

Western N.Y. NEWS & Views

SUMMER 2024

Reaching out to Retirees in five Western New York Counties—We are over 12,000 strong—A Coalition of Councils 1, 2 & 3



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From the President's Desk by Lynn Mele



Dear Retirees,

Happy Summer! This is a great time to enjoy the many outdoor activities that WNY has to offer. From the art shows, the wide variety of festivals, concerts, and Bison baseball to enjoying our spectacular waterfront, there's no shortage of things to do. Get out, explore and enjoy.

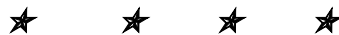
I would like to express my sincere thanks to all of you who contributed to our Mini Grant Program by using the coupon on the back page of the newsletter. As a result of your generous donations, we were able to fund five more grants. You have made a difference by helping active teachers in the classroom. Some examples of the projects you helped to fund include the construction of a 12-foot blue paper Mache whale, the building of a Monarch Butterfly station complete with seeds, soil, and fertilizer and finally, helping to establish the first Annual Day of Caring at an area middle school that has benefited Roswell Park Cancer Institute. Thank you.



I cannot emphasize the ongoing efforts to **Fix Tier 6**. This affects all public servants across NYS. Please go online to fixtier6.org and join in our efforts to correct the economic injustices for all members of this tier.

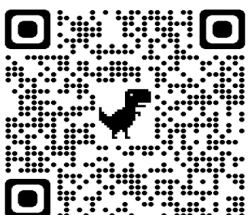
Just a reminder—VOTE/ COPE, the political fundraising arm of NYSUT, needs your financial support. Your contributions help NYSUT to advocate for and protect things that matter to all our members...retired or active. The top priorities include pensions, academic freedom, contracts, collective bargaining and tenure. You may receive a request from your former union to contribute, however, an easy and simple way is to use the pension deduction option offered by NYSUT. Contact Members Services to sign up today.

Yours in Solidarity,
Lynn Mele, President



TIME TO GET OUT AND ABOUT

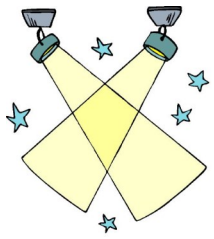
Western New York has much to offer for summer fun. A few suggestions from members include the Buffalo AKG Art Museum, the Science Museum, and the Historical Museum. Don't forget activities at the waterfront, the state parks, and the ball games. When was the last time you spent the day in Niagara Falls, hiked the Niagara Gorge, or visited Lake Ontario. Have you ridden the "Maid of the Mist" lately? You can catch a free outdoor concert or see a performance at one of our WNY local theatres. And, of course, every weekend during the summer there is a festival going on somewhere. It's time to take advantage of Western New York's summertime to enjoy all our area has to offer!



For up-to-date information on RC's 1, 2 & 3, visit our new website at <http://rcwest.ny.aft.org>

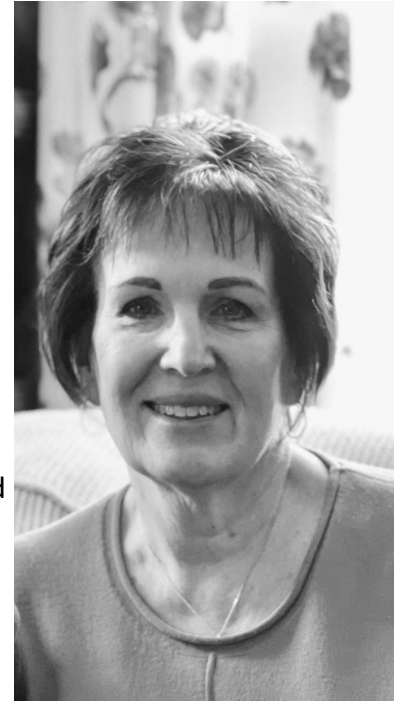
SCAN the QR CODE to be taken to our Facebook Page!

Make a friend request; we are a private group.



SPOTLIGHT ON..... LIZ DOLCE

Liz is presently the Recording Secretary of the NYSUT RC 1, 2, & 3 Retiree’s Board.



A life-long WNY resident, Liz grew up in West Seneca. She graduated from Buffalo State College with a Bachelor’s degree in Education—earning dual certification in Elementary and Special Education. Her Master’s degree was also in Special Education. She feels fortunate that she was able to obtain a teaching job in the district she went to school in—West Seneca Central SD. She retired in 2014 after 34 years with the district. Her positions over this time included 24 years as a Special Education teacher, 3 years as a Behavioral Specialist for ERIE I BOCES on a state grant, and 7 years as the Director of the West Seneca Teacher Center. Liz was actively involved in WSTA activities (West Seneca Teachers Association). As an in-service member, she served as a Union Rep for two buildings and attended the Committee of 100 annually representing the Teacher Center. In retirement (2014-present) Liz serves as the WSTA Retiree Representative—the duties which include monthly attendance at Executive Council meetings, maintaining ongoing communication for retirees, coordinating learning, social and community service opportunities for WSTA retirees, and is responsible for the annual retiree Vote Cope drive. She has served on the NYSUT Retirees Board since 2015. Aside from her professional involvement, Liz is a Community Service-Volunteer at FeedMore WNY for the Back-Pack Program which assists students by providing easily prepared, nutritious foods in take-home bags each Friday and throughout the summer. She also volunteers at the West Seneca Schools Clothes Closet and at Elderwood Assisted Living Facility doing crafts activities for the residents.

