

SFTR NEWSBEAT

Sewanhaka Federation of Teachers Retired

From: Tom Cook

Political Action Chair



Let's not throw the baby out
with the bath water.

This is neither the first time you've heard about a proposed constitutional convention for New York State, nor will it be the last time before November. However, it might have slipped your mind with a summer full of distractions, so I beg your indulgence as I recap a few of the more important points.

- The better way is to rely on the less extreme, tried and true method of the **amendment process**. That process **enacts changes to the constitution through the passage of individual bills** by two separately elected state Legislatures before they are placed on a ballot. Lawmakers and voters have more time to make well considered changes, and only a few at time, in our state's blueprint for government. **This process is less likely to produce harmful effects.**

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- Proponents will sell **Con-Con** as a *people's convention*, but if past is prologue, it will be a *politicians' convention*, just as it was 50 years ago, when four out of five delegates were career politicians and Albany insiders. If corruption is the problem in Albany, then these “physicians” will not heal themselves.
- Experts calculate that such a convention **may cost taxpayers well over 300 hundred million dollars**. Politicians who are delegates can collect their salaries and pension credits as elected officials, **and** as delegates simultaneously. **It's a nice gig if you can get it!**
- New Yorkers stand to lose more than they can possibly gain:
 - > The right of all students to a free public education in New York will be in jeopardy. Owners of for-profit charters, religious, and other private schools are eager to grab even more of the \$324+ billion in public money spent on public education by state and local governments, without any real oversight over their business operations.
 - > Developers hope to remove environmental protections for the forever wild areas of the Adirondacks and the Catskills.
 - > Energy companies hope to snatch victory from defeat by overturning the ban on fracking - clean drinking water and other side effects be damned.
 - > Labor rights are at risk:
 - ~ The right to unionize and bargain collectively
 - ~ Minimum wage protection
 - ~ On the job safety regulations
 - ~ Workmen's compensation
 - ~ The Triborough Amendment to the Taylor Law which prohibits a public employer from altering any provision of an expired labor agreement until a new agreement is reached.
 - ~ Lest we forget: ***only the current NYS Constitution guarantees the defined benefits of your pension, but open Pandora's Box and benefits can be reduced, taxed, or eliminated by those who are convinced that if they don't have a pension, then neither should you!***

On Election Day, November 7, 2017 when you receive your ballot, please remember to do one thing first, flip it over and where it says “*Shall there be a convention to revise the constitution and amend same?*”

VOTE NO for a Constitutional Convention!

In unity,
Tom Cook

From: Anna Zurawinsky

SFTR Representative

Memory Lapse

It seems that many of us have forgotten that we are **Retired Public Educators** who are **enjoying the benefits created by SFT, NYSUT, NEA, and AFT.**

Where would we be without the following rights?

- the right to have a union
- the right to collectively bargain
- the right to a free public education
- the right to a protected work place
- the right to have an enforced contract

What would your quality of life be like without a retirement pension, without negotiated health insurance, and without public schools and universities for your families? It is a fact that union members have always done better for themselves and their families when they join together and speak with a strong united voice. It is collective bargaining that has repeatedly lead to our benefits and improvements.

So why is it that some of our members advocate the **myth of self sufficiency which leads to their approval of “Right to Work” legislation?** The freedom of workers to join unions is under attack by wealthy corporations and politicians who do their bidding. **The Economic Policy Institute** stated in its report, that unions with collective bargaining are effective at giving workers power. The very right to have a union is opposed by corporate interest and policy makers representing the highest earning one percent.

So the bottom line is that:

**a strong union enhances our lives from beginning to end,
as a retiree. I urge you to call your senators and representatives
to oppose the Right to Work legislation.**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Sewanhaka's Retired Teachers Award Monetary Grants to Five District Students

Awards assemblies at the Sewanhaka district's five high schools punctuate the end of the school year for seniors. The Sewanhaka Federation of Teachers Retired is proud to sponsor five cash grants to:

seniors who have overcome adversities and consistently improved their grades during their high school years.

Teacher donations fund the grants, and individual schools select winners. In May, a committee of retired teachers interviews those selected students and a district winner is chosen.

