

U S A INFORMATION

LOCAL 15-175 NYSUT; LOCAL 3072 AFT

JUNE 2009

Next General Membership Meeting: October 2009
See you in September
TBA

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USA Information is Going Green!!!



From the Desk of the President

Here we are again at the end of another school year. This was not a typical year. We watched our economy fall apart, affecting us on so many levels. It has affected our

personal lives, our family's lives and our BOCES' lives. We will survive!!!

As we move ahead into the next school year, our union is going forward with some new initiatives. We, like everyone else, are going to go green. We need to be environmentally conscious and fiscally responsible to our members. As a result of our efforts, our first newsletter in the fall will be sent out through e-mail to all active members. Our retirees will have an option to receive their newsletter through e-mail or the post office. Please see details inside this newsletter. We hope by going green, we will not only save a little piece of the environment, but also save money on printing.

Also with our fall newsletter, we will be initiating a new feature called "Ask the Union." We will be

asking our members to submit questions concerning our contract and answer them in subsequent issues. Our hope is that we can all become more familiar with the contract as it pertains to certain situations.

I look forward to seeing all of you on opening day, as we embark on a new adventure together.

*In Solidarity,
Irene Snow*



PLEASE NOTE:
This will be the last hard copy (paper) issue of USA Information! See important info on page 7.

News from Retirees

Pete Smith..."In the Regional Senior Games at *The Villages*. I was lucky enough to get three gold medals in the 65 - 69 age group; free throw shooting 28 - 30, spot shooting 11 - 15 and timed shooting 79 points in three one minute sessions. The weather here has been awesome; 80-high during the day and 60-the low at night. The only problem is we need rain in the worst way.

Joel Shapiro..."You asked for news - here's a little: My daughter and granddaughter were here, and nine-year-old Hayley wanted to see Ukraine, which is about ninety minutes from our house. We'd already been to Hungary and Poland, where there are no border guards or restrictions, only signs that you've changed countries. Ukraine is another matter altogether. We had no difficulty crossing out of Slovakia but were detained ninety minutes on the Ukraine side - "any drugs, narcotics, tobacco? No? Why do you want to go to Ukraine, anyway?"

"We want to take pictures and buy souvenirs."

"NO PICTURES AT THE BORDER!!"

"No, we know that - just pictures in the town"

"NO, NO PICTURES AT THE BORDER"

Repeat one or two more times.

"OK, no pictures at the border"

To my daughter Dana: "Where do you come from? You look European".

Hint: EVERYBODY who's Caucasian and was born in America LOOKS European, cuz' that's where our ancestors all come from. That's what our genetic stock is. Try telling that to someone in broken Slovak who doesn't speak English (or Slovak) very well.

When we returned after an unsuccessful souvenir hunt - the border guards told us that everything would be closed by the time they let us go (ha ha), it was a four hour marathon of sitting on the Ukraine side, being looked at by border guards, supervisors, etc. They'd look at my passport, then at me, look at

the passport and at me again and repeat it. Six times that I remember. Lots of consultation with one another and a few phone calls. A busload of tourists had to go into the building with their suitcases, open everything and finally reboard, so it wasn't just us, although we did seem to command more attention than anyone else. The border folks had difficulty understanding why I had a Hungarian-registered car (it was leased from the airport there), had a US passport (and a European-looking daughter), was living in Presov and wanted to visit Ukraine. Actually, there was a reasonable explanation for everything, except why I wanted to visit Ukraine. Of course, they finally stamped our passports and let us go, and we now have a good story to tell. We won't be going back anytime soon, tho'. It was a good lesson in democracy....

We'll be heading home in three weeks. I have finished teaching my classes, and we'll be traveling/

U S A I N F O R M A T I O N

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 of
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News from Retirees

(Continued from page 2)

hosting guests until June 1 when we return to the US. What an adventure!

Wayne Coulter..."We have been at our place in Nags Head since the end of March. Prior to that we went to Maine to visit our daughter and her husband. Their daughter is our newest grand child and now is 9 months old. Our son Matt, who worked a couple of summers at Pines Bridge, is now stationed at Space Command in Colorado Springs and will no doubt finish his Air Force career there. He and his wife bought a house there with a great view of Pike's Peak, the base of which is only 14 miles away. Our oldest son continues to live in Glenham, NY so we see them fairly often."

