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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Happy 2024 to all. As I write this, I look out the window at a brighter physical world because of our first "real" storm with accumulating snow. If you are a fan of snow you celebrate, if you are not at least you can agree it makes for a brighter appearance, and if you have decided to travel to avoid the possibility you can justify your decision to leave and avoid snow! Reasons to feel good about it for all.

2023 had been a year where the world continued to be chaotic and unstable. I am fervently hopeful that we will see this turn around and we will head into a more positive direction. We are resilient souls. However, our hope is that many of you will be willing to contribute some time to help make a difference.

Meetings continue and plans are being made for a variety of activities. Your Board, Officers and I continue to represent you at these gatherings in hopes of finding ways to improve your retiree lives. To help with that cause there are multiple resolutions that RC 46 will join in support at the NYSUT Representative Assembly (RA) in NYC May 2024. These resolutions seek to make part of NYSUT's legislative focus support for retiree health care, our pensions, and Social Security. Sadly, there are many state and federal representatives who do not recognize that you have earned and should be able to count on these key aspects of your life after retirement. Their goal instead is to diminish both. Look to the NYSUT website and "NYSUT United" for more information. If I have your current e-mail address, I will send announcements and information so please stay connected. If I do not have the address, please send it to me at cjacobus2@stny.rr.com. You do have 3 elected delegates to represent you at the RA. This year it is in NYC and because of that location the Board has decided to send only 2 of the 3 delegates. The voice of RC 46 will be diminished due to the financial stress NYC places on our RC. This is not a good time to do so as our state and federal representative continue to demonstrate the willingness to diminish retiree financial support.

The Executive Board is in the process of planning our next General Membership Meeting which will be in the first week of June 2024. We are always open to any suggestions for a location, speaker, or type of event. There also are plans being formulated for the next RC 46/4 NYSUT sponsored conference which will be September 23, 2024 at the Watkins Glen Harbor Hotel. More information on both will be forthcoming but put these dates on your 2024 calendar.

Stay connected, stay informed and please plan on future participation in activities that will hopefully help to maintain your current way of life.

Cathie

JUST SO YOU KNOW

December is the month we try to focus on community and donate to local organizations. Our treasury does not allow us to do as much as we would like however it establishes a positive relationship with our communities. Retirees care and enjoy giving back!

This year the Board authorized a \$300 donation to the Southern Tier Food Bank which was designated to be used to fund the Backpack program to provide food for students in need. We purchased, many retirees placed and then cleaned up 25 wreaths at the Woodlawn and Bath National Cemeteries in honor of our deceased veterans. We donated \$200 to the Quilts of Valor program to recognize our living veterans. **Beth Arnold**, one of our active members, has put together information about how we could help the foster child program. This service has unfortunately become more and more essential and utilized. We are considering a future involvement, if possible, to support these children. You make these initiatives possible by sending your voluntary participation fees and participating in fund raisers at General Membership Meetings. To encourage attendance at these meetings, we use some of our funds to lessen the cost for attendees. To date, we have received some contributions of \$10 per member as requested. Some members have even been more generous and increased their donation. However, we have noticed a decline. We have limited fiscal opportunities and at the same time understand how inflation has hit all. We are hopeful that, with some calming of inflation, you will now be able to send in your voluntary participation fee. Please complete and send in the form on the back page with your donation if you have not already done so. If you have done so, we extend to you a GIANT **THANK YOU!**

For those who are planning to donate we send our thanks and look forward to receiving your voluntary minimum participation fee of \$10.00. Simply complete and detach form on the back page, make your check out to Retiree Council #46, and send to **Jim Jacobus** 614 Hillingdon Way Horseheads NY 14845

NYSUT UNITED DEC. 7, 2023:

HORSEHEADS SUPPORT STAFF ASSOCIATION ORGANIZED

NYSUT helped a group of nearly 40 school social workers, social work assistants, occupational therapists and physical therapists in the Horseheads School District organize in August after a nearly year-long struggle. For decades the members were part of the Horseheads Support Staff Association, a catchall group of 10-, 11- and 12-month employees that encompassed 21 different job titles and negotiated contracts but wasn't a real union. It didn't hold officer elections or union meetings and the school superintendent appointed its president. After initial resistance, the Horseheads School board voted unanimously in August to recognize the Horseheads Support Staff Association as its newest bargaining unit. Physical therapist **Alisha Tenbus** spearheaded the organizing effort with the help of NYSUT Organizer **Liz Smith-Rossiter** and Southern Tier Regional Staff Director **Tim O'Brien**.

RC #46 Board and Officers send our best wishes and congratulations to this new group of NYSUT members. Some of us were previously, as Inservice members of Horseheads Teachers and Support Staff, involved with these fine employees who faced a difficult situation. We are glad to welcome them into the NYSUT family and look forward to future involvement with their members. If we, as retirees, can help in any way please reach out to us through **Cathie Jacobus**, President, at cjacobus2@stny.rr.com.

