

THE OUTLOOK

Newsletter of the Retiree Council 12

A NYSUT-NEA-AFT Affiliate

August September 2016

Paul Cole, the 2016 RC 12 Award of Excellence Honoree

by Phyllis VanSteenburgh OESJ Retiree

P. Van: *What was your start in the education field?*

P. Cole: "In college I worked for a BA in Political Science from Marquette University and a Masters of Science degree from Canisius College. Back in 1961, I started to teach social studies, and continued for 23 years at Lewiston-Porter Senior High School in Youngstown, New York and also I served as president of the Lewiston-Porter United Teachers."

P. Van: *What made you a "force in the labor movement"?*

P. Cole: "When I started my career it was clear that if I was to raise my family and stay in teaching, economic conditions would have to improve." And thus I decided early on to get involved in my local union, first as president and then further down the line as a proponent of worker rights and a key player in the creation of New York State United Teachers. **

P. Van: *How was the New York State United Teachers created?*

P. Cole: "It was evident that New York teachers would be stronger as one organization. I made the motion that AFT-affiliated United Teachers of New York and the National Education Association-affiliated New York State Teachers Association be merged at the 1971 NYSTA convention. That merger created the present-day NYSUT."**

P. Van: *What other positions have you had that would be of interest to us?*

P. Cole: "I have served as Assistant to the President of the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) and Political Director of the New York State AFL-CIO prior to my election as Secretary-Treasurer of the State Federation in 1984. My last vote as an AFT vice president was moving to unify NYSUT and NEA/NY. *It was very satisfying. We had come full circle.*" **

P. Van: *What have you done in the last few years?*

P. Cole: I founded the American Labor Studies Center, which provides resources for teaching about the U.S. labor movement. "He has always believed the common worker wasn't portrayed enough in our national history — the center is an outgrowth of decades of labor history efforts," said Gary Duesberg, former state AFL-CIO education director and a retired NYSUT Board member. **

P. Van: *What is one project that the American Labor Studies Center is working on now?*

P. Cole: The ALSC purchased the Mullany home in 2002 with state funds, along with the property next door — a boarded-up business that was torn down to make way for a future Kate Mullany Park. The park will be filled with plants common in the 1870s and will be home to a memorial to honor trade union women pioneers. She represents the courage of people in the mid-1800s who went out and risked a lot to organize a union," said Cole. (Source NYSUT United Liza Frenette 4/22/16)

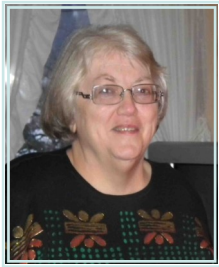
In accordance with the wishes of Paul Cole, our 2016 Award of Excellence honoree, RC 12 made a donation to the American Labor Studies Center.

** Source "NY Teacher" Kara E. Smith 3/30/06

(This article was created in the form of an interview.)



Jeanne W. Bennett and Sandra Bliss present the Award of Excellence to Paul Cole at the June meeting of RC 12.



From the President's Desk... Sandra Bliss

This fall the primary for state legislative offices will be held on Tuesday, **Sept. 13**. The General election for US President and Vice- President, Senate and Congress and NYS legislators will be Tuesday, **Nov. 8**. Put those dates in your NYSUT calendar and Smartphone.

Pledge to vote by going to nysut.org and completing the form. Research indicates people who make a signed pledge to vote in elections remember to get out and vote. Exercise your right to participate in the selection of our republic's representatives to keep our democracy strong.

Be an educated voter. NYSUT makes endorsements based on candidates' positions on education and labor issues adopted at our Representative Assembly (RA Convention). Delegates from each NYSUT local can attend the convention to create the NYSUT policies. Before elections every two years, NYSUT holds an Endorsement Conference where each NYSUT local President can attend, with expenses paid by VOTE/Cope funds, to give input and recommendations to the NYSUT Political Action Committee (PAC). The final decisions are made by the NYSUT Board of Directors at a meeting held following the conference.

