

THE OUTLOOK

Newsletter of the Retiree Council 12

A NYSUT-NEA-AFT Affiliate September 2023

NYSUT RC 12 Fall General Membership Luncheon October 23, 2023 Otesaga Resort Hotel, Cooperstown, NY

AGENDA

- 9:00 - 9:30 am Registration – coffee and tea
9:30 - 10:45 am General Membership Meeting
10:45 - 11:30 pm Speaker - NYSUT Officer - Meet one of the newly-elected NYSUT officers and hear the latest news from NYSUT
11:30 - 12:15 pm Luncheon

Tomato basil bisque * Petit greens (grape tomatoes, shredded carrots, English cucumbers, shaved radish, house vinaigrette)
Otesaga shrimp and crab salad, seasonal fresh fruit salad * chef's selection of two chilled composed salads
* sliced roast beef, Boar's Head turkey and ham, provolone, Swiss, cheddar, lettuce, tomato, and onion
* an assortment of sliced breads and rustic rolls * House-made comfort cookies—brownies / blondie

12:15 - 1:30 pm

Sticks & Stones Understanding

Implicit Bias - An introduction

1:30 - 1:45

Wrap up, closing, and evaluation



Your Luncheon Cost: \$29 (The cost is subsidized by RC 12.)

NYSUT RC 12 Fall Luncheon Meeting- The Otesaga, Cooperstown, NY October 23, 2023

Name _____

Local retired from _____ Year Retired _____

Email Address _____ Cell Phone _____

Please enclose a check for \$29 made out to NYSUT RC 12 and return by **October 9, 2023**

Send to Dolores Talmadge, Treasurer, 206 Main Street, Fort Plain, NY 13339

New RC 12 trips will be announced at this meeting!

In order to honor our military and veterans, the RC 12 Board of Directors voted to give the proceeds of the 50-50 raffle to the military courtesy room at Syracuse Airport and ask people to consider bringing a donation to our meeting. See the article and suggestions below:

The Cpl. Michael Mayne Cookie Corps (named after a soldier from Burlington Flatts who was killed in action in Iraq) collects monthly donations of food and toiletries which are transported to the Marine Cpl. Gregory J. Harris Military Courtesy Room at Syracuse Airport. Fort Drum soldiers as well as reserves and National Guard members deploy from Syracuse, and the courtesy room provides a comfortable place for soldiers and family members to relax and grab a snack to eat when arriving or departing the area.

Here is a list of items that are needed: 12 oz. bottles of Gatorade, napkins, Rice Krispies treats, leather wipes, micro meals, juice boxes (no foil bags), paper towels, heavy duty large and small paper plates, snack pack puddings, snack pack applesauce, bags of snack size chips, pretzels, Clorox wipes, individually-wrapped and shelf stable regular and French vanilla liquid creamers, beef jerky, packages of peanut butter and crackers, packages of cheese and crackers, diapers, and gum. In purchasing items, please look at expiration dates.

**Please bring your donations to our RC 12 meeting at the Otesaga.
Jeanne Bennett will collect them and then transport them to Syracuse. Thanks!**

President's Message

I hope this finds that you are well and have been enjoying the summer. If you are newly retired, congratulations!!! Now, when everyone still in-service is going back to work and you don't have to, you will start to feel retired. I encourage you to get involved with RC 12, friend groups, book clubs, and community and religious organizations. It is a great way to keep in touch with people, and studies have shown that being physically active and socially connected helps stave off Alzheimer's and other related dementias.

There have been many RC 12 trips taking place, both one day and multi-day, and the feedback has been wonderful! Thank you to the social committee for all of the time and effort you put into planning these trips. The social committee is always welcoming new members. If you would like to help plan trips and outings, please contact Kathlene Lyman at namy14@aol.com or Linda Zilka at LJZilka@gmail.com. The more people who help, the less work there is for one person.

