

The Official Publication of the Walkkill Teachers' Association
NYSUT Local # 13-265
AFT Local #3082 affiliated with NEA * AFL-CIO

October 2023
Volume 34, Issue 3
Jordan Dirago, Editor

IMP@CT

President's Message, LeeAnn Pazoga

Dear WTA Members,

Hello, I am the new President of the Walkkill Teachers' Association. I would like to introduce myself to all of you. I have been a building representative for over 14 years and last year



joined the executive team as the Vice President of Members Services. I have always had a true passion for union work and am

lucky to be able to serve our members in this new role. I would also like to thank our previous executive team for their years of leadership and dedication.

Our new executive team is excited to help continue the great work the WTA has been doing. This summer the executive team reached out to all our retirees. We know that retirees are a valuable asset to our union as they have many years of experience and knowledge.

Inside this issue

- 1—President's Message
- 2—New Member Spotlight
- 3—WTABT, Scholarship Committee Updates
- 4—NYSUT Summer Conference
- 5—MHAF Labor Heroes Dinner
- 6—NYSUT Film Screening
- 6—NYSTRS Announcement
- 7—NYSUT Member Benefits

President's Message Continued

We are also looking forward to building relationships with all of you, our active members. By having retirees, active members and future leaders work together, we can ensure that our union continues building relationships and remains strong.

In the words of John F Kennedy, "Our labor unions are not narrow, self-seeking groups. They have raised wages, shortened hours, and provided supplemental benefits. Through collective bargaining and grievance procedures, they have brought justice and democracy to the shop floor." I am a true believer in the strength and power of unions. I look forward to getting to know every member of the WTA and I encourage all members to actively participate in our events and show their Union Pride.

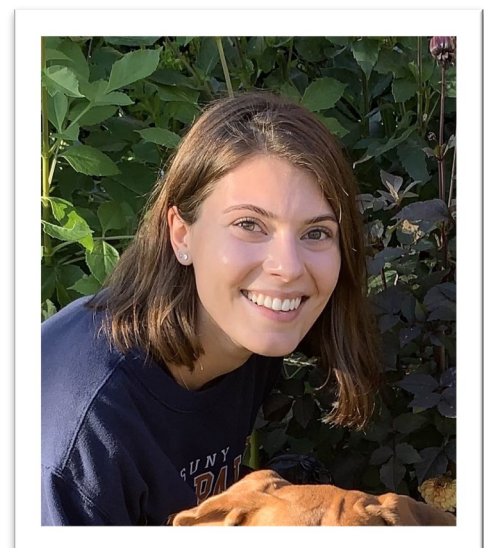
In Solidarity,

LeeAnn Pazoga



New Member Spotlight

My name is **Xenia Incremona** and this is my first year as an English teacher at Walkkill Senior High School. Having once been a student at Walkkill myself, returning to this district and working alongside the people who inspired me as a child is such a blessing. After high school, I attended SUNY New Paltz, where I pursued both my undergraduate and graduate degrees. Prior to transitioning into the field of education, I worked as a physical therapy assistant for several years. Some of my hobbies include hiking with my dog, exploring new places, and spending time with family and friends.



New Member Spotlight

My name is **Michelle Gambuti** and I am excited to be joining the WCSD as a K-6 School Social Worker this year. I was born and raised in the Hudson Valley region. After going to college at Bloomsburg University, graduate school at University of Maryland Baltimore, and working in Lancaster, PA for a while; I returned back to the area to be around family. In my free time I enjoy travelling, hiking, fishing, and baking. I am thrilled to be part of the Wallkill community.



WTABT Update

Don't forget to let me know if you have any life changes such as marriage, divorce, baby, name/address changes, etc. District office does not share changes with the WTA Benefit Trust. I will update your information on Delta Dental and Davis Vision. You can email address changes to me at kwinter.wtabt@gmail.com

Any changes that include a social security number or date of birth need to be mailed because email is not secure.

Thank you,

Kathy Winter

Scholarship Committee Announcement

The WTA Scholarship committee read and evaluated 15 scholarship letters from the class of 2023. A committee of 14 teachers chose the following recipients, Mason Ondreyko, Mikayla Paribelli, and Sydney Presutti. Each Wallkill graduate received a \$1000 scholarship to help them pursue their academic goals. Congratulations to them as well as the whole class of 2023!

The scholarship committee would like to thank the teachers who volunteered to review the applications and welcome any input for the future applications. We also want to thank all of the teachers who donate to the scholarship funds for our students!

Kathy Winter

NYSUT Summer Conference

On June 27 & 28, Ashley Sanchez, Sara Wadsworth, Katie Lobato, Joanna Miller, Nick Malgieri, Jordan Dirago, and Melissa Servant attended the NY Mid-Hudson Regional Summer Leadership Conference at the Gideon Putnam in Saratoga Springs.



MHALF Labor Heroes Dinner

Barbara Bouck, Rachel Zarret, and Jonni Dispensa attended the MHALF Labor Heroes Dinner on September 29. It was an inspiring evening honoring former NYSUT President Andy Pallotta and many other local labor heroes while meeting NYSUT's new president Melinda Person.



NYSUT Film Screening

On May 22, Richard Shands, Melissa Servant, Joanna Miller, and LeeAnn Pazoga met up with the NYSUT President Melinda Person for the film screening of NYSUT: The First 50 Years at the Rosendale Theatre



NYSTRS Announcement

Just wanted to let everyone know that I have taken over for John Bohan as the district's union NYSTRS pension and retirement delegate. I will occasionally pass on any information from NYSTRS that you may be interested in. I am also attending the NYSTRS annual delegates meeting on November 5th and 6th . If anyone has any questions that you would like answers to regarding pension and/or retirement, please either email me or call me at the High School. Below is the fall prep schedule that all those who are thinking of retiring should make an appointment to attend.

Thanks,

Mike LaPolla

Back to school can mean a lot of different things:

- Starting a new career
- Planning for the future
- Balancing work and home life
- Making difficult decisions
- Enjoying your final year before retirement
- Recalling memories of a proud career



Regardless of what you might be doing this fall, **NYSUT Member Benefits** offers a variety of endorsed programs and services that could help make you as prepared as possible for whatever the new school year may throw at you.

Whether you are looking to save money, protect your family, or plan for the future, **NYSUT Member Benefits** is a great place to start. With dozens of endorsed insurance, legal, financial, shopping, travel, and discount programs, you are certain to find something of interest that could benefit you or your loved ones.

And speaking of savings, the **Member Benefits Discounts & Deals** program utilizes the nation's largest private discount network to offer all NYSUT members (both in-service and retiree) exclusive access to savings of up to 50% at 850,000 locations -- including more than 21,200 New York State deals. If you have not already done so, head over to mbdeals.enjoymydeals.com to create your account with your NYSUT ID number, preferred email address, and password.

You'll then be eligible to save on restaurant dine-in or take-out, flowers and gift baskets, Bose electronics, clothing and shoes, oil changes and vehicle maintenance, sporting events, hotels and flights, car rentals, theme parks, movie tickets, and much more. Members are encouraged to download the MB Discounts & Deals mobile app for the best user experience with this program.

Check out all your union membership has to offer!



Learn more by scanning the QR code to the left, visiting memberbenefits.nysut.org, or calling 800-626-8101.

For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits.