



# The BEES Beacon

## BEES

### BOCES Educators of Eastern Suffolk

### Union Strong



Volume 31 Issue 1

October 2017

AFT Local 3037/NYSUT Local 22-220

**From the Lighthouse in the East to the Lighthouse in the West**

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# JIM BECK ~ PRESIDENT



## You Are The Union

Hello my sisters and brothers. The 2017-18 school year is off to a roaring start. New students, new challenges and for some, new buildings all add to the excitement of the new year. For those who did not work summer, it is a chance to reconnect with old friends and colleagues and to think about those lucky enough to have retired and started the new phase of their lives. Exciting is right! Along with this excitement in our professional lives, we face new challenges to our union and our financial future. The current political climate at the federal level is both unsupportive of public education and unsupportive of organized labor. The objective is to take money away from public education and funnel it to charter and private schools. Please remember that this is being done by people who have never attended public school and have never sent their children to public schools. No yellow school bus for those kids. Although we have a truce (due to his future political ambitions) with Governor Cuomo, he should never be mistaken for our friend.

The first thing we have to face is the vote on November 7th to open up the state constitution. Every 20 years this comes up on the ballot. It is a colossal waste of \$330,000,000 of our tax dollars and puts at risk our pensions, ability to organize and contract protections. Every union in the state is against it as well as environmentalists, gun rights activists, conservatives and many other groups. It is imperative that we get out and vote. Statewide there are no major races other than Mayor of New York City, so it should be a light turn out. Every vote we get is magnified. Get your parents, brothers, sisters, friends, and anyone else out to vote NO. Please remember that the proposition is on the BACK of the ballot. There will be three items. Please mark all three. We kill this now, and we don't have to deal with it again for 20 years. Don't let others do the heavy lifting. Get out and vote NO.

The second big event is a looming rematch in the Supreme Court over public sector unions. It is called the Janus case, and it challenges our fair share fees and culminates decades of attacks on working people by the obsequious politicians who do the bidding of corporations and the wealthiest 1 percent. Keep an eye out for more information to follow in my next article. First we must defeat the constitutional convention.



# JIM BECK ~ PRESIDENT



## You Are The Union - Continued

On a positive note, the Agency is in good condition for the new school year. Enrollments are up in both CTE and Special Ed. We continue to have robust conversations with administration over a wide range of issues. This brings me to the value of union membership. We have benefit rich contracts, blue (teachers) and yellow (paras). For example, our no charge worker's comp. provision is unheard of in most districts. We (the BEES) work very hard protect our member's contractual rights. Please remember my friends that without the union and our respective contracts, we have nothing. We will be at the mercy of the powers that be. Always remember that with unity, we have strength. We are organized, motivated and determined. Talk up the value of our union. Stay strong. Stay union strong.

Unity and strength,

Jim



ON NOVEMBER 7

**VOTE NO**  
ON THE  
**CONSTITUTIONAL  
CONVENTION**

**nysut**  
A Union of Professionals

### CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION:

**What's at stake?**

**why in five**

- 1** The environment — New York State's constitution has the nation's strongest protections for forever wild areas like the Adirondacks and the Catskills. Greedy developers could push to undo these safeguards.
- 2** Public education — The state constitution guarantees our students the right to a free public education.
- 3** The social safety net — The state constitution ensures the state provides for citizens in need.
- 4** Our voting rights — The constitution provides valuable protections.
- 5** Don't risk losing these vital safeguards.  
**Vote NO!**



# JOE POSTICLIONE ~ EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



## The Value of Union Membership

Hello BEES members. I hope the opening and the beginning of this school year went well for you. By this time you should have been asked by your union rep to fill out a pledge card asking you to vote NO for the Constitutional Convention. If you did not receive a pledge card, let me know. You can send me an email at [Execvpbee@gmail.com](mailto:Execvpbee@gmail.com) or send me a note interoffice at I.C.C., I will get one out to you. Now more than ever we need to be united in the support of our union and each other. Below I have included parts of a previous Beacon article on the value of union membership that have become more important today than ever.

What has the union done for me lately? Do I really have to pay that much in dues? Why bother with the union? These are all questions that anyone involved in the union gets asked often. With the whole concept of organized labor under attack by politicians and lawsuits, it is time to realize the value of organized labor and our union. Below I have included some information that I excerpted from an AFL-CIO publication titled "The Union Difference".

- >Union workers participating in job-provided health insurance 79%
- >Nonunion workers participating in job-provided health insurance 49%
- >Union workers participating in guaranteed (defined-benefit) pension plans 76%
- >Nonunion workers participating in guaranteed (defined-benefit) pension plans 16%
- >Union workers with paid sick leave 83%
- >Nonunion workers with paid sick leave 62%
- >Union workers' median weekly earnings \$950
- >Nonunion workers' median weekly earnings \$750
- >Young (ages 16-24) union workers' median weekly earnings \$576
- >Young (ages 16-24) nonunion workers' median weekly earnings \$445
- >Union women's median weekly earnings \$898
- >Nonunion women's median weekly earnings \$676

As you can see, there is value in belonging to a union. Health insurance, paid sick leave and salary are all items that have been negotiated by your union. Anyone that has researched the cost of purchasing health insurance knows how valuable our health coverage is.

The Constitutional Convention is only the first part of our fight, and I'm sure that my colleagues from the executive board have gone into great depth in their articles on the Constitutional Convention. The most important thing you can do is to go out and vote NO on November 7th and get your spouse, your significant other, your relatives, friends and neighbors to do the same.

