

Spotlight 21

SERVING RETIREES FROM

Bay Shore
Bayport-Blue Point

Brentwood
Central Islip
Connetquot

East Islip
Islip

West Islip
Sayville



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An Award Winning Publication of NYSUT Retiree Council 21

September-October, 2015

A Message From

President Louisa Eiermann



Where to Start....

I have started to write for this newsletter in my head many times. Everytime I read a newspaper or a magazine or a NYSUT or ARA alert or listen to a newscast, the thoughts I believe that are what I want to put down on paper, change. So, I am going to do what works for me and put things in bullet form, not necessarily in order of importance, but that the information in these bullets is something for you to know and think about.

- There will be no COLA for recipients of SS in 2016 due to the low inflation rate.
- Republican presidential hopefuls favor reform in SS, not currently making the privatization for SS a major issue, but talking of raising the retirement age and cutting benefits for future retirees.
- The AFT has published an Election 2016: You Decide. Aft.org/election2016. Please read it: you will learn that Jeb Bush advocates for privatization of SS, as does Ted Cruz; Jindal tried to eliminate defined pensions for public employees, Walker slashed state contributions to employee pensions, Paul supports what would be the largest cuts to SS in history, and so on. Rubio, Saunders, Clinton, Biden, Christie, are all there. Did you know that Governor Christie said that “the nation’s **teachers’ union needs a ‘punch in the face’ because they are the single most destructive force in public education**”? Scott Walker also said “that the minimum wage is really lame”.
- The Koch brothers plan to spend a billion dollars on the 2016 Presidential campaign. Vote-Cope raised 9 million last year, and although a significant rise in contributions, the difference in funding is staggering. The brothers hosted a “Defending the Dream” summit in Ohio, inviting 5 candidates as well as wealthy donors and conservative activists. The Ohio AFL-CIO

organized a rally of protest. Whose dream are the brothers defending?

You can have Vote-Cope donation deducted from your pension. If you already do this, you can increase your contribution. Forms for this will be available at our fall brunch.

Mario Cilento, president of the NYS AFL-CIO, had a letter published in the Buffalo News: Unions are the voice for middle-class workers. He says that “while the labor movement has made tremendous strides (union membership is at its highest level in 7 years), the attacks by our opponents are relentless”.

On September 10th, in the NY Times, a study was released, page A20, establishing “that children born to low-income families typically ascend to higher incomes in metropolitan areas where union membership is higher.”

Headline: Low-Income Workers See the Biggest Drop in Paychecks”. Don’t believe it? Go online to the NY Times Business Section, Thursday September 3rd.

The U.S. Supreme Court is hearing the case of “Friedrichs vs. California Teachers Association”. Friedrichs is challenging the requirement that teachers contribute to unions. The loss of this case would put an incredible financial strain on unions across the country. With a Friedrichs win, retirees having to pay dues could be on the table.

We do NOT want a Constitutional Convention on 2017. However, 69% of those polled said they favored having one. You do not need to have a Constitutional Convention to make changes. You can have amendments. Our current Constitution guarantees everyone the right to a free public education, the right to

unionize, the care of our public benefits and so on. Which one of these are we willing to forfeit?

- One must be registered to vote by this October 9th 2015 in order to vote in the 2016 primary.
- The Friday, September 4th, Newsday headline, read “Cuomo: Time to Fix the Common Core.” No comment. Read it and be amazed.
- In the July/August NYSUT United magazine commissioner Elia “pledged to listen to educators and parents. “The reason that kids will be successful in school is because of the teachers, “ Elia told reporters. “And we need to make sure they have all the support they need.” “ In Newsday’s September 3rd edition, she told reporters she had no authority to change state law. As the article points out she “does have the ability to push for change in those laws...” Will she?
- Thomas Sobol, the NYS education commissioner for 8 years, died on Thursday, September 3rd. In his obituary, Diane Ravitch wrote: Tom Sobol was the last state commissioner who understood that education means something more than test-taking and high scores.” Read the obituary in the September 5th, NY Times. It tells an interesting story of him and our state.
- President Johnson signed Medicare into law on July 30th, 1965. It just had its 50th Birthday! As of 2014, 54 million people were on Medicare. Where would retirees be without it?

As of this writing, Seattle teachers are on strike, for the first time in 30 years, as are those in PASCO, Washington, and Scranton teachers are getting ready to also possibly strike, to name a few places where our colleagues are in stress. Ask your own in-service locals how they are doing.

Last week the highest court in Washington State said that “much of the law underpinning the new charter school system was unconstitutional. “ Maybe this harkens a new trend in deciding that public school funds should stay with our traditional public schools.

Join the Member Action Center, the **MAC**, now. Text NYSUT to the contact number 38470. Every Tuesday or whenever necessary you will receive an alert from NYSUT on your cell phone.

There is more, of course. Every day the amount of information that is out there is incredible. When there are people who think we are the enemy, teachers and retirees, we have to speak out, be a voice, armed with knowledge. Read and question. There is so much at stake for us as retirees, for our in-service colleagues, for our children and grandchildren. Be proud of who you are and what you have accomplished.

Finally, the youngest winner of the Nobel Peace prize, Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani student who was shot by the Taliban for defending a girl's right to education, wrote: “Let us remember: One book, one pen, one child and one teacher can change the world.” You really can.



November 10th General Meeting West Islip Library - 10:15 a.m. Special Election



Running:

- 2nd Vice President: Marilyn Gutierrez
NYSUT Delegate: Michael Eiermann
Alternate Delegate: Joan Ramsey

Nominations will be accepted from the floor.



