

# THE OUTLOOK

Newsletter of the Retiree Council 12

A NYSUT-NEA-AFT Affiliate

February 2011

## From the President's Desk... *Jeanne Williams*

Public employees and retirees are increasingly being blamed for budget shortfalls in many state and local governments. Now, more than ever, it is important that we stay alert to news coverage and be sure that we are obtaining accurate information in order to refute myths and distortions of the truth. What are some issues on which we should especially focus?

**Defined pension plans** are being sharply attacked. Since fewer Americans are getting pensions, it may become increasingly difficult for those of us who have them to hold on to them.

**Social Security** has unfairly and incorrectly been blamed as a cause of our country's fiscal problems. We believe that Social Security should be strengthened, not cut.

**Public employees** are often perceived to be overcompensated. Jeffrey Keefe, a Rutgers University professor, published a paper that provided detailed evidence that public sector workers, on the whole, earn less than those in the private sector. Professor Keefe also found that public sector workers, as a group, tend to be more highly educated, work in more highly paid occupations, and tend to work moderately fewer hours than those in the private sector. Perhaps these are additional reasons for the anger that has been shown towards public employees.

A **tax cap plan** is almost certain to become a reality. We must focus on how we can shape the plan to avoid the most damaging provisions (e.g., thousands of layoffs, devastating cuts to programs, and the loss of vital public services).

**Attacks on Triborough** continue.

While we were in-service educators, we fought hard for the salaries, benefits, and working conditions that NYSUT members have today. It is imperative that we be vigilant and vote in all elections. We must let our elected officials know how we feel when we agree with them as well as when we disagree. We must continue to connect with our communities and with parents to show them that we are caring educators. We must continue to participate in positive community service projects (e.g., working at or donating to local food banks, Making Strides walks, the Heart Run, volunteering at local schools, etc.).

Many of our RC 12 members are already actively involved in their communities. Whenever possible, their activities need to be publicized. On January 10<sup>th</sup>, a group of RC 12 Board members went to the Capitol as part of a Save Our Schools rally. Nearly thirty-five RC 12 members have volunteered to participate in the NYSUT Committee of 100 meetings on February 15<sup>th</sup>, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, and May 10<sup>th</sup>. These volunteers will be involved in face-to-face meetings with our legislators.

During our March 24<sup>th</sup> general membership meeting, Mike Corn will be given RC 12's Award of Excellence. Mike is one of the teacher members of the NYSTRS. If his health permits, he would like to say a few words about the current political dangers to our retirement system. Please attend so that you can hear Mike's message, and more importantly, honor this deserving union leader who has given freely of himself to the profession and fought so hard for the benefits that we enjoy today.

### NYSUT RC 12 SPRING LUNCHEON MEETING

Thursday, March 24, 2011 Perthshire, 112 Perthshire Drive - Rte 30, Perth, NY

## Mike Corn will receive the RC 12 Award of Excellence and speak on the Political Dangers to the Retirement System

The daffodils on our tables will provide some bright spring color -- and an opportunity to contribute to the American Cancer Society.

**9:30 – 10:00 Registration with Coffee and Danish**

**10:00 – 11:15 General Membership Meeting**

**11:15 – 12:00 Guest Speaker—Mike Corn**

**12:00 – 1:00 Lunch**

1st Course: Soup and Salad

Entrée Choices: **Poultry:** Chicken Parmigiana with Ziti

**Beef:** Sliced Hot Roast Beet with potatoes and vegetable

**Fish:** Baked Haddock with potatoes and vegetable

**Vegetarian:** Upon request

**Cost to you: \$17.75**

Dessert: Brownie Sundae



### Directions

**From the East or West:** Take Rte 29 to the intersection with Rte 30 S at Vail Mills. Follow Rte. 30 South for 2.1 miles to Perthshire Drive. On the left you will see a sign/billboard for the Perthshire Restaurant (across the highway from the Nathan Littauer Primary Care Center).

**From the North:** Follow Rte. 30 South through Vail Mills and then continue following Rte. 30 South another 2.1 miles to Perthshire Drive. On the left you will see a sign/billboard for the Perthshire Restaurant (across the highway from the NL Primary Care Center).

**From the Thruway:** Take Exit 27 (Amsterdam). Merge right onto Rte. 30 North. Continue following Rte. 30 North through the traffic light at the "Perth 4 Corners". After the traffic light continue 3/10ths of a mile. On the right you will see a sign/billboard for the Perthshire Restaurant (across the highway from the NL Primary Care Center). Follow the driveway (Perthshire Drive) that leads to the restaurant.

Your Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_ # of reservations \_\_\_\_\_

Your Address \_\_\_\_\_

Your E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Your Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Your Menu Choice: (Please put the number of people in your party that are ordering each entrée.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Poultry \_\_\_\_\_ Beef \_\_\_\_\_ Fish \_\_\_\_\_ Vegetarian

Please make out a check for \$17.75 to **NYSUT RC-12** and mail it along with this reservation form to:

David Sammons 141 Gray Road, Mayfield, NY 12117 518-661-5637 **Reservation Deadline: Tuesday, March 15<sup>th</sup>**

# Thank You for Your Contributions!!

Listed below are the name of those who have made their \$ 15 contribution to NYSUT Retiree Council 12 for the 2010 – 2011 year. Our year runs from July 1 to June 30. Each asterisk indicates payment made for a future year. So a name with two asterisks means that member has paid for this year plus the 2011 – 2012 and 2012 – 2013 years. The contribution form can be found in this issue. Look over this list, and if you think I have made an error, please call me at 518-773-7180 or e-mail me at [jmazz@nycap.rr.com](mailto:jmazz@nycap.rr.com). Thanks for your continued financial support. John J. Mazur, Treasurer

