

RC39 Officers Attend the NYSUT 2019 Representative Assembly



Shaun Gerien, Joan Prymas and Peter Herron,

Local and Retiree Council Presidents Conference

Peter Herron, NYSUT RC39 President

As president of RC39, I attended the Pre-RA Local and Retiree Council Presidents Conference. During the Presidents Conference I chose to attend the Higher Ed Policy Council Meeting. Below are issues discussed at this meeting.

Security

Most SUNY campuses are not prepared for an active shooter.

Adjuncts

The ratio of adjuncts to full time faculty continues to grow. By hiring adjuncts colleges save on salaries, retirement payments and health insurance. NYSUT is working hard to get adjuncts to join the union and to maintain union membership. Adjunct union dues have to be low because of low adjunct salaries. On most campuses NYSUT locals work hard to improve adjunct working conditions.

Adjuncts frequently do not know if they have any courses assigned to them until the last minute. Sometimes there are no courses offered to them. When this happens, many adjuncts apply for unemployment insurance. At this time NYSUT is conducting a survey to gauge adjunct faculty members' recent experiences with unemployment insurance. A similar survey was conducted in 2007. Survey results will help inform and guide NYSUT's work on the issue of unemployment insurance.

Legislative update

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RC39 President Peter Herron, Secretary Shaun Gerien, and Treasurer Joan Prymas attended the NYSUT Representative Assembly in Albany on May 3 and 4, 2019. Herron attended the Local and Retiree Council Presidents Conference on Friday, May 3, 9:00 AM to 2:30 PM. Gerien and Prymas attended the New Delegate Orientation on May 3, 2:30 PM to 3:15 PM. From 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM all three attended the first general session. From 7:30 PM to 8:40 PM they participated in the Resolutions Committee meetings. They were glad to get back to their hotel rooms after such a long day and with Saturday beginning so early.

Saturday, May 4, began with a 7:30 AM breakfast meeting of the Retiree-at-large E.D. 51-53 Governance group. The second general session began at 9:00 AM and continued until after 11:30 AM. After lunch the second general session resumed at 12:15 PM. The RA ended around 4:00 PM and Shaun and Pete began their over four-hour ride home.

The 47th Annual Representative Assembly

The RA agenda was so packed there was no time for partying or sightseeing. The general sessions were held in a room with well over one thousand, seven hundred delegates. Security was strict in order to make sure only authorized delegates were permitted into the general sessions. The essential work of the general sessions is the consideration of proposed resolutions and reaffirmations of previously approved resolutions which have been submitted by local and retiree councils. There were forty-eight resolutions submitted and three reaffirmations. Resolutions passed by the RA become official NYSUT policy.

The proposed resolutions were assigned to nine resolutions committees. The nine resolutions committees were Civil and Human Rights, College and University, Educational Issues I, Educational Issues II, Health Care and Workplace Safety, Legislative/Political Action I, Legislative/Political Action II, Organization, and Pension/Retirement. The resolutions committees meet before the general sessions to deliberate the proposed resolutions assigned to the committee. Each committee must recommend to the general session the adoption, adoption with amendments, rejection, referral to the board of directors or table for each proposed resolution assigned to the committee.

With over one thousand, seven hundred delegates attending the general sessions, strict rules of order are essential. Strict protocols are required to give all delegates an opportunity to speak for or against resolution committees' recommendations. During the general sessions each resolutions committee presents its recommendation on each of the proposed resolutions assigned to the committee. Delegates have the opportunity to support or oppose each of the committee's rec-

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In Retirement Having Fun and Serving Others

Mike Fisher

When I retired after 40 years as a college professor and division chair, 33 of them at SUNY Sullivan College, I was concerned that I would be bored. That has not been a problem. In fact, I probably have never been busier. The secret for me is volunteering in public service capacities—serving on not-for-profit boards. It helped that two of those opportunities involved life-long passions.

I grew up at the Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome and was one of the air show announcers for 25 years. I restored and flew several classic aircraft and was delighted when I was asked to join the Rhinebeck Aerodrome Museum Board of Trustees. RAM is chartered as a museum by the New York State Board of Regents with a mission to educate and entertain, introducing new generations to the history and magic of flight. We house over 60 aircraft from a 1909 Bleriot (the oldest flying airplane in the world) to a 1941 Fleet Finch WWII trainer, with about 20 machines flyable. The flying collection takes wing on Saturdays and Sundays, from mid-June to late October. With a very



Mike Fisher at the Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome

limited staff of technical specialists to maintain and fly the aircraft, and a volunteer staff to assist with the air shows, this is a hands-on, working board. In addition to announcing, I handle our web and social media presences (a bit unusual for a 71-year old), print and media advertising, and I'm largely responsible for policies, procedures, and assisting with development.

I started in radio at the age of 14, right in the middle of the musical 60s so I welcomed an invitation to join the board of the Museum at Bethel Woods, at the National Historic Site of the Woodstock Festival. This is a much different experience, with superb professionals who handle the day-to-day operations. The board works at the policy and advisory level, and oversees special projects. One of the most rewarding was the Cultural Landscape Report, an in-depth examination of the large and diverse grounds that hosted half a million people. One of the results of the CLR is the reopening of the "Bindy Bazaar," a wooded area west of the main field where the concert took place. It formed the commerce and trading area for attendees. It is open to the public this season as a trail walk that passes the remains of some of the original booths. Another fascinating project is the "Message Tree" at the corner of the Festival Field which is being cloned. The tree, with original staples and nails from messages posted there, has a finite life. It has been successfully restarted on grafts and there is hope for some seedlings.

