



RETIREE COUNCIL 10 SKYLINE NEWS

**NYSUT RETIREE COUNCIL 10: SERVING OVER 11,000 NYSUT
MEMBERS WHO WERE EMPLOYED IN
ALBANY, RENSSELAER, SARATOGA, AND WASHINGTON COUNTIES**
TEACHER AND SRP SOLIDARITY

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June 2025 RC 10 President Barbara McCarthy's Message

Greetings, fellow retirees. I hope this message finds you refreshed and ready to enjoy some good weather. If you stayed in the northeast this past winter, you are undoubtedly looking forward to saying good-bye to the winter we just experienced.

We are now four months into a new presidency and the changes in what we have come to expect in retirement are already reminding us how fragile our retiree lifestyle may be. DOGE (Department of Government Efficiency) has been looking for ways to save money by going after the programs we were relying on to take care of us in retirement. While we were told that Social Security and Medicare would not be on the chopping block, apparently that is not the case.

Offices in many agencies are being closed, employees are being offered exit packages, and probationary workers have been fired despite excellent performance reviews. Many of these folks take with them an institutional knowledge that cannot be replicated, as they have spent years developing their level of expertise. Elderly recipients of Social Security are being asked to appear in person at an office to verify their identity, because they don't have an online account. (*Most of our elderly relatives don't have any online accounts!*) Calling is not an option if the local office is closed and even if it were open, you may not get through due to the reduction in staff. Some reported being on the phone for hours only to have the call dropped. During the recent Pandemic, I was trying to connect with the IRS to find out where my mom's tax return was. I spent hours on the phone on multiple occasions and was not able to get any results

until I reached out to my congressman. I mention contacting your elected representative because it is their job to assist constituents when faced with unresponsive agencies.

I've been mourning for those that have lost their jobs and have wondered how we will move forward as a world power if we proceed with the "America First" sentiments that pervade this administration. I recently finished an excellent book that reminded me of what we may face.

Who Is Government? The Untold Story of Public Service, compiled and edited by Michael Lewis, is a group of essays by Lewis' favorite authors. Each chapter highlights a government worker who has tirelessly advocated for Americans in one of the agencies we depend upon in our daily lives. I am talking about talented and remarkable people that could have worked anywhere for considerably more compensation, but they chose to devote their lives to public service.

One such person includes a young man, named Christopher Mark who grew up in Princeton, NJ, where his father taught and founded a program that combined architecture and engineering. In those classes, his students examined Gothic Cathedrals to determine which architectural features were decorative and which were structurally essential. He gained a lot of notoriety for his research. When it was time for his son, Chris, to choose a college, Chris decided he would rather work in a factory than go to Princeton or Harvard. He kicked around at several jobs and eventually ended up in a West Virginia coal mine. He realized this wasn't a sustainable position for him, so he returned to college at Penn State. He was interested in mine safety but had no idea how he could be trained for such a job and who would hire him. One day, while in a rock mechanics class, his professor lectured students on the formulas used to design the pillars that supported the roofs of coal mines. He was hooked! Having worked in mines he knew that poorly designed pillars killed miners, and that the industry accepted that as the cost of doing business. Chris went on to determine how to prevent roof collapses in mines. In 2016, it was

noted that there were no deaths in mines from collapsing roofs because of his research. *What had changed?* Steel roof bolts that were now regularly used instead of cheaper timbers, and **enforcement** of the regulations that governed mine safety. Chris’ research as well as his agencies’ enforcement of new rules made working in the mines safer than they had ever been.

The book goes on to highlight Ronald E. Walters, head of the National Cemetery Association. Mr. Walters and the 2,300 people that work for his agency are responsible for 155 national cemeteries around the US and bury more than 140,000 veterans and their family members each year. If you’ve ever visited a national Cemetery, you know what these folks do. Without detailing any more about the eight individuals featured in this book, I can tell you that they highlight some of the most dedicated public servants that work for the federal government. They are all the very best at what they do, and they hire and guide many just like themselves that aren’t there for the recognition or for the high salaries they might have received if they worked in the private sector. They are there to provide the very best service to the American people.

