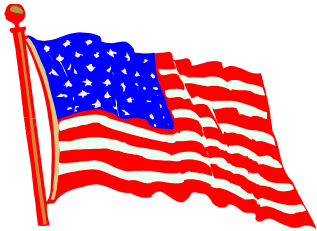


THE OUTLOOK

Newsletter of the Retiree Council 12— A NYSUT-NEA-AFT Affiliate Nov. 2010

How does NYSUT make endorsements?



by **Sandra Bliss**, *Vice President of RC 12*

The quick answer: The NYSUT Board of Directors makes the decisions.

The complete answer: NYSUT asks its members what to do and then makes a decision.

NYSUT endorsements are not based on party affiliation, but on issues important to education, health care, and labor.

NYSUT has a political action committee that meets and regularly makes recommendations to the local presidents at an endorsement conference the summer before November elections. The PAC (Political Action Committee) is made up of NYSUT members from all over the state. NYSUT provides the PAC and local presidents or the local president's designee with voluminous materials to assist in the decision process. The voting records of incumbents, but only those bills important to the membership as determined by policy set at the Representative Assembly; breakdowns of votes in previous elections; the demographics of each election district; and the results of polling the membership are discussed with a PAC member facilitating the session.

The presidents add information such as how the incumbent official acts when he/she is in the district, what he/she says to the newspaper or at public meetings, and what are the opinions of the local presidents and their membership. Challengers are evaluated by their campaign statements and background. NYSUT does not make an endorsement in most races where there is not an incumbent running.

The presidents make a recommendation to the PAC, which again discusses the races and makes a recommendation to NYSUT's Executive committee. They discuss the races and make a recommendation to the Board of Directors. After debate by the Board in a meeting after the endorsement conference, the NYSUT Board makes the decisions.

After that process is concluded, NYSUT and its members educate the membership on the reasons the endorsed candidate is good for our schools, health care, and labor. Each member makes his/her own decision at the election booth based on all the issues important to him/her. It is an informed decision because the member knows where the candidate stands on the issues important to education, health care, and labor and then votes his/her choice.

Officer Profile: Judy Schultz, Past President

By **Betsy Batchelor**, *retired English teacher, Johnstown HS*

For Judy Schultz, leading RC 12 was like raising children. Her role as a leader of the retiree council, like a parent's role with children, was to watch it grow and become successful.

Judy's efforts "to raise" RC 12 began in 1992, when she became the legislative co-chair - one year after the organization was founded. She eventually became the president of the Board of Directors and is now serving as a past president. During her 18 years on the Board, she has witnessed tremendous growth in the organized power of retired teachers: two retiree representatives joined the NYSUT Board of Directors; the number of retiree chapters grew; the number of members donating to RC 12 grew from 200 to over 600.

She measures success by how effectively we support both ourselves as retirees and NYSUT as our parent organization. Members of RC 12 and NYSUT need to do whatever possible to improve members' health, living standards, and housing. Judy believes that means "you have to put yourself out there and be active" in support of the things you believe in.

Currently, Judy's activism extends beyond RC 12 to revitalizing the Schenectady Area Labor Council as well as assisting the Capital District Area Labor Federation in building a chapter of the Capital District Alliance for Retired Americans. She served as founding president of CDARA and member NYSARA Board of Directors.

Judy has organized rallies, given speeches, led organizations, walked picket lines, and written resolutions for the RA. She has been a delegate or alternate to RA and a delegate to the AFT conventions since 1980. Her union activism has put her at the foot of the airplane when presidential candidate Al Gore came to Albany and at the table with union presidents from every state when she served as a stand-in for Tom Hobart at an ARA convention in Philly.

The breadth and depth of her union activities, coupled with the fact that she's a detail person, have left Judy in possession of boxes of paper. That's boxes and boxes, she confesses, but as a consequence she knows she can (eventually) put her finger on whatever she needs. Still her goal is reduce it all to three boxes before her husband, Bill, makes good on his threat to throw it all out.

