



Kasprak named 2012 'Outstanding Retiree'

By Karen L. Mattison
UUP Publications Specialist

Bob Kasprak enjoys keeping busy. Since his retirement in 1998 as a telecommunications professional at SUNY Optometry, Kasprak has helped to expand the scope of the union's Committee on Active Retired Membership (COARM) by organizing a subcommittee on elder abuse. He has also taken a leading role as a member of the SUNY Retirees Service Corps, continues to serve as a UUP, NYSUT and AFT delegate, and is a member of the union's statewide

Retiree Legislative Action Group (RELAG) and Veterans Affairs Committee. "People have asked me what I do with my time in retirement," recalled Kasprak, elected representative to COARM's Metropolitan New York Region. "I reply, I'm so busy now I wonder how I had time to do my job."

Kasprak's tireless work on behalf of fellow retirees has earned him the Pearl H. Brod Outstanding Active Retiree Award for 2012.

"Always the communications expert, Bob sends COARM and listserv members articles of interest on unions, health care and Social Security," wrote COARM Chair Judy Wishnia of Stony Brook in her nomi-



Kasprak

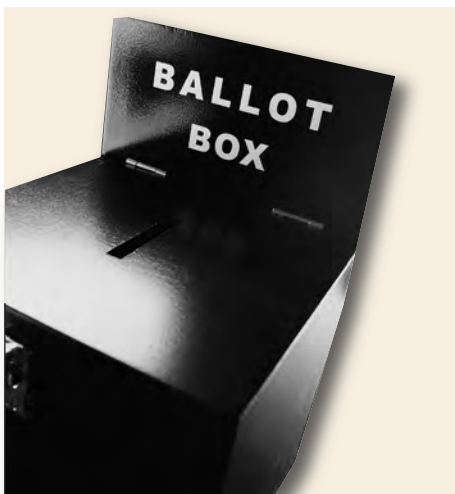
nating petition. "Reading these articles widens our understanding of the political world, especially our knowledge of the issues affecting retirees."

In addition to his union work, Kasprak has been active in organizing the Central Hudson Chapter of the Alliance for Retired Americans and, during the holiday season,

distributes toys for the Salvation Army in Manhattan.

Kasprak will receive his award during the 2013 Winter Delegate Assembly in Albany.

The award is named after the late Pearl Brod of Farmingdale, who served as COARM chair from 1999-2003.



ELECTION INFO

8—UUP: In early January, UUP begins the process for its 2013-2015 retiree elections. Check out the details inside.

10—NYSUT: Nominations are being sought for officers and delegates to NYSUT Retiree Council 40-42. Look inside for more details.

Empire Medicare Rx changes noted

By Walter Apple
UUP Retiree Member Services Coordinator

If you missed one of the many retiree meetings held by either UUP or NYSHIP/UnitedHealthcare, then you may want to take a second and review the following changes to the Empire Plan Medicare Rx program.

The Empire Plan Medicare Rx plan will go into effect Jan. 1, 2013, for those who are Medicare primary and have the Empire Plan coverage, as well as for Medicare primary dependents with Empire Plan coverage and/or members and dependents who will turn 65 with Medicare primary and the Empire Plan coverage.

- Enrollment in the Empire Plan Medicare Rx program is automatic; members do not need to do anything but be enrolled in Medicare Part A and B.

- The member and each Medicare primary dependent enrolled in the plan will

receive a unique Empire Plan Medicare Rx card to be used only for prescription medications.

- An Explanation of Benefits (EOB) from UnitedHealthcare will be issued monthly, showing a summary of the prescriptions.

- There are few changes to the prescription drug benefits:

- Copayments for prescriptions will stay the same.

- The same drugs will be covered as on the current Empire Plan Flexible Formulary.

- There are no additional coverage gaps or deductibles.

- The same network (both local and mail-in pharmacy); however, members will not be able to use the Empire Plan Medicare Rx card at VA hospitals.

For more information, go to www.cs.ny.gov/empireplanmedicarerx/index.cfm or contact me at (800) 342-4206, ext. 638.

The Active Retiree

UUP Officers

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COARM Members (2011-2013)

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

Jo Schaffer, Southern Tier Region
 31 Pearl St. schaffer@twcny.rr.com
 Cortland, NY 13035 (607) 753-7245

Patricia D. Strempel, Central NY Region
 3767 Mooney Dr. pat28@aol.com
 Marietta, NY 13110 (315) 636-8048

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

Barbara T. Maertz, Long Island Region
 134 Farmers Ave. maertzbt@farmingdale.edu
 Lindenhurst, NY 11757 (631) 957-2499

Eric P. Russell, Metropolitan Region
 134 Smithfield Ct. ericprussell@hotmail.com
 Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

Patty Bentley, North Country Region
 18 Sanborn Ave. plattpatty@gmail.com
 Plattsburgh, NY 12901 (518) 569-5327

Harvey Axlerod, Western NY Region
 16 Telfair Dr. axlerod@buffalo.edu
 Williamsville, NY 14221 (716) 631-0233

Frank L. Maraviglia, Presidential appointee

John A. Richert, Presidential appointee
 751 W. Ferry St. #8-Cd jrichert@buffalo.edu
 Buffalo, NY 14222 (716) 881-1839

Edison Bond Jr., Ex-officio member
 1530 E. 54th St. ebond@uupmail.org
 Brooklyn, NY 11234 (718) 951-4003

UUP Retiree Member Services Coordinator
 Walter Apple wapple@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 didn't want to go, but I'm glad I went

By Henry Geerken
 Cobleskill

It has been a while since my last visit to the hospital so my body decided to give me a “vacation” by getting cellulitis.

I do not recall much of what happened before arriving at the hospital, but Diane had a lot of fun trying to keep track of me because I kept thinking I was down at Myrtle Beach. Since I had one foot in Myrtle Beach and the other in Worcester, I surely was in a vulnerable position.

My first recollection starts as I was being admitted. They asked me what I weighed and I said 340 pounds. For some reason, nobody wanted to accept that. So they put me on a bed that had all the bells and whistles, including four on the floor, a hemi head, Holley carburetors—and a built-in scale. As I settled in the bed, there were all sorts of mechanical groans and squeaks.

The bed determined that I weighed 1 pound. Suddenly my estimated weight became a bit more feasible. This bed was to be mine throughout my stay, and it continued to make noises every time I moved. (I think it was trying to atone for the 1 pound gaff).

As I lay staring at the walls that night, I decided I needed to sit up. I got the remote and, because my glasses were at home, decided to use the pictures on the control to guide my actions.

I started pushing buttons and various parts of my bed started going up and down, dropping my feet and raising my head and—presto change-o!—my hospital bed became a sliding board. I began to slowly slip down the bed until I landed gently on my backside on the floor. (Officer, I swear that I wasn't going over 5 mph.)

My “call for assistance” button was out of reach at the top of the bed, so I did the only thing I could think of—I yelled. Suddenly I was surrounded by angels from heaven.



Geerken

“Did you bump your head?” “No.”

“How many fingers am I holding up?” “13.” (So I was a little off—remember I wasn't wearing my glasses.)

Now the fun begins. How do we get Geerken off the floor? It was decided to get the “derrick.”

Picture the rigging used for lifting engines out of cars. Belts of various sizes were passed around my buttocks and connected to the hoist.

With the press of a button, I was slowly levitated, wheeled over and gently deposited on the bed like a sack of rice. All I needed was a cold brewski and I would have thought I was at the circus.

I woke in the middle of the night in need of a drink. I retrieved my cup of ice water and took a sip. I must have dozed off with the cup on my chest because suddenly I had ice water all over me. Talk about being suddenly awakened!

I'm not certain but I think it was around this time that I heard a knock on the door. It was Mother Nature calling.

I need to clarify a few things here. I have been around the block enough to know that I can't navigate a bedpan. The same holds true for a urine bottle.

I believe that urine bottles are stored in a very cold freezer. Otherwise, why is it that when you touch any part of your body, the icy shock causes your gonads to shrink so fast they stay under your armpits for a week?

