

PROVOCATOR

June 2017

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION VOLUME 46/NUMBER 3

DEDICATION
SOLIDARITY
PROFESSIONALISM
PRIDE
SECOND TO NONE



A Constitutional Convention Could Eliminate Rights, Benefits of Public Employees

Every 20 years, the people of New York State are asked a simple ballot question;

“Shall there be a convention to revise the constitution and amend the same?”

Most people in New York State aren't even aware, according to a recent poll, that the state has its own constitution, let alone a clause permitting a convention to amend it.

The question, which will have a huge impact on not only BTF members, but every citizen of the state, will appear on the ballot on November 7, 2017.

At risk, if the convention is held, are pensions for public employees, rights to be a member of a union and bargain collectively and public employee benefits. Other states have already removed these rights from their constitutions.

Lengthy Process

If the voters agree to hold the convention, it will meet in Albany in April 2019 for an unspecified duration. The delegates will deliberate and publish their suggested amendments.

Proposed changes are then submitted to the voters, either individually or as a group – as done in 1967; and another public referendum vote will be held after the adjournment of the convention.

This convention process has been used nine times (1777, 1801, 1821, 1846, 1867, 1894, 1915, 1938 and 1967) to undertake major re-writes to the state constitution.

Some of these conventions succeeded with voters accepting the proposed changes, as in 1938, while other convention recommendations were rejected by the voters, as in 1967.

What's At Stake

The constitution establishes a basic organizational structure for state government. Changes could be made that give too much power to one branch, for example say the executive. This

could unbalance power and weaken the legislature.

The constitution also establishes the fundamental rights of all citizens, particularly public employees, and retired public employees, including:

- Guaranteeing the right to a free public education (Article 11, § 1);
- Prohibiting reductions in public employee benefits (Article 5, § 7);
- Rights to workers compensation (Article 1, § 18);
- Rights to be a member of a union and bargain collectively (Article 1, §17);
- Requiring that the state provide for social welfare needs (Article 17, § 1).

Actions By Other States

In other recent state conventions the rights and benefits to public employees were severely altered. They include:

- Alaska 2005 – Closes Teachers' Retirement plan; all new members in 401(k) style retirement plan
- Maine 2001 – Suspended COLA's for all retirees
- Mississippi 2010 – increased employee contribution rate for all employees from 7.2% to 9%
- New Hampshire 2011 – Place all new hires and non-vested employees in a new tier with lower benefits
- Rhode Island 2011 – Placed all new hires and all members with less than 20 years of service in new plan with greatly reduced benefits and higher employee costs

Convention Delegates

If the convention is held, three delegates per State Senate District and 15 at-large delegates are elected at the next scheduled general election – 204 delegates in total.

These delegates can include sitting members of the state Legislature, political party leaders or other office holders. These delegates are allowed to hold both their

elected office and a position as a delegate; collecting both salaries.

Cost to Taxpayers

The cost of the convention, based on past conventions, is estimated in the hundreds of million dollars.

Despite the cost and time involved, voters historically voted against most of proposed changes in previous years. In 1967, 72% of voters were against the proposed changes, compared to 27% in favor.

What You Can Do

Everyone is needed to do their part in convincing voters that a Constitutional Convention is not in their best interest. 2017 is an “off” election year for the state Legislature as well as an “off” year for presidential voting, so voting should be minimal.

When the last convention was up for vote, many groups worked together to prevent it from happening.

These groups included:

- Public and private organized labor;
- Environmentalists and conservationists who did not want to see the repeal of the “forever wild” provisions that protect environmentally sensitive areas
- Advocates for public education at all levels
- Social welfare advocates who will seek to maintain the requirement that New York State provide for the underprivileged
- Fiscal conservatives who wanted to keep existing state and debt limits in place
- Some government watchdog groups who just didn't want to “spend the millions of dollars to hold a party in Albany!”

All these groups, plus others will need to work together again in 2017 to make sure voters understand just what could happen if we open up the state constitution to drastic changes through a convention.

VOTE NO • VOTE NO • VOTE NO • VOTE NO



THE CHALLENGES NEVER END AND OUR RESOLVE WILL NEVER END

While we resolved a contract that begins to address the inequities between Buffalo teachers and our colleagues in other districts, old and new challenges are at hand.

