



THE UNION SOUND

THE VOICE OF A SOUND UNION



Mar./Apr. 2023

Rondout Valley Federation of Teachers and School-Related Professionals

Volume 47, Issue 4

**JOIN US FOR AN EVENING
OF SOLIDARITY
(AND POPCORN!)**

A DOCUMENTARY FILM
NYSUT: The First 50 Years
The story of one of America's most powerful labor unions.

NYSUT FILM SCREENING
MONDAY, MAY 22 AT 5PM
ROSENDALE THEATRE, 408 MAIN ST.
FREE AND OPEN TO ALL NYSUT MEMBERS

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER

ORGANIZED AND SPONSORED BY
ULSTER COUNTY UNION LOCAL PRESIDENTS
FOLLOWED BY A Q&A WITH MELINDA PERSON



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The Union Sound

Editor-in-Chief:
Robyn McDonough

Assistant Editors:
Jennifer Slauson,
Tara Thibault-Edmonds

President:
Robert McDonough

Contributors:
Robert McDonough,
Robyn McDonough,
Jennifer Slauson,
Tara Thibault-Edmonds

President's Message

by Robert McDonough

STAYING BUSY THIS SPRING

Another school year is almost over. We are in the last few months before our much deserved summer vacation. This is a busy time of year for all of us as we finish teaching our curriculum and prepare our students for AP exams, Regents exams, graduation, etc.

During this busy time of year, it is important to make sure we all get out on May 16 to vote yes on our local school budgets, no matter which district we may live in. Rondout's proposed budget is very fair for our community tax payers, so please help spread the word to get out and vote!

There are also a few upcoming RVF activities that you can add to your calendars, such as our Highway Cleanup on Saturday morning, May 13. Those interested in helping us with our commitment to keeping our community clean

should meet at the RVF office between 8:30am and 9:00am. The NYSUT film night celebrating the first 50 years of our labor union has been rescheduled for 5:00pm Monday, May 22, at the Rosendale Theatre. Those interested in attending should register by clicking on the link found on the front cover of this issue. RVF elections will take place in May in each building. And lastly, save the date of June 10 for our RVF Retirement Picnic from 3:00pm-6:00pm! More details can be found in the email sent out Tuesday.

It is easy to have booked calendars with little time to complete all our goals. However, please consider attending one or more of these upcoming RVF events and be sure to vote in the RVF elections and local school budgets. Long summer days will soon be here and we will have time to rest. Let's help each other reach the finish line and let's support each other along the way. Take care of yourselves and each other. Together we can make a difference.



Kim McEvoy stands with Congressman Pat Ryan (left) and Matt Haynes (right), NYSUT At-Large Director of ED 13/14.

CHECK OUT ALL YOUR UNION MEMBERSHIP HAS TO OFFER!

When you're planning for the future, what's at the top of your list?

- A comfortable nest egg for retirement
- Providing for your family
- Purchasing a new home
- Home improvement
- Purchasing a new vehicle
- Travel and entertainment

NYSUT Member Benefits offers dozens of endorsed programs to help turn those dreams into reality.



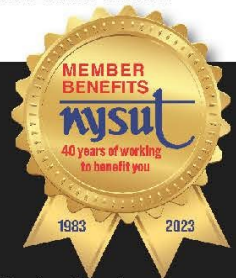
When it comes to saving you money, protecting your family and helping you plan for the future, NYSUT Member Benefits has a variety of programs and services to help with your goals. Whether you are just starting out on your journey, well into your career or enjoying a well-deserved retirement, there is a Member Benefits-endorsed plan that may be of assistance featuring value-added extras unavailable to the public.

Get started by first bookmarking the Member Benefits website at memberbenefits.nysut.org. There, you will find numerous tools and resources available to you as a NYSUT member – including a **Financial Learning Center** with articles designed to help educate you on financial decisions and topics. Member Benefits also endorses important **legal and financial services** along with an **online savings program** featuring some of today's most competitive interest rates.

Next up would be looking in the “Shopping, Travel & Personal” section of our site for **MB Discounts & Deals**. This program utilizes the nation's largest private discount network to provide NYSUT members with exclusive access to savings of up to 50% on restaurant dine-in or take out, groceries and food delivery, clothing and shoes, hotels and flights, car rentals, theme parks, vehicle maintenance, and much more.