In the spring at the NYSUT Representative Assembly, aka the RA, new officers of NYSUT were elected. These officers are: Melinda Person, president; Jaime Ciffone, executive vice president; Ron Gross, second vice president; and J. Philippe Abraham, secretary-treasurer. We are hoping to have one of the officers speak at our fall meeting. The fall meeting will be held at the Otesaga Hotel in Cooperstown, NY, on Oct 23rd. Information can be found on the reservation form in this issue.

If you know teachers who are still in-service and are in Tiers 5 or 6, please let them know that NYSUT is working on a Fix for Tier 6. Hopefully, you will join these efforts and support the Fix Tier 6 campaign. I was a member of Tier 3. When I began teaching, Tier 3 was terrible because of the retirement contribution that was deducted from each check as well as the Social Security offset from our pension. When NYSUT and its members were finally able to get that fixed, by way of creating Tier IV, many of us in Tier 3 received an instant raise due to changes in the contribution rules. Others received this raise after they worked for 10 years. One of the best parts of the fix was that there was no more Social Security offset from our pensions. In my opinion, Tiers 5 & 6 are worse than Tier 3 was. At the fall meeting, there will be more specific information about this. We will be reaching out to you to help us rectify this gross injustice.

You may have noticed that campaign season is once again upon us. My email inbox is flooded daily with requests for support of various people who are running for elected office. I realize that many people get burned out from hearing all the ads and seeing all the requests for support. There are elections to town, county and state offices coming up this November. Before you hit delete or close your ears (or turn down the hearing aids), I encourage you to stay informed on the issues that get addressed at different levels: town, county, state and national. Educate yourself on where the candidates stand on issues that are important to you. Information can usually be found on a candidate's website. Be informed and get involved! Consider becoming an election inspector. Inspectors are needed and training is provided. More information can be found on your county board of elections website or by calling your county board of elections.

We may be hearing more on issues that are important to us as the House of Representatives and the US Senate will be negotiating for a spending bill to avoid a government shutdown. I hope this issue is settled before the newsletter reaches you, but in any case, please pay attention to the issues being bantered about by both parties.

Did you know that VOTE/COPE voluntary contributions enable NYSUT to support candidates for office that support education and labor? This includes candidates from both parties. If you currently don't contribute to VOTE/COPE, I encourage you to do so. It is like having an insurance policy to protect our rights and benefits. Signing up through pension deduction is quick and easy. After I contribute this way, there has never been an issue or error with the deduction. If you already contribute, THANK YOU! Your support benefits us all!!! If you have any questions about VOTE/COPE, feel free to reach out to me or to NYSUT.

In solidarity, *Stacey*

The Outlook

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The RC 12 Social Committee

By Kathlene Lyman

Your RC 12 Social Committee is composed of volunteers who plan day and overnight trips based on your interests. The committee is always open to suggestions. Committee members include: Linda Zilka, chair; Gloria Kimball, communication; Kathy Lyman, secretary; Dolores Talmadge, treasurer; Wendy Wilson; Lori Wrench; MJ and John Rathbun; and Sue Roth.

Trip announcements are generally made first at a general membership meeting, followed by email to all who have traveled with us before and have given us an updated email. Announcements are then placed on the RC 12 website. Registration information is included with each announcement. It is not enough to tell the organizer to put your name on a list. You must include the indicated fee or deposit along with any information requested. All checks should be made payable to NYSUT RC 12.

Each trip is financed solely with money from the participants. Organizers pay the same as everyone. None of the money comes from the yearly contributions of members. If the money collected exceeds the actual expense of each trip and exceeds five dollars per participant, money is refunded.

Some Past Day Trips: Broadway Shows: DEAR EVAN HANSEN, TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD, OKLAHOMA, MUSIC MAN, MOULIN ROUGE, A BEAUTIFUL NOISE. Glimmerglass: PORGY AND BESS, SOUND OF MUSIC, WEST SIDE STORY, Boston Trolley trip

Past overnight trips: Nova Scotia, PA Sight and Sound, Mackinac Island, Mount Rushmore and the Badlands, New Hampshire Ramblin' on the Rails

For past trips, go to the RC 12 website (<http://rc12.ny.aft.org/>). Look under "About Us."