RECEIVERSHIP

The false labeling of schools (students, teachers, staff) based upon invalid student tests – tests that are given to students who speak little English, are in special Education programs, and who often care little about doing well on the tests, etc.

We will continue to fight the laws and regulations that give the power to override our contracts to implement changes that have nothing to do with improving the education of our students.

We are in court and working with NYSUT to overturn and eliminate this snake oil.

APPR

Once again, while we were successful in putting the use of the standardized tests on hold until 2019, we have to continue the battle until we are evaluated based on our teaching by administrators who remember what

good teaching is – not an impossible standard that they couldn't have achieved in the classroom – assuming that they even taught in a city school for more than a short time.

Locally, while many administrators are complaining about the APPR process we worked out, we must seek to ensure that despite some administrators' dislike for the agreement, they follow it.

THE TRANSFER PROCEDURE

Although the old transfer procedure was unacceptable, the new procedure was in many cases worse. We must continue to challenge any transfer policy that does not provide complete transparency relating to openings and process, that publically humiliates teachers and that does not provide teachers with knowledge of their position before the end of June (not September)

FUNDING

The battle for more funding for our students from the City, State and Federal Government must continue.

NATIONAL CHAOS

All eyes must be focused on the races for U.S. Senate and House of Representatives in 2018. We must be mobilized across the country to take back the Senate and House of Representatives. We need a barrier to prevent the destruction of education, the Supreme Court and all that most of us value.

Last but not least by far – we need to defeat the vote for a New York State Constitutional Convention. As you can read elsewhere in the Provocator, the defeat of this disruptive process is critical.

As you have heard me say many times before –

With our continued solidarity, we will meet and overcome each and every challenge we face. Why? Because we are Buffalo teachers who never, ever give up.

Bring them on!!

BTF at a Glance

BTF President

Philip Rumore

BTF Vice President

Edith LeWin

BTF Treasurer

Rebecca Pordum

BTF Secretary

Kevin Gibson



BTF Executive Committee Members

Pre-K-6

Sophia Howard-Johnson, Christopher Stephens, Trisha Rosokoff, Rachel Binda-Lis, Phyllis Mays, Teresa Leatherbarrow

7-12

Tom Gattie, Melissa Kenney, Dennis Brancato, Chris Salamone, Tom Anthony, M. Sue Raichilson, Lynn Garcia

K-12

Melinda MacPherson-Sullivan, Mark Mecca, Gregory Sawicki, Nicole Herkey, Lucille Emmi, Susan Marie Baker, Sean Crowley

At Large

Mike Mecca, Joseph Montante, Ruyvette Townsend

BTF Headquarters Staff

Philip Rumore, *President*

Edith LeWin, *Presidential Assistant*

Rebecca Pordum, *Presidential Assistant*

Tim Connick, *NYSUT Counsel*

Dennis Licherelli, *NYSUT*

Labor Relations Specialist

Nick Whitman, *NYSUT*

Labor Relations Specialist

Deana Fox, *NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist*

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www.btfny.org

PROVOCATOR

BTF Provocator Staff

Rebecca Pordum, *managing editor*

Chris Salamone, *editor*

Joseph Montante, *photo editor*

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The BTF is an affiliate of NYSUT, AFT and NEA.

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Executive Committee Elections Make History

The Executive Committee elections, going green for the first time this year with on-line voting, held few surprises this year. A total of 746 electronic ballots were cast.

The top four officers were not challenged and most of the BTF endorsed candidates won or were re-elected to two - year terms.

President Philip Rumore was re-elected for an unprecedented 18th term.

Rebecca Pordum, who has served as Treasurer for the past three years, was elected Vice President.

Melinda MacPherson Sullivan, director of the Teacher Center, was elected Secretary and Joseph Montante, a Math Teacher at Olmsted #156 was elected Treasurer. Both have served on the BTF Executive Committee for many years.

Edith LeWin, who served as Vice President, and Kevin Gibson, who served as Secretary did not seek re-election.

The other results are as follows:

PreK-6: Sophia Howard-Johnson, Trisha Rosokoff, Chris Stephens, Rachel Binda –Lis, Janine Schuster and Ruyvette Townsend.

