

It's time for RC 39 Elections

It was July 1, 2021, when the current RC 39 officers and members-at-large began their three-year terms. This means we are required to hold elections. The rules for RC39 elections are in the RC39 Constitution, which can be obtained by going to the RC39 website, <https://rc39.ny.aft.org/>

The elected positions of RC 39 are: President, First NYSUT and AFT Delegate; Vice President, NYSUT and AFT Delegate; Secretary, NYSUT and AFT First Alternate Delegate; Treasurer, NYSUT and AFT Delegate; and two Director-at-large positions. All positions terms begin July 1, 2024, and are for three years.

The current officers and Directors-at-large are:

President, First NYSUT and AFT Delegate: Kevin Peterman, Suffolk Community College

Vice President, NYSUT and AFT Delegate: Judy Wood, Fashion Institute of Technology

Secretary, NYSUT and AFT First Alternate Delegate: Charles Clarke, Monroe Community College

Treasurer, NYSUT and AFT Delegate: Joyce Gabriele, Suffolk Community College

Director-at-large: Joan Prymas, Herkimer Community College

Director-at-large: Gerald Speal, Suffolk Community College

Immediate Past-President: Peter Herron, Suffolk Community College

All the above elected RC39 members are seeking re-election and are running as a slate of candidates. However, if anyone is interested in running for any of the positions listed above, please see the *Call for Nominations* article on page 2.

Elections Matter and the Process Has Begun

The February special election to fill the New York Congressional District 3 vacant seat is over, and NYSUT/AFT's endorsed candidate Tom Suozzi won. The key factors attributed to the win were that labor was "all in," many voters voted early, and NYSUT, including NYSUT retirees, made more than 23,000 calls to NYSUT members in the 3rd CD.

Next up are local school board elections on Tuesday, May 21, followed by NY primaries on Tuesday, June 25. As I said in my article in the last issue of the newsletter -- As retirees, we are more likely to "get involved" and more likely to vote. And vote we must!

I plan to attend NYSUT's Endorsement Conference on August 12th and 13th and the AFL-CIO Endorsement Conference on August 27th.

In October and early November many of us will be doing Labor Walks and phone banks to encourage our members to vote in November.

I hope you consider reaching out to your in-service local or retirees in your town and consider giving a few hours (or more) to participate in this year's elections.

I firmly believe facts matter and that activism works! Please consider helping out the election cycle.

In Solidarity,

Kevin Peterman
President, RC39
Kevinp50@aol.com

VOTE-COPE Contribution



It was lobbying and a myriad other political action efforts that secured our pensions, our tenure, our benefits and our right to bargain collectively. We have enjoyed "protections" equal to those of any public employee in the entire United States. None of these victories could have been won without VOTE-COPE. Retirees have a long history of supporting VOTE-COPE. It is not just about protecting the pension checks we worked so hard for. We also have a responsibility to stand with and support newer educators as they fight to protect the joy of our profession. We need to continue to do our part to keep our Union strong and well-equipped to fight off attacks on our retirement security.

VOTE-COPE Contribution form – Use this form for checks only
VOTE-COPE is the New York State United Teachers political action fund.

Name: _____ member ID _____

Address: _____

Date: _____, local from which you retired: _____

Contribution: \$ _____ Check # _____ (Make check payable to VOTE-COPE)

Please provide your email address: _____

Return this form to: VOTE-COPE, PO Box 295, Canajoharie, NY 13317-9901

Contributions or gifts to VOTE-COPE are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

Retiree Council 39 Board of Directors

President, First NYSUT and AFT Delegate, **Kevin Peterman**
 Vice President, NYSUT and AFT Delegate, **Judy Wood**
 Secretary, NYSUT and AFT First Alternate Delegate, **Charles Clarke**
 Treasurer, NYSUT and AFT Delegate, **Joyce Gabriele**
 Directors-at-large, **Joan Prymas and Gerald Speal**
 Immediate past President, **Peter Herron**

RC39 Newsletter Addresses

98 Rocky Point Landing Road., Rocky Point, NY 11778, email: rc39pete@optonline.net.

RC39 Newsletter Committee

Newsletter Editor, **Peter Herron**

Editorial Members, **David Abrams, Charles Clarke, Joyce Gabriele, Frances Hilliard, Phylis Kurland, Richard Macy, Kevin Peterman, Joan Prymas, Gerald Speal, Patti Tana, Judy Wood**

RC39 Website

Webmaster, **Peter Herron**: Website address: <http://rc39.ny.aft.org/>. RC39 constitution, recent RC39 newsletters and much more are posted on the RC39 website.

