

## And the survey says ...

By Judy Wishnia  
COARM Chair

**M**ore than 450 UUP retirees answered our recent survey, an amazingly large response and we thank all of you. One of the crucial results of the survey was that we learned that there was no great desire among retirees to become a chapter. Not surprisingly, the majority of respondents (167) had no opinion (some wrote that they were out of touch and therefore could not make an intelligent choice), 60 voted to have a council, 90 voted for a chapter and 116 voted to keep the committee structure. Several respondents left this question blank.

We reported this finding to the Fall Delegate Assembly and the proposed constitutional amendment to create a retiree chapter was defeated. We will continue as a committee but we will also be working hard to strengthen our organization and our activities. If you have suggestions for improving our structure and our ability to better serve you, please let us know. You will note that there is a notice in this newsletter about upcoming

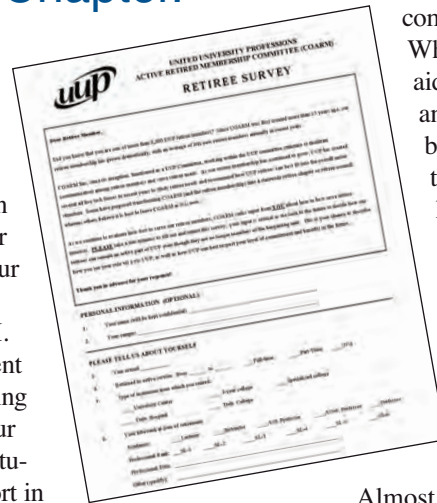
### Most respondents did not favor a Retiree Chapter.

elections. Please think of becoming an active retiree on your campus and/or in your region. Run to be a member of COARM. Many of us have spent 30 or 40 years working for SUNY and for our union, and both institutions need our support in these crucial times when the quality of public higher education is under threat and where retirement security is in danger.

### OTHER RESULTS

We are happy to report that most retirees continue to be active with hobbies and recreation, from golf and reading, to sailing and fishing, to music and everything in between. Most impressive was the number of our members who volunteer and do community service for Meals on Wheels, to serving as hospital aides, on museum boards, county and town commissions, church boards, etc. Research indicates that retirees who keep active are healthier and happier than those who do nothing, so you are certainly doing the right thing! The Faculty Senate is in the process of establishing a service corps so that more retirees can connect with groups needing volunteers. We will keep you informed.

Almost all the respondents read and liked *The Active Retiree* with a few notes of special appreciation for our resident humorist, Henry Geerken (way to go, Henry). see SURVEY, page 16



## COARM to investigate elder abuse

By Judy Wishnia  
COARM Chair

**T**hanks to a subcommittee created by COARM, a number of our members are investigating elder abuse in New York state and attempting to determine what we can do to recognize and solve this very serious and underreported problem.

A small poll is being conducted among our members and we presented a resolution to NYSUT, which was accepted unanimously at the October meeting of the NYSUT Retiree Councils. It will go the Representative Assembly in the spring.

If you know of such abuse, please send an e-mail to millerew@oneonta.edu or to donlatner@aol.com.

### Resolution

Whereas, an estimated 30,000 or more seniors are victims of some sort of abuse or exploitation; and,

Whereas, instances of substance abuse, financial stress, emotional stress, lack of social or other community supports, inadequate training for caregivers, increased medical and emotional needs of the elder person and a family history of violence constitute risk of senior victimization; and,

Whereas, New York state as a whole is not prepared to safeguard seniors from harm or to address the multifaceted causes of victimization; and,

Whereas neglect is the most common form of abuse, with financial exploitation occurring with equal frequency; and,

Whereas, elderly abuse by families occurs in approximately half the reported cases; and,

Whereas, the abuse is often not reported by the victim due to fear, guilt and shame and, as is often the case, the victim is dependent upon the perpetrator who threatens the elderly with institutionalization, if

see ELDER ABUSE, page 9

## The Active Retiree

### UUP Officers

**Phillip H. Smith**/President  
**John J. Marino**/VP for Professionals  
**Frederick G. Floss**/VP for Academics  
**Eileen Landy**/Secretary  
**Rowena J. Blackman-Stroud**/Treasurer  
**Edward H. Quinn**/Membership Dev. Officer

### COARM Members (2007-2009)

**Judith Wishnia**, Chair  
 3 Quincy Court jwishnia@notes.cc.sunysb.edu  
 Setauket, NY 11733 (631) 751-3810

**Fred Miller**, Southern Tier region  
 752 County Highway 7 millerew@oneonta.edu  
 Otego, NY 13825 (607) 988-9323

**Brian Betz**, Central NY region  
 51 E. Mohawk St. bbetz@twcny.rr.com  
 Oswego, NY 13126 (315) 343-1494

**Alvin Magid**, Capital District region  
 2200 Grand Blvd. magid2@juno.com  
 Schenectady, NY 12309 (518) 377-9542

**Pearl H. Brod**, Long Island region  
 700 SW 137th Ave. #115H pearlbrod@presto.com  
 Pembroke Pines, FL 33027 (954) 392-5538

**Vacant**, Metropolitan region

**Edward Alfonsin**, North Country region  
 141 Ames Road ealfonsin@uupmail.org  
 Potsdam, NY 13676 (315) 386-2582

**William C. Rock**, Western NY region  
 103 Gary Dr. wdrrock@aol.com  
 Brockport, NY 14420 (585) 637-4097

**John A. Richert**, President's appointee  
 751 W. Ferry St., Apt. 8CD (716) 881-1839  
 Buffalo, NY 11422 jrichert@buffalo.edu

**Jo Schaffer**, President's appointee  
 31 Pearl St. schaffer@twcny.rr.com  
 Cortland, NY 13035 (607) 753-7245

**Harvey Inventasch**, Ex-officio liaison  
 4628 Canard Road hiji@ix.netcom.com  
 Melbourne, FL 32934 (321) 253-8579

**Edward H. Quinn**, Ex-officio member  
 P.O. Box 378 equinn@uupmail.org  
 Miller Place, NY 11764 (631) 928-3811

**UUP Retiree Member Services Coordinator**  
 Anne L. Marine amarine@uupmail.org

**UUP Publications Specialist**  
 Karen L. Mattison kmattiso@uupmail.org

*The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily the opinions of United University Professions.*

**United University Professions**  
 P.O. Box 15143, Albany, NY 12212-5143  
 518-640-6600 1-800-342-4206  
 fax: 1-866-812-9446

### Life as I see it ...

# I think there's a plot afoot

By Henry Geerken  
 SUNY Cobleskill

I don't know about your main street, but the main street in my town is getting pretty threadbare. I think I need a reason to smile. Brother can you spare \$850 billion?

How come every time I get an itch it is always at a spot that I can't reach, even with a back scratcher?

Worse yet, how come I always get an itch in public in places you dare not try to scratch? (Without being accused of being a pervert and being arrested, that is. Of course, baseball players are excused—they don't know any better.)

If I were paranoid, I would think that there is a plot afoot.

Like everybody else I have "pet peeves." I have never flown on an airplane where a baby cried incessantly. I can see how that would be grating during a six-hour flight. I guess I'm just lucky to have missed that one.

On *The Tonight Show* with Jay Leno, a female guest star stated that her answer to her crying baby on a plane trip was to breast feed him. From looking at her, I could see where that would really work. It sure would quiet me down.

How come I always get in the wrong line at the checkout counter? As I come up to check out, I always pick the shortest line. There may be only one or two people in that line, where there are 15 to 25 in any other line. I have great expectations of getting through the check-out process in record time.

Forget it. Invariably there something goes amiss with the person in front of me. They either have a maxed-out credit card, no money, no checkbook, no identification or, to top it all off, they don't speak English.

Finally when it's my turn, either the cashier goes on break or the cash register malfunctions (it either runs out of paper tape or refuses to clear itself to a zero bal-



Geerken

ance, causing my bill to start out with a \$600 debit before my first item is rung up.) No wonder we have inflation, buying nothing costs \$600! (At least with gas you get two gallons.)

By the time I finally check out and pass the security barrier, everyone who went through the other lines are home, finished supper and are get-

ting ready to watch a late night movie. Grass grows faster than my ability to get out of a checkout line.

If I were paranoid, I would think that there is a plot afoot.

How come whenever I need to use a public restroom the previous occupant forgot to flush?

There I am with built-up gas pressure that's causing my ears to whistle, staring at the Picasso of all bowel movements.

I guess the previous tenant always wanted to show his mother his accomplishment and hear her say "Oh what a big boy you are." Well, junior, you're grown up now and I am not your mother. You have graduated from "big boy" to "big slob."