Dan and Brenda Cardinale are up north near Saratoga for the summer

Rich Devir..."As of last fall, I'm really retired. I enjoyed nine years at the non-profit organization Teaching Matters (in the city) working with teachers on using technology in their classrooms and delivering workshops and how-to courses all around town. I learned a lot and had a great time. These days I help out on a per diem basis.

I've been taking it easy this year, waiting for something to grab my interest. Meanwhile I still read the news - for blind listeners - once a week on *In Touch Radio*. I joined a choral group, the Old Mill Singers, here in Ossining. Barbara and I work at the Ossining Food Pantry giving out groceries to local people in need. Barbara is a Commissioned Lay Pastor in the Presbyterian Church. She volunteers at Sing-Sing and fills in at local churches as needed on Sundays.

But our principal avocation / preoccupation involves our granddaughters - three-year old twins and a seven month old. All adorable of course, and all children of our daughter Megan, whom some USAers may remember from the Pinesbridge summer program and teacher aide substitute work during the 90s. Younger daughter Kate works as a Physician Assistant with critically ill infants at Yale New Haven Hospital. So as you can see, life is good.

Lucille Miazga..."We are well and enjoying our FL lifestyle; especially going to the beach. Tommy has joined the Elks Club with a bunch of our friends and they have great dinners and entertainment with dancing afterwards. Now that I have two new knees I can dance again and even attend a linedancing class. We are flying to NY in late August for a wedding in South Salem and have just booked a cruise to the Panama Canal for January... Life is good, and the weather is beautiful.

Janine deGrouchy Hraska..."It was great to see everyone at the Pines Bridge retirement party for Barbara Burnap! It was a particularly nice surprise to have **Susie and Ron Logan** arrive from Colorado at the end of the party and see many familiar faces including **Beth Maley**. ...Actually, today I ran into Vivian Rose who was a supervisor for the teachers of the deaf in early 80s and is now working in Clarkstown! She has three children, one of whom is studying speech pathology at Geneso." Janine has had some great trips to Paris and London this year.

Kathy Feenaughty..."We have been busy. We visited Dennis, Julie, 5 yr old Dolce and 4 month old Keely in CA in March. They were here at the end of May. We are leaving for NY on June 25 and will spend some time with the NY children and their families. We are doing a family vacation in Ocean City, MD in August. It is very hot in FL in July and Aug so we try to do some fun things a little further north. We really do love it down here in The Villages. So many activities to keep us busy. Both Tom and I also do volunteer work. We have 3 families from Mahopac

News from Retirees

(Continued from page 3)

who have moved down within the last year so it's wonderful to have them here. We see **Bob** and **Ann Esposito** often and they are doing well."

Carol Lockwood..."I am back in CT now for the summer and hate this rainy weather. It is always sunny in Sarasota, FL. Miss that...I plan on meeting with the nurses from Tech on June 25th at **Nancy Casparian's** house in Cornwall, NY. We all do get together for parties to catch up on each other. That is one nice thing about living in two places....This summer there are plans to go see some of the National Parks in the west. Always a trip back to Florida during the summer to check on my house and my two weeks in Cancun and Playa del Carmine in November to play with old friends that I meet there each year...Time goes by so fast, Hard to believe that I am retired for almost 7 years now. Enjoying my grandchildren. There are 2 in Florida and 3 in Lagrangeville, NY. This is always a pleasure to see them...Been doing some hiking in Georgia and CT. Love the outdoors and still walk at least 2 miles in CT each morning. I have a walking group in Florida and we do up to 5 miles each day. We get up before sunrise and enjoy seeing the sun come up and also walk the beaches. What could be better?"

Rita Wolfson..."Can you believe I have been retired since 1986? (I'm 85) I have been lucky to be in good health, so I'm still enjoying tennis, swimming and biking. Also love bridge, concerts, etc. I'll get up to NY this summer to see family, and get my NY fix."

Charlotte Sperling..."Nothing much new.....I spent 2 weeks in Tucson, Arizona this winter with 2 friends.....now going back to Pawlet, Vermont to help with farmers' markets and work as a volunteer at SOLARFEST in Tinmouth, Vermont in July..."

