

# RC 10 SKYLINE NEWS



**NYSUT Retiree Council 10**

Serving Over 9000 Members in Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Washington Counties

**TEACHER UNION SOLIDARITY**

**ISSUE 4 for 2017-18 April-May**



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TO UPDATE YOUR  
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## **From Your President:**

Even in the midst of the ordinary, some insight can hit you when you least expect it. I attended the Palm Sunday service at my church. That is a long-familiar story we know well. Then after the liturgical retelling of the tale, the officiant arose to offer his sermon. It was short, telling and clearly stunning to the congregation but also captivating to them.

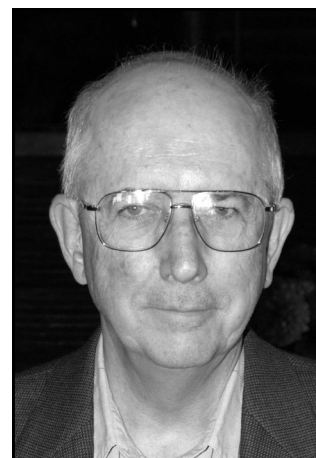
The clergyman related how he spent much of the day watching the student marches across the country. Students are seeking to make their schools safer by limiting access that mentally ill people have to machine guns. On the news he was viewing, there was an interview with a mother of a woman, not a student, who had been assassinated on a street of a foreign country because she had reported political malfeasance and the government involved did not like it. That government arranged her daughter's murder on a public street. The mother noted that it led to a great outcry about her daughter's murder, but then went on and noted it had soon died down and after a few days things were back to business as usual.

Would we continue in the future to seek to make our schools safer? He asked the question of us all, if after the weekend was over would we all go back to business as usual? It is an insight that is not limited to gun violence and all that the issue entails. It also applies to other issues we address. We recently made a great effort to stop the threat to our pensions that opening the NYS Constitution to unlimited changes would create. We led that opposition to a successful conclusion, and then what? Most of us went back to business as usual and did not take note of the other attacks upon our interests that are coming at us.

The attempt now being made to end the requirement of all members paying either dues or an agency fee to the bargaining agent threatens us all. Pay a fair share or no share, that is the issue. That is now before the US Supreme Court. If that requirement is struck down, then some will take the short view of not paying their fair share of the cost of representation but enjoying the benefits nonetheless. We went back to business as usual after our victory last fall, and now here comes an effort to undercut all unions by limiting their ability to serve and protect members by forcing them to divert their efforts from member service to maintenance of the organization.

We all need our health insurance especially as we age, but most of us do not pay attention to the local actions on that service, often because it is part of a large area-wide program, not one limited to our former school. Some districts did not have a voice in the efforts to change their plan because of their unit size and the lack of teacher input into the decisions. The drift to business as usual may only seem a bad idea when we find out our health plan no longer covers something we need or does so at a much higher cost to us. Business as usual can be costly, especially when the choice has been made and cannot readily be turned back. Much of what health services are covered or not comes via the requirements the state puts on the books and the cost it is willing to kick in to make them affordable. Do you pay attention to that changing effort or are you busy with business as usual? Do you think NYSUT can do that for you and still make up for the loss of income that would come from a negative ruling from the Supreme Court?

We live in a world of constant change and ongoing attempts to take away long-held benefits and rights. The battle to protect our interest is not just a one-issue event. It is not a case of we succeeded and can now turn to other interests. We all share the benefit of past gains, but none of us can afford to "stop paying attention" to the ongoing attempts to turn the clock back. Business as usual can cost us dearly. Timely action is the essential element of our safety and continuing our benefits. "Eternal vigilance is the price of freedom" but it is also the price we must all pay for protecting our welfare! Only you can make that choice.



**DAVID GOLDEN**

***"Eternal vigilance is  
the price of freedom"  
but it is also the price  
we must all pay for  
protecting our welfare!***

~David Golden, President

## **NYSUT RETIREE SERVICES CONSULTANT RC 9/10**

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## SAVE THESE DATES--TRAVEL AND SOCIAL CALENDAR!!!!

