

RC 10 SKYLINE NEWS

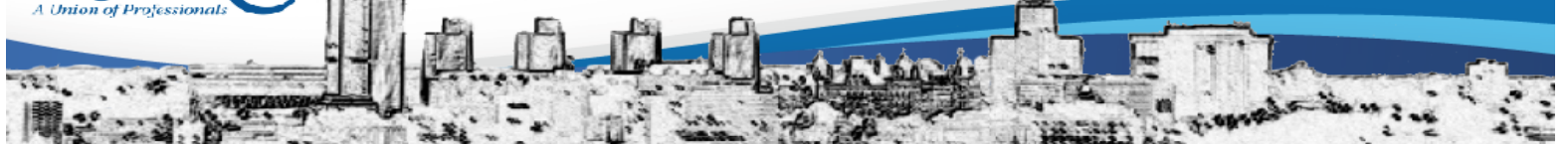


NYSUT Retiree Council 10

ISSUE 1 FOR 2016-17 September-October

Serving Over 8000 Members in Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Washington Counties

TEACHER UNION SOLIDARITY



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CALL NYSUT MEMBER
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From Your President:

I am sure you have heard the quote about how bad democracy is; *"Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others that have been tried."* You can get a clear idea of what the author meant by looking at TV or reading a paper. Polarized views by folks, who feel that the candidate they like is perfect, and the other one has no redeeming value, fill the air. Name calling is rife and mean-spirited statements assail the ear. It is often hard to find a debate of the issues that includes both sides of the political dialogue. Campaigns hurl invectives and abuse at their opponents rather than state their own views of what is possible and what they will do if elected.

The endless flow of the negative turns off many people who want to find a candidate who will do some of the things they think should be done. They may, however, also satisfy those who feel frustrated, ignored and left out of the mainstream of society. They want their voice heard, not a more perfect world. It is hard to understand the impact that change is having on our lives when the effect of the change is quite slow, or a causal link is not obvious. You know you lost your job when the factory closed and/or moved away, etc., but you do not see that a computer has ended the need for the skills you have. Bill Gates and Steve Jobs are heroes of our society, not villains. But those wonderful computers they built and promoted until they became indispensable in our lives also led to widespread loss of traditional jobs. Manual skills could be directed to perfect performance every time and did not need vacations, pensions or health care and salaries. They saved money, and cost jobs. The saved money did not go to the ex-worker but to the owners of the industry in question. The cost of caring for the former workers became a tax cost.

When we were in school, we had classmates who, for whatever reason, chose a manual skills path that included "shop class," drafting, etc. They had every reason to expect that if they learned the skills well, it would lead to a good job, secure life, and a valued place in society. They were right; it would and did for many of them. But the world changed and they did not or could not. The consistency and perfection of the computer was far beyond human competition. The need for manual skills has been in steady decline for decades and the political focus has been on getting such jobs back in impacted communities rather than retraining for a different career path. The replacement jobs that were available often were at a minimum wage level that had failed to keep up with our cost of living. You could work full time, 40 hour weeks and still not take home enough to support yourself and your family. Those people are livid and they have reason to be so. Society and the political system have failed them.

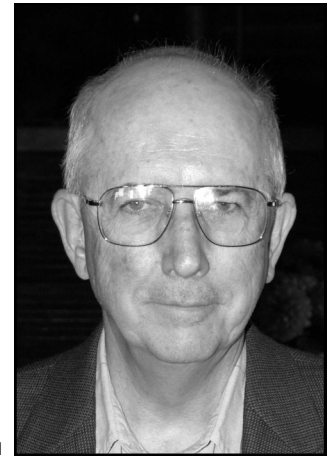
Society has also failed to meet the needs of such groups as those who produced fossil fuel. That industry has moved from an indispensable resource underpinning our economic system to a looming threat to our health and survival. Life as a coal miner was always hard and dangerous, but it was also valued and rewarded as well. Now it is seen as a path to harm us all. We know that mid-western coal powered plants have harmed our own Adirondacks forest and watershed for years. If we save the miners we doom the home owner and city dweller who lives downwind from the power plant that consumes their product. Do we turn them against each other or try to help both?

Say what you want about the virtues or evils of change, you still have to deal with it and all of its impacts. You cannot just provide a few weeks of unemployment insurance and leave it at that. People need to have a sense of self-worth and feel that they are contributing to society. Yes, there are "free loaders" out there willing to work the system to avoid having to work productively. But most folks want a productive job and chance to work up the economic ladder. They need to be heard. They need help in meeting the challenges that "progress" has forced upon them. The true cost of progress must be paid.

Democracy is not a spectator sport. It requires us to get involved. You must at least vote, but that alone is not enough. Working to understand the issues we face is not as much fun as a weekend ball game or other recreation. It is however, a necessity of democracy that we educate ourselves on the challenges we face. Is a lower tax rate always good? What is a fair rate of tax for your level of income? That is not an easy issue to work out. It is one you need to look beyond the headlines to understand what is really better for you and all of us.