Thank you for your continued support.

Joe



# **NO** New York CONVENTION



NoNewYorkConvention.org

## A party for political insiders

New York's political insiders are planning a party, but we aren't invited. In November, voters will be asked to decide if New York will hold a convention to rewrite our constitution. This "Politicians Convention" would be a multi-million dollar boondoggle funded by our tax dollars...and would give Albany politicians and special interest groups the opportunity to change our state constitution to benefit themselves. These are many of the same politicians and insiders who are mired in corruption scandals and regularly being marched out of Albany in handcuffs. Sound good so far?

In 1967, the last "Politicians' Convention" held in New York cost taxpayers tens of millions of dollars. Fifty years later, the price tag is estimated to be in the hundreds of millions. That's an awful lot of money to spend on an exclusive party for New York politicians, Albany insiders, and the corporate special interests...especially when we can amend our Constitution without spending a single penny. Aren't there better things that we could spend hundreds of millions of dollars on?

## A multi-million dollar boondoggle

## Rights at risk

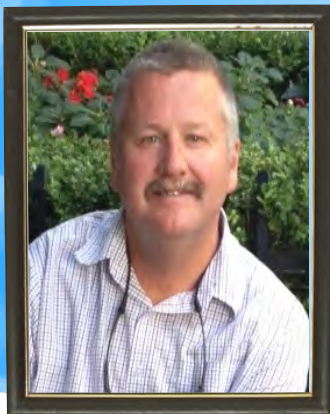
For working families, a "Politicians' Convention" could put some of our most important and fundamental rights at risk. That includes the rights to join a union and to collectively bargain, as well as essential protections of our hard-fought pension benefits. Many of these rights have come under increasing attack in recent years by the corporate special interests and the wealthy elite, and a "Politicians' Convention" would give those hostile forces a direct path toward rolling back our rights.

Did you know that the New York Constitution guarantees everyone in the state the right to a free public education? Or that some of our most environmentally sensitive areas like the Adirondacks and the Catskills are safeguarded by the state constitution's "forever wild" protections? So many of the things that value most and take for granted about living in this great state are guaranteed by the state constitution, but a "Politicians' Convention" could put them all at risk.

## Gutting guarantees

In November, Vote **NO** New York Constitutional Convention!

# RAY STENBERG ~ FIRST VICE PRESIDENT



## Vote For Your Future

Election Day is quickly approaching and your union is working very hard across the state to get the word out to vote "NO" on whether or not to have a Constitutional Convention in the State of New York. The entire country is monitoring this vote as the outcome will determine the fate of our union. Remember, our union is only as strong as its members and now is the time to stand strong! A vote of "NO" on November 7th will secure your future in New York State for the next 20 years. If those who vote yes outnumber those who vote no, then we will spend approximately \$340,000,000 dollars on a big party where the elected delegates get \$10,000 a month on top of their salaries to meet during 2019 and spend months figuring out ways to harm us. At this party, they can make changes to our past and future pensions, strip away our collective bargaining rights, and open up the beautiful Adirondack Mountains for development. The only way we are going to win this is if we get out there, rally our friends and families, and vote NO. Our Executive Board and Building Representatives have been out there having meetings and talking it up. Reps have invited Executive Board members to speak at after school meetings about the importance of a "NO" vote. Thanks to Peggy Dolce at ICC and Principal Pete Lepore for providing a room to me when I came and spoke to a group of members. All unions across the state are fully mobilized to defeat this potentially devastating measure. Even my parents, Ray and Barbara, have two anti-Constitutional Convention lawn signs on their front lawn on a main thoroughfare in Sayville. My dad was a proud unionist and shop steward in his trucking union for his entire career. So, my sisters and brothers of this very strong union of professionals, I am imploring you to find 10 minutes of time on November 7th and vote against this dangerous proposition. It will be proposal 1 on the back of the ballot.

Assuming we win, we can look forward to the security of our future and retire with confidence. Many of us old timers (I knew we would get there someday) are going to be retiring under their current contract. Lord willing, I'll be one of them. Without a Constitutional Convention, your retirement will be protected and you'll have very little to worry about as far as finances go. As long as you are blessed with good health, the checks will be coming in on the last business day of every month.

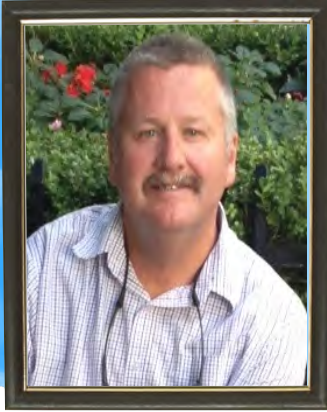
If you are a teacher or teacher assistant and thinking about retiring under your current contract, I would highly recommend signing up for and attending a New York State Teacher Retirement System Prep seminar. These free seminars are invaluable as they provide you with a wealth of good information to help you transition from employee to retiree. There are two coming up in December. They are as follows:

- 1) December 2, 2017- Radisson Hotel Hauppauge
- 2) December 1, 2017- Residence Inn Plainview



[NoNewYorkConvention.org](http://NoNewYorkConvention.org)

# RAY STENBERG ~ FIRST VICE PRESIDENT



## Vote For Your Future - Continued

All workshops are scheduled from 8:30-4:15. You can make reservations at [NYSTRS.org](http://NYSTRS.org) or call them at 1-800-348-7298 (ext 6180). These seminars fill up quickly, so if you get closed out, you can sign up for the spring. Future dates and locations will be posted on our website [beesbeacon.org](http://beesbeacon.org). For our wonderful classroom aides in the Employees Retirement System, stay tuned for information on upcoming retirement workshops. Building Representatives will be made aware of workshop dates and times.

