

THE OUTLOOK

Newsletter of the Retiree Council 12

A NYSUT-NEA-AFT Affiliate

November 2023

Thank you to RC 12 Supporters

These are the contributions of record received from members from July 1, 2023 thru October 31, 2023. Your name will appear only once in *The Outlook*. Contributions received after October 31, 2023 will appear in the next issue of *The Outlook*. **Please keep track of your contribution as to avoid multiple payments within one year.**

“ * “ indicates paid through June 2025. “ + “ indicates paid beyond July 1, 2025. (continued page 3)

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Have a Happy Thanksgiving !!



President's Message

I hope that this newsletter finds you healthy and enjoying a nice fall. I thank all the attendees of the RC 12 fall luncheon meeting at the Otesaga. It was nice to see every-one on such a beautiful day. A big thank you is extended to our speakers, the new NYSUT President, Melinda Person, and to our presenters, Nina Tribble and Jaqui Berger, of the Sticks and Stones, Implicit Bias introduction. Melinda gave us an up-date on what is happening in our communities and pointed out things on which we should all be keeping an eye. These include knowing who is running for local, town, and county board seats as well as who is running for the local school board. There is a concerted effort across the country to get people elected who would restrict rights and who want to control things like what you can read by banning or limiting books in your local schools and local libraries. I am on my local school board, and I can attest to this sad fact. In addition, Melinda pointed out the NYSUT legislative agenda which includes the push to Fix Tier 6, the efforts to return APPR to local control, and the fight to end the negatively-focused efforts of schools declared in receivership and on watch lists. I hope that you will support these efforts when you are asked to do so.

There is so much going on in the world around us. If you are struggling and having any health issues, including mental health, please don't struggle in silence. I encourage you to reach out to family, friends, and doctors or consider the NYSUT Peer Support Line. The Peer Support Line is a free service sponsored by NYSUT Member Benefits. It is confidential and staffed by trained in-service and retired individuals who can provide answers, resources, and empathetic support when you need it. For more information or to speak with someone at the Peer Support Line, call toll-free 844-444-0152.

The holiday season is again upon us. If you are purchasing gifts, why not consider Union Made in the USA? These are companies that help support the work force in the USA. "By shopping for products made by union workers, you can rest assured that the goods were produced in facilities run by companies that treat their workers with respect, value their abilities, and compensate them fairly for their labor."

I also encourage you to think about gifts that honor the person you are gifting. Donations to charities and causes that the person values are a wonderful way to honor them. Donations to food pantries, animal shelters, medical research, and local organizations in honor of someone are great ways to show the person that you care and are in tune with things they value. It also supports organizations who need the help. A final thought on gift giving is to remember the value of your time. Volunteering at local organizations is always appreciated. Homeless shelters, women's shelters, food pantries, local libraries, animal wildlife organizations, church organizations and your local schools are just some of the many groups who are usually looking for an extra someone to lend a hand. Also, don't forget neighbors and relatives who could benefit from some time. Doing yardwork, making a meal, babysitting and running errands mean a lot for someone who is sick, injured or short on time. There are many studies that show helping others also has benefits for your own physical and mental well being so while you are gifting to others, you are also gifting to yourself! That's a great win-win!!!

Finally, if you missed the opportunity to sign up and help our retiree council, RC 12, I encourage you to reach out and offer your services. This can be a one time phone banking, reaching out to elected representatives, emailing or texting people on a given issue, or it can be by volunteering on one of our committees: social, membership, history or constitution. If you would like to help, please reach out to me or any of the RC 12 officers and delegates at RC12.NYSUT@gmail.com or by calling us with your contact information and on what you would like to work. On behalf of your NYSUT RC 12 Executive Board, I wish you a happy, healthy, safe holiday season!

Worthy considerations for a donation. (These are programs that RC 12 has supported or made a donation to in the past.)

