

RC 43 TRIF-ic NEWS IS THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF RETIREE COUNCIL 43, NYSUT TEACHER RETIREES IN FLORIDA. IT IS PUBLISHED SEASONALLY

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Contact NYSUT Member Records  
Ph: 1-800-342-9810  
[memberrec@nvsutmail.org](mailto:memberrec@nvsutmail.org)



## From The Desk of RC 43 President Felicia Bruce

They say, "For everything there is a season..." "You reap what you sow" and so on. Well, thanks to a MARVELOUS team of officers and hard working members, RC 43 has reaped awards, seen NYSUT adopt both of its resolutions at the RA in May, enjoyed basking in the spotlight at a very successful Regional Conference in Orlando and gained the recognition of NYSUT Leadership. In addition to all that (and more) members got to share time, talents, prizes and gain new knowledge about Member Benefits, NY and FL politics, necessary legal procedures and more. We have built bridges to our union brothers and sisters across the entire state.

There is no doubt the challenges we face in our adopted home as we 'age in place' are unfolding in unexpected ways. AND YET we are more prepared and better equipped than we often give ourselves credit for. Whether we look at unprecedented politics, economic concerns, social shocks or health worries, these are times that "try men/women's souls". AND YET....looking through the lens of history, WE ARE THE ONES TO GET THE JOB DONE.

Consider how difficult it was for our founders to challenge a powerful king across an ocean and declare "We will not be subjects! We will be citizens!". The powerless confronted the most powerful empire on earth...AND WON. Consider how Blacks had the audacity to convince all-powerful whites that they were deserving of similar rights. AND YET THEY WON. Consider how women were able to challenge the power of men and get the right to vote, to own property. AND STILL THEY WON.

American military forces had the courage to cross oceans in order to protect the world from powerful kings, autocrats and dictators, not once but TWICE. Those who fought in WW2 were called "the greatest generation" and when they returned home they gave birth to BABY BOOMERS...that's US. And what have we done with our heritage? WE, the powerless convinced the powerful to give US the right to vote at 18. But we did not stop there to rest on our laurels. We marched for civil rights, we fought to end segregation and we fought for BODY AUTONOMY, contraception, the right to sit in board rooms no matter what your color, creed or gender. We stood up for student rights, for equal pay and more. We convinced a Republican President to create the EPA, to regulate pollution and protect the planet. And then we created EARTH DAY in order to educate everyone about caring for the only home we will ever know. But we did not stop there. We joined UNIONS and we fought for acceptance, diversity, and social justice for everyone.

WHY are we prepared to face the challenges before US? Because we have the wisdom, experience, political acumen to achieve success. WE ARE THE LARGEST voting block, not just in FL but in swing states like AZ. We are reliable, consistent, dependable 'super voters'. WE are the force that can defeat those who would deny us the rights we fought for, the EARNED BENEFITS that are ours to claim ! VOTE. Work for candidates that are PRO-UNION, PRO PUBLIC EDUCATION, PRO- ENVIRONMENT, PRO HOME RULE, PRO DEMOCRACY. Give generously of your time, talents, money to candidates that will protect what we have achieved.

We are not just the heirs to all our powerless ancestors who fought for and won power. We are not just the descendants of the greatest generation. We are champions in our own right . IT'S UP TO US. WE HAVE EVERYTHING WE NEED TO SUCCEED.

**VISIT US ON LINE**

**RC 43 Website:**

<http://rc43.ny.aft.org/>

**RC 43 Facebook Page:**

**New-York-State-United-Teacher-Retirees-In-Florida**

## RC 43 Conference in Orlando, May 20, 2024

RC 43 NYSUT Consultant Miriam Hanan’s hard work on the Spring 2024 Symposium, held on May 20, 2024 at The Florida Hotel in Orlando came to fruition spectacularly for the attendees and the invited guest speakers. We heard from Miriam; RC 43 President Felicia Bruce,; Ross Stonefield, RC 43 VOTE-COPE Chairperson,; Jeffrey Friedman, NYSUT Regional Political Organizer; Florence McCue, NYSUT E.D. 51-52-53 At-Large Director; Joan Perrini, NYSUT E.D. 52 Director; Charles McAteer, UUP Statewide Retiree Chair and RC 40-42 President; Lynne Winderbaum, UFT Retired Teachers Coordinator, Tampa Bay; Gino Giustra, UFT Florida Center Director; Ron Gross, NYSUT Second Vice President; Michelle Kennedy, NYSUT Member Benefits Specialist; Attorney Steven Kramer, Feldman, Kramer & Monaco, P.C.; Anna Eskamani, Florida State Representative; Melinda Person, NYSUT President; and Andrew Spar, Florida Education Association (FEA) President.