You and I know that, as sure the stars above, we're going to dump the contents of the urine bottle all over the bed. (When this happens, you'll have to endure all the reminiscent pubescent training: “Oh Henry, what have you done?”)

The same holds true for a bed pan. Trying to place me on a bed pan is akin to putting an elephant on a thimble. You know that it's a disaster in the making. If a urine bottle can recapture shame, then missing the bed pan altogether is total mortification.

For all the reasons I've stated, I would see **HOSPITAL**, page 15

From the COARM chair

What price inequality?

I am writing this before the election, but no matter what the outcome (and, of course, I hope Obama will be elected), a major threat to American democracy and the well-being of its citizens will remain. That threat is the enormous income inequality in the United States, which affects not only our economic system but the political system as well.

Joseph Stiglitz, the Nobel Laureate in Economics, recently published, *The Price of Inequality*, where he asserts that the economic system is basically unfair and the influence of wealth on the political system, reinforces and increases the lack of fairness. While the recent financial crisis exacerbated the situation, income inequality has been building for the last 30 years. The result is that the top 1 percent of Americans now control one-third of the U.S. wealth, while wages have stagnated. Stiglitz asks: How do you accumulate wealth? You either make something to create wealth, or, you can make money by taking it away from others. This last way has been the story of the last 30 years, 30 years in which the U.S. has become the most unequal society of all the industrialized nations.

In the last 30 years, the wages of 90 percent of Americans have risen 15 percent, while the wealth of the top 1 percent has increased by 150 percent. And most shocking, the .1 percent has seen an increase of 300 percent. The economic plight of the 99 percent is also affected by the fact that the U.S. offers the least generous unemployment insurance in the industrialized world. And we are the only major nation without government-sponsored health insurance.

While the life expectancy in Japan is 83, and 82 in Australia and Israel, it's 78 in the U.S. The political system is rigged so that the rich pay low taxes, corporations are not regulated, and education and research are underfunded. Students who do manage to go to college or university, have more debt than the total American credit card debt. In addition to a decrease in the standard of living, there is a loss of belief in fairness and in the U.S. as a "land of opportunity."

"The political system is rigged so that the rich pay low taxes, corporations are not regulated, and education and research are underfunded. ... In addition to the decrease in the standard of living, there is a loss of belief in fairness and in the U.S. as a 'land of opportunity.'"



Wishnia

Stiglitz makes it clear that this inequality will continue to exist as long as we allow the 1 percent to control governmental policies that create an unfair tax system and crushes unions.

A recent article in *The New York Times* (Oct. 13, 2012) by Chrystia Freeland, discusses a further analysis by Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson. In their book, *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty*, they contend that what separates successful states from failed ones is whether the governing institutions are inclusive or extractive. Extractive states are controlled by ruling elites whose objective is to extract as much wealth as they can from the rest of society. An excellent example of the downfall of such a society is Venice, where the concentration of power in the hands of the wealthy elites led to Venice's eventual decline as a major economic power.

Inclusive states, on the other hand, give everyone access to economic opportunity, which creates more prosperity and even greater inclusiveness. Historically, the U.S. has been an example of an inclusive nation—but now it may be on the way to being another Venice.

So, what can be done to keep the U.S. as the land of opportunity? Stiglitz offers a number of ways to restore economic equality and end the threats to democracy.

- End corporate welfare: close tax loopholes and make the tax system fairer.
- Institute legal reform: democratize access to justice.
- Improve access to education, including public higher ed, instead of supporting "for-profit" schools.
- Provide health care for all and make it more efficient.
- Improve the safety net: tax credits, food stamps, etc.
- Stop the global "race to the bottom," by taxing profits made overseas.
- Maintain full employment by investing in infrastructure and the environment.
- Support citizen organizations and unions.
- And, finally, what we have learned from this election: in order to save our democracy, we must have campaign finance reform.

We must, as a people, organize to convince the politicians—many of whom receive a lot of money from the 1 percent—to back reforms suggested by Stiglitz and many others, and to recognize that it is in our mutual interest for our nation to become once again an inclusive society, a true land of opportunity.

Judith Wishnia

Regional meetings

Southern Tier retirees meet in Cortland, Oneonta

By Jo Schaffer
Cortland

The fall meetings for the Southern Tier COARM were scheduled following the 2012 Fall Delegate Assembly and the extended COARM retreat held just prior to that meeting. I wanted to make sure that I could transmit the most recent and important information to the regional members.

At Cortland

A brunch meeting on the Cortland campus was held Friday, April 27.

At Cortland, we have negotiated, over the years, a joint UUP/COARM and college administration program. We normally get a big crowd and this year was no different. There were 66 folks in attendance. COARM organizes the program and hosts the meeting from the podium. That is



Jo Schaffer, right, stands with the Central NY ARA during a Syracuse Labor Day event.

how I can present the issues of importance—not only to retirees and seniors, but to everyone in attendance.

As a special part of the program, we try to have interesting and pertinent speakers. This year, Laura Gathagan, the newly appointed medievalist in the college's history department, was invited to share her research on the Domesday Book, in a talk entitled "When Men were Women." By examining the use of pronouns in the document, Gathagan was able to discover that women held property, goods and titles at a time when

it was presumed they had little or no power.

Having faculty present current research to an interested audience of former colleagues is a treat for both. Over the years, the range of topics has gone from Spiegel Wilcox and his jazz trumpet to exercise physiology.

At Oneonta

The meeting in Oneonta for the Oneonta/Delhi group was held Friday, May 18—a different venue, a different set of circumstances but a really good chance to present the important information and have a rousing give and take on the issues.

The addition of Chapter President Bill Simons and VP for Academics Rob Compton to

the discussion was fabulous. The retirees were reminded that their presence, their history, their participation and their energy were welcome.

Compton gave a very presentation on "Social (In)Security and the Veil of Ignorance," which proved to be a thoughtful analysis of our society and how some seek to diminish the benefits and respect for its distinguished elder citizens (see related story, page x).

I have been part of the Central New York chapter of the Alliance for Retired Americans for years. Pat Stempel now attends along with Flossy Brush. The ARA is an incredible source of information and powerful direction for retiree activists. Weekly, I forward on their news update to a distribution list of COARM members of the Southern Tier. If you want to be included on our regional list, email me at schafferj@cortland.edu.

Long Island retirees meet in Farmingdale

By Barbara Maertz
Farmingdale

A lovely day was had by all who attended the COARM brunch at Farmingdale State College on Wednesday, Oct. 23. The program was highlighted by a walk down memory lane with UUP Farmingdale (UUPF) founding members Judi Bird, John Hunt, Mike Smiles and Bob Reganse.

Hunt had a video of pictures of our union marches along Route 110, as well as the march on the administration building back in the late 1970s. There were so many faces that all of us remembered,

some of whom were in the audience. He remembered the time we hired a plane to take some members up to Albany for a grievance hearing—which we won.

Reganse regaled us with the story of the demonstration against parking fees (which was the biggest crowd we ever had), held in front of the administration building, with TV coverage. There have never been any parking fees imposed. A very successful UUPF event.

Smiles and Barbara Maertz talked about the motorcade down Route 110 to the Farmingdale College Aviation Center at Republic Airfield, to protest protracted contract negotiations that resulted in the

state suspending UUP's dental/vision coverage. The cars each had a balloon tied to the mirror and traffic was stopped for 1½ miles. Assemblyman Bob Sweeney spoke to our members and TV coverage was awesome.

The memories were fun to relive. Bird talked about all the trips to Albany, with flight delays, to attend the DAs. She remembered the negotiations for "Reinvestment" for our members, which began in 1989 and didn't end until 1993, and which were still being implemented in 1995. No one can calculate the many hours spent protecting our members

see **LONG ISLAND**, page 7

Capital District: What's at stake in this election?

By Al Magid
Albany

Another presidential election, atop numerous election hierarchies all the way down to the most local level throughout the country. A time for much foolish talk in the body politic. And for voicing good sense and understanding.

