

# Spotlight 21

## SERVING RETIREES FROM

Bay Shore      Brentwood      East Islip      West Islip  
Bayport-Blue Point      Central Islip      Islip      Sayville  
Connetquot



Vol. 24 No. 1

An Award Winning Publication of NYSUT Retiree Council 21

March-April, 2024

## I Am .... We Are... Not Finished Yet!



Often, when Michael and I are with friends and family, they ask us why we are still involved with the Union, so much so that our calendar is booked up with those events making it hard to plan for the rest of our life. For example, we got an email from a vacation club we belong to saying that our points were about to expire. I finally made time to investigate that and, low and behold, the email was correct:

a LOT of points were about to expire. We scrambled to find a time when we COULD plan a vacation or two at the Clubs we would WANT to visit. Only two fit the bill and that's where we are going but things like social gatherings, medical appointments, family time, seem to suffer the same fate. Yet, we continue. And we are not the only ones, of course. Look at Joan Perrini. She recently required surgery. She scheduled that surgery but was planning for union things until the night before and two days later she was at a union meeting and the next day helped run a NYSARA meeting and the day after that was at the Hauppauge Rally! For those of you who are close to Joan you will not be surprised that the very same day as her surgery, she went home and did 3 loads of laundry! You can't keep a good woman down! Look at the picture from the Rally. You will see Joan and Michael on his "Cadillac" of walkers. You can't keep a good man down either! AND...MOST of your Executive Board have or have had serious health/family issues yet, they show up for meetings, plan their own meetings, do whatever is necessary for you to be properly represented. Always.

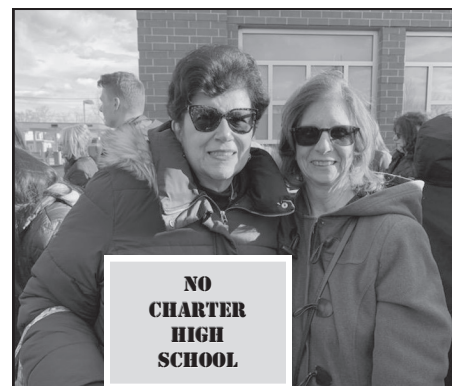
So, WHY DO WE DO THE WORK? SIMPLE answer. We are not finished yet! We still have a lot to say, to contribute to NYSUT, to you, to our local communities, to our State, to our Country. We believe that as retirees our combined histories and experiences are invaluable to them. We believe that we must make a lot of "noise". Remember "good trouble", the two words made famous by the unforgettable Representative from Georgia, John R. Lewis? That's what we want and need to do, make "good trouble" so our causes, needs are not forgotten by anyone. Most recently at the Committee of 100 in Albany Michael, I and Kate Hughes, went to support our in-service colleagues, with pride and genuine concern. See Diana's report for details. The Rally at the Million Dollar Staircase to Fix Tier Six was inspirational as our NYSUT President, Melinda Person, spoke, along



Mike, Louisa, Joan,

with other labor leaders and Legislators whom Melinda and our PAC people, have been working with to gain their support. We stayed for the Ed 52 meeting, listening to updates from different speakers, most notably from Florida. Read that report by Diana. I mean really read it, especially if you live or spend time in Florida. It was at that meeting that we learned that the IRMAA reimbursement was taken out of the governor's budget! We had never been told, nor had our local PAC leaders. Oh, boy, did we make a LOT of noise! We were heard and between the almost immediate MAC blast and other petitions, our Legislators put the reimbursement back in the budget. We. Must. Always. Be. Alert. Probably one of the best moments at the ED meeting was the dinner speech given by Melinda. Michael and I and many others there agree that it was the best speech we have ever heard given by a NYSUT President. It was thought-provoking but most of all hopeful. As I look to the months leading to the November election, I sometimes feel a sense of dread, not only for the outcome but also for the actions leading to that election. Well, after Melinda spoke, I believed that she had direction for us, and that with our work, things WILL be okay! She needs us. Notice, I said WORK and US.