Perfection is not a part of democracy. If it were, we would all just figure out what is a perfect tax system, work rules, health care program, or transportation policy and live happily ever after. Your perfection may be my worst nightmare! The reverse is probably true as well. So if you will not vote for any candidate who is not

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DAVID GOLDEN

NYSUT RETIREE SERVICES CONSULTANT RC9/10

Barbara McCarthy 518-783-7977 (bmccarth@nysutmail.org)

SAVE THESE DATES– TRAVEL & SOCIAL CALENDAR!!!!
RETIREE COUNCIL 10 UPCOMING SOCIAL EVENTS:

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2016, FALL LUNCHEON. Come welcome our new teacher and SRP retirees at the fall luncheon which will be held at Longfellows, 500 Union Avenue, Saratoga. Our guest speaker will be Dr. Don Levy, director of the prestigious Siena College Political Research Institute. His presentation will include state and national polling trends, the status of the political candidates, and other relevant topics relating to this important and exciting Presidential election. This event will be of great interest to all. **DON'T MISS IT!!!** The noon luncheon will be preceded by a business meeting at 11:30 a.m. The choices for this \$24 per person luncheon are Pot Roast, Crusted Tilapia, Chicken Milanese, and Vegetable Ragout (gluten free and vegan). Please complete the reservation form and send it with a non-refundable check (payable to NYSUT Retiree Council 10) to Erica Berger, 91 Pheasant Ridge, Schenectady, NY 12309. The deadline for registering is September 28. Please reserve early in order to be included in this event.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26, JOY BEAR PROJECT. Come help with this amazing service project for cancer patients. See article on Page 4.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29, PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINAR. See article on Page 4.

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 if you have questions.

RETIREE COUNCIL 10 FOREIGN TRAVEL for 2017:

APRIL 21-29, 2017, PARIS & THE HEART OF NORMANDY RIVER CRUISE. This trip is filled.

MAY 11–20, 2017, DISCOVER IRELAND. This 10-day trip to Ireland, which will be led by **Doug Porter**, begins with two days to the north through Dundalk and Calingford, and Belfast, Northern Island. Then, traveling across the Irish midlands to Galway, where we spend two more days sightseeing through the Connemara region. Then on to the Cliffs of Moher and travel to Killarney for two days, where we take in the spectacular views of The Dingle Peninsula, or have an **option for a round of golf** at the Killarney Golf and Fishing Club. On our way to Dublin you'll have a chance to kiss the Blarney Stone and have photos at the Rock of Cashel. For our final two nights, we stay at Fitzpatrick Castle Hotel in Killiney, with easy access to Dublin, for our last two days offering many sights, including the Guinness Storehouse, Whitefriars Church, and Trinity College, and a "few" pubs. **Tour cost: \$2,128** includes air. Additional costs include the pre-registration fee to RC 10 and fees for optional tours and golf. For detailed information and pre-registration form, contact Doug Porter; e-mail: dporter1950@aol.com. Phone: 518-669-3433.

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 September 2-14, 2017. 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 includes 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). Air rates will not be available until the fall. Contact: Karen Maher, kmaher2@nycap.rr.com or 518-588-4083 for more detailed information. Exclusive reservations will be held for RC 10 members until November 1. Check out the Road Scholar web site for the RC 10 information: www.road scholar.org/IA_NYSUT_RC10_15893.

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 \$ _____

Report From the 100th Anniversary Celebration of the American Federation of Teachers Minneapolis, Minnesota, July 17-21, 2016

In 1916 the American Federation of Teachers was formed, when eight local unions came together in Chicago and applied for a charter from the AFL. Now membership is at its highest point ever, with more than 1.62 million members and the largest number of affiliates at 3,450, and we continue the fight against multipronged and well-funded efforts to destroy America's labor movement and all that unions have built and stood for.

In 2012, convention delegates approved a mission statement that drives the AFT's work for fairness, democracy, economic opportunity, and high quality services for our students, their families, and our communities. These principles were advanced through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining, political activism, and the work of our in-service and retired members.

This year, the convention opened with a Retiree Conference on Sunday, July 17. Speakers included: AFT Vice-President and President of Montana Teachers Eric Feaver; Richard Fiesta, Executive Director of the 4 million member Alliance for Retired Americans; and House Representative Betty McCollum (D) of Minnesota.

"The top 25 Hedge Fund operators **earn more money** than all the Kindergarten teachers in America."
~Randi Weingarten

"Retirees are the daytime protectors of all the in-service retirement benefits."
~Eric Feaver

On Monday, July 18 the Convention was called to order by President Randi Weingarten and she proceeded to give her keynote address. Three thousand delegates sat as she described this year's election as "a moment of reckoning for our country and a battle for the soul of our children's future." She spoke about the AFT endorsement of Hillary Clinton and how she will be a friend to education through her life-time achievements and advocacy for early childhood education, public education, universal health care, human rights and economic opportunities.

On Tuesday, July 19, Convention highlights included Convention business on Constitutional Amendments, Resolutions, and speeches from Minnesota Senators Al Franken and Amy Klobuchar, along with Hillary Clinton.

