

Spotlight 21

SERVING RETIREES FROM

Bay Shore Brentwood East Islip West Islip
Bayport-Blue Point Central Islip Islip Sayville
Connetquot



Vol. 14 No. 4

An Award Winning Publication of NYSUT Retiree Council 21

September-October, 2014

Kathleen Lyons honored with the AFT Living Legacy Award

At the AFT Convention this July in Los Angeles, Kathleen A. Lyons, better known to you as Kathy, was awarded the AFT 2014 Living Legacy Award for her contribution to the furtherance of women's rights and unionism during her more than 50 years of service. This award honors women who have made a difference for children, families, and communities in the teachers' union movement, in the larger union movement and in their community-based organizations.

During her career Kathy served as an officer of the in-service union local, NYSUT and AFT delegate. Since retiring, she has maintained activism in the retirees structure of NYSUT/AFT. She served as President of the West Islip Retiree Chapter (WIRTA) and continues to be Membership Chair. Kathy served in several capacities in NYSUT's Retiree Council 21, including Secretary, Vice President and Newsletter Editor.

As both in-service and retiree member, Kathy has served as delegate to AFT and NYSUT. Currently, she serves as a Retiree Services Consultant in NYSUT's Nassau Regional Office. She works closely with the leaders and members of Retiree Councils 17, 18 and 19. In that capacity, she also becomes a liaison between NYSUT and its retiree members on Long Island. She answers questions and provides referral information to individual local units and coordinates information between the NYSUT Retiree and Social Service Department and the Nassau retirees.

In addition she helps families of deceased NYSUT



Rosemary Catanzariti - RC19 Co-president, Joan Perrini - RC 21 President, Kathleen Lyons, Louise Levine Rosenthal, - RC 19 Co-president, and Sheila Goldberg - RC17 president.

members who need guidance with their benefits. And she willingly takes calls from members who have a "simple question" but essentially just need someone to talk to – and a fellow retired teacher can be very helpful.

In the area of community service Kathy serves as Secretary of the Uniondale Community Council. She is also a Corporate Trustee and serves as Finance Committee Chair at St. Martha's Parish, a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-cultural community. They service and work with community residents, both adult and student, who are new immigrants and need much support and help. Kathy is very active in all aspects of the church, especially coordinating and teaching in its English as a Second Language program through Spanish Outreach.

We at RC 21 are very proud of her well-deserved award and all her accomplishments.

"Our Commitment to Fighting Back and Fighting Forward"

A Special Order of Business brought up and passed on the floor of the AFT Convention was titled "Our Commitment to Fighting Back and Fighting Forward". Paraphrasing the resolution, the AFT is launching a media campaign to inform our members and the public regarding the importance of collective bargaining and due process to long term educational and economic prosperity and to support policymakers who stand on the side of working people. Lastly, this resolution called for the resignation of the U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, because of his anti-union, anti-teacher policies. As Weingarten says: "Our strength and the strength of the labor movement has never been our dollar power. It's been our people power." With that in mind, thousands of AFT members around the country will be making calls, knocking on doors and attending community events between now and Election Day to make sure the candidates who stand up for us are successful.

A Message From President Joan Perrini



Are You With Us?

As President, I want to extend a warm welcome to our most recent retirees. You have now entered the world of retirement which can feel new and strange and perhaps a little frightening. I assure you it is not and I encourage you to approach it as a new phase of life -- one that can be as rewarding as the amount of effort you give it. Let's just hope you will consider membership in RC21 part of that effort.

If you're wondering why you should do this, let me tell you why. For one thing, if you read the papers and listen to the news, you know that our benefits are seriously under attack on both the national and state level. We have the best pension system in the country -- a defined benefits plan that is fully funded and very well managed. Sadly we are under scrutiny by conservative groups that threaten to create a defined contribution plan (401k or 403b). This would not only be a drastic change, it would diminish funding in the current retirement system.

At this point some of our current members will probably say, "Here she goes again," and they'd be right. When you get to know me you will discover my passion for the work we do at RC21. Lately I am more concerned because there are forces at work trying to make changes that will adversely affect present retirees and all that will follow. What worries me most is that if these changes happen, it will be very difficult to reverse them. That's why I'm asking for your involvement, help and support.

There are so many conservative groups with lots of money who are working against pensions, Social Security, Medicare and all types of social benefits that we struggled to gain. You may not have been teaching in the 50's and 60's when conditions were not favorable for this profession. But thanks to Al Shankar and some very dedicated teachers, we gained the benefits that we still enjoy today. Naturally since these benefits were obtained through collective bargaining with unions, the privatizers want

to do away with the union too. Public education itself is in jeopardy and the corporate world wants to privatize it as well.

Further, there may be a New York State Constitutional Convention in 2017. There is a clause in the present Constitution which essentially says that once you are hired and become a member of the New York State Retirement System, your pension benefits cannot be diminished. A most frightening prospect is that a convention could eliminate this clause and things could change for the worse. With all of these threats facing us today, it is ever so important for us to maintain our current membership and to keep our numbers strong enough to fight the forces that would destroy what we have built.

