

# Spotlight 21

Bay Shore  
Bayport-Blue Point

## SERVING RETIREES FROM

Brentwood  
Central Islip  
Connetquot

East Islip  
Islip

West Islip  
Sayville



Vol. 16 No. 2

An Award Winning Publication of NYSUT Retiree Council 21

May-June, 2016

## ***A Message From***

## ***President Louisa Eiermann***



### **Together We Must Stand**

A great deal has happened since last I wrote to you. In March Michael and I attended the Committee of 100 and the Retiree Presidents Meeting in Albany, and in April we attended the Local and Retiree Presidents Conference and were your delegates, along with Marie Kanzler, at the Representative Assembly in Rochester. There was a great deal of information given out, and all that information had to be sorted out and condensed for you. The passion of many speakers will be hard to translate in a bulletin such as this but what I came away with from all the meetings I attended and the speeches I heard was that there was much at stake and the time to do something about things is NOW. We were actually told at one point that the new normal is “Crisis”. So, in my usual fashion, I will present to you highlights from Albany and Rochester. Notice that “activism” is the theme.

- Although the new normal may be “crisis” we were also told that we may not be able to outspend the opposition, but we **CAN** out-organize them. Organize we did. The assemblymen and senators the Committee of 100 visited this year told us, that as a result of our advocacy last year, they listened, as did the governor, and the budget that was finally approved in Albany this year includes: finally, the elimination of the of the Gap Elimination Adjustment(GEA), restoring \$433.6 million to education, increased state aid by \$626.6 million, money to expand pre-k for 3-year-olds, in-state tuition for SUNY and CUNY was frozen, teacher centers are still in existence, school vouchers and tax credits were defeated, nearly all of the harmful language on charter schools was eliminated, the defeat of the proposal to freeze the reimbursement of Medicare Part B premiums at \$104.90 and the proposal to eliminate the reimbursement of the IRMAA. As Andy Pallotta said to us, “What a difference a year makes” as we created a “culture of activism.”
- On the 2017 ballot there will be a question “Shall there be a convention to revise the constitution and amend the same?” and **our answer is to be a resounding, “NO”** because as it stands, the constitution now: guarantees the right to a free public education, prohibits reductions in public pension benefits, guarantees rights to worker compensation and the rights to be a member of a union and collective bargaining and provides that the state provide for social welfare needs. **CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION WILL AFFECT EVERY OTHER LAW CURRENTLY IN PLACE AND WILL IMPACT FUTURE STATUTES.** Also, contrary to what many may think, NO ONE will be grandfathered in.
- As a result of the 4-4 vote of the Supreme Court in the Friedrichs case, Agency Fee is still the law of the land. HOWEVER, there are many Friedrich-like cases out there, 4 already at the level of the Court of Appeals. A justice has yet to be appointed to replace Justice Scalia, and there is the possibility of three more justices retiring in the near future. Imagine a Court of justices not favoring the cause of Labor! The replacement of these justices will be in the hands of the next president. Think on that!