We learned about the Keys to Estate Planning and How to Avoid Probate in Florida, The Struggles of Education in Florida, and The Documents You Need to Protect Your Estate in Florida, among other topics.

The proceeds of a raffle, \$400.00, went to The Villages/Ocala Unit to supplement member Gail Lazenby’s ongoing backpack endeavor that supplies personal grooming and other essentials to homeless children. Gail is the NYSUT Humanitarian Award winner.

Joan Perrini was celebrated as the recipient of the NYSUT Not for Ourselves alone award for her lifetime of service. She received the award at the RA meeting in NYC.



**(L-R) John Reynolds, Joan Perrini, Florence McCue as Joan receives her award at the RA in NYC**



**Senator Chuck Shumer at the RA in NYC**



**FL Representative Anna Eskamani addresses the**



**Ron Gross, NYSUT 2nd VP**



**Felicia Bruce, RC 43 President**



**Miriam Hanan, NYSUT RC 43 Consultant**



**NYSUT President Melinda Person and RC President Felicia Bruce**

### VOTE/COPE

As you may know, NYSUT’s new campaign is “Fix Tier 6”. This is a major push by NYSUT to provide equity in retirement for New York’s newest employees so that they, like us, can retire with dignity. One way for us to attain this goal is to convince legislators that it is in everyone’s best interest to take care of this problem. Donations to legislators’ campaigns is one way to influence their decisions. However, this takes money. Remember that it is illegal for NYSUT to use union dues to support their lobbying efforts. The only way for us to let the legislators know our interests is for us to contribute to VOTE/COPE. Your continued COLAs are a direct result of NYSUT’s lobbying on your behalf. Even if you already have pension deduction for VOTE/COPE, please consider an additional donation to this program. Let’s give them the ammunition they need to continue to fight for all of us.

**Please send checks made out to VOTE/COPE to:**

**Ross Stonefield  
9 Haig Pl. Apt 501  
Dunedin, FL 34698**



**Please support our Florida colleagues by going to [feaweb.org](http://feaweb.org) and using your Florida address to take whatever action is requested.**

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### SPACE COAST, ORLANDO, and JUPITER

Reorganizing. Contact Miriam Hanan

Please send your Participation Fee to the Treasurer of the Unit that you wish to join. Choose the Unit that is closest to your location. Our membership year runs from September 1—August 31.

## RC 43 Tidbits

**Greater Naples:** The Greater Naples Unit elected a new board for the 24/25 season at our April meeting. We thanked both Bob Lomicka and Paul Murphy for serving as co-presidents for 12 years. Our donation this year was to Pinecrest Elementary School in Naples to purchase earphones for the state testing. Our next meeting will be November 13th at 11:00 AM at Longshore Lake Clubhouse, Valewood Drive, Naples, FL. Optional lunch to follow. All are welcome. For more information, please contact Bob Lomicka at 239-514-7234 or Paul Murphy at 239-593-7738.

**Clearwater:** We've had delicious lunches and new venues along with visits to nearby museums this year. It would be great to meet more of you at our monthly events. We meet the second Thursday of each month from September through April for our luncheons. Egan Cottage has been our charitable project for more than fifteen years and over that time our unit has donated more than \$25,000.00 to support special events for the kids. Our (rescheduled) closing luncheon took place on Wednesday, April 17th, at TIFFANYS in Palm Harbor. Our guest speaker, Dennis Kellenberger, Donor Relations Representative from THE SHERIFFS YOUTH RANCH, added the fifth star on our plaque. Each star represents \$5000.00 donated to the ranch for the kids at Egan Cottage. We also presented Dennis with a check for \$900.00 for special activities for the long summer months. In all, our generous members also donated \$400.00 at Christmas for gifts that included a Pizza Party for a total of \$1300.00!