What happens in congress and our state legislature directly affects how we live. With the current climate, we definitely need to know which politicians are our friends and which ones are our enemies. The upcoming 2014 November election will affect us for many years to come. We need to know what can happen in that election. We need to be informed voters who will vote in our best interest and in the interest of the working middle class. Remember, your vote counts and while you may not pay attention to politics, be assured that politicians pay close attention to you.

So to those of you who have been retired for a while, I ask you to continue your support and involvement in the work of RC 21. Reach out to our new retirees, reinforce the things you have learned and encourage their participation. To the newly retired I simply ask that you give us a try, read our newsletters and learn what we're all about. Come to the upcoming welcome brunch and enjoy the fun, comradery and the reward of knowing what your union has done and is doing for you. Please look at the candidates endorsed by NYSUT and discover WHY they get that support and get the information you will need to help you make good decisions in the upcoming elections. I cannot stress this enough except to say that failure to act can only result in disaster.

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A Publication of NYSUT Retiree Council 21

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

NYSUT Endorsements 2014

In an effort to keep our members informed, NYSUT researches all the voting records for our New York State elected officials. They examine their stance on issues important to us as educators and retirees. During a three-day conference devoted to election-year politics, hundreds of grassroots activists and local union presidents pored over candidate statements, voting records and "scorecards" that rated incumbents and challengers on their accessibility to NYSUT members and advocacy on important education and labor issues. Participants arrived at consensus in about 200 legislative, statewide, and congressional races and did not endorse in others.

NYSUT encourages you to get out to vote for candidates of your choice and gives the following list for your consideration.

The list of candidates below have shown consistent support for our issues. Therefore NYSUT endorses their respective candidacies.

Statewide Offices

Comptroller
Thomas DiNapoli

Attorney General
Eric Schneiderman

House of Representatives

Timothy Bishop

Steve Israel

Kathleen Rice

New York State Senate

Kenneth LaValle

Adrienne Esposito

New York State Assembly

Fred Thiele, Jr.	Kimberly Jean-Pierre
Anthony Palumbo	Andrew Raia
Edward Hennessey	Charles Lavine
Alfred Graf	David McDonough
Phil Ramos	Michael Montesano
Andrew Garbarino	Michelle Schimel
Jason Zove	Tom McKeivitt
Joseph Saladino	Edward Ra
Chad Lupinacci	Todd Kaminsky



Save the Date **October 28, 2014**

Annual Welcome Brunch for New Retirees

West Lake 322 West Main Street Patchogue, NY 11772	Guest Speakers: Paul Pecorale, NYSUT VP Kyle Belokopitsky, NYSUT Legislative Representative	Cost: \$35 for Present Member <u>Complimentary to New Retirees</u> <u>Year 2014</u>
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Name: _____ Chapter _____

Address: _____ Phone _____

_____ Cell _____

<u>New Retiree 2014 (Our guest - no cost)</u> Send to: Marie Kanzler 204 Piney Street Islip Terrace, NY 11752 (631) 581 - 5981	<u>Present Member (\$35 check to NYSUT RC 21)</u> Send to: Simonne Harkavy 104 Raleigh Lane West Islip, NY 11795 (631) 661 - 4446
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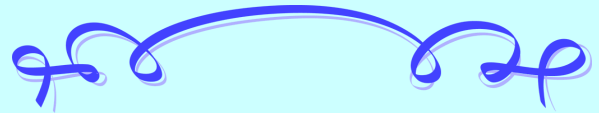
RC 21 Meeting Dates 2014 - 2015

General Membership
West Islip Public Library
Higbie Lane/Montauk Hwy.
10:15 a.m. - 12 noon

September 30, 2014	March 24, 2015
October 28th Welcome New Retiree Brunch	April 28, 2015
November 18	May 19, 2015
December 9	June 23, 2015 Awards Luncheon
No Meeting January and February	

Executive Board Meetings
NYSUT Office
150 Motor Pkwy, Hauppauge
(Citibank Building)
10:15 a.m. - 12 noon

October 14	March 3, 2015
November 4	April 2015 TBA
December 9	May 5, 2015
February 3, 2015	June 2, 2015
No Meeting January	



RC 21 Calendar 2014

Upcoming Meetings

October 28th
October Welcome Brunch
West Lake Country Club
Patchogue

October 14th
Executive Board Meeting
NYSUT Office - Hauppauge
10:15

Trips and Luncheons

October 16th
Essex Steam Train & Boat Ride

October 28th
Welcome New Retirees Brunch
West Lake - Patchogue

December TBA
Holiday Trip NYC
Radio City Music Hall Show

Get details & registration forms online at
our website:

<http://rc21.ny.aft.org>

and at General Membership Meetings.
Reservations accepted on a first-come basis.