My wife just finished her term as chairperson of the local Boys and Girls Club. Somehow, I managed to get caught up in the wine auction of the annual farm-to-table fundraiser.

Want to remain vital? Find a board or a service organization, and stay active. I use the skills and knowledge base from my higher education career every day. I used to say my students kept me young. Now, it is the activities.

Visit the Bethel woods website at www.bethelwoodscenter.org,

Visit the Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome website at www.olderhinebeck.org

By staying involved in NYSUT through Retiree Council 39 you can:

- Participate in volunteer opportunities: mentoring, book giveaways to students, holiday activities, etc.
- Advocate for issues related to education, health care, earned benefits, etc. in your local, state, and federal legislatures by phone banking, picketing, contacting elected representatives and using the NYSUT MAC app <https://mac.nysut.org>
- Share institutional history with new union members
- Assist with local initiatives
- Help get candidates elected to school board/city council, etc.
- Run to be a member of a local school board/city council, etc.
- Find resources to help get answers to personal concerns
- Share concerns and issues of in-service members with community organizations
- Participate in your NYSUT RC39 and stay involved in issues that will affect your retirement!

<https://www.nysut.org/members/retirees/retiree-council-websites>



RC39 Website

Go to the RC39 website, <http://rc39.ny.aft.org/>, where you can read recent NYSUT RC39 newsletters in color, AFT and NYSUT news releases, and much more.

Local and Retiree Council Presidents Conference

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Many high school students are taking courses in high school for dual credit, both high school and college. Tuition for these dual course credits is an issue. Should tuition be reduced? Free? Should local school districts pay the college tuition?

State money for SUNY and CUNY

There will be no new state money for SUNY in 2019. There are efforts to privatize some SUNY and CUNY facilities, for example Downstate and Syracuse medical colleges and possibly other SUNY medical colleges. NYSUT is trying to restore state subsidies to the medical colleges. The Gap Trap is still an issue.

Student loan forgiveness

The United States Department of Education's public service forgiveness program denies 73% (only 1640 approved) of its applicants, making the program all but nonexistent. NYSUT and AFT are prioritizing their efforts to change this policy.

The 47th Annual RA

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ommendations, or propose an amendment to a committee's recommendation. Sometimes the committee's recommendations are accepted without debate but, often there are disagreements resulting in heated debate. Sometimes there are amendments to amendments giving the parliamentarian a real workout. Eventually all proposed resolutions are adopted, adopted as amended, defeated, referred to the board of directors, or tabled.

Between each resolution committee presentation there are many other activities. Celebrating Excellence Among Our Members gave delegates the most edifying moments during the RA. Delegates were presented with the accomplishments of some outstanding people in our union. Alhassan Susso of the International Community High School in the South Bronx is the 2019 New York State Teacher of the Year. The Retiree Member of the Year was shared by Joyce Magnus and Ken Ulric. Recognitions were given for higher education, health care professionals, school-related professionals, local community service, and leadership. Community service awards were given to nineteen retirees. VOTE-COPE fund raisers were also recognized.

During the general sessions there were speeches given by local and state politicians.

RC39 needs member participation

RC39 President Pete Herron

The RC39 newsletter is by and for its members. All members are encouraged to submit (email preferred) an article. The article can be a creative writing piece, something on a retiree issue (union, health insurance, pending legislation, etc.), travel, hobbies, volunteer activities, or whatever you think would be of interest to RC39 members.

RC39 needs new leadership. All RC39 deliberations are done by email. Members can request to be placed on the RC39 officer email list. Everyone on the list will be able to participate in all email discussions. Only elected officers will be able to vote. This is a great way to learn what is involved in being a RC39 officer.

You can contact me at rc39pete@optonline.net, or 98 Rocky Point Landing Rd., Rocky Point, NY 11778.

Looking forward to hearing from you.



Retiree Council 39 Board of Directors

President, First NYSUT and AFT Delegate, Newsletter Editor and Webmaster: Peter Herron

Vice President, NYSUT and AFT Delegate: Judith Holmes

Secretary, NYSUT and AFT Delegate: Shaun Gerien

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Director-at-large: Tim McLean

Send your comments, suggestions, and inquiries to NYSUT RC39 Officers, 98 Rocky Point Landing Rd., Rocky Point, NY 11778 or rc39pete@optonline.net.

RC39 Newsletter is looking for comments, suggestions and articles from its members.



Send your comments, suggestions, or article to Peter Herron at rc39pete@optonline.net or mail to 98 Rocky Point Landing Road, Rocky Point, NY 11778. Your article will be published when space is available. RC39, NYSUT, and AFT news will be given priority.



Address Change

Do not let a new address keep you from receiving NYSUT RC39 newsletters. There are three ways to update your address. Contact NYSUT Member Records at 1-800-342-9810 ext. 6224. Send written changes to: NYSUT Member Records, 800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY 12110, or e-mail changes to memberec@nysutmail.org. If you are a snowbird, give Member Records a few weeks notice to change its address records each way.

Have you paid your voluntary RC39 contribution for 2019?

If you have not sent in your voluntary NYSUT RC39 annual contribution, now is as good a time as ever. Just send your check along with the form below to the RC39 treasurer. It is your contributions that enable RC39 officers and delegates to represent you at NYSUT conferences and meetings.

Retiree Council 39 Voluntary 2019 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 RC39, along with this completed form to:
 Ms. Joan Prymas, RC39 Treasurer, 141 Montgomery Street, Ilion, NY 13357