7-12 Secondary: Melissa Kenney, Lynn Garcia, Dennis Brancato, Eve Shippens, Patrick J. Foster, Chris Salamone and Sue Raichilson,

K-12: Mark Mecca, Isabella Keegan, Nicole Herkey, Gregory Sawicki Susan Baker, Elizabeth Spiro-Carmen and Catherine Lipsitz.

At-Large: Marc Bruno, Tom Gattie and Mike Mecca.

Balloting Occurred from May 8-22 and results were available instantaneously, eliminating the need to count ballots. Voters reported that the on-line voting was easy and convenient.

The Election Committee, which worked hundreds of hours to get the elections done were: Janine Williams, chairperson; Beth Ann Fullagar, James Healy, Angela Hester, Brian Hilton, Jorge Koury, and Temothye Peart.

Rumore Calls On City Officials To Hike Student Funding

A letter calling the city's funding for Buffalo's students "disgraceful," has been sent by the BTF to Mayor Byron Brown and the Common Council.

BTF President Philip Rumore issued the letter May 9. It included charts that showed that the City of Buffalo's funding for its students was \$30,646,642 to \$93,151,509 behind Syracuse, Rochester and Yonkers.

The chart shows that while the City of Buffalo contributes 15% of its budget to support its students, Yonkers provides 34%, Rochester 24% and Syracuse, 21%.

"It is disgraceful that Buffalo Public School students receive between \$30,646,642 to \$93,151,509 less from their city than the other city school children," Rumore said.

"We call upon the mayor and Buffalo Common Council to reverse the city's unacceptable underfunding of our students and to support our students on the same level as Rochester, Yonkers and Syracuse fund their students.

"Our students deserve more, nothing less," Rumore stated.

NEA Election Results

BTF President Philip Rumore was re-elected Delegate to the National Education Association Annual Representative Assembly June 30-July 5 in Boston, Ma.

The BTF is entitled to elect two delegates and two successors to the convention.

Treasurer Rebecca Pordum was elected as the second Delegate. The two Successors elected are Lynn Garcia and Sophia Howard - Johnson.



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Sick Bank Changes Due By June 23

Attention All Teachers: It's time to join or make changes to your Sick Leave Bank Enrollment.

Requests to enroll, change or withdraw membership in the Sick Leave Bank must be in the BTF office no later than 5 p.m. Friday, June 23.

To enroll or change the number of days donated to the Sick Bank, complete both the purple enrollment card and the grey authorization card, which are available through your building representatives.

To become a member and maintain membership in the Sick Leave Bank, a teacher must donate a minimum of two days per school year of his/her accumulated sick leave. A maximum of four days per school year may be donated. Membership in the Sick Leave Bank will be continuous without the necessity of filing a new application each year.

Teachers wishing to terminate membership must withdraw by written request. These requests must be mailed by certified return receipt requested only!! Faxed copies cannot be accepted.



ON NOVEMBER 7

**VOTE NO
ON THE
CONSTITUTIONAL
CONVENTION**



**RUMORE CONTROL
881-4818**

Despite Travel Cancellations, Dedicated BTF Delegates Make It To NYC For NYSUT RA

Despite bad weather in Atlanta, Georgia that caused a domino effect cancellation of dozens of Delta airline flights, BTF delegates made it to the April 7-8 NYSUT Representative Assembly in New York City.

Three delegates, Lynn Garcia, Sophia Howard-Johnson and Sue Raichilson, left Buffalo a day early to serve on the Credentials Committee at the convention. Their flight was postponed numerous times and they sat at the airport 13 hours before the flight was finally cancelled. Delta provided them with a van and driver and they drove through the night.

Meanwhile, the remaining delegates were scheduled on an early morning flight, only to have the flight cancelled. Quick thinking and action by Rebecca Pordum, presidential assistant and treasurer of the BTF, saved the day. Thirteen delegates rushed to the Depew Train Depot and caught the first train out and two others were able to catch the second train an hour later.

Three other BTF members, Delegates Kevin Gibson, Kristin Mendoza, and Mary Manley, drove to NYC.

BTF Gets Awards At NYSUT RA

The BTF received two awards during the annual NYSUT Representative Assembly in New York City.

The BTF was awarded the Local Community Service Award, established in 1996 to recognize those locals that have made a collective and sustained contribution to community service during the previous year.

