

# RC 10 SKYLINE NEWS



**NYSUT Retiree Council 10** **ISSUE 2 FOR 2016-17 November-December**  
Serving Over 8000 Members in Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Washington Counties  
**TEACHER UNION SOLIDARITY**



## RC10 Officers

**President** - David Golden  
[dmgolde@nycap.rr.com](mailto:dmgolde@nycap.rr.com)  
518-371-0604 (Vo/Fax)  
518-573-1326 (Cell)

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President** - Jim Stolis  
[jimnfros@aol.com](mailto:jimnfros@aol.com)  
518-424-5426

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President** -  
Ann Cherney  
[acheme1@nycap.rr.com](mailto:acheme1@nycap.rr.com)

**Secretary** - Laraine Gillette  
[rc10secretary@hotmail.com](mailto:rc10secretary@hotmail.com)

**Treasurer** -  
Paula M. Johannessen  
[rc10treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:rc10treasurer@gmail.com)  
518-283-3556

## NYSUT Delegates

Daniel Boone,  
[boonesfarm1976@gmail.com](mailto:boonesfarm1976@gmail.com)  
Dennis Bouchard  
Jane Weihe,  
[Mweihe1@nycap.rr.com](mailto:Mweihe1@nycap.rr.com)

## Alternate Delegates

Bonita Maxon,  
[bamrdk@aol.com](mailto:bamrdk@aol.com)  
Vince Pelliccia

## AFT Delegate

Jim Stolis

## AFT Alternative

Bonita Maxon

## Membership Director

Beverly A. Harrington  
Box 74  
Guilderland Center, NY 12085  
[sharrin@nycap.rr.com](mailto:sharrin@nycap.rr.com)

## Travel Program

Kathryn Chesterfield  
[kchesterfield@nycap.rr.com](mailto:kchesterfield@nycap.rr.com)  
518-235-0264  
Karen Maher  
[kmaher2@nycap.rr.com](mailto:kmaher2@nycap.rr.com)  
518-477-6746

## Webmaster and Newsletter Editor

Deb Escobar  
[rc10newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:rc10newsletter@gmail.com)

<http://rc10.ny.aft.org>

TO UPDATE YOUR  
PERSONAL CONTACT  
INFORMATION,  
CALL NYSUT MEMBER  
RECORDS (518) 213-6000

## From Your President:

By the time you read this, the elections will be over and the future more easily defined. Some things do not depend on the election of 2016. You may be looking back with joy or sorrow, but the challenges ahead are where we are really at. The next election will be the one that carries the question of a Constitutional Convention and all that this implies for us.

This year gave us a look at the approaches we face from our opponents. There will continue to be a lot of big money put into the election year. Next year, turnout will be smaller as it is an off-year election that mostly draws local interest. Simple solutions will be abundant and seem to make the solving of hard problems easy. We already hear that ethics reform can be accomplished by amending the constitution and taking away pensions from convicted wrong doers. Many voters will be turned off by much ado about wrongs that they claim can only be righted by changing the constitution.

The reality is that most of the public wrongs we see were not done for long periods of time. Then someone changed a law and suddenly crime occurred. When the legislature, at the urging of the Governor, took away the authority of the Comptroller to monitor spending of some "not for profit" entities used to manage construction and development programs by the state, we got corruption—not efficiency. They promised us that it was just eliminating big government overreach and unnecessary duplication and regulation. It turned out to have really been preventing insider deals, bribery, and political manipulation of state programs! Change the law back and fix it, or change the constitution? The true remedy is clear.

"Changing the constitution in unpredictable ways is not a cure all for our problems. It is that tempting 'easy fix' for what ails you that most often will give you a worse problem than the one it promised to fix!"

