

VIEW*POINT

April/May Retiree Council 5

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Hi everyone,

Happy Spring!

I hope this newsletter finds you doing well and enjoying the spring weather! I always love it when the spring flowers start to bloom. Not only are they beautiful, but they bring the promise of better weather and better times ahead.

By now the NYS primaries are behind us. I hope that you participated and made your voice heard. It's important to exercise our right to vote and have a say in the future of our democracy. With over 8000 retirees in RC 5, we have a strong voice in what happens in our towns, school districts, the state and the nation.

Your delegates from RC 5 are heading to New York City on May 2-4 for the NYSUT RA. The resolutions we will be dealing with are all found on the NYSUT website (www.nysut.org). If you feel strongly about any of the resolutions, please contact me at nysutrc5@gmail.com and we will be sure to take a look at them more closely.

RC 5 continues to work with NYSUT to "fix tier 6". This is a primary focus of NYSUT and a great amount of VOTE-COPE dollars have been spent on this campaign. If you can find it in your heart to donate or increase your donation to VOTE-COPE, rest assured that your contributions will go a long way towards improving the retirement of many current members in education. There is a critical shortage of workers throughout education, from cleaners to cafeteria workers to bus drivers to secretaries to teaching assistants to teachers. One of the reasons for this is the pitiful retirement that tier 6 in its current form gives. I know that this is not the only reason for the shortage, but it is a contributing factor and one that we can help do something about. If you would, please go to: <https://nysut.involve.me/fix-tier-6-take-action> and let your legislators know they have the power to fix this.

Please mark your calendars: NYSUT's 22nd RC5/6 Regional Conference will be held at the Double Tree Inn, on Jefferson Road in Henrietta on Wednesday, September 25. It promises to be a highly informative and enjoyable day! (See note on Page 2)

I'm pleased to say that I have heard no complaints from any of you regarding AETNA. As always, if you have a problem, please let me know.

Get outside and enjoy the improving weather!

Doug

**NYSUT REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR RETIREE
COUNCILS 5 & 6
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2024**

Retiree Council 5

President: Doug Becker
(nysutrc5@gmail.com)

Vice-President: Freddi Macek

Secretary-Nancy Demarkis-
Tese

Treasurer: Barbara Quinn

NYSUT Retiree Services

Consultant: Peter Randazzo

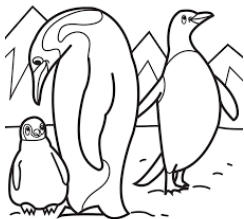
Viewpoint Editor: Donna
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Save the above date for the next exciting Regional Conference for Retiree Councils 5 & 6. Once again, it will be at Double Tree by Hilton, 1111 Jefferson Road in Henrietta. We'll start a little earlier, 8:00 am, and finish by 3 pm. The cost will be approximately \$25 per person, and we are planning on offering some early bird specials. Included in the price are a Continental Breakfast and lunch.

Our morning speaker will, once again, be Ron Gross, NYSUT's 2nd Vice President, and our after lunch speaker will be Chet Fery, The Bread Man. Every one who attends his talk will go home with a loaf of bread.

Workshops will include Steve Kramer talking about some legal issues for older adults; Jackie Davis talking about some of NYSUT's Member Benefits offerings;

Karen Godshall, a certified fitness trainer and retiree from Churchville Chili will offer an introduction to Basic Yoga; there will be a speaker discussing some of NYSUT's political action programs; we'll have a speaker from Lifespan talking about some of the programs they offer; and Peter Randazzo will share pictures of his trip to Antarctica. In addition, we're hoping to have some musical entertainment provided by New Horizons.

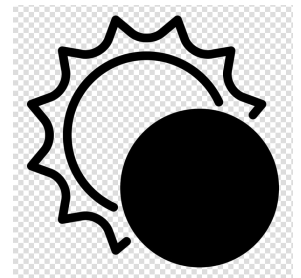


Please watch for the registration form and directions on how to register which will be coming out in August. And don't forget to register early.