The BTF was cited for:

- Participating in many events including the Variety Club Telethon, Gospelfest and the Juneteenth Festival
- Contributing approximately \$35,000 to charities including SABAH, Inc., E.P.I.C., Shea's Performing Arts Center and Junior Achievement of WNY
- Awarding \$2,560 in scholarships to the University at Buffalo Foundation, Inc., Say Yes to Buffalo and other foundations

The BTF was also given a Lou Cammarosano Award in recognition of outstanding improvement and leadership for the 2016 VOTE-COPE Campaign. VOTE-COPE funds are used to defray campaign costs of endorsed candidates who are education and teacher friendly.

The delegates on the first train were: Pordum, Rachel Binda-Lis, Dennis Brancato, Tom Gattie, Mike Jeffers, Melissa Kenney, Phyllis Mays, Mark Mecca, Mike Mecca, Claire Rosart, Trish Rosokoff, Chris Salamone, and Eve Shippens. Delegates Marc Bruno and Roger Aumick were on the second train. Delegate Melissa MacPherson-Sullivan had her own separate transportation to the Representative Assembly.

Despite the nine hour travel delay, all of the delegates and alternates arrived at the RA in time to vote in the election of officers.

NYSUT Officers Elected at RA

BTF President Phil Rumore was re-elected Director of Election District 44 of the New York State United Teachers during the 2017 Representative Assembly.

The Representative Assembly was held April 7-8 in New York City.

Andy Pallotta, who served as Vice President under the past two NYSUT administrations, was elected to serve as president of NYSUT for the next three years.

Also elected to Pallotta's Team were:

- Jolene T. DiBrango, Executive Vice President
- J. Philippe Abraham, First Vice President
- Paul Pecorale, Second Vice President (i)
- Martin Messner, Secretary- Treasurer (i)

More than 2,000 delegates attended the Representative Assembly, including 19 from the BTF. The delegates approved 35 resolutions and referred five others to the Board of Directors.

Some resolutions that passed included:

- Calling for student test scores to no longer be a mandatory part of teachers' evaluations
- Condemning computer-based testing for grades 3-5
- Opposing teacher participation in generating test questions for the state's ELA and math assessments in grades 3-5
- Supported ESSA professional development funding to be used to expand teacher center programs
- Called for NYSUT to work with national, state and local organizations to prevent US Education Secretary Betsy DeVos from any attempt to defund public education
- Called for at least 30-minutes a day of recess for all elementary school students

Letters to the Editor

Members Donate Over \$74,000 to United Way

A sincere thank you, on behalf of the United Way of Buffalo and Erie County and our entire community, for your leadership and support during our 2016 United Way Campaign. Thank you for all the work involved in a workplace campaign. Your generosity and that of your colleagues contributed \$74,628 to our campaign, and will make a substantial difference for those in need in our community.

Through your generosity, United Way brings people, organizations and resources together to improve community well-being. Your contribution will be invested in local programs to ensure that children and youth reach their full potential: families attain financial stability and independence; and people of all ages are healthy and safe.

We are so grateful for your contributions of your time and talent to the United Way.

On behalf of the United Way and the thousands of people whose lives you have touched, thank you. We look forward to working with the Buffalo Public School System next year.

Sincerely,
Paulette M. Crooke
2016 Campaign Chair

Children's Thanks BTF For Gifts To Newborns

Thank you for your faithful support of Children's Hospital. We want to recognize your generosity and extend our appreciation to you for your very generous donation.

We are pleased to let you know that in the very near future, our nationally ranked programs and services will find a new home on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus with plans unfolding for the John R. Oishei Children's Hospital – the first in more than 120 years.

Your gifts help Children's Hospital sustain life-saving programs and services by providing the best technology and equipment and all the special little touches that combine to heal our children. Because of your support, all children in Western New York will continue to receive compassionate, expert care in a state-of-the-art facility.

Sincerely,
Elsie Dawe
Vice President

BTF Sponsors AKA Founders' Day Program

On behalf of the members of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority – Gamma Phi Omega Chapter, we thank you for your role in making our 73rd Founders' Day Program, held Feb. 25, such a huge success.

