

THE UNITED NEWSLETTER

LOCAL 15-175 NYSUT LOCAL 3072 AFT

March 2017

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From The Desk of the President

Good Day Members,

Just recently I experienced a very serious health issue. Thankfully, I am back on the road to recovery, but, I was unable to work for at least a week.

Because of the Contracted Sick Leave, I was able to receive medical treatment and recuperate at home, knowing that when it came to paying my bills, there would be no reduction in my paycheck.

Just so you are aware, if you utilize all of your Sick Days, the Union maintains a "Sick Leave Bank". The "Sick Leave Bank" is there in case a Member experiences a serious long-term illness. Your Sick Time, Sick Leave Bank, and Personal Time are part of your BOCES Benefits Package.

When we are out, not only do our students need and miss us, but our fellow members are also affected. As I have worked at BOCES for 24 years, I know with certainty whoever substitutes for me, will either be my own Teacher Assistant, or a Teacher Assistant pulled from another program at the last minute. This Substitute process continues to be an ongoing

conundrum for Administration. BOCES has never been able to attract and retain Substitute Teachers, based on the students we serve, or the low daily salary. In Special Education every Substitute Teacher who is qualified, within months, is usually hired as a full-time Teacher's Aide.

It pleases me as a Union Leader to see my Membership growing, based on Substitute Teachers being hired for a full-time position. However; it should be our number one priority to take care of ourselves and our families and not have the burdensome worry that a Substitute Teacher may not be available, and that my colleagues will be encumbered by having to staff my classroom.

As a Union we can only suggest to Administration how to recruit and retain Substitute Teachers. Whether Administration accepts those suggestions is another story, for another day, and another Newsletter.

Enclosed in this Newsletter is the Contract language for use of your Sick Leave and Personal Days. Please review this information and if you have any questions, please contact your Program Representative or Union Leadership.

Be Well and Wash Your Hands Often,

Doug Andreotti



Know Your Contract



SECTION XXXVII - SICK LEAVE

- A. Paid sick leave shall be extended to all full-time salaried employees on the basis of 1- 1/2 days per employment month. At the beginning of each school year, ten-month employees will be credited with 15 days and 12-month employees with 18 days. Unused sick leave may be accumulated to total of 260 working days. Sick leave shall be prorated for part-time salaried employees. An employee may use up to five days per year of his or her sick leave for serious illness in the immediate family which requires the employee's presence. For this purpose, "immediate family" means spouse, child, parents or others living in the employee's home.
- B. Full-time employees absent three or more consecutive days may be required upon return to work to submit a physician's statement to the District Superintendent, or his designee, indicating the nature of the illness and fitness of the individual to return to work.
- C. A sick leave bank shall be established for the use of employees paid on the certificated salary schedule who have used up their accumulated sick leave as a result of serious, long-term illness or who need the benefit of the bank because of the advent of a serious, long-term illness. Such employees may withdraw days from the bank as needed but only until they are eligible to apply for disability insurance benefits. If the employee was eligible to apply for disability insurance and failed to apply, he or she may only use the sick bank until such time as he or she would have been eligible for disability benefits if he or she had applied. Withdrawals from the bank may not exceed the number of days on deposit in the bank through contributions. The Assistant Superintendent for Administration shall regularly inform the Association of withdrawals from the bank. The Association may request a medical certificate from any employee making a withdrawal. If, in the opinion of the Association and the Assistant Superintendent for Administration, there has been abuse of the bank by any employee, such employee may be denied the privilege of using the bank. If the Association and the Assistant Superintendent for Administration do not agree on the question of abuse, then the employee may use the bank. Contributions to the bank may be made by any employee desiring to contribute one or more days of his or her accumulation. Such contributions shall be made on a form to be provided by the Board. Contributions are not mandatory but once made may not be withdrawn, except in the event that a contributor subsequently exhausts his or her own accumulated sick leave.
- D. A sick leave bank shall be established for the use of all other salaried employees who have used up their accumulated sick leave as a result of serious, long-term illness or who need the benefit of the bank because of the advent of a serious, long-term illness. The sick leave bank form and procedures relating thereto shall be the same as that of the sick leave bank for teachers set forth in Section C above.
- E. No one eligible for either sick leave bank may use such bank more than once for the same illness or injury. To determine if it is the same illness or injury, on the second application to the bank, either the Board or the Association may ask that a determination be made by an outside physician, who would be entitled to get the records of the first illness or injury in order to make his or her decision. The Board will pay for the outside physician's charge.

