

THE OUTLOOK

Newsletter of the Retiree Council 12

A NYSUT-NEA-AFT Affiliate April 2021



NYSUT Retiree Council 12



Stacey Caruso-Sharpe, President's Message

As I write this the state finally has a budget. There is good news in the education funding. For the first time in many years the state is fully funding foundation aid and over the next three years will pay back money that is owed to districts. The governor's proposal to eliminate 11 different aid lines and combine them into a block grant, which would have been disastrous for many districts, was not implemented. There is money to help fund full day K and pre-K programs as well as funding for BOCES and other programs that the governor proposed eliminating. The state is committed to helping fund community colleges through the pandemic caused enrollment fluctuations as well as help for our public colleges and universities to close the TAP gap.

While we are encouraged for the future of public education with this budget NYSUT president, Andy Pallotta, stated, "That isn't to say there is not more work to be done, though. We had advocated for a statewide early retirement incentive for all public school employees. Unfortunately, that has fallen out of the budget. And after a decade of relatively flat operational funding for public universities, colleges and hospitals, they needed significant new investments in operating support in this budget that have not come to fruition."

"To ensure there is funding for these critical needs in the years ahead, we're finally going to see some economic justice as New York asks the ultrawealthy to pay their fair share toward our public services. A progressive tax policy, combined with significant federal resources delivered by the federal government, starts our pandemic recovery on the right foot. " Thank you to those of you who reached out to legislators to help advocate for these much-needed funds!

Those of you who contribute to VOTE/COPE also deserve a round of applause!!! Our VOTE/COPE contributions help with getting local, state and federal representatives elected who support and advocate for our issues including support of public education, health care, support for unions and support of retiree issues. If you currently do not participate in VOTE/COPE, please consider doing so. If you currently contribute, Thank You!!!! Please consider increasing your contribution. Increasing by \$1, \$2, or \$3 or more a month goes a long way toward protecting our rights and benefits. Consider it an investment in your future!!! <https://www.nysut.org/my-nysut/reference/toolkit/member/political-action/vote-cope>

At a recent NYSUT Retiree Advisory Committee meeting while discussing the issue of how we can better communicate with the members of our RC, it became apparent that many people are still not clear on where RC 12 fits into the NYSUT structure. When we were in-service members, we belonged to our local teacher or SRP association. Through our locals we were members of NYSUT as our state affiliate. The NYSUT Board of Directors is comprised of elected representatives from different regions of the state. The regions are divided into Election Districts or EDs. (We were ED 12 members when we were in-service.) Through NYSUT we are members of the national unions AFT and NEA.

In retirement your local may or may not have an official retiree chapter that is recognized in the local constitution. If your local does have a chapter, you must maintain membership in it to be recognized by NYSUT. Whether or not you have a local chapter, you become a member of NYSUT Retiree Council 12 (RC12) upon retirement. NYSUT Retirees have representation on the NYSUT Board of Directors. You still have access to NYSUT member benefits and other programs, such as NYSUT social services programs and Legal Program. Nationally you are a retiree member of AFT and NEA as both organizations recognize and value retirees. There are many other regional teacher or SRP retiree groups that do wonderful activities but know that they are not the official NYSUT recognized group. Only RC 12 is recognized in the NYSUT constitution within our region.

There are many benefits in being active in your union while retired. The most popular is the social aspect through luncheons, dinners, and many wonderful trips. There are many opportunities to contribute to your community. Opportunities to participate in food banks, book give aways, mentoring, phone banking and other community programs that may be sponsored by your local or through NYSUT. (Studies show that volunteering with community opportunities help give you a feeling of purpose and are a real mood booster!). Maintaining union involvement also gives you the ability to access many NYSUT member benefits and services. NYSUT is currently running many different zoom webinars that are open to all NYSUT retirees. Health and wellness, how to use different new technologies and cooking are just a few options. I hope that many of you are taking advantage of these. To learn more about these programs visit www.NYSUT.org/retirees

If you know of a retiree who is not receiving the RC 12 newsletter, please encourage them to contact us by emailing to RC12.NYSUT@gmail.com. NYSUT is currently reaching out to retirees through a new initiative called "Union For Life"! If you receive a call or email asking for your email and other contact information, I encourage you to respond so that you will be kept updated with the latest NYSUT information. As we learn more about the program, I will share it with you!