When you vote, you must consider all the issues important to you. Sometimes people do not vote in their best interests because they fail to take into account all the positions a potential candidate advocates. Do you know whether the candidate will support expanding Social Security or vote to raise the age for eligibility? What is the candidate's position on making Social Security investments subject to the ups and downs of the Wall Street market? What about Medicare and Medicaid? Knowledge is power! Know before you vote so you do not suffer later. As I stated, you make your decisions based on many issues. NYSUT educates you as to the candidate your elected NYSUT locals believe are best on education and labor issues.

Below is a list of RC 12 NYSUT and AFT/NEA endorsements.

- US President/Vice-President:** Hillary Clinton (D) and Tim Kaine (D) (AFT/NEA)
- US Senate:** Chuck Schumer (D)
- US House of Representatives:** Zephyr Teachout (D), Paul Tonko (D) Elise Stefani (R)
- NYS Senate:** Jim Tedisco (R*) and James Seward (R*)
- NYS Assembly:** Phil Steck (D), Angelo Santabarbara (D), Marc Butler (R*), **Candidates with a primary September 13*
Anthony Brindisi (D) and Bill Magee (D)

The Outlook

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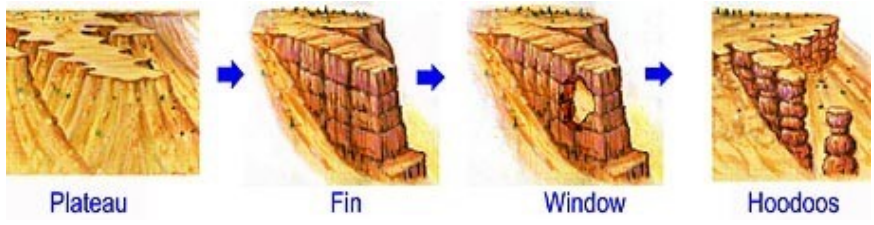
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Hoodoos Worth Seeing Now!
By Phyllis VanSteenburgh, OE Teacher Retiree

“Water, ice, and gravity are the natural forces that formed the geological "hoodoos" that make Bryce Canyon, Utah unique.” (2016 NileGuide.com) This just sums up a little bit of the serene magic and mystery of these features of weathered red/orange spires of stone.

“These hoodoos won't be here forever. Erosion occurs at a rate of about two to four feet per hundred years. Though the loss of these hoodoos will come long after our lifetime, this notion can make one feel an urgency to see a geological element that, in the long run, is a fleeting one.” (What on Earth Is a Hoodoo? posted by Sky Barsch Gleaner 10/10/12, 2016 Country Walkers site)

How did these hoodoos start forming? They are formed from subtraction instead of addition. The National Park Service does an excellent job explaining the process with pictures, too: “Hoodoos, which range from five to 150 feet tall, all start their geological life in the same womb—one giant plateau. Individual hoodoos are carved out over eons through the chemical weathering process, as shown in the National Park Service illustration above. These unique structures are formed over centuries as grain after grain of sediment is whisked away by water and wind. When rain water combines with carbon dioxide, carbonic acid is produced, which further erodes the limestone.”

Now you know how they were formed, making it much more interesting to see them in person. Bryce Canyon, Utah is just over a 4 hour drive from Las Vegas or Salt Lake City. A direct flight from Albany to Las Vegas in late April is probably the best way to visit the hoodoos at Bryce Canyon. That brings me to an interesting fact in that “Bryce Canyon isn't actually a canyon. It's a natural amphitheater.” (2016 NileGuide.com) So do make a plan to visit the hoodoos really SOON!

Consider Joining the RC 12 Committee of 100!!

