

A Brief History of NYSUT Retiree Council 8 by Florence Wood Retiree Council encompasses Oneida, Madison and Oswego Counties Twentieth Anniversary 1991-2011

During 1991 a group of retired area teachers formed a committee to investigate ways of keeping retired educators connected with the union. Sally Mungerson, a retired Utica teacher and Mario DeMarco, retired Whitesboro teacher guided a group of other retirees into forming such a group. A committee comprised of Al Joseph, Paul Baker, Angie Gorman and Helen Fisher formed the Mohawk Valley Retiree Council.

With Vincent Grove, the Utica NYSUT Regional Office Manager had a saying at this time, which still holds true today, "Those who are not involved with the game of politics will become a victim of the game." This prompted and motivated these retirees to keep retirees informed about issues that were happening locally, statewide and nationally through the council. The early chapters were Holland Patent, New Hartford, Westmoreland, Rome, Utica, and Whitesboro.

A constitution was developed and elections held. Paul Baker was elected as the first president (1992-1994). Since then the presidents and their terms were: Angeline Gorman (1994-1996), Henry Albrecht (1996-1998), Joseph Gee (1998-2000), Henry Albrecht (2000-2002), Margaret Corbett (2002-2010), and Kenneth Drake (2010-present).

Local unions were encouraged to form chapters and send representatives to the Council Steering Committee. As of 2011 the following chapters or retiree representation have been established through their local teacher's association: Adirondack, Canastota, Central Square, Clinton, Holland Patent, New Hartford, Oneida, Oneida BOCES, Oriskany, Oswego, Remsen, Rome, Sauquoit, Stockbridge Valley, Utica, Vernon-Verona-Sherrill, Waterville, Westmoreland, and Whitesboro.

Retiree representatives have been elected by their chapter and attend monthly steering committee meetings held at the NYSUT office. Also during this time NYSUT recognized the need for representation on the NYSUT Board of Directors. Loretta Donlon is the Election District 51 representation on the Board. She represents retirees from Kingston to the western part of the state.

Retiree Council 8 represents approximately 4,800 retirees and informs them of issues through a newsletter that is mailed bi-monthly. Floyd Cameron is the manager of NYSUT Retiree Services. Anne Marie Voustsinas is the retiree services consultant for Retiree Council 7 and 8. Council 8 holds two luncheons yearly, fall and spring. A retiree conference is held once a year.