At the luncheon, we celebrated the Founders of our great sorority as well as the service we continue to provide to the greater Buffalo Community. The program also featured Patricia Russell-McCloud, an outstanding speaker, who inspired and challenged an audience of nearly 500 attendees.

We thank you, as a program sponsor, for assisting and making it possible for us to offer a luncheon of such a high caliber.

Again, many thanks for your willingness to partner with us.

Sincerely,
Janice Y. Ferguson, Ph.D.,
Lisa Tolbert Yokley
Founders' Day Co-Chairmen

Helping Families and Children of America, Inc

This letter is written to your organization because you believed in our cause and made a donation toward our 3rd annual Boys to men Youth Empowerment Conference.

It's because of organizations like yours we are able to do the things we do. Your contribution went toward supporting our 2017 Boys to Men Conference.

We were able to purchase Shirts and Neck-ties, giveaways, as well as other pertinent items for the boys.

We take pride in our work. We are committed and determined to provide families and children with the care, support and encouragement they need to strive, reach high and be successful.

THANK YOU! Your organization helped make a difference in the lives of these boys who attended this year's conference. We are very excited, this year we had 100 boys participate.

With Great Humbleness,
Jacqueline Mines,
President/CEO

District Thanks BTF For United Way Efforts

(Editor's note: The District received a letter of thanks from United Way. It responded by thanking the BTF)

I understand we couldn't have done this without your help. Thank you so much.

Marianne Dixon
BPS District

BTF Buys HOME Ad

Thank you! Your support of Housing Opportunities Made Equal through advertising in our souvenir journal and program guide helped to make HOME's 54th Anniversary Celebration a great success!

Thanks again for your support.
Sincerely,
M. DeAnna Eason
Executive Director

BTF Supports Dinners, Buys Program Book Ads

To support local community events, the BTF often makes donations or purchases ads in award dinner program books.

Some of the BTF ads recently appeared in the programs of the following events:

- 10th Annual Celebrate Women "Touching the World" Awards Dinner, which was held on March 18. Several Buffalo Teachers were among the women honored.
- The 40th year celebration of Sabah, March. 26.
- The Western New York Area Labor Federation Appreciation Awards Dinner, May 3.
- 5th Annual American History Bee, May 7.

BTF Gets NYSUT Service Award

Congratulations on the selection of your local as a NYSUT Community Services Award winner.

The selection of the Buffalo Teachers Federation as a recipient recognizes your local's contribution to community service during the 2016 calendar year.

On behalf of the Officers and Board of Directors, congratulations to your local for this outstanding effort and dedication to community service.

In solidarity,
Karen E. Magee,
President, NYSUT

Math Teacher Takes Journey Into Space

It was just about this time last year when Jorge Koury, a Math teacher at Olmsted #156, learned he had been selected to attend the prestigious Honeywell Educators @ Space Academy.

The academy, conducted at the University of Alabama @ Huntsville, was attended by 186 educators representing 30 states and numerous countries throughout the world.

The all-expense paid program was held June 16-20, and Koury says he almost missed it because the Board of Education did not want to let him go so close to the end of the school year.

The program was centered on engineering, math, science and technology. It was geared toward 5th-8th grade teachers with the intention of encouraging middle-school students to seek careers in these academic areas.

While there, the teachers spent a lot of time at the nearby US Rocket and Space Center, where the space program began. There, they met the person who started the space program and many current astronauts.

The teachers also saw where the Tom Cruise movie, Top Gun, was shot and experienced a simulated helicopter crash, which ended in the water. They also visited the control station for the 1969 moon landing.

During the program, the teachers were put into groups of 15. Koury said there were teachers from Turkey, Portugal and the Ukraine in his group and they are keeping in touch via social media.

Together they learned activities to bring back to their schools and each created his own rocket. Koury's rocket flew more than 900 feet during his demonstration. And, much to his surprise, he was able to bring the rocket home.

Koury described his adventure as "part museum, part amusement park, part school and part camp. It was an experience of a lifetime."

He said NASA has many free materials for teachers and has the capacity to take pictures from space that can be sent directly to classrooms for use in instruction.

Koury said he is hoping to share his experience, knowledge and materials with his colleagues during a half-day professional development sometime in the future.