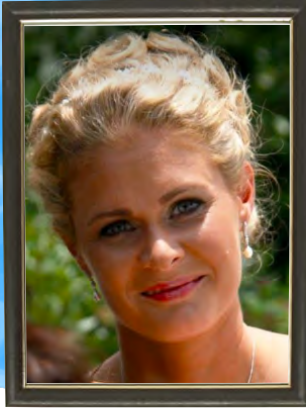
As we begin to approach the holiday season, we should take some time to think about all those who suffered tremendous losses after recent disasters in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico, California, and the US Virgin Islands. Thousands of people have literally lost everything and are currently living in shelters and struggling to survive. Both NYSUT and the AFT have established disaster relief funds with money going directly to the people affected by these incredible acts of nature. Please consider donating a little bit (or a lot of if you have it) to either of these unions. I would also like to put in a plug for the Employees Resource Foundation (ERF). Their annual fundraiser will take place on December 7th at Lands End in Sayville. Over the years, this organization has provided BOCES employees with financial assistance after they have endured a tragedy or other major negative life event. Please consider attending this wonderful event and help support your fellow employees during a time of great need.

I would like to wish you and your families a very happy and healthy holiday season because before you know it, we will be saying Happy New Year.





**ASHA MAZZA-SHAW ~ AREA V.P. FOR SPECIAL ED.**



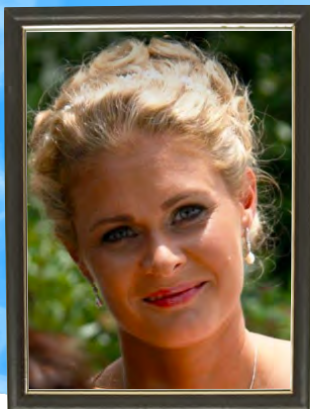
## **BEE The Change**

Welcome back to another wonderful school year! Our BEES executive board has been hard at work since last year on member engagement. It can be a daunting task to get all the important information out to the membership because we have so many sites. We have a new mass texting system in play, which will be used to send information out to members. If you haven't signed up to receive texts from the BEES yet, you can do so by texting the word "BEES" to the number "33222". It's a great way to stay up to date on union issues; we all need to be informed in the current climate, and this system puts valuable information right at your fingertips! Your information will never be shared, only used for our union database. Also, be sure to check out our BEES Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/BEES3037](http://www.facebook.com/BEES3037) for current updates and political action items.

I cannot stress enough how imperative it is that we share our knowledge with one another and have conversations about potential threats to our collective bargaining and union rights. Make no mistake, politicians and wealthy business owners are out to union bust. Starting with the proposal to open the NYS Constitution, also known as Prop 1. By now, I hope you have committed to voting no against the Constitutional Convention. It could devastate current members' and retirees' pensions and collective bargaining rights, and that's just the beginning. Please get out on November 7th and vote no to Proposition 1, a Constitutional Convention. There will be other questions along with Prop. 1 listed on the back of your ballot. These questions may be misleading as they ask about making term limits for congress and removing the pension of a representative who committed of a felony. You may think, "Well, that sounds pretty good." And it does, but there is no need to open the NYS Constitution to make these changes! They can be made by amendment, which is how it has almost always been done. Don't be fooled, flip your ballot over and vote NO!

The newest threat to our collective bargaining and union rights is the case that is in the Supreme Court as you read this. This case, "Janus vs. American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees", could collapse unions as we know them. If the court rules against unions collecting "agency shop fees" or mandatory dues, then members must choose to remain in the union. There are times when members ask me, "What has the union done for me lately?" "Why would I stay in the union if I could get the dues money back in my check?" These questions are short sighted, but if enough members chose to leave the union and our membership falls below 50%, we could lose our contracts all together. Even if you feel our current executive board hasn't done a great job, the union still provides your contract salary, benefits, sick time, personal days, working terms (length of school day, safe environment, etc.) and so much more. Our contracts are full of items that have been collectively bargained over the course of several years, and we could lose it all in the blink of an eye. It is not my intent to frighten you, but to point out what is at stake.

# ASHA MAZZA-SHAW ~ AREA V.P. FOR SPECIAL ED.



## BEE The Change - Continued

With no union, there is no contract, and with no contract, the agency is under no obligation to continue to provide your same salary, sick/personal days or any other contractual items. Imagine your salary being cut in half or not having health insurance. It's not something I like to think about, but it could be a very real possibility. I urge you, no, I implore you, get involved. Sign up for the text system, read the newsletter, check our social media pages. You, the members are on the front lines, and we need everyone to know what is at stake. We have to talk about it; we have to prepare; we must be ready. The time is now, all hands-on deck. Talk to your co-workers, families, friends and neighbors. As educators, we know all too well, knowledge is power, and it's time to be powerful.

