

Western N.Y. NEWS & Views

Winter 2026

Reaching out to Retirees in Western New York Retiree Council 2—We are over 7,800 strong



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From the President's Desk by Eva Mroczka



Greetings Retirees,

As the filling of income tax forms quickly approaches, I am reminded of that catchy ad that asks, "What's in Your Wallet?" In my wallet, I found an enhanced driver's license, credit cards, a new health insurance card, my NYSUT membership card and some cash. This year COLA (Cost-of-living Adjustment) will boost our Social Security by 2.8% and our NYSTRS retirement pension by 1.2%. But these gains will be erased by present high increases of insurance premiums. We are constantly dealing with uncertainty as to what the future will bring. Will Medicare, Social Security and our pensions be reduced or will they be cut completely. We need to support NYSUT's local, state and national efforts to fight for what we know is right. RC 2 is already preparing to attend NYSUT's RA (Representative Assembly) in Albany on April 30 – May 2. At this convention we will help NYSUT to develop legislative policies and vote on amendments to NYSUT's constitution. And we will review, debate, and vote on proposed resolutions for future considerations. This allows all convention delegates to participate in democratic policy-making process.

It's still cold outside but I am looking forward to Spring filled with flowers, showers and sunshine. I'll try to file my income tax forms on time and hope you'll do the same. And maybe we'll even get a tax refund – wouldn't that be great!

In Solidarity,
Eva Mroczka

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 MEMORIUM

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 DEADLIINE MAY 18, 2026

Mail your checks with your name, address, phone number, and email to
WNYRC, 270 Essjay 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 Essjay 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) 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/fCi2ede5HC>

**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