Note: Copies of the USA Contract are available for reference on www.pnwboces.org -Employee Resource Area



Know Your Contract

SECTION IX - PERSONAL BUSINESS LEAVE

Full-time salaried employees shall be granted personal business leave without loss of pay during each employment year not to exceed five days. Personal business leave shall be prorated for part-time salaried employees. Unused personal days shall be converted to sick days at the end of the school year.

Such leave shall be used to transact business which cannot ordinarily be transacted outside of the regular school day and shall include time for religious observance, illness in the immediate family, attendance at funerals, and absences due to extraordinary weather conditions.

Personal business leave shall be granted upon application to and approval by the Director of Human Resources and Professional Development. No reason is needed except for before and after holidays, consecutive days, or emergencies. Except for emergencies, written application must be received in the Human Resources and Administrative Services Department at least three working days in advance of the day for which leave is requested. One of the five personal days per year may be taken as a compelling emergency day without the required three day notice. Such compelling day does not require a reason provided the day does not fall before or after a holiday.

Requests for a personal business before or after a holiday may be approved at the sole discretion of the Director of Human Resources and Professional Development. All requests for a personal business leave before or after a holiday will require a reason.

If the applicant is concerned that there is a delay in his or her application for a personal day, he or she may telephone in the request at the same time it is being processed in order to preserve his or her rights. Except in the case of emergencies, at the time that such application is made, the employee shall notify his or her immediate supervisor that he or she has made such application and the supervisor shall subsequently promptly notify him or her whether or not approval has been granted. In case of an emergency, the employee will follow the procedures outlined by the Director of the program to which he or she is assigned.

When an employee has been informed that his or her application for leave has been approved, the employee shall report his or her absence according to administrative procedures.



USA Welfare Fund Legal Service Benefit

USA Welfare Fund: Legal Services Benefit

The Westchester Putnam Teachers Legal Services Fund provides a Legal Services Plan Benefit to all members of the United Staff Association Welfare Fund. The attorneys are available for consultation on the first Monday of each month during the school year and by appointment during the summer months. The plan includes, but is not limited to, preparation of Wills, Health Care Proxies, Living Wills, Powers of Attorney, and representation in Real Estate Transactions. Certain legal benefits are extended to parents and/or parent-in-laws of covered members.

If you need to update/create a Will, if your parents need to update/create a Will, if you are buying/selling a home, etc.....please take advantage of this benefit by calling the attorney today to schedule an appointment. Consultations and select legal services (e.g. Simple Wills, Document Review, Identify Theft Protection Benefit, Living Will/Health Care Proxy) are at no charge to members with very low fees for other services (e.g. Simple Personal Bankruptcy - \$75.00, Change of Name - \$45.00, representation in Real Estate Transactions for primary residence - \$60.00, Uncontested Divorce - \$60.00, Uncontested Legal Separation - \$45.00-\$75.00) .

The Legal Fund Booklet is available on-line at www.teacherslegalfund.com

To schedule an appointment with a legal service plan lawyer, call (914) 997-1576.

The trustees of the Welfare Fund are available as a resource and can be reached at their BOCES email: Dawn Galvin, Nancy Finsmith, Jenn Guiffre, Doreen Trani, Maria Pontbriand, and Doug Andreotti.



United Staff Association Information for June Retirees

RETIREES OPTION PLAN USA Welfare Fund Benefits



Welfare Fund Benefits which are otherwise available to active members may be continued into retirement for those individuals who have been a member of the United Staff Association, Local 3072 prior to retirement and who continue to maintain their membership as a retiree, and who remit the self-pay cost of continuing Welfare Fund benefits, to the Fund, on a timely basis.

