



May/June 2024

President's Corner

Barbara Keilty-Michaleski, President

Election District-18 Council of NYSUT Retirees
rc.18.nc@gmail.com

We Are Not Finished Yet!

Unions have fought for the working class throughout history. We are fortunate to be part of the movement and to have our defined benefit NYS pension, Social Security based on our past income, health insurance, and whatever additional benefits each local may offer. NYSUT Member Benefits provides us with the opportunity to receive additional benefits: some free, many at discounted rates. None of this would exist if it weren't for our union, NYSUT. As retirees we reap those benefits.

Benefits aren't the only piece we enjoy. NYSUT fights for the protection of those benefits, as well as lobbying for all our tiers - and now Fix Tier 6. They work to protect our Medicare and IRMAA reimbursements from being diminished or eliminated for those who have NYSHIP insurance. They lobby for better school funding, campaign to elect pro-public education representatives, fight for due process, have upheld the Taylor Law when challenged, and continues to expand the Committee of 100 so our elected officials hear first-hand from us! The list is long, and WE ARE NOT FINISHED YET!

All our continued campaigning and lobbying is supported through VOTE-COPE contributions. Are you a "Giver" or are you a "Taker"? Retiree numbers have increased significantly through the years, now being about 250,000+ and rising. We are 1/3 of NYSUT. Yet our VOTE-COPE contributions don't match those numbers. GIVERS are only 17%; yes, that low. TAKERS, those who benefit from all the work NYSUT does to protect us, are 83%; astonishingly high. To continue the fight, Vote-Cope needs to be financially supported, even by retirees.

(Continued on bottom of page 2)

Council Officers, Delegates & Alternates 2023 – 2026

President: Barbara Keilty bkeiltymic@aol.com
Vice President: Barbara Hafner hafnerbarbara@aol.com
Corresponding Secretary: Phil Nespeca
rc.18.nc@gmail.com
Recording Secretary: Maddy Maffetore
maddymaff@aol.com
Treasurer: June Innella jinnella@verizon.net
NYSUT Delegates: Barbara Keilty, Barbara Hafner, Thomas Cook
Alternate: June Innella
AFT Delegate: Barbara Keilty
Alternate: June Innella
LINKAGE Newsletter Editor: Vicki Puccio
NYSUT Nassau Retiree Consultant:
 Claire Zatorski claire.zatorski@nysut.org

Chapter Contacts:

Baldwin: Miguelina Ortiz btapublicaffairs@gmail.com
Elmont Elementary: Mary VonBargen
evonb@optimum.net
Floral Park-Bellerose: Val Lucas Vall62@aol.com
 Eileen Griffiths EGmusic@aol.com
Hempstead: Cheryl Goodridge
cheryl.goodridge@gmail.com
Hewlett-Woodmere: Jane Binkoff jbinkoff@aol.com
Island Park: Patti Pozen pattip241@aol.com
 Beth Kimmelman bjkimmelman@gmail.com
Lawrence: Rachel Kreiss
Communications@LawrenceTA.org
Long Beach: Frank Volpe Zvolpe@optonline.net
Lynbrook: Dave Ajello dajello32@gmail.com
Malverne: Rosetta Giannotti Rosettagia297@gmail.com
New Hyde Park-Garden City Park:
 Mindy Simon mindy820@optonline.net
Oceanside: oftrcmail@gmail.com
Rockville Centre: Mary Schmidt rvcrt@gmail.com
 Marianne Mancusi rvcrt.mm@gmail.com
Sewanhaka: Randy Lewis sftretired@gmail.com
Uniondale: Dolores Spagnoli doloresspag@aol.com
Valley Stream: June Innella jinnella@verizon.net
West Hempstead:
 Ron Huetter ronhuetter@hotmail.com
 Bev Visconti Blv210@yahoo.com
***East Rockaway, Franklin Square, Freeport, Woodward:** No chapter or contact

NYSUT REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY, 2024 NYC: Retiree Focus, Resolutions Presented

Barbara Keilty, President & Delegate; Delegates: Barbara Hafner, Thomas Cook; Alternate: June Innella

You will have received this newsletter after the NYSUT RA. I felt it important to convey what our retiree councils worked on to present as resolutions. On Long Island, we have a group called LIRDC (Long Island Retiree Delegate Council). It originally was established for just Long Island councils. In recent years we felt it was important to expand it to include all retirees in ED 52, which covers UUP, PSC, Community Colleges, Rockland and Westchester, NYSUT LI retirees living in Florida and probably more! Our meetings are informational; sharing has been a tremendous advantage.