Those who pushed the changes upon us now disavow any responsibility for the results. "Not me," "It's all the other guy's fault." It did not take a change in the constitution to make this crime easier to commit, and it will not take such a change to keep it from happening again. Changing the constitution in unpredictable ways is not a cure all for our problems. It is that tempting "easy fix" for what ails you that most often will give you a worse problem than the one it promised to fix! A change proposed to change a specific part of the document may have merit. The change suggested of giving a blank check to those same folks who came up with this bad idea is not a solution. It is a bigger problem.

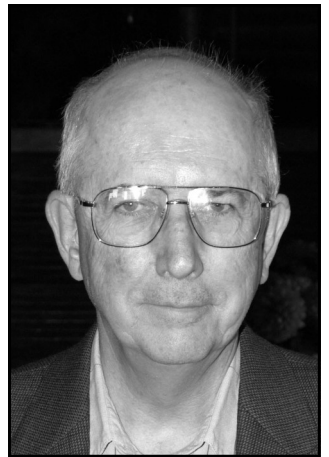
The solutions that really work are harder to get but worth the effort. One is support those who work for you. We have VOTE/COPE to help us when money is needed. Yes, one hedge fund

manager can and has put \$500,000 into this past campaign to support his special interest. VOTE/COPE could only afford less than \$50,000. We put in time, workers, rallied our allies and we won! I think I am safe in saying that the person who spent the \$500,000 was not a member of RC 10 or any other RC! Nonetheless, there was a need for money, and our side was able to come up with enough to make a difference. What made that possible? Well, it was those of us who authorized pension deduction of VOTE/COPE. If each month you put in the cost of a cup of coffee a week or the price of a glass of wine or two when you go out to dinner, the impact would be huge! Yes, an occasional check is a help, but the ability to plan a budget and know what you can afford is a great way to help assure success. Maybe we are not able to outspend them, but we can remain competitive with your help. It is a form you can download or call NYSUT and ask for, but it is important that we all do our part.

We also have people who care—people who care enough to give up their time and go help with a campaign. There have been several busloads of them who went from unions, including but not limited to NYSUT, to work on the recent national campaigns. We have others who stay closer to home but give up a few hours to take part in a "labor walk" in neighborhoods with a concentration of union homes. They went to union households and distributed information and answered questions while reminding folks to register and vote. It is a very effective tool and let's face it; we have more who will walk a neighborhood than hedge fund managers who write checks. It is our members who make a difference, and it is a difference you can make in this coming year.

We live in an area with substantial representation from both parties in public office who are our friends and allies. If party enrollment is your paramount concern, you can sign up to help the endorsed candidates of your

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**DAVID GOLDEN**

## NYSUT RETIREE SERVICES CONSULTANT RC9/10

Barbara McCarthy 518-783-7977 ([bmccarth@nysutmail.org](mailto:bmccarth@nysutmail.org))

**SAVE THESE DATES– TRAVEL & SOCIAL CALENDAR!!!!**

Check out the RC 10 website, [www.rc10.ny.aft.org](http://www.rc10.ny.aft.org), for more information on the events listed below!

**RETIREE COUNCIL UPCOMING SOCIAL EVENTS:**

**NOVEMBER 15, LUNCH AT NYSUT HEADQUARTERS.** Come join Retiree Council 10 Board of Directors for a \$5 lunch at 800 Troy Schenectady Road, Latham. David Keefe, President of the Board of the New York State Teachers Retirement System, will be a special guest of RC 10. He is the Retired Teacher member who was elected by the retirees of the New York State Teachers Retirement System in 2004. David will discuss the health and future of the Retirement System. Lunch will begin at 11:45. Return the registration form to Laraine Gillette, 9 Cortland Drive, Albany, NY 12211, along with your non-refundable check for \$5 made payable to Retiree Council 10 by November 1. Contact Laraine at [rc10secretary@hotmail.com](mailto:rc10secretary@hotmail.com) if you have questions.