Life Insurance and Long Term Disability Insurance are not available under the retirees' option plan.

Legal Fund benefits may be continued as an additional elective.

- You must maintain your USA membership as a retiree to be eligible for Welfare Fund benefits in retirement.
- USA membership is \$15.00 annually: for questions regarding USA membership in retirement, please contact Sharlene Orłowsky Bass, Treasurer of USA, at her BOCES email: sbass@pnwboces.org. - you should receive a notice in December 2017 for your 2018 membership dues.
- USA Welfare Fund self-pay cost is \$60.00 per month for INDIVIDUAL dental benefits (dental/optical/variable) and \$150.00 per month for FAMILY DENTAL in retirement. You can pay however you like; at least 6 months contribution is preferred; however, you can pay each month or once a year.
- To continue the Legal Fund benefit in retirement, the cost is \$90 annually.

Upon receiving notification from BOCES of your retirement, Daniel H. Cook (the Welfare Fund Administrator) will send you a Retirees Option Letter. This letter should be returned to Cook ASAP. You may not receive this letter until late July or August- depending on the notification from BOCES about your retirement. The monthly contributions are payable to the United Staff Association Welfare Fund, 253 West 35th Street, 12th floor, New York, NY 10001

The Retiree Liaison for WELFARE FUND questions/concerns is Janine deGrouchy-Hraska. Janine is available by phone or email: (845) 735-4683; pnwboceswelfarefund@gmail.com.

If you would like to receive general retiree information or news, please email retired member, Wynnie McCarthy, at wam48@aol.com and she will add you to her contact list. The United Staff Association is interested in hearing about your experiences in retirement to post in The United Newsletter. Send your news to Wynnie McCarthy at wam48@aol.com or call her at (914) 245-8353.

Welfare Fund Information:

REVERSE MORTGAGES: WHAT TO KNOW

By: Mirkin & Gordon, P.C.

Reverse mortgages have been advertised on television with greater and greater frequency and they have grown in popularity with retirees. However, while a reverse mortgage can be beneficial under the right circumstances, there can be a number of downsides as well.

A reverse mortgage is a loan to the homeowner that is repaid to the lender after the borrower moves out or dies. It is also known as a home equity conversion mortgage (HECM). The purpose is to enable seniors to access a portion of their home equity without having to move out. The amount that one receives from the reverse mortgage depends on several factors, including the age of the homeowner, the value of the home, and the interest rate.

The benefits of a reverse mortgage are available for those who do not wish to move out of their house or for those who do not wish to keep the house in the family. The proceeds from the reverse mortgage can be used to pay off an existing mortgage, pay off debt or unexpected expenses, and improve monthly cash flow.

A reverse mortgage is only available if one of the owners of a home is 62 or older and that person resides in the home as his or her primary residence. A further eligibility requirement is that the homeowner must either own their home outright or have a low mortgage balance that can be paid off at the closing with proceeds from the reverse mortgage. Depending on the type of mortgage, the homeowner can collect payments as 1) a lump sum, 2) a

fixed monthly payment, 3) a line of credit, or some combination.

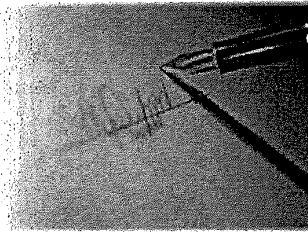
It is important, however, to understand that a reverse mortgage might not be right for every homeowner. Even with this type of mortgage, the borrower must maintain the house, pay property taxes and homeowners insurance. While one does not have the burden of a monthly mortgage payment, some of these costs can still be onerous to seniors living on a fixed income.

Other factors to consider are the closing costs, which are considerably higher than a traditional mortgage. Interest rates may also be substantially higher.