An Amazing Trip with Our Daughters Part 1

By Carolyn Darkangelo, Retired from Mayfield TA



**Dominick Darkangelo meets
a Green Sea Turtle**

This April Dominick, my husband, and I traveled to Ecuador on an Overseas Adventure Travel trip with our adult daughters and nine other people. We traveled in the highlands of Ecuador near its capital, Quito, and spent four days in the Amazon and seven days in the Galapagos Islands on a small boat. I will try to give you the highlights for each part of our trip. We were so lucky because it only rained on the days we were changing locations. We had many wonderful experiences with unique creatures throughout the trip.

We traveled by air to the Galapagos Islands, a group of volcanic islands clustered around the equator in the Pacific Ocean, 600 miles from the coast of Ecuador. On the way to the boat, we spotted sea lions, Sally Lightfoot Crabs, and Blue-footed Boobies. Our boat's first stop was landing on North Seymour Island where we observed yellow and brown land iguanas which were two to four feet long. They love prickly pear cactus. We even saw a large male fall out of a large cactus as he tried to locate the best food.

As we moved toward the center of the small island, we encountered many frigatebirds, black birds with a six-foot wingspan who soar over the island. Darwin referred to them as the "Condors of the Ocean". Their mating ritual was on full display. The male has a large red throat pouch which puffs up as she poses to attract a mate. Then, he brings her nesting material, but they seem to be very poor nest makers. Further on, we watched as the male Blue-footed Boobies performed their dance with their lovely feet and sang to attract their mates as other couples were busy protecting and feeding their young. All the animals go about their business and completely ignore the humans observing them.

The boat crew of seven was diligent in helping us enjoy our trip safely. When our guide, Daniel, gave us our first day's itinerary, we thought he was joking. Days could begin at 6:00 am, and most had two snorkeling trips, one to two hikes on the islands, three great meals, a meeting, and two kayak trips. We could remain on the boat, but most of our group of thirteen participated. The food was excellent, including local dishes and a gourmet menu.

We visited Buccaneer Bay on Santiago Island. From the pangas (our boats), we saw sea lions and cliff colonies of noddies raising fuzzy babies. On our snorkel trip, we saw many colorful parrotfish, angel fish, sergeant major fish, and schools of juveniles. There was also a sea lion making bubbles at the sea bottom to herd schools of fish to the surface as a small reef shark joined in the hunt.

On the island of Isabella, we observed sea stars, urchins, penguins, and cormorants, but a highlight was watching a pelican startle my daughter, Barb, when he dove in to get fish right next to her! We observed Darwin Finches building nests. While hiking on Isabella, we watched sea lions including beach masters resting on rocks near the shore. We were introduced to the black marine iguanas as they formed large stinky piles (to stay warm) on the sand spitting excess salt from their nostrils. They ranged from two to nine feet long and reminded us of sea monsters from sci-fi movies. We also observed a pair of Galapagos hawks raid the nest of a pair of oystercatchers.

Fernandina Island was one of my favorite places. As we arrived at Point Espinosa to watch marine iguanas eating plants on the sea floor, a friendly young sea lion popped up next to the boat several times. When I thought I saw an iguana *apparently* levitating up beside the boat, it was actually a sea lion with the iguana on his back! Later, we saw another sea lion grab an iguana's tail and swing it around. Punta Vicente Roca, a sea cave on Isabella, was teeming with ocean creatures. Our group snorkeled, surrounded by a huge number of sea turtles and several sea lions as Nazca boobies, penguins, and noddies were busy fishing.

