



THE CENTRAL NEW YORKER

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2017: Danger vs. Opportunity

“The Chinese use two brush strokes to write the word ‘crisis.’ One brush stroke stands for danger; the other for opportunity. In a crisis, be aware of the danger-but recognize the opportunity.” So said John Kennedy in a speech in Indianapolis in 1959.

As we view the president-elect’s picks for cabinet positions, we are aware of the danger, and we know we are facing a crisis. Tom Price, nominated for Health and Human Services, has advocated changing Medicare from a defined benefit plan where coverage is guaranteed to a defined contribution plan, giving seniors a voucher/coupon for a set amount of money to purchase their own private insurance. That coverage may not be guaranteed. Andrew Puzder, a fast-food CEO, and choice for labor secretary, wrote a book critical of business regulations, the minimum wage, and labor unions. Betsy DeVos, a fellow billionaire, proposed by the president-elect for education, has promoted charter schools, private schools, and desires to privatize public education. These are but a few of the nominees that appear to be at odds with the cabinet positions to which they are being nominated.

Yet, as much of a danger that these picks reveal, there may be opportunity lurking. For instance, if Price proposes any moves to undermine Medicare or even social security under the guise of ‘modernizing’ the program, he may be met with an outcry from seniors and a subsequent introduction of real reforms by the opponents of such draconian measures. Those real reforms may not get traction yet, but they set the stage for a change in congressional control...and future real reforms. Moreover, the imminent repeal of the Affordable Care Act

will engender a great debate and stories of patients losing coverage, not to mention how it increased Medicare solvency by a decade.

Another opportunity is found in a labor secretary, Puzder, if confirmed, who may oppose any significant increase in the minimum wage, voice opposition to labor unions and open the door to unfettered business deregulation. The more vociferous and outspoken, the more opposition that secretary will encounter. Labor will organize to oppose such moves.

Finally, a privatizing firebrand such as Betsy DeVos may have her hands full with the opposition of our two major national unions as well as several million public school teachers whose experience in the classroom far outweighs her ideological opposition to the concept of a free public school system in America. The education secretary may indeed win many battles in her quest to free America from public schools, but the chaos that will ensue may backfire over time.

It’s true that this outlook may be “pollyannish”, but in this crisis, if we are aware of the danger, become outraged at the danger, organize, support our union and oppose radical changes in the ACA, Medicare, social security, labor rights, and our school system, we will seize the ‘brush stroke’ of opportunity to benefit our nation.

BE THE UNION. CONTACT YOUR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES. GIVE TO VOTE/COPE!

~Bill Spreter, 2nd VP and Vote/Cope Chair

Notice of Election of Officers- NYSUT RC 7

President and First NYSUT Delegate/AFT Delegate

1st Vice President

2nd Vice President

Secretary

Treasurer

Five (5) members - Board of Directors

Two (2) NYSUT Delegates

Three (3) NYSUT Alternates

One (1) AFT Alternate

Term of Office: July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2020



Nomination form is available on our website and Facebook page. The form must be submitted electronically AND through US Mail by **March 7, 2017**.

Email to: RC7elections@gmail.com

US Mail to: **Chair, RC 7 Elections Committee**

NYSUT Regional Office

4983 Brittonfield Pkwy. PO Box 247

East Syracuse, NY 13057

The Elections Committee will meet to determine the eligibility of nominated candidates and will announce the candidates at the RC 7 General Membership meeting on **Tuesday, March 21st**, at the Crowne Plaza, Syracuse.

Resumes will be available at the **April 19th** meeting and on our website.

The election of officers will be conducted at the RC 7 General Membership meeting on **Tuesday, May 16th** at the Orchard Vali, Lafayette.

All NYSUT Retirees of ED 7 are eligible to vote; you do not need to attend the luncheon.

Balloting will be held from **11:45 am - 12:15 pm**.

Members of the Elections Committee will conduct the election and tally the ballots.

The luncheon will follow the meeting, beginning at approximately 12:30 pm.

2016 - 17 MEETINGS

March 21 - Crowne Plaza,
Downtown Syracuse

see reservation form on page 3

April 19 - Springside Inn, Auburn

May 16 - Orchard Vali, Lafayette

June 20 - NYSUT

From the President's Desk...

Loretta K. Donlon

Sylvia Matousek, member of the RC 7 Board of Directors, offers a perspective on ALEC as this issue's guest columnist. We should all be paying close attention! To learn more, chat with Sylvia at a future RC 7 meeting.

We've Been Had by ALEC!

What is ALEC? ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council) is a well-funded organization, which operates outside of the political parties. ALEC is a "corporate bill mill," which groups conservative Republicans and corporate billionaires together to write legislation. Its existence was virtually unknown until 2010, when, by accident, a reporter happened to stumble upon a meeting of the group. ALEC meets in secret locations to draft legislation designed to limit the role of government, and hence direct more money into corporate pockets. The draft legislation is actually discussed/written at these meetings. The Republican Legislators then fan out to carry the drafts back to the respective state houses where they are introduced state by state. And frequently become (bad) law.