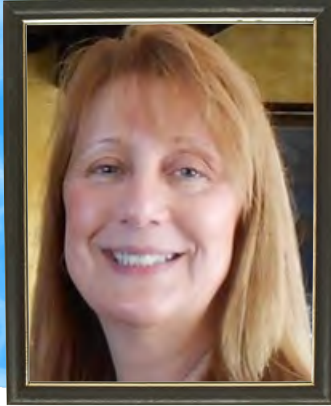
In closing, I'd like to review a few housekeeping items regarding CTLE – Continuing Teacher and Leader Education. At this point, every holder of a Permanent or Professional teaching certificate should have registered the certificate via your TEACH account online. For those holders of Professional teaching certificates and Level III Teacher Assistant certificates, you may have begun collecting hours for the 100 hour CTLE requirement every five years. Please note that these hours are no longer tracked on My Learning Plan but will now need to be maintained by the certificate holder for a period of 3 years following the registration (5-year) period. You do not have to submit these hours to NYSED unless requested to do so. Please track your hours using the form provided by the following link - <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/pdf/donotsubmit-ctlerecord.pdf>. On the form you will need to include the title of the program, the total number of hours completed, the number of hours completed in language acquisition addressing the need of English language learners, the sponsor's name and any identifying number, attendance verification, and the date and location of the program.

If you have questions or need help with the CTLE process, please feel free to email me at [ashashaw@rocketmail.com](mailto:ashashaw@rocketmail.com).

Best wishes to all for a wonderful school year, remember to talk it up! Change starts with you--BEE the change.



# LINDA BUFALO ~ AREA V.P. FOR PARA~EDUCATORS



## Keeping Up With Para-Professionals

We're off to a very busy school year! On October 20-22, 2017 I attended the 39th Annual NYSUT-SRP Leadership Conference along with building representatives, Bernadette DiGirolomo (TSP@BLC), Christine Lent (WHBLC), and Dorie Sullivan (BLC), as well as Jim Beck our union president. Jim has attended the conference for the past 4 years and while he is not required to, I appreciate the constant support he gives to our unit. Thank you all for giving your weekend to attend.

There were many interesting and informative workshops including those on Workers' Compensation, Civil Service Law, Education Law, Employees Local Retirement System, Teachers Retirement System, and Compassion Fatigue. The Building Representatives will bring the information from the conference to share at the next Para Rep. meeting so it may be shared with the members.

Since we're just beginning the year and we have so many new members, I thought it would be a good idea to go over some basic information as there is so much to know.

\***B.E.E.S.- BOCES Educators of Eastern Suffolk.** *The Para-Educators* (Special Education Aides, Bilingual Teacher Aides, Teaching Assistants, and Sign Language Interpreters) are an umbrella unit under the teachers' local union though we have our own (yellow) contract.

\***NYSUT- New York State United Teachers.** Our union at the state level

\***AFT- American Federation of Teachers.** The "mother ship" at the national union level.

\*In addition to our contract, we have 43 *Professional Practices Agreements* with the agency that are binding, but may be changed if necessary. Some agreements included are the following: Paras do not pay for field trips, Paras are eligible for a 15 minute break when possible, the role of shared aides, medical documentation requirements, and student teaching guidelines for ESBOCES teaching assistants.

Please get to know your building representative and ask to review these agreements. Take the time to read and understand your contract, as well as the agency handbook. Attend building meetings and ask questions. Remember, your building representative is there to always assist you. Have a great year!

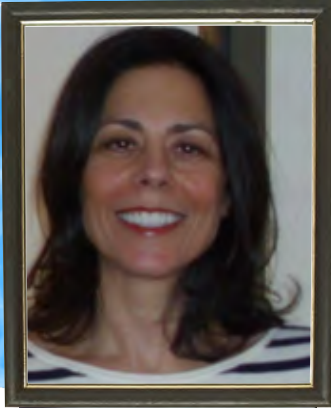
BEE Strong,

Linda





# KRISTIN ERICSON-ABRUZZESE ~ AREA VP. FOR SAS/ITINERANTS



## Updates

Welcome back to all who are returning and welcome to all the new members recently hired. So it feels like the weeks are just flying by and ESBOCES continues to take in new students, and we continue to interview and hire, it is all good. I would like to cover some recent updates and review some business that we are all responsible for as employees of ESBOCES. Please make sure that you send in your schedule as you update it and each quarter which is REQUIRED. Also as required, send in a copy of your license each time you renew it to Jean Christensen at 201-Hines. Please make sure that you also keep up on your CPI refresher training which must be done yearly, it is required by ESBOCES and covers you legally if it comes down to you having to get involved in placing your hands on a student. Remember the refresher is only for those who have attended the initial full training. I know I always find the refresher class helpful as a review and a time to listen to my co-workers and their experiences in how CPI training has helped them in working with our students.

For speech teachers and social workers, some new procedures have been addressed when a coworker is not licensed to provide services to students who have Medicaid. The agency and the union have been putting together forms and a procedure in using UDO/USO for when a student becomes covered under Medicaid during the school year. We all agreed that it was a disruption to all involved when a student had to change a provider due to this issue involving a coworker not having a license. The process of signing off on a coworker's notes is a voluntary position and members should not take on this role if they do not feel comfortable doing this; it will not be held against you if you say no. Remember you are taking on some responsibility in this role and that is why it is stressed that this is to ONLY be reserved for when a student becomes Medicaid during the school year and should NOT be from September if a student is a known Medicaid recipient and then in the following September that student should be moved onto a licensed provider.