**RETIREE COUNCIL 10 FOREIGN TRAVEL for 2017:**

**APRIL 21-29, 2017, NORMANDY AND THE D-DAY BEACHES.** This trip is filled.

**MAY 11-20, 2017, DISCOVER IRELAND.** This trip is filled.

**SEPTEMBER 2-14, 2017, PORTUGAL AND THE DOURO RIVER.** *Looking for a trip a little off the beaten track? Why not PORTUGAL AND THE DOURO RIVER?* Road Scholar's 5-star trip *Belo Portugal: Wine, History, and Landscapes Along the Douro River* will be offered to RC 10 members. Aboard a smaller river cruise ship, we will visit national parks to port wine vineyards and villages abundant with Baroque and Gothic history, folkloric culture, and natural splendor. We will spend a day visiting Salamanca, Spain, and three days in the heart of beautiful Lisbon. Cost include cruise/land program, 30 meals, 7 lectures, 14 fieldtrips, 1 performance, beverages including local wine and beers, taxes, gratuities, Road Scholar Travel Assistance Plan (\$3395-\$3695). Contact: Karen Maher, [kmaher2@nycap.rr.com](mailto:kmaher2@nycap.rr.com) or 518-588-4083 for more detailed information. Check out the Road Scholar web site for the RC 10 information: [www.roadscholar.org/IA\\_NYSUT\\_RC10\\_15893](http://www.roadscholar.org/IA_NYSUT_RC10_15893).

**SEPTEMBER 12-14, 2017, A TASTE OF THE FINGER LAKES TOUR.** We'll travel by Yankee Trails Bus to visit five prominent wineries in the Seneca and Keuka Lakes area, as well as distinguished sights of interest. A thorough orientation to wine making, as well as tastings, will be included. Particular highlights will include lunch at Belhurst Castle, the Glenn H. Curtis Museum, The Rose Hill Mansion, and both the National Women's Hall of Fame and The Women's Rights National Historic Park. We will stay two nights at the Best Western PLUS Vineyard Inn and Suites in Penn Yan. There will be a departure from Wilton Mall (from the Park and Ride at Dick's) at 8 am and Latham Farms (in front of Dick's) at 8:45 am. We should return to those locations at approximately 5 pm and 6 pm on September 14. Activities are moderately strenuous. Shoulders and elbows should be in good shape! This tour will fill quickly, so don't delay! **COST:** Price is \$370 for those members who have paid the annual sustaining membership fee. Price is \$390 for guests and members who have not paid the annual sustaining membership fee. If you're traveling as a single, there would be an additional cost of \$136. Most meals are included, as well as gratuities. **Costs Not Included:** one lunch and any possible purchases of alcohol. A minimum **deposit of \$100** is due by May 1 with the balance due by July 15. Make your non-refundable check payable to NYSUT Retiree Council 10. To register or if you have any questions, contact Doug Porter 518-669-3433 or e-mail [dporter1950@aol.com](mailto:dporter1950@aol.com).

**IN THE WORKS FOR 2017.** May—New York City on Your Own; June—the scholarship luncheon, Culinary Institute of America, Lowell National Historic Park; July or August—Glimmerglass Opera; October—the fall luncheon; and October—Shelburne Museum in Vermont. Look for more details in the January newsletter.

**2018 TRAVEL CALENDAR** is in the planning stage with hopes to be unveiled in the January newsletter. Keep your calendar open for diverse and fascinating travel programs!

When registering for a trip, please remember that a **member of RC 10** is anyone who has retired from a NYSUT local that is located in Albany, Saratoga, Rensselaer, or Washington counties or is a Social Member who has retired from a NYSUT local in some other part of the state and has paid member fees to his/her Council and a social membership fee to RC 10. Anyone who did not retire as an in-service member of a NYSUT local is not eligible for sustaining or social membership and must pay the guest registration fee. A **sustaining member** has paid the annual sustaining membership fee for the fiscal year that is from July 1 to June 30.

**GET TRIP INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION FORMS ON THE WEB! Here's how:** 1) Log on to <http://rc10.ny.aft.org>. 2) Click on ACTIONS & EVENTS menu, and 3) Click the Travel & Social tab. The generic travel/form (printed below) is a pdf file on this page.