Now I ask you, do you see yourself as the "WE" in WE ARE NOT FINISHED YET? I certainly hope so because the work cannot be done by an "I". Therefore, let's get to it! Believe and prove that Retirees still have lots to say and we want everyone to know it!



Louisa and Jennifer Olsen at the Riverhead Rally.

### Take Action Now.

Can't get out to join rallies, you can still act by going to NYSUT mac member action center at: [mac.nysut.org](http://mac.nysut.org) and in a matter of a few clicks and your voice will be heard.

# Florida Unions On the Defensive against Lawmakers



The Florida Legislature has expanded attacks on unions in general and on the educational community in particular (FEA) and as a result the **AFL CIO lost 200,000 members in one day!** Small unions are hard hit because they don't have the resources to recruit.

The results of the assault in part are:

- librarians have been fired
- Unions that have not/cannot get the three part documentation needed to prove they have met the 60% threshold are decertified, which means their negotiated contracts are NULL AND VOID.
- PERB's job is immeasurably harder but the Legislature did not allocate additional resources to manage the situation. Thus when Miami Date Teacher Union submitted their 11,000 three part documentations, PERB had to close for days due to lack of staff to review.

There are more than 1300 pages of DOE laws regulating public education in Florida; everything from teacher salaries to prep time! By contrast, private, parochial and charter schools have less than 10 pages of regulatory oversight.

Florida has the most regressive tax structure in America. It relies solely on sales tax revenues.

The Legislature which meets only 60 days per year also has:

- expanded its "War on Woke"
- led the nation in Banned Books
- ended child labor protections
- added 0.12 to the perstudent allocation
- ended "home rule" for prevailing wage, environmental protections, and worker safety
- Terminated all courses offering training or classes on Diversity, Inclusion and Equity
- eliminated holistic history and promoted racial supremacy theories be taught in schools
- raised the bar to 67% of vote for citizen initiatives.
- removed all references to climate change and global warming from state documents and school text books.

*If you live in Florida or are a snowbird and want a voice in the future of education in Florida, join the **Florida Retiree Chapter** while still remaining a member of RC21. The Council leaders including Felicia Bruce, President of RC 43, want to meet you or at least have you as a member as they help their in-service maintain their academic freedom and civil liberties. Their website is <https://rc43.ny.aft.org/>*



## NYSUT 2024 Legislative Issues of Focus: Policy

- **Charter Schools:** Support Legislation S.4486/A.4458 hold corporate charter schools to same standards of transparency and accountability as public schools if they receive public funding.
- **Reforming IDAs:** Support legislation s89/A351 to prohibit IDAs from waiving school taxes.
- **Reforming the Property Tax Cap:** Amend the tax cap law to allow school districts to put forth a budget with a tax increase of 2% or the rate of inflation, whichever is higher, and to

allow for a simple majority vote to override the tax cap.

## NYSUT 2024 Legislative Issues of Focus: Budget

**Foundation Aid:** Legislative Ask: Develop a budget that fully funds our public schools. Learn more at [FundOurFutureNY.org](https://FundOurFutureNY.org)

**Fighting Childhood Poverty:** Legislative Ask: Address our students' basic needs by building upon last year's school-meal expansion, strengthening student health care access and making housing affordable.

**Fix Tiers 6:** Legislative Ask: Reduce the final average salary calculation from five to three years for Tier 6 members, which would increase their pension earnings and offer parity with Tier 4. Learn more at [FixTier6.org](https://FixTier6.org)

### Spotlight 21

A Publication of NYSUT Retiree Council 21

Louisa Eiermann, Co-President  
Mike Eiermann, Co-President  
Marilyn Gutierrez, 1st VP  
Joan Perrini, 2nd VP  
Jerry Holwell, Treasurer  
Barbara Vouris, Co-Secretary  
Joanne Hamilton, Co-Secretary

Diana Baranec Editor  
[spot21editor@optonline.net](mailto:spot21editor@optonline.net)