Challis Thompson..."I'm not really sure about summer yet, but next week I'm going to Pensacola to visit my stepmom. Peter & I are flying to Phoenix to do a national park drive. We're not going on a tour, but will follow the Tauck tour itinerary (and I guess a few others!) to the Grand Canyon, Bryce & Zion, ending up in Las Vegas. Peter has been there before. Though, I've been to both cities, I have never been to the parks! It is so cool to me that we will travel in May, and not wait for a school vacation! I'm flying to London to meet my friend Janet for a week. We'll take the Chunnel to Paris for an overnight, too, so she can wake up in Paris on her birthday...In June we have a wedding in Atlanta one weekend and a graduation in Bethesda, MD on another weekend. Peter will attend a PT conference and we hope to meet up with some of the BOCES PT's.....So you see why I haven't thought as far as the summer yet!...Actually, Peter will be starting a new job mid May doing lymphedema massage, after he takes a 2 week training course, so he may not have any time off for a few months after he starts. We do want to take his mom somewhere & have been looking into river cruises in Europe."

John Keck and **Jean McCabe** were called out of retirement to sing at **Jean Gold's** retirement party. John is very busy preparing for an International Handicapped Encounter Christ Conference this summer in Mt. Kisco. John founded this retreat program 35 years ago. Jean has been performing in the local production of Urinetown in Pleasantville.

Several retirees attended the EDUCATED Palate for the Italian Feast in April. It is a great lunch out and will start again next spring. We do hope that with Renee Gargano's help we can plan a retiree trip to the Educated Palate sometime in the future.

Fall reunion...It looks like we will have another BOCES fall reunion. details will follow...stay in touch Wynnie McCarthy wam48@aol.com

News from Retirees

(Continued from page 4)

We have been sent news that **Martha Burton** died. She was a Putnam BOCES employee before the merger in '69 and later was a team leader in Walden school. She was taken over by Mahopac in the 80's and retired from there.

It's always great to hear from retirees! Lots of news this time around. Keep your emails coming. Send *News for Retirees* to Wynnie McCarthy at Wam48@aol.com.

candidates and to support political action that aims to protect our incomes and careers, health and safety, retirement changes, and health care.

Our contributions will protect our own profession and the institution in which we work. As public employees, almost all conditions affecting our professional environment, working conditions and pension rights are determined by the actions of the New York State Legislature, the Governor, and the U.S. Congress. If we wish to have a positive influence on our professional future, we must take an active part in the political process.

We would like to thank all those who took part in the VOTE COPE campaign. Thank you to the building representative for distributing the information and collecting the donations. We would also like to thank all those who made donations. We had 131 members do payroll deduction, 18 members sent in checks and a big thank you to our 32 retirees who mailed in their donations. Our donations will assist in making our voices heard, and at the same time make an investment in our future.

VOTE-COPE

VOTE-COPE Raised almost \$5,200

We would like to thank all those who took part in the VOTE-COPE campaign. Thank you to the building representatives for distributing the information and collecting the donations. We would also like to thank all those who made donations, we collected \$5,198.50. We had 131 members do payroll deduction, 18 members sent in checks and a big thank you to our 32 retirees who mailed in their donations.

When we returned from Spring break we began our VOTE-COPE campaign and today as we near the end of this school year, we have collected \$5,198.50 in donations. VOTE-COPE (Voice Of Teachers in Education - Committee On Political Education) is NYSUT's non-partisan political action fund. It pools the voluntary contributions of members from across the state to make contributions to pro-education

IMPORTANT!

Be aware new Aetna cards are being issued, reflecting the changes in co-pays as of July 2009.

Check the last Health Insurance Newsletter for details...The newsletters are on the PNWBOCES web site:

www.pnwboces.org

Click on departments and services...click on health and safety...click on left side - health benefits, newsletters.

A Sad Rite of Spring: Layoffs

For Civil Service Employees:

In the January issue of *The Edge* we focused on the process of abolition of positions, layoffs and recall rights for teachers and teaching assistants. In this edition of *The Edge*, we will feature a comparable article for **Civil Service employees**.

Sadly, spring brings the abolition of positions and layoffs of teachers and school related professionals in many of our school districts. Before *The Edge* provides some reminders about the laws and regulations governing layoffs for civil service employees, let us make one point clear:

The best way to prevent or reduce layoffs is to work to pass your school district's budget on May 19. Let's put our efforts to pass the budget in high gear!

