

THE Yonkers Teacher

September 2023

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Official Publication of the Yonkers Federation of Teachers

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Dear YFT Family,

Welcome back! I hope you all had a relaxing and enjoyable summer vacation, surrounded by friends and family and beautiful weather. This summer was filled with lots of energy and hard work.

In August, many of our YFT siblings attended the annual NYSUT Tarrytown Regional Office Summer Leadership Conference. Members had the opportunity to network with each other while participating in workshops focused on unionism. Topics included negotiations, grievances, budgets, educational issues and organizing. We even had special guests, NYSUT President, Melinda Person and NYSUT Executive Vice President, Jaime Ciffone, address our regional folks!

Our Community Outreach Committee (COR), along with several volunteers donated over 200 backpacks filled with supplies to our Yonkers students living in shelters. They spent countless hours sorting and distributing supplies so that our students have what they need to start the school year prepared. The children were so excited!

In September, the YFT will participate in the Yonkers Riverfest where we will have activities for children and free giveaways. Look for our table down by the water. Also on the same day, we will host our annual Storybook Bonanza at the Riverfront Library, run by the YFT Public Relations Committee. Children will receive free books and can get a picture with Clifford, The Big Red Dog! Make sure to stop by.

Speaking of books, one of our very own retirees published a new early childhood picture book! Linda Calabro, a retired IB Physics Teacher, authored Good Morning Clouds. It uses poetry to provide whimsical observations about clouds while incorporating STEAM concepts. Check it out on Amazon!

We are excited to start the school year with a 5-year contract, retroactive from July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2027. However, because of the Yonkers Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA), the City Council oversees the Yonkers Public Schools Finance Department. While they have no authority over our contract, they vote on releasing funds to the Yonkers Public Schools when needed. The City Council was scheduled to vote on releasing the funds in July and then postponed it. As of this writing, we have reached out to the interim superintendent, the Board's attorneys, Yonkers City Council and the Mayor. We have been informed that the City Council has placed it on their agenda for September.

Our members know we are stronger when we stay together. No single member can accomplish what we have been able to accomplish jointly. I wish you a productive school year.

Sincerely,

Samantha Rosado-Ciriello, President

#ProudToBeYFT

YFT WELFARE FUND NOTICE

Telephone: (914)793-0393 Fax: (914)793-0995

Dental Claims

- **Dental forms** must be signed, we require a signature and **do not accept “signature on file.”**
- When a dental form is returned to the member for signature it must be signed and returned upon receipt. There is a one-year filing deadline from the actual date of service. **Delays in returning the signed form may lead to non-payment of claim.**
- Participating dentists are under contract with the YFT Welfare Fund to accept the negotiated fees as payment in full and there should be no copays. If you are going to a participating dentist, at NO TIME DO YOU MAKE ANY PAYMENT TO THEM UNLESS IT IS A SERVICE NOT COVERED OR YOU HAVE REACHED THE MAXIMUM ALLOWED FOR THAT PROCEDURE. If you have been asked to pay for covered services, please contact the Welfare Fund to confirm your patient responsibility.
- Dental Payments: Please be sure to sign Dental Claim Forms correctly. Payments are made according to where the signature appears on the Dental Claim Form. If payments are made to the dentist in error, it is your responsibility to get the payment back from the dentist.

All dental claims need to be completed by the dentist that provided the services.

Pre-Authorizations:

Pre-authorization is required for **all claims over \$500 with x-rays**. If you fail to pre-authorize major procedures, you will be eligible to appeal. **Appeals are once per lifetime**. Any future procedures performed without pre-authorization, cannot be appealed.

Pre-authorizations are required before any of the following procedures are performed:

Crowns, Implants, Bridges, Occlusal Guards and Orthodontics (braces).

While Pre-authorizations are not required for **Extractions** or **Root Canals** the following is required:

For Extractions, an x-ray is needed to demonstrate why it was extracted.

For Root Canals, pre-op and post-op x-rays are required when Root Canal Therapy is completed.

Orthodontics:

Welfare Fund Benefits only cover metal braces. If you choose Invisalign braces, they are not covered by the Plan and will not be reimbursed.

X-Rays:

Panoramic or Full Mouth Series x-rays are allowed once every 3 years and they share frequency.

CT Scans/Cone Beam Scans are not covered by the Plan and you would be responsible for any fees incurred.

Implants/Abutments:

- Custom Abutment (*code# 6057*)- The member is responsible to pay \$300 to the dentist and the Fund will pay \$165 to the dentist- this only applies to Implant Crowns.

