

# The Retiree ORGANIZER



A NEWSLETTER FOR NYSUT'S RETIREE LEADERS

Winter 2012

[www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org)

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## NYSUT retirees celebrate 20 years of activism

When it comes to union activism, Manny Darwin's motto is simple — once a NYSUT member, always a NYSUT member. "Retirees are concerned about what's going on with the in-service members," said Darwin, president of Retiree Council 20. "Terrible things are happening and we're happy that we can try to help make things better for them."

Darwin, like most NYSUT retirees, puts the action in political action, routinely answering the union call in times of need. From raising money for the NYSUT Disaster Relief Fund, to supporting "get out the vote" efforts at election time, for the past 20 years NYSUT retirees have helped get the union voice heard.

More than 100 elected retiree council delegates and retiree leaders traveled to NYSUT headquarters last month to mark that anniversary and chart the course of retirees for the coming year. Retiree leaders in attendance received a commemorative 20th Anniversary pin and heard a keynote address celebrating the 20-year history of NYSUT Retiree Councils.



Todd Crenshaw

In an address punctuated with chuckles and applause, Pat Longo, NYSUT's first retiree services manager, led retirees on a walk down memory lane, recounting the struggles retirees faced to establish NYSUT Retiree Councils 20 years ago. A video showcasing the group's involvement in the

*Continued on page 4*



Manny Darwin, RC 20 president



Below, Doris Blank, RC 15 makes a point during the meeting.



Above, from left, Joe McLaughlin, Kathleen Donahue, Pat Longo, Ruth Dworkin and Loretta Donlon.

Below, Lauren Lucchi offers a detailed analysis of the Super Committee (photos of some of the Super Committee members are visible behind her).



Representing more than 600,000 professionals in education and health care. For more, see [www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org).

### INSIDE

Spotlight on disaster relief  
Page 2

"We Are Ohio" campaign  
Page 3

Protection for your golden years  
Page 4

## NYSUT Regional Conferences

RC 43	Jan. 24
RC 10	May 22
RC 4 and 46	May 23
RC 1, 2, 3 and 44	May 24
RC 11	June 5
RC 9 (FSNR)	June 7

## 2012 RA Buffalo, NY

April 26-28, 2012

### RA Deadlines:

Retiree of the Year	Jan. 18
Community Service Awards Nominations	Jan. 18
Resolutions	Jan. 30
Proposed Amendments to Constitution and Bylaws	Feb. 24

## Good news on 2012 Medicare Part B premium

The standard Medicare Part B premium is much less than expected for 2012. The premium will be \$99.60. This is an increase of \$3.50 per month for most people. The Medicare Part B deductible will decrease by \$22 to \$140.

# Retirees are a resource: Spotlight on disaster relief

NYSUT has received more than \$100,000 in contributions to the NYSUT Disaster Relief Fund to date. Retiree councils, retiree chapters and individual retirees continue to donate money to the fund and service to relief efforts. In addition to these contributions, NYSUT retiree leaders donated more money out of their individual pockets during the NYSUT Retiree Contiguous ED 51-53 (At-Large) Meeting in October.

Space constraints allow only a sampling of retiree disaster relief effort stories, which follow below. Visit [www.itswhatwedo.nysut.org](http://www.itswhatwedo.nysut.org) to view additional retiree relief stories or to submit your own.

### In Vestal

- Retirees of the Vestal Teachers Association staffed two flood relief centers in Vestal. For days and nights on end, retirees served in many capacities.

### Help for dislocated students

- Ken Griffith, president of the Owego Apalachin Teachers Association Retirees (OATAR), disseminated information

about the relocation of 600 Owego-Apalachin students who were moved to three different locations.

- Numerous OATAR retirees heeded the person-to-person call to aid with flood clean up. They ripped out walls, cleared furniture and helped save memories. Many donated school and clean-up supplies.
- MacArthur Elementary School in the Binghamton School District has been closed due to flood damage, and its nearly 600 students moved to two other locations. Binghamton School District retirees have purchased books and supplies, and set up alternate locations as learning centers.

For more information about NYSUT disaster relief efforts and how to help those in need, visit [www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org).



Andy Pallotta and many other NYSUT employees helped with disaster relief.

## The Retiree ORGANIZER

The Retiree Organizer is published periodically for NYSUT's retiree leaders. Locals, chapters and retiree councils may reprint all Organizer content.

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# Retirees are a resource: Advocacy and mobilization matters

NYSUT President Dick Iannuzzi put out the call for retiree volunteers to help defeat Issue 2 in Ohio and more than a dozen NYSUT retirees responded. AFT President Randi Weingarten congratulated, thanked and praised the volunteers who helped defeat Issue 2, which repealed Senate Bill 5 on Election Day. Senate Bill 5 would have barred public sector strikes, curtailed public-employee bargaining rights and scrapped binding arbitration.

“The vote, which marks the first time that the collective bargaining rights of public employees have been upheld on a statewide ballot, sends a clear signal that Ohioans will not sit idly by while politicians scapegoat hard-working public employees for an economic crisis they did not create.