School boards have the right to abolish civil service positions for reasons of economy, consolidation, abolition of functions, or curtailment of activities.

Generally, Civil Service employees' positions are abolished in inverse order of **original permanent appointment** in the classified Civil Service in positions the employer has chosen to eliminate. In our region, typically this Civil Service rule applies solely to competitive class employees; however, local leaders must check the contract language, practice and local Civil Service rules to see if the same rights apply. Employees who are blind, veterans, or spouses of disabled veterans are given preference in layoff situations. In some Civil Service jurisdictions Civil Service employees may receive seniority credit for other positions held in the school district prior to the position being abolished.

In a layoff situation, **competitive class** employees may have an opportunity to bump other less senior employees in the same direct line of promotion, or retreat back to a position in which the employee last served on a permanent basis.

After a layoff has occurred, it is the superintendent's responsibility to provide the name, title or position, date of appointment, and the date of, and reason for, the layoff to the local Civil Service agency. Excessed **competitive class** Civil Service employees are placed on a preferred list and given preference over others in rein-

statement to positions within the **competitive class**. Such employees remain on the preferred list for four (4) years. If a laid-off employee refuses a similar position in the same layoff unit, that employee's name is removed from the preferred list. Other jurisdictional classes of Civil Service employees (i.e. Noncompetitive, Labor, and Exempt classes) do **not** enjoy these rights of seniority, layoff and recall under the civil service law. However, these rights may be provided in some form in the local union contract or by practice in the district. Generally, these are the Civil Service rules regarding seniority, layoffs and recall. However, there may be exceptions for positions in other *jurisdictional classes* (i.e. Noncompetitive, Labor, and Exempt classes) in some Civil Service regional jurisdictions. In addition, seniority, layoff and recall rights for all civil service workers may be expanded in the local union's contract. It is best to ask your NYSUT LRS if you have questions about a member's rights under Civil Service law or your contract.

School boards must act in good faith when such positions are abolished. School boards may not use the abolition of Civil Service positions in matters of employee discipline; that is, positions may not be abolished in an effort to circumvent due process rights provided by Civil Service Law. The burden of proving that a position was abolished in bad faith rests with the employee, who must show that the employer had no bona fide reason for eliminating the position, achieved no cost savings, hired someone else as a replacement, or that the abolition was otherwise motivated by bad faith.

Recommendations from *The Edge*:

- Check your contract; it may afford additional rights regarding layoffs.
- Order copies of NYSUT's Handbook for Laid-Off School Employees from the Tarrytown Regional Office for members who have the misfortune of being excessed.
- When in doubt about layoff issues, check with your NYSUT LRS.

The rules for the abolition of Civil Service positions, layoffs, and recall rights are especially complex and confusing. Do not hesitate to contact your NYSUT LRS regarding these matters in your local.

Reprinted from the March 2009 edition of *The Edge*, a news service of NYSUT Tarrytown Regional Office, 520 White Plains Road, Tarrytown, NY 10591

USA INFORMATION IS GOING GREEN!!!

This will be the last paper copy of the union newsletter. The newsletter will be available online at our local's page of the NYSUT/AFT website at:

<http://ny.aft.org/pnwb/>

We will also be sending the newsletter out via email.

Retirees please note:

If you would like a paper copy sent to you please clip this notice and mail it to:

Athena Swikata
PO Box 210
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598

Please mail my newsletter to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip Code _____



To schedule an appointment with the lawyer members should call (914) 997-1576.

IMPORTANT!

Please Note:

Mary Ann Alvord is the Grievance Chairperson. She can be reached at extension **764**, or from the outside at **(914) 248-2764**.

**United Staff Association
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IMPORTANT!!!

PLEASE NOTE:

The telephone number for
DANIEL H. COOK

has changed from (914) 381-2399 to:

(914) 250-0700

USA PHONE NUMBER: (914) 962-9579

Keep this page for future reference!!

A Bouquet from Us

Send items for *A Bouquet from Us* to Elizabeth Bowler at:
ebowler@pnwboces.org

*Our sympathy to Jacqueline DiPierro, teacher at the
Walden Learning Center on the loss of her mother-in-law.*

*Our sympathy to Josephine Scala, teacher at the the
Tech Center on the loss of her father-in-law*