If I were paranoid, I would think that there is a plot afoot.

How come when I go to the doctor's office for a shot, the person in front of me gets the shot with a small, short needle, while when it is my turn the nurses haul out a hypodermic needle that's a foot long with the bore of a 12-gauge shotgun?

If I were paranoid, I would think that there is a plot afoot.

How come every time I hear a politician or a financial advisor say my pension and lifetime savings are "secure" I get the "willies?"

How come when I hear the words "bailout," I keep thinking of a sinking ship?

How come every time I hear "golden parachute," I feel someone's hand in my pocket?

I think I am paranoid after all.

*From the COARM chair*

# The road ahead

Now that the election frenzy is over and Barack Obama is the president, it is time to turn to the task of reinvigorating our economy and making the United States once again a country that values and upholds the principles of social justice. Like many of you, I spent my childhood in the depths of the depression and then in the war years. I remember sharing our small four room apartment with relatives who were unemployed and had no place to live (I slept on the living room couch). I remember the many ways my mother made soup for dinner and I remember how long it took our family to scrimp and save to pay hospitals bills when my father had a heart attack.

But I also remember the New Deal, the establishment of Social Security, unemployment insurance, Aid to Dependent Children, and the National Labor Relations Act, which enabled unions to organize and negotiate. And, of course, I remember the WPA and the building of roads and bridges and post offices, with murals painted by artists paid by the government. I also remember that this was a time of worker solidarity and union building. I have two distinct memories of my father's union activity. One was when he came home bleeding because he had been struck by a policeman's club as he marched on a picket line in sympathy with a striking union not his own. I also remember his arrival at home with great elation as he told us that his union (he was on the Executive Board)

**“We need to ... spend less on the war and more on health and education ... It is time to build, to educate, to heal, and to be secure and proud.”**



**WISHNIA**

had signed a contract that gave their workers access to Blue Cross hospitalization for the first time. We should all remember that it was the union movement that gave us health care coverage.

It is time for a *new* New Deal. We need to expand health care coverage to all. Medicare works. Why not expand Medicare to include all Americans? And for those who reach retirement age, we need access to long-term care with special provisions for home health care coverage so seniors can stay in their homes. We need to protect Social Security. Think of what would have happened recently if George W. Bush had been successful in privatizing retirement funds.

We need to encourage more union building. Unions have been in the vanguard of the fight for economic and social justice and we need them to light the way now ... We need to improve our schools. It is a dis-

grace that our students are so behind students in almost every other industrialized nation. We need to change the way we support public education, creating a better and fairer tax policy. And, of course, we need more support for public higher education. In the depths of the depression, all New York City students needed was good grades and a nickel to ride the subway to go to one of the CUNY colleges: tuition was free! And City College produced more Nobel laureates than Harvard.

Finally, we need to do all this by spending less on war and more on health and education, on the arts, on our infrastructure. It is time to build, to educate, to heal, and to be secure and proud.

*Judith Wishnia*

---

## In memoriam

---

Let us take time to remember the UUP Active Retirees who have passed away:

Estelle Auerbach, SUNY Stony Brook  
Bernard Bass, Binghamton  
Janina Casper, Upstate Medical University  
Lin Chiao, Binghamton  
Olive Ann Cox, SUNY Stony Brook  
Harry Dahlheimer, Cortland  
Forest Davis, Empire State College  
Mohamed El-Behairy, Buffalo State  
Robert Elmes, Buffalo State  
Ruth Englander, Empire State College

Dan Farris, Cortland  
Jerome Fink, SUNY Buffalo  
Hans Kipping, Buffalo HSC  
Chester Kiser, SUNY Buffalo  
N. Brock McElheran, Potsdam  
Frances Murphy II, Buffalo State  
Thomas Nickson, Geneseo  
Don O'Connor, System Administration  
Herbert Lee Paul, Geneseo  
F. Anne Payne, SUNY Buffalo

Edward Pflieger, Maritime  
Morton Roller, Brooklyn HSC  
Rodney Rudolph, Delhi  
Robert Salisbury, Oswego  
Charles Sonntag, SUNY Buffalo  
Richard Tofte, New Paltz  
Marvin Tunis, Buffalo State  
William West, Brooklyn HSC



# Regional meetings

## Capital District

By Al Magid  
SUNY Albany

**A**s I reported at the recent DA, the Albany Regional COARM plans to hold a luncheon/symposium meeting in Albany in May 2009.

The time and location are yet to be determined. The symposium will bring together SUNY retirees and key officials in the state government to address the subject "NY State Public Policy and the Aging: Prospects and Possibilities." Specifics regarding time, location, etc., will be provided in a future issue of *The Active Retiree*.

As Albany Regional COARM chair, I am working with UAlbany retirees Don Cohen, Hy Kuritz and Jim Kieffer to organize the event.

## Cortland

By Jo Schaffer  
COARM President's Appointee

**O**n Sunday, Oct. 19, more than 65 Cortland retirees met for the semi-annual luncheon sponsored jointly by UUP and the SUNY Cortland College Foundation. Jo Schaffer took the podium to remind those present of the new health benefits, the current deep fiscal problems of New York affecting the welfare and health of SUNY, preparing them to gear up to help in the fight to save SUNY once more, and to vote.

After the SUNY Cortland president and UUP chapter president spoke about the economic problems, Donna Anderson, a professor emerita of music, delivered a fulsome talk on Charles Griffes, a famous American composer born and raised in Elmira. Anderson is the noted expert on Griffes, both in print scholarship with a number of biographies and in performance of his works. Cortland was fortunate to have this preview of the talk she will give in London next spring.

The spring luncheon has been set for late April 2009.

## Long Island

By Pearl Brod  
SUNY Farmingdale

**T**he Long Island region meeting of COARM was held Wednesday, Oct. 22 at the Farmingdale campus. We had an excellent turnout from Old Westbury, Stony Brook and Stony Brook HSC. I am proud to report that each year the number of participants grows.

Michael Smiles, president of the UUP chapter at Farmingdale, welcomed the retirees to the campus. Our first speaker was Barbara Maertz. She discussed the coming election. Her focus was on the candidates running for office on Long Island. She also suggested the retirees volunteer to staff the phones at the NYSUT headquarters on Long Island.

Catie Keane, senior consultant at the Long Island office of TIAA-CREF, addressed the issue on everyone's mind:

retirement money. After discussing the current situation, she stressed that our money is safe. If members are interested in investing money, they should contact TIAA-CREF for an appointment.

I brought our members up to date about our last COARM meeting. When I informed them we are remaining a committee, there was no reaction.

I advised them about our concern with elder abuse. I suggested that if they knew anyone suffering from elder abuse to let me know or send it to Fred Miller, subcommittee chair, at UUP, P.O. Box 15143, Albany, NY 12212-5143.

I distributed pamphlets regarding the many benefits available to retirees through NYSUT and UUP. Many remained after the meeting to discuss personal issues.

Our retirees seemed happy and left saying "Goodbye, I'll see you next year."

## Central New York

By Brian Betz, SUNY Oswego,  
and Pat Strempel, Upstate Medical

**T**he UUP Central New York Retiree Summer 2008 Luncheon was held Friday, Sept. 26, at the Steak and Sundae Restaurant in Syracuse. Great food, friendship and information was shared by the many attendees. Brian Betz of Oswego organized the luncheon, with help from Pat Strempel and Horace Ivey, both of the Upstate Medical University Chapter.

The planning committee working from the theme "Creating Success for Your Retirement" set as its objectives: 1) to share information useful to retirees in making their retirement more enjoyable and productive; 2) to renew old friendships and to create new ones in the context of an enjoyable meal; 3) to strengthen bonds with UUP as well as with SUNY; and 4) to generate topics for future luncheons.

The meeting opened with informal discussion among the participants, which was followed by a very valuable presentation by Anne Marine, UUP retiree member services coordinator. Among the items discussed

were insurance coverage, the travel medical assistance program, the availability of flu and shingles vaccines, and vision and dental benefits.

UUP President Phil Smith then outlined the current state budget problems facing SUNY and suggested various ways retirees can spread the word that SUNY plays a vital role in the Central New York economy. Smith emphasized how valuable retirees are in working within the various UUP strategies, and asked that the retirees remain active to advocate for the good of the union.

Jo Shaffer of Cortland, a COARM presidential appointee, discussed the results of the retiree survey (see related story, page 1). In addition, she informed the group that a discussion regarding elder abuse was discussed at the 2008 Fall Delegate Assembly in Albany, and that a new study is under way.