We need to push back on the efforts to dismantle the FDA, the CDC, the Department of Education, the Social

Security Administration, Medicare and Medicaid, the National Parks, FEMA, and the National Weather Service to name just a few. These agencies protect us by providing the best scientific evidence needed to guide decisions about our health, safety and well-being. They respond to catastrophic events, to provide relief to those affected by disasters. They protect the vulnerable from those that seek to avoid oversight in unvetted, dangerous and unregulated procedures and jobs. In other words, they are essential to a way of life we have become accustomed to living.

Please call or write letters to your legislators and let them know you are concerned about the gutting of these important agencies. Join a local protest for what you are most concerned about. If you see a local agency struggling to maintain services, consider becoming a volunteer. Last of all, take care of yourselves and pay attention to your personal well-being.

Hoping to see many of you at our upcoming events. Trips are being planned for the fall. See you at the fall conference in September. Please join us for an informative day. **Barbara**

UPCOMING NYSUT RETIREE COUNCIL 10 EVENTS-

Keep Reading for registration forms. Watch our webpage and Facebook for updates

SEPTEMBER 1, 2025. The Capital District Area Labor Federation Annual Labor Day Picnic. Join the fun and celebrate the hard-working men and women of our union families. Information will be via an Action Network service email in August.

SEPTEMBER 12, 2025 *Re-scheduled trip to Mark Twain and Harriet Beecher Stowe Center*

<https://forms.gle/4tMBSkZAZRTM8rff6>

SEPTEMBER 24, 2025 RC 10 Annual Fall Meeting and Luncheon

<https://forms.gle/wXt35JVjGU6j1yS76>

Did you know that on our website, we have a dedicated Memorial Page? The link is <https://pemsite.blogspot.com/> Contact jedwinw@gmail.com to have someone listed. Thank you, Jon, for your work on this!



**SANDIE CARNER-SHAFRAN WINS NYSUT’S
“NOT FOR OURSELVES ALONE”
THE SANDY FELDMAN OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP
AWARD**

Sandie Carner-Shafran, 2nd Vice-President for Retiree Council 10 and President of the Saratoga Labor Council, was recently awarded the **Sandy Feldman Outstanding Leadership Award** at the New York State United Teachers Representative Assembly in Rochester, NY.

This prestigious award recognized Sandie’s dedication to education, the students she worked with, and her nearly 40 years of service to the union members she has always advocated for. Sandie has always encouraged others to become involved and engaged in the issues affecting SRPs, including safe working conditions, fair wages, and opportunities for professional development. This is not the first time Sandie has been recognized for her commitment to education. She was previously awarded the Albert Shanker Pioneer Award, the NYSUT Legacy Award, NYSUT SRP of the Year, and she was nominated for the NEA Education Support Professional of the Year.

We're all so proud of you! Enjoy this video shown at the awards ceremony. In her own voice, Sandie documents her commitment to a better workplace and learning environment.
<https://youtu.be/kU2szTGPnto?si=-D2Y98FNTohQkguD>

Congratulations, Sandie!