Mulling all this, Capital Region COARM's Executive Committee deemed it appropriate, nay urgent, to lend encouragement to assaying the political goings-on in this election season, in the interest of shedding light on and increasing understanding of the key actors and stakeholders and of the electorate.

Capital Region COARM convened its fall semester semi-annual meeting to tackle the question What's at Stake in the 2012 Elections? The meeting was held on Oct. 2 in the Alumni House on UAlbany's main campus, with two distinguished guest speakers, Steven Gottlieb and James McGrath.

Gottlieb, a law professor at Albany Law School, was formerly president of the Capital District Chapter of the New York Civil Liberties Union. Educated at Princeton and Yale Law School, for years he has focused his research, teaching and other activities on constitutional and administrative law, U.S. constitutional history and the Supreme Court, jurisprudence, civil liberties and civil rights, and litigation and the provision of legal services.

McGrath earned his B.A. degree at Lake Forest College in Illinois and a master's in journalism at Northwestern. His professional experiences in journalism have been numerous and varied. Currently, he is a member of the Editorial Board of the Albany *Times Union* and its chief editorial writer.

The two speakers ranged widely for an hour about the past and present in American politics and public policy, and about likely consequences of the presidential election this fall.

On many points, Gottlieb and McGrath were in agreement. The major exception was this: McGrath expected that, if elected president, a pragmatic Mitt Romney would likely pursue policies on a whole host of issues akin to those likely to be pursued by the pragmatic Barack Obama.



Capital District COARM members heard from, left to right, Albany Law School professor Steve Gottlieb, *Times Union* chief editorial writer Jim McGrath, and COARM Capital District Chair Al Magid.



KATIE GEERKEN PHOTOS

Dozens of Capital District retirees attend the recent regional meeting on the UAlbany campus.



Gottlieb strongly disagreed. Each speaker sought to bolster his thesis with persuasive evidence.

A robust Q-and-A followed their presentations.

The meeting ran from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. It began with an opportunity for academic and professional retirees from SUNY campuses in Albany, New Paltz and Cobleskill, and other guests, to socialize and consult printed materials provided by UUP Member Benefits and Services. UUP Retiree Member Services Coordinator Walter Apple addressed the gathering,

principally on Medicare issues.

A brunch was provided by statewide COARM for those attending the meeting.

The Capital Region COARM Executive Committee is currently organizing the semi-annual meeting to be held in May 2013. Details will follow. Capital Region COARM urges SUNY retirees to participate in meetings.

All meetings are keyed to timely issues—educational and political/policy, the latter domestic and international—with distinguished speakers from near and far.

Regional meetings

WNY retirees learn about creativity, benefits

By Harvey Axlerod
Buffalo Center

“**T**ests! I don’t take tests, I gave them when I taught! Except for blood tests, but that’s another story ...”

Environmental Science and Forestry professor Frank Maraviglia was the first guest presenter at the Western NY Region’s fall meeting on Oct. 16. His topic, “Creativity and the Mind: Encounters in Thinking,” was an interactive workshop.

There were tests indeed: a test on whether a person is right brained or left brained; a test on whether someone can think outside the box (literally), and a test on how individuals interact in groups. And, of course, there were detailed explanations. (To be honest, the workshop flew by, and one hour seemed hardly enough. I was so busy following what Frank presented that my notes were scant. That’s the highest compliment—when a presenter so captivates so completely.)

Our second speaker, UUP Retiree Member Services Coordinator Walter Apple, gave a broad and sweeping review of retiree benefits. He spoke of Empire Plan pharmacy changes, including a new and Empire-separate Rx card, as well as minor changes in the prescription formulary (see related story, page 1). He warned that dropping Empire Rx coverage drops *all* Empire coverage. So be very careful!

Apple also pointed out that UUP Active Retiree membership includes a \$1,000 death benefit; everyone seemed to know that. He then pointed out that the state provides a \$3,000 death benefit; almost no one knew or remembered that. Further, Apple reminded us that a member’s executor must inform the state of a UUPer’s demise—it is the individual’s responsibility, not the state’s, to file for death benefits.

There was also a vigorous and passionate discussion about why retirees pay 100 percent for Empire coverage, but only receive a 20 percent benefit after Medicare pays its share. On a related topic, a good case was made that there should be a third category of coverage, namely “couples.” No one in the room had young children or were planning on having any. Apple promised to present these arguments in future health insurance planning meetings.

(This was a wonderful meeting, and I would recommend both speakers for consideration at other retiree meetings.)



PAT BAKER PHOTOS

Above, Frank Maraviglia of ESF shares his creativity.

Left, Harvey Axlerod of Buffalo Center introduces the speakers.

Below, UUP staffer Walter Apple discusses benefits.



‘Nobody wants to die’

A commentary by Harvey Axlerod, WNY Region chair

The lyrics of the above title by John Fischer feature the oft-quoted chorus, “Everyone wants to get to heaven Lord, Nobody wants to die.” The essence of the lyrics, as I see them, is that everyone wants the rewards, without the downside or hard work. So, with due respect to the lyricist, I offer to you a labor version of this:

Everyone wants to right a wrong,
Nobody wants to file a grievance.

Everyone wants to change the law,
Nobody wants to visit a legislator.

Everyone wants better leadership,
Nobody runs for office.

Everyone wants more information,
Nobody reads a newsletter.

Everyone asks, “What’s the union doing for me?”
Nobody lifts a finger.

Not to paint with too broad a brush but, by and large, this is true of the vast number of union members. The last one is particularly galling to me. Maybe, as retirees, more of us need to step forward and lend a hand, a voice, a little sweat.
Just a thought.

Hurricane Sandy wreaks havoc, but UUPers come through

By Donald Feldstein
UUP Media Relations Specialist

UUP members stepped up to help their neighbors and colleagues in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, while at the same time personally dealing with its disastrous effects.

The Oct. 29 storm left 42 dead in New York and shut down Manhattan bridges, the Brooklyn Battery and Holland tunnels—and even shuttered the New York Stock Exchange.

As the storm hit, Stony Brook University Hospital took in 31 patients who were transferred from neighboring hospitals because of the storm. Nineteen came from Mather Memorial Hospital in Port Jefferson, the other 12 from Eastern Long Island Hospital in Greenport.

“Many of our members worked extra shifts and spent the night on air mattresses,” said Stony Brook HSC Chapter President Carol Gizzi.

Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn also took in patients; five people on ventilators were evacuated to Downstate from Promenade Health Care Center in Queens. Downstate was ready to take up to 20 med-surge and six pediatric patients from Coney Island Hospital, but it proved unnecessary, said UUPer Ron Najman.

At SUNY Maritime in the Bronx, UUPers helped FEMA workers who used the college’s training ship as a staging area for disaster relief. The storm also damaged the

campus, as strong winds blew the roof off the science and engineering building.

Two SUNY campuses—Old Westbury and New Paltz—served as shelters for those displaced by the storm. Old Westbury’s shelter in the campus gym remained open nine days after the storm, as chapter members worked to collect clothing and food.

Four UUPers helped staff the New Paltz shelter, including psychology professor James Halpern, who worked with graduate interns to provide mental health support. The shelter has since closed, but Halpern says their work is not done.

“We expect to continue working with the Red Cross, and the offices of Mental Health and Emergency Management to train volunteers to participate in what will likely be a long period of recovery,” he said.

Even as they lent a hand, UUPers and their families had to cope with what Sandy left in her wake.

Gizzi’s home lost power for five days, and nine trees fell on her property; a UUPer in Lindenhurst lost his home due to flooding.

Some Farmingdale members also had serious damage to their homes and cars, said Chapter President Yolanda Pauzé.

Stony Brook Chapter President Arty Shertzter said almost everyone from his chapter lost power. Some homes were flooded, and at least one had a tree crash through the roof.

Shertzter predicted life on Long Island won’t return to normal for months.



Relief available; donations sought

Although Hurricane Sandy is behind us, its aftermath remains.