An important possible overriding danger for a homeowner to consider before entering a reverse mortgage arrangement is that upon death or if the home isn't the primary residence for more than 12 months – due to illness or any other reason – the loan immediately comes due!

This means that either the homeowner or the estate has the option to either 1) repay the loan immediately with other assets or 2) put the home up for sale to satisfy the loan. If the family cannot or isn't willing to do either, the lender will foreclose and sell the home at auction and there may not be any equity left in the home.

Although reverse mortgages can be an attractive option to many seniors who wish to generate income from the equity in their homes, it is important to consider the downsides as well. The legal plan is available for your assistance if you are considering a reverse mortgage.



Retiree Information

Did You Know?

Benefits for more than 60 million Social Security recipients will go up next year by a mere 0.3 percent, the Social Security Administration announced Tuesday.

This is the smallest cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) since automatic raises began in the mid-1970s. And it comes after recipients received no bump up in benefits for 2016 because inflation was so low.

For retired workers the average monthly benefit in January will go up \$5 to \$1,360.



RETIREES OF WESTCHESTER/PUTNAM

Website for Retirees:

This is the listing and web site for Putnam Westchester retirees.

There is information on volunteer opportunities at the Ronald McDonald House located near the Westchester Medical Center near the children's hospital and a chance to volunteer on the social justice committee...issues covered hunger, poverty, child labor.

There are some trips listed check it out.

<http://westputretirees.com>



Retiree News

Flo Laicher with her champion Great Pyrenees at a show in NJ this fall. Flo recently represented with others at the "meet the breeds" at the Westminster DogS how in New York City.

Kitty Desimone, just retired last month, and her husband Jim, a recent retiree from Blythdale, are busy



volunteering with the Winter Special Olympics. If you have a special project and would like to introduce our retirees to let us know.

Kathy Prior and Gay OBrien have posted great photos from their trip to Tuscany in February. Gay O'Brien and Kathy Prior have just returned from a week in Italy 🇮🇹 They put lots of miles on their rental car and had great weather 60's and no crowds. What a different perspective without the summer crowds.

Linda Bonavist is happy her son and family will be relocating to the Boston area after moving from nearby Connecticut to California a couple of years ago.

Carol Story had a great vacation with Marion Connelly in Naples Fl this winter. Like all trips to Naples, no trip is complete without a stop or two to the "Best of Everything" store. Carol had wonderful weather and went home with that Fl tan.

Kathy Heller had a visit to Fl and Houston to see her daughter, Emily, but her event is waiting for the arrival of her first grandchild this spring. She posted great photos from the shower.

Carol Vales and family had another wonderful trip to Disney World with her grandchildren.

Irene Petriello: I am a grandmother twice! My son, August, and his wife Vanessa welcomed a baby girl, Elise Sophia on Nov 5, 2016. They live in Santiago, Chile. I am flying down to spend Christmas with

them. My son, Chris, and his wife Tara welcomed a baby girl, Emma Paige on Dec 2, 2016. They recently bought a home in Pelham Manor, NY. Life is good. I sold my place in Florida. If I go, it will be a short visit to see friends and family. I am presently in sunny, warm, Chile visiting my son, daughter in law and granddaughter.

Lucille Miazga: Life in Florida is good with us, dinner and dancing twice a week at the Elks or Eagles and other fun activities. We are going on a two week Southern Caribbean cruise in March on the Celebrity Eclipse with friends.

Dan Gottfried is proud to share some news about his children:

Jonathan, now 26, was recently selected by Forbes as one of the 30 people under 30 who are most influential in Education. Major League Hacking, the company Jonathan founded with a friend, works with almost 200 colleges each year in the development of Hackathons in their schools. Hackathons are friendly competitions among students working in teams to develop software applications and business ideas over an intensive weekend.

Jeremy Aaron, now 22, just completed his first full length album of original songs. Jeremy is a singer-songwriter in NYC who can be heard every month at the Greenwich Village Showcase at Vivaldi's, which he founded and which features some of the best emerging singer-songwriters in New York. Jeremy's album has been lauded by Christine Lavin and his songs have already received some radio play. He also performs with Spuyten Duyval, the popular band from Yonkers that has played at the Philadelphia Folk Festival and toured Israel for 2 weeks this past summer.