Contact/ us at:  
(631) 473 - 4055

And visit us at:  
[ny.aft.org/rc21](https://ny.aft.org/rc21)

Forward changes in addresses/names to NYSUT and/or your local President

**RETIREE COUNCIL 21**  
**ANNUAL JUNE AWARDS LUNCHEON**

**Presentation of Journalism & Website Awards**

Guest Speaker  
TBD

Tuesday, June 4, 2024  
Timber Point Country Club  
398 Great River Road  
Great River, New York 11739  
631.581.0022

\$60.00 pp  
12:00 noon – 3:30 pm

**DOOR PRIZE & RAFFLES & 50/50**

Reservation Form & Check (*payable to Retiree Council 21*) are to be forwarded to...

Marilyn Gutierrez  
593 Muncey Road  
West Islip, New York 11795  
631.587.4128

~ **Reservation Form & Payment Deadline: May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024** ~

\*\*\*\*\*

**PLEASE PRINT:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Retiree Chapter/District \_\_\_\_\_ Guest Name \_\_\_\_\_

Entrée Choice: London Broil \_\_\_\_\_ Chicken \_\_\_\_\_ Fish \_\_\_\_\_ Vegetarian \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**KYKUIT, THE ROCKEFELLER ESTATE**

**Friday, May 24, 2024**

**Kykuit was home to 4 generations of the Rockefeller family, beginning with the philanthropist John D. Rockefeller, founder of Standard Oil. His business acumen made him the richest man in America, in his day. Now a historic site of the National Trust for Historic Preservation**

**Trip Includes:**

Tour of Estate: **Two 1 ½ hour Group Tours** – (10:15 a.m. + 10:30 a.m.)

Lunch: **Harvest on Hudson Restaurant: 1:30 - 3:30p.m. (Riverview Room)**  
FIRST COURSE: Caprese Salad & Classic Harvest Meatballs  
SECOND COURSE: Branzino & Eggplant Parmigiana  
DESSERT: Chocolate Layer Mousse Cake  
(Coffee, Tea, Soft Drinks Included)

Cost: **\$175.00 per person** – check payable to *Retiree Council 21*

Payment: **Due on or before April 30, 2024**

Bus Leaves: **7:30 a.m. from 100 Motor Parkway, Hauppauge, NY 11788**  
(Please arrive 20 minutes before departure)

Bus leaves: **4:00 p.m. from Harvest on Hudson**

Bus Returns: approx. **6:00 p.m.** at 100 Motor Parkway, Hauppauge, NY 11788

Questions: Call or email Joan Perrini - 516 680-6163 – perrinli@optonline.net

**Send Checks to: Jean Economos - 25 Durham Lane Bayport, NY 11705**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Guest \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Total amount of check \$ \_\_\_\_\_





New York State  
Alliance *for* Retired Americans

*Educate. Advocate. Activate.*

Stanley Bergman, President, NYSARA Long Island Chapter

Dear NYSARA-LI Members,

The AFL-CIO Legislative Scorecard rates House and Senate legislators on their votes on legislation important to working people. As we all know, Long Island's 2024 Congressional races will be hotly contested; the outcomes will be crucial in determining which party controls the House of Representatives in 2025.

Please go to the AFL-CIO website scroll down to Legislative Scorecard banner and click. Check who voted for your interests and keep this in mind when you go to vote in November.

*Marge Harrison, Chair*  
*Thank You!*  
*NYSARA-LI Legislative Committee*

**Next General Meeting**  
**April 16, 2024**

West Islip Public Library  
10:15 am

**Awards Luncheon - June 4th**



Make your wellness a priority with a **free, premium subscription to Calm**, the #1 app for sleep, meditation and relaxation.

Offered through NYSUT Member Benefits, the free subscription is open to NYSUT in-service and retiree members, and up to five dependents aged 16 or older.

Visit NYSUT Member Benefits to create a Calm account.

You'll need your NYSUT ID number and a personal email address. You can find your NYSUT ID on your NYSUT membership card or by visiting [nysut.org/memberid](https://nysut.org/memberid)