

THE OUTLOOK

Newsletter of the Retiree Council 12

A NYSUT-NEA-AFT Affiliate November 2019

Sandy Bliss, 2019 Award of Excellence Honoree

by Phyllis VanSteenburgh, Oppenheim-Ephratah Teacher Retiree

“Sail beyond the horizon; fly higher than you ever thought possible; magnify your existence by helping others...be true to what you value most; shine your light on the world; and be the person you were born to be.” Blake Beattie

I do love quotes so I found one that seems to embody all that Sandy Bliss was. She did leave us in August of 2018, but her legacy lives on, and the Award of Excellence recognizes her exemplary leadership and her dedicated services to members of NYSUT Retiree 12. For those who do not know, Sandy became RC 12's vice-president in 2010, the year after she retired. Two years later, she was elected as our co-president with Jeanne Williams Bennett and served until her death in August of 2018.

As Jeanne Williams Bennett pointed out, the Award of Excellence is awarded to people because “they might not do things specifically for RC 12 retirees alone, but for inservice educators and retirees in general.” That is why, in Jeanne's speech about Sandy receiving this award, Jeanne included her participation in NYSUT's Solidarity Project when Sandy made two trips to Poland to help Polish teachers learn about democracy. “Those of you who participated in NYSUT rallies and marches often have chanted, ‘This is what democracy looks like!’ and whenever I hear that chant, I think that this is what Sandy and her fellow teachers were sharing with the Poles.”

“Sandy was at the very first convention that merged the New York State Teachers Association or NYSTA with the United Federation of Teachers or UFT to form NYSUT (New York State United Teachers). She became actively involved in this new union and ended up being on the NYSUT Board of Directors for 24 years.” In addition to teaching math for 40 years at the Frankfort Schuyler School District, Sandy always served in an elected or appointed leadership position from VOTE/COPE coordinator to union president. “In fact, she continued to serve on the negotiations team throughout her entire retirement. Sandy was also instrumental in forming a retiree chapter for Frankfort Schuyler, and as you may have guessed, became its first president.”

“As an articulate spokesperson, Sandy participated in the original Committee of 100 (which now numbers over 700) as ‘she believed that political action is central to union work and that coalition building is an important facet of political action.’ Sandy became heavily involved as a delegate to the NYSUT Representative Assembly, as a State Democratic Convention delegate, and she helped build the Central NY Labor Council into a more meaningful and effective organization. She was given the Samuel Gompers Award for her efforts.

When she retired, Sandy moved back to Cooperstown where she was born. “For many years, she was very involved with the local food pantry. I (Jeanne) remember Sandy working on and helping solve problems such as aiding new mothers with the purchase of diapers or partnering with local farmer markets so that food pantry recipients could obtain fresh fruits and vegetables.”

Also, Sandy became involved with the Otsego County Senior Citizen Advisory Board and the Office of Aging, always advocating for what was best for retirees. I hope you can “see how Sandy's efforts were widespread and affected a vast number of people.” Thanks, Sandy. Just one more quote, “Success isn't what you accomplish in your life, it's about what you **inspire** others to do.”

A donation on behalf of Sandy Bliss, 2019 Award of Excellence honoree, was chosen by her two sisters, Amy and Laura, and it will be split three ways: Cooperstown Food Pantry, the Catskill Area Hospice and the Kate Mullany House.



Jeanne Williams Bennett and Sandra Bliss at the RC 12 June meeting in 2016

Save the Date

- March 5, 2020** RC 12 general membership meeting at Winner's Circle in Fonda
- April 15, 2020** RC 12 Trip to see “AIN'T TOO PROUD” in NYC
- May 13, 2020** RC 12 annual meeting, election, and NYSUT Conference at the Glen Sanders in Scotia
- June 14-20, 2020** RC 12 trip to Mackinac Island, Michigan *
- Sep.25-Oct. 5, 2020** RC 12 trip to South Dakota *

*Trip is wait listed. Call to add your name to the list.
(see website)

Always verify dates with the trip coordinator.

RC 12 Members at the StateWide Senior Action Convention in October



Kathy Lyman and Sue Penny



**Mary Pritchard and NYS Senator
Rachel May, chair of the NYS
Senate Aging Committee**

Photographer - Jeanne Williams Bennett

Letter from the RC 12 President

The holiday season is fast approaching! For Hallmark movie and Lifetime movie fans, the Christmas movie marathon has begun. The massive number of advertisements, nonstop Christmas music stations and the delectable temptations that could lead to a few extra pounds are all around us.

This time of year is a wonderful time to share with family and friends. As you are joining in festive activities, I would encourage you to reach out to those you know who may not have friends and family nearby. Invite others to join your fun. If you find that you have free time because loved ones are not nearby, consider donating time to a local organization such as a food pantry, hospital, church organization or local child care center, or consider reaching out to help a neighbor. Sometimes, babysitting for a stressed-out parent, looking after someone's pet while they go for a visit, or baking a batch of cupcakes or cookies to share with friends and neighbors is a very appreciated gift. When buying gifts, I would encourage you to think of gifts that are union made, made in the USA or Fair Trade items. Reading the labels helps to ensure that people are paid a decent wage and receive benefits to improve their quality of life.

