

### **RC39 Election this June**

The terms of all elected RC39 positions ends June 30, 2021, and the beginning of the new three-year terms begin on July 1, 2021.

The elected positions are:

President, First NYSUT and AFT Delegate

Vice President, NYSUT and AFT Delegate

Secretary, NYSUT and AFT Delegate

Treasurer, NYSUT and AFT Alternate Delegate

and two Directors-at-large.

RC39 President Peter Herron will nominate five RC39 members to serve on the nominating committee. The nominating committee shall propose a slate of officers and directors-at-large which will be published in the March RC39 newsletter and emailed to all members for whom RC39 has a valid email address. Members can directly nominate candidates for any office and director-at-large positions. The May RC39 newsletter will contain the names of all nominees for all positions. NYSUT Headquarters will conduct the election, by mail, in June 2021.

The procedures for the election of RC39 officers and directors-at-large are contained in the RC39 constitution which can be obtained by going to the RC39 website, <http://rc39.ny.aft.org/>.

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### **A Call for RC39 Nominations**

RC39 is asking for members to serve on the nominating committee. The committee will do all its work by email, phone, Zoom or another platform. If you wish to be a member of the nominating committee or to be nominated for a particular position, email your name, mailing address, phone number, and email address to Pete Herron, [rc39pete@optonline.net](mailto:rc39pete@optonline.net). If you wish to nominate a member for a particular position, please make sure the member is willing to serve.

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### **RC39 was established September 2006**

In May 2006, NYSUT invited community college retirees to participate in a teleconference on forming a statewide community college retiree council. We met at the NYSUT Headquarters in New York City on June 9, 2006. The other conference centers were located at East Syracuse, Jamestown, and Latham (Albany). It was agreed that a community college retiree council should be established. At the end of the conference, we were given several retiree council constitutions to serve as examples for writing a constitution for RC39.

Using all these constitutions as guides, we put together a draft constitution and sent it to everyone who participated in the teleconference for whom we had an e-mail address. We also sent it to NYSUT Headquarters in Latham to make sure this constitution conformed to the regulations of NYSUT. There were many who helped to clean up the draft constitution. While this was happening NYSUT and NEA were scheduled to merge. This initially seemed to mean that the constitution had to be ratified and the slate of officers elected before September 1, 2006. This deadline served as a motivation to get the constitution drafted and the slate of officers in place as quickly as possible. We came close but missed the deadline of September 1 by a few days. It turned out that the deadline of September 1 was not mandatory and the ratification and election took place in October. The first RC39 newsletter was published February 2007.

Two of the original officers are still serving RC39, Joan Prymas as Treasurer and Pete Herron as President.

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### **I'm Stepping Down after Fifteen years as RC39 President**

Pete Herron

The excitement of forming a community college retiree council at the 2006 teleconference seemed to indicate that there would be many retirees from all over New York State ready to become active members of RC39. Well, that did not happen. It has been a struggle to get retirees to run for office. Only when no one stepped forward to serve as president did I accept running for president. Over the years I have appealed for someone else to take on the presidency only to run again when no one came forward. I am no longer able to continue serving as RC39 president, therefore I will not be running for any position. I will continue to serve RC39 as immediate past president. I will serve as newsletter editor and website manager at the discretion of the new administration.

**Retiree Council 39 Board of Directors**

President, First NYSUT and AFT Delegate, **Peter Herron**  
Vice President, NYSUT and AFT Delegate, **Judith Holmes**  
Secretary, NYSUT and AFT Delegate, **Shaun Gerien**  
Treasurer, NYSUT and AFT Alternate Delegate, **Joan Prymas**  
Directors-at-large, **Tim McLean and Kevin Peterman**

**RC39 Addresses**

98 Rocky Point Landing Rd., Rocky Point, NY 11778, email: rc39pete@optonline.net

**RC39 Newsletter Committee**

Newsletter Editor, **Pete Herron:**  
Editorial Members, **Ann Fey, Frances Hilliard, Judith Homes, Sivia Kaye, Richard Macy, Tim McLean, Kevin Peterman, Joan Prymas, Ann Smallen, Patti Tana**

**RC39 Website**

Webmaster, **Pete Herron:** Website address: <http://rc39.ny.aft.org/>

**Get on the RC39 Email List**

In order to receive RC39 notices and early colored RC39 newsletters email your name, the community college from which you retired, your email address, mailing address, and phone number to rc39pete@optonline.net.

**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](mailto:memberec@nysutmail.org). If you are a snowbird, give Member Records a few weeks notice to change its address records each way.

**RC39 Encourages its Members to Attend Regional Conferences**

RC39 will pay a member's expenses, up to \$40, for attending a NYSUT regional retiree conference. Check the RC39 website for details.

**Silver Linings amidst the Pandemic**

Sivia Kaye, English Professor Emerita, Nassau Community College

**Sometimes a silver lining appears where one would least expect it.** It comes unbidden, but welcomed nonetheless. Such was the case with the Pandemic which we are all experiencing with different levels of tolerance.

Boredom is what some complain about: it was never an issue with me. There is so much on my to-do list that I am never at a loss for what to focus on. But now, in the Covid-19 era, I discovered 3 pursuits that unexpectedly surfaced.

