

RC 8
Retiree



January/February 2022

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Retiree Councils Celebrate 30 Years Jan Corn, President

In 2021 NYSUT celebrated the 30th anniversary of Retiree Councils as part of their governance. This celebration will continue at the upcoming 2022 spring Representative Assembly (RA) in Albany.

I thought you might like a quick history of RC 8 to put into perspective how far we've come in the past thirty years.

In 1991 a group of local retired teachers formed a committee to look into ways of keeping retired educators connected to their union. The committee named themselves the Mohawk Valley Retiree Council.

The NYSUT Regional Office Director, Vinny Grove, was supportive of this initiative and offered his help. The retirees planned to use the Council as a vehicle to stay involved with local and statewide retiree issues.

They developed a constitution and elected their first President, Paul Baker (1992-1994). Presidents followed as listed: Angie Gorman (1994-1996), Henry Albrecht (1996-1998), Joe Gee (1998-2000), Henry Albrecht (2000-2002), Peg Corbett (2002-2010), Ken Drake (2010-2017), and me, Jan Corn (2017-present).

Local unions were encouraged to form Retiree Chapters and send representatives to the Council Steering Committee. The first districts to form chapters were Holland Patent, New Hartford, Rome, Utica, Westmoreland, and Whitesboro. As of now, chapters have also been formed in Adirondack, Canastota, Central Square, Clinton, Oneida, Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES, Oriskany, Pulaski, Remsen, Sauquoit, Stockbridge, VVS, and Waterville.

The Retiree Councils are now organized by NYSUT's election districts, ours being Election District 8

representing Oswego, Oneida, and Madison Counties. We represent 5000+ retirees. Loretta Donlon is our District Director (ED 51), representing us on NYSUT's Board of Directors.

The Retiree Councils were eventually granted voting rights at NYSUT's annual RA, where NYSUT's policy is developed. RC 8 is allowed three delegate votes. We send three elected delegates each year to the RA to exercise these voting rights along with the active teaching delegates.

Retirees are now an integral part of NYSUT and our own future.

As you can see, we've come a long way. Happy Anniversary to us!

On a final note... my late husband, Mike Corn, in his NYSUT and NYSTRS retiree work, was very involved with local retirees and the initial retiree council organization and subsequent activities. I often heard him mention names, meetings, issues, activities, luncheons, etc. As a busy active teacher, I never paid much attention. I now wish I had. I would have been better prepared for understanding my role as a NYSUT retiree. We need to inform and educate our inservice members about union life and organization in retirement. We need their support as future retirees. Please maintain and nurture your active teacher relationships. Keep abreast of your local union developments and inform them of your retiree work and goals. We need each other. Communication is crucial to a successful relationship.

With the beginning of a new year, I want to thank you for staying involved, for supporting your chapters and RC 8, for your generosity, and for your perseverance through this long pandemic. Continue to stay safe. Happy New Year! In solidarity, Jan

**Thanks to Florence Wood, Whitesboro retiree, for historical facts.*

CAREGIVING GUIDE

Caregiving for a loved one—be it an aging parent or disabled spouse or child—can be both a privilege and a burden. The information in this handout will help you recognize options and make decisions that will ultimately make caregiving a little easier. Download your free copy at the following address:

<https://www.nysut.org/resources/special-resources-sites/publications-ordering/nysut-publications-catalog#Union%20Value>

Retiree Council 8 Steering Committee: Adirondack—Y. Emery, H. La Fave; Canastota—B. Wood-arek; Clinton—C. Wheat; Holland Patent—C. Johnson; New Hartford—D. Markson; Oneida—K. Cartwright-Cox, J. Fiacco; Oneida BOCES—J. Furgal; Oriskany—S. McQueen, Barbara Sanford-Ferrick; Remsen—J. Corn; Rome—W. Carey; Sauquoit—Y. Cortright; Stockbridge—L. Dunn; Utica—N. Bender; VVS—K. Drake, S. Hauprich; Whitesboro—H. Chomin, F. Wood; Past presidents—K. Drake, P. Corbett; RAC—C. Gehrig

Vote-Cope and Social Security

The Social Security Administration recently announced that Social Security will increase by 5.9% beginning in January. It will be the largest increase any of us have ever seen since it's the largest increase since 1982! That will be about \$100 per month (before taxes) for almost all of us who are currently collecting Social Security.