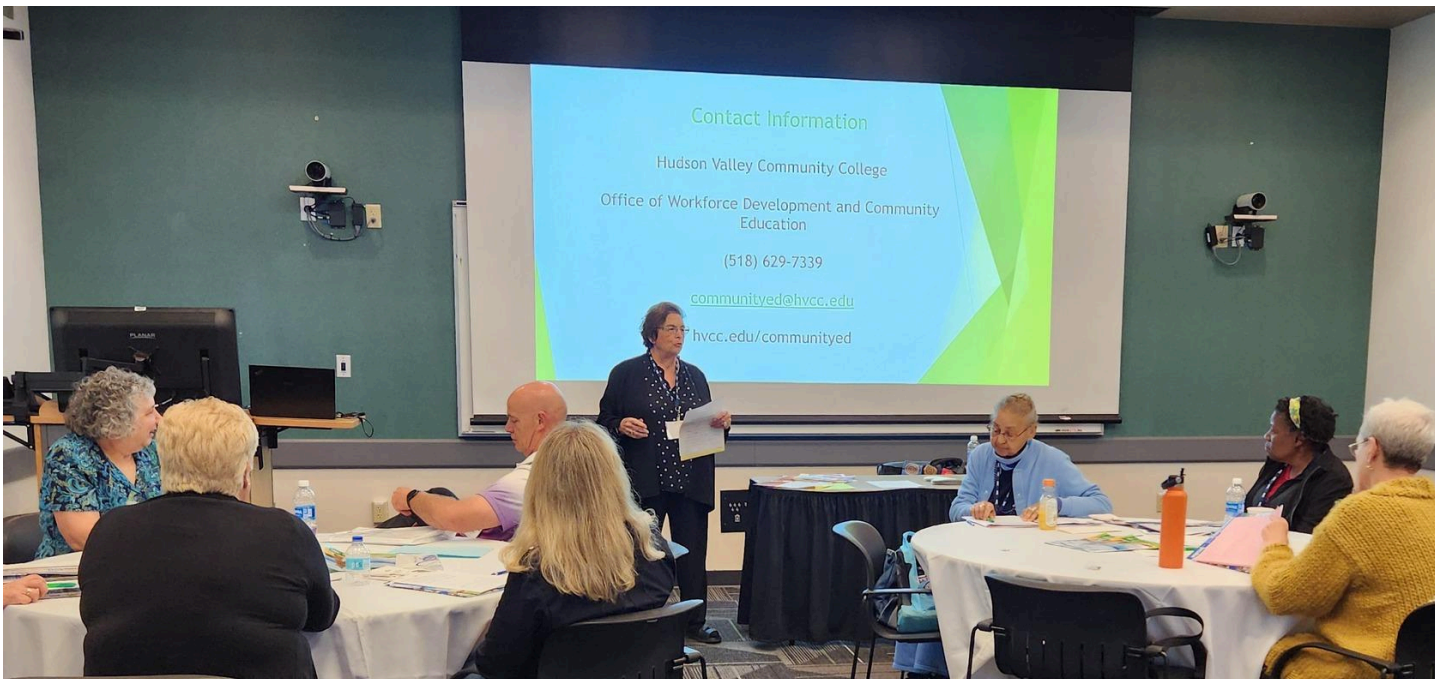
UPDATE FROM OUR RETIREE SERVICES CONSULTANT-CHRIS FOWLER
RETIREE COUNCIL 10 SPRING CONFERENCE

The 2025 Spring Conference was held at Hudson Valley Community College on May 8. The day had an overarching theme related to health and wellness. *RC 10 Vice President Cliff Brosnan* began the day with information about RC 10 participation and upcoming events. *NYSUT's Capital District Regional Office Director Mike Rowan* followed with a presentation about locals' health insurance coverage for retirees. *Greenville Superintendent Mike Bennett* gave a moving talk about his personal and professional experiences related to school safety and the importance of supporting the mental health of students, faculty and staff in our schools. *Member Benefits Specialist Derek Clement* explained our continuing benefits and programs. He also brought along three door prizes!



NYSUT President Melinda Person updated attendees about state and national cell phone restrictions in schools, as well as school budgets. Then, she led the attendees through a centering exercise that is part of the Kripalu RISE program. There is a three-session online RISE course offered in June through NYSUT's ELT and is open to retirees. Contact Chris Fowler at chris.fowler@nysut.org if you would like more information.

After lunch, RC 10 honoree *Jean Chenette* spoke about the Center for Creative Retirement and *Kimberly Williams* explained the Community Education opportunities offered at HVCC. We wrapped up the day by getting active! Maria Parick led thirty participants in a Qi Gong session and a smaller group toured the Joe Bruno Valley Cats Stadium including the clubhouse, locker room, bullpen, guest suites and media rooms. Many RC 10 Board Members helped to make the day flow smoothly for all who attended.



RETIREE COUNCIL 10 HS SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS and **RETIREE COUNCIL 10 RETIREE RECOGNITION**

The 2025 Scholarship Committee met at NYSUT on Friday, April 11. The Committee reviewed 22 applications from students in the four counties represented by RC 10: Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Washington.