Enjoy the spring weather and be well! As more people become vaccinated we are getting closer to returning to "normalcy" but please remember to adhere to safety protocols when out in public or meeting in a large group.
In solidarity,

In solidarity,

Stacey

RC 12 Nominees – Election to be held on May 12 at 10:15 AM

Term of Position: July 1, 2021– June 30, 2023

The election will be at the NYSUT RC 12 general membership zoom meeting on May 12, 2021 at 10:15 AM. To vote, you must be a RC 12 member and present at the time of election.

Retiree Council 12 Director Candidates Statements

Theresa Kovian I retired in June 2018. While employed by the Gloversville Enlarged School District as a speech pathologist, I was involved with the Gloversville Teachers' Association as a building representative for three years. In 2007, I was a member of the committee to update the Constitution & Bylaws. During the 2017-2018 school year, I volunteered as the chair for the Constitution & Bylaws Committee. I am interested in volunteering for an RC 12 board member position so that I am part of a team in discussing and resolving issues and concerns for our membership.

Susan Proctor Having served as vice president of the Schenectady SRP group, I feel I am well qualified to express the concerns of the SRP's serving our school districts. Also, having been a member of the SRP contract negotiating committee and representative to the RA's, I understand even more the important role SRP's play in our schools.

Vickie McGowan Horan I was building director, vice president for grievance, first vice president, and a member of the negotiation committee for the Schenectady Federation of Teachers, and I have been an RC 12 board member for three years. Having been actively involved in my union as an in-service teacher, I felt compelled to stay involved as a retiree. I feel it is very important to be informed of changes and challenges in public education and to continue to support those involved in a career I loved!

Margaret Dafeldecker Having served as president, vice president, chair/member of negotiations, and member of the grievance committee for the Middleburgh CSTA and an RC 12 board member since 2012, I want to continue the important work of RC12. The efforts for the improvement of public education and retired teachers have to be maintained.

Maggie Bouck It would be a pleasure to serve as a member of the RC 12 Executive Board. Having spent nearly 20 years as president of the Cherry Valley-Springfield Teachers' Association, I believe my vast experience and my leadership/communication skills will be an asset to the organization. I am eager to engage more of our retirees with hopes of building a strong, vital base that can advocate for the benefits and rights of our retired professionals. Unionism should not end when you turn in your retirement letter. We can be a powerful social and political group."

The Outlook

President Stacey Caruso-Sharpe (518) 496-2769
1st VP Kathlene Lyman (518) 399-0256
2nd VP Bev Alves
Treasurer Dolores Talmadge (518) 993-2854
Secretary Cathy Picciocca (518) 922-6025

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Past Presidents: Karen Wojcik-Hess Judy Schultz Don Griffith Bill Schultz Jim Marquit

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 Margaret Dafeldecker - Schoharie & Otsego
 Theresa Kovian - Fulton & Montgomery
 Vickie McGowan-Horan - Schenectady
 SRP Director—Susan Proctor

Newsletter Staff Phyllis VanSteenburgh, Carolyn Darkangelo, Jeanne W. Bennett, Theresa Kovian

Webmaster - Carolyn Darkangelo
Assistant Webmaster - Theresa Kovian
 Darkangelo @nycap.rr.com

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

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

Focusing on the Positives

By Carolyn Darkangelo, retiree Mayfield TA

We can see the light at the end of the tunnel for the pandemic. It has been a very tough year, but I would like to highlight that some good was possible. We certainly learned not to take anything for granted. I will relish my time with family when we host Easter dinner. (We have all had our vaccinations.)

Eight months ago, we started to Zoom with family once per week. I have not seen some of the family members in person for over a decade. Our Sunday morning Zoom included people from Florida, Kentucky, Arkansas, New York, and Stuttgart, Germany. Everyone became so comfortable that it seemed like we were together laughing and telling stories over a meal. We watched my grandniece creating dinner in Stuttgart, and we saw her boys skateboarding and playing basketball. Our nephew wears a different crazy shirt (his wife buys them for him) each time we meet. An example would be "People, not a fan!" Cats and dogs stop for a visit occasionally. My sister-in-law looks forward to our time together so she can see her great grandsons. We all shared our trials in search of vaccinations. My sister-in-law in Florida was getting up at 5:30 in the morning for several weeks to schedule her shot. We all cheered when she finally succeeded and when my nephew finally qualified in New York. All in all, technology has helped us stay connected and become closer over the past year.