I would like to end with asking individuals to please reach out to your building reps should you have even the "smallest" question regarding any issue that just does not seem right. I'm bringing this up because all too often members in passing will discuss an issue with me that did not sit well with them, however it has now passed the deadline date to address what is now on their permanent record however their administrator told them they could not do anything about it. Please ask and speak up if you have a question. I can be reached at [kristinericson@optonline.net](mailto:kristinericson@optonline.net) and Sequoya @Pat-Med HS 631-218-5411

#NYConCon

Would open the door for corrupt politicians and Albany insiders to rewrite our Constitution



VOTE NO on PROPOSITION #1

# ROSARIA BROESLER ~ AREA V.P. FOR ACADEMY/SCC



## Be In The Know

Hello to all my CTE Teacher colleagues. By now you all are well underway in your classrooms working toward another fulfilling school year. I hope you are also well aware of the Constitutional Convention Vote that is approaching on November 7th. I urge each and every one of you to get your friends and relatives out there to vote NO and save New York State from a disaster that would affect unions and all the benefits they have worked so hard to provide for their members.

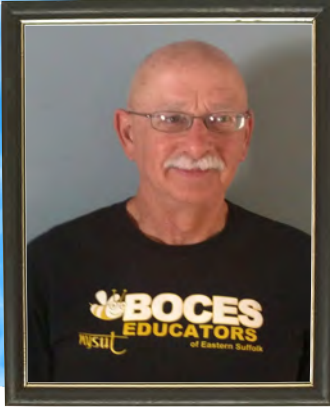
Attending your building meetings is imperative to being notified of any up and coming union action as well as BEES information. Speak to your building representative if you think there is a situation that you might need representation for. Remember to familiarize yourself with your contract and be ready to refer to the language in the contract that references your situation. There's no telling what we may be up against with regard to the Con- Con and the Janus Case. Stay informed! Read the NYSUT news and the BEES Beacon, they're valuable informational resources. Also check our website at [BEESBEACON.org](http://BEESBEACON.org) and our FaceBook page for ongoing updates.

Can you imagine



Life without unions

# BOB LOVE ~ MEMBER BENEFITS OFFICER



## It Benefits You to Know

I would like to welcome you all back to another school year. Every year I suggest that you read your Collective Bargaining Agreement. This year it's even more important, that way you will know what benefits you are apt to lose when a decision is reached by the Supreme Court in the Janus vs. AFSCME.

### Annual Salary Notice and Attendance Verification

Make sure you check your salary notice and that you are on the correct step and receiving the correct longevity increments. Your attendance record is no longer being sent with the salary notice. You can, and should, check your personal leave, sick leave, accrued sick leave days on WinCap. (<https://wincapweb.com/>) I highly recommend that you print out and save a copy of your attendance record.

### **EVEN NEWER** No-Charge Workers' Compensation Guidelines

As a result of committee meetings between human resources and your union the No-Charge Workers' Compensation guidelines have been updated once again. I would like to thank the members of the committee for their time and effort. The new guidelines require fewer forms and a medical note only needs to be submitted when requested by the insurance company. There are still timelines that need to be met. The new guidelines can be found in the Employee Handbook or online through the BOCES website. ([www.esboces.org](http://www.esboces.org) – click on “For Staff” – scroll to bottom of list and click on “Workers' Compensation Documents”) Both the guidelines and new forms can be accessed very quickly this way.

### Workers' Compensation Call Number

Just a reminder, please make every effort to call human resources as soon as you know you will be absent due to an on-the-job injury. This is in addition to completing the appropriate forms. You can call Daria Greco directly (631 687-3027), or call HR (289-2200) and tell them you want to report a workers' comp absence. This was a change that took place a few years ago because of a directive by NYS Workers' Compensation Board.

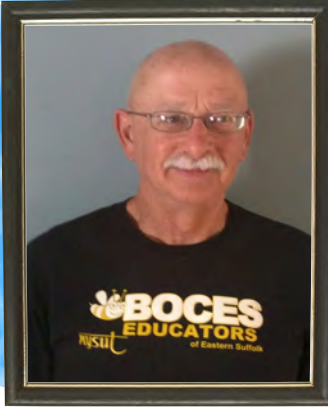
### First Eligibility

Here is a short reminder to those of you nearing retirement.

- Any Blue contract member who is 55 or older has five years from the time they reach 30 YOS to retire if they plan on collecting their contractual Retirement Leave.
- Any Blue contract member who has 30 YOS when they turn 55 has five years from that time to retire if they plan on collecting their contractual Retirement Leave.
- Any Blue contract member who does not have 30 YOS by the time they turn 62 has five years to retire if they plan on collecting their contractual Retirement Leave.
- \*years of service (YOS) is your time in the NYSTRS. It could be more than your ESB years of service.
- \*\* Retirement Leave is your accumulated sick leave days. See the contract for complete language. You might also check with HR for eligibility.
- There is no time limit for Yellow contract members but you must be eligible to retire to collect your contractual Retirement Leave. Again, see contract for complete language.



# BOB LOVE ~ MEMBER BENEFITS OFFICER



## It Benefits You to Know - Continued

### FSA Enrollment

FSA – Flexible Spending Account allows you to use pre-tax dollars to pay for certain healthcare and dependent care expenses. BUT, you need to know your expenses. If your expenses don't equal up to the amount you contributed, you will lose your unspent contributions. The money you can save from the tax advantage can be well worth the effort of researching your expenses and calculating how much you should contribute. My suggestion would be to start out small and increase your contributions each year as you learn how the FSA plan works. Your building should be receiving information sheets about the beginning of November. Check with the plan advisor for specifics. Remember, you will need original receipts when submitting for reimbursement.