Strempel assured those present that retirement funds are secure, according to reports by state Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli.

A number of chapters have campus benefits for their retirees. These include continued see **CENTRAL NY**, page 11

# Western New York

By Paul McKenna  
SUNY Brockport

**T**he Active Retirees of Western New York held the fall luncheon meeting at SUNY Geneseo. There were 37 active retirees and two guests present.

UUP President Phil Smith was the morning speaker. He brought the attendees up to date on several issues of importance to the retirees. First, he reported on the recent Delegate Assembly, where it was decided not to form a separate unit of retirees but to continue the present arrangement (where retirees remain members of their chapters).

He then gave an account of the budget situation in Albany. His detailed description of these complex budget negotiations between SUNY and the governor's office was enlightening. He urged the audience to support SUNY as the one state agency that generates revenue. His report on some of the proposed actions by presidents of various SUNY campuses illustrated the need for uniform action to stave off further cuts to SUNY.

Although retirees are not directly affected by these discussions, we should remain attentive to the ongoing issues that may affect us in the future and support UUP anyway we can.

Smith went on to outline the conditions under which our health benefits may be affected by the governor's attempt to reduce health care costs for state employees. Our health benefits cannot be changed unless the benefits now available to active employees are changed. This would require a change to the state constitution, which appears unlikely. If benefits for new employees are reduced, then that reduction may affect future retirees.

This clarification of the risk to our health

Right, UUP President Phil Smith addresses retirees from the Western NY region.

Far right, Tom Matthews of Geneseo gives a presentation on the cleanup efforts in hurricane-ravaged communities.



PAT BAKER PHOTOS

benefits was most reassuring.

Bill Rock, chair of the COARM Western New York region, strongly urged retirees to support SUNY. Rock explained that UUP is training its members to meet with their local legislators and he urged retirees to contact their chapter presidents to volunteer to be part of this effort. He also advised us to use our civil, fraternal and social contacts to bring the message to those groups for their general support.

He gave his view that we need to keep pressure on the state Legislature to maintain our health benefits. One way to do this is to contribute to VOTE/COPE, the nonpartisan political action arm of NYSUT.

The afternoon speaker was Tom Matthews, director of the Student Leadership Program at SUNY Geneseo, on the creation of Livingston Cares: Rebuilding After Hurricane Katrina. This program was the result of students approaching Matthews, asking how they could help in hurricane-devastated areas. A meeting of community officials, faculty,

staff and students resulted in the Livingston Cares program.

The group decided that money wasn't enough help and that participation was more important, so the first group of 30 people headed for Mississippi.

After his introductory remarks on Livingston Cares, Matthews gave a visual presentation of the first trip in March 2006, of a Geneseo student involved in the volunteer effort. The presentation showed the devastation, as well as the students and their living conditions on site.

Matthews and his fellow volunteers continue to help out in Gulf Coast communities. More than 300 people have participated to date.

Livingston Cares now has nonprofit status and continues to receive donations from local organizations to help offset the cost of the trips. Nonstudents pay \$500 and students pay \$400 to cover travel expenses, etc.

This is a worthwhile effort that will continue as long as help is needed in these coastal communities, Matthews said.

# North Country

By Edward Alfonsin  
SUNY Potsdam

**O**ver the summer, I met several times with retired members and leaders of the Public Employees Federation. In the North Country, PEF—the union representing state professional, scientific and technical services workers—has had a problem much like ours: Very few retirees have expressed a desire to attend regional meetings.

As a result of the meetings with PEF, we set up a series of four meetings, in Potsdam and throughout the region. Attendance of UUPers was very light.

The Potsdam meeting featured a presentation by UUP retiree Neil Johnson on SOAR (Stimulating Opportunities After Retirement, a regional program for retirees). The meeting also included overviews of Elderhostel and other senior programs, as well as reports on legislative

and political activities, among other issues.

North Country retirees who have suggestions for programs or presentations are encouraged to contact me at (315) 386-2582 or at ed@northnet.org.

While we will continue to try to hold joint regional meetings, I encourage all retirees to attend chapter events. I will attend as many of those as possible. Individual communications are always welcome as well.



# COARM

## members tackle lengthy agenda

By Bill Rock  
Acting Secretary

The meeting convened at 10:05 a.m. Sept. 19 at The Desmond in Albany.

COARM members present were Ed Alfonsin, Pearl Brod, Alvin Magid, Fred Miller, Jack Richert, Bill Rock, Jo Schaffer, and Judy Wishnia. A number of guests were present as well as staff member Anne Marine. Membership Development Officer Ed Quinn joined the meeting Saturday morning.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Rock, seconded by Richert to approve minutes of the May 2, 2008, meeting. Adopted unanimously.

### CHAIR'S REPORT

**Resignation**—Joe Marcus has resigned as regional chair. Wishnia is working to get someone to fill that post until the next election.

**Survey Results**—There were 454 responses to the survey. Detailed results will be published in *The Active Retiree*.

Wishnia reported that the results indicated that members wished the retiree organization to remain as it is and stated that she would report this result to the delegates when the constitutional amendment for a retiree chapter comes up for discussion at the DA.

The members discussed the need to have subcommittee chairs get approval of their committees and COARM before moving ahead with actions, such as this survey. It was noted that COARM had not approved the survey instrument as had been required in the charge to the subcommittee.

Survey results indicated that people would come to regional and/or campus meetings if there were good topics at convenient times.



Above, COARM member Jo Schaffer, right, and Chair Judy Wishnia make their points during the recent COARM meeting at The Desmond in Albany.

Right, John Hunt of Farmingdale discusses committee finances.



Many survey respondents reported that they are not invited to local activities by their campus chapters.

Most respondents, except those living out of state, indicated satisfaction with benefits but indicated concern about the future.

### APPOINTMENT OF COARM SUBCOMMITTEE ON BENEFITS

Moved by Rock, seconded by Alfonsin that a subcommittee be appointed to examine the results of the survey on benefits and come up with an action plan. Members are

Ed Alfonsin, chair; Flossie Brush, Pearl Brod, Harvey Inventasch and Jo Schaffer.

Authorized such expenditures as may be necessary for subcommittee meetings. Adopted unanimously.

### ELDER ABUSE

Moved by Miller, seconded by Brod, that Miller be authorized to send to DA delegates the following statement:

“UUP’s Committee on Active Retired Membership believes that abuse to elders is

Right, Membership Development Officer Ed Quinn meets with COARM. Also shown are Jan Tewes of Morrisville, center, and Pat Strempele of Upstate Medical University.



Above, Al Magid of Albany shares a thought as Pearl Brod of Farmingdale listens.

Right, Bill Rock of Brockport, right, discusses COARM business as Ed Alfonsin of Potsdam looks on.



a serious problem, and, therefore, has formed a Subcommittee on Elder Abuse which, in the true spirit of academic investigation, is gathering evidence. We are asking for your help. If you have experienced any incident or know of any which you can report, please describe the incident for us. You need not identify the participants, but, if possible, please include such information as: (a) the nature of the relationship between the senior and the alleged abuser (relative, paid caregiver, landlord, etc.) (b) the nature of the location (in the senior's home, in a Senior Citizen's facility, a hospital, at a work site, etc.) (c) the results of the incident.

Your reply may be e-mailed to: \_\_\_\_\_ and will be of great

assistance in our research. Thank you."

Adopted unanimously.

In a related matter, Miller reported that there may be a problem using the DA members as a sample for the survey on this issue. Moved by Miller, seconded by Rock, that Miller may substitute his own e-mail list if needed.

Adopted unanimously.

### RECESS

The members recessed at 12:10 p.m. and reconvened at 8:05 a.m. Sept. 20.

### REPORTS OF REGIONAL CHAIRS

Moved by Miller, seconded by Magid, that the following regional and campus meetings be authorized:

Western New York—Buffalo, January

2009 (liaisons meeting); Buffalo, May 2009; and Brockport, October 2009.

Long Island—Spring 2009

Capital District—Spring 2009

North Country—Four meetings held jointly with PEF: Sept. 24, Potsdam; Oct. 8, Peru; Oct. 14, Ogdensburg; and Oct. 21, Lake Placid.

Southern Tier—Spring Regional Meeting at a site to be determined and a campus meeting in Cortland.

Central New York—September 2008 and Spring 2009.

Adopted unanimously.