By Carolyn Darkangelo, retiree from Mayfield TA

I volunteered to join the Committee of 100 team from RC 12 in 2002, my first year of retirement. I was extremely grateful to NYSUT and VOTE COPE for their efforts to help members and retirees. I joined the retirement system as a new teacher in 1969 as a Tier 1 member. After taking time out to take care of my two daughters, I returned to teaching in 1979 and found I was now in Tier 3. Needless to say, my retirement benefits had been significantly reduced. There were many NYSUT members in the same situation. Through successful lobbying efforts on our behalf, NY State enacted a law to reinstate members to their original tier. This made a huge difference in the size of my pension and my retirement date. It also made me very interested in the lobbying process.



RC 12 is in a unique position to provide more volunteers for lobbying due to our proximity to the Capital. There is always a need for new retirees to join the process, because they understand what has been happening in the school systems before they retire. Rallies held during the day, press conferences held by legislators in the Albany region, coalition partner meetings like the AQE and Labor-Religion Coalition, and Fight for \$15 events are other examples of activities you can choose to participate in.

You might ask, "What is it like to be a member of Committee of 100?" The time commitment is about 1 or 2 days a year. In March, there is a day for teachers to meet with their legislators at the Capital. Breakfast and lunch buffets are provided at the Desmond in Colonie and volunteers are reimbursed for travel expenses. So, the only cost to you is time and effort. Buses are provided for transport to and from the Capital. Therefore, Albany parking is not an issue. There are also some in district lobby days later in the spring, which are closer to home, because you would be lobbying your own representative in his/her district.

For my first few trips to the Capital I just observed and listened. Each group lobbying a legislator has a few spokespersons to explain the education, health, retirement, and budget issues that are important to members of NYSUT. As years went by, I felt more confident in my role. Recently, I spoke to the issues of the effect of the tax cap and the Gap Elimination money taken from the districts. I had some specific examples of the terrible effects they were having on students, since my granddaughter was adversely affected by the staff cuts they caused.

Through the last 14 years there have been many crazy changes happening in state government. Governor Pataki retired, Governor Spitzer was elected in 2007 and resigned in March 2008, Governor Patterson took over, Governor Cuomo was elected and became a friend of charter schools, some Democratic senators joined with the Republicans to keep them in leadership in the senate, and legislative leaders were indicted and convicted. Many years were frustrating for both the legislators and the NYSUT members visiting them.

This year was different. The legislators seemed to feel they had more say in the process and I felt they were listening more carefully. I was especially impressed with Assemblymen Butler, Santabarbara, and Steck. Their passionate support of education and teachers is amazing. They all spoke movingly on the importance of public schools.

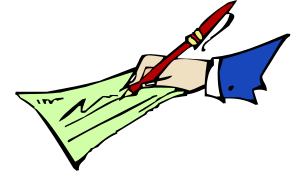
So, why should you participate? You could be part of the process of government rather than sitting on the sidelines. Convincing legislators to push for more funding for education will help your former colleagues and students. Working to protect retiree benefits helps you and your fellow retirees. It is a way to participate in RC 12 activities. At a RC 12 meeting co-president Jeanne W. Bennett reminded me she met her husband while participating in the Committee of 100.

I hope I have convinced you to consider becoming a member of our Committee of 100 volunteers or participating in other lobbying events, contact S. David King is the 2nd vice president in charge of legislative issues (518) 725-0848 or discuss it with any member of the board. (see page 2)



Toni Cortese, founding vice-president of NYSUT and AFT secretary-treasurer at the RC 12 meeting in June.

Retiree Council 12 Contribution Form July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017



Name _____ County _____

Address _____ City _____ Year Retired _____

State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____ Email _____

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

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

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

**\$15.00 yearly contribution requested. Send to
Dolores Talmadge 206 Main Street, Fort Plain, NY 13339 Make check payable to NYSUT Retiree Council 12.
Any questions, please call (518) 993-2854 .**

Whale Watching in the St. Lawrence River ?

By Carolyn Darkangelo retiree of Mayfield TA

Last summer, our family decided to take a short vacation to Quebec. As we investigated the area on the Internet, we were surprised to find whale watching. The Saguenay – St Lawrence Marine Park is 120 miles north of Quebec. This is an area where a deep fiord and a river meet.