After a very wet landing on Urbina Bay, we shared a path with several female Galapagos tortoises on their way to lay their eggs near the shore and several land iguanas. When we headed back to the beach, we saw tortoise prints in the direction of their nests and hermit crabs searching for tortoise eggs. Our guide, Daniel, provided a free swim around the boat.

Our next stop was Bartolome on Santiago Island. Our day started with a sunrise hike to the



**View From Top of
Bartoleme on Santiago Island**

top of the island at 1,800 ft high. At one point, we had to wait while our guide convinced two sea lions to find another location to nap. Even though the island is quite dry with minimal vegetation, we spotted a painted locust and a lava lizard. The view from the top was overwhelming. We saw a bay around Pinnacle Rock, vast black lava flows, and the Santiago and the Baltra Islands, which looked like cones displaying pastel colors.

After the hike, we sailed in the panga, a modest-sized, open, outboard-powered, fishing boat around Pinnacle Rock to see pelicans, penguins, and sea lions. When we returned, a frigatebird and a petrel were perched on the top of the boat. During the snorkel, we saw white tipped and black tipped sharks, sea lions, pelicans, penguins, puffer fish, and storm petrels. When my daughter, Christina, was filming on her Go-Pro, Daniel shouted, "Shark on your left!" and then, "Your other left!". Finally, she videoed the shark as he swam close by her. Daniel and Christina set up a system to show her videos from the boat. They are now on YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/@christinadwood>

Next, we sailed to the Chinese Hat and kayaked during an awesome sunrise. We saw penguins, boobies, hawks, and gulls diving for schools of small fish. Two penguins were working to convince a young one to jump into the water. Our last stop was on the island of Santa Cruz (the most populous island), where we spent some time with a large group of Galapagos turtles on a farm, watched a wood carver create a tortoise in a short period of time and toured the Charles Darwin Center. We also visited Quito and the Amazon which I will share in the next newsletter.



**Galapagos
Sea Lion**

OAT (Overseas Adventure Travel) can be found in member benefits at <https://memberbenefits.nysut.org/program-service/shopping-travel/travel-and-tours/grand-circle-and-overseas-adventure-travel>



Land Iguana



**Giant
Galapagos
Tortoise**



Are You Struggling to Sleep?

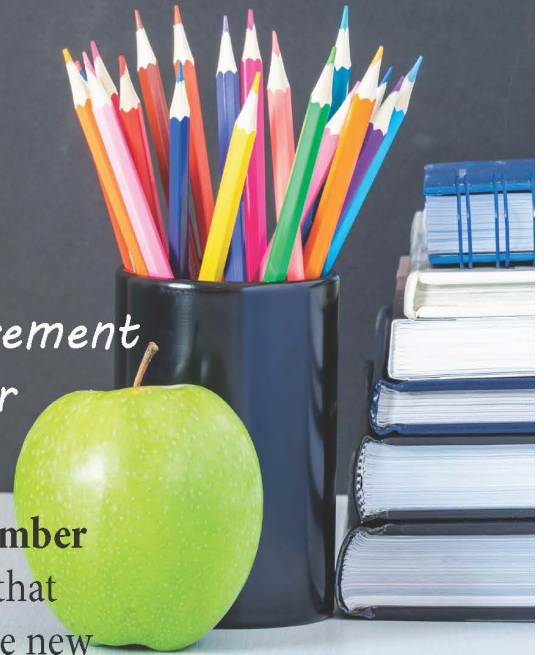
It is documented that people over 60 get less sleep than we did when we were younger. We also tend to wake up more during the night. What can be done to improve our sleep? Here are some suggestions that may work for us.