Welfare Fund General Information:

A new Welfare Fund card must be completed and supporting documentation must be submitted for the following:

- *New members and members who change their status (i.e. Teacher/TA/Reg. Sub)
- *Members who have undergone changes in marital status through marriage (marriage certificate is required to cover your spouse), divorce (must provide court document to remove ex) or death of spouse.
- *To add a dependent child (through birth or adoption) to benefits (copy of birth certificates of children are required).
- *To change the beneficiaries of your \$5,000 death benefit.
- *To change/update your mailing address.
- *For a change in legal name (Please note, you must use the same name on Welfare Fund claims as the name used with the Yonkers Board of Education.)

Welfare Fund Benefits are provided to dependent children to 19 years of age **ONLY**. However, if your child is a full-time student, benefits continue until they graduate school to the maximum of 25 years of age. Please call the Welfare Fund for the form to continue the benefits.

Hearing Aid Benefits and Prescription Appliance Claims

Hearing Aid Benefits and Prescription Appliance Claims must first be submitted to primary medical insurance before being submitted to the Welfare Fund.

Optical Claims

- Unlike the prescription drug claims, the claims for optical do not have to be held to the end of the year. Please submit the claim at the time of service.

As of 01/01/2023, the optical reimbursement benefit increased for **members to a maximum of \$200 per calendar year**. For **dependents, the benefit increased to a maximum of \$125 per calendar year**.

Please note, the Welfare Fund provides benefits to over 3,000 Teachers, Administrators and Retirees. We also provide benefits to their dependents. There are only three people working in the Welfare Fund Office. **Please be patient**, we are working as hard as we can.

Thank you in advance for your patience and understanding!

Sincerely,

Georgia DeMuro

Welfare Fund Administrator

Toni Ferraro

Dental Benefits Coordinator

Tiffany Lebron

Benefits Assistant

In Memoriam



Marsha Friedman- Our YFT Family grieves the loss of long time union activist, Marsha Friedman who passed away after a short illness on April 19, 2023 surrounded by her loving family.

Marsha began teaching in Yonkers in 1967 as a first grade teacher in Emerson Elementary. She later spent many years teaching ESL at School 18 (later Scholastic Academy, now Ella Fitzgerald School) and then taught ESL at Roosevelt High School until her retirement in 2000. After retiring she taught many semesters at VIVE.

Always a YFT member, she became much more active in the union during her time at School 18 and she continued that activism for the rest of her life. She was an alternate building rep, YFT Elections committee chair, NYSUT delegate, and she participated in many YFT union workshops. Even though her primary residence was later in Florida, she continued to work for the union on the Board of the NYSUT Retiree Council as treasurer and organizer for all of the NYSUT retirees living in Florida and she remained a NYSUT delegate. Last summer Marsha was awarded the prestigious *AFT Living the Legacy* award for over 50 years of active union service.

So many of us called her our close friend and we already miss her so much. She always had time to lend a listening ear and line up travel buddies for her worldwide trips that left out nothing on her bucket list. She knew how to combine pleasure with business and always found time to connect on a personal level.

The YFT sends our deepest condolences to her daughter, YFT member Jen Cogan, Jen's husband and sons as well as Marsha's son, Sam and daughter, Heather and their families who were all so close to Marsha. May Marsha's memory be for a blessing.

Submitted by Florence McCue

Darlene M. Fata- It is with great sadness that we announce that active teacher, Darlene M. Fata (nee Pidoto) 54, passed away peacefully with her family by her side on May 31, 2023 after a courageous battle with cancer.

Born and raised in Yonkers, Darlene attended Sacred Heart Elementary and High School. She received her Bachelors Degree from Mercy College and her Masters Degree from Long Island University. She became a Yonkers teacher in 1994. She worked at Enrico Fermi for many years and at School 5 for the last 15 years. She was loved by her colleagues and students. She is survived by her husband, Sal Fata, a retired custodial worker for Yonkers Public Schools, her father Angelo, her two brothers Frank (Cathy) and Anthony, extended family, in-laws and many dear friends. Darlene will be remembered for her kindness, easy-going nature and beautiful smile and will be missed by all who knew her.