Art from the Heart -Dr. William Bouton – Bill sells his art work and uses the proceeds to make donations monthly, year round to

Danielle's House, disabled veterans, the Amsterdam soup kitchen, and those in need at local nursing homes. Contributions may be sent to William Bouton, 30 Mergner Road, Fort Johnson, NY 12070

CPL. Michael Mayne Cookie CORP – at the Marine Cpl. Gregory Harris Military Hospitality Room at Syracuse's Hancock Airport. This is a courtesy room for military members passing through the Syracuse airport. Donations may be sent to the Cpl Michael Mayne Cookie Corps., Herkimer County Hunger Coalition, PO Box 622, Herkimer, NY 13350

Haven of Hope Farm and Residence in Fonda, NY – Haven of Hope offers Transitional housing for homeless women with children. They offer holistic living and work experience programs to prepare women to work towards independent living and family unification. Contributions may be sent to Haven of Hope, 19 Cemetery St, Fonda, NY 12068

The Outlook

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Website: <http://rc12.ny.aft.org/>

NYSUT Retiree Services Consultant:

Sheryl Baker Delano

Sheryl.Delano@nysut.org 845-706-6986

In Solidarity, Stacey

Medicare Patient's Rights Helpline and Medicare Counseling Services Through StateWide Senior Action

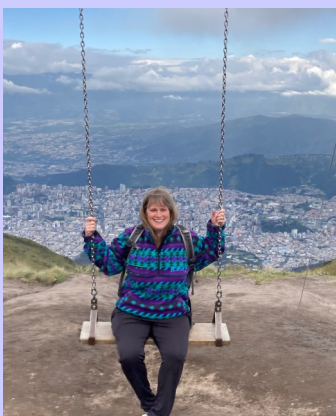
Do you need help deciding on a Medicare Advantage Plan, Medicare Supplement Plan, or a Medicare part D plan for drugs? Are you confused about which type you should choose? Do you wish to return to the original Medicare? Do you need help understanding your Medicare Summary Notices? Do you need help appealing bills or negotiating a hospital payment? Do you need someone to listen to you? Are you having trouble getting insurance to pay for medicine that the doctor says you need? Are you frustrated with the whole process? Are you looking into EPIC (the NYS Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage) program?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, StateWide has a well-staffed unbiased program where you can get answers and help. The people who work there only want to help you get what is best for you. **Call the Medicare Hotline at 800-333-4374.** All calls are confidential and free. When you call, they may answer your question, they can get you the information you need, or they may connect you to the resources that can help. Their main job is assisting seniors with their health care needs.

O'DONNELL—	REINHART, Harvey*	SCHOU, Margaret+	STAHLER, Marie	Van ALLEN, Cynthia
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REID, Carol				ZILKA, Linda

Part 2 Our Family Trip to Ecuador

By Carolyn Darkangelo, retiree from Mayfield TA



The top of Pichincha Volcano

The second part of our trip introduced us to Quito, the oldest capital in South America, high in the Andean foothills at an elevation of 9,400 ft. At this altitude, you need to move more slowly, make sure you are hydrated, and pace yourself. Our “altitude brains” caused us to say silly things especially when we took the gondola up the east slope of Pichincha Volcano to the Cruz Loma viewpoint at 13,100 ft. The beautiful clear day allowed us to see Quito and most of the volcanic mountains that surround it. Our daughters hiked up to a set of swings near the top where there was a wonderful view of Quito. Our city tour included a trip to the colorful Santa Clara market, which is filled with exotic fruits, vegetables, spices, medicinal herbs, meats, and fish. We sampled guanabana, gooseberries, and dragon fruit and met some locals outside who were selling goat milk directly from the goat. We toured the Nan Museum, which is dedicated to the history and culture of indigenous people in Ecuador and had a delicious catered lunch in one of the exhibit rooms.