As in past natural disasters, UUP has partnered with NYSUT and AFT to help members in need. Go to bitly.com/VFY7U0 to learn more about how you can help and how you can get help if you need it.

Members seeking financial assistance as a result of the storm should make their requests directly to NYSUT, using the application posted on the UUP and NYSUT websites.

Donations can be made online using Pay Pal, or by mailing a check made out to “NYSUT Disaster Relief Fund” to UUP, P.O. Box 15143, Albany, N.Y. 12212-5143.

Donations are tax deductible.

Long Island ...

(continued from page 4)

rights and ensuring the successful transition to a four-year college.

Maertz had a bunch of photos that depicted UUPers from the early days of the union. There were memories of a lot of us (younger and thinner) to cause a laugh or two.

UUP Retiree Member Services Coordinator Walter Apple answered questions about the change in prescription drug coverage (see related story, page 1). Those who have Empire as their secondary coverage don’t have to do anything; those with HMO coverage need to decide which prescription plan to use.

UUPF President Yolanda Pauzé updated retirees on UUPF happenings and on the status of negotiations. Maertz listed the

NYSUT-endorsed candidates in our region and encouraged everyone to vote.

The highlight of the spring meeting will be professor Stan Mehlman, who will show us his bird photos and tell us how to take better vacation photos.

Note: The Oct. 30 meeting of Long Island retirees was canceled due to Hurricane Sandy and the havoc she wreaked on the island and throughout the New York/New Jersey region.

“We can’t hold the meeting this fall because of continuing recovery efforts and because the UUP leadership is concerned for the safety of members traveling to the meeting,” noted Barbara Maertz, COARM Long Island Region representative.

The meeting will be rescheduled for spring, she added.

Notice of 2013-2015 UUP Retiree Elections

In early January, UUP begins the process for its 2013-2015 Retiree elections.

Watch for nomination forms that will be mailed Jan. 4 from the UUP Administrative Office.

As election materials are mailed to members, copies will also be posted on the UUP website. Except for ballots, these items will be downloadable and printable.

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. Color photos of candidates are also welcome, but not necessary.

Statements must be received by the UUP director of communications' designee (kmattiso@uupmail.org) in the UUP Administrative Office by 5 p.m. **Wednesday, Feb. 6, 2013.** Statements will be printed in a special Election Edition of *The Active Retiree*.

If anyone wants labels to distribute campaign literature on behalf of any candidate, the UUP Executive Board has approved the following policies and procedures for retiree requests:

UUP Policies and Procedures for Distributing Campaign Literature in UUP Elections

To 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 ensure members' privacy and fulfill UUP's obligation to conduct fair and honest elections.

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 may request mailing labels of members' last known home addresses for distribution of campaign literature. Candidates shall sign a statement governing the use of mailing labels and limiting their use to 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 mailing labels. All declared candidates may obtain mailing labels by contacting the UUP Secretary's Office in writing (or by email). Such requests must specify the category(ies) of eligible members for whom they wish labels. Candidates will cover the cost of labels and mailing.

Mailing labels will include only UUP members, including contingents, 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, including contingents, they wish to receive their mailings.

Retired Delegate to the Delegate Assembly:

- All Retirees
- Retired Academics Only
- Retired Professionals Only

Retiree Regions:

All options listed below are available in each Region
All Retirees; Academics Only; Professionals Only

- Capital District—Region A (*Albany, System Administration, Cobleskill, New Paltz*)
- 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, Buffalo Center, Buffalo State, Fredonia, Geneseo*)
- Central New York—Region E (*ESF, Morrisville, Oswego, Upstate Medical, Utica/Rome*)
- Metropolitan—Region F (*Downstate, Maritime, 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 was located prior to retirement.



Retiree Elections
Request for Labels

Print Name _____ Academic Professional

Phone Number _____ Email Address _____

Address (Include Street, City, State, Zip) _____

I am a candidate for _____ Date Requested _____

Indicate the categories of eligible **Retired Members** for labels. (Check All Boxes That Apply)

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All Retirees | <input type="checkbox"/> Academics Only | <input type="checkbox"/> Professionals Only | Western New York – Region D: <i>(Alfred, Brockport, Buffalo (All), Fredonia, Geneseo)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> All Retirees | <input type="checkbox"/> Academics Only | <input type="checkbox"/> Professionals Only | |
| Capital District – Region A: <i>(Albany, System Administration, Cobleskill, New Paltz)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> All Retirees | <input type="checkbox"/> Academics Only | <input type="checkbox"/> Professionals Only | Central New York – Region E: <i>(ESF, Morrisville, Oswego, Upstate Medical, Utica/Rome)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> All Retirees | <input type="checkbox"/> Academics Only | <input type="checkbox"/> Professionals Only |
| Long Island – Region B: <i>(Farmingdale, Old Westbury, Stony Brook, Stony Brook HSC)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> All Retirees | <input type="checkbox"/> Academics Only | <input type="checkbox"/> Professionals Only | Metropolitan – Region F: <i>(Downstate, Maritime, Optometry, Purchase)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> All Retirees | <input type="checkbox"/> Academics Only | <input type="checkbox"/> Professionals Only |
| North Country – Region C: <i>(Canton, Plattsburgh, Potsdam)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> All Retirees | <input type="checkbox"/> Academics Only | <input type="checkbox"/> Professionals Only | Southern Tier – Region G: <i>(Binghamton, Cortland, Delhi, Oneonta)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> All Retirees | <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 Campaign Literature in UUP Elections. I request labels in accordance with UUP Policies and Procedures. I understand that each set of labels of names and home addresses, provided by UUP, is limited to use in a UUP election.

Print Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Please FAX or MAIL this request to UUP

Req. for Labels Rev. 10112012

Fax Number: 1-866-812-9446

PO Box 15143, Albany, New York 12212-5143

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 Elections and Credentials committee and/or the Leadership Directory.

In election years, UUP will publish these policies and procedures in *The Voice* and post them on the UUP website prior to the beginning of the election cycle. A copy will be 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.

2013-2015 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 1/4/13
- Chapter, retiree and affiliate convention nominations close 2/6/13
- Chapter nomination lists mailed to chapter presidents and posted to UUP website 2/6/13
- Mail retiree election ballots 2/15/13
- Mail chapter election ballots 2/20-22/13
- Retiree election ballots due 3/13/13
- Counting of retiree ballots 3/13-15/13
- Chapter election ballots due 3/20/13
- Counting of chapter election ballots 3/20-23/13

** Dates may be modified*

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

NOTICE OF NOMINATION AND ELECTION
Retiree Council 40-42
President, Vice President and Secretary/Treasurer

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a mail secret ballot election will be conducted on Friday, February 15, 2013 at NYSUT Headquarters, Latham, New York (IT Training Room) for the following positions:

President, Retiree Council 40-42
Vice President, Retiree Council 40- 42
Secretary/Treasurer, Retiree Council 40- 42

The term of office for each position shall begin once the election results are certified and end on June 1, 2014. The election will be overseen by the NYSUT Retiree Council 40-42 Elections Committee.

All members of NYSUT Retiree Council 40-42 who are on the NYSUT membership roster as of Thursday, December 13, 2012, are eligible to either nominate a candidate, or seek nomination and election to any of the above positions.

To request a nomination petition for any of the above positions, please contact NYSUT's Office of Retiree Services either by mail addressed to 800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY 12110; by email addressed to goreilly@nysutmail.org; or by telephone at (800) 342-9810, ext. 6306. To be timely submitted, each completed nomination petition must be returned to NYSUT's Office of Retiree Services, 800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY 12110 and RECEIVED by mail or in person by no later than by 5:00 PM. on Thursday, December 13, 2012. Nominations will close at that time. Any candidate nominated for a position must indicate on the nomination petition that he/she accepts the nomination. All candidates will be notified after receipt and review of their nominating petitions whether their petition has been validated, and, if validated, that their name will appear on the ballot.