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.

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Delegate Update

by Robyn McDonough

On April 13, several of your elected Representative Assembly Delegates [Tara Thibault-Edmonds, Kim McEvoy and (alternate) Robyn McDonough] attended the ED 13/14 meeting in Newburgh, NY. At this meeting, the guest speakers shared with us the newest union benefits available to our members, updates on political action around our area, and information about retirement. Ron Gross, NYSUT 2nd Vice President, spoke about the current state of education and was proud of the hard work performed by all the dedicated professionals who continuously pour their heart and soul into their daily work, despite the obstacles we face.



Kim McEvoy, NYSUT 2nd Vice President Ron Gross, Tara Thibault-Edmonds, and Robyn McDonough at the ED 13/14 meeting on April 13.

[The Peer Support Line](#) is one new service available to staff through NYSUT Member Benefits. This is a confidential helpline manned by trained retired and in-service individuals who know and understand the unique challenges faced by NYSUT members. The specialists will be able to confidentially connect you with the resources you may need. You can find out more by clicking the link above or calling toll-free 844-444-0152.

There is also [a new retiree page linked to NYSUT](#) that you should check out! It is full of resources not only for those nearing retirement, but also for those already retired.

Lastly, the presenters all reiterated the importance of supporting each other in our home districts by reminding us of the importance of voting in our local school budget elections on May 16.

Overall, it was a very informative and inspirational meeting. The three of us, along with RVF President Rob McDonough, will now head to Albany later this week to attend the 2023 Representative Assembly where our very own RVF Executive Committee has proposed and sponsored several resolutions that will be voted on during this convention. Upon our return, we will be sure to share with our members all that we learned.

Solidarity Corner

by Jennifer Slauson

UNION SHORTS

Hold the popcorn—Hollywood may be walking out. Television and movie writers have given union leaders the right to call for a walkout, with an overwhelming number also supporting a strike if the Writers Guild of America is unable to settle their contract by the upcoming May 1 deadline.

Solidarity win: 21% over three years is what Los Angeles

Unified School District has agreed to pay its nearly 35,000 teachers. This comes on the heels of another settlement with its 30,000 support staff. Both teachers and staff staged a three-day walk out last month that advanced negotiations for both unions.

Free Cone Day was back after a four-year hiatus, and Ben and Jerry's flagship ice cream store in Vermont has filed for a union election. Scoopers United would be the first unionized store putting the company's progressive ideals to the test.



FREE MEMBER BENEFITS

NYSUT Member Benefits appreciates everything that NYSUT members do on a daily basis to benefit those in the education and health care industries.

We are proud to offer the following programs and services to NYSUT members free of charge.



NEW: PEER SUPPORT LINE -- Created in partnership with Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care, this confidential helpline can provide answers, referrals, and empathetic support when you need it. Also available to NYSUT members' families.

STUDENT LOAN CENTER -- This helpful resource allows NYSUT members to speak with a Cambridge Credit Counseling loan counselor, attend a NYSUT Student Loan Workshop, or visit the Cambridge Student Loan Portal.

FINANCIAL LEARNING CENTER -- Powered by Kiplinger's Personal Finance, this platform offers numerous articles designed to assist NYSUT members with achieving their personal financial goals and better understand the nuances of insurance, savings, investing, and more.

NEW MEMBER LIFE INSURANCE POLICY -- New NYSUT members are eligible to receive a free term life insurance policy providing coverage for up to \$25,000 for one year, guaranteed renewable at the end of the year.

NEW: ACCIDENTAL DEATH & DISMEMBERMENT INSURANCE -- All NYSUT members (both in-service and retiree) are automatically provided with a \$5,000 accidental death & dismemberment insurance benefit (previously, the coverage amount was \$1,500 per member).

TRAVEL ASSISTANCE SERVICES -- All NYSUT members (both in-service and retiree) are automatically provided with travel assistance services from Europ Assistance that focus on providing coordination services to travelers.

NATIONAL AFFILIATE RESOURCES -- Your status as a NYSUT member provides you with access to complimentary life insurance from the National Education Association, along with an accidental death & dismemberment insurance benefit and trauma counseling services from the American Federation of Teachers.



Learn more by scanning the QR code to the left, visiting *memberbenefits.nysut.org* or calling 800-626-8101.

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