



NORTH COUNTRY NOTEBOOK:

The North Country Retiree Council (RC) 9 & Sub-Councils Newsletter

Bringing news & opportunities to the Council of Retirees, Franklin-St Council of NYSUT Retirees and



NYSUT Retirees in Champlain Valley Lawrence United Retirees, Jefferson-Lewis Southern Adirondack NYSUT Retirees

January 2024 NYSUT Retiree Council 9 Newsletter

Which Sub-council do you belong to? These are based upon where the district you retired from was located. A retiree may join a sub-council where they now live if more convenient. (And if you like an activity in another sub-council, sign up!)

RETIREE COUNCIL (RC) 9 Email is NYSUTRC@gmail.com Website is rc9.ny.aft.org

RC9 OFFICERS: President Lynn Hunneyman lhunneyman@gmail.com Vice President Rod Sherman rsherman@westelcom.com

Treasurer: Rick Morris Secretary: Robin Duncan Newsletter Editor: Phillis Walrath philliswalrath@gmail.com

RC 9 Website: Nona Garrard, Sandra Gleason, and Laura Gutenmann

NYSUT Delegates: Rick Morris, Rod Sherman, Joe Vernon Alternates: Tony Fiacco, Lynn Hunneyman, Nan Scinta

NYSUT Retiree Services Consultant Ruth Shippee ruth.shippee@nysut.org 518-321-8676

SUB COUNCILS

CVCR Co-Chairs: Carlos Madan & Voilet Moesch cvcn.ny@gmail.com **FSNUR:** FSNURRC9@gmail.com Acting Chair: Tony Fiacco

SANR: sanrrc9@gmail.com Acting Chair Joe Vernon **Jeff-Lewis CNR President:** Lynn Hunneyman lhunneyman@gmail.com

jlcnr9@gmail.com **JLNRC Webmaster** <https://www.jlcnr-rc9.org/> Carole Ashbridge cashbridge@zoominternet.net

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Greetings for 2024

Once again another new year is upon us, one that will surely be interesting and I hope one that brings a lot of our present day divisions to a close. I may be in the minority, but I truly believe the best thing that could happen for our upcoming Presidential Election is for both candidates that are presently leading the two sides would be to step aside. We need an election based on issues, not personalities. There are too many problems facing our country and the world for us to have another election bogged down with all these side issues. Now to that subject I urge all of you to actively support Vote Cope, we need to continue to have a strong voice not just in the national election but for statewide and local races too. Many of you I know are already involved by working at the polls, a role I took on for many years, but also writing letters to our legislators, campaign signs, phone trees, political buttons or any other way to make our voices heard.

RC 9 is busily planning another active year for our members across the North Country. Our membership numbers continue to grow and it appears that FSNUR is getting closer to being an active sub council once again. Social activities are being planned along with Mini Conferences and retiree meetings in our respective sub councils. Rod Sherman, Rick Morris, and Joe Vernon will be attending the NYSUT RA in New York City this spring. I along with others will attend the Retiree Councils statewide meetings this spring and fall. Ruth Shippee, our NYSUT Retirees Services Consultant has done a wonderful job planning events and assisting your retiree leadership. She continues to provide services to retirees across the North Country. I would also urge all of you to make use of the NYSUT and RC 9 websites as shown in the newsletter for each issue. In my travels across RC 9 I hope to meet many more of you for the first time and visit the many retiree friends I have already met.

Now on to 2024,

RC 9 & JLCNR President, *Lynn Hunneyman*



Been Wondering What You Can Do....This May Be Your Answer Are you like many people wondering what you can do to help make a positive impact in our area? As they say, activists never retire. You could become part of a team for our Retiree Council to help provide other retirees with information and possible action plans so that we can use our experience to make a difference?

NYSUT Retiree Services is looking to make teams to help us learn more about what actions we can take. *What will these teams be looking at?* For one item, what can be done to help Tier 5 and 6 members have a more supportive retirement like we have. That will take legislative action. And we have an easy way to influence that through our contributions to VOTE COPE. The retiree council team will be looking to encourage us all to do our part with that.

Have you wondered how your school district is influenced? Are you interested in learning more about how staff is supported and encouraged to do their job? Are you concerned about how some groups are targeting our in-service members and creating hostile work environments? *What can retirees do to support our in-service members?* This team will explore that.

The team's efforts in creating, recruiting, and growing a political program specifically designed for our region and by our regional retirees. NYSUT staff training for this role is included, in March, as well as support to help train and educate fellow retirees on issues and the program.

Help build a stronger and deeper support network of retirees to support the union!