### Dependent College Student

At midnight on the 19th birthday of your dependent, his or her Dental insurance will be terminated. If your dependent is attending college or an accredited institution of higher learning, taking at least 12 credits, you can continue their coverage by submitting the appropriate affidavit to your dental insurance carriers. You must submit this form each school semester, so make several copies once you obtain the form.

### Health Insurance Transfer

Before you know it the deadline for changing your health insurance carrier will have come and gone. The month of November is the time period for switching insurance carriers. You must submit in writing your request for change to Human Resources. The deadline for submitting the request is November 30th. If you decide to change carriers and have submitted your written request to Human Resources, your new health plan will go into effect on January 1, 2018. Remember, as in all your decisions, check out the pros and cons before making your decision.

### It's Your Retirement

Retirement Online is a helpful tool that allows you to view your own Retirement System information – such as your contribution balances or beneficiary designations – securely on our website. If you haven't already enrolled in this service, take a few minutes to sign up now. NYSERS: <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/retire/portal.htm>

NYSTRS: <https://secure.nystrs.org/sma/security/logon.aspx>

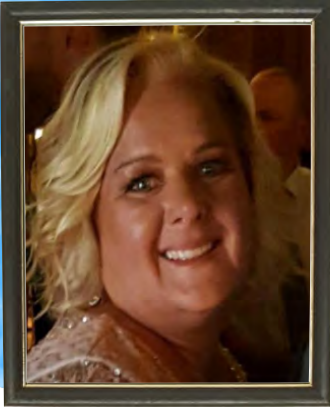
The "Notice of Intent to Retire" 8004F.15 form is to be used to let ESB know you intend to retire. The same timelines apply to this form that applied to the letter of intent we used to send. (Dec 2017 for a June 2019 retirement)



Remember, as in everything that's important – KEEP COPIES OF EVERYTHING

I can be reached at [beesvpch@optonline.net](mailto:beesvpch@optonline.net)

# MICHELLE TINTER ~ TREASURER



## United We Stand

Hello and welcome back as we are off to a great start this school year. As promised, your Executive Board worked hard throughout the summer in order to secure and unite our union in a year of uncertainties, beginning with Election Day, November 7th. Please get out and vote not only for your local officials, but please remember to vote **NO** to a Constitutional Convention. By now I would have hoped you have heard the dangers that could occur if the New York State Constitution is opened. Our only certainty to stop the uncertain is to **VOTE NO!**

Our dues schedule for the 2017-2018 school year is posted on our webpage for your reference. As a reminder, the first scheduled payroll deduction will begin on October 27th and will continue for a total of (8) pay periods. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me by email [mmtt2004@aol.com](mailto:mmtt2004@aol.com) or in writing to WHBLC.



# AL RIOS ~ MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY



## The More the Merrier

Greetings and welcome back to all of our BEES members! I'm hoping the beginning of the 2017-18 school year has started with success. Our membership continues to grow! Over the past year, the agency has hired more than 100 new employees, which is a good sign for our local union as well as for our agency. It's important as you start this new year, to make sure you get to know your building representative. They are a very valuable source for you to ask questions, express concerns or get information about your union and all the benefits your union provides you. I would also like to thank all the new members who attended the new members' social meeting in October. It was an excellent opportunity to find out a little bit about all the benefits that are available to our members from your union as well as a great opportunity to ask individual questions and to learn about working for E.S. BOCES. I hope you all had a good time, enjoyed the refreshments and had your questions answered. Thank you to ALL who attended!!

Speaking of benefits, once again to all our new members who want to take advantage of all the benefits, please remember before I add you to the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) membership list, certain measures must be completed, they include:

- Formal approval by E.S. BOCES board
- Next, I send your building representative your individual NYSUT membership application, VOTE COPE card and contact information card.
- Your building rep. is responsible to hand those forms to you to fill out AND send all three back to me.
- Once received, I will mail all applications to the NYSUT Union office where your names will be added to the membership list.

The process from beginning to end usually takes 2-3 months. I will be sending out new applications shortly, so keep an eye out. Your patience is most appreciated. I have been asked about NYSUT membership cards; if you do not have one or misplaced yours and want one, you must give your name and membership number to your building rep., and they must send me an e-mail and I will contact NYSUT. If you ever have a question or concern, please contact me and I will do my best to get back in touch with you as soon as I have answers. Well, that's all for me. I wish you all a wonderful year and look forward to seeing you this year! Cheers!

Al





# PATTI RICHARDS ~ GRIEVANCE OFFICER



## What is a Grievance?

Welcome back to another school year. I hope everyone had a relaxing summer. I would like to introduce myself, as I am new to the E-Board. My name is Patti Richards, and I have been teaching for 26 years, currently at Sayville Academic Center. I have also been union representative for 6 years. I am excited to be appointed as the Grievance Chairperson for both the Blue and Yellow contract members. As the Grievance Chairperson, it is my responsibility to enforce the terms and conditions of both the blue and yellow contracts. I am responsible to research, prepare, and file all grievances on behalf of the BEES members. In order for the grievance process to be successful, it is essential that the association be notified of possible contractual violations as soon as they occur.

How do you know if you need to file a grievance? First, there must be a clear violation of your contractual rights. For example, if it affects your salary, your working conditions, or your work day hours. The grievance is usually a result of a contractual violation due to the actions of the administration. Second, who can file a grievance? Any BEES member can file a grievance. Finally, whom is the grievance filed against? Generally, the contractual violation is the result of the actions of the administration, not another BEES member. Therefore, you cannot file a grievance against another BEES member. If you have an issue with another BEES member, it might be something that a building mentor can help you work out. To learn more about the grievance process, please refer to your contracts. In the YELLOW contract language regarding Grievances is Article 3, and can be found on pages 2-4 of the contract. The Blue contract language is in article 13 and can be found on page 23-26. Please take the time to read, know and understand your contract.