Get on the RC39 Email List

In order to receive RC39 email notices of important issues to retirees and early colored RC39 newsletters, email your name, the community college from which you retired, your email address, mailing address, and phone number to rc39pete@optonline.net.

Address Change

Do not let a new address keep you from receiving NYSUT RC39 newsletters. There are four ways to update your address: Contact NYSUT Member Records at 1-800-342-9810; send written changes to NYSUT Member Records, 800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY 12110; e-mail changes to memberec@nysut.org; or go to <https://www.nysut.org/members/retirees/mailling-list>. If you are a snowbird, give Member Records a few weeks notice to change its address records each way.

RC39 Encourages its Members to Attend Regional Conferences

Requirements for being reimbursed up to \$40.00 for attending a regional retiree conference.: submit a copy of the regional conference registration form, a receipt for the amount you paid to attend the regional retiree conference, your name, NYSUT membership number, and contact information to Joyce Gabriele, NYSUT RC39 Treasurer, joyce917@aol.com.

RC39 Membership Zoom Meeting, May 8, 2024 12:00 P.M. to 1:15 P.M.

RC39 members are encouraged to participate in the May 8th RC39 Zoom membership meeting. Zoom meeting link: Time: May 8, 2024 12:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting <https://nysut.zoom.us/j/93103580483>

Meeting ID: 931 0358 0483

The following will be attending this Zoom meeting.

RC 39 Officers: President Kevin Peterman, Vice President Judy Wood, Secretary Charles Clarke, Treasurer Joyce Gabriele, Director-at-large Prymas, Director-at-large Gerald Speal, Immediate Past-President Peter Herron

Guests: ED 52 Director Joan Perrini

NYSUT Assistant in Program Services – Retiree Services Swinka Richards

Agenda: 2024 RC39 Elections, Discussion on how RC 39 can better serve its members, Q. & A.



Call for Nominations

All current elected officers and Directors-at-large are willing to serve another three-year term. Even though this means there is a full slate of candidates, members are encouraged to run for office. Any RC39 member can nominate herself or himself, or a willing member of RC39. To nominate a RC39 member, email Peter Herron at rc39pete@optonline.net the member's name, phone number, email address. Also include your name and phone number.

The nomination and election procedures are in the RC39 Constitution, VII F and VII G. A copy of the RC39 constitution can be obtained by visiting the RC39 website, <https://rc39.ny.aft.org/>.

Nominations will not be accepted after May 1, 2024.

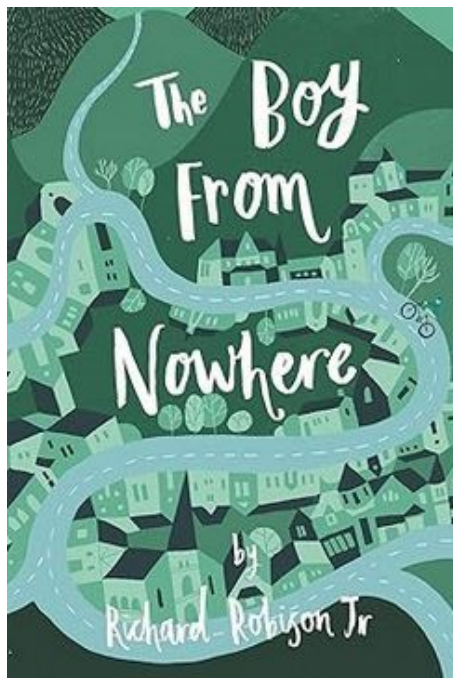
Book Review

The Boy From Nowhere

SUNY Erie Professor Emeritus of English, Richard Robison, Jr.'s literary memoir *The Boy From Nowhere*, (Blackwater Press, 2023), reveals what it was like to be a teenager in 1960s America, where every year is the same story. As soon as he settles into his surroundings, with its friendships, school, sports teams and all those customs that make a place home, he is forced to move. His early years fit into a pattern many Boomer kids at that time experienced – post war parents obsessed with grabbing higher and higher status jobs offering more lucrative salaries. And as a boy who is older than his years, he sees that his parents' quest of the American Dream comes at a cost.