**TUESDAY, MAY 22, 2018**, the NYSUT Regional Conference for all NYSUT members in Retiree Council 10 will take place at the Albert Shanker Conference Center, NYSUT Headquarters, Latham, New York. Information will be mailed to all retirees in April.

**THURSDAY, JUNE 7, 2018, ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON.** The Annual Spring Luncheon will be at the Shaker Ridge Country Club (802 Albany Shaker Road in Colonie, near the Albany County Airport). The noon luncheon will be preceded by a business meeting at 11:15 am. The highlight will be the celebration of the RC 10 scholarship winners, RC 10 honorees, and 2017 retirees. Entrée selections will be Turkey Breast, Sliced Roast Beef, or Baked Salmon and will include salad, dessert, and coffee/tea. The price, including tax and gratuity, is \$26. Please complete the reservation form and send it with a non-refundable check payable to NYSUT Retiree Council 10 to Jeanne Bush, 102 Southbury Road, Clifton Park, NY 12065, by May 30. Contact: 518-371-1738 or Jeannebsh50@gmail.com.

**THURSDAY, JUNE 21, 2018, CULINARY INSTITUTE OF AMERICA ANNUAL SPRING TRIP.** The Bocuse Restaurant (French) at the CIA will feature the following menu: Black Truffle Soup V.G.E. (beef broth, vegetables, black truffles, and puff pastry); Magret Duck Breast (pickled cherries, turnip puree, Brussels sprouts, cherry kirsch sauce); and Crème Brûlée and fruit compote. On the way we will stop in Poughkeepsie at the Walkway over the Hudson. This will give us a chance to walk out on the old railroad bridge 212 feet above the Hudson River for a nice view. If you want, you can ride the bus over the river. After lunch, we will tour Widerstein, widely regarded as the Hudson Valley's most important example of Victorian architecture. This was the home of the Suckley family. Margaret Suckley had an extraordinarily close friendship with Franklin D. Roosevelt which was always the subject of much interest. The bus will pick up and drop off at three locations: Glens Falls pick up at the Aviation Mall at 7 am in front of Sears, Saratoga pick up at Exit 15 Park and Ride at 7:15 in front of Dicks Sports, and Albany pick up at Crossgate Commons at 8 at the lower level. The bus should return to Albany by 5:30 pm. The cost of the trip including the meal, transportation, fees, taxes and tips: \$105 for those members who have paid the annual sustaining membership fee and \$110 for guests and members who have not paid the annual sustaining membership fee. Make checks payable to NYSUT Retiree Council 10 and mail to: Daniel D. Boone, 187 Aldous Road, Granville, NY 12832, by June 1. Any questions, call Dan at home in the evenings: 518-642-1075.

**OCTOBER 21 TO OCTOBER 26, 2018, OUT AND ABOUT IN SANTA FE.** Some of the highlights of our itinerary will include wonderful collections of pottery, weaving, baskets, jewelry, paintings only seen by the public via special invitation at the Indian Arts Research Center and a lecture about the life and art of Georgia O'Keeffe and a tour of her museum. Visit Cintiela Traditional Arts weaving gallery where we will meet families who have been creating Hispanic weavings for generations, and a beautiful little Roman Catholic Church, El Santuario de Chimayó, a National Historic Landmark. Interact with a Pueblo native potter and visit the Museum of Indian Arts and the Museum of International Folk Art. Attend a lecture on southwest cuisines presented by James Beard Award-winning chefs, followed by a meal prepared at the Red Mesa Cuisine. We will stay at the Drury Plaza Hotel, located in the heart of downtown Santa Fe, with easy access for exploration. Six days' activities, twelve meals, six lectures, seven field trips, one performance, gratuities included. Cost: \$1,499 double/\$2,039 single for land program package. Does not include airfare (group arrangements are available) and approximately \$66 airport shuttle fee. Plus \$25 RC 10 pre-registration fee for fee-paying members, \$50 for nonfee-paying members. Additional cancellation insurance available for \$100/\$157 (double/single). For additional information, contact Karen Maher, [kmaher2@nycap.rr.com](mailto:kmaher2@nycap.rr.com) or 518-4776746 or 518-588-4083. This is an active, small travel group and is selling quickly. Check out this link for complete itinerary: <https://www.roadscholar.org/ia-22047-rc10-santa-fe>.