### FINANCES

The issue of free dues for new members during their first year of retirement is now see **COARM**, page 9



# 2008 Fall DA

## Schaffer accepts Outstanding Retiree of the Year award

By Jo Schaffer  
SUNY Cortland

**A**t UUP's 2008 Fall Delegate Assembly, I was deeply honored and touched to receive the annual UUP Outstanding Retiree of the Year award for 2008.

It was a DA of highs, lows and mid-points. We had just gone through almost two hours of listening to the UUP leadership about the devastating budget cuts to SUNY, with the drastic implications to the University, all wrapped up in the most horrendous financial picture of the U.S. economy. It didn't seem quite right to put on a smiley face while accepting the award and pretend that all was "business as usual."

So I put aside my prepared remarks and briefly thanked UUP for the award and the chance to serve and serve again in retirement. I also thanked two of my sons who took the time to be there, and said I hoped all UUPers would have the chance some day to retire with security and dignity.

It was an evening of many awards: three to the union's scholarship recipients; one to Trudy Butera of Alfred for her outstanding work raising money for those scholarships; two for part-timers; and the prestigious Nina Mitchell Award to former UUP President Bill Scheuerman. So, I said my abbreviated piece and modestly sat down.

I share with you now the speech I was going to give.

### THE SPEECH NOT GIVEN

Thank you so very much for this great honor. I appreciate that it comes from review by my peers on the Committee on Active Retiree Membership and nomination by my chapter. We have all spent our years in SUNY undergoing one sort of review after another, permanent appointment, tenure, promotion etc., but the one that always counts for me far more is the one given by our peers and colleagues.

This is an award not for longevity but for my continued activity after my "real"



UUP President Phil Smith reads the inscription to 2008 Outstanding Retiree of the Year award recipient Jo Schaffer of Cortland.

professional life in SUNY and UUP. There is a life after retirement. I won't bore you with it but I have to say that all those activities in my community, the larger community, and it seems the world, keep me from being bored in retirement. There are patently clichéd comments that go around retirement circles stating, "Just don't know how I ever found the time to work and still do all this stuff." And "if you want something done, ask a busy person." (Copies on request if you are a glutton for biographical torture.)

But I want to take these few moments tonight accorded to my age, my wrinkles and my chins as well as my accomplishments to make a few comments about my life in the University and especially my life in UUP. It boils down to a simple statement: There is much that has been left undone; there is much that is left to accomplish.

When I started at this noble university,

I was a part-timer with no protection for salary increases or renewal. Within two years, I had convinced my department that it was to their best advantage to make me whole. And so, I became an indispensable full-time professional, an NTP. There was no formal job description, no formal job requirements or training listed or required, no standard for the position in writing anywhere and no performance program that had any meaning for the real work I was doing on campus. There was a performance review that was an administrative tool. Draw your own conclusions as to how far we have or haven't come!

And then UUP came into the University and my life! At the very first chance, I signed on as I had with my first position straight out of college years before. I became truly involved with our union when I found I needed and wanted more from it than was contractually available for professionals. I opted to run for chap-



# COARM ...

(continued from page 7)  
before the Executive Board. If approved, it was suggested that the action be publicized in *The Voice*, through human resource offices and in campus newsletters.

Ed Quinn requested COARM authorize the employment of a UUP Retiree Member Services representative to be paid out of retiree dues. The members did not agree to do so. Wishnia will meet with UUP Treasurer Rowena Blackman-Stroud to discuss and then report back to COARM.

The following points were made:

- There is a question as to whether this much staff is needed to serve retirees. Until a year ago, only one-half of the UUP Retiree Member Services Coordinator's time and salary were used for this purpose. A year ago, that was raised to three quarters. Members questioned the need for one-and-three-quarters staff members.
- The regional chairs reported that there is general satisfaction with the timeliness of responses to member inquiries.
- It was noted that if the need for additional staff is the result of processing the new vision and dental benefits, then an



KAREN L. MATTISON

UUP Outreach Committee Co-chair Glenn McNitt, left, talks over legislative issues with RELAG co-chairs Jack Richert and Harvey Inventasch, right.

administrative fee should be added to the cost of the insurance to cover this, rather than coming from retiree dues.

- A study should be made of the time the Retiree Member Services Coordinator spends on retiree concerns.
- Consideration should be given to having the coordinator only deal with retiree matters, with the full salary coming from retiree dues, rather than hiring an additional staff member.

## RELAG

Members will be meeting with state senators and assemblymembers to discuss what is happening with retirees' health insurance, among other things. Training sessions are

being held throughout the state. COARM members and liaisons are welcome to attend.

Rock indicated that he would ask Western New York liaisons to attend the Buffalo training session Oct. 3. The problem is the governor for the first time vetoed the legislation that would assure no

reduction in retirees' health insurance unless there were similar reductions in working members' insurance.

RELAG will ask that UUP retirees be solicited to make voluntary contributions to VOTE /COPE.

## NYSUT RETIREE COUNCIL

Alfonsin asked Quinn why the amendments concerning the NYSUT Retiree Council have not been sent out for vote. The members expressed frustration that the process is taking so long.

## ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Rock, seconded by Schaffer, to adjourn at 9:20 a.m. Adopted unanimously.

ter office, for delegate, for delegate to our affiliates, to chapter officer-ship positions, to the statewide Executive Board, to statewide membership development officer and committee participation—hoping that we could make considerable gains for a truly professional life as a professional in SUNY.

And all along this path, I have spoken out, written, proclaimed, debated and promoted for better treatment for professionals. We still do not have a reasonable career or promotion path (one that might be somehow equated in steps or titles with our academic colleagues). We still do not have reasonable job descriptions that accurately define what it is that we do to make the University

run well. We do not have equitable titles and salaries that are the same from campus to campus. We still do not have gender equity in our titles from campus to campus. We are still fighting the comp time issues, the FLSA issues, and overtime and workday issues.

All in all, not a whole lot has changed or improved! That being said, without the union it would probably be worse.

So here I am, happy to be busy, grateful to be honored by those I have loved working with and ready to engage once again in making the life for professionals more professional and for saving our University!! La lutte continuera!!

Thank you.

# Elder abuse ...

(continued from page 1)

she/he is reported to the police; and

Whereas, elderly victims suffer from a high rate of social and physical isolation, thereby limiting access to communicate such problems with anyone other than their caretakers; therefore be it

Resolved, that NYSUT use its leadership and vital community linkages in addressing abuse in the elderly population including teachers and professionals; and be it further

Resolved, that NYSUT work with its affiliates and other appropriate organizations to coordinate their social service networks with Adult Protection Services (APS) and thereby assist in potential investigation and intervention in the growing number and complexity of elder abuse cases; and be it further

Resolved, that NYSUT support legislation to address this problem.



## Butera receives Link service award

Gertrude Butera of Alfred, center, accepts the Eugene P. Link Award for Outstanding Devotion and Service to the Cause of Higher Education from UUP President Phil Smith, right, and Alan Shank of Geneseo.

Butera, an honorary trustee to the UUP College Scholarship Fund and chair of the statewide UUP Scholarship Development Committee, was recognized for the more than \$700,000 she has helped to raise for the fund since 2000.

“Trudy is being recognized for her unwavering devotion to our long-standing scholarship fund,” Smith said. “Her unparalleled efforts to keep the UUP scholarship growing is an inspiration to all of us.”

Butera earned the union’s Nina Mitchell Award for Distinguished Service in 1996.

A full story on the award ran in the September 2008 issue of *The Voice*.



EL-WISE NOISSETTE



Above, Fred Miller of Oneonta and Flossie Brush of Cortland review materials during a committee meeting.

## Other DA highlights



MICHAEL LIST PHOTOS

Below, Frank Maraviglia of ESF sports a T-shirt supporting Barack Obama for U.S. president.



Above, Herb Fink of Brockport, right, gets his questions answered by a representative from TIAA-CREF.

Left, Barbara Maertz of Farmingdale makes a point during a meeting of professional delegates.



# Legislative update

By Fred Miller  
SUNY Oneonta

**B**ecause retirees are not represented in the collective bargaining process and cannot negotiate their health insurance, the state Legislature (one year at a time) has extended benefits to state retirees that mirrors those of active members.

There have been newspaper reports that Gov. David Paterson has proposed raising the retiree share of health insurance premiums.

That is not a pleasant thought.

Sen. Hugh Farley and Assemblyman Peter Abbate during the 2008 legislative session introduced bills to their respective houses—S.6649 and A.9894—that would have established a moratorium (until June 30, 2009) on any reduction in public sector retiree health insurance benefits, unless corresponding reductions were also made for active employees. In essence, those bills would ensure that the health care insurance for retired SUNY employees could be no less than that of current SUNY employees.