Our family is all about volleyball. After the fall season was postponed for my granddaughter's team in Scotia, we were all disappointed. The sport is allowed this spring with Covid restrictions. I miss seeing the games in person, but the schools are live streaming them on YouTube. Now, her grandparents in Maine and her aunt in Florida can also watch the games.

Last March, my husband and I decided to set a goal to walk an average of 3 miles each day to try to keep as healthy as possible. My iPhone says we averaged 4 miles per day and became reacquainted with many of our neighbors. We noticed nature's ebb and flow throughout the year.

If you think of some positive experiences that you would like to share, please email them to me at darkangelo@nycap.rr.com. I will include them in our next issue .

Monoclonal Antibodies for High-Risk Patients

If you've tested positive for COVID-19, one of the first questions you may have is *what can I do to reduce the risk of getting sicker?* The good news is there are treatments that may reduce that risk. Depending on your age, health history, and how long you have had symptoms of COVID-19, you may qualify for a promising form of treatment for the disease. It is called monoclonal antibody (mAb) treatment.

Some early evidence suggests that mAb treatment can reduce the amount of the SARS-CoV-2 virus (the virus that causes COVID-19) in a person's system. This amount is known as viral load. Having a lower viral load means you may have milder symptoms thereby decreasing the likelihood of you being hospitalized.

mAb treatment may help people who:

- Have a positive COVID-19 test, and had symptoms for 10 days or less, and
- Are at high risk of getting more serious symptoms.
- 65 years of age or older
- 55 years or older with: Heart Disease, high blood pressure, COPD, chronic respiratory disease, including asthma.

For more information, go to: <https://combatcovid.hhs.gov/i-have-covid-19-now/monoclonal-antibodies-high-risk-covid-19-positive-patients>

Spring ? In Upstate New York



Tax Information -- New Deduction for Charitable Donations

For the **2021 calendar year**, an individual who does not itemize their deductions on their individual income tax return **may deduct monetary contributions of up to \$600** (for married filing joint filers, or \$300 for single filers) made to 501(c)3 charitable organizations. This is an increase to the maximum amount allowed for 2020 monetary charitable contributions of \$300. This will be an "above the line" deduction in the main body of the individual tax form and will not require the taxpayer to itemize using Schedule A.

Thank You for Your Contributions !!!

*Many people have called concerned that your name did not appear in the last issue. Please refer to the first issue of *The Outlook*, August 2020, issue. Your name appeared in that issue because you made your contribution for this fiscal year prior to July 1, 2021 or are paid ahead multiple years. THIS issue may have your name listed again because you sent in a second contribution and are now paid ahead 1 or more years.*

These are the contributions of record received between **February 1, 2021 and March 31, 2021** from members for the July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 fiscal year. Your name will appear only once in *The Outlook*. **Please** keep track of your contribution as to avoid multiple payments within one year.

Adamczyk, Linda*	Cuttica, Paul	Hanna, Maureen	Nickson, Kathleen+	Spiry, Lorraine+
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Alexander, Albert+	Dafeldecker, Margaret*	Henze, Sarajane	Orapello, Joyce	Sweet, Serena F.
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Atkins, Carol	Darkangelo, Carolyn+	Hotaling, Pam+	Otten, Sandra*	Treiber, Rochelle
Bartman, Nora	D'Arpino, Dorothy	Ida, Arlene+	Parker, P. Victoria*	Valachovic, Dot
Berber, Bonnie	Davis, Lois M.+	Ives, Ralph+	Pavalock, Rose*	Van Wormer, Michele+
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THANKS !

Social Committee Update

We have rescheduled the **Mount Rushmore, Badlands and Black Hills of South Dakota** trip for September 30-October 10, 2022. We now have some openings. If you're interested in going, please call Linda Zilka 518-725-5139. A deposit of \$75 is needed. The price is \$1035 which is due July 23, 2022.

The trip to **Mackinac Island**, Michigan, has been rescheduled for June 12 - 18, 2022. If there are some openings for the trip, it will be announced in the August issue of *The Outlook*.