### THE FOLLOWING TRIPS ARE FILLED:

WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 2018, BRONX BOTANICAL GARDENS/GEORGIA O'KEEFFE EXHIBIT.

SATURDAY, JUNE 16, 2018, TASTE OF TROY.

NOVEMBER 30 TO DECEMBER 8, 2018, DANUBE WALTZ RIVER CRUISE—HISTORY, MUSIC AND CHRISTMAS MARKETS.

OCTOBER 28 TO NOVEMBER 12, 2019, SWITZERLAND & THE HEART OF THE RHINE & MOSELLE RIVER CRUISE.

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.



### THE TRAVEL COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!!!

At present, we're undergoing a significant loss of volunteers who have served our Travel Committee admirably for many years, but now must move on. We are in need of more manpower if we're to continue to serve our membership as we have to date. If you've enjoyed our activities, consider joining our Committee to help make them happen. You don't need previous experience...start with a luncheon or an afternoon outing or a day activity. You probably have ideas of your own. Interested? Please contact Karen Maher, [kmaher2@nycap.rr.com](mailto:kmaher2@nycap.rr.com).

**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 2017-2018: ( ) 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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## RC 10 STANDS IN SOLIDARITY WITH TEACHERS IN WV AND ACROSS THE NATION

BY DEB ESCOBAR on March 25, 2018

At its March 20 meeting, the RC 10 Board of Directors approved a motion to donate \$500 to an AFT fund that will benefit West Virginia teachers, who recently endured a two-week strike for better pay and a fix to the state's public healthcare system. If individual members would like to donate to the strike fund, they can send checks to:

**AFT-WV Solidarity Fund, 1615 Washington Street East, Suite 300, Charleston WV 25311.**

At the beginning of the strike on February 22, West Virginia ranked 48th in the nation for teacher salaries. West Virginia is a right-to-work state, and the Janus-like prohibition on required agency fees, plus the weakening of power to negotiate contracts, left teachers with little recourse than to engage in a more aggressive collective action. The modest pay hike (a proposed 2% for 2018, and 1% for both 2019 and 2020) would have actually resulted in a loss in salary due to the rising cost of health insurance through the state's Public Employees Insurance Agency. The PEIA has endured years of cuts to its funding. The result is that the declining health benefits, along with higher premiums, copays, and deductibles, worsened the already poor financial condition of teachers.



The 55 counties of the state were forced to close schools, giving teachers leverage and incentive for lawmakers to negotiate a fair deal. On February 27, Governor Jim Justice agreed to a 5% pay increase, but the State Senate rejected and offered 4%. Teachers continued their strike and did not go back to work until March 7 after the State Senate agreed to the 5% increase and an increase in funding for the PEIA. WV teachers were thoughtful about the impact of their strike on the communities they serve. They packed and delivered meals for needy students and helped arrange childcare for parents before and during the strike. This resulted in increased support from the families of WV, which put pressure on legislators to resolve the conflict in a satisfactory manner.

The success of the WV action will have implications nationwide. The labor conditions that led to the wildcat strike are similar to what would occur if the case of Janus v. AFSCME, now before the Supreme Court, is successful for the plaintiffs. If that occurs, the prohibition on collection of mandatory dues will weaken the collective bargaining power of unions. When the hands of workers are tied for fair and productive bargaining, aggressive actions like strikes will become more common. The WV teachers had not engaged in a strike since 1990, but current conditions left them no recourse.

Teachers elsewhere in the country are enduring similar conditions and are noting the successful example of the WV strike. To find out more about teacher working conditions and actions in Oklahoma, Arizona and Kentucky, read an extended version of this article that is available at <http://rc10.ny.aft.org/news/rc-10-stands-solidarity-teachers-west-virginia-and-across-nation>.

### RC 10 MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN NYSUT "COMMITTEE OF 100" LOBBYING ACTION



On March 5 and 6, 2018, RC 10 members participated in NYSUT's "Committee of 100" political action. The following individuals have reported on the results of their meetings with legislators.