“The repeal of Senate Bill 5 was a victory for every teacher who helps a struggling child,

## Spotlight on victorious “We Are Ohio” campaign

every firefighter who races into a burning building, every snowplow operator who ensures safe travel for others, and every community that relies on these vital public services. Ohioans said loud and clear that they would not turn their backs on the people who watch theirs. The historic citizens’ veto was a victory for all Ohioans and for all Americans who care about democracy and fair play,” said Weingarten.

More than a dozen NYSUT retirees volunteered to work for two weeks in Toledo, Cincinnati and Cleveland as part of a larger grass-roots campaign. NYSUT

Retirees joined a team of more than 10,000 volunteers to collect 1.3 million signatures to place Issue 2 on the ballot and to assist in the labor-to-labor campaign to get out the vote.

“Congratulations on a job well done and thanks to all of our NYSUT retiree volunteers for answering the call and proving themselves to be such a valuable resource to this campaign, this organization and to the labor movement as a whole,” NYSUT President Dick Iannuzzi said.

Due to union mobilization efforts throughout the country, retirees played an important role in many advocacy campaigns:

- Defeated anti-immigration laws in Arizona.
- Defeated voter suppression efforts in Maine.
- Upheld women’s reproductive rights in Mississippi.

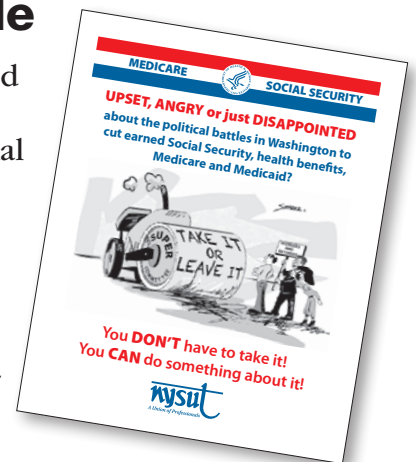
## Welcome newly elected Retiree Council 44-46 presidents

As part of NYSUT’s redistricting plan, three new retiree councils are now established and have held elections. Congratulations to newly elected retiree council presidents (from left): RC#44 — Stan Nowak, RC#45 — Bill Ninness RC#46 — Cathie Jacobus.



## Advocacy postcards available

If you need additional 2011-12 Social Security, Medicare & Medicaid postcards, contact your NYSUT retiree services consultant. Please allow a couple of weeks to process your request.



# Protection for your golden years

Every major life change has a big impact on your financial well-being, including entering into retirement. Having the right type of insurance can help provide peace of mind for you, and prevent unnecessary stress for your loved ones.

Term life insurance can give your family the means to pay off debt, handle financial burdens and live a comfortable life in the event you are not there to support them.

There are a lot of companies out there offering various types of insurance, but it's important to find the right insurance for your situation. Have you discussed what's important to you

with an agent or company you can trust?

The NYSUT Member Benefits Trust stands behind several endorsed insurance plans that can help protect



the assets of hardworking NYSUT retirees and their families.

For more information about your options, please contact Marsh U.S. Consumer — the plan administrator — toll-free at 888-386-9788. Feel free to also contact Member Benefits with any questions at 800-626-8101 or visit [memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org).

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

*Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.*

## NYSUT retirees celebrate 20 years of activism *continued from page 1*

multi-year push to successfully secure a Cost-of-Living Adjustment for retirees was a highlight. The video can be viewed at [www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org). In recognition and appreciation of Longo's decades of service to NYSUT retirees, NYSUT V.P. Kathleen Donahue and Retiree Contiguous ED 51-53 At-Large Director Joe McLaughlin presented the first manager of retiree services with a plaque on behalf of the NYSUT officers and the organization.

"After working to help build NYSUT, we faced the challenge of building an organization that fit us in retirement," said Longo. "But I did very little — it was the perseverance of all of you who built this retiree organization."

Donahue encouraged retirees to remain politically active. "Things are downright ugly at the federal level, so we've got to keep it up

— it's the only way to have our voices heard," said Donahue who thanked retirees for their ongoing support of NYSUT efforts.

She also thanked outgoing director Ruth Dworkin for her years of service. "You are a backbone of this organization, thanks for working so hard to carry out NYSUT's mission," she said.

Retiree representatives from NYSUT's two national affiliates were also on hand — Todd Crenshaw, retiree director of the National Education Association, and Lauren Lucchi, associate director of the American Federation of Teachers Retirement and Retirees program. Crenshaw presented information on how NYSUT and NEA retirees can collaborate on advocacy and programs. Lucchi presented a workshop on current issues in Washington, D.C., including the

Super Committee. Other speakers included R. Michael Kraus and Thomas K. Lee of the NYS Teachers' Retirement System who reiterated the safety and soundness of the TRS pension system. NYSUT staffers Susan Klug and Peter Savage covered Medicare and NYS Legislative issues, respectively.

Resolutions approved during the event will be forwarded for discussion and voting among the greater retiree membership. Measures include a call for inflation protection equity for Optional Retirement Program retirees.