Here are some important things for you to know. Both contracts are very specific on time limits. From the time your rights have been violated, you have 30 school days to act on a grievance. Both contracts have similar clauses regarding the 30 days, written grievance within thirty (30) days after the teacher (party) knew or should have known of the act or condition (events) on which the grievance is based. Your first action when you believe your rights have been violated would be to try to work the situation out with your immediate supervisor. If this does not work to your satisfaction, informing your building representative is your next step in the grievance procedure. Your building rep. has a very specific role, and you should give them as much information about the situation as possible. Your building rep. or Area Vice President will contact me if the grievance is going to be moved forward.

# PATTI RICHARDS ~ GRIEVANCE OFFICER



## What is a Grievance?- Continued

Keep in mind, if you are ever called in to speak with your administrator without a union rep., and what starts out as a friendly conversation turns into you being disciplined, or you are made to feel uncomfortable, you have the right to stop that conversation and seek representation from your building representative. Document everything, keep informed and most importantly, read and know your contract.

The executive officers of your union have been working very diligently and tirelessly on behalf of all union members over the years in order to resolve any issues that may have arisen. As a result of their exceptional dedication and hard work, the BEES once again did not have to file a single grievance during the 2016-2017 school year.

The chain of command for the grievance process is as follows:

1. The member should contact his/her building rep as soon as possible. They are your first line of defense. The building rep will schedule a meeting with the supervisor and all parties will attempt to come to a resolution of the issue.
2. If the building rep is unsuccessful, he/she will then contact the area vice president who will attempt to resolve the issue.
3. If the area vice president is unable to reach an agreement, then it will be referred to the grievance officer who will then put the grievance in writing and present it formally to the supervisor.

*This all must take place within 30 school days from when the member knew or should have known of the act or condition on which the grievance is based.* Timeliness in filing grievances is critical. If a grievance is not filed in a timely manner, the administration can refuse to entertain the grievance and the association has no further recourse.



# NYSUT Member Benefits... more than just insurance!

***As an additional benefit to NYSUT members and their families, your union membership allows you to participate in more than 40 programs & services endorsed by NYSUT Member Benefits.***

These offerings include crucial products that you may already purchase such as life, auto & homeowners insurance, unbiased financial services and expert legal advice. But your NYSUT membership also allows you to participate in a variety of shopping, travel and personal programs that can help you save on everyday purchases and those special occasions.



**Our endorsed shopping/travel/personal programs offer savings on numerous online purchases, including:**

**Theme Park & Movie Tickets  
Hotel & Vacation Discounts  
Car & Truck Rentals**

**Office Supply Discounts  
Retail Store Discounts  
Concerts & Sporting Events**

**Electronics Discounts  
Ski Tickets  
Car Buying Service**

Participation in Member Benefits-endorsed programs also gives you a trusted advocate ready to assist you with any issues or concerns with any of our programs.

## **Member Appreciation Month coming in February 2018!**

As a show of thanks to the more than 600,000 NYSUT members that comprise this labor union, NYSUT Member Benefits will once again be holding our annual Member Appreciation Month celebration in February 2018.

Special prize drawings will be held each day of the month. To be eligible to win, you must be a member of our voluntary MAP Alert email service.

Sign up any time through the end of February 2018 to be eligible to win... but if you join MAP by January 31, 2018, you'll have the most chances to win!



To learn more about Member Benefits-endorsed programs & services, visit ***memberbenefits.nysut.org*** or call **800-626-8101**.



For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.



# ANGIE SCHULTZ ~ SOCIAL CHAIRPERSON



## Warm Welcome

As I sit here and write this article, I can't help but think how quickly the first two months of school have passed. For some of us, this school year means new beginnings, whether in a new building or new position or maybe it's your first year with Eastern Suffolk BOCES. Welcome back to all. I would like to thank all the new members who came out to the union office on October 12th for our new member social. Any member who was hired within the last year was invited to attend. This meeting allowed the Executive Board of our union a chance to introduce themselves to the new members and to discuss important topics, such as our contracts and their benefits, the difference between regular and no charge workers' compensation, the new forms for no charge and where they are located, as well as professional development and certification issues. New members were given time to ask questions that were of concern to them. The meeting was a big success and very informative.

### Welfare

In the event that a member suffers a death in the family, a bereavement card will be sent if it is a member's spouse, parent, child, or sibling. In the case of a member passing, special circumstances will then apply. The procedure for a bereavement card to be sent is as follows: Members should contact their building representative as soon as they believe a member meets the above guidelines and a bereavement card should be sent. The building representative should then contact me via email at [rarvm22@gmail.com](mailto:rarvm22@gmail.com) with the member's name and address and the name and relation to the deceased. In most circumstances, the card will be sent as soon as I receive the information from the building reps.

We want your feedback on the Retiree Honorarium. [Click Here](#) to complete a brief survey



# The **CON** in the constitutional convention

**According to the state constitution, every 20 years New York voters are asked to give thumbs up or down on a simple referendum: "Shall there be a convention to revise the constitution and amend the same?"**

The question will appear at the top of the ballot on Nov. 7, 2017.