Schoolhouse Dems Honor Zephyr Teachout

About a dozen BTF members attended an award luncheon April 22 for Congressional Candidate Zephyr who was honored as a Defender of Public Education by the Schoolhouse Democrats.

The Awards Luncheon, attended by approximately 200 people, was held at Banchetti by Rizzo's in Amherst.

Zephyr, a former candidate for governor of New York State, talked about saving public education and also a lawsuit she initiated against President Trump for his violation of the U.S. Constitution's emolument clause.

She was introduced by Assemblywoman Monica Wallace, another tireless advocate for public education. Wallace said she is working in Albany for increased funding for public education and to stop the rapid increase of Charter Schools.

Representing the BTF at the luncheon were: President Phil Rumore, Dennis Brancato, Lynn Garcia, Brian Hilton, Barbara Hall, Melissa Kenney, Melinda MacPherson Sullivan, Mark Mecca, Trisha Rosokoff, and Chris Salamone.

The Schoolhouse Democrats is a newly formed organization dedicated to protecting public education. It was founded by parents, community members, and educators to defend public education from being destroyed.

The Schoolhouse Democrats believe that public education is a public good that must be preserved to maintain our values and our country.

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION: Labor rights at risk why in five

- 1 **At risk:** The right to unionize and bargain collectively. Your union's strength could be jeopardized.
- 2 **At risk:** Workers' compensation. Safeguard your rights if you're injured on the job.
- 3 **At risk:** Public pension protections. The constitution guarantees your pension will be there.
- 4 Other states have made drastic pension changes with disastrous results for active members and retirees. Don't let it happen here!
- 5 Don't risk your rights/your future. **Vote NO!**



The organization supports politicians that defend public education and challenge those who do not through direct political action and campaigns.

Officers of the organization are:

- President - Todd Hathaway
- Vice-President - Joe Cantafio
- Secretary-Treasurer - Alka Moudgil

Zone Chairs are:

- Amherst - Jacqui Berger
- Aurora - Alka Moudgil
- Buffalo - Larry Scott
- Clarence - Mike Huttner
- Hamburg - John Mrozek
- Orchard Park - Todd Hathaway
- Tonawanda - Cheryl Hughes
- West Seneca - Joe Cantafio

For more information, or to join the organization, visit schoolhousedems@gmail.com



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BRTA Keeps Retirees Active

You don't have to say goodbye to your friends and colleagues when you retire. The Buffalo Retired Teachers Association (BRTA) will keep you busy and in touch.

The BRTA is open to all Buffalo teachers and administrators who are retiring. The BRTA hosts four luncheons during the school year, including the Fall Luncheon on the first day of school in September, Holiday Luncheon in December, Winter Luncheon in February, and the Spring Luncheon, held in May. During June, BRTA men and women participate in the Annual Golf Tournament.

Travel excursions are sponsored by the BRTA throughout the year, including week-long cruises, day trips to various locations within a 100-mile radius, overnight trips outside New York State, and theater trips to Erie, Pa, Toronto and Shea's Buffalo Theatre.

The BRTA newsletter keeps members informed of all important issues. And although retired, members of the BRTA don't forget the students. Each year, four \$1,000 scholarships are awarded to graduating seniors of the Buffalo Public Schools.

Life membership in the BRTA is \$150 and must be paid in full. Annual membership is \$12 per year. For more information contact Linda Parada, membership secretary, at 875-3392 or online at www.BRTA.biz

42 Retiring Teachers Served Over 1,100 Years In Buffalo Public School Classrooms

Forty-two retirees, who clocked a total of 1,144 years teaching in the Buffalo School District, attended the annual BTF Retirement Dinner May 31 at Salvatore's Italian Gardens on Transit Road, Depew. Each retiree received a framed certificate from the BTF.

Among the retirees was BTF Vice President Edith LeWin, who served 58 years in the District and held various posts with the BTF, National Education Association (NEA), and New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) throughout her career.

BTF President Philip Rumore, who presented Edie with her award, called her "the heart and soul of our organization."

Also among the retirees were Executive Board Member Phyllis Mabry-Mays and former Executive Board Member Kym Mosgeller.

Rumore thanked the retirees for their years of dedication and said they impacted thousands of children throughout the years.

"Teaching is an amazing thing because you touch children and this effects their lives and their children's lives," Rumore told the retirees.