And maybe, just maybe, she'll find the time to use the brand new Serger sewing machine she bought for herself as a retirement gift long ago and has yet to thread.



Judy Schultz with Senator Chuck Schumer and Gail White

Kudos to our Leaders

Judy Schultz, a past president of RC 12, was honored at the recent bi-annual conference of the Capital District Alliance for Retired Americans (CDARA). She was recognized for serving on the Constitution Committee, for being the first president of the organization, and for filling in for various officers. For these and for her commitment and work, she received a plaque.

The Central New York Labor Council honored **Sandy Bliss**, vice-president of RC 12. She was given the Samuel Gompers Distinguished Service Award, which is intended to recognize and thank those individuals whose devotion and effort have helped keep unions strong. As noted in the program, "It is also an opportunity to model those traits that serve our movement and our communities so well: selfless dedication, belief in the solidarity of collective action, practicing the ideals of democratic unionism, and helping to create a better life for our members.

From the Legislative Committee

New Found Allies are Uniting for Real Property Tax Relief.

Clarisse Butler Banks - NYSUT Communications

The Omnibus Consortium, which includes several members of community-based anti-tax groups, NYSUT, the Alliance for Quality Education and the Fiscal Policy Institute are working together to enact meaningful property tax reform through the use of a circuit breaker.

Unlike a so-called tax cap, a circuit breaker ties property taxes to homeowner's income - and ability to pay. The consortium supports the Omnibus Tax Relief and Reform Act, sponsored by Assemblyman Steve Englebright, which provides short-term relief to tax payers and long-term solutions for tax reform.

"A cap on school property taxes - such as the one passed by the state Senate - would have had a devastating impact on public education," said NYSUT Executive Vice President Andy Pallotta. "Anyone with good intentions towards the citizens of the state know that claiming any kind of 'caps' are synonymous with property tax relief is perpetrating a cruel hoax," said Gioa Shebar, coordinator of taxnightmare.org.

The cap doesn't reduce an individual's tax bill and it doesn't cut waste and it doesn't fix what's wrong with the property tax. For more information about the consortium and the omnibus bill, visit <http://omnibustaxsolution.org>.

The Outlook

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Tentative Itinerary for RC 12 Trip to Ottawa, Canada -- July 29 to July 31, 2011

Touted as the city by which all capitals should be measured, Ottawa is a compact, clean, cleverly planned center of culture and politics. It's an ideal choice for a weekend trip because you can see so much in a short time. We'll be visiting some fabulous museums such as the National Art Gallery of Canada, The Museum of Civilization, and the War Museum. We'll visit the Gothic Revival-style buildings on Parliament Hill and witness the famous Changing of the Guard ceremony. You'll have a chance to walk around the lovely Rideau Canal which cuts through the city, and we'll visit the Byward Market which features an outdoor market area, numerous boutiques and restaurants. We'll be staying at the magnificent Westin Ottawa Hotel, which is located in the heart of the downtown area. This hotel is connected to the Rideau Shopping Center which features over 200 stores. On our way home, we'll be stopping in Montreal to see a show by the world famous group, Cirque du Soleil!

The cost will be approximately \$415.00 per person for a double room \$541.00 for a single and covers bus transportation, hotel reservations, admission to the two museums and Cirque du Soleil, both tours, dinner on Friday night and buffet breakfast on Saturday morning.

Sign-Up and Payment You may sign up for this trip now. To sign up, you must send a check for \$200.00 payable to Retiree Council 12 and the reservation form at the bottom of this page. **The deadline for the first payment is November 19.** Send to:

Mr. Donald Harris 146 Fifth Avenue Gloversville, N.Y. 12078

Phone 518-725-5413 or email at dharris5@nycap.rr.com

A second deposit for \$215.00 will be due on January 7, 2011. There will be no refunds after May 13, 2011.

You must bring a valid U.S. Passport with you on this trip. Consider purchasing travel insurance.