Why ARE We Bothering with ALEC? ALEC has molded American politics and public opinion and, in large part, engineered the Trump victory. Working for a decade with a razor-like focus on "a state by state strategy," note the restrictive voter access laws popping up, increased attacks on virtually every public institution from schools to Medicare, anti-environment and anti-climate attacks.... This is ALEC. ALEC is beholden to no one except the Koch Brothers and the Corporate Billionaires who use ALEC to further enrich themselves. The Koch Brothers, big investors in pipe lines and fossil fuels, have spawned the anti-environment legislation coming out of STATE houses, sponsored by state legislators who are ALEC members. Hydrofracking is one such contentious issue, a damaging process supported by the next President and ALEC.

How is ALEC Successful? ALEC is well funded by the infamous Koch Brothers. Additionally, corporations "pay big bucks to play," i.e. to get a seat at the table to draft/write legislation. Using their "state by state strategy", 31 of our states have Republican Governors, 18 Democratic and 1 independent. This has permitted Republican gerrymandering of these states, making it near impossible for Democrats to win LOCAL offices. That is where ALEC's focus has been. The Koch Brothers were not particularly thrilled with candidate Trump. (Pence, however is a known ALEC supporter.) Despite that, ALEC pressed hard in the recent election to fund the "down ballot" offices and the Democrats across the country took a bad beating!

What are ALEC's Goals? Repeal ACA (Obamacare), restrict voter access, scale back public pensions, destabilize unions, loosen environmental regulations, institute charter schools, and privatize Medicare and Social Security.

In Remembrance....

Baldwinsville

Kevin Allen
Gerald Freeman
Naivie Moses
Gordon Turner

Fayetteville-Manlius

Beverly Nyman
Richard Thoma

East Syracuse-Minoa

Charles Gallagher
David Pepe
Orlando Reitano
Helen Richardson

Auburn

Robert Calimeri

Cay-Onon BOCES

David Dunseath

Marcellus

Joseph Coleman

Solvay

Michael McCulley
Steve Piano
Esther Ponzio

West Genesee

Mary Laskowski
William McGrade
Lorraine Szul

North Syracuse

Joyce Eschenfelder
Mary Freebern
Anne Green
Dorothy Jordan
Kim Napolitano
Linda Nuzzo

Liverpool

Marie Baronick
Eleanor Thuotte

Jamesville-Dewitt

Shawna Marzella

Syracuse

Bernie Antonio
Mary Baker
Joseph Bartelli
Kathleen Black
Elizabeth Derby
Rosemary Dugan
Sally Evertz
Grace Gronau
Fanny Mannara
Martin Matarrese
Vincent Mirabito
Margaret Nowlin
Helen Paikert
Millicent Rockwitt
Virginia Sheridan
Carmen Snyder
Diana van Camp

Tully

Madeline Despres

Onondaga Central

Elizabeth Dunford

OCM BOCES

Laura Bullock

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NYSUT Retiree Council 7
NYSUT, AFT, NEA, AFL-CIO

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William Spreter, Second VP
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4983 Brittonfield Parkway
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Loretta Donlon, ED 51 Director

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Anne Marie Voutsinas
Retiree Services Consultant

Lynn Davis, Web Master
EditorRC7@gmail.com

Lower your Insurance Cost  **Reduce Points on your License**

NYSUT & National Safety Council's 6 Hour Defensive Driving Class

Thursday April 20, 2017

At the Regional NYSUT HQ, 4983 Brittonfield Parkway
East Syracuse, NY 13057

Class is open NYSUT Retirees, their family and friends
Registration Begins at 8:45, Class 9:00AM - 3:30PM

Cost: \$25.00 per person includes Snacks

Maximum of 40 people (minimum 10) Reserve your spot now!
30 minutes for lunch is included in the time, Bring a bag lunch or order pizza as a group.

You Must Bring your License and Payment that Morning.

Call 315-431-4040 to register

Please Note: Our newsletter is posted on the RC 7 Website before it is printed and mailed from NYSUT Headquarters. Be sure to check the site for luncheon information and avoid sending in a late reservation due to unexpected printing and/or mailing delays.

Join Us on **March 21, 2017** for the RC 7 Luncheon at
Horizons Dining Room @ The Crowne Plaza Downtown, 710 E. Genesee St., Syracuse
 \$24 per person

Registration @ 11:30 • Meeting @ Noon • Lunch @ 12:30 • Program after Lunch
★FREE PARKING AVAILABLE★

Barry A. Kaufmann, NYSARA President, will give an update on issues confronting us this year.