Submitted by Jennifer Lorio

Eugene Zilempe, 72, died on July 29, 2023, in South Carolina after a courageous battle with a progressive cancer. He is survived by his beloved wife of 42 years, Nancy (Nyahay) and his pride and joy, daughter, Victoria. He is preceded in death by his sister, Ginny. He is survived by his brothers Edward and Richard, his sisters Patricia, Kathy, Jennifer and Judy, and many nieces and nephews. Gene graduated from Saunders Technical School and SUNY Empire State. He was a teacher for 30 years at Saunders Technical School and adjunct professor at Westchester Community College. In addition to teaching, he supported his colleagues through his work with the Yonkers Federation of Teachers. Gene was a strong union leader and a sensitive and courageous YFT building representative. During his time as Membership Chair, he saved the union thousands of dollars. He always made sure that the concerns of Saunders HS were addressed. As YFT Vice President and a member on NYSUT committees for many years, he was a strong voice for secondary teachers. During many months of late-night YFT negotiations he was always prepared with facts and figures. Our union is stronger because of Gene's efforts.

Music was Gene's passion. He toured Europe with Gloria Gaynor. He later performed in the New York area playing with many talented jazz musicians. He was happy playing music anywhere from some of the most prestigious stages in the world to casual family performances. He supported other musicians and was always happy and ready to play when needed and encouraged young musicians. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.



Submitted by Margaret Ciandella & Pat Puleo

Roseann Weitmann- A beautiful heart - every inch filled with love, compassion, kindness, and generosity - Roseann Weitmann. Roseann taught in the Yonkers Public Schools District at School 5, Pearls, and School 22. A life-time Jenkins Award recipient, she was the consummate teacher who cared for her students educationally, socially, and emotionally. She welcomed students to her home to bake or enjoy a needed respite. Simply stated, she changed the lives of countless students. Roseann succumbed to Parkinson's disease and COVID on January 5, 2023. She is survived by her wonderful husband, Herb and her loving daughter, Daria. Those students, colleagues, friends, and family who were fortunate enough to be in Roseann's life could not help but love her. May she be at peace.

Submitted by Marlene Feder

Marie Jeannine Chaluisan (nee Bagan) was born in St. Cyr au Mont D'or, France, on January 7, 1940. At the age of 13, she and her family emigrated to the U.S.A. She attended high school in Yonkers, New York, and graduated from the University of Chicago. Before her marriage she spent much time touring the world. In addition to exploring much of the U.S., she visited many countries in Europe, Asia, and studied for a period of time in Russia. Her love of travel remained throughout her life. She was a long-time resident of Scarsdale, New York. Jeannine, as she was known to her family and friends, spent 30 years as a teacher in Yonkers. She started as a science teacher at Emerson J.H.S., and taught at Roosevelt H.S., Saunders H.S. and Yonkers H.S. Throughout her life she was very close to her large family. She is survived by her husband of 51 years, Henry Chaluisan, sister-in-law, Sheila Bagan (nee Chaluisan), brother, Bruno Bagan and 3 nieces and 2 nephews; Maria Bagan-Battocchio (Michael), Karen Hicks (Larry), Kathryn Bagan Meltz, Marc Bagan (Mariana), and Christopher Bagan (Tina). She was also "Aunt Jeannie" to her beloved 2 grandnieces and 11 grandnephews, as well as 4 great grand-nieces and 3 great grand nephews. Jeannine passed away on September 9, 2022 with her husband and family at her side. She will be greatly missed by all. Rest In Peace- We love you.

Submitted by Henry Chaluisan



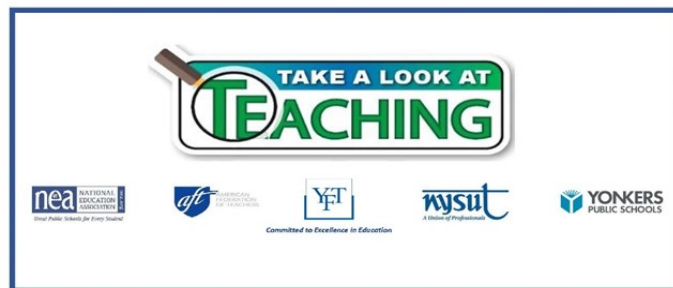
The YFT would like to express our condolences to the families and friends of our members, both in-service and retired, who passed away from August 2022 through July 2023:

Marguerite Warrens
John D. Eshoo
Marie Chaluisan
Ladislav Bucek
Carol Caragine
Lisabeth Furman
Khongendra Das
Elizabeth Graney
Thomas Nevins
Mary Jane McGahan
Madeline Ossoff
Maureen Decker
Joshua Seuss
Florence Crawley

Thomas Cerqua
Nancy Wells
Olive Jones
Enzo Antonelli
Richard Lewis
Roseann Weitman
Marianne Spamer
Constance Bova
Ruth Becker
Gloria Gold
Gin Woo
Ben Dharm
Robert Lesser
Mary Shea Watson

Robert Sajdak
Frances Bentivenga
William Kaplan
Marsha Friedman
Sanford Levine
Darlene Fata
Anne Warshaw
Barbara Weiss
Vivian Sheff
Aimee Mommsen
Eugene Zilempe
Angelo Branca
Theresa Garraffa

***in-service teacher**



CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS!