Please reserve _____ seats @ \$415.00 each for a double room, or \$541.00 each for a single room.

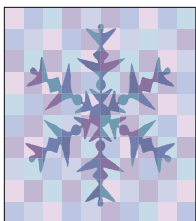
Name _____ Address _____

Phone number _____ Email _____

Confirmation via _____ phone _____ email

Pick Up Location: _____Wade Terminal _____ Amsterdam _____Johnstown

*Trip to STOCKBRIDGE at CHRISTMAS
on Sunday, December 5, 2010*



Every December, Stockbridge re-creates the Norman Rockwell painting "Stockbridge Main Street at Christmas," complete with vintage automobiles parked in the spots occupied in the painting. Visitors experience the effect of walking through the painting while enjoying horse-drawn carriage rides and holiday music. Main and Elm Street shops are decorated and open.

TRIP INCLUDES: Round trip transportation (and bus driver tip), admission to Main Street festivities admission to Norman Rockwell Museum and Berkshire Museum in Pittsfield (to view the Festival of Trees) and dinner at Cork'n Hearth in Lee, MA. TRIP COST----\$80.00
Reservations due by November 6. No refunds after that date.

Send the completed form with a check made out to NYSUT RC 12 to:

Marlene Towne 4527 State Route 30 Middleburgh, N.Y. 12122

e-mail: towne@midtel.net phone 518 827 4300

STOCKBRIDGE at CHRISTMAS

Please reserve _____ seats @ \$80 each

Name _____

Address _____

Phone number _____

Email _____

Confirmation via ____ phone or ____ email

Pick Up Location: ____Wade Terminal (8:30) ____ Amsterdam Park and Ride (by exit 27) at 8:00

Menu choice (indicate the number for each):

Grilled salmon: ____ Chicken Marsala: ____

Grilled NY steak: ____ Mushroom Ravioli: ____

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

We would like to include events and websites of local retiree chapters. Please send information to Darkangelo@nycap.rr.com

Golf Course Recommendation

from Pam Thompson and Vi Laing

The College Golf Course at Delhi offers state-of-the art grasses and irrigation courtesy of the college's golf course management programs. It is an 18 hole course: the front nine is a classic 1960's design, the back nine, which features a natural design, opened in 1996. The holes are challenging and provide a good workout in the midst of lovely scenery. There is a driving range, a putting green, carts to rent, and a restaurant as the 19th hole. Lessons are available to young players at affordable rates. The club also accommodates leagues. Fees are competitive with area courses. Plan ahead in order to reserve time on the course. #607-746-4653



Catskills : Hiking the Balsam Lake Fire Tower

By **Jeanne Williams, RC 12 President**
retired elementary teacher, Mohawk Central School District



A climb to the top of Balsam Lake Mountain in the Catskills rewards the hiker with spectacular views and scenic beauty.

As a member of the Finger Lakes Trail Hiking Club, I completed this hike one October when the fall foliage was at peak. It should be noted that this hike is rated strenuous and should be undertaken only by experi-

enced hikers. The trail from the parking lot to the fire tower is about two miles; however, the steep vertical climb lasts for less than a mile, and the views from the top make the effort very worthwhile. Dress in layers as temperatures in the fall can vary greatly within a few hours, and wear hiking boots since there are some rocks and boulders. Hiking poles would also be helpful. Be sure to bring some water and snacks.

At the summit is the newly-restored Balsam Lake Fire Tower, which can be climbed. The views from the top of the tower are magnificent. No mountain stands taller to the west, and one can literally see as far as the eye can. At least three other fire towers are visible to the east. There are picnic tables at the summit which make a great place for a lunch, and there is also an outhouse.