- Seniors vote at a higher rate than other voters BUT often vote against their own interests. In the 2014 election more than half of our members voted for candidates who want to CUT Social Security! More on this from Barry Kaufmann, the President of NYSARA, who will speak to us at our June Awards Luncheon.
- The FIGHT for FIFTEEN is a senior issue, too. Not only is it good for New York's economy, but raising the minimum wage increases the amount that goes into Social Security. Originally, farm workers were not to be included in this but due to the Social Justice efforts of NYSUT, they will be included in the minimum wage increase.
- 80% of retirees remain in NYS, having an economic impact and tax benefit in the billions.
- 70% of NYSUT members are women. Yet, in NYSUT, only 40% of NYSUT Executives are women. Also, women make up 54% of the low-wage workers in NYS. NYSUT has formed a Women's Steering Committee to address these issues and why, of the 20 richest countries in the world, does the USA rank 17<sup>th</sup> on equal pay for women!
- Barbara Keilty-Michaleski of RC 18, on LI, is the Retiree of the Year. She called retirees "the daytime army" and that "union activism is in our blood."
- NYSUT UNITED is looking for stories. Do you have one to tell? Contact Kara Smith at ksmith@nysut.org.
- Members are asked to avoid travel to North Carolina and Mississippi since these states passed laws that allow discrimination against LGBT individuals. Major companies have withdrawn business and performers have cancelled concerts in these states.
- Mario Cilento, president of the NYS AFL-CIO, spoke to us at the RA and said, "You are the largest AFL-CIO affiliate, and when you get attacked, other union members take notice. They know that if it can happen to you, it can happen to them." He said we have inspired other unions through our efforts.
- Karen Magee, our NYSUT president, told us that last year we fought back and won as we answered her call to "be the union.", and now we must "grow the union" as we spread the word about the importance of our union's work.
- Vice President Catalina Fortino affirmed "because of the power of our collective voices and collective actions with parents, students and communities, darkness will not prevail."
- Vice President Paul Pecorale's work on Social Justice issues across the state is inspiring and he asks us to all "become activists" to promote why unions matter, why better wages matter, ultimately why all people matter
- NYSUT has launched a "Pledge to Vote" campaign. The goal is to persuade 95 % of NYSUT members to vote. Are you registered?
- The highlight of the RA was when Hillary Clinton arrived and spoke to us for about an hour about her commitment to us: "I am with you!" she told us. Delegates shouted out time and time again but especially as she called for making certain that "teachers are treated with respect as the professionals they are" and treating equal pay for women "as the critical issue it is."

I carried all of the above thoughts with me when, right after the RA, Michael and I took a trip to Georgia and Alabama. It was a last minute thing – there were Southwest vouchers we had to use and hotel points we needed to spend and we were going to visit our son and his family at Fort Benning so why not visit places near there? Well, what an extraordinary trip it turned out to be. From Atlanta to Tuskegee to Montgomery to Monroeville and back to Atlanta after our family visit, we experienced such incredibly moving places and history, that my life will never be the same. We all know that is one thing to read about things, but to be where they actually happened is something else. I will leave you with two quotes that now have given new meaning to what I learned in Albany and Rochester. From Rosa Parks: "The only tired I was, was tired of giving in" and from Dr. Martin Luther King: "We will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream." So, let us ask ourselves, if two people, by themselves, can change the world, imagine what we can accomplish if we work together?

2016 NYSUT Community Service Award  
Linda Brookshire  
East Islip Retired Teachers' Association

Linda will be honored at the June Awards Luncheon on Tuesday, June 21st at Villa Lombardi's. She has been a strong union activist throughout her career and in retirement. To quote one of her nominators: "This reliable, knowledgeable and empathetic lady is a remarkable person. She is so organized that she makes transitioning from one task to another look easy."

She has been serving her church, The First Presbyterian Church of Levittown, for the last four decades with the utmost dedication and commitment.

Come join us at the June luncheon to honor Linda and to enjoy an afternoon of comradery.

***RETIREE COUNCIL 21***  
***ANNUAL JUNE AWARDS LUNCHEON***

**Honoring Community Service Winner**  
***Linda Brookshire***

***Also: Presentation of Journalism & Website Awards***

**Guest Speaker: Barry Kaufmann, President NYSARA**

**Tuesday, June 21, 2016**

**Villa Lombardi's**  
**877 Main Street**  
**Holbrook, New York 11741**  
**631.471.6609**

**\$38.00 pp**  
**12:00 noon – 3:30 pm**  
***DOOR PRIZE & RAFFLES & 50/50***

***Menu***  
***Tuscan Garden Salad***  
***Penne Filetto di Pomodoro***  
***Entrée: Choice of...***

Roasted N.Y Sliced Steak / Chicken Marsala / Fish du Jour / Vegetarian  
Accompanied by vegetables & potatoes, rolls & butter  
***Dessert:*** House Cake accompanied by Coffee or Tea  
Soda included; Cash Bar available

**Reservation Form & Check (payable to Retiree Council 21) are to be forwarded to...**  
**The Eiermanns**  
**39 Linda Street**  
**Port Jefferson Station, New York 11776**  
**(631) 473 - 4055**