**Southeast:** At our last meeting for the season, in April, we heard from VOYA representative Stephan Coles about the 403B accounts that many of us have. He talked about recent trends in the economy, and that our investments in VOYA are safe. Some of us attended the May 20 NYSUT RC 43 Conference in Orlando and came away with really good information about what is going on in NY concerning teaching in general and the state's attempts to change retiree benefits.

**The Villages/Ocala:** Our Unit member Gail Lazenby received the **NYSUT Humanitarian Award** at the recent RA meeting. The Award has been established to recognize NYSUT members, past and present, who have exhibited the highest level of dedication to their communities through humanitarian actions and philanthropic work. Lazenby, who retired from the Grand Island Teachers Association, served his union in a variety of capacities, including delegate, secretary, president, and negotiator. A paramedic with the Grand Isle Fire department for four decades, he served as EMS captain and chairman of the Board of Directors. Since retiring to The Villages, Lazenby has continued his leadership and service traditions, including serving as a medic and EMS captain. Today, among his other commitments, he organizes and collects hygiene items for area children who are not traditionally domiciled.

**Treasure Coast:** RC 43 President Felicia Bruce, Florida Alliance for Retired Americans (FLARA) Treasure Coast area VP has been chosen to serve as FLARA's first female President to complete the term of former President Bill Sauers, who has resigned due to commitments to the Labor Movement, Women's Rights, Social Security, Medicare and more. Mr. Sauers will continue as FLARA's Sargent at Arms and Field Organizer. Ms. Bruce works tirelessly in every position she holds, and goes above and beyond every day.

## RC 43 Receives Ken Kurzweil Social Justice Recognition Award at the RC in NYC

RC 43 was honored for consistently evidencing its belief in social justice with many of its activities, such as:

- Supporting survivors of domestic abuse by volunteering and collecting donations for a local women's shelter.
- Advocating for educational justice, including supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.
- Promoting healthcare advocacy by hosting meetings and speaking frequently on healthcare for all and the expansion of Medicare.
- Supporting efforts to combat hunger and poverty.
- Championing LGBTQ+ solidarity and encouraging members to take the NYSUT LGBTQ+ Educator Task Force Survey.
- Championing women's issues, history, and rights.
- Lobbying by RC President on civil rights and related issues.
- Educating members on child labor.
- Demonstrating labor solidarity by supporting striking workers and those attempting to organize.

Come Zoom with Us!

NYSUT Retiree Council 43 is having meetings on Zoom!

All NYSUT retirees who live or snowbird in Florida are welcome to join us.

Currently we are inviting all of our members and interested retirees to Zoom Meetings. Please send your email address to Miriam Hanan, [miriam.hanan@nysut.org](mailto:miriam.hanan@nysut.org) or phone her at 516-236-0276 to receive an email invitation to the next meeting.

VISIT US ON LINE

RC 43 Website:

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RC 43 Facebook Page:

[New-York-State-United-Teacher-Retirees-In-Florida](#)

RETIREE COUNCIL 43 & LOCAL UNIT PARTICIPATION FEE/MEMBERSHIP FORM - SEPTEMBER 2024-AUGUST 2025

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CELL PHONE (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

DISTRICT FROM WHICH YOU RETIRED \_\_\_\_\_ YEAR OF RETIREMENT \_\_\_\_\_

TRIF UNIT YOU WISH TO JOIN \_\_\_\_\_

Suggestions? Topics of interest? \_\_\_\_\_

When you participate in your local unit, you are also participating in RC 43.

The membership year runs from September 1, 2024 - Aug. 31, 2025

Please check the amount of your participation fee: \_\_\_\_\_ \$30 (NYSUT Retiree) \_\_\_\_\_ \$20 (Assoc.)

Remit a check payable to "NYSUT RETIREE COUNCIL 43—TRIF UNIT'S NAME" by mail to the Treasurer of the RC Unit you wish to become part of (see page 3), or contact Miriam Hanan, Ph: 516-236-0276

[miriam.hanan@nysut.org](mailto:miriam.hanan@nysut.org)

\*\*\*Participating in RC 43 is in addition to membership in your New York RC Unit. You are not transferring your membership to RC 43.