He told a story of a former student who came to him for help in finding a job. Afterwards, the student sent him a thank-you note, which read, "You saved me when I was a child and you saved me when I was an adult," Rumore recalled, his voice breaking. "You have helped an entire generation and you don't even know it."

The retirees, listed by the number of years of service are:

Edith LeWin	58	Kym Mosgeller	28
Anne Mulder	34.5	Denise Bauer	28
John Weiss, Jr.	33	Dennis Knipfing	27
Tammy Ruocco	33	Donna Podsiadio	26
Veronica Gnau	33	Sonia Dixon	26
Valerie Davis	32.2	Rosemarie Tronolone	25
Lawrence Weimer	32	Gale MacMullin	25
Richard Smith	32	Linda Colose	25
Elaine Pond	32	Cheryl St. George-Calleri	23
Caroline Parrinello	32	Hilda Ramos-Woodward	23
William Spatzer	31	Leonard Rizzo	22.5
Monica Smart	31	Kathryn McCracken	22.5
Mary Young	30.7	Mary Ann Rusnak	21
Marie Wu	30	Yvonne Bratton	21
Luz Soto	30	Nadine Kosmoski	21
Phyllis Mabry-Mays	30	Michael Ruffino	19
Valorie Gardner	30	Maureen Castellani	18.6
Guy Schiavi, Jr.	29.5	Ann Braniecki	17.5
Elaine Pietka	29.3	Carol Mischnick	15.5
Kathleen Piske	29	Maureen Seitz	15
Marian Munoz	28	Grace Febres	15



Phyllis Mabry - Mays, a BTF Executive Committee members retires after 30 years.



BTF President Phil Rumore thanks Vice-President Edith LeWin for her decades of service to all the teachers in Buffalo.



All Retirees Become Members Of RC 44

All BTF retirees should be aware that after retirement you are automatically a member of the New York State United Teacher (NYSUT) Retiree Council 44.

As an active BTF member, you were a member of ED 44. RC 44 is a continuation of your membership in NYSUT and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). As a BTF retiree you will join the more than 200,000 retirees who are members of NYSUT. Retirees do not pay any dues. However, there is a voluntary annual "Participation Fee" of \$10. This fee is the only means of support for RC 44.

Retiree Councils send delegates to the NYSUT, AFT and National Education Association (NEA) Representative Assemblies in order to promote retiree issues and legislation. RC44 also participates with Western New York Retiree Councils 1, 2, and 3 in various school functions. Our "Day after Labor Day" luncheon honors all new retirees. The Christmas/ holiday luncheon is filled with holiday cheer and entertainment. The annual Spring NYSUT Retiree Conference is an all-day event with NYSUT speakers and retiree workshops. Information about these events is published in the bimonthly RC 44 newsletter.

Upon retirement, you are no longer a member of NEA. However, to continue to enjoy the benefits of NEA membership, retirees are strongly urged to join NEA as a lifetime member for \$250.

If you have questions about RC 44, contact President Stan Nowak at 837-2061 or by email at stanjn79@hotmail.com

**NEED THE LATEST INFORMATION
CALL THE BTF AT**

881-5400

**OR VISIT THE WEB AT
www.btfny.org**

BTF Constitutional Convention Plan of Action

June

- 19th: Start Social Media Campaign
- 27th-29th: Phonebank at BTF to register delegates for Summit 2
10 – 12 p.m. and 2-4 p.m. Volunteers needed

July

- 5th and 6th: Phonebank at BTF to register delegates for Summit 2
10 – 12 p.m. and 2-4 p.m. Volunteers needed
- 18th: Summit 2 at NYSUT from 4 – 7 p.m.