The Balsam Lake Fire Tower is located in Ulster County. The nearest towns are Hardenburgh or Claryville. To get to the Balsam Lake parking area, take Beaver Kill Road to Turnwood Road. After exiting your

vehicle, begin the hike on the Dry Brook Ridge Trail. There is a register located at the beginning of the trail; it's a good idea to sign it. After about a mile, the hiker will come to a Y. Take the left branch which is the Balsam Lake Mountain Trail. This will go to the summit. A map can be purchased at the Finger Lakes Trail Hiking Club website, www.fingerlakestrail.org. The map that you would need is Sheet M32.

An option for extending this activity is to hike from Balsam Lake to Alder Lake, which is a little over eight miles. It is a good idea to leave one vehicle at the Balsam Lake Parking area and another car at Alder Lake.

For those interested in traveling on to Alder Lake: from the summit parking lot where the Balsam Lake Fire Tower is located, take the Mill Brook Ridge Trail to Alder Lake. Hike around the north side of the lake to the parking lot, which can be accessed by County Route 54, also known as the Alder Lake (Creek) Road.

Happy Running !!

by **Sherry Dixon**, Retired elementary teacher from the Mayfield School District.

A sure sign of spring is the annual e-mail I receive from the organizers of the Freihofer Run for Women. It is a national 5k championship that attracts many elite female runners and about 3000 women who run for fitness. This was my 27th year of uninterrupted participation. I began in the 1980's when it was a 10-kilometer event. Over the course of those years, I have transitioned from a runner who was competitive in my age group to a participant who runs to stay healthy and lean.

I have been a runner for thirty-two of my 63 years and have suffered very few injuries. I attribute this longevity to the fact that I have, for the most part, tried to use common sense and professional expertise in my training and practice. It is with that in mind that I can say that it is never too late to become an active runner/walker -- and that the benefits are overwhelmingly positive. People who exercise three to four times a week and include aerobic activities tend to maintain a healthy body weight, have fewer illness, and have a more positive outlook on life.

There are many tried and true ways of beginning a running/walking program. One of the newest is the *The Couch-to-5K Running Plan* developed by Active.com and Cool Running (www.coolrunning.com). This program outlines a very gradual walk/run plan that uses either time or distance to slowly condition the body. You can purchase an online version, but you don't need to, since the entire program is available online. All you

need to do is print it out and lace up your shoes.

That brings me to the other important component of a new running program, and that is to remain injury free. After you have checked with your doctor to see if you are able to pursue this kind of exercise program, your next stop should be a reputable running shoe store, where you need to be fitted for good quality running shoes. Once you have the shoes and the plan, your next stop should be your computer once again. I highly recommend that you spend some time looking at a program called Chi Running (www.chirunning.com). It is an outgrowth of *tai-chi* and emphasizes good running posture. If you google *chi running videos*, you can actually see short videos that give detailed information about posture and foot strike. Everyone has his or her own running/walking stride developed over a lifetime. Watching these videos will help avoid habits that might contribute to injury.

Happy running! Running and the athletic lifestyle it led to have made all the difference in my well being. I can't imagine a day without doing some kind of exercise. Just remember: it is never too late to start. Get off the couch -- and maybe I'll see you at one of the local running events.

<u>Save the Dates</u>	
March 8	A Night out in Schenectady Lion King
April 6-9	NYSUT Rep Assembly New York City
March 21 & 22	Committee of 100
May 9 & 10	Committee of 100
March 23 & 24	RC 12 General Meeting
May 26	RC 12 General Meeting Riverstone Manor Scotia

Retiree Council 12 Contribution Form
July 1, 2010 - June 30 2011

Name _____ County _____

Address _____ City _____ Year Retired _____

State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Original Union Local _____ You may share my email with AFT _____

My Assemblyman _____ My NY State Senator _____ My US Representative _____

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

\$15.00 yearly contribution requested send to John Mazur, 176 West Bush Rd. Gloversville, NY 12078 518-773-7180
Make check payable to NYSUT Retiree Council 12

NEWSLETTER OF THE RETIREE
COUNCIL 12— A NYSUT-NEA-AFT
AFFILIATE NOV. 2010



Happy 75th Birthday Social Security !!!