Basic things that help are setting thermostats in the lower 60's in your bedroom and avoiding screens for at least half an hour before bedtime. We can also change our pillow. The National Sleep Foundation recommends replacing pillows every 1-2 years. Waking up to arm and neck pain can be reduced by replacing an older pillow. Work to get at least an hour of natural sunlight in the morning. It may help to reset your body's clock by telling the brain to wake up. Outdoor sunlight is best, but even light through a window can help. Cut down on salt from dinner and evening snacks. This will help reduce the number of trips to the bathroom after you go to bed. Make a to-do list before dinner, and don't try to solve big problems in the evening. Your brain will keep that negative energy, and it will disrupt your sleep. "Your brain reorganizes negative memories, making them harder to suppress, research suggests."

Source "Why You Couldn't Sleep Last Night" AARP Bulletin, December 2021, pg 6-7

Back to school can mean a lot of different things:

- Starting a new career
- Planning for the future
- Balancing work and home life
- Making difficult decisions
- Enjoying your final year before retirement
- Recalling memories of a proud career



Regardless of what you might be doing this fall, **NYSUT Member Benefits** offers a variety of endorsed programs and services that could help make you as prepared as possible for whatever the new school year may throw at you.

Whether you are looking to save money, protect your family, or plan for the future, **NYSUT Member Benefits** is a great place to start. With dozens of endorsed insurance, legal, financial, shopping, travel, and discount programs, you are certain to find something of interest that could benefit you or your loved ones.

And 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 electronics, 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.

Check out all 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.

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 .

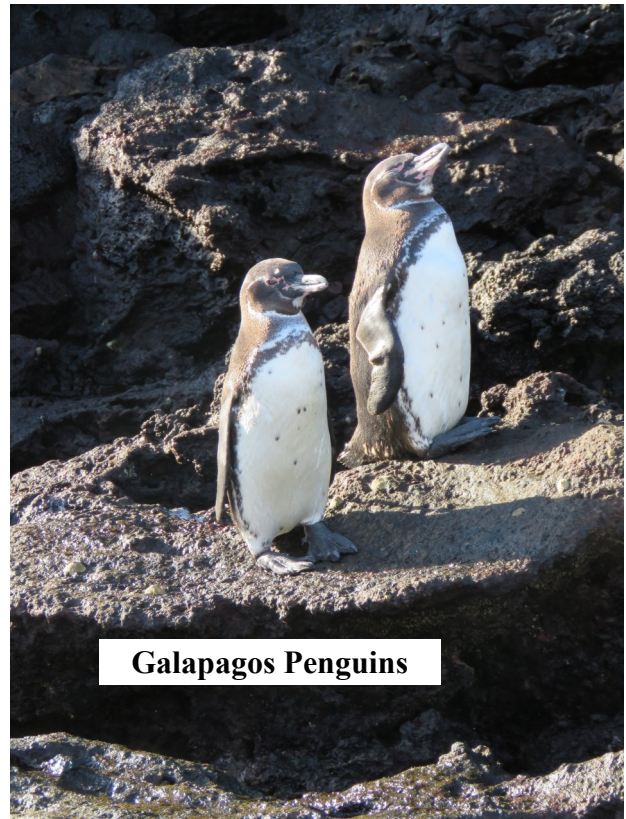


**Frigatebird
Family in the
Galapagos**

RC 12 Outlook

Sept 2023

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



Galapagos Penguins

CDC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COVID-19 VACCINES

- 1) All people 65+ who received an updated dose at least 4 months ago are eligible for another booster. Medicare recipients can have covid tests, ordered by a provider with no out-of-pocket costs. To locate a CDC no cost provider of tests go to www.testinglocator.cdc.gov
- 2) All immunocompromised are eligible an additional booster 2 months after last dose.
- 3) Uninsured can get free access to covid-19 vaccines and treatments at pharmacies, health centers, and public health departments.

New boosters based on later variants will be ready by the end of September and widely available in October.

Save the Date

September 11 - 13, 2023 *The 2023 StateWide Senior Action Council Convention*

RC 12 Trip October 2-7, 2023 *The Ark Encounter & Creation Museum in Cincinnati*

RC 12 Fall Membership meeting October 23, 2023 at the **Otesaga in Cooperstown**