**The first was my return to the PIANO.** I'm lucky to have a piano (bought at the metropolitan Museum) which supposedly belonged to Napoleon's sister. Whether its pedigree is valid or not, it is a gorgeous piece of furniture — even if never played. Recently, I returned to my old music books and began figuring out the notes and the fingering. It did not come easily to me: I have NO ear for music. NONE. **But I look at musical notes as a language - and everything about language intrigues me.**



So instead of words, I interpret the black marks as keys on the piano. It works. Because NO talent resides here, I have to pay strict attention to every black mark — whether it has a tail, or a dot above it, or below it. Is it a staccato? A hold? I can't "sense" the music. I have to read each note on the page with extreme care, and then try to reproduce it on the keyboard. Often, I am successful. Often not.

But it is with joy that I find it is getting easier and easier to find a low base clef "G" or a "D" 3 octaves above middle "C." I view it as success in deciphering a language — and then I smile. My neighbors have been kind and - to my knowledge — there have been no complaints about my "efforts" at the piano.

**The second was TAP DANCE.** The tap class was offered on Zoom and, although a novice, I signed on. After many months, I bought a pair of tap shoes. **WOW!! In the middle of a pandemic to buy tap shoes!** The others in the class are far more accomplished than I. This is apparent because they allow themselves to be seen on the screen (I don't) and are likely getting ready for try-outs in Radio City. Me? I often hold onto a chair while doing some of the moves (this is totally incorrect) but no one sees. It is an odd feeling to be the worst in the class, but I've gotten used to it. What it has given me is an appreciation of rhythm and of memorization of steps. *The major takeaway for me was learning how skilled some people are with things that have nothing to do with books, or any aspect of academic accomplishment.* This? alone, was quite a benefit for me.



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Silver Linings amidst the Pandemic

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The third was BRIDGE. It is NOT a game; for me, at least, it is a mental exercise at the level of the Olympics. It is so incredibly difficult that I wonder why I just don't quit. The group that I play with meets twice a week on Zoom, and we review the hands played, discuss why the bid was inappropriate, why the lead was wrong, and "argue" over how it "should" have been played. Then 2x a week, I take a class on Zoom. It is miraculous how the Bridge hands can be displayed so clearly and how the instructor - miles away — can ask students to raise their hand approving or disapproving of some card choice. I know for sure, that If I had taken this up when much younger, I'd now be better at the game. One's cerebral functioning is surely not the same in one's senior years as it was in college days. Compounding this is that number manipulation is very difficult for me. Almost like a plague in itself. But I force myself to attend the lessons, and perhaps, just perhaps, I am getting a bit better at it.



Most in the class say they are taking it to stimulate their mental capacity as they grow older. All of them have been professionals and now, in retirement, they are trying hard to keep their mental acuity from serious decay. Are their efforts working? Who knows? There is no control.

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The pandemic is a horror and has incurred hardship on many: death, unemployment, social isolation, and a general disruption of life as we knew it. But sometimes a silver lining does surface. It's best to welcome it and not be dismissive because of our inability to shine in these new undertakings.

YOUR HEALTH CONNECTION

“Should I try taking melatonin to help me sleep?”

“Should I try taking melatonin to help me sleep?” Lately this is a question being posed more frequently to health care practitioners. Melatonin is a hormone made by the pineal gland, a small appendage of the brain that functions like an endocrine organ. The pineal gland is very involved with the sleep-wake cycle, and melatonin helps to regulate this cycle. As we age, the body’s levels of melatonin decrease, contributing to sleep disturbances in older adults.

Melatonin has a lesser profile of adverse reactions than most other sleep aids, and is considered safe when used appropriately. It is not recommended for long term use (more than three months), and is suggested only for delayed sleep (difficulty falling asleep). Melatonin products can be purchased over-the-counter – be sure to look for a USP endorsement on the label. Consult with your health care provider on whether melatonin is appropriate for you and for guidance on the proper way to take it.

This column is not intended as a substitute for medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. You are urged to seek the advice of a health care practitioner for any questions about your medical condition or treatment.

References  
[www.sleepfoundation.org>articles>melatonin-and-sleep](http://www.sleepfoundation.org>articles>melatonin-and-sleep)  
[www.webmd.com>SleepDisorders>Reference](http://www.webmd.com>SleepDisorders>Reference)

Frances S. Hilliard, RN, MS  
Professor Emerita, Nassau Community College

Scheduled NYSUT 2021 Meetings

April 30-May 1: The 2021 Pre-NYSUT RA Local and RC Presidents Conference and the RA. In January NYSUT will decide on whether to attempt an in-person RA.

October 4 and 5, 2021: Contiguous meeting for ED 51-53 RA Delegates and RC Presidents. For now, it is scheduled to be in person at the Desmond. If that changes, then it will be virtual but the dates will remain the same.

Retiree Council 39 Voluntary 2021 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



## **RC39 Donates to Local Food Banks**

In a country as rich as ours it is difficult to realize that there are all too many people who do not have sufficient food to put on the table. Many do not even have a table. The Covid-19 pandemic has made it worse. The RC39 board of directors decided to donate \$300.00 to Long Island Cares Food Bank and \$200.00 to Food Bank of Central New York.

## **Medicare and NYSHIP Empire Plan Warning**

On December 14 RC39 received an email from Joan Perrine and Kathleen Lyons with an attachment from West Islip Retired Teachers Association. They cautioned members about enrolling in Medicare Advantage or Part D prescription plans as it will mean losing their NYSHIP Plan. We immediately emailed this important information to all RC39 members for whom we have an email address. Unfortunately, if you have not given us your email address you did not receive this important email notice. A copy of the WIRA letter is on the RC39 website.

## **RC39 Newsletter Takes on a New Look**

Thanks to member Sivia Kaye suggestions, RC39 newsletter has changed its front page header, revamped organizational information into one location on page 2, and opened page 4 for content. Let us know what you think of the changes.