Quito is watched over by a 135 ft. statue, The Virgen de El Panecillo. While we were in the old city, we walked through The Grand Square and spotted the president’s car going into the presidential palace. We also saw the Basilica which is a neo classical building adorned with gargoyles on its façade, as well as animals that are endemic to the country and the region, such as: pumas, alligators, turtles, blue-footed boobies, condors, monkeys, and among many others. Another high point was the Iglesia de la Compañía de Jesús, a multi-domed building with a gilded interior and a façade carved from volcanic rock. The interior was decorated by indigenous artisans.

On another day, we toured the Intinan Museum, where you can try to balance an egg on the head of a nail and walk on the equator with your eyes closed. It also includes typical homes of Kichwa tribes. Next, we drove to the Agave Spirit Museum, where you can learn the harvesting and distillation process. Our lunch there included local dishes such as lupin bean ceviche, quinoa tortillas, plantains, and corn fried water. We then tasted many versions of Miske, and my husband, Dominick, took a turn learning to mix and serve drinks. The staff was amazing as they shared their knowledge and love of this traditional drink,

On our last day in Quito, our guide, Alfredo, helped our family set up a trip to the cloud forest 60 miles from Quito. Our new guide, Freddy, was adept at driving through the zigzagging route that took us from the Eastern to Western Andes to the Mindo Valley. At one point, we were behind a large truck full of live chickens. We stopped at a farm where we had the opportunity to watch 16 species of hummingbirds and experience them in our hands. I was amazed to feel the wind created by their wings. Next, we rode two cable cars over the huge trees in the canopy of the cloud forest as we spotted Golden Quetzal, tanagers, and hawks. We hiked down a narrow path to a swift-flowing glacial river with a beautiful waterfall. We returned by way of the cable cars and enjoyed lunch in a nearby village which included fish and steak cooked on lava rocks.

There is so much to write about. I will finish telling you about the four days we spent in the Amazon in the next issue.

Check **Overseas Adventure Travel** in NYSUT Member Benefits.

<https://memberbenefits.nysut.org/program-service/shopping-travel>

Being ready for the holidays can mean a lot of different things:

- Gifts for your loved ones
- Appliances for your home
- Confirming travel plans
- Entertainment for the kids
- Food delivery in case of inclement weather
- Savings set aside for unexpected expenses

NYSUT Member Benefits offers dozens of endorsed programs and services that could help make you as prepared as possible for whatever the holiday season may throw at you.

No matter what your plans may be this holiday season, NYSUT Member Benefits is a great place to start. With a number of shopping, travel and discount programs, you are certain to find something of interest that could benefit you or your loved ones.

Speaking of savings, the **Member Benefits Discounts & Deals** program utilizes the nation's largest private discount network to offer all NYSUT members (both in-service and retiree) exclusive access to savings of up to 50% at 850,000 locations – including more than 21,200 New York State deals. If you have not already done so, head over to mbdeals.enjoymydeals.com to create your account with your NYSUT ID number, preferred email address, and password.

You'll then be eligible to save on restaurant dine-in or take-out, flowers and gift baskets, Bose products, clothing and shoes, oil changes and vehicle maintenance, sporting events, hotels and flights, car rentals, theme parks, movie tickets, and much more. Members are encouraged to download the MB Discounts & Deals mobile app for the best user experience with this program.

Member Benefits also endorses life insurance programs, auto & home insurance, dental & vision plans, legal & financial services, and other programs to help protect yourself and those you care about most.

Participating in Member Benefits-endorsed programs also offers the added protection of having a trusted advocate on their side. Member Benefits staff take great pride in stepping in to support members with any questions, concerns, or issues that may arise.

Explore all that your union membership has to offer!



Learn more by scanning the QR code to the left, visiting memberbenefits.nysut.org, or calling 800-626-8101.

For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits.