SRPS LAUD PASSING OF SECTION 80

Author: **Molly Belmont** Source: NYSUT Communications

Signed by **Governor Hochul** on November 21, New York State SRP Recognition Day, the legislative package will strengthen the rights of SRPs and other public sector workers. One of the changes will amend Section 80 of the civil service law, closing certain loopholes to ensure that union members enjoy the same rights as everyone else. SRPs have been lobbying for this change since the 1990s.

The amendment means that all competitive and non-competitive employees are entitled to the same layoff and job recall protections, ensuring fairer treatment of SRPs.

Congratulations to all SRPs—at long last there is recognition of your value. We thank all at NYSUT who persevered and were able to change legislative attitudes and right a wrong. Next step is to increase your involvement with NYSUT's Retiree Council #46!

CALLING ON ALL CONCERNED RETIREES!

We are entering a period where we must make some tough, informed, and serious decisions based on what is important to us. The political season is starting to go into full swing. Before we know it, we will be asked to make some choices that may have long lasting effects on our lives and country. There will be many factors and information available to assist us in making the right decisions. Retirees are most concerned with the political positions on maintaining our health care at an affordable and meaningful level, keeping Social Security alive and financially viable, and securing our pensions at the level which allows us to live a meaningful retired life. As for our families and friends some areas of interest and concern, in no order of importance, include student debt, a woman's right to control her personal health care, fair and free elections, global warming, etc. More importantly is the need to preserve the various structures of our democratic republic created and built by the Founders! As plans are formulated, we may be seeking volunteers to do any or all the following:

- Write postcards, make phone calls, send text messages attend meetings, rallies, and/or town halls, talk to your local representatives, or engage neighbors and/or families in discussions, etc. If you do none of the above, we ask that you at least do the research and fact checking on those whose names appear on the November ballot.
- Decide what topics are important to you and seek information about those issues from any candidate you are considering.
- Ask yourself if you know what the position of the candidate you support is on our democratic institutions and structures? Do you know if they support free and fair elections and the peaceful transfer of power from one administration to the other? How do they feel about maintaining your access to a good, affordable Medicare program and Social Security? What is their stance on the pension you receive—is it an earned benefit or an entitlement? Do they believe that we need to address the concerns and conditions of our weather based on climate change/global warming? Does the person believe in a woman's right to decide what her personal health care should be? Is the student debt bore by today's college graduates a concern that needs to be addressed? Is our democratic republic worth fighting to keep? Immigration is a much more difficult topic to solve—is your candidate willing to work to resolve those problems in a mutually beneficial way? Are you getting your background candidate information from a reliable, unbiased source which presents various points of view? Are you on the alert for misinformation and/or can you sort that information into facts versus opinions?

We are a diverse group with diverse opinions-my goal is not to persuade anyone of one position or another. My goal is to encourage careful thought and consideration. The present world we live in has many who are

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Check out all your union membership has to offer!



NYSUT Member Benefits

Every Dollar Counts!

When it comes to protecting yourself, your loved ones, your income or your most valuable possessions, NYSUT Member Benefits has insurance programs that fit the bill. Whether you are looking for **auto & home, life, disability, long-term care, dental, vision, or pet insurance**, there is a Member Benefits-endorsed plan that may be of assistance featuring value-added extras unavailable to the public.

Get started by first bookmarking the Member Benefits website at memberbenefits.nysut.org. There, you will find numerous tools and resources available to you as a NYSUT member – including a **Financial Learning Center** with articles designed to help educate you on financial decisions and topics.

Member Benefits also endorses several discounted shopping programs that can help you save on both everyday and more expensive purchases. Finally, if you ever have an issue or problem when using a Member Benefits program, our staff take great pride in their ability to quickly assist members with any concerns that may arise.

Visit memberbenefits.nysut.org or call **800-626-8101** to learn more about the endorsed programs and services available to you through your union membership.



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.

Jan/Feb 2022



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dressing up their personal views as facts and selling them through various media outlets. This piece is not aimed at selling any political beliefs to those who receive this newsletter. There was a time when affiliations strongly influenced our decisions, however we need to take a closer look at candidates beyond their affiliations. It is a critical time for our country. As voting Americans, we must carefully listen and verify what we hear and read to insure we are making the best choice possible. We must make certain, in this important election, that we vote only after thoughtful consideration for whom you are voting. There are no perfect choices but there are choices that are better than the alternatives. To continue our successful existence as part of the 200 plus-years-old Great American Experiment, we need to consider our decisions seriously and carefully as we travel to the polls in November. We need to be engaged, involved, and confident about our choices—that is what a good American voter does!



VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION FEE

NAME _____ PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIPCODE _____

DISTRICT FROM WHICH RETIRED _____

"Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choice are prepared to choose wisely. The real safeguard of democracy, therefore, is education."

- Franklin D. Roosevelt

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