Both the Senate and Assembly passed these bills, but Gov. Paterson vetoed them.

In his veto message, Gov. Paterson referred to the bills in language which could only be interpreted as his being in favor of the concept, but questioning the methods of implementation. Many believe that modified versions of those bills will be drafted and subsequently included in the state Legislature's 2009 legislative agenda.

UUP—with input from the UUP Retiree Legislative Action Group (RELAG) and the UUP Outreach Committee—again included the call for a “Health Insurance Moratorium Bill” in the union's 2009 legislative agenda.

In this current fiscal climate, where there is tremendous pressure for New York state to cut costs, UUP, and its state affiliate NYSUT, seek to protect the health insurance benefits afforded to public sector retirees from unilateral diminution and will strongly advocate for this bill on behalf of all state retirees and their dependents, including retired employees of SUNY.

For more information and to see the text of the proposed legislation, go to [assembly.state.ny.us/leg/](http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/). Search by keyword and type in the bill number (A.9894). Questions may also be directed to UUP Legislation at (800) 342-4206.

# Why we need universal care

By Judy Wishnia  
COARM Chair

**M**ost Americans (84.2 percent) have some form of health insurance. But an estimated 47 million Americans were uninsured for at least a year, as reported by the Bureau of the Census for the year 2006. And as many as 89.5 million people under the age of 65 lacked health insurance for at least one month during 2006-2007.

Since most coverage is connected to employment, we can be sure that with the current job losses, this figure will certainly increase. Thirteen percent of New York residents are uninsured, that's 2.5 million families (including children) of all income levels. People without health insurance are much less likely than those with insurance to receive preventive services, and are less likely to have regular access to a physician and

thus are much more likely to suffer from preventable illnesses and to have more severe (and costly) consequences. And, of course, they are much more likely to die.

Spending on health continues to rise. It is now at 16 percent of the Gross National Product and, by 2015, will reach 20 percent (Annals of Internal Medicine 12-3-07).

Almost every country has some form of universal health insurance. And even though the U.S. spends more per capita than they do, life expectancy and infant mortality in the U.S. is higher than in most industrialized countries.

When health care activists push for universal coverage, there is always someone poised to offer a “horror story” about the universal health care systems in Canada or Great Britain. But one wonders: If there is so much bad treatment in these countries, how come their citizens live longer than Americans and fewer

	SPENDING PER CAPITA	% OF GNP	LIFE EXPECTANCY	INFANT MORTALITY (per 100,000)
USA	\$5,267	14.6	77.1	6.8
FRANCE	\$2,736	9.7	79.2	4.5
GERMANY	\$2,817	10.9	78.5	4.3
JAPAN	\$2,077	7.8	81.5	3.1
CANADA	\$2,931	9.6	79.7	5.2
SWEDEN	\$2,517	9.2	79.9	3.7
AUSTRALIA	\$2,504	9.1	80.0	5.3

(figures are from 2001-2002)

## Central NY ...

(continued from page 4)

use of the SUNY ID card, and access to campus e-mail, Internet and library services. The Upstate Medical University Chapter of UUP will look at these benefits and provide retiree information on the chapter Web site.

Ivey discussed the problems facing retirees. He encouraged members to take advantage of the NYSUT social services benefit available to retirees.

As measured by the evaluations submitted by the attendees, the menu and service were very satisfying and the social contacts were useful. Especially

valuable was the information on the Unum Emergency Travel Medical Assistance Program and the distribution of personal IDs for everyone present.

The planning committee is looking forward to next summer's luncheon and would welcome suggestions for topics for the next meeting, as well as any suggestions regarding speakers.

The committee would like to extend its sincere thanks to Anne Marine for her generous and very efficient assistance in carrying out this luncheon.

A spring luncheon is tentatively scheduled for April 17, 2009.

# Notice of 2009-2011 UUP Retiree Elections

In early January, UUP begins the process for its 2009-2011 Retiree elections.

## AFT constitution forces policy change

The Elections and Credentials Committee received a formal request to distribute campaign literature on behalf of a declared candidate in the upcoming chapter elections. The committee checked with attorneys at the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and NYSUT on the necessity to distribute campaign literature for individual candidates and the process by which that could be done without compromising the privacy of UUP members. The attorneys found that UUP must change election policy in each of its elections (Chapter, Retiree, Statewide Executive Board and Affiliate) to enable distribution of campaign materials so that UUP

is in compliance with the requirements of the AFT constitution.

The Executive Board approved the following *UUP Policies and Procedures for Distributing Campaign Literature in UUP Elections* for the 2009-2011 election cycle.

## Board changes policy for retiree statements

Nominees may submit written statements in support of their candidacies. Each candidate may submit 500 words; if he or she wishes to submit more, it will be printed in smaller type to give all candidates equal space.

Statements must be received by the UUP director of communications or designee in the UUP Administrative Office by 5 p.m. **Wednesday, Feb. 4, 2009.** Statements will be printed in a special Election Edition of *The Active Retiree*.

## *UUP Policies and Procedures for Distributing Campaign Literature in UUP Elections*

**T**o provide equal and uniform access to all candidates for the distribution of campaign literature, UUP will include the following policies and procedures in the conduct of its elections.

These policies and procedures provide equal and uniform access to all candidates for the distribution of campaign literature.

Equally important, they insure members' privacy and meet reasonable organizational needs to fulfill UUP's obligation to conduct fair and honest elections.

UUP will honor reasonable requests by candidates for elected office to distribute campaign literature to members at the candidate's expense. Properly prepared material will be accepted within specified time periods to be determined at each election cycle.

All duly declared candidates shall have equal access to appropriate membership information, to mailing privileges and to publications of UUP in accordance with procedures issued by the UUP Elections and Credentials Committee.

Duly declared candidates requesting distribution of campaign literature shall sign a statement governing the use of mail files and limiting the use of each file containing names and home addresses to once in UUP elections. Such signed statements shall be submitted to the Office of the Secretary of UUP, which shall check eligibility and the parameters of the mail files requested.

All declared candidates may mail campaign literature at their own expense through the UUP mailing house under contract at the time of the election. UUP will provide mail files containing names and home addresses directly to the mailing house for all declared candidates who request them.

This cost will be determined and announced at the beginning of each election cycle. The candidate must contact the mailing house

under contract at a specific election cycle for all other costs and mailing details. UUP cannot guarantee a specific mailing date.

Mailing files will include only UUP members Regular (Active) and Retired in good standing as of the certification date for eligibility to participate in a given election.

Candidates must specify in their formal requests which of the following categories of eligible members they wish to receive their mailings.

### RETIREES

#### Retired Delegate to the Delegate Assembly:

- All Retirees
- Academics Only
- Professionals Only

#### Each Region: All options listed below are available in each Region

- All Members
- Academics Only
- Professionals Only

Capital District—Region A: (Albany, System Administration, Cobleskill, New Paltz, NYSTI)

Long Island—Region B: (Farmingdale, Old Westbury, Stony Brook, Stony Brook HSC)

North Country—Region C: (Canton, Plattsburgh, Potsdam)

Western New York—Region D: (Alfred, Brockport, Buffalo HSC, SUC-Buffalo, SUNY Buffalo, Fredonia, Geneseo)

Central New York—Region E: (ESF, Morrisville, Oswego, Upstate Medical, Utica/Rome)

Metropolitan—Region F: (Brooklyn HSC, Maritime,





## Retiree Elections

### Request for Distribution of Campaign Literature

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_  Academic  Professional

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Address (Include Street, City, State, Zip) \_\_\_\_\_

I am a candidate for \_\_\_\_\_ Requested Date of Mailing \_\_\_\_\_  
 (UUP cannot guarantee a specific mailing date)