Nov./Dec. 2023



RC 12 Supports a Military Hospitality Suite at Syracuse Hancock Field Airport

At the October meeting of Retiree Council 12 members brought donations for the Marine Gregory Harris Military Room and the Michael Mayne Cookie Corps. Additionally, \$250 was raised from their 50-50 raffle when all of the winners donated back their winnings to the charities.

The Michael Mayne Cookie Corps was created in 2009 to honor the memory of fallen star Army Cpl. Michael Mayne from Burlington Flats who was KIA in Iraq on 2/23/09. Burlington Flats is in RC 12. Every month, members of the Cookie Corps bring donations to central locations in Mohawk and Little Falls for transport to Syracuse.

Since 2009, over 140,000 active and retired military personnel have made use of the accommodations at the Marine Corporal Gregory Harris Military Room. Cpl. Harris was from the Syracuse area. He was captured during the Iraqi War and remains unaccounted for.

The courtesy room is equipped with TV's, recliners, WiFi access, computers, microwaves, etc. The room provides a stopover site while soldiers are in transit. The room is staffed by volunteers, many of them veterans. Fort Drum deploys from Syracuse. Families come there to say good bye to departing soldiers as well as to welcome them back home.

Do you remember the weather last year at Christmas? We were hit with a major storm. There were soldiers and their families who were literally stranded at the hospitality suite for several days.

By donating to the courtesy room, we best remember our departed heroes through deeds, not just words. These young men believed in "duty, honor country". Keeping Michael Mayne's and Gregory Harris's flames burning, hopefully helps ease the anguish of their families and friends. It reminds us all that the deaths of our soldiers are not in vain.

Our veterans epitomize everything good about this country and have embodied its ideals by their actions. As we approach Veterans Day, if you see a vet, thank a vet for his/her service.

Jeanne Williams Bennett
Immediate Past President of RC 12
315.895.7063 (H) 315.867.4541 (C)



Bruce Bennett unloading half of the donations at Hancock Field



Medals left at the room as a thank you



RC 12 Members Ray Pitcher, Kathy Lyman, and Bruce Bennett loading RC 12 donations for the military hospitality suite after the RC 12 meeting at the Otesaga in October.



NYSUT President, Melinda Person spoke to members of RC 12 about at the general meeting in October about NYSUT'S goals for the year for the coming year.



Mike Rowan, Staff Director for NYSUT Capital Region Spoke about the value of Retirees in the 2024 election year



RC 12 Members at the October Meeting.

Retiree Council 12 Contribution Form July 1, 2023—June 30, 2024

Name _____ County _____
Address _____ City _____ Year Retired _____
State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____ Email _____
Original Union Local _____ You may share my email with AFT and NYSUT _____

I would be willing to work for my fellow retirees in the area of: ___ Legislation ___ Social Committee ___ Newsletter

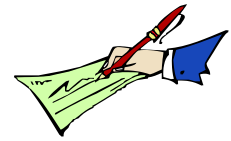
Check this box if there has been a change in your contact information

\$15.00 yearly contribution requested. Send to _____ Amount _____

Dolores Talmadge 206 Main Street, Fort Plain, NY 13339

Make check payable to NYSUT Retiree Council 12.

Any questions, please call (518) 993-2854.



*RC 12 Outlook
November 2023*
<http://rc12.ny.aft.org/>

Please Participate in this Survey :
New York Master Plan for Aging survey

NYSARA leadership urge you to take the survey at

(<https://forms.ny.gov/s3/mpasurvey>) .

The deadline for survey participation is December 31st, 2023.

Save the Date

NYSUT RC 12 trip to NYC - “Harmony, the Musical”
March 27, 2024 (information on RC12 website)

*NYSUT RC 12 trip to Cape Cod, Massachusetts
June 10-14, 2024

*NYSUT RC 12 trip to Newport, Rhode Island
September 16 - 19, 2024

*For info, contact Kathy Lyman 518 366-4545.



Jacqui Berger and Nina Tribble explain the impact of implicit bias on our lives at the RC 12 general meeting at the Otesaga in October