Ballots will be mailed to each eligible elector in NYSUT Retiree Council 40-42 at their last known home address on or about Friday, January 4, 2013. Completed ballots must be returned in the self-addressed return envelope provided so that they are received in the US Postal Service post office box dedicated to this election by February 15, 2013 at 10:00 A.M. Ballots will be tabulated on Friday, February 15, 2013 commencing at 11:00 A.M. at the NYSUT IT Training Room. All nominees or their designated representative are invited to attend the opening and tabulation of ballots.

Any candidate who completes and submits a valid Nominating Petition to NYSUT's Office of Retiree Services by not later than Thursday, December 13, 2012 by 5:00 P.M. shall be eligible to receive a set of eligible elector mailing labels for campaign purposes.

The candidates will be ranked according to the total number of votes cast for each of the three elected positions. The candidate for each office with the highest vote totals will be declared elected to the position. Should a second balloting be necessary to determine the outcome of the election due to a tie in the votes cast, the nominees involved in the tie vote will be placed on a second ballot. Please note that an election may be waived for any office if, after the close of nominations, there is only one candidate for the office.

Certified election results will be announced in the April 2013 edition of *NYSUT United*.

All questions regarding this election are to be directed to NYSUT's Office of Retiree Services via email addressed to goreilly@nysutmail.org.

NOTICE OF NOMINATION AND ELECTION
NYSUT Retiree Council 40-42
Delegates to the 2013 and 2014 NYSUT RA

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a secret mail ballot election will be conducted on Friday, February 15, 2013 at 11:00 AM at the NYSUT Headquarters (IT Training Room), Latham NY for nine (9) delegates from Retiree Council 40-42 to the NYSUT RA for a two-year term covering the 2013 and 2014 NYSUT RA. Their term of office shall begin once the election results are certified and end on June 1, 2014. The election will be overseen by the NYSUT Retiree Council 40-42 Elections Committee.

All members of NYSUT Retiree Council 40-42 who are on the NYSUT membership roster as of Thursday, December 13, 2012, are eligible to either nominate a candidate, or seek nomination and election to the position of NYSUT Retiree Delegate from Retiree Council 40-42.

To request a nomination petition for the office of NYSUT Retiree Delegate from Retiree Council 40-42, please contact NYSUT's Office of Retiree Services either by mail addressed to 800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY 12110; by email addressed to goreilly@nysutmail.org; or by telephone at (800) 342-9810, ext. 6306. To be timely submitted, each completed nomination petition must be returned to NYSUT's Office of Retiree Services, 800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY 12110 and RECEIVED by mail or in person by no later than by 5:00 P.M. on Thursday, December 13, 2012. Nominations will close at that time. Any candidate nominated for a position must indicate on the nomination petition that he/she accepts the nomination. All candidates will be notified after receipt and review of their nominating petitions whether their petition has been validated, and, if validated, that their name will appear on the ballot.

Any candidate who completes and submits a valid Nominating Petition to NYSUT's Office of Retiree Services by not later than Thursday, December 13, 2012 by 5:00 P.M. shall be eligible to receive a set of eligible elector mailing labels for campaign purposes.

Ballots will be mailed to each eligible elector in NYSUT Retiree Council 40-42 at their last known home address on or about Friday, January 4, 2013. Completed ballots must be returned in the self-addressed return envelope provided so that they are received in the US Postal Service post office box dedicated to this election by February 15, 2013 at 10:00 A.M. Ballots will be tabulated on Friday, February 15, 2013 commencing at 11:00 A.M. at the NYSUT IT Training Room. All nominees or their designated representative are invited to attend the opening and tabulation of ballots.

The candidates will be ranked according to the total number of votes cast. The nine (9) candidates with the highest vote totals will be declared elected as NYSUT Retiree Delegate from RC 40-42. Should a second balloting be necessary to determine the outcome of the election due to a tie in the votes cast, the nominees involved in the tie vote will be placed on a second ballot.

Please note that an election may be waived if, after the close of nominations, the number of candidate is equal to or less than the number of positions to be filled.

Certified election results will be announced in the April 2013 edition of *NYSUT United*.

All questions regarding this election are to be directed to NYSUT's Office of Retiree Services via email addressed to goreilly@nysutmail.org.

Social (In)Security

Oneonta active UUP member defends government program

By Rob Compton
Oneonta VP for Academics

It appears that no public good is safe from privatization.

Over the last 10 years, under the guise of the “Ownership Society” as articulated by the proponents of neoliberalism and radical marketization, the clamor for privatizing Social Security has increased. The sententious narrative goes like this: “Social Security is bankrupt and there will be no benefits for the next generation. Social Security funds yield only a 2 percent rate of return. We must encourage greater rates of return by investing the monies in market-based retirement account where people can be accountable for their own future.”

On the morning of May 18, as I was headed to the COARM meeting to deliver my comments, my eldest son Chris asked me why I sought to defend the defunct government program. He said that there is only “social insecurity” for people of my generation. Then he startled me by saying, “There will be nothing left for me” and that it was a failed program. I told him that Social Security has been the most successful government program in history and that the country would be plunged back into a Dickensian past without it.

In this article, I want to explain why the statement above is false. Also, based on the idea of the veil of ignorance by philosopher John Rawls, I want to explain why society would not seek to dismantle collective goods. Lastly, I will examine the

ramifications of privatizing Social Security.

Social Security isn't bankrupt

Social Security is not bankrupt. Despite the Obama tax cut on FICA, the trust fund is solvent until 2033. The federal government, both under Republic and Democratic governments, have raided the trust fund to pay for deficit spending over the years. In other words, the rate of return is 2 percent because the funds are “invested” long-term government debt. This is a political decision that, some argue, has allowed the government to finance part of its debt at bargain rates. Despite the recent FICA tax cuts, numerous pre-tax deductions, the maximum income limits for FICA taxation, and the pending retirement boom, Social Security remains not only popular among older Americans but it also provides a safety net for Americans.

In signing the Social Security Act in 1935, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt stated, “We can never insure 100 percent of the population against 100 percent of the hazards and vicissitudes of life, but we have tried to frame a law which will give some measure of protection to the average citizen and to his family against the loss of a job and against poverty-ridden old age.

“This law, too, represents a cornerstone in a structure which is being built but is by no means complete. It is a structure intended to lessen the force of possible future depressions. It will act as a



Compton

protection to future administrations against the necessity of going deeply into debt to furnish relief to the needy. The law will flatten out the peaks and valleys of deflation and of inflation. It is, in short, a law that will take care of human needs and at the same time provide the United States an economic structure of vastly greater soundness.”

Over the years, Social Security expanded to include unemployment insurance, medical insurance, supplemental security income (SSI), and payments to dependents and survivors. In other words, Social Security provides security for society.

This modicum of security is particularly important given the termination of defined benefit pensions in the corporate and, increasingly, the public sector, and its substitution with defined contribution plans. Despite the great fanfare under which 401(k) plans debuted in 1978, many employees were restricted to company stocks and limited choices under the programs. Often, upon leaving employment, employees would cash in their 401(k) retirement plans. In 2007, the average 401(k)

balance was \$71,000.

Predictably, poorer workers were less likely to deposit funds into such accounts, are least likely to have company matching, and are more prone to “cash in” during protracted unemployment or other financial hardships. In other words, 401(k)s cannot replace defined benefit pension plans and there is a sharp class basis regarding who benefits from 401(k) and IRA plans. As the old adage goes, “It takes money to make money.”

Veil of Ignorance

Jo Schaffer, Southern Tier representative for COARM, told me there's another reason why young people should support Social Security. Not only will young people eventually collect money, it is also insurance that protects them from financial ruin. Imagine all senior citizens becoming completely dependent on their children for financial survival!

If society were allotted a “do over,” it is improbable that society would choose a privatized strategy for retirement. Philosopher John Rawls, in his experiments concerning the veil of ignorance, observed that people would not only seek to limit extreme wealth accumulation at the top, but they would also seek to create a solid safety net for society. Using Rawls' veil of ignorance, we remove class, race and gender from the equation. This means that no one knows if he or she will be a millionaire attorney, a professor, a custodial worker, a fast food restaurant employee, or an unemployed factory worker. Rawls questioned what would



New York retirees meet with U.S. Congressman Tim Bishop (D-NY) to celebrate the 100th birthday of Social Security. From left are Bob Benson, IBEW; Bishop; COARM Chair Judy Wishnia; John Kenneday, IBEW; and Kevin Willis of the CWA, chair of the Long Island Alliance for Retired Americans.

happen if “no one knows his place in society, his class position or social status; nor does he know his fortune in the distribution of natural assets and abilities, his intelligence and strength, and the like?” Stripped of all social and economic pretense, what, in this discussion, would people choose for their future? What sort of enlightened self-interest would emerge in this circumstance?

People prefer a social contract in which there is an equality of opportunity. While neoconservatives and libertarians may rejoice, they also want a degree of equality with a strong social net to prevent people from falling victim to the vicissitudes of life. In other words, when bad things happen to good people, through no fault of their own, Social Security is important; in other words, it’s completely understandable for 20-year-olds to believe they are invincible and to conjure up delusions of grandeur attended by their conspicuous piles of gold nuggets. By the time they reach 40, most sensible people realize the absurdity of such active imaginations and begin to see value in “social security.” Social Security prevents gross inequality in our society and allows human beings—yes our friends, parents, relatives, and eventually ourselves—to age with dignity.

Conclusion

Social Security is not bankrupt. Some people seek to morally bankrupt the program by pointing out the power of the markets and the ownership society and the “so-called” deficiencies of government. To call for Social Security’s privatization is veiled ignorance for corporate greed. It is also a morally bankrupt position in today’s environment of increased social insecurity.

Given the rise in the number of mutual funds and the financial markets over the last 20 years, the drumbeat for the privatization of Social Security continues to increase. For those who aspire to social justice and social security, it falls on deaf years. We have the responsibility for communicating with younger people and our friends and family about the truth of Social Security. Retirement should not be a lotto ticket, but social security for all. Social Security is a public good that is necessary to prevent social insecurity. As unionists, we have a responsibility to mobilize for fairness and social justice by protecting our Social Security program.

(Editor’s note: This article is based on a presentation made by Compton on May 18, 2012, during COARM’s annual regional meeting in Oneonta.)

Active Retiree pens book on survival

UP retiree Carl Pegels of Buffalo Center, has written a book on extreme events entitled, *We Live on a Dangerous Planet—Prepare for Survival Now*. The book is published on Amazon Kindle and is available for \$2.99.

Our planet will eventually be exposed to a natural disaster that will result in a massive loss of life and potential destruction of much of the world we know. Although the probability of this happening during one’s lifetime is moderate, our descendants will eventually face a destructive event that will shake up their world of comfort—and possibly end it.

During World War II, I personally experienced what deprivation and famine does to people who are used to living in a civil environment. I question why nothing is being done, in our advanced society, to ensure that famines and other miseries will not be repeated.



PEGELS

We are living in a fantasy world that we believe will continue to provide us with our daily needs, especially in terms of food, water and the necessary public services. We are aware of the occasional occurrence of natural disasters, such as earthquakes, hurricanes, tornados or drought. But these events are usually of a local, regional or a national nature.

Throughout our history, major worldwide disasters have occurred that are incomprehensible in potential havoc and chaos to our civilization. As recently as 200 years ago, we had a year without summer. Food prices skyrocketed then; one can only imagine how we would be able to feed the more than seven billion people in today’s world.

The most important—and immediate—preparation we can make, as a nation, is to build up regional reserves of basic foods, such as grain and legumes that can keep for a long time. Grain is one of the least expensive food stuffs to acquire and to store, and it is also the most effective to keep large numbers of people from starvation. Common grains such as wheat, barley, rye and oats can literally last for 1,000 years, if kept in controlled environmental conditions.

For more information on the book, contact the author at cpegels@buffalo.edu.

Goodbye, Charlie

UUP says so long to founder, trailblazer for professionals

By Karen L. Mattison
UUP Publications Specialist

Former statewide vice president for professionals Charlie Hansen of SUNY Stony Brook passed away June 11 in Delray Beach, Fla. He was 85.

Hansen, a UUP pioneer who served as the Stony Brook Chapter's first president and then as a statewide vice president from 1977-1982, will long be remembered as the driving force behind uniting academics and professionals into one powerful union.

From his early leadership in UUP's predecessor organizations—State University Professional Association (SUPA) and Senate Professional Association (SPA)—through his lifelong service as a union delegate, Hansen was unwavering in the fight to make academics and professionals equal partners in the eyes of SUNY management.

"Charlie was one of the major building blocks of UUP," recalled Stony Brook colleague Bill Wiesner. "The 'fire in his belly' was so powerful that it inspired entire Delegate Assemblies. It was that fire—knowing what unions are for—that wedded academics and professionals and helped build a strong union."

"He was my hero in many ways," Wiesner added.

"He mentored me and many others as to what was important for union leadership: rank, file, terms, conditions. These were Charlie's mantras and he never wavered.

"He stood true to the ideals of unionism throughout his career. I believe his impact on all of us will continue."

Before Hansen led the charge for equality among SUNY employees,

professionals were, by all accounts, hired and fired at the whim of managers. As assistant director of business management at Stony Brook's Graduate Physics Facility, Hansen set out to change that, first in SUPA as a delegate, and then when SPA evolved as a hybrid organization for both academics and professionals.

In 2000, Hansen received the union's Nina Mitchell Award for Distinguished Service for a stellar union career as a statewide officer, Executive Board member and delegate, and as a member of the Negotiations, Career Development, Membership, and Active Retired Membership committees.

"Forty years ago, Charlie took the high road and demanded fair treatment for professionals," said UUP President Phil Smith. "Every professional has Charlie to thank for paving the way."



Hansen in 2005.



"Charlie was, indeed, a true unionist who helped to make UUP a strong member-based union. Even in his retirement to Florida and during his last illness, he wrote to tell me, once again, to remember to maintain democracy in the union."

— COARM Chair Judy Wishnia

"I can still hear Charlie's voice at a Delegate Assembly booming 'Terms and conditions of employment!' to emphasize a point. In many ways, Charlie helped me understand what unionism is all about."

— Lew Herod
Downstate Medical



Above, Hansen, right, at one of several UUP protests, circa 1975.

Right, Hansen took over as VPP in 1980, succeeding Ernie Fox, right.



In memoriam

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

Paul Baer, Stony Brook HSC
 Thomas Bardos, Buffalo HSC
 Charlette Bleecker, Farmingdale
 Mary Boyle, New Paltz
 Philip Camponeschi, Old Westbury
 Marcia Carlson, Cortland
 J. William Dock, Buffalo Center
 Janet Egan, Empire State
 Louis Faron, Stony Brook
 Charles Hansen, Stony Brook
 Duncan Hinckley, Geneseo
 Maureen Knopp, Upstate Medical
 Diane Leventhal, Upstate Medical
 Bernard Licata, Stony Brook
 Patricia Mallett, Downstate Medical
 Joseph Margarone Jr., Buffalo HSC
 Joseph Martino, Downstate Medical
 Mary Mooney, Empire State
 Mirta Mulhare, Old Westbury
 John Naughton, Buffalo HSC
 Birgid Naylor, Buffalo Center

Mary Neumann, Brockport
 Jo-Ann Oakes, Stony Brook HSC
 Maureen O'Hara, Upstate Medical
 Grant Phipps, Buffalo HSC
 Owen Pittenger, Oswego
 Gordon Purrington, Albany
 William Pygon, Binghamton
 Eleanor Richards, New Paltz
 William Rock, Brockport
 Sheldon Rothenberg, Downstate
 Patricia Shedd, Cortland
 Harold Solan, Optometry
 Mythili Srikishnan, Buffalo HSC
 Eugene Straus, Downstate Medical
 Jean Sylvester, Buffalo Center
 F. Van Norstrand, Stony Brook HSC
 Louis Vanaria, Cortland
 Charles Wallin, Buffalo Center
 Ralph Whitehead, Morrisville
 Howard Zauder, Upstate Medical

Hospital stay ...