Indicate categories of eligible RETIRED MEMBERS to receive mailing. (Check All Boxes That Apply)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>All Retirees</b> ..... <input type="checkbox"/> Academics Only <input type="checkbox"/> Professionals Only<br><b>Capital District - Region A:</b> (Albany, System Admin., Cobleskill, New Paltz, NYSTI)<br><input type="checkbox"/> <b>All Retirees</b> ..... <input type="checkbox"/> Academics Only <input type="checkbox"/> Professionals Only<br><b>Long Island - Region B:</b> (Farmingdale, Old Westbury, Stony Brook, Stony Brook HSC)<br><input type="checkbox"/> <b>All Retirees</b> ..... <input type="checkbox"/> Academics Only <input type="checkbox"/> Professionals Only<br><b>North Country - Region C:</b> (Canton, Plattsburgh, Potsdam)<br><input type="checkbox"/> <b>All Retirees</b> ..... <input type="checkbox"/> Academics Only <input type="checkbox"/> Professionals Only | <b>Western New York - Region D:</b> (Alfred, Brockport, Buffalo (All), Fredonia, Geneseo)<br><input type="checkbox"/> <b>All Retirees</b> ..... <input type="checkbox"/> Academics Only <input type="checkbox"/> Professionals Only<br><b>Central New York - Region E:</b> (ESF, Morrisville, Oswego, Upstate, Utica/Rome)<br><input type="checkbox"/> <b>All Retirees</b> ..... <input type="checkbox"/> Academics Only <input type="checkbox"/> Professionals Only<br><b>Metropolitan - Region F:</b> (Brooklyn HSC, Maritime, Optometry, Purchase)<br><input type="checkbox"/> <b>All Retirees</b> ..... <input type="checkbox"/> Academics Only <input type="checkbox"/> Professionals Only<br><b>Southern Tier - Region G:</b> (Binghamton, Cortland, Delhi, Oneonta)<br><input type="checkbox"/> <b>All Retirees</b> ..... <input type="checkbox"/> Academics Only <input type="checkbox"/> Professionals Only |
|--|--|

*Empire State Chapter Retirees will be included in the Region in which such member's primary work site prior to retirement was located.*

I certify that I have read, understand, and agree to the provisions of UUP Policies and Procedures for Distributing of Campaign Literature in UUP Elections. I request campaign literature to be distributed on my behalf in accordance with UUP Policies and Procedures. I understand that each file of names and home address, provided by UUP and sent directly to the mailing house for this purpose, is limited to a one time use in a UUP election.

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Please FAX or Mail this Request to UUP**

Fax Number: 1-866-812-9446

PO Box 15143, Albany, New York 12212-5143

Optometry, Purchase)

Southern Tier—Region G: (Binghamton, Cortland, Delhi, Oneonta)

Empire State Chapter Retirees will be included in the Region in which such member's primary work site prior to retirement was located.

UUP will not be involved in any other distribution of campaign literature for candidates, except for official publications that provide for candidate statements on an equal and uniform basis.

UUP and NYSUT provide a variety of lists and labels of members' home addresses necessary for UUP to conduct its programs and business. Candidates may not access or use these in the distribution of campaign literature, except for the printed list available in the Chapter office provided by the Elections and Credentials Committee and/or the Leadership Directory.

In election years, UUP will publish these policies and procedures in *The Voice* prior to the beginning of the election cycle. A copy will be available in each chapter office and upon request to the UUP secretary.

The UUP secretary and the Elections and Credentials Committee will be responsible for implementing these policies and procedures. Questions should be directed to the UUP secretary.

## 2009-2011 Election Calendar

If you plan to run for COARM, as a delegate from your chapter or as a delegate to affiliate conventions, here is the election calendar. We urge all retirees to continue to be active on their campuses, to be a campus liaison to COARM, or run for a seat on COARM. Elected regional representatives are responsible for meetings in their regions but many individual campuses have meetings as well. So ... join us and become active!

- Mail chapter, retiree, affiliate convention nomination forms . . .01/05/09
- Chapter, retiree and affiliate convention nominations close . . .02/04/09
- Chapter nomination lists mailed to chapter presidents . . . . .02/13/09
- Mail retiree election ballots . . . . .02/20/09
- Retiree election ballots due . . . . .03/11/09
- Counting of retiree ballots . . . . .03/11-03/13/09
- Mail chapter election ballots . . . . .03/12-03/13/09
- Chapter election ballots due . . . . .04/15/09
- Counting of chapter election ballots  
(affiliate conventions, if necessary) . . . . .04/15-04/18/09

**You must self-nominate if you run for COARM, but a nonretired member must nominate retirees for affiliate conventions.**



## What's all the Buzz about?



You might have heard your colleagues talking about MAP, the Member Assistance Program available from NYSUT Member Benefits Trust. Or maybe you've already joined. But if you haven't, you may want to once you read about MAP's benefits.

By joining MAP, an e-mail based program, you'll be among the first to hear about new, endorsed programs and program updates. You'll receive special offers and reminders from Member Benefits or from providers of its endorsed programs. Your opinions will be solicited on new programs under consideration for endorsement. When possible, you'll help Member Benefits test potential new services and provide feedback.



Often, MAPers are entered into drawings for prizes donated by providers of endorsed programs and Member Benefits. Since MAP's introduction, MAPers have entered drawings for a Bose® Wave Music System, free admissions to the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, 100 gallons of heating oil from Heat USA, a summer fun pack filled with a variety of items, a DVD player and OfficeMax gift cards. In addition, new MAP enrollees and existing MAPers are automatically entered into quarterly drawings; to date, prizes included digital cameras, a cross-cut shredder and an iPod nano.

MAPers receive e-mail communications from Member Benefits and occasionally from

its providers of endorsed programs. On average, a MAP e-mail alert is sent once every three weeks.

Rest assured, Member Benefits will only share your e-mail address with endorsed program providers and then only under controlled circumstances. Once a program provider receives approval from Member Benefits to send you an offer or information, the vendor will be required to destroy the e-mail listing after sending the communication.

This exciting program allows you to help shape future programs and services exclusively available to you and your colleagues.



Help make a difference. Become a MAP team member. Enroll on our secure page by logging on to [www.memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://www.memberbenefits.nysut.org) and clicking on the "MAP Sign-up" navigation tool on the left-hand side of our home page.

For information about this program or about contractual expense reimbursement/endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please call NYSUT Member Benefits Trust at (800) 626-8101, e-mail [benefits@nysutmail.org](mailto:benefits@nysutmail.org), visit [www.memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://www.memberbenefits.nysut.org), or refer to your NYSUT Member Benefits Trust Summary Plan Description.

Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits Trust-endorsed programs.





# Prescription savings available for Empire Plan participants

I have some very exciting news for our members who participate in the Empire Plan.

I would like to introduce you to a new, voluntary program called the Half Tablet Program (HTP). It is part of your Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program benefits.

Under the HTP, you get the same medication and dosage for half the cost. How does it work? It's simple, really.

The HTP offers the opportunity for you to reduce your prescription medication co-payments by using double-strength tablets and splitting them in half.

Members are urged to check with their physicians to see if it is appropriate to take part in the program. If your doctor agrees that the HTP is for you, your doctor can phone in or fax a new prescription to your preferred retail or mail-order pharmacy.

Your doctor will write your prescription for twice the dosage (strength) and half the quantity of your current prescription. The dosing instructions will advise you to take a half tablet at your regularly scheduled time.

This will automatically enable you to participate in the HTP, and you will only be responsible for half the usual co-pay amount.

These medications are available under the HTP:

- Antihypertensives and ACE inhibitors: Aceon (2 mg, 4 mg), moexipril (7.5 mg) and trandolapril (1 mg, 2 mg).
- Antihypertensives, angiotensin receptor blockers (ARBs): Atacand (4, 8 & 16 mg); Avapro (75 mg, 150 mg); Benicar (20 mg); Cozaar (25 mg, 50 mg); and Diovan (40, 80 & 160 mg).
- Antidepressants: Lexapro (5 mg, 10 mg); Pexeva (10 mg, 20 mg); and sertraline (25 mg, 50 mg).
- Lipid-lowering medications: Crestor (5, 10 & 20 mg); Lipitor (10, 20 & 40 mg); pravastatin sodium (10 mg, 20 mg); and simvastatin (5, 10, 20 & 40 mg).

The list of medications is subject to change without notice.

Please note that the HTP is voluntary.

If you have additional questions about the Half Tablet Program, please visit the



Doreen M. Bango, Manager Member Benefits & Services

Frequently Asked Questions Web page at [www.halftablet.com](http://www.halftablet.com).

## Free pill splitter available

The Empire Plan is offering a free tablet splitter to members who join the Half Tablet Program. To get your tablet splitter, simply call (877) 471-1860 or request one at [www.halftablet.com](http://www.halftablet.com). You will be asked to provide your participation number.

Splitting tablets using a tablet splitter isn't difficult. Please follow the directions provided with your free tablet splitter or with one you purchase on your own.

If you have any questions regarding the Half Tablet Program, contact a Benefit Trust Fund representative at (800) 887-3863. Information is also available on the UUP Web site at [www.uupinfo.org](http://www.uupinfo.org).

## NYSUT Retiree Council update

By Ed Alfonsin  
SUNY Potsdam

In addition to campus- or regional-specific matters, COARM members have the wider obligation of dealing with and making recommendations about retiree issues.