Each application is rated by three different committee members based on predetermined criteria. The applicant with the highest total rating from each county is chosen to be the recipient. The committee members were left with a very positive feeling about the future of our chosen profession based on the overall high caliber of the applications.

This year's winners are *Abby Rudolph from Albany County, Leah McIntosh from Rensselaer County, Audrey Mosall from Saratoga County, and Chloe Bentzen from Washington County*. Congratulations to them. These students and their families were honored at the spring annual dinner meeting on June 4.

NYSUT Retiree Council 10 also annually recognizes members who have shown outstanding dedication to the Retiree Council and their communities. This year's honorees are *Colleen Condolora, Albany County; Jean Chenette, Rensselaer County; Anne Moore, Saratoga County; and Mark Sullivan, Washington County*.

In the nominations we heard they tutor at risk students, organize food drives for the Regional Food Bank, provides NYSUT professional development opportunities for educators, travel to promote various pro-union candidates, serve as an election worker, writes letters to the local

paper and gives interviews with reporters, member of zoning board, Senior Center drivers, Olympic torch bearer, gardener, coordinating educational programs for community- the list goes on and on!

Congratulations to these fine educators who prove teachers don't really retire once they leave the classroom.



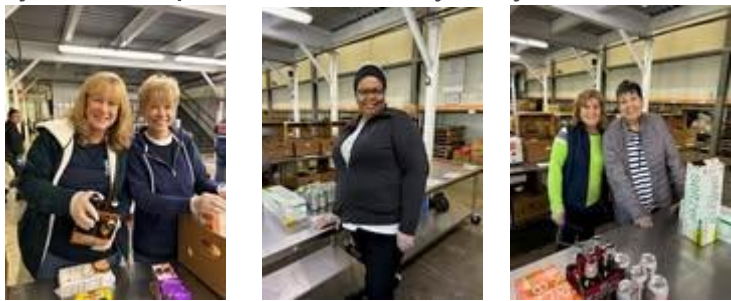
Consider making sure a Class of 2026 gets a scholarship form AND nominate a retiree next year!

BACKPACK/SCHOOL PANTRY PROGRAM

DONATE to your district's BackPack/School Pantry Program! The need is great--the Regional Food Bank continues to address increased food insecurity for many working parents who struggle to buy groceries each week. Please consider making a donation in any amount to your local school district:

ONLINE: give.regionalfoodbank.net/rc10

CHECKS payable to: The Regional Food Bank, In the memo section: *RC 10 BackPack, specify your school/district.* **Send to:** Mary Ellen Caporta, 6 West Bayberry Rd. Glenmont, NY 12077



REGIONAL FOOD BANK

The dedicated and hard-working RC 10 volunteers have completed another successful year sorting food and non-perishable items at the *Regional Food Bank located in Latham, NY*. The Food Bank is a not-for-profit organization that collects donated food and other items and distributes them to nearly 1,000 charitable agencies throughout 23 counties of northeastern New York. The donated food helps feed over 350,000 people each month. Once a month, from October through May, RC 10's Social Justice Committee sent a team to the Food Bank to volunteer in the salvage department for two hours. Many thanks to *Barb, Tere, Dawn, Kara, Matt, Carmen, Judy, Paula, Peter, Karen, Melissa, Anne, Mary, Bill,*

Maggie, Clare, and Karole for their help throughout the year. If you are interested in helping next year, email Michele Doodian at mdoodian@outlook.com.

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE

On May 7, Agnese Andrews, Laraine Gillette, Paula Johannessen, and Ann O'Brien prepared a dinner for 25 people at the RMH as part of the Love Is Served Program. From planning the meal to sharing recipes to purchasing the ingredients and preparing the meal, the volunteers worked well together as a team.

On June 14, RMH hosted its Family Fun Day/5K Run. Individuals and/or teams signed up to run/walk the 5K. There were also opportunities to volunteer prior to, during, and following the event to assist with set up, registration, participant support, clean up, etc. As with other events, information was distributed through FaceBook and the Action Network.

We anticipate participating in the READ for RMHC Program in August. Additional dates for Days of Service will be scheduled for the fall, beginning in October. Special thanks to everyone who participated in this year's events and supporting this worthy organization. If you are interested in participating, please email Paula Johannessen at pmjohannessen4@gmail.com.

RETIREE COUNCIL 10 COMMITTEES AND CHAIRS:

Looking for a way to assist in making Retiree Council 10- even stronger? Consider joining one of our committees. Go to the link below to be contacted about the committee(s) you are interested in. To receive more information; go to <https://forms.gle/cY7EfGywP6SjNtEZ7>

Activist Committee: work is to aid in the formation of Retiree Chapters within In-service locals that are in RC 10.
Co-chairs: Dennis Bouchard & Jane Weihle

Social Justice: promotes various programs to make our communities better for all. The committee's purpose is to move beyond just fundraising efforts and take action on issues important to our members that will make change within our community. Current programming includes backpack programs, Food Bank & Ronald McDonald House.
Co-chairs: Mary Ellen Caporta & Michele Doodian

Travel/Social Committee: organizes activities such as trips, luncheons, and outings for RC 10 gatherings. This may include annual meet and greets along with various trips: day trips and longer.
Chair: Donald Finelli

SALT Representative: connecting us to our Saratoga Adirondack locals to help keep our retirees informed of issues in our in-service groups and how they might impact retirees.
Representative: Sandie Carner-Shafran

Scholarship: annually promotes and awards scholarships from RC 10 to seniors going into the education field from our four counties.
Chair: Jeanne Bush

Audit Committee: reviews and audits RC 10 treasury, filing required fiscal forms.
Chair: Sean O'Neil

Website: Promotes knowledge of RC 10 activities and provides educational materials.
Chair: Ruth Shippee

Legislative and Vote/Cope Committee shall have the primary responsibility of keeping the membership informed of all Legislative matters. The committee shall be composed of the RC 10 members of the Vote/Cope and PAC committees.
Co-Chairs: Seth Cohen & Tara Molby-Grocki



Retiree Recognition: Solicits nominations of active retirees from each of the four counties for their work as retirees and in the community.
Chair: Laraine Gillette

RETIREE COUNCIL 10 ANNUAL FALL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 24, 2025
NYSUT HEADQUARTERS, 800 TROY-SCHENECTADY ROAD, LATHAM, NY

- 8:45-9:00 Registration
- 9:00-9:45 Annual meeting and presentation by the Travel/Social Committee
- 9:45-10:30 Political Update: Peter Savage, Deputy Director of Legislation at NYSUT and Peter Kim, Regional Political Organizer with NYSUT, present timely legislative updates.
- 10:30-10:55 Break: Coffee, tea, soft drinks and assorted fresh baked pastries and bagels**
- 11:00-12:00 Marcus Harazin, Coordinator of Patient Advocate Programs with New York Statewide Senior Action Council, will present information about how to use the Federal and State Rating Systems to make the best Nursing Home choices, and highlight the rights of families and nursing home residents. When making choices for a loved one, it's important to make an informed decision.
- 12:00-12:50 Dinner Buffet: Chicken Piccata, Garlic Steak Tips, Classic Greek Salad, Rosemary Roasted Red Potatoes, Roasted Mixed Vegetables, Cheesecake, Pastries and Coffee, Tea, and Soft Drinks **
- 1:00- 2:00 The Alarming History of Pharmacy with Lee Ann Obos, R.Ph, Registered Pharmacist and Instructor at the College of Pharmacy This presentation will explore the most unusual medications and formulations used as treatments for a variety of ailments from the eighteenth century to the present day, including *mercury*, *arsenic*, *antimony*, and *laudanum (opium)*.. She always opened her lessons with a bit of history and we are fortunate to have her share some of those stories with us. A fascinating presentation not to be missed!
- 2:00-2:15 Door prizes and collection of evaluations.

**If you have any food allergies or food restrictions, please identify them when you make your reservation.

Cost: \$20 per person. This event is being subsidized by RC 10 to encourage attendance and reduce the cost for everyone. Register at <https://forms.gle/wXt35JVjGU6j1yS76> or use QR code. You can also send below with at check. Questions? rc10secretary@gmail.com.