(continued from page 2)

rather die before I answer Mother Nature's call in any place other than a bathroom.

So, it makes perfect sense that when Mother Nature called while in the hospital, I would look for the nearest bathroom.

There is a toilet designed for people with handicaps that is slightly higher than the traditional toilet. It makes life pleasant, and much, much easier to slide from one place to another.

The nurse helping me sensed my reluctance and returned with a height-adjusted commode. I breathed a sigh of relief.

A final word about hospital gowns.

For some reason, wearing a hospital gown gives me the sensation of a breeze hitting me from behind all the time—which is good for sailing, but nerve-wracking to maintain any sort of decorum in a half-naked state. (A word of advice—Never try to pick up anything on the floor when wearing a hospital gown. As you bend over everyone can see “New York without a ticket.”)

So to Janet, Jessica, Kelly and Kelly (there's two of them, honest), Charlotte, Dora, Darlene and the other nurse whose name I forgot (but you know who you are), a big Thank You for a wonderful vacation. You are all a pleasure to know ... even if we met under not-so-enjoyable circumstances.

Truly, the Oneonta area is very fortunate to have such dedicated people help us in our times of need. Bless you all.

P.S. I left before they served the beef Wellington with lobster side, so all I can tell you is the food I did eat was darn good.

Join our e-list

Retirees are invited to join the group's email information network 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.

Interested members should contact Old Westbury retiree Claire Meiorowitz at cmeiorowitz@yahoo.com. Member privacy is protected because the group is considered private and names will not be displayed in Yahoo!'s directory.

Pearl H. Brod Outstanding 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, 2013

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.

The award will be presented during the 2013 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, 2013

COARM gets down to business

By Loraine Tyler
Oneonta

The following are draft minutes from the Committee on Active Retired Membership (COARM) meeting held Friday, Oct. 12, during the union's 2012 Fall Delegate Assembly in Buffalo.

COARM elected and appointed members present: Eric Russell, Harvey Axlerod, Jo Schaffer, Barbara Maertz, Frank Maraviglia and Jack Richert.

Visitors present: Ed Hines, Carl Pegels, Ed Drummond, Dawn Becker, Bob Rees, Joyce Haines, Mac Nelson, Loraine Tyler, Richard Tyler, Gideon Dunkley, Harvey Inventasch, Bob Fluck, Don Cohen and Peter D.G. Brown.

Meeting was called to order by Jo Schaffer at 12:18 p.m. Schaffer was filling in for COARM Chair Judith Wishnia, who was in Paris.

1. Minutes of April 20, 2012, were approved, subject to editorial changes.
2. Proposed regional meetings were approved and past meetings discussed:
 - Western NY Region, Axlerod: Spring meeting was held. A social event is scheduled for Oct. 16 with UUP Retiree Member Services Coordinator Walter Apple and UUP Active Retiree Maraviglia of ESF as scheduled speakers.
 - Long Island Region, Maertz: A meeting is scheduled for Oct. 24 for Farmingdale and Oct. 30 Stony Brook. Spring events to be determined. A pre-retirement workshop is scheduled for Oct. 23, with Apple as speaker.
 - Metropolitan Region, Russell: A meeting is scheduled for Oct. 18, with Apple as speaker.
 - Southern Tier Region, Schaffer: Meetings are scheduled for Nov. 19 in Binghamton, Oct. 6 in Cortland and Nov. 1 in Oneonta (includes Delhi). Nov. 28 is a pre-retirement workshop in Cortland.
- No reports: North Country and Capitol District regions.
- 3: UUP Publications Specialist Karen Mattison, *The Active Retiree*:



Above, Harvey Axlerod of Buffalo Center discusses COARM business, as Barbara Maertz of Farmingdale and Ed Drummond of Stony Brook HSC listen.

Below, Jo Schaffer of Cortland shows off her NYSUT membership card. Seated next to her is UUP Retiree Member Services Coordinator Walter Apple.

- Nov. 1 is deadline for submission of articles.
- An anniversary booklet is planned to celebrate the 40th anniversary of UUP. The booklet will be self paid through ads.

Russell moved and Axlerod seconded that up to \$1,000 be allocated for an appropriate advertisement in the anniversary booklet. Carried.

4. Report from Apple:
 - Listserv should be up and running by the first of year.
 - Prescription drug update—One major change is that retirees will have two different ID cards; networks and copays remain the same.

5. Report from RELAG, Inventasch and Richert:

- Talked a good deal about the Spring DA and training day on Tuesday. All RELAG members are being encouraged to visit lawmakers in the state Legislature and advocate on behalf of the Downstate Medical University Chapter. More information is needed regarding the Downstate issue. All advocacy efforts should be reported to COARM.

- No Friend of SUNY Award will be given this year.
- Discussed NYSUT procedure for endorsements. Some dismay expressed about certain NYSUT endorsements.



- NYS-AFL-CIO labor walk discussed. RELAG invited to attend.
6. Report from special committee for 35th anniversary of COARM, Don Cohen:
 - An operating budget of \$12,000 was approved. The kickoff will be at the 2013 Fall DA 2013. Among the anniversary projects: a journal of articles by retirees; a traveling exhibit of memorabilia; workshops to be determined by the elected regional representatives. Each area will be encouraged to host celebrations.
 7. RPEA and COARM:
 - Maertz moved and Axlerod seconded the motion to support 10 (\$125) members to officially join RPEA. Carried.
- At this point our time in the meeting room had expired. COARM's elected representatives continued the discussion of the COARM anniversary celebration.

Planning a trip? Let Member Benefits help!

Are you finally looking to book that fantastic getaway to the Caribbean or Europe that you've always been dreaming about? Maybe you've got a business trip that you need to plan? Or, do you need to rent a car to get around town as part of your next excursion?

Let your friends at NYSUT Member Benefits help! We've got a variety of endorsed discount travel programs designed to help you keep a few more dollars in your wallet while enjoying some well-deserved rest and relaxation.

If big savings is your game, the Member Benefits-endorsed travel program offered by Wyndham Hotels & Endless Vacation Rentals is for you! NYSUT members can enjoy savings of up to 20% at nearly 7,000 participating hotels among 15 hotel brands with Wyndham Worldwide; meanwhile, save 25% at more than 200,000 vacation rentals in 100 countries with Endless Vacation Rentals.

Wyndham Hotels has the right hotel for you at the right price – whether it's an upscale hotel, all-inclusive resort or something more cost-effective. With Endless Vacation Rentals, NYSUT members can save on resort condos, villas, homes, and cottages that provide space and flexibility ideal for families and groups of friends traveling together.

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Learn more about these endorsed programs – including how to access discounts, unique website codes and website links – by contacting Member Benefits at **800-626-8101** or visiting memberbenefits.nysut.org. Happy travels!



For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.

Observations on elder abuse and an age-integrated society

By Don Cohen
Albany

This essay aims to place the issue of Elder Abuse (EA) front and center on the national priority agenda. Its thesis is that elder abuse is a violation of human rights based on the following:

1. Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, “Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.”

2. Article 25, “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and family including food, clothing, housing, medical care and necessary social services. Furthermore, the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age, or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond one’s control.”

3. The U.S. Older American Act of 1965, which has been renewed every 10 years, states, “that it is the duty and responsibility of federal, state and local governments to assist older people in retirement in securing health, honor and dignity after years of contribution to the community.”

Has America fulfilled these legal obligations? A *New York Times* editorial “Broken Trust of the Elderly,”¹ (March 17, 2011) states: 14 percent in a national study of the elderly have been neglected, abused or exploited. There are nearly six million cases of elder abuse every year, approximately one case every five seconds.² Yet, for every reported case of abuse, it is estimated that five or more cases go unreported.³

Regrettably, New York, which has the third largest number of people over age 60 in the country, is one of four states that does not have mandatory reporting. Yet New York ranks third among five states (California, Florida, Texas and Pennsylvania) that accounted for the greatest number of elder abuse cases in the U.S.