Please consider being a part of this team. If you are interested in further information, contact our Retiree Services Consultant, Ruth Shippee at ruth.shippee@nysut.org

SUB-COUNCIL EVENTS AND NEWS:

Check out what is happening across Retiree Council 9. Events are open to all RC members- even if the event is in another sub council. Events will be listed at <http://rc9.ny.aft.org/>

CVCR

Our monthly meetings/luncheons/speakers are at MHAB Fresh Dormitory Drive Plattsburgh. You will receive an email with details on how to sign up. The rest of the dates for the year are February 12, 2024, March 11, 2024, April 8, 2024, May 13, 2024, June 10, 2024.

JLCNR- Jefferson Lewis Council of NYSUT Retirees

Sharing Your Story

How often do you wish you would have asked your parents or grandparents about their lives, from where they came and who are other relatives? Family research is one way to go about finding this information and then sharing this information for your descendants. Join Carole Ashbridge, retired library media specialist from Sackets Harbor Central School and a professional genealogist, as she provides some tips on how to get started and the surprises you can find.

This hour long zoom workshop will be on Thursday, February 15 at 1 pm. Please register by emailing nysutrc9@gmail.com by Friday, Feb. 9.

Southern Adirondack NYSUT Retirees (SANR)

FSNUR-Franklin St. Lawrence NYSUT United Retirees

Happy New Year!!

2024 is going to be an interesting year. FSNUR has been reactivated and we are planning activities and meetings that will be fun and informative for the retired educators of the North Country. If you have never participated, we encourage you to join FSNUR and become involved in some way. If you are a member, please reach out to your retired colleagues and invite them to join us at an activity or a meeting.

Research shows that social networking is a cornerstone of a happy and healthy retirement. ***May 2024 be a year of new experiences for you.***

Tony Fiacco- Acting FSNUR Chair

FSNUR Nominating Committee.

The committee will help to locate candidates for our spring elections.

Please contact Ruth Shippee our NYSUT Retiree Services Consultant at ruth.shippee@nysut.org or 518-321-8676 if you would like to help with this.

AND OF COURSE: people willing to be officers are needed.

The offices are president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. The Board looks to meet several times a year to approve activities suggested, work on programming and scholarships to new teachers. Please contact Ruth by **February 20** if you are interested in running for an office and/or being on the nominating committee. In our next newsletter candidates will be announced and the date of our June meeting and elections.

FSNUR Upcoming Events

February 15 Retirees (and friends) are invited to a guided ski at **Higley Flow State Park** in South Colton, beginning at 10:00. Higley Flow offers almost 10 miles of groomed x-country ski trails for all levels of experience. Retired English Teacher Tom French, a volunteer groomer at the Park, will guide the group over 2 to 4 miles of woods trails while offering commentary on the history and ecology of this park along the edge of the Adirondacks. The route will be determined by the group.

Rental X-Country Skis will be available for \$7.00. The Park also offers snowshoe rentals for those who would prefer to walk. If there is insufficient snow for skiing, a hike will be offered instead. Lunch (on your own) will be available afterwards at the nearby [Red Pine Cone](#). If weather is inclement, the event will be postponed until the following week, Thursday, February 22. RSVP by 2/12 to fsnurrc9@gmail.com

February 27 at 10 am at the NYSUT Potsdam Office will be the next meeting. We had many great ideas of activities and we will be checking back on what we have found out. Please come join us. Email ruth.shippee@nysut.org to let her know you will be attending.

March 14 Come visit the **Remington Museum** in Ogdensburg! We will be meeting at **1 pm** at the museum. Entrance fee is \$12/person. For those interested in having **lunch** beforehand, we are planning to meet at the **Freight House** at around 11:45. Please email fsnurrc9@gmail.com to sign up by Friday, March 8.

Tai Chi



As a thank you for years of service in education, North Country Tai Chi LLC is offering a free one month unlimited membership in Tai Chi instruction to retired teachers and school personnel. All classes are offered both in person and online in a friendly, informative, and fun environment. While we offer three semesters each year, you can start at any time you are ready. Our Winter Semester begins 1/15 but you can start your trial at any time. Please visit us at northcountrytaichi.com You can also send Sean Boutin an email at northcountrytaichi@gmail.com or call at (315) 229-4003.

It's That Time of the Year!



