

Getting Connected - Around the State and Locally

Joyce Gabriele and I attended the NYSUT Retiree Contiguous E.D. 51-53 (At-Large) Meeting, September 28-29. The attendees were all Retiree Council Presidents or officers from across the state and Florida as well. While most were from K-12 councils, there were School Related Personnel (SRP) and higher ed. Besides Joyce and I representing community colleges, reps from Professional Staff Congress (PSC), the union representing CUNY, and United Unity Professions (UUP), the union representing SUNY colleges and universities were in attendance.

There were greetings from NYSUT Officers Jolene DiBrango, Ron Gross, and NYSUT's Executive Director and Political Director Melinda Person.



RC39 President Kevin Peterman at the NYSUT Retiree Contiguous E.D. 51-53 (At-Large) Meeting, September 28-29

Charlie McAteer (UUP RC President) and I addressed the attendees regarding our need to have our members connect and join local Retiree Councils in their area. It certainly will allow higher ed retirees to connect with other NYSUT retirees by attending luncheons and conferences locally. The consensus from the crowd was that higher ed retirees will be encouraged to attend.

<https://www.nysut.org/news/2022/september/retirees>

Here is a link to all the Retiree Councils:

<https://www.nysut.org/about/nysut-election-districts>

This will allow our retirees to click on their county and connect to provide them a local connection.

There were discussions regarding political action on both the national and state level. Retirees were encouraged to sign up for VOTE/COPE pension deduction from their TRS or ERS pensions. NYSUT is working on getting deductions from TIAA pay-outs as well. Retirees can also make direct donations to V/C by going to the NYSUT web site: www.votecope.org

I'm not sure if you are aware, but faculty hired after April 1, 2012, are in New York State's Tier VI retirement system. NYSUT's Legislative Department is trying to get Tier VI reforms. Anyone in the Tier VI retirement system knows - It Stinks!

<https://www.osc.state.ny.us/retirement/publications/1530/contributing-toward-your-retirement>

Tier VI Members contribute anywhere from 3% to 6% of their total salary for as long as they are employed, and they cannot retire until they are 63. And after 30 years they can only get 55% of their FAS. It seems Tier VI is a real deterrent in attracting new teachers, creating teacher shortages in many areas around the state. NYSUT's legislative department's top priority is to "fix Tier VI."

There were several NYSUT RA resolutions drafted for the 2023 NYSUT RA addressing retiree concerns. RC 39 submitted an Adjunct and Part-Time Employees Retiree Resolution. The purpose is to ensure that adjunct and part-time members receive NYSUT Retiree benefits when they "retire." Many K-12 RCs said they would support the resolution.

We heard from RC 43 President, Felicia Bruce who lives in Florida and was at our meeting when Hurricane Ian hit Fort Myers. At that moment, we knew it was going to be devastating. RC 39's Board of Directors agreed to donate \$250 to the NYSUT Disaster Relief for Hurricane Ian.

<https://www.nysut.org/resources/special-resources/sites/disaster-relief/hurricane-ian>

I hope to see you all at our next RC 39 Zoom Membership Meeting on Wednesday, November 30, at noon.

Have a safe and Happy Thanksgiving!

In Solidarity, Kevin

Next RC 39 Zoom Membership Meeting on Wednesday, November 30, at noon.

The November 30th RC39 Membership Zoom information will be emailed to members well before Nov. 30. If you have not given us your email address, email it to us now, rc39pete@optonline.net, so you can participate in this meeting

ELECTION DAY, NOVEMBER 8

RC39 Vice President Judy Wood

For me that's the most important day of the year. As an aside, I believe it should be a national holiday, but I digress.

Possibly our democracy is at stake — every race counts, and so, here is what we can do. Pay close attention to who is running for office in your district. Most of us have more than one race on our ballot so there's lots to think about. Make sure everyone in your household is registered and will vote. In many areas mail in ballots are available for those who can't physically get to the polls. Also, in many parts of the country early voting has started. If you have that option, I recommend going out to vote early just in case something happens on Election Day that might keep you from getting to the polls.

If you have friends and family in other parts of the country where there is a tough race, reach out to them to encourage them to vote Democrat. No, I'm not going to pretend to be nonpartisan. We know the race is on to hold onto the House and keep Democratic control.

And several close races for control of the Senate are out there — one close to us in NY - Pennsylvania. If you're in the mood, there are opportunities to canvas in PA. Closer to home, my local club, Three Parks Independent Democrats, is canvassing on Long Island for Robert Zimmerman, running to replace Tom Suozzi in Congress. The club website, <https://www.threeparksdems.org/>, has information if anyone wants to canvas for Zimmerman, or Anna Kaplan, NY State Senate.

So, of course don't forget to vote — because every vote does counts.

Retiree Council 39 Board of Directors

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RC39 Newsletter Addresses

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

RC39 Newsletter Committee

Newsletter Editor, **Peter Herron**
Editorial Members, **Charles Clarke, Joyce Gabriele, Frances Hilliard, Sivia Kaye, Phyllis Kurland, Richard Macy, Kevin Peterman, Joan Prymas, Gerald Speal, Patti Tana, Judy Wood**

RC39 Website

Webmaster, **Peter Herron**: Website address: <http://rc39.ny.aft.org/>. RC39 constitution, recent RC39 newsletters and much more are posted on the RC39 website.