"They say there are pros and cons to every issue," said NYSUT Vice President Paul Pecorale, "but I see only cons in this 'Con Con.'"

## **THREE key reasons**

Here are three key reasons why a state constitutional convention should be rejected:

**1.** The constitution establishes the basic organizational structure for state government as we know it. A convention would place everything on the table and delegates would have the power to swipe away any of the policies, programs and protections we might take for granted.

For example, the delegates — who could be political party appointees or even sitting elected officials — could decide to alter the balance of power. With enough votes, they could give much more power to the executive branch and significantly weaken the role of the Legislature. We all know how much the Legislature has done to amend and repair the damaging executive budget proposals we've seen in recent years.

Concentrating unchecked power could be a disaster.

**2.** The constitution establishes the fundamental rights every NYSUT member enjoys as a citizen of the state, as a public employee or as a retired public employee.

It guarantees the right of all state residents to a free public education; establishes your rights to be a member of a union and to bargain collectively; prohibits reductions in public pension benefits; provides workers compensation; and requires that the state provide for social welfare needs. It provides the "Forever Wild" statute that protects the Adirondack and Catskill parks. Imagine New York State without those things.

**3.** The constitution sets the most important policy goals for the people of New York State. Any changes would affect every other law in place, as well as future statutes.

Think about what happened in 1967: Voters approved the call for a convention and what resulted was a number of bad constitutional proposals, including a repeal of the "Blaine Amendment," which prohibits the use of state monies to assist religious schools.

That issue continues to be debated today, and NYSUT annually fends off efforts by privatization advocates and religious schools to establish backdoor voucher schemes funded by the state.

The catch 50 years ago was that, after voting to authorize a constitutional convention, voters had the opportunity to accept or reject the proposed changes. New Yorkers rejected the convention's proposed revisions, including a repeal of the Blaine Amendment. Had voters not rejected the repeal of Blaine, public education would look very different in New York State today.

"In an off-election year, the referendum on a constitutional convention is going to be one of the biggest votes our members face, and we need to get out the vote and defeat it," said NYSUT Executive Vice President Andy Pallotta.

## **WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**

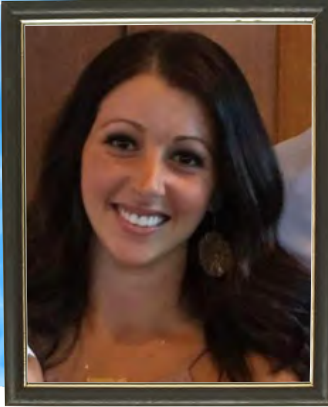
- The constitutionally required 20-year referendum to propose a constitutional convention will be on the Nov. 7, 2017 ballot.
- If it passes, three delegates per state Senate district and 15 at-large delegates — 204 in total — would be elected at the next general election, in November 2018.
- Delegates can include members of the Legislature or other elected officials, as well as political party leaders — and they can hold both positions, collecting both salaries.
- The convention would meet in Albany in 2019 for an unspecified duration, and then publish its suggested amendments.
- Any proposed changes are submitted to voters for approval separately or as a group for another public referendum no sooner than six weeks after the convention adjourns.



This article reprinted from NYSUT United, June 2016.



# AMANDA HAAS ~ RECORDING SECRETARY



## New Opportunities

Welcome to the 2017-2018 school year! I am honored to be writing as your new Recording Secretary. I have the responsibility to keep records at all meetings of the Executive Board as well as maintain records of all the bylaws and constitutional amendments. As a member of the BEES for the last 8 years and a Para Educator Representative for the last 5 years, I look forward to taking on this new position. I am so thankful for this opportunity. I wish all of you a successful and rewarding year.



Solidarity, June 30, 1917. The Hand That Will Rule the World—One Big Union.



# TERRY KALB ~ RETIREE CHAIRPERSON



## Staying Active

Dear Retirees,

This has been a busy Fall! The dramatic increase in life insurance premiums from The Standard Company certainly got every retiree policyholder's attention. Former BEES Presidents Jim Arden, Thelma Shaw-Patrissi, and Pat Copertino and I, along with several members of our E-Board, attended a series of meetings with BOCES HR Director Terri McSweeney. We were able to extend the grace period for renewing your coverage until November 30, at which time it must be paid in full for the year or cancelled. If you have further concerns or questions about your life insurance policy, contact Marysue DiLeva at [hrbenefits@esboces.org](mailto:hrbenefits@esboces.org).

NYSUT retirees have been phone-banking to our members about the importance of voting NO on the NYS Constitutional Convention. Many thousands of calls have been made on Tuesdays from 10:30-1:30pm since August at the NYSUT Suffolk office at 150 Motor Parkway in Hauppauge. Thank you to everyone who turned out--you have 2 more opportunities on Oct 31, and Nov 7th! Let's hope we have reason to celebrate on Election night!

Almost 40 BEES retirees attended our Fall meeting last month-- I am so appreciative of your engagement and support for our union! To stay in touch, please make sure I have your updated email and home address. You can find our closed group on Facebook by searching for BEES Retirees and adding your name to join! By now, most of you have sent in your annual retiree union dues for 2017-18, but it's not too late to keep your membership current! Send your \$35 check (made out to BEES) to me at PO Box 798, Wading River, NY 11792.

In Solidarity,  
Terry Kalb, BEES Retiree Chapter President  
RC-22 NYSUT Delegate  
[terrykalb@yahoo.com](mailto:terrykalb@yahoo.com)



# BEES

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