

# Western N.Y. NEWS & Views

Winter 2026

Reaching out to Retirees in Western New York Retiree Council 1—We are over 6,000 strong



## NYSUT Retirees of WNY Officers RC 1

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## From the President's Desk by Kathy Brown

Dear Retirees,

I hope this update finds you safe, happy, and warm after what feels like a very long winter. Retiree Council #1 is currently seeking Trustees to fill four open seats on our Board, and we would love to hear from you. Your voice, experience, and perspective as a Union member are truly valued and essential to ensuring full representation of retiree and in-service teacher needs, as well as supporting initiatives that promote overall well-being.

The Board meets at the NYSUT office in Williamsville on the second Monday of each month at 10:30 a.m.—and yes, lunch is shared! Even our “snowbirds” are welcome and encouraged to serve on the Board. If you’re interested or would like more information, please contact me at kbrown681@gmail.com or call 716-870-7758.

I’ll close with this quote and requests for you to consider:

- “Life’s most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?”  
*Martin Luther King, Jr.*
- Think about volunteering—there are many ways to use and share your leadership skills.
- Reach out to someone you haven’t connected with in a while; strong connections make us stronger.
- And each day, try to notice just one thing that brings you joy—it’s there if you look for it.

Thank you for all you do and for continuing to support one another and our Union community.

Sincerely, Kathy Brown

## A Message from Our Coalition President, Lynn Mele

Dear Retirees,

It’s time to roll up our sleeves and get to work!

Midterm election year is here. Ask yourself a few questions...

Are you satisfied with the COLA you receive in your NYS pension and Social Security?

Are you happy paying more for groceries, utilities and car insurance?

Are you paying less for gasoline?

Are you satisfied with the direction our country is taking?

No? Well it’s time to activate what NYSUT has always called its Retirees ...“The Daytime Army.” Many of us worked hard to gain the benefits we enjoy today. Let’s work together to make sure that those who follow us enjoy the same. How? Decide to volunteer and participate in Political Action! Many local, county and state elected officials/positions are up for grabs this November. We have the power but more importantly, we have the time to make a difference. Let’s Do It!

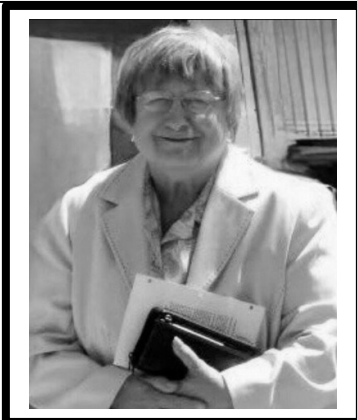
Yours in Solidarity.

Lynn Mele



For up-to-date information on RC's 1, 2 & 3,  
visit our website <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.



## IN MEMORIAM

We recently lost a cherished Union Sister. Joanne McCartin (retired, Grand Island) passed away on January 5, 2026, at the age of 85. Joanne made countless significant contributions as a NYSUT leader over the years and was honored with the NYSUT Legends Award in 2023. She will be remembered for her dedication, leadership, and unwavering Commitment to our Union family.

Joanne served as president of the Grand Island Teachers Association for 19 years and oversaw contract negotiations for several subsequent contracts. Many of the benefits enjoyed by Grand Island teachers today can be directly linked to the work of Joanne.

When Joanne retired, she didn't leave teaching and serving teachers behind. She became the director of the Tonawanda-Grand Island Teacher Center. And, then, during her post-teaching years, she was active with the NYSUT Retired Teachers, serving in various posts.

### ***DON'T FORGET OUR JUNE BUS ADVENTURE***

#### **THE SPIRITS AND SPIRITS TOUR - \$149 per person WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24, 2026**

**Stops at Lilydale, a camp and meeting place for Spiritualists and Freethinkers,  
the popular *White Inn* in Fredonia for a buffet lunch, and  
21 Brix Winery in Chautauqua for tasting and shopping.  
Refer to our Facebook Page and Website for more descriptions and information.**

**Tour price includes general admission costs, lunch and driver gratuity.  
Pickup points at the AAA Amherst branch or the AAA Orchard Park Branch.**  
*Private readings not included.*  
*If you wish to reserve private readings be sure to schedule between 10am-11:30am.*  
*Link to medium directory can be found on our website or Facebook page.*  
Or contact Frank Marchese (716) 698-8434

#### **REGISTRATION DEADLINE MAY 18, 2026**

Mail your checks with your name, address, phone number, and email to  
WNYRC, 270 Essay Road, Williamsville, NY.

### **MINI-GRANT DONATION FORM FOR 2025-2026**

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. Information on our mini-grants has been sent to the Union Presidents of each district in our Coalition. Check with your active teachers to see if they have been informed of this opportunity to apply. 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 Essay Road, Williamsville, NY 14221



# BOOKS, BITES & BOOZE



MONDAY, APRIL 20, 2026

11AM-2PM

## A GROWN-UP BOOK FAIR EXPERIENCE!

Reignite that feeling of a childhood "Book Fair," but with better snacks and beverages! Join the NYSUT Retirees of Western New York for an afternoon of literary indulgence, great company, and tasty treats.

- **SHOP:** Merit Badge Books of Hamburg ([www.meritbadgebooks.com](http://www.meritbadgebooks.com)) will be on-site with a curated selection of titles across various genres. Find your next favorite read or a perfect gift!
- **SIP & SAVOR:** Enjoy a delicious spread of food and a selection of beverages.
- **WIN:** Keep an eye out for **prizes and surprises** throughout the event.

**Get ready to browse, bite, and enjoy! See you there!**

**Where:** NYSUT Regional Office  
270 Essjay Rd. Williamsville, NY 14221

## FREE ENTRY!

Open to all retirees and their guests.

Sponsored by the NYSUT Retirees of Western New York

<https://rcwest.ny.aft.org/>

and

Merit Badge Books of Hamburg, NY

<https://www.meritbadgebooks.com/>

**Scan the QR Code below**



Or type this link for registration instructions.

<https://forms.office.com/r/fCj2ede5HC>



**PLEASE  
REGISTER BY  
APRIL 17.**

## PARTICIPATION FEE FORM (2025-2026)

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

Working to Benefit You