**TRAVEL/SOCIAL GENERIC REGISTRATION FORM**

*(If you are signing up for more than one activity, or will be taking a guest, please copy this form and fill in the appropriate information.)*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone\* \_\_\_\_\_  
\*Take phone to event

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Registering for: Event & Date \_\_\_\_\_

Check One: For 2016-2017,  
( ) RC10 Member who has paid the annual sustaining membership fee  
( ) Guest or Member who has not paid the annual sustaining membership fee.

**Event Selections:**

For Luncheons/Meals, Entrée of Choice \_\_\_\_\_ For Trips, Pick Up Location \_\_\_\_\_

Other notes (Keep it Simple): \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_




preferred enrollment. They are fellow party members who have worked for and continue to work for interests we share. They are folks of both parties who stand with us on vital issues. It is not enough to say "that's nice." It is necessary to get out and help them when they need help. You can also make phone calls for our political friends. Now NYSUT has a new system that allows you to call members from home via a downloaded program that connects you to other members without having to come to a call center. Is dialing a few phone numbers, delivering a prepared message and noting responses too much work to protect your pension, right to organize and keep tenure for all teachers?

Effective political action takes time. It takes money that is available for sure. It takes a lot of people who will do a little bit each for the common good. It takes some trust in your fellow teachers and in your leadership. Not any one of us agrees with every other member on all issues all of the time. You can always find some point to justify inaction or opposing action. That is what our opponents search for and promote. There is a cost to all of the good things of life. Perfection is seldom achieved, and perfect choices are rare. You have to make the best choice you can and do the best effort you are capable of. It is still true, that "there is no free lunch." But it is also true that there is "a trail of tears" for those who do not do what they can when they can. Now is the time for you to do your part.

~David Golden, President

## ERNIE REIS



1944-2016

Retiree Council 10 has lost a valuable member of our ranks. Ernie Reis passed away on September 8, 2016, at the age of 71. Ernie served as Editor of our award winning newsletter, Skyline News, and as Webmaster of the companion internet site. He has been an ambassador and Alternate Delegate from RC 10 to the NYSUT Representative Assembly. In June, he was honored for his work with RC 10 at our Spring

Scholarship Luncheon, with the Rensselaer County scholarship being given in his honor.

In the 1960's Ernie served in the Air Force as a weatherman and spent some time in Turkey. He then went to the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, graduating with a major in Economics. While there he became involved with reform groups to change the way juvenile delinquents were treated, which included several programs that gained national recognition. His work there awakened a passion to help youth, and he subsequently worked for the NYS Division for Youth, and also served for over ten years with employment and training programs in Columbia/Greene and Orange counties. Ernie then attended UMass School of Education, earning his Master's in Education. He later attended SUNY New Paltz, where he received his Certificate of Advanced Study.

Ernie retired in 2006 after spending many years teaching in the Rensselaer-Columbia-Greene Counties BOCES, where he empowered his students to earn their GED (High School Equivalency). While teaching, he was involved with Union activities within the RCG BOCES Teachers' Association, representing the union at the NYSUT RA. He also served as an elected delegate to the Troy Area Labor Council. In retirement, he continued to substitute teach for Chatham, Ichabod Crane, and Taconic Hills schools. He was very involved with local politics, and served as Town Chair of Chatham up to the time of his death.

When diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, Ernie approached the challenge with humor and optimism, giving the battle his all. He wrote about his diagnosis in the October-November 2015 issue of "Skyline News," sharing with all of us the need to remain hopeful and yet acknowledging the difficulties in such an overwhelming diagnosis. His article won the "Best Writing" NYSUT Communication Award. The article can be read on the RC 10 website, at <http://rc10.ny.aft.org/files/erniesarticle.pdf>.

Robert F. Kennedy once said, "The purpose of life is to contribute in some way to making things better." Everyone who knew Ernie, understands that he left the world a better place because he was in it. We will miss him.