Liz has been married to her husband Bob for 43 years. They have two children and 4 grandchildren. Her hobbies and interests include traveling with her husband, spending time with her family, reading, craft projects, sewing, cooking and baking—she loves the time retirement allows to try new recipes! Retirement has also allowed her to take up a new craft—quilting.

In her words, Liz feels that retirement life is full. “I feel very blessed to have this time to do the things I truly enjoy, including the opportunity to remain engaged as a NYSUT member.”



Several school districts have established Clothes Closets in their schools for families. The closets provide clothing, coats, backpacks, shoes, and hygiene products free of charge. Check with your local school district to see if they need any assistance that you can get involved with.

FUTURE SOCIAL EVENTS AND WELCOMING NEW 2024 RETIREES

Did you mark your calendar for our **Welcome New Retirees Fall Luncheon** on **Tuesday, September 10** at **The Columns , Elma, New York. The menu is a Brunch Buffet.**

*Now is the time of the year that our in-service colleagues will be committing to join us in the retiree ranks! If you hear of individuals who are making that decision, tell them about Retiree Councils 1, 2, 3 and invite them to register for our **New Retirees Fall Luncheon on September 10***

Send a note to Janet Goddard, our NYSUT Retirees Consultant, at janet.goddard@nysut.org which will help insure that they are put on our mailing list ASAP. Tell Janet what school district they retired from and when they retired.

Also, our Holiday Party will be on Tuesday, December 10 at Salvatore’s. Menu choices include: Prime Rib, Salmon, Chicken Francaise, Vegetable Napoleon.

Full information on these luncheons will be forthcoming in our August and Fall newsletters.



FREE MEMBER BENEFITS

Have you checked out the NYSUT services lately that you can receive as a retiree? The newest services include: Peer Support Line, Premium Calm Service, YOURCARE360, and Legal Assistance Plan.

LEGAL AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

NYSUT members can get quality legal and financial planning assistance for themselves and their families by purchasing the NYSUT Member Benefits Trust-endorsed **Legal Service Plan** or NYSUT Member Benefits Corporation-endorsed **Financial Counseling Program**.

For an annual fee, the Legal Service Plan which is provided by the law firm of Feldman, Kramer & Monaco, P.C. -- offers legal expertise on a variety of personal legal matters such as dealing with a speeding ticket or handling estate planning. With the base plan, you'll get access to unlimited, toll-free advice from plan attorneys.

Meanwhile, the Financial Counseling Program—provided by Stacey Braun Associates, Inc.—offers unbiased, objective advice customized to your specific financial situation. The full-service program will provide you with up to six hours of objective toll-free telephone consultations with a certified financial planner or registered investment advisor.



Member Benefits also endorses a number of other financial programs available for use by NYSUT members and their families.

For more information, go to [https://memberbenefits.nysut.org/program-service/legal-and-financial/legal-service plan](https://memberbenefits.nysut.org/program-service/legal-and-financial/legal-service-plan).

MY PET PROTECTION PLANS

The pet insurance program from Nationwide can help NYSUT members manage the increasingly high cost of veterinary care for dogs, cats, avian, and exotic pets—from annual preventive care to accidents and illnesses.

Freedom: You're free to use any veterinarian, anywhere in the world—including specialists and emergency providers—with no pre-approval necessary.

Flexibility & Savings: Nationwide has plans to fit every pet and every budget. NYSUT members receive preferred pricing as a NYSUT member (along with additional discounts when enrolling multiple pets). Save 5% when you enroll two or three pets, or 10% when you enroll four or more pets living at the same household and are insured by the same primary insured person.



Extras: Nationwide policyholders receive 24/7 access to the **Vethelpine**® for live veterinary advice on any pet health question, along with discounts on hand-picked pet products and services, a subscription to Nationwide's award-winning *The Companion* magazine, and more.

Visit <https://benefits.petinsurance.com/nysut>



SUMMER IS UPON US!



CHECK OUT THE BENEFITS AND SERVICES AVAILABLE THROUGH
NYSUT MEMBER BENEFITS FOR TRAVEL, ENTERTAINMENT AND ONLINE SHOPPING
<https://memberbenefits.nysut.org/program-service/shopping-travel>

PARTICIPATION FEE FORM (2024-2025)

If you have not already sent in your Participation Fee Form, we urge you to support our Retiree Councils by sending in your \$10 participation fee and by encouraging others to support the work we do for all of us. Thank you.

Name _____ District you retired from _____

Street Address _____ Year of Retirement _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Make your \$10 contribution payable to: **NYSUT Retirees of WNY**.

Mail this form to: Eva Mroczka, c/o NYSUT Retirees of WNY, 270 Essjay Rd., Williamsville, NY 14221

MINI-GRANT DONATION FORM FOR 2024-2025

NYSUT Retirees of WNY awards mini-grants up to \$500 to in-service teachers to supplement special projects. Grant monies are funded by our "Share the Wealth" drawings and retiree donations. This past year we were able to award five more mini-grants to local teachers for a total of \$7,000. Our mini-grants help make a difference! Please consider donating to this worthwhile activity.

NAME _____

PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

E-MAIL _____

DONATION AMOUNT \$ _____

Please send your donation payable to: **NYSUT Retirees of WNY** and mail to:

ATTN: Mark Shanahan
270 Essjay Road
Williamsville, NY 14221