**BONNIE MAXON:** During the Monday evening presentation, there was talk of the Janus Court Case and the NYSUT Member Organizing Institute, which you can read about at <https://www.nysut.org/news/nysut-united/issues/2018/march-april-2018/members-across-the-state-say-i-m-sticking-with-our-union>. After the presentation and the PAC meetings there was the usual bar and snacks BUT this year there was a band that

played until after 11 PM. We were also entertained by Andy, Jolene and many others singing with the band.

~Carrie Woerner supports the tax cap increase and education funding but feels there will be no movement on the tax cap since it is Governor Cuomo's signature thing. The Governor is not open to any change or discussion on this. She also feels public money is for public schools. The 529 accounts were set aside for college so students would not have debt, not for private high schools. She feels that a different account should be for the private undergraduate schools. On APPR, she said she will co-sign a bill or write a letter to the Commissioner in support of our concerns. There is a FOIL issue about disclosing to the public terms of any new collective bargaining agreement before it is voted on. It was explained to her and she said she will look into it.

~In our meeting with Kathy Marchione, SD 43, she wanted to know if we discussed APPR with Carl Marcellino. She said that he is the one we should talk to about it. No commitment on her part. As to the tax cap, she feels that 2% is 2% and it should not go lower. Also, she feels with the rising cost of health insurance it should not be included in the tax cap. As to the 529 accounts, she will look into it. She supports mental health legislation and more school security.

**VINCENT PELLICIA:** ~I met with Carrie Woerner from the 113th assembly district which includes my residence in Saratoga Springs and my old district Schuylerville. Carrie has become very knowledgeable about education issues. We brought up issues related to APPR, which will be changing soon, and she promised in our meeting that she would sign onto or sponsor NYSUT's bill to make appropriate changes. I discussed federal changes to the 529 which now allows withdrawals to be used for private or religious schools. I told her this may be a violation of the Blain Amendment prohibiting public funding of religious schools. She took a note and said this also undermines the original purpose of saving over a long period to reduce families borrowing for college and that if expanded, people will deposit and withdraw funds immediately for the tax deduction and may not fund it adequately for college. She was very astute. She is currently interested in school safety and mentioned the bill just passed and that there is more to come.

~I also met with Kathy Marchione of the 43rd Senate district including Saratoga Springs and Schuylerville. She also has become a great friend to education. Besides being supportive of the previous issues, she is leading the fight on the tax cap and that 2% means 2%. She says she is swimming upstream, not only fighting Governor Cuomo but members of her own party. She also has become much more knowledgeable about education issues and is on the small government committee. She said that the current system does not allow school districts or municipalities to budget or plan ahead.

**LORETTA QUIGLEY:** ~Jim Tedisco was already well-informed & supportive of educational issues. His district includes urban, suburban and rural schools and he was clearly aware of the particular needs of the small as well as the large schools. Valerie & Audrey of the GCRTC were able to amplify the case for teacher centers, and Senator Tedisco took note.

~Mary Beth Walsh is relatively new to the legislature but, as a family court lawyer, has a deep concern for & knowledge of children's issues. She is smart & sympathetic and, I feel, willing to stand with us if we keep her informed.

~Carrie Woerner was open and attentive to our concerns. I've seen her on other occasions during the few years since her election and I think she has learned, so far, a tremendous amount about educational issues.

~Pat Fahy's aide took notes and indicated the Assemblywoman was in agreement with our main points. The aide was unaware and made note of the information, however, that school security officers in a state funded program have been let go after the state funds were cut and the local districts didn't have the funds to support them.

**STEVE ZAHURAK:** I visited the following legislators or their aides: Fahy (Kathy), Santabarbara (Jessica), Steck (Phil and Alison), McDonald (secretary), Woerner (Jerome) & Walsh (secretary). I had polite responses and there was no controversy or negative discussions.



## Social Justice Committee News

**UPDATE:** As of March 20, the Regional Food Bank has received \$1,977 in contributions for their BackPack Food Program from RC 10 members. The generosity of our members is phenomenal and will be felt at the local level as they are able to serve the neediest children in the schools that our members retired from. Thank you to those who have donated. If you haven't yet had an opportunity to make your contribution, it is not too late.

