to turn 90 but feels like he’s 70. He has great memories about some of the excellent staff he had at Larkfield and 5th Ave. Many students and staff have contacted him over the years. Jerry lost his great wife Dorothy five years ago. She loved her years in the Time Out Room at NHS. Of the fine staff he hired, perhaps Chris Pendergast was one of the best. They were close friends until his recent passing. Jerry supports the R-UTN scholarship program each year, and still plays golf 2-3 times per week.

IN MEMORIAM

*Please see our website
for more details*

MICHAEL FEINSTEIN, retired technology and computer teacher at Northport Junior High School and Middleville Middle School, passed suddenly in January while in Florida on vacation with his wife and friends.

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