This year's winners are:

- **Emmanuel Betancourt** from Floral Park Memorial HS
- **Emelyn Alvarenga** from New Hyde Park Memorial HS
- **Damindra Arunasalam** from H. Frank Carey HS
- **Steven Girdhari** from Elmont Memorial HS
- **Destiny Hurt** from Sewanhaka HS

Each student is a testimony to the strength and determination needed to overcome tremendous challenges, as each managed to improve grades, excel in subject areas and gain entrance to college in senior year. Damindra Arunasalam from H. Frank Carey, the district winner, received a grant of \$500. Each of the other winners received a \$250 grant from the Sewanhaka Federation of Teachers Retired.

As the new school begins, The SFTR hopes the perseverance that these students and their perseverance will inspire incoming students to work hard despite the challenges and sadness that life can present them.

Contact:

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631-6515740

pmcasa217@optonline.net

NYSUT Regional Conference

Thursday, Nov. 2nd, 2017

8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Watermill Inn, Smithtown, N.Y.

Keynote speaker: NYS Comptroller - Thomas DiNapoli

Workshops: Elder Care, Health Care and Senior Issues

Update on Constitutional Convention ballot

Political Action

Urge senators to support the following bill:

Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (HR2353).

Urge Congress to restore voting rights protections:

Voting Rights Advancement Act (HR2978)



(Luncheon tear off on the other side)

The Luncheon is such a wonderful way to celebrate retirement together.

Remember to reserve a spot.

My Two October Passions

By Maddy Maffetore

Two annual events important to me each year in October are:

MAKING STRIDES AGAINST BREAST CANCER and VOTE COPE.

I won't bore you with any lengthy rationale--you know it.

MAKING STRIDES AGAINST BREAST CANCER JONES BEACH WALK is scheduled for October 15, 2017. Very few people participate in that event, perhaps due to age, aches and pains, or previous commitment.

SO..... how about having your fingers walk through your check book, writing a check payable to:

American Cancer Society and sending it to:

**SFT
270 Jericho Tpke.
Floral Park, N. Y. 11001
Attention: Maddy Maffetore**

Please indicate SFTR on the memo line

VOTE COPE is the best political action vehicle for us to combat the forces that threaten the quality of life in our retirement years. If the public votes to have a Constitutional Convention, our pensions could be in jeopardy. If the conservative Supreme Court votes to do away with agency fee, the in-service union, which negotiates our benefits will be weakened. You have to make a decision to gamble with your future or fill out the enclosed form and contribute to VOTE COPE. Lazy people, like me, choose to have contributions taken out of my pension check.

Your decision, the ball is in your court.

Fall Luncheon

Good times are here again. Come one come all to the annual SFTR Luncheon. We hope to see as many of you as possible as we will be discussing the ConCon (constitutional Convention) and how it may impact New York Residents.

LOCATION: Uncle Bacala's
2370 Jericho Tpke
Garden City Park, NY 11040
(516) 739-0505

DATE: Tuesday October 24, 2017

TIME: 12:30 PM

COST: \$20.00 for members and 30.00 for guests

Additional information: Please fill out the tear off below and submit a check for \$30.00 payable to SFT. At the time of the luncheon your check will be returned to you when we receive your \$20.00 in cash. This way a no show will not cost us \$30.00. **No worries... if you are unable to attend at the last minute just let us know.**

Fall Luncheon Payment Form

NAME _____

PHONE# _____ Email _____

Number of Guests _____

CHECKS PAYABLE TO SFT AND MAILED TO:
Sewanhaka Federation of Teachers,
270 Jericho Tpke, Floral Park, NY 11001
Attention: Anna Zurawinsky

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2017

Communications Group Meetings*

Tues: 10:30 AM: SFT Office:

Sept 26, 2017

October Meeting during luncheon

November meeting TBA

(please note the new time)

NYSUT RC18 Meetings*

Mon: 9:30 AM to Noon

Sept 18, Oct 16, Nov 20

(Third Monday ... No meetings Jan and Feb)

North Bellmore Public Library

(Newbridge Road and Bellmore Avenue)

*All members are welcome

Fall Luncheon

October 24, 2017

Uncle Bacalas'

(Invitation and tear-off page 5)

SFTR Newsbeat

SFTR Reps: Anna Zurawinsky and Maddy Maffetore

Newsbeat Editor: Karla Adasse

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Maddy Maffetore, Anna Zurawinsky

Special thanks to Helen Zurawinsky

Letters welcome e-mail: KarlaFSA@aol.com

Log onto: www.sft-nea.org