FROM THE EDITOR

Our 2024 Total Solar Eciipse

Although our Rochester weather didn't provide us the bright blue skies and clear vision of the eclipse that we had hoped for, most people agreed that it was still an amazing experience to see darkness in the middle of the day, feel the temperature decidedly drop, and hear everything seem to go silent around us. If you were like me, you sent away for your packet of eclipse viewing glasses ahead of time. Mine came with a great little booklet with interesting facts about the eclipse. If you didn't get that booklet, I would like to share some of the facts with you - even if the eclipse has passed into history.



1). The Sun is 100 times larger than the earth; the earth is four times larger than the moon, making the sun 400 times larger than the moon. The Sun is also 400 times farther away from the Earth than the Moon is, thus making the Sun and Moon appear the same size to us here on Earth, explaining why the much smaller moon can completely cover the sun!

(continued on Page 3)



- 2) The Eclipse can't help but give the viewer an awesome as well as eerie feeling. Imagine how ancient people felt. Thinking they could reignite the sun, indigenous peoples in North America shot flaming arrows toward the sun. The Chinese, thinking a dragon had eaten the sun, made loud noises with drums and shot arrows skyward to scare the dragon away.
- 3) Eclipses were often viewed as omens. In 585 BC, a total eclipse occurred

during a battle in eastern Turkey. The two armies took the eclipse as a sign to lay down their weapons and make peace.

4) In 1973, scientists boarded a Concorde supersonic jet and flew at 1,250 MPH to stay inside the Moon's shadow during an eclipse over Africa. In doing so, they extended the duration of totality to 74 minutes - 10 times longer than could be experienced on the Earth's surface.

5) The Moon's average distance from the Earth is slowly increasing by about one inch per year. Because of this, the Moon will appear too small to cover the Sun in about 500 million years. At this time, there will no longer be total eclipses seen on Earth.

6) The next total eclipse of the Sun seen anywhere in the contiguous USA will happen on August 25, 2044, but totality will only be seen from parts of Montana and North Dakota...so make your travel plans!!

Source: The pamphlet, "BE ECLIPSMART- The Complete Solar Eclipse Observing Guide by Fred and Patricia Espenak

Election 2024...Senior Benefits at Risk???



As Campaign 2024 begins to ramp up, proposals are starting to be floated around pertaining to issues of great importance to Seniors. Whether these are just trial balloons or serious proposals are not known at this point. Here are a few of these issues:

- 1) **Repealing The Affordable Care Act** - passed 14 years ago this week, this act strengthened Medicare and Medicaid and created important coverage guarantees and consumer protections for people of all ages. From expanding access to affordable care to preventing discrimination based on health status, as well as improving Medicare's financial status, the ACA made significant improvements to the nation's health care infrastructure. These advances are especially important for older adults, who are more likely than younger adults to have health problems that cause them to rely on the ACA's consumer protections. The ACA gave states the option to expand their Medicaid programs to include coverage for low-income, non-elderly adults (ages 19-64) without dependent children; prevents insurers from charging older consumers more than three times what younger people pay (Prior to the ACA, there was no limit on this disparity); prevents compliant insurance plans from denying, limiting, or charging people more for coverage based on a pre-existing condition; prevents private insurance plans from placing annual or lifetime limits on coverage; requires most insurers to cover, at a minimum, a set of 10 essential health benefits.
- 2) Proposals being discussed in the House of Representatives call for **raising the Social Security retirement age to 69** and ending Medicare's guaranteed health care benefits and replacing it with a payment toward the cost of private insurance called "premium support."
- 3) **A proposal for over \$1.5 trillion in cuts to Social Security and also cuts to disability benefits.**
- 4) **A proposal to strip Medicare's power to negotiate lower prices on prescription drugs.**

Source: March 25, 2024 NYSARA Monday Alert Retiree News

*** Make sure your representatives know how you stand on these issues sooner rather than later!