This is the time of the year that our in-service colleagues will be committing to join us in the retiree ranks! If you hear of people making that decision, if you look at Board of Education agendas/minutes, see it on social media, etc. please let Lorraine know so we can make sure to get everyone connected as soon as possible. Send the information to nysutrc9@gmail.com

If you could include the person(s) name, school district (and building location if possible), when they are retiring and where you found the information. For example: Joe Doe, Green School District in ABC Elementary in the January 2024 Board of Education agenda retiring May 30, 2024. Thank you!

Free Member Benefits for NYSUT members. For more information visit [Free Member Benefits \(nysut.org\)](http://Free Member Benefits (nysut.org)) Have you checked out their free services lately? These are the newest ones:



PEER SUPPORT LINE
PREMIUM CALM SERVICE
YOURCARE360
LEGAL ASSISTANCE PLAN



Speaking of Legal Plan: Often we procrastinate about getting our legal documents updated- *don't we all!!!!* To assist in this, Retiree Council 9 has arranged help. This benefit is amazing: for you and a partner, for \$55 annually or \$50 pension deduction, you will get your wills, power of attorney, living wills and health care proxy.

The process is to: 1) *pay for legal plan*, 2) make appointment to get assistance in *filling out forms* on February 20 9-5 (the 21st will be available if needed) with John Calimano of the law firm of Feldman, Kramer & Monaco, P.C., 3) once forms are completed, wait 6-8 weeks for them to be mailed to you for *review*, 4) attend a *signing event* at one of the three North Country offices: Watertown, Potsdam, Plattsburgh or with one of the participating law firms.. Find out more information, go to <https://memberbenefits.nysut.org/program-service/legal-and-financial/legal-service-plan>

To take advantage of the Retiree Council 9 plan:

- A. Contact Member Benefits to register and pay for the plan. You can do this by calling 800-626-8101 or going on-line. Please do so by February 14.
- B. If you want to complete the forms and send them in, do so. To schedule a 10 minute appointment with a lawyer on Feb. 20 between 9 am - 5 pm, email ruth.shippee@nysut.org. These will be either by phone call or via zoom: your choice.
- C. Dates are being set for document signing days. These will be in the next newsletter. You will bring your documents to be signed and witnessed.

For those of you who may have had your local provide this benefit, it will be similar to that. *Let's use this benefit and get our legal documents updated!*

FLORIDA SNOWBIRDS (OR TRANSPLANTS)

Did you know that there is a NYSUT Retiree Council #43? It consists of 10 units throughout the state that will "Welcome You" to be a participant while in the Sunshine State. For information contact: RC President Felicia Bruce or visit <http://rc43.aft.org> They are planning their conferences now so make sure to reach out!

SAVE THE DATE:
 Spring RC 9 Conference
 Watertown Elks
 May 23, 2024

-----Cut here and mail with \$20 Participation Fee with RC 9 for 2023-2024 -----

If you have not done so yet, please make sure to submit your membership form and participation fee: our year runs July1- June 30. Some sub-councils pay directly to their membership person.

**** YOU CAN PUT AN ADDRESS LABEL HERE SO YOU DO NOT NEED TO FILL OUT THE ADDRESS******

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Phone (home) _____ (cell) _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip code: _____

E-mail address: _____

School district retired from: _____ Year Retired: _____

Check your sub-council: CVCR FSNUR JLCNR SANR

Send to: RC 9 Membership c/o NYSUT 513 Washington Street #3 Watertown, NY 13601

Check out all your union membership has to offer!

Free Premium Calm App for All NYSUT In-Service AND Retiree Members!



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The Calm app -- recognized as Apple's Best of 2018 award winner, Apple's App of the Year 2017, and Google Play Editor's Choice 2018 -- is the #1 app for sleep, meditation, and relaxation with over 100 million downloads. Whether members have 30 seconds or 30 minutes of time available, the diverse content library offered by Calm includes numerous resources for their schedule and needs.

Members can explore guided meditations and specialized music playlists to help with stress and focus, mindful movement video and audio, relaxing sleep stories, nature scenes and sounds, specific content tailored for children, masterclasses led by experts, and more.

To learn more about how to create your Calm account and access the premium content for free, visit memberbenefits.nysut.org/free-member-benefits and then click on "Premium Calm Service." From there, you will find detailed instructions on how to create your Calm account along with a helpful Frequently Asked Questions document about the service. You will need your NYSUT ID number to create an account with your email address and password. Your NYSUT ID number can be found on your NYSUT Membership Card or by visiting <https://www.nysut.org/memberid>.

Once you create your free Calm account on your computer, it is recommended that you download the Calm app for your iOS or Android device. After downloading the Calm app for your preferred mobile device, you can then log in with your email address and password to unlock the premium Calm content.



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. 2024