I would also encourage you to consider making a donation in honor of someone. There are many wonderful charities that do amazing work. Please be sure to check out your charity of choice and make sure it is worthy of your donation. There are some verified sites that make it easy to do:

Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance <https://www.give.org>

Charity Navigator Your guide to Intelligent Giving <https://www.charitynavigator.org>

Charity Watch - America's most independent, assertive charity watchdog <https://www.charitywatch.org/>

If you find yourself online, consider taking a few minutes to "Click to Give". These are sites where a sponsor pays the charity for everyone who visits and clicks. Visit <http://thenonprofits.com/> to find more than 70 sites where you can donate for free just by clicking.

If you find that you are depressed by this time of year, I would encourage you to reach out for help. Many people of all ages have a hard time with the holiday season. Reach out for help from a relative, friend, neighbor, EAP program through your insurance, family physician or through NYSUT's social services department. ((800) 342-9810, Ext. 6206, or email at socsvcs@nysutmail.org)

I send my best wishes to you for lots of Peace and Happiness throughout the upcoming season!

Stacey Caruso Sharpe, RC 12 President

HELP!

Retiree Council #12 needs a 2nd Vice-President to start a new term on July 1, 2020.

*The 2nd Vice- President is our Legislative Chair.
Duties/responsibilities include....*

1. Let our legislators know what issues are important to us through Committee of 100 when we visit them in Albany every March.
2. Write or email our legislators that we want them to support items that are important to all retired teachers.
3. Organize all to rally for tax caps or that Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security benefits should be strengthened and not cut.

If you are interested in running for this position contact Phyllis VanSteenburgh, Nomination/Election Chairperson.

(next election is May 2020),

pvanst123@gmail.com 518-725-4172.



The Outlook

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Darkangelo @nycap.rr.com

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

NYSUT Retiree Services Consultant:
Jennifer Shaad-Derby (518) 783-7977

RC 12 Trip to Amishland

AIN'T TOO PROUD

- **The Life and Times of the Temptations**

NYSUT RC 12 TRIP – Wednesday, April 15, 2020

8:00 am Amsterdam Pick-up — Our Lady of Mt Carmel Church, 79 St. John St.
 8:20 am Schenectady Pick-up — Home Depot, Watt St at Crosstown
 12:00 (approx) Arrive Theater District
2:00 pm **AIN'T TOO PROUD at the** Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th Street (2 hrs 30 min)
 5:00 – 6:45 Dinner on your own.
 7:00 pm Leave Theater District.
 10:30 (approx) Schenectady Drop-off
 10:50 Amsterdam Drop-off



NYSUT RC 12 has reserved 35 tickets for the April 15, 2020 matinee. The cost of an orchestra center ticket is \$160. The cost for transportation, etc. will be determined when a full count of participants is made. That cost will be between \$40 and \$60. Lunch and Dinner on your own. A restaurant list will be provided.

If interested, ticket payment must be made by December 20, 2019.

NYSUT RC 12 Trip to see “AIN'T TOO PROUD” in NYC on Wednesday, April 15, 2020

Name(s) _____ **Phone #** _____

Address _____ **Cell#** _____

_____ **Email** _____

Number of tickets @ \$160 each: _____ **Total enclosed:** _____

Pick-up site: Circle one. **Amsterdam** or **Schenectady**
 Send this form by **December 20, 2019** to: (Check payable to NYSUT RC 12)
 Kathlene Lyman, 254 Riverside Place, Alplaus, NY 12008

Thank You for Your Contributions !!!

Listed below are those who have made their \$15 contribution to NYSUT Retiree Council 12 by October 11 for the 2019 - 2020 year. Those who make their donation in the upcoming weeks will have their names listed in future issues of THE OUTLOOK. If you think I have made an error, please call me at (518) 993-2854 or e-mail me at doloresltalmadge@gmail.com. Thanks for your financial support. Dolores Talmadge, Treasurer *Paid through 2020-2021 +Paid Beyond 2021

Continued on page 4

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Retiree Council 12 Contribution Form July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020

Name _____ County _____

Address _____ City _____ Year Retired _____

State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____ Email _____

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

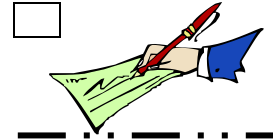
My Assemblyman _____ My NY State Senator _____ My US Representative _____

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.



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November 2019

RC 12 Outlook

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This money-saving benefit is available exclusively to NYSUT members and features the nation's largest private discount network.

These deals can be accessed either online or from the palm of your hand through Access Development's MB Deals mobile app. Visit mbdeals.enjoymydeals.com to learn more.

Register your account on the Access website with your NYSUT ID number using the URL above. You will then be able to enjoy exclusive access to savings of up to 50% on shopping, restaurants, movie tickets & entertainment, travel, oil changes & vehicle maintenance, and much more.

Have a favorite local business?

One of the best features of the MB Discounts & Deals program is the ability to recommend your favorite local business, restaurant, coffee shop, etc. to potentially join the Access Development network.

Register your account on the Access website by March 31, 2020 to be eligible to win prizes -- visit the Member Benefits website for more information!

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

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

Nov./Dec. '19

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