Directions: The Crowne Plaza is located in Downtown Syracuse at the intersection of E. Genesee St. and Almond St., accessible from Rts. 690 and 81. Parking is located on Almond St. View a detailed map at <http://www.cpsyracuse.com/maps>. The Horizons Dining Room is on the 20th Floor. Use the Express Elevator.

Reservation Form RC 7 Luncheon - March 21 at Crowne Plaza, Syracuse

Name _____ Phone _____

Email _____

All entrees include soup, dessert, and coffee and tea.

Please indicate entrée choice below. If including multiple reservations, indicate names clearly next to meal choice.

_____ Cobb Salad of Lettuce, Turkey, Ham, Cheese, Eggs, Olives, and Tomatoes with Creamy Dijon Vinaigrette

_____ Chicken Caesar Wrap w/ Red Bliss Potato Salad _____ Turkey & Smoked Gouda Croissant w/ Red Bliss Potato Salad

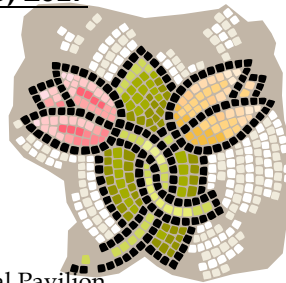
Number of reservations _____ at \$24. Amount enclosed \$ _____

Please send reservation form and a check payable to NYSUT RETIREE COUNCIL 7 to:
FRAN HUDSON, NYSUT Regional Office, 4983 Brittonfield Parkway, Box 247, E. Syracuse, NY 13057
Reservations must be received by March 1. No one can be seated without a reservation.

RC 7 Trip: Ottawa Tulip Festival - May 14 - 15, 2017

Package includes:

- ❖ Roundtrip motor coach transportation
- ❖ 1 Night Lodging at Doubletree by Hilton
- ❖ 1 Buffet Breakfast at the hotel
- ❖ 1 Dinner at Union Local 613
- ❖ Admission to:
 - Capital Cruises - Rideau Canal
 - Visit to Byward Market and the International Pavilion
 - Tour of Parliament and Peace Tower Observation Deck
 - The Tulip Festival at Commissioner's Park
 - Northern Lights Sound and Light Show on Parliament Hill



Save the Dates

**NYSUT Regional Conference for
RC 7 & 8**
May, 1, 2017 @ Doubletree, Syracuse

Upcoming RC 7 Trips

- Alex Bay - July 26, 2017
- Baltimore, MD - Sept. 12 - 15, 2017

Cost is based on number of travelers and room occupancy choice. Cost will range from a high of \$445 (single room, 25 travelers) to a low of \$285 (quad room, 40 travelers). Initial deposit of \$100 per person and registration form is necessary to reserve your seat.

Questions?? Contact Bella Tours! Or call Marge Schuster at 315-446-2037 or email mschuster730@yahoo.com.

NYSUT RC 7 OTTAWA CANADA RESERVATION FORM

Please complete the following form for each traveler and return to
Bella Tours and Travel Inc. 305 Vine Street, Suite 9, Liverpool, NY 13088
Phone# 315-652-0121 Fax# 315-299-4733 email: bellatours@hotmail.com

Name _____ M _____ F _____

Address _____

Home Phone # _____ Cell Phone# _____

Optional Cancellation Insurance? Yes ___ No ___
 (please submit with deposit - insurance is \$10 per person - additional info available at Bella Tours)

Method of payment: Cash ___ Check# ___ Credit Card ___ (call cc info into Bella) Money Order ___

Please indicate any physical limitations, and dietary restrictions.

Bring a list of medications and allergies with you on tour. You must have a Passport or Enhanced License.

Make checks payable to Bella Tours and Travel Inc. (There will be a \$20 fee for any returned checks.)

You asked for it... and you got it!

Third Annual Member Appreciation Month set for February 2017



Don't miss out... join MAP!

NYSUT Member Benefits and our endorsed program providers will once again be teaming up for the Third Annual Member Appreciation Month set for February 2017 in recognition of all you do to make *NYSUT union strong*.

To be eligible for these drawings, you simply need to be a member of the voluntary MAP Alert email service or sign up before January 31, 2017.

MAP Alerts are a convenient way to learn about new endorsed programs; updates to current programs; and special offers unique to MAP Alert participants -- without being inundated with emails.

Prize drawings will be held each day, with the winners announced exclusively on the Member Benefits website throughout the month of February.



Win prizes such as Best Buy, Amazon or American Express gift cards; car rental certificates; wireless speakers; an i-Pad Mini; and many more.

Last's year Grand Prize winner received a free vacation to Orlando, FL!

We encourage you to spread the word to your colleagues about this special event. **So if you see a phone call or email from us, make sure you answer it!!!**

For more details about this exciting event, visit the Member Benefits website at 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.

Jan./Feb. '17

❖ 3/21 @ Crowne Plaza, Downtown Syracuse