The **Music Man** starring Hugh Jackman is now going to be April 6, 2022.

Here is the Latest Covid Vaccination News:

New York is now allowing **pharmacies** to offer the COVID-19 vaccination to people with eligible underlying health conditions and anyone over 16. Go onto the following websites and follow the link to vaccine appointments.

CVS [cvs.com/pharmacy](https://www.cvs.com/pharmacy) or there is a toll-free number 1-800-746-7287 to see where the vaccine is available.

[Walgreens.com](https://www.walgreens.com) [RiteAid.com](https://www.riteaid.com) [Valuedrugs.net](https://www.valuedrugs.net) [Stopandshop.com](https://www.stopandshop.com) [Secure.kinneydrugs.com](https://www.secure.kinneydrugs.com)

If you do not have access to a computer, you will have success in getting appointments by calling the NYS Covid 19 Hotline. You have to call all day, every day, and you will eventually get an appointment. 833-697-4829. Also, call your local office of the aging for help.

****Veterans, their spouses, their caregivers can get COVID-19 vaccinations from the VA under the SAVE LIVES Act [signed into law March 24](#).**



VACCINATION

Retiree Council 12 Contribution Form July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021

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 _____ 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 .



RC 12 Outlook

April 2021

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

NYSUT RC 12 General Membership Meeting & Election of RC 12 Board of Directors May 12, 2021

Zoom on-line meeting from 10 am – 12 pm

We had hoped to have an in-person meeting but since that is not yet possible please join us for:

Our spring business meeting followed by

RC 12 Looking Forward—a Townhall Meeting

Featuring RC 12 Members



Please bring questions, suggestions, and ideas about: future meetings in person, ways we can help each other, new trips you would like to take, programs for future general meetings, and other thoughts about how RC 12 can be of interest to you.

Then join in a fun chair yoga session led by our very own RC 12 secretary and certified yoga instructor, Cathy Picciocca

We hope that you will be able to join us. Registration will be required. Send a request for registration to : RC12.NYSUT@gmail.com Please include: your name, district retired from and year that you retired, and then the registration link will be sent to you.

Legal or financial concerns?

NYSUT Member Benefits can help

Whether it's assisting NYSUT members with everyday essentials, important choices about insurance needs, or making prudent decisions about financial and legal concerns, NYSUT Member Benefits can help.



Scan the QR codes below to learn more about the following endorsed programs and services.

Legal Service Plan: For a low annual price, our Legal Service Plan provides unlimited toll-free legal advice; a simple will, health care proxy, living will and power of attorney; and guaranteed maximum fees for many legal matters. If a NYSUT member who is a current participant in the Legal Service Plan passes away due to COVID-19, the law firm of Feldman, Kramer & Monaco has offered to extend a number of services at no cost to the member's family.



SCAN ME

Financial Learning Center: We recently contracted with popular financial publisher Kiplinger's Personal Finance for our new Financial Learning Center. This interactive microsite offers numerous articles on a wide variety of financial topics, including selecting the best value in tax planning software and more. No matter your point in life or financial situation, you are sure to find something of interest.



SCAN ME

Mid-Island Mortgage: With our UnionDirect Mortgage Discount Program presented by Mid-Island Mortgage, NYSUT members receive special purchase and refinancing mortgage discounts for a variety of home-related needs. Whether you're looking to buy a home, lower your mortgage payment or planning a home improvement project, Mid-Island Mortgage can help you save up to \$2,700 on lender fees and closing costs.



SCAN ME

Cambridge Credit Counseling: Our program with Cambridge Credit Counseling can assist NYSUT members with better understanding their student loan re-payment and debt consolidation options. NYSUT members can receive a no-cost, no-obligation, consultation with a Cambridge certified counselor. Cambridge is also the provider of NYSUT's Student Loan Debt Webinars.



SCAN ME

NYSUT Member Benefits offers dozens of programs and services that are available to NYSUT members and their families, including the following options:



DINING & SHOPPING DISCOUNTS



TRAVEL & TOURS



CAR & TRUCK RENTALS



LIFE INSURANCE



AUTO & HOME



LONG-TERM CARE & DISABILITY

To learn more about Member Benefits-endorsed programs & services, visit memberbenefits.nysut.org, call 800-626-8101 or scan the QR codes above.

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