Richard Robison, Jr.



The Boy From Nowhere is told through interwoven episodes from which themes emerge and re-connect. There is the story of his grandmother, a Justice of the Peace in a small town in the Pennsylvania mountains, who is forced to acknowledge her inherent racism and that of her community. There is the schoolyard fight that results in the death of a sixth-grade classmate, an event so traumatic that years later Robison refuses to fight a tormentor, which leads to a humiliating beating in front of a crowd of his new classmates. There is the grade school classmate who brings in pictures his G.I. father took of Holocaust victims strewn in piles at Mauthausen.

But despite dark moments in the narration, there are moments of humor, empathy, and certainly joy. As much as this memoir is about disconnection and loss, it is ultimately about hope and change: the person we once were does not dictate the person we will become. It is this recognition that ultimately holds our destiny.

The Boy From Nowhere is available through blackwaterpress.com, independent bookstores throughout North America and the U.K., or Amazon.

For additional information, go to <https://www.richardrobisonbooks.com/>

NYSHIP's Discontinuation of the Excelsior Plan

The following is a recent message from NYSUT President Melinda Person to retiree council presidents regarding NYSHIP's discontinuation of the Excelsior plan effective January 1, 2025. As a service to its members, RC39 emailed this extremely important message to its members. Since RC39 does not have the email addresses of many of its members, President Person's message is in this newsletter. This is another example why it behooves members to have their email address on the RC39 email list.

A significant portion of NYSUT affiliates receive health insurance coverage under the New York State Health Insurance Program ("NYSHIP"). NYSHIP is the health insurance plan for all employees of New York State. It is made available to local government employees, such as those working in school districts, towns, and counties. When a local government joins NYSHIP they are called "Participating Agencies" ("PA") under NYSHIP's terminology.

NYSHIP currently offers two plans to PAs, the Empire Plan, and the Excelsior Plan. The overwhelming majority of our members are in the Empire Plan. Recently, the Excelsior Plan has become an increasingly attractive option for segments of our membership attempting to find health care options at a lower premium than charged under the Empire Plan.

NYSUT has just learned that NYSHIP will be discontinuing the Excelsior Plan, effective 1/1/25. As part of this process, PAs (employer administration) need to complete a form (link below) indicating whether the members of the Excelsior plan should be moved into the Empire Plan, or if the PA is terminating coverage for those employees and applicable retirees.

Click to download form: <https://nysut.docsend.com/view/87kqcabd2f9g9tva>

The PA must complete and return the form by July 1, 2024. However, as the form also indicates, if the PA fails to return the form by July 1, 2024, all Excelsior Plan employees and applicable retirees will automatically be enrolled into the Empire Plan, effective January 1, 2025.

Barring language in a collective bargaining agreement that explicitly gives a right to the employer to make a unilateral decision, the determination on how to move forward must be bargained. Please contact your LRS for assistance if you think your affiliate may be impacted by this change.

Retiree Council 39 Voluntary 2024 Participation Fee Form

Name _____ e-mail _____

Address _____ Phone (_____) _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

College retired from _____ Year of Retirement _____

Please check amount of your voluntary participation fee: \$25 _____ Other \$ _____

Send your check, made out to NYSUT Retiree Council 39, along with this completed form to:

Ms. Joyce Gabriele, RC39 Treasurer, 492 Everdell Avenue, West Islip, NY. 11795-4222

Member Benefit Information can be found on the NYSUT Website

Go to the NYSUT website, <https://memberbenefits.nysut.org/>, to explore the many benefits available to all NYSUT members, including retirees.

NYSUT encourages all NYSUT members to signup for its MAP (Member Alert Program) alert email service to be among the first to learn about new endorsed programs and services, changes to existing programs, and special prize drawings.

To login to the NYSUT website you will need your NYSUT membership I.D. number.

Membership I.D.

Your Member I.D. is on your NYSUT Membership Card. Lost your card? Don't know your I.D. number? Call NYSUT Membership during business hours at 1-800-342-9810.