One of the newest duties for our elected members for the last year and a half has been serving as the Initial Executive Board of the NYSUT Retiree Council 40, 41, 42—that is NYSUT's designation for our retired membership in their role as NYSUT retirees. The constitution for the council was sent out by NYSUT in June 2007, and was ratified,

but some of us saw immediately that there was need for a several amendments.

I have been involved with constitutions and bylaws in UUP and elsewhere for many years, so I presented a set of proposals to our Initial Executive Board (IEB) last February, whose members approved them without dissent. The IEB delegated me to handle the logistics for the amendments and subsequent elections; copies of each stage in the process of revision have been sent to IEB members.



ALFONSIN

Despite a number of delays for technical or legal reasons, the package with original constitutional language, proposed changes and rationales for the changes was supposed to have been mailed by last June for your ratification.

Finally, the constitutional changes and nomination ballots will be sent to you in the near future.

The council—which is separate from COARM—will give nine seats to UUP, thus a stronger voice to raise higher education issues with NYSUT retirees.

# Cobleskill retiree honored for service to college

**F**or those of you who attended Delegate Assemblies in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, you will remember Ann Marie Behling's smiling face, incredible energy and unwavering activism on behalf of SUNY Cobleskill and UUP.

Cobleskill recently honored Behling with its Emeriti Award, and we join in wishing her continued good health, happiness and much political success in North Carolina.

Behling's educational experience has been vast. From 1955-65, she studied at Cornell University, SUNY Albany, SUNY Cobleskill and SUNY Oneonta. She earned her M.A. in zoology from Colorado State in 1966. She continued her education at SUNY Oswego and received her HTL (ASCP) Certification in August 1981.

Her career has taken her down many paths, from floral designer to substitute teacher, to a biology and general science teacher, to her final position as professor and director of the histotechnology program at SUNY Cobleskill.

Developed by Behling, the histotechnology program was the second largest and New York's only professionally accredited program in histotechnology. She established a network of 22 hospitals as clinical



**BEHLING**

affiliates. Behling's students are requested all across the country.

She has helped her students by providing no-interest loans to buy books or to pay summer clinical tuition. After discussion with administration, she set up a histology fund and continued to raise money to supply it. She was involved in the placement of her students and continues her involvement on both professional and personal levels.

Behling has been the recipient of many awards, including the New York State Histotechnological Society Dominic

Europa Award in 1989, the state/UUP Excellence Award in 1990, and the union's Nina Mitchell Award for Distinguished Service and the National Society of Histotechnologists of the Year Award, both in 1994.

Behling is active in many professional associations, has served on the Employee Assistance Program Committee and has helped to develop the campus smoking policy.

Behling's greatest success was on the legislative front, when she developed a

**Behling is best known for her smiling face and dedication to unionism, histotechnology.**

handout listing the needs of the college science department and the University's six technology colleges. She hand delivered these to senators and assemblymen. That same afternoon, the Democratic Caucus met and added a special \$1 million member item to the state budget for equipment for the colleges.

## Survey ...

*(continued from page 1)*

There were suggestions to have more information about former colleagues (please send us information) and more about benefits and on politics. If you have an article of interest, information about retiree activities, please send it to us. We will print it!

At the time of the survey, respondents were quite satisfied with their financial situation, but were somewhat worried about the future (falling stock market and rising prices). Well, the worriers were right. For those in the optional retirement plans, the recent stock market debacle has certainly eaten away a substantial part of their nest eggs. Let's hope the new administration can put us on the right economic path. There was also general satisfaction with health benefits, but many asked for better cover-

age for dental and vision. There was particular dissatisfaction with the dental coverage. We have numerous members who live out of state (either all year or part of the year) and it was difficult to find physicians in the Empire Plan. There was also some concern that Empire stopped for widows and widowers. Many respondents would like to see long-term care added under Empire. I would add here that we should be urging this addition to Medicare. At the last COARM meeting, a subcommittee was established to look into our benefits needs.

Many respondents said they would come to more retirement meetings if they were in a convenient location and had interesting topics. There were some complaints about lack of meetings in some regions. Perhaps we should look into establishing smaller regions

or expanding campus meetings. For those who live in other states, perhaps some of you can arrange to meet from time to time. We can help with such arrangements.

Finally, we asked what home campuses offered retirees (parking, library, invitations to events, etc). Our results show that while many campuses—Brockport, Potsdam, Cortland, the two Buffalos and Albany, among others—treated their retirees with respect, some schools granted little access to campus: Old Westbury and Upstate Medical were particularly lacking in access for retirees. Indeed, there were some strong comments: "after all those years of devotion, we are treated like dirt." COARM intends to use this information to pressure some of these campuses to treat their retirees with dignity.



# Water wilderness

## Nelson shares trip of Yellowstone from a canoe

By Mac Nelson  
SUNY Fredonia

I have always loved the American west, especially Yellowstone National Park, the world's first and greatest national park. I have visited it so many times that I have lost count, from 1955 to the present. In that half century it has changed little, and mostly for the better; gray wolves are back, and the bear count is up. I have changed, too, and not all for the better. The one thing I had never done is to get deep into the back country, into the wilderness, for several days to see the sights and hear the silence. In my seventieth year, I decided to set this right, and I did.

I thought I was a little too creaky to walk very far into Yellowstone's thousands of miles of trails, carrying food, equipment and sleeping gear for a week. But I could sit and pull on a paddle all day. I asked two SUNY Fredonia friends if they wanted to join me and they jumped at the chance. A third pouted that he hadn't been asked. He was, and we were set. Perfect: four paddlers, two canoes. If one tips over, the other can help. Set the dates, get the reservations and permits, find a canoe renter and GO. We did.

After three days on the road and three days to acclimate to the altitude and see some bears and wolves, we met our concessioner and headed for the lake. Yellowstone Lake is big and high and sometimes scary. It was still early June; "ice-out" had come only two weeks before. We had sat on the porch of Lake Lodge the night before and looked at the headland called The Promontory, our goal, 13 miles away. It looked even farther. It also looked like what I later heard a Ranger guide call it: "The Crocodile." Lying in wait?

The first day started placid and sweet, but the end of the day we were pulling hard for shore against wind and rain. Later, I heard



Though not taken by Nelson or his fellow travelers, this photo of Yellowstone National Park captures the beauty of the region.

that the guys were calling me "Captain Ahab," and I now take that as a compliment. After another hard day, we got to the bottom of Southeast Arm, as far from cars and crowds and tourists as you can get in Yellowstone. Two days there was bliss. As Ted said, "You learn how few things you really need." Thoreau agreed: "A man is rich in proportion to the number of things he can afford to leave alone."

The next year I was ready to go again, and all my friends wanted to, but couldn't. Life intrudes. So I recruited three more friends, and I was no longer the oldest. Three of us were 70—friends from high school—and the kid was 52. Lesser canoe skills, yes, but it was easy to adapt: take a shuttle boat out to "The Crocodile" and go from there. Fewer miles to paddle, just as much majesty and solitude, just as many birds and otters and trout. And just as fine a trip.

Then the next year I wanted to try Shoshone Lake. It has the largest geyser basin in the world that you can't drive to. Want to see it? Earn it: walk or paddle. After a tough pull through a swift river, my son and I hit the lake and saw nine canoes on their way out. Drat. I thought this would be more quiet and private. And then it was. We stayed

five days, had the lake and geysers and trout to ourselves, and saw not one more human being the entire time. The only other large mammal we saw was a lone wolf that loped through our campsite. Magic.

Wilderness is a great tonic for the spirit. Aldo Leopold put it this way: "I would hate to be young again without wild country to be young in, for what avails forty freedoms without blank spaces on the map?" Wallace Stegner wrote that we all need wilderness "even if we only drive to the edge and look in." Yes. There will soon be fifteen billion of us, and we need to save a few large places to get away to. Or at least to know that someone is going there. Perhaps a week, even a day, in the wilderness is too much for you, though it was a lot easier than I expected it to be.

Maybe you'll never go. But aren't you glad somebody did, and sent you a report from the edge? I'm seventy-four and I'm going back again soon. I hope I'll see you there.

(Mac Nelson is a distinguished teaching professor emeritus of English at SUNY Fredonia. His "TWENTY WEST: The Great Road Across America" has a much fuller account of these trips to Yellowstone, and is available at campus bookstores and from SUNY Press.) — Copyright Malcolm A. Nelson, 2008

# 2009 Outstanding UUP Active Retiree Award



**I. Eligibility:** Any active UUP retiree who has rendered outstanding volunteer service to his/her community and has provided exemplary service to UUP and to SUNY *after* retirement is eligible to be nominated. (A candidate may qualify if outstanding in all or any combination of the criteria listed.)