If you want to have some barometer for how lucky we are to have our pensions, just read what I have written below:

- Forty percent of *Americans collecting Social Security* depend on the monthly checks for at least 90% of their income. That is simply hard to fathom.
- Two-thirds of *Americans collecting Social Security* depend on the payments for at least half of their income. Wow!
- Social Security benefits have lost 32% of their buying power since 2000. The annual adjustments have increased payments by a total of 55%, but seniors' typical expenses have grown nearly 105% over the same period.

THANK YOU NYSUT for our lobbying power in Albany that created our pensions and sustains those pensions. We are blessed. (shared by Jeff Zuckerman)

In addition to the Social Security increase, most of you will receive a cost-of-living allowance in your *pension*. We fought for this increase years ago and continue to defend our position despite the fact that most people no longer receive a defined-benefit pension let alone a cost-of-living adjustment.

Vote-Cope drives are underway in many locals throughout the region. Vote-Cope provides the funds necessary to lobby the legislature to pass legislation beneficial to the education community. Your support of Vote-Cope is extremely important. Please give generously when asked.

Submitted by: Ed Blake, Vote-Cope Regional Coordinator CNY, Utica and Whitesboro Retiree

Identify Theft and Unemployment Insurance Fraud

New York State Teachers Retirement System (NYSTRS) urges you to continue to be on alert for personal identity theft, including unemployment fraud. While NYSTRS places the highest priority on keeping your information secure, you can also help.

If you think your personal identity has been compromised, contact NYSTRS immediately at 800-348-7298, Ext. 6190 to discuss options for adding a theft of ID flag to your System account. This will notify staff to take extra care in authenticating your identity before sharing specific information over the phone or processing any transactions.

For example, you may want to consider adding a theft of ID flag if you believe you have been the victim of unemployment insurance fraud. If you get a notice from the state unemployment office, you should also act quickly to stop the fraud.

- If you are working, report the fraud to your employer.
- Report the fraud to the state unemployment office by visiting the Report Fraud page at the NYS Department of Labor website (dol.ny.gov), or calling the state Labor Department at 888-598-2077.
- Visit **IdentifyTheft.gov** to report the fraud to the Federal Trade Commission and get help with recovery steps, including placing a free one-year fraud alert on your credit, getting your free credit reports, and closing any fraudulent account opening in your name.

Source: STRS Resource, October 2021, p 6.

Five Union Values

GOOD JOBS—Pays a decent wage, allows a voice at work and provides a secure retirement.

HEALTH CARE—Affordable, accessible, and high-quality health care.

JUSTICE—Unions fight back against discrimination, hatred, and bigotry.

VOICE—A strong and vibrant democracy, including a free press, independent judiciary, thriving labor movement, and the right to vote.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS—Great public schools that are safe, welcoming, and prepare young people for life, citizenship, career and affordable access to college.

Source: nysut.org

Spring Brunch: Thursday, May 19, 2022

HART’S HILL INN
135 Clinton Street, Whitesboro
Cost \$20 (Tax and Tip included)
Free for 2020 and 2021 retirees

Menu will be in the March/April issue of the newsletter.

RESERVATION FORM

Please send this form and your check for \$20 made payable to Retiree Council 8, to the following address:
RC 8 Brunch, NYSUT, 7 Ellinwood Court, New Hartford, NY 13413. Your check must be received by
Wednesday, May 11, 2022. Late reservations can no longer be accepted.

Name _____
District Retired From _____ Year of Retirement _____
Address _____
E-mail _____ Phone _____



Recalling my high school Civics Class and the lessons I learned has impacted my life and hopefully yours. Here is what I learned:

- It is our responsibility to vote in all elections; school board, village, town, county, state and national.
- Contact your representatives whether it is for a request, an issue or a thank you.
- Your VOTE is your voice.
- Not voting means you are in agreement with whatever is happening.