4. In a 2012 research study, “Under the Radar,” the epidemic nature of EA was revealed. This first in the U.S. study conducted by experts from Cornell University and the New York City Department of Aging investigated the incidence and prevalence of EA experienced by all senior citi-

zens living in New York’s 62 counties. Among its findings:

- One out of 12 NYers over age 60 will experience elder abuse in any one year.

- The typical EA victim is female over age 80 with a physical or cognitive impairment who suffered physical abuse, the most prevalent form of EA, with adult children being the most frequent perpetrators.

- The study’s personal questionnaire, self-reported by older individuals, identified financial exploitation as the most common form of abuse. A 2009 U.S. Senate-reported study estimated that elderly victims lost at least \$2.6 billion a year to fraud and abuse.

- All told, the incidence of elder abuse in New York state is 24 times greater than the number of cases referred to social service, law enforcement or legal authorities.

The study was undertaken by Lifespan, a multiservice social welfare agency for the elderly based in Rochester. Director Art Mason, a social worker and the study’s project organizer, first reported its findings to COARM in 2011. Mason concluded that elder abuse was “underrecognized, underreported and underprosecuted.”

5. The U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging, chaired by Herbert Kohl, reported in 2011 that elder abuse is a growing problem that far outmatches the resources available to fight it. Commenting on the Senate Committee findings, *The New York Times* “Broken Trust” editorial concluded, “that older people in society have only a threadbare of protection and resources to combat the growing number of elder abusers.”

The most poignant testimony before Sen. Kohl’s committee viewed nationally on C-SPAN was delivered by an unexpected victim: 90-year-old actor Mickey Rooney. Rooney related that the isolation and loss of power that comes with age and infirmity make elders especially vulnerable to abuse—not only from caregivers, but also from unscrupulous family members.

“I felt trapped, scared, used and frustrated,” Rooney told the committee, saying he had been defrauded by a member of his family. His money was taken and misused.

“I was unable to obtain any information

from the family to help myself,” Rooney said. “Above it all, I felt helpless.”

One conclusion I draw from the facts cited is that the culture of our society suffers from “ageism.” The suffix “ism” is defined by Webster as a basis of discrimination or prejudice. It follows that “ageism” is a cultural, political and social disease of which EA is called an “abomination,” as cited in the “Under the Radar” report.

Given that American culture associates and tends to define being old as akin to a social disease—one rent with illness, repeated hospitalizations, loneliness, job discrimination, uselessness, social isolation, family sadness, nursing homes, hopelessness and, finally, death—it is, in sum, regarded as a dead end.

Times call for a refocusing of goals to fulfill a national destiny proclaimed for all peoples and societies. I propose that we move toward eliminating elder abuse with a goal of creating a just and age-integrated or anti-ageism society.

One aim of a just society is to integrate all the aged into its ranks and to provide for the elderly all the benefits available to other sectors of society.

A just and age-integrated society builds bridges through intergenerational digital communication and cooperation. The elderly of all cultural heritages should have available to them at least as many choices or options in any given sector of society as any other age group.

In rural communities, special attention and emphasis on the barriers to age integration is needed and should be recognized and defined as a human rights violation.

In multiethnic communities, language barriers to communication must be addressed to excite and build indigenous leadership across all age sectors to deal with the fallout from ageism.

In sum, my motto told often to my wife, friend, and colleagues is: “Come age with me ... the best is yet to be ...”⁴

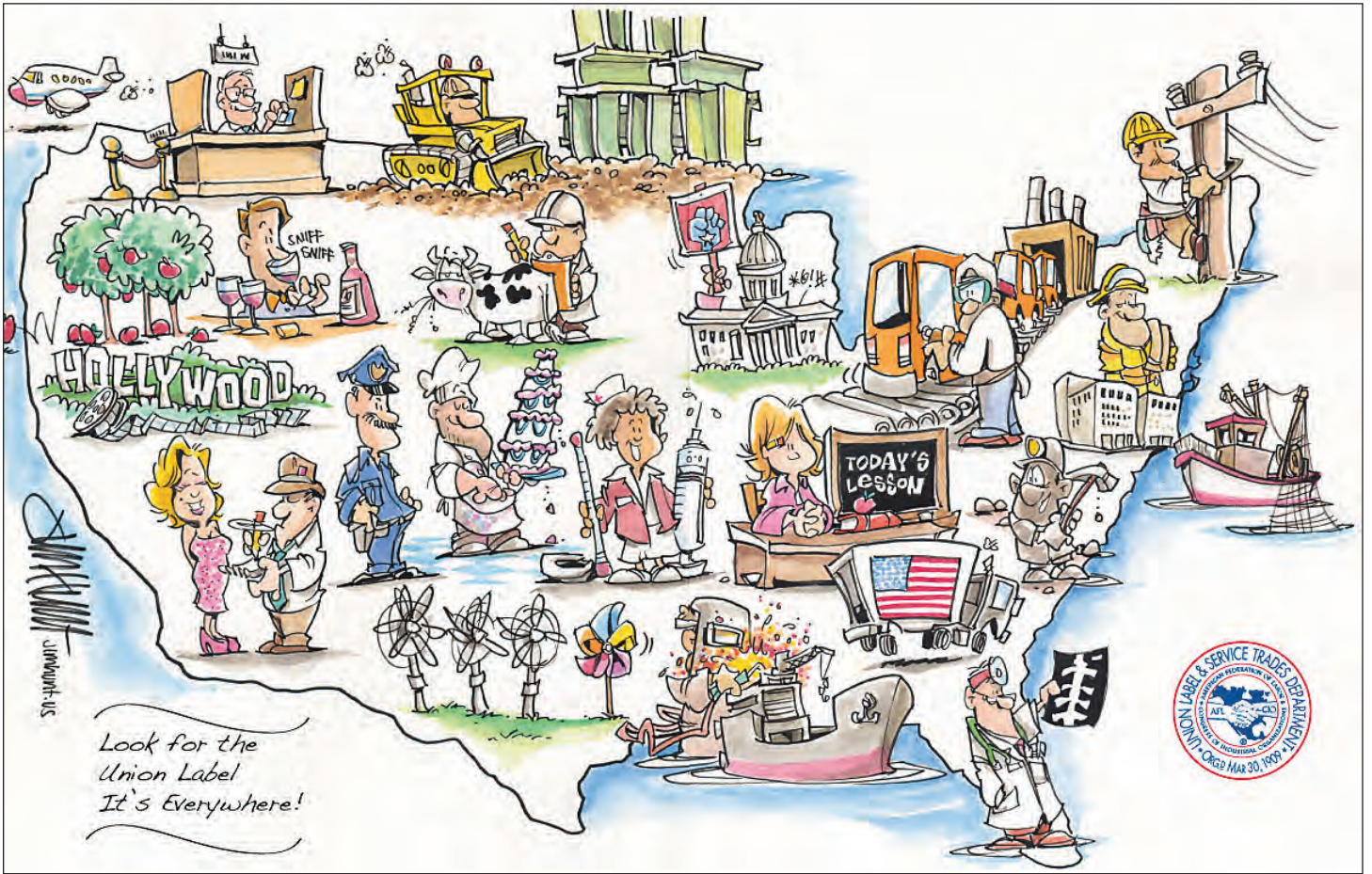
(Editor’s note: This article is based on Cohen’s presentation at the SUNY Retirees Service Corps conference, Nov. 3, 2011.)

¹ Broken Trust of the Elderly—nytimes.com, 3/17/11

² Elder Abuse Data and Statistics: Elder Assistance Daily, 4/23/12

³ Albany County (NY) Department of Aging, 4/23/12

⁴ Quoted from the Robert Browning poem “Rabbi Ben Ezra” in his book, *Dramatis Personae*, 1864



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