The BackPack program is designed to meet the needs of hungry children on weekends when other food resources are not available. The program provides bags filled with food that are child-friendly, shelf-stable, and easily-consumed. Bags are packed each week by school staff and discreetly distributed to participating children every Friday afternoon. The bags are then returned on Monday to be refilled for the next weekend.

In the four counties that RC 10 represents, the following school districts currently have a Regional Food Bank BackPack Program: Albany, Argyle, Averill Park, Berne-Knox-Westerlo, Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake, Brunswick-Brittonkill, Capital Region BOCES, Cohoes, Corinth, Fort Edward, Greenwich, Guilderland, Hartford, Heatly, Hoosick Falls, Hudson Falls, Lansingburgh, Mechanicville, North Colonie, Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk, Rensselaer, Schodack, Shenendehowa, South Glens Falls, Stillwater, Troy, Voorheesville, Watervliet, and Whitehall School Districts. It costs the Regional Food Bank \$183 to support a child for the entire year. There are never enough funds, so no contribution is too small since our combined efforts will help to sustain the program.

If you would like to make a contribution, make checks payable to The Regional Food Bank, and mail to the food bank at 965 Albany-Shaker Road, Latham, NY 12110, Attention: Betsy Dickson. Write **RC 10 BackPack Program/Name of School** you would like to support in the **memo section** of your check. For example: **RC 10 BackPack Program/ North Colonie**. If you do not care which school gets the funds, simply write **RC 10 BackPack Program**. Donations are tax-deductible and all donors will receive a donor acknowledgement letter. If you have any questions, please contact Barbara McCarthy at [irishiz9@aol.com](mailto:irishiz9@aol.com) or phone her at 518-682-2814.

~Barb McCarthy, RC 10 Social Justice Committee



### IN MEMORY OF JOYCE FOLEY, 1944-2018

Over the past eight years, RC 10 has been involved in making and distributing Joy Bears to cancer patients, and many RC 10 members and guests have participated in twice-yearly work sessions to decorate the bears.

Joy Bears first began in 2008 when Guilderland retiree Joyce Foley battled ovarian cancer, and a friend began making the bears for Joyce to pass out to her fellow patients during chemotherapy treatments. RC 10 member Jinny Ucci knew Joyce, and in 2010 brought the idea of the Joy Bears to the RC 10 Executive Committee and Board, who approved of the project. Since then, and with the leadership of RC 10's 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Ann Cherney, RC 10 members and guests have made about 50-60 bears a year. The Joy Bears are decorated with colored ribbons signifying the type of cancer the patient is being treated for, a heart to share with others, pearls to signify wisdom and a tag explaining that each bear is full of wisdom, love, hope, courage, comfort and joy to those who are given a bear.

Unfortunately, Joyce left us on Valentine's Day, in Naples, FL, perhaps a symbolic day for someone whose life was filled with so much heart and service. Her impact will be long felt, as the Joy Bears Project continues in her memory. There will be a memorial service on April 14 at 9 am, at Katerina Tekakwitha Church Parish, 1803 Union Street, Schenectady. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to St. Agnes Catholic Church, 7775 Vanderbilt Beach Road, Naples, FL; or Guadalupe Social Services, 211 South 9th Street, Immokalee, FL, 34142, attention Peggy Rodriguez. To read the obituary, go to <http://rc10.ny.aft.org/news/memory-joyce-foley-1944-2018>.



### SPECIAL INVITATION TO 2017 RETIREES

Each year Retiree Council 10 invites new retirees to be recognized at one of its general meetings. This year 2017 retirees will be welcomed to the Council at the Spring Luncheon on June 7.

To welcome new retirees, the sustaining membership fee for 2018-2019 will be waived **IF:**

1. Members retired in 2017.
2. The 2017-28 sustaining membership fee has been paid.
3. Members have registered for the Spring Luncheon on June 7 (see page two of this newsletter).

Please contact [rc10secretary@hotmail.com](mailto:rc10secretary@hotmail.com) with any questions and to obtain a membership form.