**DEADLINE: April 15, 2009**

**II. Name of Nominee:** \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

UUP Chapter \_\_\_\_\_ Years of retirement from SUNY \_\_\_\_\_

**III. Nominee Activities**

A. Service to Community  
Description \_\_\_\_\_ Organization \_\_\_\_\_ From-To \_\_\_\_\_

B. Service to UUP  
Description \_\_\_\_\_ From-To \_\_\_\_\_

C. Service to SUNY  
Description \_\_\_\_\_ From-To \_\_\_\_\_

D. Other Accomplishments  
Description \_\_\_\_\_ From-To \_\_\_\_\_  
(i.e., continual professional accomplishments)

*(If additional space is needed, attach a separate sheet.)*

**IV. Name of Nominator** \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**V. Endorsements**

- A. One or more letters attesting to the candidate's accomplishments since retirement from SUNY.
- B. Letters from leaders of organizations served, describing scope and quality of volunteer service to the community, UUP and/or SUNY.

**Applications will be reviewed by UUP's Committee on Active Retired Membership (COARM). The award will be presented at the 2009 Fall Delegate Assembly.**

**Send completed nomination form, including letters of endorsement, to:**

**Judith Wishnia, COARM chair  
c/o United University Professions  
P.O. Box 15143  
Albany, N.Y. 12212-5143**

**DEADLINE: April 15, 2009**



# SUNY is the \$olution

By UUP President  
Phillip H. Smith

Since its founding in 1948, the State University of New York has produced tens of thousands of graduates whose knowledge has helped to generate years of economic growth. But following the latest round of devastating funding cuts that threaten to dismantle SUNY, that generator is losing its power.

First, the University took a \$52 million budget reduction this spring in response to the state's fiscal crisis. Then in late July, Gov. Paterson ordered all state agencies to cut spending by another 7 percent, which meant SUNY's budget was slashed by \$96 million more.

Cumulatively, the loss in state aid to SUNY amounts to \$148 million dollars, making it one of the state agencies to be hit the hardest, and matters could get even worse.

Unless these funds are restored, SUNY will be in the fight of its life. SUNY has already been cut to the bone and is now looking at being cut into the bone.

New York is trying to cut its way out of its mounting budget deficit. But why cut an entity that produces much more revenue than invested and serves as a major engine of economic growth? It is unwise to cut funds from an entity that produces more revenue than the amount you invest. SUNY says that for every dollar in state support it receives, its campuses return between \$6 and \$8 to their respective communities. Imagine that for every dollar cut from SUNY, the economic return of \$6 to \$8 goes away.

The state's elected leaders need to rethink these cuts to SUNY and approach state support to the University as an investment in the future economic well-being of the state rather than as a drain on the state's beleaguered finances. The state ought to build its way out of this crisis instead of cutting its way out—and SUNY is the solution. Restoring state support to the levels in the original 2008-09 budget is a good start.

That's why UUP is calling on the governor and SUNY administrators to give the University the funding it needs to keep SUNY's economic engine humming.

## SUNY IMPACTS COMMUNITIES

SUNY is also the economic lifeline for a number of communities across the state. For example, SUNY Stony Brook produces \$4.6 billion for Long Island's economy. UAlbany contributes \$3 billion annually to the local economy. Upstate Medical University generates over \$2 billion in economic activity for the Syracuse region. The University of Buffalo leaves a \$1.5 billion economic footprint. SUNY Binghamton's economic impact is \$673 million. If SUNY campuses are forced to slash their budgets, the repercussions would be far-reaching—not just for these communities—but for the state economy as a whole.

**“We need a strong public university system now more than ever.”**

The effects of these monumental cuts are already being felt. Some campuses are planning to limit future enrollments, enlarge the size of classes, reduce course offerings, and freeze searches for new full-time faculty to replace those who are retiring. Others say they will delay purchases of supplies and equipment, a basic necessity in today's technologically driven world.

## MORE DAMAGE LOOMING

These draconian budget cuts would cause even more damage in the 2009 spring semester. Without additional funding, SUNY campuses will be unable to retain the faculty needed to teach advanced courses—the courses students need to graduate on time.

That means working families who send their children to a public university or college within SUNY face the very real prospect of having their sons and daughters take more than four years to graduate.

Already strapped to pay rising energy and food bills, families will be forced to pay thousands of dollars more for a degree that will take five or more years to complete, or they may end up unable to pay the increased costs, and their children may not get the chance to graduate at all.

The cuts will also hurt working families with high-school age children looking to SUNY for an affordable and quality higher education. Thousands of qualified students will likely find the doors to SUNY closed, because the money simply won't be there to give them access to higher education. Without adequate funding, SUNY will be unable to retain the faculty needed to teach them.

SUNY's core mission is to ensure that degree programs of quality are available to every qualified student. Achieving that mission will not be possible in light of these latest reductions, coupled with the soaring demand for admission.

SUNY is a major engine that drives the state's economy. It's responsible for educating the next generation of New York's

workforce with the type of skills needed to retain and attract employers. Eighty percent of the students who graduate from SUNY remain in New York to live and work. If those students are forced to study elsewhere, New York will suffer a brain drain that will hamper its efforts to bolster the economy. And because one's income generally increases with education, we

will also lose the tax revenues from their salaries.

With SUNY, New York already has a proven economic engine in place. But it will require the state's continued investment for this engine to keep running. It makes no sense to neglect this engine by not filling it with the fuel needed to sustain its economic momentum.

We call upon concerned parents and students to join UUP in asking the governor to reverse these cuts. You can do so easily by going to our Web site at [www.uupinfo.org](http://www.uupinfo.org) (<http://www.uupinfo.org/>) and sending a fax to the governor.

New York needs a strong public university system, now more than ever.



SMITH

# Season's Savings

During the holiday season and all through the year, you can save on great gifts and take advantage of exciting offers available only to union members.

Here are some of the ways your union membership can help you delight everyone on your list — while getting the best value for every dollar you spend!

Special union discounts make holiday shopping a joy!

## Computer and Internet Deals

- Save up to 12% on **Dell computers**—laptops, desktops, printers and more.
- Use **Union Plus Voice** with your broadband connection and save 25% on your phone bill.
- Get high-speed dial-up **Internet service** that's 5 times faster than 56K for only \$14.95 a month.

## Clothing Discounts

- Get up to **10% off** quality, comfortable union-made apparel.
- Wide selection for all ages and sizes—everything from golf shirts, henleys, sweats and jeans to dresses, oxford shirts and pants to kids' tees and sneakers.
- You also can order **gift certificates** for your friends.



## Entertainment Specials

- Save up to 40% on **movie tickets**.
- Find bargain prices and great selections at **Powell's Book Store**, the largest unionized Internet bookseller.
- Get discount **DVD rentals** at Blockbuster.
- Save on **Broadway shows** and  **sporting events** in selected cities.



## AT&T Wireless Saving

- Take an additional **10% off** the regular rate of any individual or family **calling plan** purchased at an **AT&T Wireless** store and also receive a \$50 in-store credit when signing up for service\*\*.

\*\*See member benefits at 1-888-744-4444 or AT&T store. AT&T available through computer or any internet. AT&T store is located at New York City. Additional restrictions apply. ©2003 Union Plus. All rights reserved.



## Flower Discounts

- Get **20% discount** on every order.
- Find a wide selection of beautiful **flower arrangements**, green and blooming **plants**, fresh table **centerpieces** and fragrant **seasonal wreaths**.
- Enjoy **same-day flower delivery** service (if ordered before noon in recipient's time zone).
- Call **1-888-667-7779** to place your order today.



For more information about **benefits**, and **savings** available to you visit

[www.UnionPlus.org/Gifts](http://www.UnionPlus.org/Gifts)

PH 01

## Stay in touch!

Retirees are invited to join the group's e-mail information network (e-list) as a way to share ideas and to receive information more quickly. E-list topics are restricted to issues of concern to UUP, SUNY, the labor movement and retirees.

COARM Chair Judy Wishnia said the e-list is an easy way to discuss retiree issues and to post news about regional meetings, benefits and advocacy.

Interested members should contact Old Westbury retiree Claire Meirowitz at [cmeirowitz@yahoo.com](mailto:cmeirowitz@yahoo.com). Member privacy is protected because the group is considered private and names will not be displayed in Yahoo!'s directory.



MEIROWITZ