I hope you use your voice now by contacting Senators Schumer and Gillibrand plus your Congressional Representative, State Senator and Assemblyperson as well as local representatives.

This is how we make democracy work.

Submitted by Carole Gehrig, RC 8 Delegate and Whitesboro retiree

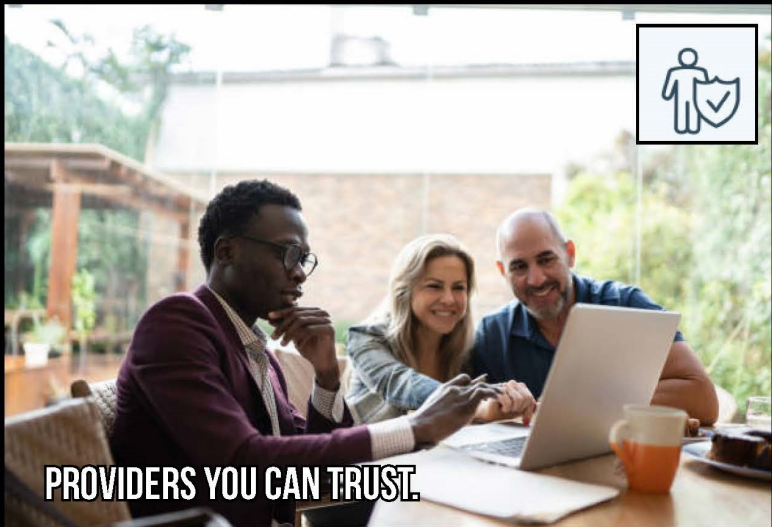
2021-2022 Participation Fee

IMPORTANT: Retirees from Adirondack, Canastota, Central Square, Clinton, Holland Patent, Oneida, Oneida/Herkimer/Madison BOCES, New Hartford, Oriskany, Pulaski, Remsen, Sauquoit Valley, Stockbridge Valley, Utica, VVS, Waterville, Westmoreland, and Whitesboro **do not have to send \$5**, since the Participation Fee is contributed via retiree dues by your chapter. Rome Retirees may add the Participation Fee to their RTA local dues.
ATTENTION ALL OTHER RETIREES NOT BELONGING TO THE ABOVE-MENTIONED LOCALS; please fill out the form below.

Name: _____
Street Address: _____ City/State/Zip _____
Retiree School District: _____ Phone _____
E-mail address: _____

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AND A \$5 CHECK MADE PAYABLE TO “RETIREE COUNCIL 8” AND MAIL TO: Wanona E. Carey, RC 8 Treasurer, 8623 Turin Road, Rome, NY 13440-7523.

Check out all your union membership has to offer!



NYSUT Member Benefits

Every Dollar Counts!

When it comes to protecting yourself, your loved ones, your income or your most valuable possessions, NYSUT Member Benefits has insurance programs that fit the bill. Whether you are looking for **auto & home, life, disability, long-term care, dental, vision, or pet insurance**, there is a Member Benefits-endorsed plan that may be of assistance featuring value-added extras unavailable to the public.

Get started by first bookmarking the Member Benefits website at memberbenefits.nysut.org. There, you will find numerous tools and resources available to you as a NYSUT member – including a **Financial Learning Center** with articles designed to help educate you on financial decisions and topics.

Member Benefits also endorses several discounted shopping programs that can help you save on both everyday and more expensive purchases. Finally, if you ever have an issue or problem when using a Member Benefits program, our staff take great pride in their ability to quickly assist members with any concerns that may arise.

Visit memberbenefits.nysut.org or call **800-626-8101** to learn more about the endorsed programs and services available to you through your union membership.



Learn more by scanning the QR code to the left,
visiting memberbenefits.nysut.org or
calling **800-626-8101**.



For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Jan/Feb 2022