This year we focused on presenting resolutions mostly on protecting our health insurance, which has been under attack for retirees for several years. For those who have NYSHIP (now Anthem United Healthcare), locals are attempting to switch retirees into private Medicare plans (Medicare Advantage Plans, good old Joe Namath). What's their goal? Saving money on the backs of retirees. Those plans are private, sold through insurance brokers who profit from them. Federal or Original Medicare, as it is known, is not for profit and is established through the Federal Government, which is why it's deducted from Social Security. Taking a Medicare Advantage Plan negates the Medicare Reimbursement and IRMAA we receive. Those funds come from the NYS Budget, not local districts, and are negotiated through Civil Service, not NYSUT. The districts must collect the information from retirees to get the funds from NYS and then must send our reimbursements to us.

Our resolutions were listed under Health Care & Workplace Safety, Civil and Human Rights. Additional resolutions submitted for discussion and vote focused on Banned Books and research on Single Payer Insurance.

A multitude of resolutions from every ED (election district) and council are submitted annually. Not all will pass; some are subsumed into others, and some are recommended to the NYSUT Board of Directors for further discussion. Whatever the outcome is, the focus is for our voices to be heard.

We continue to fight for and represent our retirees.



Left: Hauppauge Rally for Funding Education

Left to Right: RC18 VP Barbara Hafner, NYSUT President Melinda Person, RC18 President Barbara Keilty, Half Hollow Hills President Richard Haas.



Right: Committee of 100 Delegates June Innella, Tom Cook and RC18 Retiree, NYSUT Assistant to the President Viri Pettersen.

President's Corner, Continued...

Many of us were able to contribute to VOTE-COPE through payroll deduction while in-service. Some weren't given that opportunity and needed to write personal checks to contribute. As retirees, we ALL can contribute through pension deduction. It's easy and when you receive your NYSTRS statement it states what you've listed as a contribution. Those already on pension deduction can change the amount online. We all should be monthly GIVERS, no matter how small the amount is.

The VOTE-COPE Pension deduction form is available online at NYSUT.org. See instructions on page 4.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS THIS SUMMER?

NYSUT Member Benefits offers a variety of endorsed programs & services that can help you enjoy today, while planning for tomorrow.



As a NYSUT member, you have access to participate in a number of programs and services endorsed by NYSUT Member Benefits. These products have been carefully cultivated to provide members with quality programs at competitive prices, including insurance programs to help you protect your family; legal and financial plans to help you plan for the future; and shopping, travel & personal services to help save you money.

Member Benefits also offers a number of benefits available free of charge to members such as the premium Calm service, Peer Support Line, Financial Learning Center, and more.

Participation in our endorsed programs features the added protection of having a trusted advocate on your side. Our staff take great pride in stepping in to support members with any questions, concerns, or issues that may arise.

No matter what your plans may be, NYSUT Member Benefits is a great place to start. Explore all that your union membership has to offer!



Learn more by scanning the QR code to the left, visiting memberbenefits.nysut.org, or calling 800-626-8101.

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



May/June 2024



SAVE THE DATE! OCTOBER 15, 2024

NYSUT Nassau/Suffolk Regional Conference for Retirees
Huntington Marriott

*Flyer will be mailed during the summer.

Mark your calendars! Join us, all are welcome!

Upcoming Spring 2024 dates: May 20, *June 10

NYSUT RC 18 meets September - December, March - June.

Meetings are the 3rd Monday of the month, 9:45-12:00, unless otherwise noted or changed for unforeseen circumstances.

* Indicates 2nd Monday (June 10th location TBA)

➡ NEW LOCATION for 5/20/24 ⬅

Where: NYSUT Regional Office - 1000 Woodbury Road, Suite 214, Woodbury, NY 11797

Breakfast noshes, coffee and tea will be available.

Please forward any agenda items via email at least 10 days prior to our meeting date to: bkeiltymic@aol.com.

The September 16, 2024 meeting will also be held at the NYSUT Regional Office in Woodbury.

SUPPORT VOTE-COPE

The VOTE-COPE Pension deduction form is available online at <https://www.nysut.org>

(Make sure you have your NYSTRS pension number available).

- Log in to your MY NYSUT account (or create an account with your email, NYSUT ID# and a password)
- In the top left corner, click on “Member Exclusives” and then on “Political Action/VOTE-COPE”
- Click on “Donate Online” and scroll down to click on “Retiree Pension Deduction”
- On the “VOTE-COPE Pension Deduction Authorization” page, click on “Go to Pension Deduction Form - I affirm that I am a NYSUT member”
- The form pops up on the screen! Fill it out and submit it.

That's it! It's easy, and so important for all of us! **BE PART OF THE “GIVER” TEAM!**