**MAKING STRIDES
Against Breast Cancer**

**Walk with RC 21
RC 21 joins NYSUT at
Jones Beach - Field 5**

October 18, 2015, 8 a.m. - 11 a.m.



**Look for the NYSUT Tent
Bring a friend and a donation**

Donations also may be made online at LongIslandNYStrides@cancer.org, or brought to RC 21 Meetings at the West Islip Library. Make sure to mention that you want the donation to be given for TEAM RC 21.



NYSUT NOTES

Joan Perrini, NYSUT Retiree Services Consultant
Suffolk County RC 20 - 23
631-273-8822 X 312; e-mail: jperrini@nysutmail.org

NYSUT Regional Conference for Retiree Councils 17 thru 23 Thursday, November 19, 2015 Watermill, 711 Smithtown Bypass, Smithtown, NY 11787 8:00 am – 2:00 pm

Once a year NYSUT holds a regional conference to update its members on issues we should care about since they are most important to all of us and our future. You will learn about ways that pressure can be applied to state legislators and congressmen concerning bills currently before them – some that help us and others that can be harmful.

And the good news is that NYSUT subsidizes the conference as a benefit to its members, keeping the **cost at only \$32**. This includes breakfast, a break and lunch, and an informative line-up of speakers dealing with those issues of concern.

Some of the highlights of the day will include:

- ⇒NYSUT officers speaking on the 2017 proposition to authorize a constitutional convention in New York
- ⇒Information from local Long Island Retiree Directors
- ⇒Long Term Care and Elder Care information
- ⇒Susan Klug, NYSUT Assistant in Health Benefits, will speak on Medicare and retiree health insurance.
- ⇒Barry Kaufman, new President of the New York State Alliance for Retired Americans (NYSARA), will speak on strong lobbying efforts for the protection of Social Security and Medicare.
- ⇒An upbeat message on aging from Ani Shahinian of NYSUT's Social Service Department.

We guarantee you will enjoy the day. This is a once-a-year opportunity to meet most of the major players who govern our union and work for our benefit.

You can also be part of the celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of NYSUT retiree councils. We will be honoring your colleagues for their long-standing service to the unions.

Flyers will be mailed to you sometime in October, but you may also receive forms by attending your chapter and/or retiree council meetings.

Don't be left out.



Fred Schaefer - TFCU Board Member

Fred Schaefer is RC 21's Treasurer. He was elected to the TFCU Board in 1981, and has served as Chairman from 1985 - 2012. He also served as Vice Chairman of the Board, Chairman of the Personnel Committee and Chairman of the CUSO Board. Fred also has been: Director of Bay Shore Classroom Teacher's Association, Southside Hospital Advisory Board member, and PTA member. A former science teacher in Bay Shore School District, he has worked for Grumman Corp. and in laser research and development at Quantronix Corp. through a Brookhaven National Laboratory program. He has a BS from Cornell; an MS from **WE Post/LIU**; **National** Science Foundation Grants at Know College and University of Seattle, and an MBA in Banking and Finance from Hofstra University's Zarb School of Business.

Spotlight 21

A Publication of **NYSUT Retiree Council 21**

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And visit us at:

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

RETIREE COUNCIL 21

Welcomes New Retirees to Our Annual Brunch

Tuesday, October 27th, 2015

11:30 am – 3:00 pm

Villa Lombardi's

877 Main Street

Holbrook, New York 11741

(631) 471-6609

Guest Speaker

Florence McCue

NYSUT At Large Director

Cost: \$38.00 for Current Members
Complimentary for New Retirees 2015

- Fabulous Buffet Brunch including Mimosas
- Distribution of folders containing important information regarding retiree benefits and RC 21 programs
- Door Prize & Raffles
- Fair Trade items available for purchase
- Benefits Display

Please join us in welcoming our New Retirees!

*To ensure seating with your Chapter, please return your reservation form and check (payable to:
NYSUT RETIREE COUNCIL 21) ASAP.*

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____ Email Address _____

Retiree Chapter _____

RSVP by October 14th, 2015

Mail To (CHECK ONE)

New Retiree 2015:

(Complimentary – Our Guest)

Marie Kanzler

204 Piney Street

Islip Terrace, New York 11752

(631) 581 – 5981

Current Member:

(\$38.00 Check payable to NYSUT Retiree Council 21)

Simonne Harkavy

104 Raleigh Lane

West Islip, New York 11795

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Identity theft protection available for NYSUT members



TRUE IDENTITY PROTECTION™

NYSUT Member Benefits is excited to announce that its newest endorsed program -- ID Watchdog -- is now available to all NYSUT members & their families looking for protection against the growing threat of identity and credit theft.

What Do I Get When I Sign Up for ID Watchdog?

- Credit & Cyber Monitoring
- Credit Reports & Scores
- Monthly Credit Score Tracker
- High Risk Monitoring
- Individual, Individual/Spouse or Family Coverage Available

According to Javelin Strategy & Research, an estimated 13.1 million Americans fall victim to identity theft each year. These individuals are hit with approximately \$7,000 in fraudulent charges per person and spend about 330 hours each trying to recover from the effects of identity theft.

ID Watchdog (founded in 2005 as a theft protection service) uses proprietary monitoring technology that alerts members as soon as new or updated information associated with their identity is detected -- allowing them to catch fraudulent activity immediately.

To learn more about ID Watchdog, call toll-free 866-513-0823
or visit memberbenefits.nysut.org.



For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.

Sept/Oct. '15