-----Registration Form -----

Name (1) _____
Email address _____ Phone Number _____
Food Allergies, restrictions _____

Name (2) _____
Email address _____ Phone Number _____
Food Allergies, restrictions _____
Total enclosed _____

By September 16 mail the registration to RC 10 Secretary, Colleen Condolora, 623 Michelle Way, Schenectady, NY 12304, or register by September 19 using the following QR Code.



Participants at the 2024 Fall Luncheon

TRIP MARK TWAIN HOUSE AND HARRIET BEECHER STOWE CENTER
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2025—RESCHEDULED

Join Retiree Council 10 members on a Yankee Trail arranged trip that will include a Living History Tour of the Mark Twain House with a costumed guide. After the tour, a buffet lunch will be served at the house catered by Fire x Forge. We then travel to the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center for another historical tour.

Cost: **\$165 per person** Registration Due by **August 8, 2025**
Pre-Registration fee: **\$5 for Dues Paying Member, \$10 for Non-Dues Paying Member**

Depart at **7 a.m. from Pet Smart Crossgates Commons, Albany, NY** and at **7:30 a.m. from Yankee Trails Depot, Rensselaer, NY**. Approximate arrival back in the Capital District will be 5:30 - 6 pm.

Make your **non-refundable** payment to NYSUT Retiree Council 10 by either check or online.

If using check, send your check and the form below to
Dina Ariemma, 10 Harvard Road, Watervliet, NY 12189.
You will then be sent a link to register with Yankee Trails for the trip.
Any questions, contact Dina Ariemma.
Email: **fdariemma@verizon.net.**

If using our on-line format, go to this link
<https://forms.gle/ZqB99QPxfai3muWAA> or use QR code. You will be able to pay with credit card, PayPal or Venmo



RC 10 Mark Twain House and Harriet Beecher Stowe Center
Thursday, September 12, 2025

NAME (person 1) _____ Dues Paying Member? ☐ Yes ☐ No
HOME PHONE _____ CELL _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
E-MAIL _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT DURING THE TRIP: (Someone different from the person you are travelling with)
Emergency Contact: Name _____ Phone Number: _____
NAME (person 2) _____ Dues Paying Member? ☐ Yes ☐ No
HOME PHONE _____ CELL _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
E-MAIL _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT DURING THE TRIP: (Someone different from the person you are travelling with)
Emergency Contact: Name _____ Phone Number: _____

Enclosed check:
\$5 per person for a dues paying member _____
\$10 per person for a non-dues paying member _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: _____



LET MEMBER BENEFITS HELP YOU PLAN FOR RETIREMENT

If you recently retired or plan to do so in the near future, it's important to prepare for the transition from in-service work to retirement.

Maintaining NYSUT membership in retirement is crucial, especially if you're currently participating in a NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed program(s) and would like to continue doing so. This can be accomplished in one of two ways:

- 1** Continue membership within your local if retiree membership is offered. Contact your local to find out if any retiree membership requirements are in place. You must comply with these requirements to continue your membership in NYSUT along with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and National Education Association (NEA).
- 2** Continue as an at-large member of NYSUT through the Retiree Council in your region. Contact your local to ensure you will be reported as retired to NYSUT. This will provide you with membership in the Retiree Council in your region along with NYSUT, AFT, and NEA. If you have questions about maintaining NYSUT membership or would like more information about NYSUT retiree programs, you will want to contact the NYSUT Retiree Services Consultant serving your region. You can find this information at nysut.cc/retireeconsultants.

More than a dozen of the endorsed programs offered by Member Benefits can be purchased through either payroll or pension deduction. These convenient payment methods offer reduced premiums or the elimination of service fees in many instances. An active NYSUT membership is required to participate in payroll or pension deduction. If you're currently participating in one (or more) of our endorsed programs, we encourage you to look into switching to pension deduction after you enter retirement.

Learn more about continuing Member Benefits-endorsed programs or the pension deduction process by scanning the QR code, visiting memberbenefits.nysut.org, or calling 800-626-8101.

SCAN ME



**MEMBER
BENEFITS**
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Working to Benefit You