The YFT Take a Look at Teaching/Grow Your Own (TALAT/GYO) Program is looking for in-service and retired teachers to expand our program in PK-8 schools!

The YFT TALAT/GYO program seeks to increase diversity in the teaching workforce and inspire our own Yonkers students to become future teachers. In our PK-8 schools, upper grade students work with lower grade students under the guidance of our experienced teachers, and act as role models for their younger peers while building confidence, empathy, communication skills, and leadership.



JOIN OUR TALAT/GYO TEAM TODAY!

Contact Dr. Kara Popiel at the YFT office, (914) 793-0200 or at kpopiel@YFT860.org for more information.

Congratulations

to the Class of 2023 Retirees!

Juan Ramos

Patricia Ackerman

Virginia Anderson

Kirk Bauer

Beverly Brannan

Terronnie Bronfield

Elyse Campbell

Deborah Carol

Cathy Chinnery

Joyce Davis

Jaime Fiebert

Roseanne Freih

John Happaney

Christine Hees

Marion Kass

Kenneth Knox

Valerie Lendor-James

Donna Longo

Kerri Madigan

Camille Manzo

Herson Martinez

Eileen Mazzullo

Alice McCarthy

Bridget McMasters

Sabrina Medley

Violea Memishaj

Thomas Muniz

Janine O’Gorman

Helaine Ortiz

Helena Osinloye

Maria Otero-Martin

Mary Joan Owens

Marc Pekowsky

Gladys Quezada

Vernon Rambarrat

Siobhan Samuels

Stephen Sciallo

Dora Soropoulos

Sharon Strommer

Barbara Sutton

Leila Sweeney

Mary Trausneck-Flower

Mary Vaccaro

Adele Vecciarelli

Ivona Veresova

John Vople

Amy Wells

Denise Wiggins

Jeanne Ziminsky





YFT Annual Storybook Bonanza

Yonkers Teachers will distribute FREE books to Pre-K through 6th Grade YPS Students. Students get their picture taken with *Clifford, the Big Red Dog!*

Saturday, September 23rd

Yonkers Riverfront Library, One Larkin Center

10:30AM to 12:30AM



MAKING STRIDES
Against Breast Cancer®



Please join us in the **Making Strides for Breast Cancer Walk** on **Sunday, October 15th** at Manhattanville College in Purchase. Please meet by 8:30am under the NY-SUT/YFT tent to get your YFT t-shirt and for a group picture.

CALLING ALL YFT BROTHERS AND SISTERS!

Donations can be sent to **Dr. Lisa Foto** at the YFT Office.

Checks made payable to the “American Cancer Society” would be greatly appreciated.

ATTENTION NEW TEACHERS!

Please join the YFT for our annual **New Teacher Reception** on Tuesday September 26th from 3:45pm-5:45pm at the Homestyle Restaurant at the Sprain Lake Golf Course

To RSVP, please email the YFT office at yft@yft860.org before 9/19.



Are you looking for a fun way to break up the work week? **Join the Yonkers Teachers Bowling League.** You don't have to be a teacher to join. We meet Wednesdays from 4:00 - 6:00. Contact Mala Lipes at m.lipes66@gmail.com for more information.



Please join us for a

90 PLUS Luncheon

Honoring Yonkers Residents Age 90 and above
Sunday, November 12, 2023 • 12:00-4:00 PM
Westchester Manor
140 Saw Mill River Road
Hastings-on-the-Hudson, NY

Honorees are hosted by the

Friends and Family are welcome to attend
Care Bird Special: Adults \$58.00 due by October 22
Regular Price: Adults \$62 Children under 10 \$38.00
Family tables are available at a slightly discounted rate

Kindly respond by 11/7

Please email me at: pianodivita1970@yahoo.com

Mail payments to:
Antoinette Cantone
319 Cornwall Meadows Lane
Patterson, NY 12563

Please make checks payable to:
East Yonkers Kiwanis

September 2023 Calendar



13th	3:45pm	Executive Board	YFT
14th	3:45pm	Building Assembly	Roosevelt Library
20th	7:00pm	Board of Education Meeting	Saunders
27th	3:45pm	Executive Board	YFT
23rd	10:30-12:30	Storybook Bonanza	Yonkers Riverfront Library
23rd	12:00pm	Yonkers Riverfest	Yonkers Riverfront