You can watch whales from large boats or zodiacs for more adventure and not have to ride for hours. We saw harbor seals, gray seals, beluga whales, Minke whales, and Finback whales. There are even several parks where you can spot whales from the shore. At Cape de Bon Desir Interpretation Center, we saw a Minke whale. Near the Tadoussac ferry we watched several female Beluga whales with their offspring. In August, Blue whales have been spotted.

The parks along the fiord and river also offer fishing, kayaking, hiking, bird watching and photographic viewpoints. There are reasonably priced accommodations at local ski areas in the summer.



For more information go to <http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/amnc-nmca/qc/saguenay/index.aspx>

Kate Mullaney House

Kate Mullaney, an Irish immigrant, began working in Troy, NY in the collar industry. She was only 25 years old when she led a strike in 1864 that gained the collar workers a 25% increase. She was inducted into the National Women’s Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls. Kate’s house in Troy was designated a National Historical Site and affiliated with the National Park System.

The American Labor Studies Center is working to restore and furnish the house. Consider making a donation to this important part of labor history. Go to www.katemullaneynhs.org and click on the DONATE button.

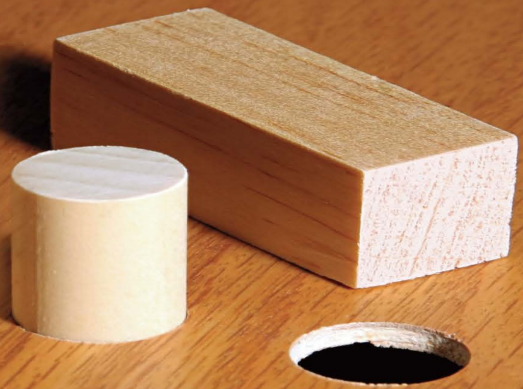
Source American Labor Studies Center



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Learn more by calling **800-626-8101**
or visiting memberbenefits.nysut.org.



NYSUT RC 12 Fall General Membership Luncheon Meeting

Wednesday, September 21, 2016 Otesaga Resort Hotel, Cooperstown, NY



PLEDGE TO VOTE EVERY NOVEMBER!

WHAT IS AT STAKE IF A CONSTITUTION CONVENTION IS HELD IN NEW YORK?

Peter Savage – NYSUT Senior Legislative Rep

Ian Phillips and Randy Gunther – NYSUT Regional Political Organizers

AGENDA

9:30 – 10:00 am	Registration - The Rotunda plus coffee and tea - Ballroom
10:00 – 11:00 am	General Membership Meeting, Ballroom
11:10 - Noon	Keynote speakers
12:15 – 1:30 pm	Otesaga Grand Buffet Luncheon, Ballroom
2:00 pm	Optional Tour of Hyde Hall - \$9.00 additional cost Luncheon Cost: 26.00

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Email _____ Telephone _____

Please make your check out to NYSUT RC 12 and return by September 16, 2014, to
Sandra Bliss, 2191 Cty Hwy 33, Cooperstown, NY 13326-4101 phone: 315-725-0706 nysutrc12@gmail.com

*RC #12 members: Tour an American Masterpiece. HYDE HALL- a historic fifty-room mansion overlooking scenic Otsego Lake in Cooperstown, NY. Hyde Hall, built between 1817-1834, was home to five generations of the Clarke family. **Special price for RC 12: \$9.00** Ticket and map (drive yourself) to the site will be available at the registration desk before the general membership meeting. Sign up for the tour when registering for the meeting and include the cost of the ticket with the meeting registration.*

_____ enclosed for the Hyde Hall Ticket

Save the Date– 2016

Aug. 17	RC 12 Trip to Hyde Park
Sept. 17	Primary Election
Sept. 21	RC 12 fall meeting at the Otesaga
Oct. 4	RC 12 Essex , CT steam train and boat ride
Nov. 8	Election Day

April 27-30, 2017 Surprise Trip - TBA at the Otesaga meeting in the fall.