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***PLEASE PRINT:***

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

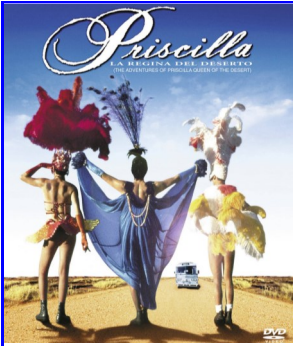
Retiree Chapter \_\_\_\_\_

Guest Name \_\_\_\_\_

Entrée Choice: Steak \_\_\_\_\_ Chicken \_\_\_\_\_ Fish \_\_\_\_\_ Vegetarian \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ people

# Upcoming Events



## NYSUT RETIREE COUNCIL 21 THEATER PARTY

**“PRISCILLA Queen of the Desert”**  
**The Patchogue Theater**  
**Thursday, July 28, 2016**



Lunch **before** the show at

**PERABELL (next to the theater)**  
**11:30 lunch and 2:00 show**  
**Fee paying members-\$93**  
**Non-members -\$98**

**Please send form and check no later than July 1, 2016**

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**Theater party sign up form-- Clip and return with check made out to:**  
**NYSUT Retiree Council 21**

**Send the check to:**

**Marie Kanzler**  
**204 Piney Street**  
**Islip Terrace, NY 11752**  
**(631) 581-5981**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**District retired from** \_\_\_\_\_

**Guest name** \_\_\_\_\_

### Spotlight 21

A Publication of NYSUT Retiree Council 21

**Louisa Eiermann, Co-President**  
**Mike Eiermann, Co-President**  
**Simonne Harkavy, 1st VP**  
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**Fred Schaefer, Treasurer**  
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**Linda Brookshire, Co-Secretary**

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**Contact/ us at:**  
**(631) 587 - 1151**

**And visit us at:**  
**[ny.aft.org/rc21](http://ny.aft.org/rc21)**  
**Mike Eiermann - Webmaster**

**Forward changes in addresses/names to NYSUT and/or your local President**

**NYSUT Regional Conference for Retiree Councils**  
17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23

**The  Retiree**



**Thursday**  
**October 6, 2016**  
**Woodbury Country Club**  
**Woodbury, NY 11797**  
**Cost: \$37/pp**

**Election Year Legislative Session**

In November, elections will take place in ALL NY State  
Assembly and Senate Districts, as well as Federal  
Congressional Districts.

Join NYSUT for a unique regional conference.  
Meet those seeking to represent your interests in  
Government for the next two years!

**Save the DATE!**

**Thursday**  
**October 6, 2016**

# NYSUT RETIREE COUNCIL 21

*is sponsoring a...*

## DEFENSIVE DRIVING COURSE

**Wednesday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016**

**9:30 am – 4:30 pm**

**West Islip Public Library**

**Corner of Higbie Lane & Montauk Highway, West Islip, New York 11795**

**Continental Breakfast & Lunch *provided***

### ***Benefits of Course Completion***

- ☐ 10% reduction on liability & collision insurance premiums (three year duration)
- ☐ Up to 4 points removed from driving record, if applicable.

***Questions:*** Contact Simonne Harkavy at 631.661.4446

***To enroll, complete the tear-off at the bottom of this page and mail it to...***

Simonne Harkavy  
104 Raleigh Lane  
West Islip, New York 11795

**Include check made out to RETIREE COUNCIL 21: FEE...**

- ☐ \$40.00 – members of RC 21
- ☐ \$45.00 – non-members/guest

***RSVP ASAP due to limited enrollment!***

**YOU MUST BRING YOUR DRIVERS LICENSE TO THE CLASS!**

-----**TEAR OFF**-----

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

RETIREE CHAPTER/DISTRICT \_\_\_\_\_

CHECK: \_\_\_\_\_ RC 21 Member (\$40.00 pp) \_\_\_\_\_ Guest (\$45.00 pp)

Name(s) of Guests: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is check *payable to NYSUT Retiree Council 21*) for \$ \_\_\_\_\_