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 four 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. or go to: <https://www.nysut.org/members/retirees/mailling-list>. 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 in-person regional retiree conference. Check the RC39 website for details.

YOUR HEALTH CONNECTION

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

Make the Most of Your Medical Visits

In today's health care environment, it has become essential for older adults to make the most of their visits to health care providers. For starters, many individuals are not aware of some important Medicare benefits that can be utilized: the "Welcome to Medicare" and Annual Wellness visits.

During the first 12 months of your Medicare enrollment, you are entitled to a "Welcome to Medicare" visit, during which your primary health provider should review and discuss your medical, family, and social history; your current state of wellness; and your significant risk factors. The provider should also discuss Medicare's preventive services, including which screenings and immunizations are appropriate for you. A cognitive assessment to detect possible signs of dementia should be performed at this time. This visit establishes a baseline for your state of health and also helps the provider identify any "red flags" for disease or disability.

Medicare enrollees are also entitled to annual wellness visits, which serve to update your health profile and formulate a plan to help you stay well. Both the Welcome to Medicare and Wellness visits are not subject to Medicare deductibles or copays if your provider accepts assignment. However, if as a result of a visit your provider performs additional tests or services, deductibles and copays may apply.

For any visit to a health care provider, proper preparation is helpful:

- Make written notes in advance of your visit, which include any health information or questions you wish to discuss with your provider.

- Make a list of all your current medications, including over-the-counter, vitamins/minerals, herbal supplements, etc.

- If possible, fill out necessary paperwork in advance.

- Confirm your appointment date/time and location. Make sure you know how to get there, and think about making a "dry run" if needed.

- Gather all relevant insurance cards and information.

- If permitted, bring a trusted significant other with you to the appointment. Often that person may recall details that you can forget to mention and may help you remember what the provider said during the visit. (This person can even jot down notes for you.)

Reference

Medicare and You: 2022. The Official U.S. Government Medicare Handbook.
www.medicare.gov, 1-800-633-4227

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.

Events That are Available for RC 39 Members

Ruth Shippee, NYSUT Retiree Services Consultant RC 9 and RC 10

Fall 2022 is off to a great start for NYSUT retirees. There have been many gatherings and activities that show how resourceful and relevant retirees are to their communities and NYSUT. The other RC's welcome you to join us in our events. A great way to be informed about them is to check the websites at <https://www.nysut.org/members/retirees/retiree-council-websites-including-RC-39>! Most have the information about upcoming events and how to sign up for them.

For example, RC 9 just held their Fall Conference at the Hotel Saranac in Saranac Lake. <http://rc9.ny.aft.org/events/rc-9-fall-conference> was where you would find the sign-up information.



The day started with welcome from RC 9 President Lynn Hunneyman and NYSUT 2nd Vice President Ron Gross. Pete Savage, NYSUT Deputy Director of Legislation and Peter Kim, NYSUT Regional Political Organizer for the Capital Region and North Country reviewed last year's legislative victories and plans for the upcoming session. They also discussed the November election, NYSUT endorsement process and how we can get involved. After our lunch, Karen Maher, RC 10 Travel committee chair presented information on trips with Road's Scholar program. There were a variety of types of trips that were presented- including virtual opportunities. The day closed with a game led by Swinka Richards, NYSUT Assistant in Program Services- Retiree Services and Ruth Shippee, NYSUT Retiree Services Consultant for RC 9 & 10. A great day of learning and conversation was held. We are looking forward to our spring conference in Watertown along with other gatherings in our four sub-councils.



GOP Aims to Use Debt-Limit Deal to Cut Social Security and Medicare

Key House of Representatives Republicans say they are prioritizing cutting Social Security and Medicare through eligibility changes, spending caps, and safety-net work requirements, and they want to use next year's debt-limit deadline (click to see Bloomberg Gov. report) to extract concessions from Democrats.

Five House Republicans interested in top Committee assignments have said that next year's deadline to raise or suspend the debt ceiling is a point of leverage if their party can win control of the House in November. This demonstrates that they are willing to put the U.S. government into default unless extreme and dangerous changes are made to Social Security and Medicare.

They include Republican Reps. **Jodey Arrington** (TX), **Buddy Carter** (GA), and **Lloyd Smucker** (PA), who are each seeking the top spot on the Budget Committee, and Rep. **Jason Smith** (MO), currently the top Republican on the Budget Committee, who is seeking the top GOP spot on the tax-writing Ways and Means Committee. Rep. **Kevin Hern** (R-Okla.), head of the Republican Study Committee's Budget and Spending Task Force, also said the upcoming debt-limit deadline is "obviously a leverage point."

"It is not an exaggeration to say that seniors need to vote in November to prevent Social Security and Medicare from being slashed," said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. "The cuts and privatization threats that the GOP is talking about are truly dangerous."



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 Retiree Council 39, along with this completed form to:
 Ms. Joyce Gabriele, RC39 Treasurer, 492 Everdell Avenue, West Islip, NY. 11795-4222

Your Member I.D. is on your NYSUT Membership Card. Lost your card? Don't know your I.D. number? Call NYSUT Membership during business hours at 1-800-342-9810.