### Ernie's Legacy

Until his passing, Ernie Reis served RC 10 by editing the Skyline News and the companion website at [www.rc10.ny.aft.org](http://www.rc10.ny.aft.org). Under his leadership, RC 10 won three 2015 NYSUT Communication Awards for "Best Writing." David Golden's "From Your President" column took two awards, and Ernie's "O Fortuna, velut luna, statuu variabilis" article about his cancer diagnosis earned the third award. The judges commented that in Ernie's writing piece, "The writer takes the reader along on his roller coaster of emotions and the grueling days of treatment, yet he also finds opportunities to lighten the burden with humor. Very well done."

With Ernie's passing, Deb Escobar has been appointed Newsletter Editor and Webmaster. The website often extends Skyline News articles, and shares up-to-date news. There is a photo album from RC 10 events, a "Take Action" page that gives the latest opportunities for volunteer and political work, and travel posts that include pdf brochures about the trips being offered. Please take the opportunity to visit the website and appreciate the legacy of excellent communication that Ernie left to RC 10.

At the last meeting of the RC 10 Executive Board and Board of Directors, a motion was made and adopted to honor Ernie and all that he gave to NYSUT Retiree Council 10. Beginning in June 2017 through June of 2022, the RC 10 Scholarship award to a student from Rensselaer County will be presented in the Memory of Ernie Reis.

In accordance with that, the Executive Board and Board of Directors has also established a format for members to make Memorial Donations to the RC 10 General Scholarship Fund in memory of a family member or colleague who has passed away. Below you will find a form to be used to make your donation.

### NYSUT RETIREE COUNCIL 10 MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP DONATIONS

Donation in Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount of Donation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Donor: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Donor: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address of Donor: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Family of Deceased: \_\_\_\_\_

*Send this form with donation to Jeanne Bush, 102 Southbury Road, Clifton Park, NY 12065*

### NYSUT RC 10 E-MAIL

As many of you are aware, the time between when the six newsletters are published by RC 10 and when they are received by members in the mail can often be from two to three weeks. If you would like to receive your newsletter by email when it is published, please send your request to: [rc10secretary@gmail.com](mailto:rc10secretary@gmail.com). The newsletter and updates between these newsletters are sent to those on the RC 10 e-mail list. The newsletter will still be mailed to you.



### Welcome 2016 Retirees

Congratulations on your retirement. As a new retiree, you are now a member of NYSUT Retiree Council 10. RC 10 strives to promote the best interest and welfare of NYSUT retirees, the mutual assistance and cooperation with other organizations with which it is associated, and the aims and objectives of the New York State United Teachers and its national affiliates. Check the website for the latest information at [www.rc10.ny.aft.org](http://www.rc10.ny.aft.org).



Membership in RC 10 is open to retired teachers and school-related personnel who retired from a school district in Election District 10 (Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Washington Counties). Some local associations require their members to continue local membership in order to remain a member of NYSUT. Check with your association president to determine how to remain a member of your local association. The annual sustaining membership activity fee for RC 10—either \$10 or \$20—is based on the amount of your pension. This fee finances the various activities of the Council. The membership form is available from [rc10secretary@hotmail.com](mailto:rc10secretary@hotmail.com).

RC 10 held their annual Fall Luncheon on October 6, and welcomed new retirees at the event. 48 members were in attendance, including new retirees Karen Harris, Mary Kruchinski, Charlene Perruccio, and Suzanne Wallace. After a business meeting and a delicious meal, members heard from Dr. Don Levy of the Siena College Political Research Institute. To read more about the luncheon activities, go to the RC 10 website, <http://rc10.ny.aft.org/news/rc-10-welcomes-new-retirees-fall-luncheon> and the photo album, <http://rc10.ny.aft.org/fall-luncheon-2016>.

RC 10 ON LINE  
<http://rc10.ny.aft.org>

### PHOTOS FROM THE RC 10 FALL LUNCHEON ON OCTOBER 6