Retirees enjoy a dinner on the isle of Capri in Fla: Marion, Wynnie, Gay and Carol

We try to include as much as possible from the retirees. If you have news to share, please send it:
Wynnie McCarthy
36 Cheshire Lane Yorktown, NY 10598.
wam48@aol.com

Union Representatives

Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598
914-607-6736

Executive Board:

President	Doug Andreotti
1st Vice President (Special Education)	Elisa Longo
2nd Vice President (CTE)	Stephanie Buckhout
Secretary	Judy Gillet
Treasurer	Sharlene Orłowsky
Membership Chairperson	Stacey Chiarella
Grievance Co-Chairperson (Special Education)	Lisa Giacomini-Essell
Grievance Co-Chairperson (CTE)	Larry Marino
Negotiations Chairperson	Al Cotoia
Program Rep Chairperson	Magaly Almonte

Program Representatives

Administrator

Jim Bellucci
Michael Sowul
Steve Lowery
Nicole Murphy
Csilla Mate/Michael Sowul
Csilla Mate/Pinesbridge
Csilla Mate/Pinesbridge
Lisa Hammel
RSE/TASC/Patti Slobogin

Representative

Lisa Tobin

Marie Russo
Nate Ball
Danielle Iammatteo (CLASS Transitions)

Deirdre Toolan
Margo Schepart
John Boniello

United Staff Association Welfare Fund

c/o Daniel H. Cook Associates
253 West 35th Street, 12th Floor
New York, New York 10001

Chairperson:	Dawn Galvin
Secretary:	Nancy Finsmith
Treasurer:	Doreen Trani
Trustees:	Maria Pontbriand Jenn Guiffre Doug Andreotti
Retiree Liaison:	Janine deGrouchy-Hraska Janine is available by phone/email: (845) 735-4683 pnwboceswelfarefund@gmail.com
Consultant:	Flo Laicher
Administrator:	Daniel Cook Associates www.dhcook.com

Upcoming Meetings

Upcoming Executive Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 7, 2017

3:00 P.M.
Pinesbridge Conference Room

Upcoming General Membership Meeting

May 2017

3:00 P.M.
Location TBD



A Bouquet from Us

In Our Thoughts ...

Doug Andreotti- speedy recovery
Virginia Carlotti - speedy recovery
Ada DeCicco- speedy recovery
Noelle Harrison- speedy recovery
Veronica McCarthy- speedy recovery
Stanley Rupinski- speedy recovery

In Memoriam...

We send sympathy to the families and friends of:

Giovanni Pettricone, beloved Tech Center employee who passed too soon. In his memory, the Spirit of Giovanni Scholarship has been created for a student who is kind, caring, and generous of heart; a person who appreciates others and exhibits the character of a true gentleman or woman.

Colleen Rodriguez on the death of her Son.

Congratulations to...

Mark Endres on the birth of his Daughter.

Send items for A Bouquet from Us to Karen Carey at kcarey@pnwboces.org



IMPORTANT:

Grievance Co-Chairpersons are:

Larry Marino (CTE)

lmario@pnwboces.org (914) 248-2480 (ext.480).

Lisa Giacomini-Essell (Special Education)

ligiacomini-essell@pnwboces.org (914)248-2264 (ext. 264)

We are on the Web!
 pnwb.ny.aft.org

Thanks to All:

Thank you to everyone who contributes to this Newsletter by submitting articles, important information, bouquets, or helping with the printing and/or distribution throughout the school year.

Please send Retiree News for the Newsletter to Wynnie McCarthy, wam48@aol.com or 36 Cheshire Lane Yorktown, NY 10598. We want to reach out to more Retirees.

Please send Newsletter worthy information to Meredith Markolovic (Tech) at mmarkolovic@pnwboces.org.