“ Tests don't measure everything that's important. Employers tell me they want creative employees with critical thinking skills and an ability to work well with others. It's hard to test those things.”
~Senator Al Franken

“ All students should have access to all resources. It should not matter what school you attend. All children deserve to receive a high quality education.”
~Senator Amy Klobuchar

“ When I am president, you will have a partner in the White House, and you will always have a seat at the table.”
“I promise to lift the status of educators through career-long professional development, higher salaries for teachers and PSRP's and seek reform on student debt.”
~Hillary Clinton

The Value of Community Collaboration topic brought on three speakers. Philadelphia City Council member Helen Gym spoke about how poverty and inequality are at the heart of injustices in our schools. Los Angeles Unified School District Board President, Steven Zimmer, spoke about the Board of Education, United Teachers of LA and the school district working together to raise graduation rates in the city by 25 percent. Retiree Rod Sherman, a past local president and now school board member from Plattsburgh, NY, said that years of collaboration between his district and union have benefited the community.

“I reject any effort to return to top-down reform.”
~Hillary Clinton

Delegates approved Per Capita increases: Effective 9/1/2016, each local will receive \$19.03 per month with \$1 dedicated to a special AFT "Response Fund." Effective 9/1/2017 locals will pay a per capita tax of \$19.28, with \$1.10 being dedicated to the "Response Fund."

Many progressive resolutions were adopted on issues including racial equity, immigration, LGBTQ safety, ESSA, economic inequality, opposition to TPP, health care, gun violence, student debt, workplace violence, privatization of schools, and many more. For a complete listing of resolutions, check your next AFT Newspaper.

In the election, the Progressive Party Caucus received 98% of delegate votes. Officers elected included President Randi Weingarten, Secretary-Treasurer Loretta Johnson, and Executive Vice-President Mary Cathryn Ricker.

Final Credential Committee Report:

Total Delegates	2,651
Locals Represented	467
State Federations	24
Councils	0
Ex. Council	6
Total Alternates	17
TOTAL ELECTION VOTES	784,851

It was a distinct honor and pleasure to once again represent the 8,000 members of NYSUT Retiree Council 10. If you have any questions. you may contact me at JimNFros@aol.com. Please use "Convention Question" in your subject line.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Stolis, 1st Vice-President

President's Notes (Cont'd from Page 1)

"perfect" (because none are), you undermine our democracy. No election of a diverse body of voters is ever going to offer a choice between two perfect candidates. Some Parliamentary countries fragment their system so that it seeks to allow you to pick only a perfect part to vote for. You get minority leadership and that is required to give away its values to get a ruling majority. They get a coalition which is not what you wanted. Majority rule is not perfect but it is much better than minority back room dealing to get political leadership and jobs.

In party registration, NYSUT members politically are almost exactly divided as the population of the state is. We are just a small bit more registered democratic than the state population. There is almost exactly the same proportion of republican members as in the electorate as a whole. We vote more often than the general population. For the rest we are typical New Yorkers.

To choose not to vote is to cast a vote for the candidate you dislike the most! Pick a candidate who is the best available one that has a good chance of winning, even if they are not the perfect one. We are great when we are united and work together. Unite our country around a program that makes it a bit better as you see it, not one that divides us and turns us against each other. Remember that other old truism, United we stand, divided we fall. Be a unifier!

~David Golden

**NYSUT RETIREE
COUNCIL 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 when it is published, please send your request to:

rc10secretary@hotmail.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.

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

PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINAR

On Saturday, October 29, from 8 am to 2 pm, a Pre-Retirement Seminar will be held at NYSUT Headquarters for active teachers and SRPs within Election District 10. The seminar will be hosted as a collaborative effort by Election District 10 and Retiree Council 10.



Representatives from the New York State Teachers' Retirement System; the New York State Employees Retirement System; NYSUT Member Benefits; and

Feldman, Kramer & Monaco, P.C., speaking on legal considerations, will present pertinent information to future retirees. The latest changes to Social Security benefits will also be presented. If you know of an active teacher or SRP who plans to retire in the next five years, please have him/her contact Jim Stolis, RC 10 First Vice-President, at 424-5426 or E-mail jimnfros@aol.com. For a registration form, please contact rc10secretary@hotmail.com.

SHARE SOME JOY!

RC 10 will hold another Joy Bear Workshop on Wednesday, October 26 from 10 am to 12 noon at NYSUT on Route 7 in

Latham. Joy Bears are decorated teddy bears that are given to cancer patients to provide comfort as they undergo chemo treatment. It is the hope of the project to get dozens of bears decorated and delivered to cancer patients. This project only asks you for your time. All materials are provided free of cost. You do not need to be a long time craft person to make a Joy Bear. If you have craft supplies (thread, lace, ribbon) that you would like to donate, please bring them with you. New teddy bears would also be greatly appreciated. Bring a friend or two to help us complete these much appreciated bears. To sign up, please contact Ann Cherney at acherne1@nycap.rr.com or call 982-1923 after 3 p.m. Please help! If you know of a person undergoing treatment for cancer, please contact rc10secretary@hotmail.com and a bear will be sent to that person.