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***Constitutional Amendment***



The 2011 NYSUT redistricting resulted in a decrease in geographic area assigned to RC12 and as a consequence, a loss of members represented by RC12. Therefore, the Board of Directors voted unanimously to propose a change in Article VII A of the RC 12 constitution. The present section reads as follows:

***The Board of Directors shall be composed of the duly elected officers, past presidents and seven (7) directors, whose geographical areas of assignment are to be determined by the Board of Directors. Each office of the Board of Directors shall have one vote in Board deliberations. No office and/or member shall have more than one vote.***

The Board of Directors proposes that this article be amended to read **six (6) directors** instead of seven (7) directors. The vote on this change will take place at the March general meeting.

**Get a Free Energy Audit. To find out what you can do to save money on heating your home. Go to NYSERDA website — [www.getenergysmart.org](http://www.getenergysmart.org) Search for Free Energy Audit.**

**Nomination/Election Notice  
for RC 12 Directors**

Anyone interested in being a Director for RC 12 should contact Nominations/Election Chair Karen Wojcik-Hess 518 899-7592 or 518 366-8141 or [karengo@nycap.rr.com](mailto:karengo@nycap.rr.com) for information and to request a nomination form. Six director positions are available. All NYSUT retirees in RC 12 are eligible to hold the position. **Deadline for return of completed nomination form is March 15, 2011.**

The director is a 2-year position on RC 12 Board, effective July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2013. It is expected the director will attend the 4-6 yearly board meetings and serve the NYSUT retirees for a designated area of RC 12. (Your expenses are covered for attending those Board meetings.) It is also expected you will attend the three general membership meetings at your own expense.

You will not only be doing a service for retirees but also socializing and working with other interesting and dedicated retirees. Through RC 12 and NYSUT, we strive to achieve a high quality of life for the retired educator. Your contribution of energy, time, and expertise will further our vision. Thank you in advance for any consideration you give this position.

The election will be held at the annual general membership meeting, May 26, 2011. No nominations will be accepted from the floor.

**Current Directors:** Elizabeth Batchelor, Joe Bernocco Jr., Alex Boschi, Margaret Dafeldecker, Royann Rogerson, David Sammons. All positions are

***Remembering John van Schaick***

*By Bill & Judy Schultz, Past Presidents of RC 12*

RC 12 sadly notes the January 5<sup>th</sup> passing of John van Schaick, our 2004 Community Service recipient. John recently celebrated his 90th birthday with his wife of almost 70 years, Sally, who was the RC 12 Community Service recipient in 2003.

John devoted virtually his entire life to community service. He was a consistent supporter of RC 12, the labor movement in general and the less fortunate in particular, and our state and our country. One letter of recommendation for his RC 12 Community Service Award stated, "When John ran for County Legislator in the late 70's, we met many of his former students. Their respect for John as a teacher and human being was made obvious by their stories of Mr. van Schaick and how much he had influenced their lives."

Our deepest sympathy to Sally and family as we say good-bye and thank you to John van Schaick, a man who made a difference.

Save the Dates

- April 6-9 NYSUT RA
- Mar 21-22 Committee of 100
- May 9 -10 Committee of 100
- Mar 24 RC 12 General Meeting  
Perthshire Restaurant - Perth
- May 26 RC 12 General Meeting  
Riverstone Manor - Scotia



CHALLENGES: THEN AND NOW

Commentary by S. David King, Co-2nd VP of RC 12

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century AD, corrupt and poorly trained leaders administered the western division of the Roman Empire, which included Rome. Eventually, Rome succumbed to pressures from enemies such as the Huns, the Vandals, and the Goths. Rome, which for centuries had been the source of a great light of culture from a once powerful empire, was no more.

During this time of fear, disruption, and great change, monasteries were established, staffed by individuals committed to the preservation of the cultural advances of Rome. These people collected, saved, and passed on the intellectual treasures of the past to others. They also incorporated the determination and spirit of the invaders. As a result, the West eventually emerged rejuvenated. Strong leaders appeared and learning was fostered. Literature, art, medicine, and architecture flourished. A greater Western Europe was born.

Today, we retired teachers are besieged by weak leaders, anti-intellectual forces, and the rapid dissemination of misinformation. Oh, for the good old days of the Huns! Maybe we should be like the monks of medieval Europe and collect, safeguard, and disseminate the grand accomplishments of teachers like ourselves who helped make Americans creative, spirited, innovative world leaders. Maybe we need to find renewed energy and some new positive approaches to confront today's "invaders" who threaten public education and the well being of retirees.

Perhaps our best response to ensure the preservation of our accomplishments and to muster our strength against our enemies is to go to [www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org) and [people-power@aflcio.org](mailto:people-power@aflcio.org), the 21<sup>st</sup> century equivalent of those ancient monasteries. If we all use these sites, in service teaching in the public schools and quality of life in retirement might someday emerge rejuvenated.

Check out our website <http://ny.aft.org/rc12>  
for the expanded version of the Outlook with color pictures

The Outlook

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Latham, NY 12210-2455 (518)783-7977  
1-800-287-3903

Social Committee notes

The July 29 trip to Ottawa is sold out.  
Contact [dharris5@nycap.rr.com](mailto:dharris5@nycap.rr.com) to be put  
on the waiting list.

Be ready for a survey of trips you would  
like to take. Anyone for Denver? Chicago?

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