August

- 9th: Summit 2 at NYSUT from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

September

- Campaign Launch:
 - BTF eblast planning meeting/5 separate emails to be sent out
 - Building Level Meetings/One to One Conversations
 - Identify friends, neighbors to contact regarding Con-Con
 - Council of Delegates meeting

October

- TBD: Building Level Meetings/One to One Conversation
eblast 2, 3, 4,5,6
Phone bank confirmed no votes

November

- 6th: eblast 7
- 7th: GOTV – call friends, neighbors

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Joe is the Husband of BTF member Barbara Polino Frandina



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ON NOVEMBER 7
VOTE NO
 ON THE
CONSTITUTIONAL
CONVENTION

CONSTITUTIONAL
CONVENTION:
A waste of tax dollars
 why in five

- 1** Experts estimate a constitutional convention will cost hundreds of millions in taxpayer dollars.
- 2** Lawmakers can collect salaries and pension credits as elected officials and as delegates simultaneously.
- 3** The last time a constitutional convention took place, it cost taxpayers millions and accomplished nothing.
- 4** Constitutional conventions don't have mandatory end dates — delegates keep meeting and taxpayers keep paying.
- 5** Should taxpayers fund a party for Albany insiders? No!
Vote NO!

\$100s
OF MILLIONS!

Yes, you read that right.
 Albany wants to spend hundreds of millions of your taxpayer dollars on a constitutional convention, even as class sizes grow and educators are asked to do more with less. And what will those millions buy? Return trips to Albany for state legislators, since most convention delegates will likely already hold office. And since double dipping is allowed, lawmakers can collect salaries as elected officials and as delegates.

New York's constitution protects the fundamental rights we enjoy as state citizens, including **free public education,** the **right to unionize** and **retirement security.**

Holding a constitutional convention gives delegates free rein to overhaul the entire document.

Your taxpayer **MONEY** **\$100s of millions in tax dollars wasted, and our rights up for grabs? Heck, NO.**

VOTE NO On Nov. 7, remember to VOTE
www.NoNewYorkConvention.org



PROVOCATOR

BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION
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 BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14201
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Extended Paychecks to Begin on July 14

If you get summer paychecks through the BTF Extended Pay Plan, the summer paycheck schedule will begin on July 14.

The final, full paycheck from the Board of Education is June 30. Summer paychecks will be mailed to the address that is on file with the BTF as of the start of the 2016-17 school year. If you have not notified the BTF of an address change, please call the BTF at 881-5400 immediately and provide a new address.

The bank has advised us that checks cannot be cashed before the date of issue even if you receive them before that date.

“SUMMER 2017” PAYCHECK & DEPOSIT SCHEDULE – PLEASE RETAIN THESE DATES FOR YOUR RECORDS. (You should receive your check(s) on or before the date indicated and your deposit on the date of the check.)

- **ONE CHECK OR DEPOSIT** (One summer check or deposit to be issued) July 14
- **TWO CHECKS OR DEPOSITS** (Two summer checks or deposits to be issued) July 14, August 11
- **FOUR CHECKS OR DEPOSITS** (Four summer checks or deposits to be issued) July 14, July 28, August 11, August 25

TO PARTICIPATE NEXT YEAR:

- If you wish to continue participating in the BTF Extended Pay Plan next year at the same deduction per paycheck, then do absolutely nothing. The Buffalo Board of Education payroll department should automatically deduct the same amount from your second paycheck for the BTF Extended Pay Plan next school year.
- If you wish to continue participating at a different rate of deduction, you must complete a new request for participation in the BTF Extended Pay

Plan. This request must be completed on the white form specifying the “new” amount you want deducted per paycheck. Contact your BTF delegate or the BTF office for the form. This form must be received at the BTF office by Friday, August 25, 2017.

• If you do not wish to continue as a participant for the 2017-2018 school year, you must notify the BTF in writing before August 25, 2017. This letter must give your authorization for withdrawal from the BTF Extended Pay Plan effective September, 2017 through June, 2018.

To keep our records and the bank's records accurate and up-to-date, and provide sufficient time for our accountants to review the accounts, there can be no withdrawals after June 1 (of each school year) unless there is an emergency situation explained and verified with appropriate documentation.

DIRECT DEPOSIT: Please remember that if you have made any changes to your checking account during the 2016-2017 school year **YOU MUST** notify the BTF before June 1st to ensure that your deposits are made correctly. Providing the BTF with a voided check is the best way to update your account information, but you may also call the BTF, (716) 881-5400.

***REMINDER:** BTF will continue to offer Direct Deposit for your Extended Pay Plan Funds through Northwest Savings Bank to the bank of your choice. If you have not done so, please complete the bottom of an Extended Pay Plan card and submit a **VOIDED** check for the account that you wish the funds to be directly deposited.